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## **Matthew Henry (1662-1714)**

Murray, D.P.

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## Abstract

This dissertation answers the question, ‘Why and how did Matthew Henry develop and use the reasonableness of the Christian faith, especially the reason of its pleasantness, to defend and commend the Christian faith in the context of his culture?’ The study finds that a central aspect of Henry’s ministry and teaching may be understood as an apologetic response to the events, people, movements, and trends of his historical context and that this partly motivated the writing of his *Exposition*. It examines Henry’s apologetic use of the reasonableness and pleasantness of religion, demonstrates that the pleasantness of religion was one of Henry’s favorite and most frequent themes, and that it permeated his theology. The primary results of the research are, first, a historical contextualization of Henry and his oeuvre; second, a re-appraisal of Henry as more than a Bible commentator, as someone who was also a Christian apologist; third, an analysis of Henry’s apologetic using historically appropriate criteria; and, fourth, a contribution to understanding late-Puritan identity and religious experience.