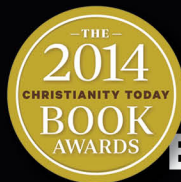




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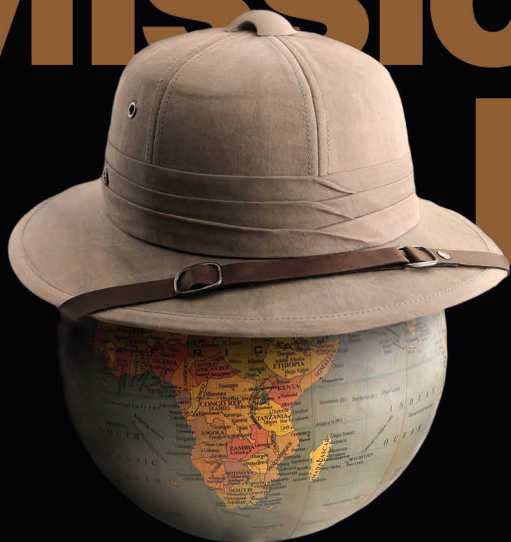
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BEST BOOKS** *p.43*

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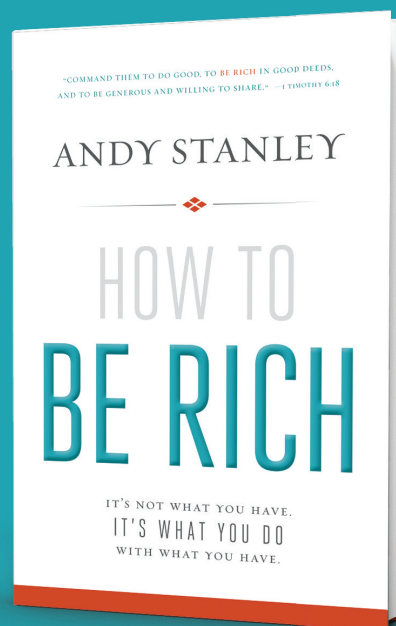


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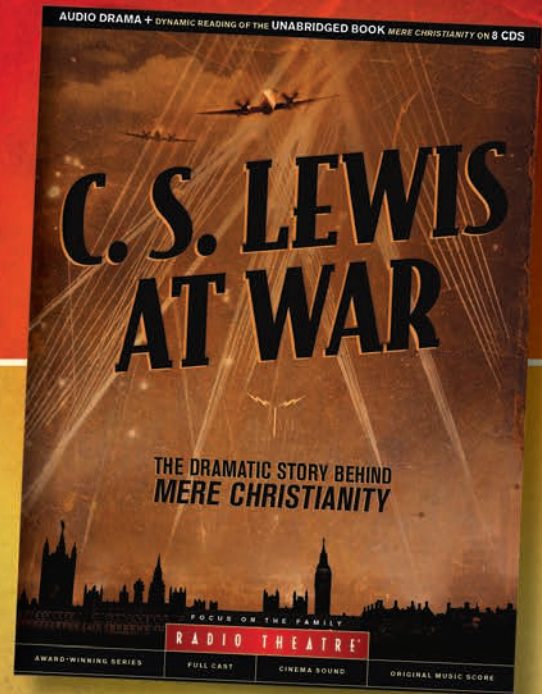


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CHRISTIANITY TODAY

(ISSN 0009-5753) is published monthly (bi-monthly January/February and July/August), by Christianity Today, 465 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, IL 60188. Periodicals postage paid at Carol Stream, IL, and at additional mailing offices. ©2014 Christianity Today

POSTMASTER

Send address changes to Christianity Today, P.O. Box 37060, Boone, IA 50037-0060; 800.999.1704, Canada Publication Mail Agreement #: 040029733.

Registration #: 126028836RT0001. Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses to: WWM Inc., 2835 Kew Drive, Windsor, Ontario N8T 3B7. Printed in U.S.A. Subscription Rates: Regular subscription price: one year \$29.95. Outside U.S. add \$13.00 postage prepaid U.S. currency. \$4.95 per copy.

MANUSCRIPT POLICY

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Elissa is still craving hummus thanks to Bradley Nassif's Global Gospel Project article (see p. 52).



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MediaCom, 14 Eton Road, Keswick 5061, South Australia

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Christianity Today is indexed in Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature; Christian Periodical Index; Religion Index One: Periodicals, Religious and Theological Abstracts; Book Review Index; and Academic Abstracts and Magazine Article Summaries. Occasionally we share subscriber information with select organizations. If you wish to remove your name from direct mail, e-mail, or telephone lists, call 800.999.1704 or send e-mail to ctcustserv@christianitytoday.com. Please specify the types of promotions you do not wish to receive.

