

An Unexpected Light

Theology and Witness in the Poetry and Thought of Charles Williams, Micheal O'Siadhail and Geoffrey Hill

by David C. Mahan

DESCRIPTION:

'Can poetry matter to Christian theology?' David Mahan asks in the introduction to this interdisciplinary work. Does the study of poetry represent a serious theological project? What does poetry have to contribute to the public tasks of theology and the Church? How can theologians, clergy and other ministry professionals, and Christian laypeople benefit from an earnest study of poetry?

A growing number of professional theologians today seek to push theological inquiry beyond the relative seclusion of academic specialisation into a broader marketplace of public ideas, and to recast the theological task as an integrative discipline, wholly engaged with the issues and sensibilities of the age. Accordingly, such scholars seek to draw upon and engage the insights and practices of a variety of cultural resources, including those of the arts, in their theological projects.

Arguing that poetry can be a form of theological discourse, Mahan shows how poetry offers rich theological resources and instruction for the Christian church. In drawing attention to the 'peculiar advantages' it affords, this book addresses one of the greatest challenges facing the church today: the difficulty of effectively communicating the Christian gospel with increasingly disaffected 'late-modern' people.

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