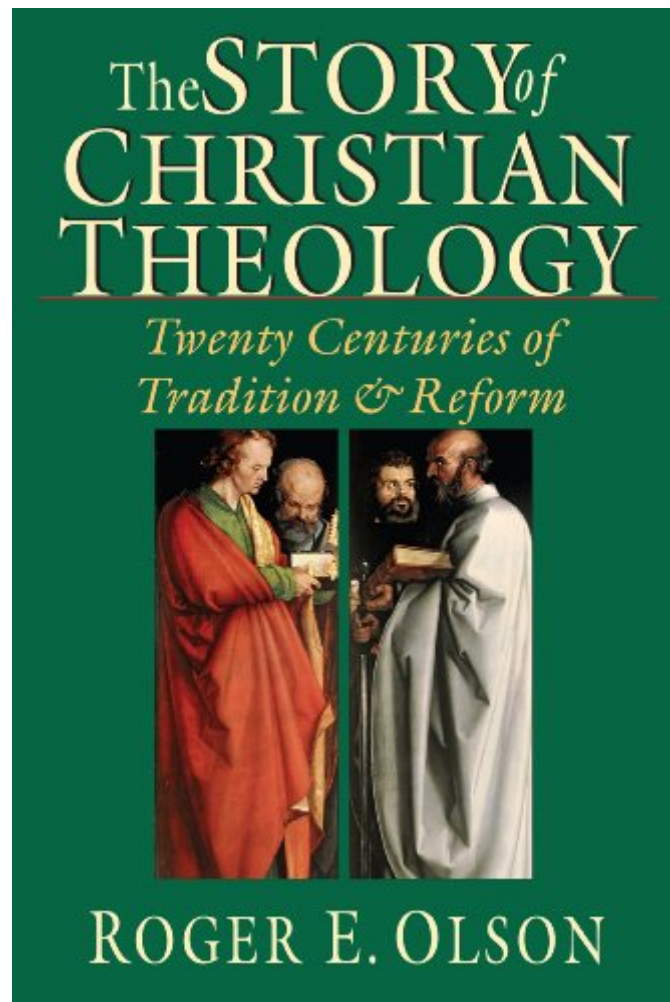


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The Story Of Christian Theology



Synopsis

Voted a 2000 Book of the Year by Christianity Today! Winner of a year 2000 ECPA Gold Medallion Award! History is made up of stories--narratives that recount the events, movements, ideas and lives that have shaped religions and nations. Theologian Roger Olson believes that the history of Christian theology should be told as such a story, one replete with thick plots, exciting twists, interesting people and fascinating ideas. In this panoramic work of historical theology Olson vividly recounts the deeds and words of the cultists and apostolic fathers of the second century, the clash between the theological schools of Alexandria and Antioch, the epochal division between East and West, the revolutionary advent of the Reformation and much more, right on up to the dazzling, sometimes dismaying fallout that has continued to shake Christians through the twentieth century. Through it all Olson detects and traces a common thread: a concern for salvation--God's redemptive activity in forgiving and transforming sinful human beings. Evenhanded, refreshingly readable, impressive in its breadth and depth, *The Story of Christian Theology* is poised to become a standard historical theology text.

Book Information

File Size: 3678 KB

Print Length: 636 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 0830815058

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: InterVarsity Press (January 14, 2014)

Publication Date: January 14, 2014

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00GMOETS2

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #281,395 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #106

inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > History > Religion > Christianity > Biblical History & Culture > Historical Theology #351 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > History > Historical Theology

Customer Reviews

Olson's book is easily the most thoughtful and insightful overview to the history of Christian theology that I've read. Compared to the other similar books in my library, it's much more approachable, but even so, it provided a number of insights into the reasons behind the debates that I had never considered before. I've been reading more history lately, and if they weren't so annoying, I would've laughed at some of the books and what they try to do. I recently finished *A Brief History of Ireland*, and found myself extremely frustrated at the author: he would refer to various events that I'd never heard of with a phrase like, "As everyone knows," or "The well known story of 'x'", or sometimes just with a wave of his literary hand -- and then would never bother to explain precisely what it is that everyone supposedly knows. He apparently forgot that the reason someone would be reading a brief history of Ireland -- as opposed to academic journals about Irish history -- is because they don't know anything about it! Good books on history -- at least, good books for the general reader -- just tell the story. Thomas Cahill is the perfect example: he doesn't always get every last detail right, and he sometimes skips over huge opposing viewpoints with barely an acknowledgement of their existence, but he has one gift, and a solid one: he can tell a story. That's one of the primary reasons why I appreciated Olson's book so much: he just tells the story. He explains the theology, but also explains why it was important. I had a year of church history in seminary, but I guess I never quite grasped how external forces -- i.e., responding to critics like Celsus -- played their role in the development of trinitarian and christological dogma.

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