



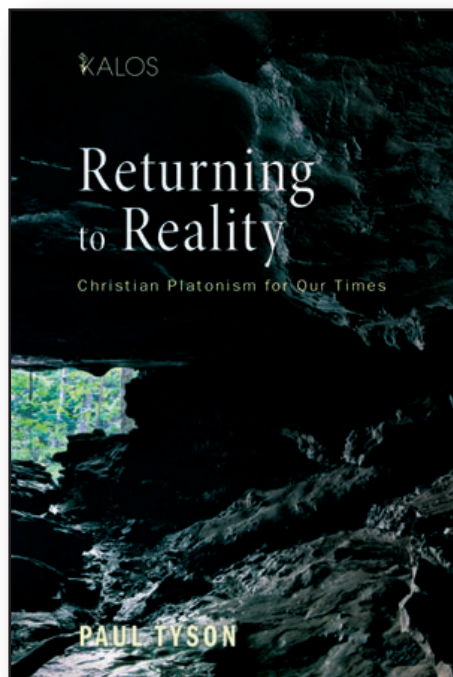
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Returning to Reality

Christian Platonism for Our Times

PAUL TYSON

Could it be that we have lost touch with some basic human realities in our day of high-tech efficiency, frenetic competition, and ceaseless consumption? Have we turned from the moral, the spiritual, and even the physical realities that make our lives meaningful? These are metaphysical questions—questions about the nature of reality—but they are not abstract questions. These are very down to earth questions that concern power and the collective frameworks of belief and action governing our daily lives.

This book is an introduction to the history, theory, and application of Christian metaphysics. Yet this book is not just an introduction, it is also a passionately argued call for a profound change in the contemporary Christian mind. Paul Tyson argues that as Western culture's Christian Platonist understanding of reality was replaced by modern pragmatic realism, we turned not just from one outlook on reality to another, but *away from reality itself*. This book seeks to show that if we can recover this ancient Christian outlook on reality, reframed for our day, then we will be able to recover a way of life that is in harmony with human and divine truth.

“Paul Tyson has written an impressive essay on Christian metaphysics. He is aware of the widespread charges against Platonism, metaphysics, and Christianity but he addresses them with a balanced combination of sound common sense, theological acumen, and philosophical finesse. He shows how Christian Platonism is richly concerned with the things of reality we know, while yet seeing them in the light of a wisdom that is more than human. His thoughtful voice is both accessible and penetrating and the human wisdom of the author shines through. Warmly recommended.”

—**WILLIAM DESMOND**, Professor of Philosophy, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, Leuven, Belgium and David R. Cook Professor of Philosophy, Villanova University, Villanova, PA

“Paul Tyson is an academic with a passion. He wants us to think hard and long about overcoming dualistic thinking and not to buy into the sacred-secular divide. He thus advocates a personal faith with public implications and longs to see us enter ways of knowing that combine transcendent truth with immanent and active passion.”

—**CHARLES RINGMA**, Professor Emeritus, Regent College, Vancouver, BC, Canada

“Paul Tyson’s *Returning to Reality* is an excellent introduction to the fundamental existential and intellectual crisis facing Christianity and the West: whether meaning and intelligibility are intrinsic to reality and thus whether truth is anything but pragmatic success. Simultaneously beautiful, whimsical, and profound, *Returning to Reality* provides an important witness to the unity of life in Christ and the life of the mind and compelling evidence that only Christian faith in its fullness can now save reason.”

—**MICHAEL HANBY**, Associate Professor of Religion and Philosophy of Science, Pontifical John Paul II Institute, Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.

“Everyone does metaphysics. For Paul Tyson, therefore, the crucial question becomes whether we fall in line with the one-dimensional (1DM) physicalist outlook of modernity or open our horizons to the three dimensions of morality, physicality, and spirituality that make up the 3DM outlook of Christian Platonism. This is a passionately written book, calling for nothing less than a ‘life-world rebellion.’ Those gripped by Tyson’s uncovering of the mythos of modernity find here a convincing alternative to the amoral instrumentalism that characterizes much of contemporary society.”

—**HANS BOERSMA**, J. I. Packer Professor of Theology, Regent College, Vancouver, BC, Canada

PAUL TYSON is an Honorary Assistant Professor in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of Nottingham. He is author of *Faith’s Knowledge* (2013).

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