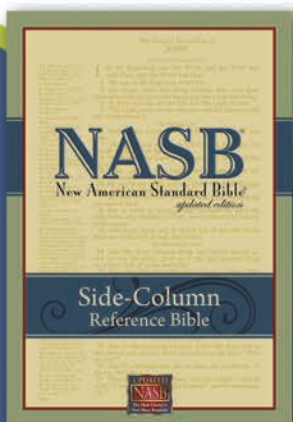
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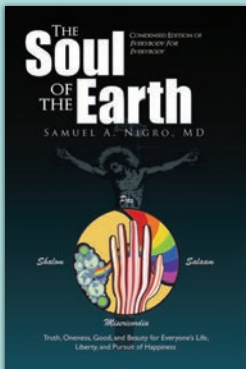
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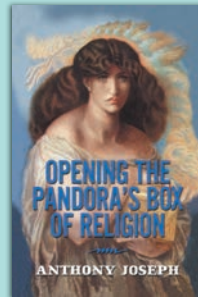


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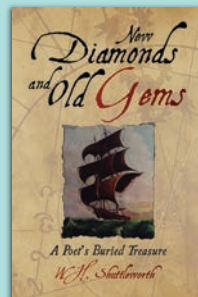


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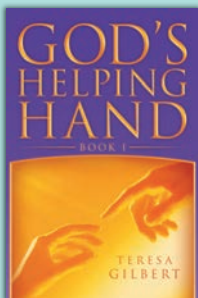


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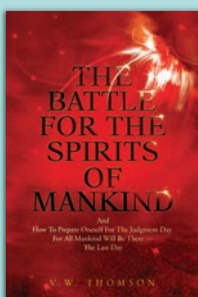


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EDITOR'S NOTE

AS A SOPHOMORE AT CALVIN COLLEGE, I began hearing a refrain from classmates who had shed their evangelical heritage like a bulky fur coat at the start of spring. "Evangelicals only care about abortion and gay marriage," they sighed, parroting headlines of the time. It was 2004, and the "values vote" had apparently secured George W. Bush's reelection. We rushed to show that no, really, we cared about poverty and social justice too (unaware that Jim Wallis, Ron Sider, and others had been saying this since before we existed).

Like a stellar magazine should do, *CT* set the story straight. Over Christmas or spring break, I'd pick up a copy at my parents' house and read about Christians who supported the partial-birth abortion ban—and also resettled refugees and reconciled Arabs and Israelis and helped turn the tide on HIV/AIDS. "A magazine of evangelical conviction" taught me that those convictions were broader and deeper than media wisdom suggested.

Our cover story this month lands another nail in the coffin of bad Christian stereotypes. Or, to borrow a metaphor from the sociologist whose award-winning research we debut on page 34: It sets off an *atomic bomb* over the recycled story about white missionaries of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The pith helmet on our cover says so much. It was worn in earlier centuries by Europeans manning the jungles and deserts of Asian and African colonies. It connotes privilege, paternalism, and unfettered power. It is *Heart of Darkness* and *Things Fall Apart* and *The Poisonwood Bible*. And, so the story goes, it was donned by Protestant missionaries with as much ignorant pride as colonial rulers.

Sociologist Robert Woodberry has dedicated his career to demonstrating why that story is plain wrong. These missionaries founded schools, opened hospitals, and ignited other initiatives crucial to societal health. They were harbingers of democracy in former colonies. Without them, the world today would have more authoritarian rulers and sick children and fewer books, hospitals, and educated women. With nary a Twitter hashtag or e-blast campaign, these missionaries did, actually, change the world.

And their spiritual descendants still do. On p. 65, political scientist Mark Amstutz explains evangelicals' continued engagement in global affairs. And on p. 56, Gary Haugen highlights how International Justice Mission, the evangelical nonprofit he founded in 1997, is stemming the violence that keeps the global poor in their place.

Surveying this issue of *CT*, I wish my 19-year-old self had read it. She would have known a bit more about her evangelical heritage—and, I imagine, carried it with pride.

CT



OUR POSITION ON MISSIONARIES

(Almost) everything you've heard about them is wrong.

