
Healing Death's Wounds by Michael Mitton and Russ Parker (Bath, Arcadia, 2002), 160pp.; £8.99.

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This is a reworking of the 1991 book *Requiem Healing* by the same authors, which was reviewed in CP 9:3, on pp. 100-101. The changes include a Foreword by Adrian Plass, an Introduction to the Revised Edition, some more recent news stories and plenty of prayers near the end of the book, many from *Common Worship: Pastoral Services*.

There are eight chapters and a conclusion. Topics discussed are: Feelings for the Dead; Meeting with the Dead: A Biblical Survey; Prayers, Purgatory and Protestants; Hurtings and Hauntings; Healings and Requiems; Jesus the Model for Requiems; Requiem Healing and Pastoral Care; and Remembering and Releasing. From scripture, the passages about Saul and the medium of En-dor, the Transfiguration, the healing of Lazarus, the cloud of witnesses, 1 Pet. 3.19 & 4.6, and 1 Cor. 15.29 receive evangelical commentary. The authors conclude that there are divinely-allowed crossings of death's boundary. Within the body of Christ, the living and the dead may meet. Much may be added to this understanding by careful study of part II of *Life, Death and Psychical Research* (edited by John Pearce-Higgins and Stanley Whitby and published by Rider in 1973 on behalf of the CFPSS).

Michael and Russ write clearly and from their experiences. Their pastoral wisdom, prayerfulness and desire to be loyal to the Lord Jesus, to scripture and to church tradition shine throughout. The issues discussed, not to mention the writers' integrity and courage, still deserve appreciation. Adrian Plass's foreword - hopefully - will encourage new readers from the Pentecostal, evangelical and house church end of the Christian spectrum. The phenomenal outbursts at the time of Princess Diana's death, the war in Iraq and other events leading to more and more shops holding a two-minute silence on 11 November last year suggest a real upsurge of public desire to do something about death's wounds. The need for this book is clear. One hopes for an increase in new readers to this truly life and death topic.

A curate recently told me how *Requiem Healing* had saved his life; volunteering that whilst evangelicals, like himself, were good at proclaiming good news they tend to be poor at coping with the hard slog that is commonly the course towards the happy outcome. This fine book

deserves to be read alongside, say, Dr Roger Grainger's *The Family Forest – Healing across Time* (reviewed in CP 16:2 [June 2004], pp.59-60). Roger's book shows that decades of suffering may occur before such a simple and beautiful redemption can take place.

Readers of CP may appreciate better my favourite book on family tree healing: *Healing the Greatest Hurt* by Matthew and Dennis Linn and Sheila Fabricant. The Linn brothers were Jesuits when they lived in the McAlls' home for a month. In exchange for teaching them the practical aspects of this manner of service, they provided Ken McAll, as a Christian psychiatrist, with the theology found in his original book *Healing the Family Tree* - which is how a seventh-generation Congregational medical missionary came to write a book with notes from the annals of the Roman Catholic church.