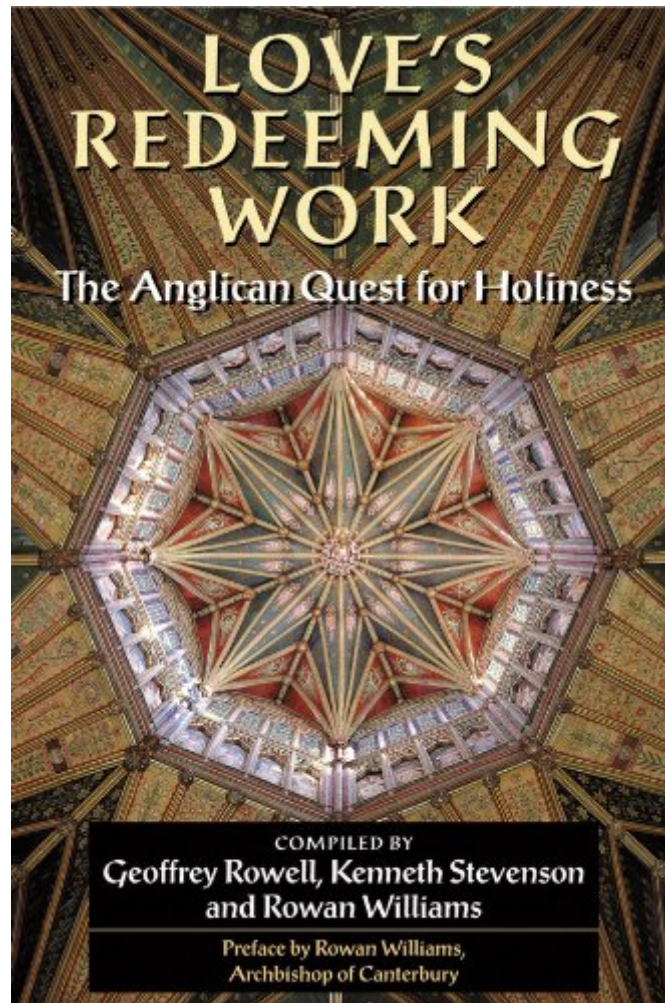




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Love's Redeeming Work: The Anglican Quest For Holiness



Synopsis

There is a rich vein of writing within Anglican tradition that has helped to form the theology and spirituality of the contemporary church. For many readers, much of this material remains unfamiliar and is often difficult to access. Love's Redeeming Work draws together the works of major writers from the sixteenth century to the present day who have contributed to this development. Each selected writer is introduced with a brief biography, which gives background information about the author, and highlights the relationships that existed with others from the same period. This will enable the reader to set the writings in their proper context, enhancing understanding of the material. The selections then follow. In some instances these may be familiar, but other examples will introduce fresh ideas for every reader. Each writer's selection is concluded with a list of source texts, which can encourage readers to explore in more depth those areas which intrigue and excite them. Love's Redeeming Work traces a path that has enabled Anglicanism in particular, and the wider church as well, to develop an ever-deepening awareness of the need for a spiritual depth in the Christian life informed by a better knowledge of tradition. In exploring this material, it is the compilers' hope that readers will find new riches that will encourage and sustain their own quest for holiness.

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Customer Reviews

In the foreword to this wonderful collection of Anglican spiritual writings, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams states two things: first, that it is intended to be something of an enchiridion - a handbook or manual - of the Anglican faith and second, the desire that it will be instrumental in leading to a renewal of Anglican theology. Perhaps this second point that will strike some people as odd, but in reality Williams is only noting what others before him (such as one of Williams' predecessors, Michael Ramsey) have noted: since World War II, there has been a real loss of Anglican identity. It is precisely because of this loss of identity that a handbook for instruction in the faith is needed. Love's Redeeming Work accomplishes this quite admirably. First, there are over 700 pages of source material. Each author or selection is prefaced with relevant dates (including birth and death), a brief summary of their accomplishments and any other relevant data (such as forced exile, martyrdom, marriage, controversies, etc.). It is fascinating to read about some of the great heroes of Anglicanism fighting and arguing with each other, or being influenced and taught by each other; one can go back and forth between these authors and get a feel for really being in the midst of historical development. Every selection for each author is also referenced so that if one desires to pursue further reading of an author one may do so (assuming, of course, that one can get one's hands on the originals which, in many cases, is sadly doubtful). Second, the book is divided into three main time periods, each of which begins with an essay on the historical and theological development of the era. The essays are absolutely first rate (which is of no surprise, given that Rowell, Stevenson and Williams are all theologians and historians that orbit a high sphere all their own) and provide a substantive amount of background material. Again, reading back and forth between different authors and noting the influence over time of different persons on each other is a wonderful way of getting into the historical development of Anglicanism; fortunately this book is arranged in such a way that this is made quite possible. Reading the selections in order gives one view; dipping into different selections gives another view that is no less complementary. The chronological arrangement of authors fosters the helpfulness of both. One thing that one will see as one reads through this is that Anglicanism has a wide variety of streams in it. From early Protestant streams that did not seek to divide the church from its catholic past so much as to offer a reform of

the excesses of the late medieval Western church, to those that would be far more Calvinist in their views, to those that would be more far more medieval in their aspirations: all of these are found in Anglicanism. Furthermore, as one gets away from the motherland (England) in the 19th and 20th centuries, one begins to see some of the ways that Anglicans have both engaged and been engaged by cultures from all around the world. This volume, in fact, is the only place that one is going to find many primary documents on the development of Anglicanism as a world communion: India, Africa and Southeast Asia are all represented in this collection. This is incredibly refreshing as there is much talk about global Anglicanism (especially its being more conservative) but next to no primary sources available; this volume offers a significant corrective to that absence. Living authors such as Desmond Tutu, Rowan Williams and N. T. Wright are not included in this collection. It would be fascinating to see this collection updated in a generation to see who would be included (the aforementioned surely would be). However, as a reader in Anglicanism - including some liturgical texts, for that matter - it functions magnificently. It does a tremendous job revealing how Anglicanism - the third largest Christian church in the world - has come to be. And, hopefully, in fostering the memory of what has come before, it will be influential in shaping where Anglicanism goes from here on out. For all interested in Anglicanism, this is a volume that can truly be called "indispensable".

An impressive collection of Anglican thinkers and writers covering the chronological history of the church. Choose to study both major and minor contributors to the Anglican story by period or by individual writers. The choice is yours. An excellent source for research material representing an obvious labor of love in its compilation.

Splendid collection of Anglican spiritual treasures.

This anthology is an extremely valuable source text on the development of Anglican spiritual thought and practices. It has selections from hundreds of sermons, poems, devotional texts, prayers, hymns, biographies, diaries and other documents created by Anglicans all over the world from the year 1500 to 1980. Each entry has a short biography of the person who wrote the selection, which helps give the reader context on people who were not famous. The entries appear in rough chronological order, according to each author's birth date. The book's strength is also its biggest weakness. It is 759 pages long, in size 9 typeface. The typeface is clear and can be easily read even by people with weaker vision and the pages are composed of high quality paper. But the book

is just way, way, way too long. Please understand -- I'm a glutton for theology. I love reading long spiritual texts, OK? But this book seriously needed an editor who would confine it to truly significant Anglican thinkers. In their passion for Anglican spirituality and practices, the people who assembled the anthology included anyone -- I do mean anyone -- who ever wrote one famous Anglican hymn, poem or sermon. TMI -- too much information! I would recommend purchasing this book -- the selections are fascinating, and you can skip over the less interesting entries. But it is not a quick read.

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