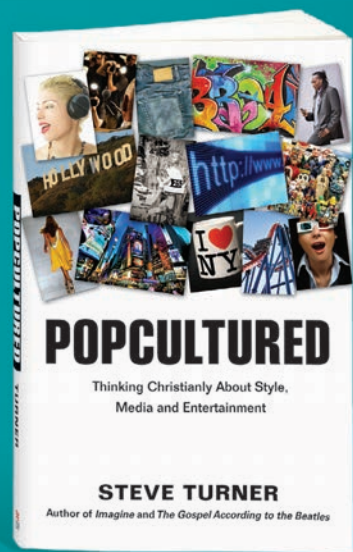
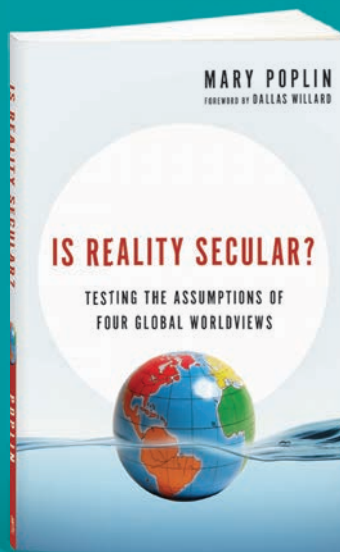
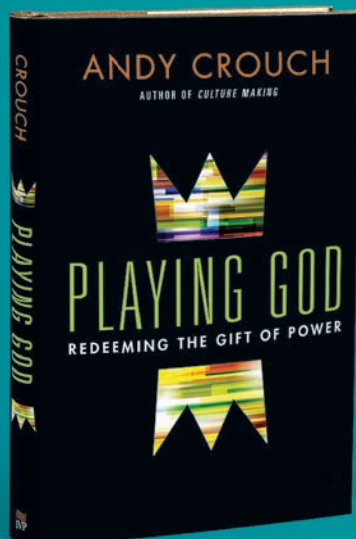
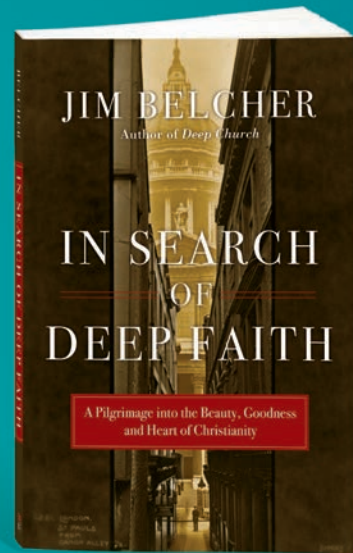
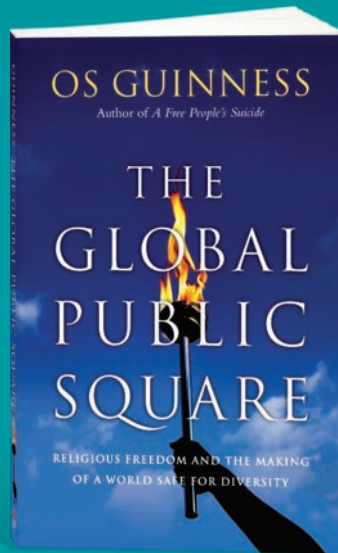
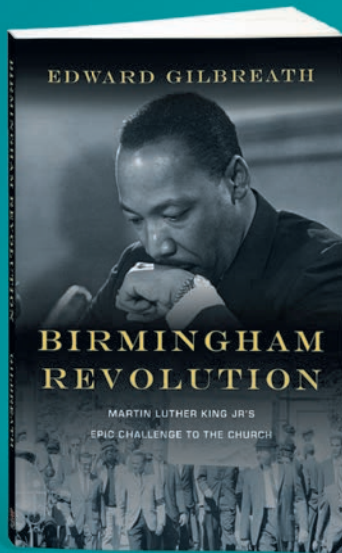
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REPLY ALL



HOW LEWIS LIT THE WAY

As a nondrinking, nonsmoking, retired graphic artist, I was impressed by the apt and powerful image of Aslan rising from the pipe on your November cover. The article and illustration match perfectly. Well done.

Our two sons were raised on Narnia. Now they are passing their love of C. S. Lewis on to our grandchildren. I can imagine Lewis merrily writing his enchanting tales as he imagines them in his pipe dreams—to give the phrase a positive twist.

Darwin Dunham

Minneola, Florida

PEP TALKS FOR SUCCESSFUL LIVING

Mark Galli's editorial was full of keen insight. I used a highlighter on several portions and tacked it up on my bulletin board. Even so, I take issue with one implication: that prosperity preaching is essentially innocuous. On the contrary, when moralistic messages are divorced from the grace of Christ, they form a false gospel.

The message of Joel Osteen and company is consistently one that makes the recipient responsible for earthly and spiritual success: think positively, make lemonade, "I think I can, I think I can!" This may nudge disheartened seekers away from foolhardy living, but it suggests that lifting ourselves up by the bootstraps is possible and sufficient. Such talk is not a partial or incomplete gospel; it is antithetical

to the gospel.

Let us instead preach only the pure, world-upside-down grace that Galli heralds: the wisdom of the Cross.

David Huizenga

Wyncote, Pennsylvania

OUR OWN WORST (ART) CRITICS

I desperately need to respond to N. D. Wilson's column on the "Christian artist" label. I was a member of a band, all Christians. While our music reflected our faith, only one song used "Christian vocabulary." We did not want to be called a Christian band because of the limits it created. When playing for Christian audiences, clear gospel message language is expected. If you don't have that, it can be tough.

We had the chance to play in local bars and clubs, where people noticed our lyrics were different and full of hope, and many of them took our cd. We could go anywhere and take Jesus with us. As a classically trained musician and a Christian, I doubt Handel or Bach would have called themselves "Christian composers." Rather, their goal was to create beautiful music for their patrons, which at times specifically glorified God. *That* is how we should judge "Christian art."

