

Contents

<i>Foreword by Sallie McFague</i>	ix
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiv
1 ATTENDING TO THE TEXT	1
2 THE SENSE OF HISTORY	11
History reshaped	11
History or mythical literature	14
The narration of history	18
The unity and coherence of the New Testament	20
Anthropology and archetypes	22
3 IMAGINATION AND METAPHOR	27
Figurative and literal language	27
Aristotle and the language of poetry	30
God and religious language	36
The imagination and history	41
4 THE STORY TOLD	43
The problem of narrative: the Fourth Gospel	43
Confusion and mystery	46
The religious use of story	48
The parables	51
Author, narrator, character and reader	54
The story as proclamation	56
5 HOLDING TO THE TRADITION	59
Tradition, preaching and teaching	60
Literature and tradition	64

The problem of the Second Coming	66
Worship and the tradition	69
Language as re-enactment	70
6 PROVERBIAL WISDOM	73
Proverb and aphorism	73
The individual and the universal	76
The poetry of the proverb	79
7 FICTIONS AND FANTASY	83
Order and disorder	83
Imagination and escapism	86
The imagination as threat and as a creative force	91
8 CONCLUSION: THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE LITERARY CRITIC	97
<i>Reading List</i>	103
<i>List of Scriptural Passages</i>	107
<i>Index</i>	110