



La Due, William J.

The Trinity Guide to the Trinity

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Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

New Jersey

William J. La Due has provided the interested reader with a wonderful survey of the doctrine of the Trinity. The format is quite simple, La Due chooses important theologians from various disciplines and times, gives brief summaries of their work and contributions to Trinitarian theology, as well as important events in the history of the Church and their impact on the development of Trinitarian dogma, and ends the chapter with some observations. One wouldn't imagine that you could pack as much detail into such short summaries as La Due has done, but that's the end product. The student just starting their study of the doctrine of the Trinity will benefit greatly from this book, and certainly be equipped to engage in much more detailed study, whether they want to focus on Patristics, Medieval theology, or something more contemporary.

The theologians he surveyed were: Walter Eichrodt, Gerhard von Rad, Walter Brueggemann, Roland Murphy, Karl Rahner, Raymond Brown, James D. G. Dunn, Yves Congar, Ignatius of Antioch, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, Basil, Gregory of Nazianzus, Gregory of Nyssa, Hilary of Poitiers, Augustine, Cyril of Alexandria, Anselm, Richard of St. Victor, Thomas Aquinas, Friedrich Schleiermacher, David Friedrich Strauss, Ernest Renann, Adolf von Harnack, Walter Kasper, John O'Donnell, Catherine Mowry LaCugna, Karl Barth, Wolfhart Pannenberg, Jürgen Moltmann, Robert W. Jenson, Vladimir Lossky, Leonardo Boff, Elizabeth A. Johnson, Joseph A. Bracken, Marjorie Hewitt Suchocki, Kathryn Tanner, Peter C. Hodgson.

Students of the Trinity are more likely than not, acquainted with most of these names, but for the beginning student, La Due introduces the reader into a world of scholarship that spans centuries. As should be obvious (to those familiar with these names), La Due focuses on scholars of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament, as well as the most important early Church fathers, Medieval theologians, and thinkers from the Enlightenment. He then surveys some of the best contemporary Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestant scholars, and even includes some Feminist scholars along the

way. While certainly not comprehensive, this list is representative of the best that have addressed the topic of the Trinity.

La Due also covers the major events in Church history, to include the Ecumenical councils, as well as some local synods, the Protestant Reformation, the Enlightenment, and even more recently, the advent of Liberation theology. Attention is given to the various Christological and Trinitarian heresies that have plagued the Church throughout history, such as Sabellianism, Arianism, Nestorianism, and while not calling it heresy, La Due addresses the filioque clause inserted into the N-C Creed at the third synod of Toledo in 589.

All in all, this book is the perfect introduction to the Trinity in my opinion. My major criticisms have only to do with matters of publishing, and that is mainly my annoyance with the chapter end notes. It seemed an attempt to bridge the gap between end notes and footnotes, but in the end, they still require two book marks, and that is unforgivable. There is an 8 page bibliography filled with some of the most important works on the Trinity throughout history, and a 9 page subject index. I recommend this book to all beginning students, as well as to intermediate students who might not be familiar with a particular era of Trinitarian theology. I would also recommend this to advanced students as a great refresher for information they have already obtained, and also as a good study guide to teach classes on the Trinity.