Bill Kropp

CT online comment

THE FEAR THAT DRAWS US

If "scared" or "be afraid" replaced the word *fear* in the November Global Gospel Project article, God would seem not that different from the ancient gods who needed appeasement because they were angry with humans. Mark Galli could have explored how fearing God works out in day-to-day living. How does that fear influence how I interact with other people? How do I love someone who frightens me?

CT might publish an article about loving a God who calls us friends, and how that frees us from the notion that fear is healthy and spiritually growth-enhancing. Often in Scripture, the first words spoken in an

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encounter with God were, “Be not afraid.” Why? Because we cannot love what we are afraid of.

Bernie Kopfer
CT online comment

WOULD YOU KILL THIS CHICKEN WITH YOUR BARE HANDS?

I appreciated CT’s article about Lamppost Farm very much. After spending three years in Mexico and witnessing a pig killed outside church one morning, I realized why many people today can’t understand the sacrifice of Jesus. In countries where animals are raised and killed for nourishment, and people see the blood spilt so that they can live, they understand salvation much better than those who buy packaged and sanitized meat at the local supermarket. Those people see none of the sacrifice, and therefore it means nothing to them.

Candi Frizzell
Major, Salvation Army
Mesa, Arizona

While the mindfulness and gratitude practiced by Lamppost Farm is light-years ahead of today’s standard agricultural practices, the underlying assumption of the article is that animals were made for human consumption. Yet more and more Christians are realizing that eating animals was not part of God’s original design for creation, nor will it be a part of a kingdom in which “they will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain.” I hope CT will highlight some of the reasons that Christians are turning back to plant-based diets.

Sarah Withrow King
Deputy Director, The Sider Center
on Ministry and Public Policy
King of Prussia, Pennsylvania

Whenever somebody claims, “This (activity) is more spiritual than that one,” I need to give due diligence to determine whether I should adjust my own spiritual life to encompass the claimed benefit, or if the claim is really, “I like my secular tradition more than your secular tradition.” I think your chicken farm article falls into the latter category.

Christians derive substantial spiritual (as well as financial) benefit from factory farms and processed food, because those scorned links in the food chain have freed up millions of people from the drudge of growing and preparing their own food, so that they can do other things to create

wealth and therefore help others. I buy TV dinners or canned soup for about \$1 each, and heat them for five minutes in a microwave. As a computer programmer who works on Bible translation software, I can earn 500 times the cost of that meal in the time it would take me to prepare it from local fresh produce. That doesn’t seem like a good investment of the talent God entrusted to me.

Tom Pittman
Bolivar, Missouri

HEALER BEWARE

In response to the interview with Candy Gunther Brown about her book *The Healing Gods*, having grown up in the New Age movement, I’m pretty aware of pantheistic religious influences in many alternative therapies and absolutely reject them. However, as someone formerly in the medical field, I also recognize that there is some scientific basis for many of these practices. How much each practitioner of alternative treatments adheres to Eastern religious influences and calls upon spiritual forces varies widely and should be identified prior to treatment.

Denise Plichta
CT online comment

I have lived in East Asia for about 20 years. I am bemused by American alternative healing practitioners who think nothing of combining shards of many religious traditions of which they know little: a little feng shui here, a little Ayurvedic medicine there, chakras, Zen meditation, I Ching hexagrams, taken all together with a big dose of naïveté.

On one hand, isn’t it a bit presumptuous, not to say disrespectful, to shop around among religions as if you were at a swap meet, extracting the bits you want and patching them together as you please to satisfy an appetite for personal health and fitness? On the other hand, Westerners, including Christians, commodify spiritual practices because they no longer believe in the existence of the spiritual world (or else hold the simplistic view that everything spiritual is full of goodness and light). But the spiritual world exists whether people believe in it or not.

Brenda Sansom-Moorey
CT online comment

THE GOD I CAN’T WRITE OFF

Thank you for Kirsten Powers’s inspiring

article about Jesus finding her. What a crescendo conclusion to an issue featuring C. S. Lewis. Although both conservatives, my late wife and I became fans of Powers when she began commenting on Fox News. We were impressed immediately with her intelligence and honesty. I hope for a future article about her continued experience.

Bill Snyder
Rio Verde, Arizona

Kirsten, thank you for sharing your testimony. It made my day. Of all the Fox News contributors whose politics I don’t always agree with, you are my favorite. I have been drawn to your calm and honest demeanor for some time. You always seem to have that “something” that I could never quite put my finger on. Now I know why.

Emmie O’Neill
CT online comment

NET GAIN

Responses
from the Web.



“Stories of how God saves 21st century arch-unbelievers send my heart singing, including this one.”

John Piper (@JohnPiper)

on Kirsten Powers’s conversion.

“In modern Christianity, we often lose sight of the fact that Jesus and Paul were revolutionary in their treatment.”

John Vaughan (@lawyervon) on how Scripture views women, according to blogger Sarah Bessey.

