

Notices

Endings: Invitations to Discipleship by Morna D. Hooker. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2003. Pp. vii + 104. \$14.95 paper.

Morna Hooker has written a clever little book comparing the endings of the four gospels. To effectively tie the chapters together, she begins each section with a memorable quote from T. S. Eliot about beginnings and endings. In summary, Hooker argues that all of the gospels conclude with suspended endings just as the Hebrew Old Testament canon ends with 2 Chronicles and an open-ended conclusion about returning to the land of Canaan after the edict of Cyrus. In this way, the readers can enter the story.

She argues persuasively that Mark originally ended at 16:8 purposely requiring a response from the readers. "The ending Mark demands that his readers supply is the response of faith: it is only those who are prepared to believe and who set off on the journey of faith who will see the risen Lord" (23). Hooker is not as convincing in her argumentation that the other gospels are open-ended. Matthew ends with a world-embracing commission as well as geographically on the mountain picturing Jesus like Moses in the Pentateuch. Luke uses tradi-

tional methods to tie together a two-volume work, and the ending of Acts at the capital of the empire is certainly climatic. John ends triumphantly in the resurrection appearances with Jesus proclaimed as God (20:28), and the last chapter commissions the disciples as fishers of men (evangelists) and pastors (“feed my sheep”). Morna Hooker is effective in demonstrating how beginnings and endings function together as *inclusios*, but her arguments that all the gospels and Acts contain suspended endings leave me unconvinced except for the unique ending of the gospel of Mark.

—Dean Deppe