

Review: The Wood Between the Worlds

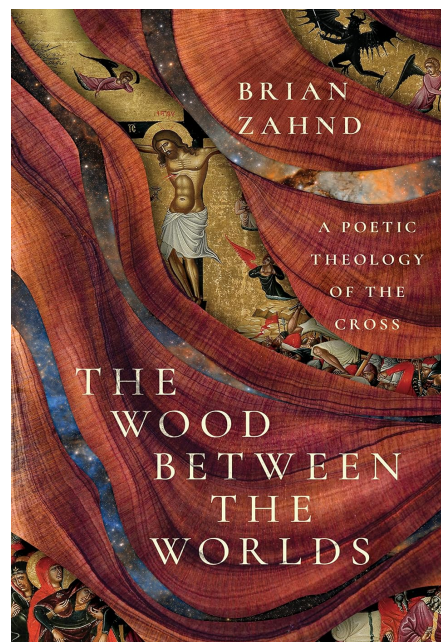
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The Wood Between the Worlds: A Poetic Theology of the Cross

By Brian Zahnd (IVP)

Poetry brings out strong feelings in people. For some, poetry is obscure and indiscernible, off-putting and oblique in every way.

For others, like me, it's the vehicle by which the sacredness of life in this world can be captured most specifically—in a brief set of intentional words, which illuminate beauty, meaning and value in even the most mundane moments.



Though I dwell in a home filled with four vibrant reasons to celebrate the sacral nature of living, I am alone in my house in my appreciation of poetry. If you find yourself more in the pragmatic company of my husband and my children, believing poetry just isn't for you, please do not discount this book.

Zahnd appeals to the growing renaissance of interest in spiritual imagination that seems to be taking shape among younger, emerging practitioners of our faith—regardless of whether they have Catholic, Orthodox or evangelical backgrounds. However, he does not go all in on poetry to the point where readers must wade through so much flowery language, they forget they came hunting for meat.

Rather, he gives all the meat they can stomach.

Zahnd presents the centrality of the cross to the gospel. But reacquainting readers with pre-historical-critical approaches to scriptural interpretation, he describes multiple ways to understand the crucifixion.

Zahnd draws on history, literature, art and film, in addition to Scripture. And, he includes a full-color spread of religious art and iconography of the cross through history to illustrate his discussion.

As God is the author of our faith, we do well to consider, and reconsider, his most beautiful work of poetry, the Word made flesh—the incarnation, crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus. *The Word Between the Worlds* spurs readers to contemplate deeply the theopoetic scandal at the heart of our faith and mission and to examine anew the remarkable work God did there.

*Calli Keener, news writer
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