“‘I’m a Feminist Because I Love Jesus So Much,’” interview by Katelyn Beaty.

“Well done. The truth is sufficiently obfuscated by (honestly funny) humor.”

Elizabeth Sullivan, CT online comment.

“11 Christian Book Promotions Gone Horribly Wrong,” by Katelyn Beaty.

“Thanks for the thoughtfully presented guidelines. As in so many endeavors, confident ignorance often leads to more hurt than help.”

Paul Godwin, CT online comment.
Speaking Out: “How Churches Can Help Without Hurting After Super Typhoon Haiyan,” by Jamie Aten.

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NEWS



WITNESS



SHELTER FROM THE STORM

PHILIPPINES: “We prayed the typhoon would not be strong. The Lord did not answer our prayer,” says evangelical leader Efraim Tendero. Haiyan/Yolanda, the archipelago’s deadliest storm to date, killed more than 5,600 people and damaged scores of buildings—including the roof of Tacloban’s Santo Nino Church (above). Tendero’s new prayer: “Increase our capacity to respond.”





↓ EVANGELICALS' FAVORITE SAME-SEX MARRIAGE LAW

If you can't beat them, amend them. With same-sex marriage (SSM) now legal in 16 states and D.C., many religious liberty advocates are helping SSM laws include sufficient religious exemptions. Of the 12 existing laws (5 states legalized via judges or ballot), church-state experts pick Maryland and Rhode Island as offering the best protections. The worst: Delaware. Law professor Thomas Berg says, "Too many folks see this as an all-or-nothing matter. If religious liberty is tied to defeating [SSM] altogether, religious liberty is going to lose." For a complete chart, see ChristianityToday.com/go/MarriageLaws.

	Exempts clergy from officiating a wedding	Exempts religious nonprofits from providing wedding services ¹	Protects objectors from private suits and government penalties ²	Exempts religious marriage counseling, courses, or retreats	Exempts housing specifically designated for married couples	Exempts insurance coverage by fraternal organizations	Allows adoption/foster agencies to maintain existing placement policies ³
MARYLAND							
RHODE ISLAND							
N.H.							
MINNESOTA							
CONNECTICUT							
D.C.							
NEW YORK							
WASHINGTON							
VERMONT							
HAWAII							
ILLINOIS							
DELAWARE							

1) IL: Some facilities only 2) DE: Penalty only; VT: Suit only 3) If privately funded

COURTESY OF ROBIN FRETWELL WILSON, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Pastor housing perks in peril?

One of the most important tax breaks available to American pastors is unconstitutional. So ruled a Wisconsin judge, who said the IRS's clergy housing allowance violates the First Amendment because it "provides a benefit to religious persons and no one else." The exemption saves clergy \$700 million per year.

The ruling is on hold pending appeal to the Seventh Circuit, which previously reversed the same judge's ruling that the National Day of Prayer is unconstitutional.

Billy Graham's living room birthday bash

The last crusade of Billy Graham was hard

to miss: More than 28,000 churches and 500 TV stations aired his videotaped message, "The Cross," on his 95th birthday. The event marked a pivot from stadiums to living rooms. But the United States was actually the 58th country to take this approach: Since 2002, nearly 300,000 churches worldwide have hosted "My Hope" viewing parties.

“God has the power to change anyone, even Butt Naked.”



Monrovia bishop John Kun Kun, discussing Liberian warlord-turned-pastor **Joshua Milton Blahyi**. As “General Butt Naked”—who entered battle naked and ate his victims’ hearts—Blahyi killed 20,000 people during the West African nation’s 1989–2003 civil war. Today, the 42-year-old pastor seeks out survivors to ask forgiveness. His record so far: 19 of 77 have forgiven him. DER SPIEGEL



PRODIGAL PASTORS’ KIDS?

PKs are often stereotyped as either straight-laced, spiritual Mini-Mes or hell-raising rebels. The Barna Group surveyed pastors nationwide and found that PKs aren’t so different from their peers.

40% **38%**

Pastors’ kids age 15 or older who went through a period where they significantly doubted their faith.

Millennials with Christian backgrounds who did the same.

7%

Pastors’ kids who no longer consider themselves Christians.

9%

Millennials with Christian backgrounds who say the same.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC **Christian-Muslim strife stirs genocide fears**

The volatile Central African Republic has long been called “the worst crisis most people have never heard of.” Since Islamist rebels seized power in March, a new fault line has emerged: religion. Self-proclaimed president Michel Djotodia has ordered Seleka fighters, including mercenaries from neighboring Chad and Sudan, to disband. But renegades continue attacking Christian villages and churches—and Christian militias are retaliating. More than 100 leaders of the landlocked nation’s 4 million Christians recently warned the international community of a “genocidal interfaith civil war.” France and the United Nations echoed the concern. But a larger peacekeeping force is likely months away.

cccu school mulls shift on same-sex relationships

A Christian college is permitting professors to have same-sex relationships—at least for the next six months. Trustees at Eastern Mennonite University, a member of the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (cccu), unanimously voted to let president Loren Swartzendruber lead the school through a “listening period” to review its current ban. During that time, tenure-track faculty will not be penalized for violating current policies, which restricts sexual relationships to marriage between one man and one woman.

