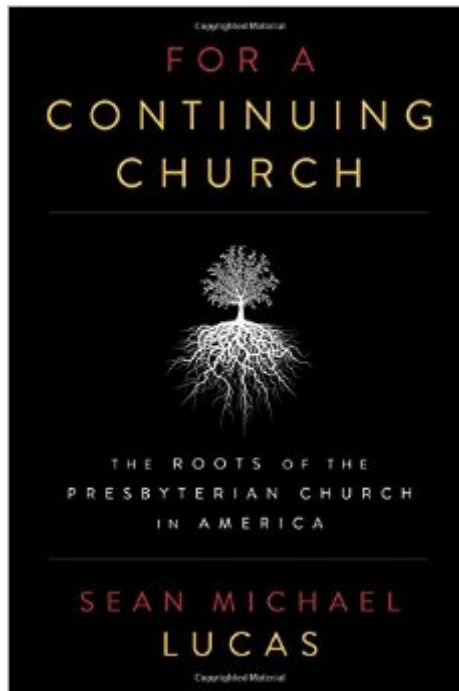


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For A Continuing Church: The Roots Of The Presbyterian Church In America



Synopsis

The Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) is the largest conservative, evangelical Presbyterian denomination in North America. For a Continuing Church is the first full scholarly account of the theological and social forces that brought about its creation. In the 1920s and 1930s, emerging progressive leadership in the Presbyterian Church in the United States (PCUS) led to rising dissent from conservatives. This fascinating story of conviction and struggle resonates today more than ever.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

What has happened in history never stays in the past. It echos and ripples and reverberates throughout time. That sounds cliché for two, legitimate reasons. 1) I am an average writer who is being somewhat lazy and, more importantly, 2) it is just plain true. History repeats itself and we are doomed to repeat our past if we don't learn from it and etc, etc. Our history is important. And before you look at a work about the foundation of the PCA and think it has no edifying benefit outside of that denomination, do not forget how universally sinful we humans are and how hopelessly unoriginal we tend to be. The failures and flaws that led to the formation of the PCA (as well as the failures and flaws within the process of formation and the years since) can be found in many (if not all) Christian denominations, churches, individual lives. The evolution of the Protestant liberal, a regression to a virtually Scripture-less, authority-less, Gospel-less, authority-less, Christ-less, "do good and be good"ianity, is a danger to be guarded against by all Christians. The emergence of the

PCA is an example of a rejection of this regression. In that sense, Lucas's history of the PCA offers a service to the church at-large. But the primary ministry of this book will be to Christians more closely associated with the PCA. As someone brand-new to the PCA (and presbyterianism in general), I benefitted greatly from this work. This is a detailed historical work that was not necessarily written for a PCA-novice like me. But, purposely or providentially, Lucas writes in a way that has great depth but does not leave the uninitiated gasping in the wake. History texts, for me, are generally vegetables.

When a denomination departs from orthodoxy, the unity has been broken by the denomination, not by those who then leave it to remain faithful! That principle sums up the reasons for the formation of the PCA when it was formed by the withdrawing of many congregations from the mainline Southern Presbyterian Church. Sean Lucas has done a wonderful job of recording the trends, people, and events in the 20th century that led to the formation of the (now) largest evangelical Presbyterian denomination in America. Using a large amount of original source material, especially articles from the Southern Presbyterian Journal/Presbyterian Journal and correspondence between some of the key players involved, Lucas successfully shows the true background of the formation of the PCA. His account is fair and even-handed. He does not whitewash the mixed motives of some of the conservatives for their leaving the PCA, but neither does he criticize their decision to leave. I think the best praise I can give is that I believe that since the author was so committed to using the correspondence and journal editorials & articles to tell the story, that the people involved in the narrative (living and now with their Lord) would acknowledge the fairness and accuracy of the way they are portrayed. A commitment to the Reformed Faith, the Scriptures, and the Great Commission were clearly at the heart of the reasons for the formation of the PCA. But, Lucas also shows, in their own words, that often these pure motives were uncritically mixed with discomfort over racial integration, fears of the mixing of races, and rabid anti-communism. So again, Lucas gives a fair picture, not a hagiography for the denomination he serves in! Reading this work gave me both joy and sorrow.

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