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**Saving Creation: Nature and Faith in the
Life of Holmes Rolston III**

by Christopher J. Preston

Trinity University Press, San Antonio, 2009. 243 pp. \$25.95
(cloth). ISBN 978-159534-050-4.

HOLMES ROLSTON III'S NAME may not be familiar, but his lack of notoriety should not dissuade one from reading his many books, or this excellent biography of his life and work. Selected in 1997 to deliver the prestigious Gifford Lectures, and in 2003, awarded the Templeton Prize for his pioneering work in science and religion, Rolston is one of the most important philosophers of science and environmental ethicists living today. His 1987 volume, *Science and Religion: A Critical Survey* (Templeton Press), is still one of the best books of its kind, and his 1988 book *Environmental Ethics: Values in and Duties to the Natural World* (Temple University Press) is hands down the best book on environmental ethics written in the last forty years. His Gifford Lectures, published in 1999 as *Genes, Genesis, and God: Values and Their Origins in Natural and Human History* (Cambridge University Press), is one of the most informed and sophisticated discussions of the topic named in the subtitle ever written.

Christopher Preston, a philosophy professor at the University of Montana, Missoula, has written a

superb biography of this important contemporary thinker. Preston engagingly tells the story of Rolston, from his childhood in the Shenandoah Mountains to his brief Presbyterian pastorate in Virginia to his long and distinguished career as a philosopher at Colorado State University. As the story of a human life, it is an interesting read, but along the way, Preston also adroitly interweaves the story of the rise and development of environmental ethics as an academic discipline.

Thankfully, Preston writes like a biographer and not in the manner of many philosophers or ethicists. In other words, this book is very readable. It is not (only) for specialists but is written so that the proverbial "person in the pew" can understand it. Technical terms are carefully explained and complicated issues are dissected and presented with care and insight. Non-specialists need not fear that the book is beyond them.

While I have a number of bones to pick with the book (e.g., there are no footnotes or endnotes, even for quotations, and no bibliography beyond that of books and articles by Rolston), this is an impressive work overall. If you are interested in natural science and Christian theology, this is a book for you. If you are interested in environmental ethics, this is a book for you. Or, if you are just interested in a fascinating human story, well told, this is a book for you.

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