CHINA **Backing off on baby ban—a bit**

By its own count, China’s controversial one-child policy has reduced its population by some 400 million people since the 1970s. Now the nation will relax restrictions, permitting more couples—such as those in which one adult is an only child—to have two children without penalty. (Fines raised \$3 billion for local governments last year.) Pro-life groups largely welcomed the news, yet All Girls Allowed lamented that the Communist

government “has not gone the logical and compassionate route—abolishing the policy altogether.”

Christian college led by atheist student

“I am an atheist.” Eric Fromm’s confession in his college newspaper made national news. The reason: He is student body president of Northwest Christian University in Eugene, Oregon. Response from students and staff at the ccu school was mostly supportive. “He can tell the truth, or he can daily go through Christian-friendly motions,” wrote Doyle Srader, Fromm’s academic adviser, in the *Beacon Bolt*. “He chooses truth. I think that pleases God.”

VENEZUELA **Churches get legal status—as nonprofits**

In the wake of Hugo Chavez’s death earlier this year, 15,000 evangelical churches in Venezuela have finally gained legal recognition—but not as churches. Instead, Nicolas Maduro’s new government will recognize them as nonprofit civil foundations, and will help to fund churches’ drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs, homeless ministry, and community outreach. Evangelicals say Chavez, who enabled churches to launch radio and TV ministries, was never the barrier. Rather, long-standing laws that favor the Roman Catholic Church still limit their full recognition.

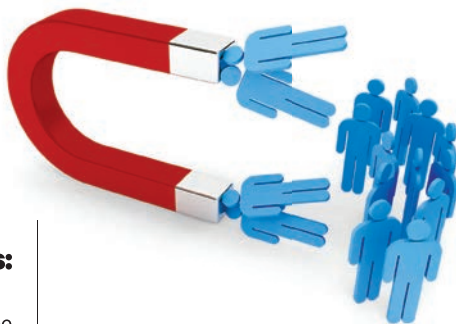
“I follow her example.”



Sam Childers, the controversial “Machine Gun Preacher,” after becoming the first American to receive the Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice. Childers claims to rescue abducted children from the Lord’s Resistance Army in Uganda.

ASIANEWS





UNITED KINGDOM

Gov. to religious adopters: Do not be afraid

With more than 4,600 children waiting to be adopted, the British government surveyed 4 million potential parents. It found that more than half were “actively practicing a religion.” But most were not applying, in part because they feared they’d be rejected because of their faith. In response, the United Kingdom has partnered with Home for Good, a network of 15,000 churches, to debunk misperceptions. Its first step: a dedicated information hotline, launched shortly after British evangelicals celebrated their first nationwide Adoption Sunday.

United Methodists punish pastors

In order to stay united, the United Methodist Church (UMC) is putting its own ministers on trial. More than 1,000 pastors have pledged to defy their denomination’s ban on celebrating same-sex unions. In turn, the UMC’s Council of Bishops has pledged to uphold church law. Both sides made good on their promises in November. Retired bishop Melvin Talbert, the highest-ranked dissident yet, conducted a same-sex ceremony in Alabama, while Pennsylvania pastor Frank Schaefer lost his credentials for officiating at his son’s wedding. In 2012, the UMC declined to follow other mainline denominations in allowing same-sex unions, thanks to its more conservative international arm. And it seems unlikely to change. The latest data shows the United States branch recently lost 81,000 members, while East Africa alone gained 68,000.



NIGERIA

After deadly stampede, churches ban politicking

An all-night prayer vigil turned tragic after an early-morning stampede killed dozens of worshipers. Investigators blamed overcrowding and a false fire alarm, but also assessed the presence of Peter Obi. The state governor’s entourage made an appearance at the vigil. In response, the southeast chapter of the Christian Association of Nigeria banned political campaigning at church events. “[It] causes

HOW CHURCHES ATTRACT MILLENNIALS

The latest Faith Communities Today report found that only 16 percent of 11,000 religious congregations nationwide have “significant” young-adult participation—that is, at least one-fifth of adults are between ages 18 and 34. Beyond electric guitars and projectors, three of the strongest correlating factors are

1 Men

Young adults are nearly twice as likely to become involved if women make up one-fourth or less of a congregation than if women are the majority.

2 Instability

Congregations experiencing rapid growth or rapid decline (more than 10-percent change over the past decade) are more than twice as likely to have high involvement by young adults as slowly changing congregations.

3 Multiple pastors

Young adults are twice as likely to attend a church with multiple full-time leaders than with a more traditional solo pastor.

commotion and disrespect to one another,” said chairman Emmanuel Chukwuma. “This does not augur well for our spiritual growth.”



