

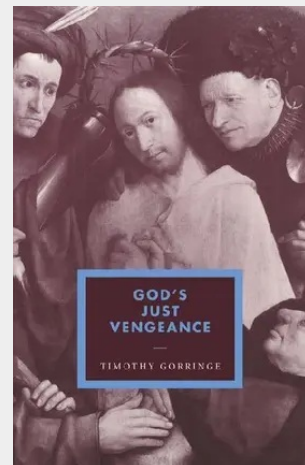
Gorringe

God's Just Vengeance

Crime, Violence and the Rhetoric of Salvation

This book examines the relationship between the theologies of atonement and penal strategies. Christian theology was potent in Western society until the nineteenth century, and the so-called 'satisfaction theory' of atonement interacted and reacted with penal practice. Drawing on the work of Norbert Elias and David Garland, the author argues that atonement theology created a structure of affect which favoured retributive policies. He ranges freely between Old Testament texts, St Anselm, and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British social history, to show the integral connection between sin and crime, the legal and the moral. The question arises if the preaching of the cross not only desensitised us to judicial violence but even lent it sanction. The last two chapters review theory and practice in the twentieth century, and Timothy Gorringe makes concrete proposals for both theology and criminal and societal violence.

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