

Stephen Mitchell
God In The Bath
relaxing in the everywhere presence of God

ISBN: 9781 9038 1641 7

O Books, John Hunt Publishing Ltd. Ropley, Hants, 2006, £9.99

In substance, this book is an attractive series of essays on the words taken by St. Paul (Acts 17:28) from Epimenides (6th Century BCE) in his hymn to Zeus: the words "In whom we live and move and have our being". His opening gambit and title God in the Bath serve to suggest immersion and relaxation; and we go on from there exploring the little word "in". Stephen Mitchell is easy to read, but I found some sections, especially the last chapter, profited by repeated reading to plumb the depths there contained.

Two important aspects of the book are his insistence on the ever-present and continuing creativity of God; and the mystery which, for all our efforts, must remain unexplained.

As Mitchell says, believing in God is not ticking off a checklist of propositions about the supernatural. In God we make our life.

A slight dissatisfaction for me, especially in view of the chapter "in love", was the lack of emphasis on that love when, at the end, we "lose ourselves in God", but this may well be assumed. The writer's emphasis is, rather, on how we have lived. To believe in God is "to live with loving gladness in the reality of the mystery of life, personhood and imagination".

Elizabeth CSF