ISRAEL

This year’s hottest tablet display?

Israel’s supreme court has ordered its antiquities authority to return to collector Oded Golan his controversial Jehoash tablet. The authority claims the sandstone artifact—which describes repairs made to the First

Temple by King Jehoash in words similar to 2 Kings 12—is a forgery, yet still belongs to the state. In 2012, a court acquitted Golan of forgery charges after a trial lasting a decade. Golan plans to put the tablet, along with an even more controversial artifact—the James Ossuary, a burial box inscribed as belonging to “James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus”—on display soon.

Pagan cover star returns to Christianity

Three simple words prompted Teo Bishop (Matt Morris), an ex-Mouseketeer turned *Witches & Pagans* magazine cover star, to return to Christianity. After a homeless woman told him “God bless you” for feeding her, he experienced an irresistible “pull towards Jesus, God, and the gospel.” Bishop, who is blogging his journey, no longer writes for the pagan magazine, but says he doesn’t want to be seen as a trophy convert. Instead, he remains “somewhat of a pagan [exploring] a call to return to the Church.”

More evangelicals see suicide as moral

Nearly 1 in 3 evangelicals who worship weekly now say a person has a “moral right” to suicide if in a great deal of pain with no hope of improvement. Fewer approve in other circumstances (incurable disease: 27%; ready to die: 19%; burden on family: 19%), according to the Pew Research Center. Among the general public, nearly 2 in 3 see suicide as moral for sufferers—a modest increase since 1990 that Pew attributes to people who formerly said “I don’t know” now choosing a view.

R rating slapped on church-made movie

Churches making movies are no longer news, thanks to Sherwood Baptist (*Facing the Giants, Courageous*). But Retta Baptist Church in Burleson, Texas, made headlines after its own movie received an R rating. The Motion Picture Association of America said the rating was for violence and drug use portrayed in *My Son*; pastor Chuck Kitchens believes it was a reaction against the film’s faith message, and that the rating will hurt word-of-mouth marketing among pastors.



Egypt

A Ransom, For Many

Kidnappings of Christians are surging. Why many families are simply paying up.

In 2011, Nadia Makram, 13, was walking home from church near her working-class Cairo neighborhood when she vanished.

Her mother, Martha, went to the police, who refused to file a report. Soon after, Martha received a call demanding \$15,000. She went back to the police, who registered a complaint but noted only Nadia's disappearance.

When the police did nothing, Martha gathered money from family and friends and traveled to a village 65 miles south.

Martha met Nadia's 48-year-old kidnapper in the home of the local mayor. After she handed over the money, the men showed her what they called a "marriage certificate." Nadia, they said, had converted to Islam and married her abductor. Martha left empty-handed—an increasingly common story among Coptic Christians. Abductions have increased sharply in the past few months.

Nadia's case is being followed by the Association for Victims of Abductions and Enforced Disappearances (AVAED), which has documented 500 similar cases since the 2011 revolution. Hers appears to be a straight kidnapping, but AVAED says these are only a small proportion of disappearances. Sixty percent of them begin with a love relationship built on false pretenses.

"The girls are told, 'What will your family do to you if you go back to them? Convert to Islam so we can be together,'" said Ebram Louis, founder of AVAED. Kept against their will, Louis says, some of the girls are later found in brothels.

But some kidnappings turn out to be runaway stories instead. If a young Copt

has found a Muslim lover, her shamed family may invent a tale of kidnapping by Muslim extremists.

Still, no matter the reason for the disappearance of a minor, says Cairo pastor Rifaat Fikry, "The state must investigate with complete neutrality."

But since the state is perceived as doing nothing, Christians often just pay the ransom.

Coptic bishop Kyrillos of Nag Hammadi, 300 miles south of Cairo, recently held a press conference to complain of 34 kidnapping cases in his diocese since the revolution. Of these, 11 were returned after ransom

80+

Christians kidnapped for ransom in Minya (an Upper Egypt province with a high percentage of Copts) since the 2011 revolution.

17

Kidnappings in Minya in August and September 2013 alone.

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

Muslim Bride or Kidnapping Victim?:

Christian farmer Ishaq Aziz holds a photo of his 17-year-old daughter, Nirmeen, missing for more than a month.

payments, which totaled \$435,000.

Hany Hanna's family pooled its money for a ransom to free his kidnapped uncle, but the abductors killed his uncle before the family could pay. "Within a system that does nothing to prevent kidnapping, I say yes, to purchase back his humanity, it is worth it," said Hanna, a professor at the Evangelical Theological Seminary of Cairo. "Paying the ransom can communicate that I am rewarding the criminal for what he has done. But God has paid our ransom, and he is not rewarding sinners—he is taking upon himself the consequences of restoring the relationship."

In July, the Egyptian cabinet established the Ministry of Transitional Justice, appointing lawyer, judge, and human rights advocate Mohamed Amin al-Mahdi at its head. Some wonder if the ministry is only for appearances. But given consistent failures to achieve justice through the police or the judiciary, some Coptic Christians sense a new opportunity to address past wrongs.

"The Ministry of Transitional Justice is the ministry of hope," said Hany Gaziri, a veteran Coptic activist who met with al-Mahdi to discuss the kidnappings and other issues. "If I know my daughter has been taken, I can go the Ministry of Transitional Justice and prove my case, and he will order the Ministry of the Interior to return her. If we can arrest even one or two, I think these kidnappings will come to an end."

Jayson Casper



Higher Education

The Merer Christian College

A new study raises questions about what happens when schools cut denominational ties.

For decades, the Kentucky Baptist Convention had appointed the board of trustees of Georgetown College—all required to be Southern Baptist—and financially supported the small liberal arts school.

But that arrangement recently ceased as Georgetown decided to forgo convention funding, allow non-Baptists on its board, and expand its fundraising.

In November, the Kentucky convention voted to sever its remaining ties with the college, ending a scholarship program to attract students from the state's Baptist churches.

Its decision came after Georgetown moved away from a statement of specific Baptist identification to one “built on a Baptist foundation” in pursuit of a “knowledge of and commitment to the Christian faith.”

But a major new study by the Council on Christian Colleges and Universities (cccu) raises questions about what happens when schools with strong denominational ties loosen them.

The three-part study, published in the journal *Christian Higher Education*, surveyed thousands of faculty members and students at 79 evangelical schools.

According to the study, structural support for denominational identity persists in many evangelical colleges. Church bodies, for example, appoint some or all trustees at 87 percent of the institutions, and 59 percent require at least some faculty (particularly those who teach Bible or theology) to belong to the supporting denomination.

The study found “a general sense of goodwill” toward sponsoring denominations among students and faculty, even as denominational colleges draw fewer students (an average of 41%) from their own ranks.

But students repeatedly indicated a preference for a “more general or generic Christian identity,” reported study authors Phil Davignon, Perry Glanzer, and Jesse Rine. More than two-thirds of faculty, meanwhile, said they support hiring Catholic and Orthodox colleagues, “a practice that would likely weaken the denominational character of

the institutions they serve over time,” the authors said.

Abandoning “sectarian differences” raises concerns for those who believe denominational identity “sustains a richer theological language and set of practices” in Christian colleges and prevents a slippery slope toward secularization, the study concluded.

“Some of these trends are beyond the control of Christian colleges,” said Rine, director of research projects at the Council of Independent Colleges. After all, the shift away from denominations is happening among churches themselves, not just their schools. “However, we also found that students are rarely required to complete any specific coursework regarding the history or theology of the institutions’ sponsoring denominations. This is a missed opportunity.”

The study’s findings resonate with David Dockery, president of Union University, a Southern Baptist college in Tennessee.

“Some of this has to do with the changes that took place within denominations,” he said. “Evangelical Baptists and evangelical Presbyterians share much more in common than do liberal and evangelical Baptists or liberal and evangelical Presbyterians. This reality, coupled with the rise of something like a ‘mere Christianity’ nondenominationalism, has provided the context for a more generic kind of Christian college.”

The concern, as Dockery sees it, is that when an institution abandons or softens its denominational particulars, “there is nothing to reinforce those core commitments, which likely will lead to a weakening of the college’s Christian identity.”

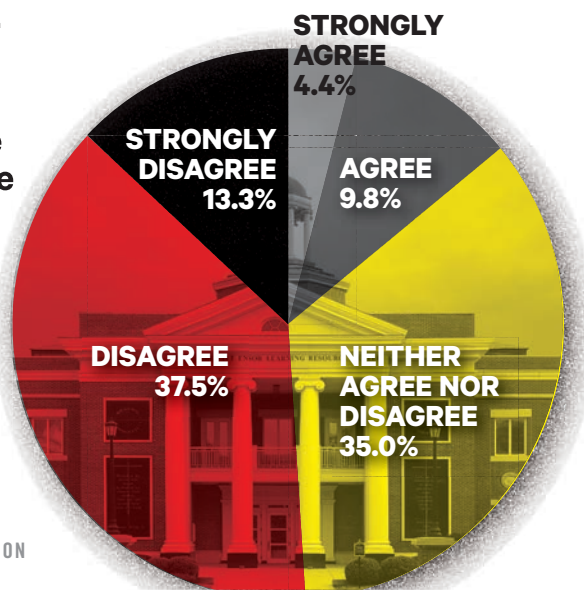
The challenge, he said, boils down to funding: The cost of Christian higher education keeps rising, while denominational funding is declining.

But William Ringenberg, a historian of Christian higher education, is skeptical, since most colleges departing from orthodoxy did so between 1920 and 1960.

“I see little secularization in the Christian colleges since then,” said Ringenberg, who teaches at the interdenominational Taylor University, in Upland, Indiana. “My major concern for the near future in Christian higher education is less secularization or a reduction in denominational control than the growth of federal government control and the problem of financial access for Christian youth.”

Bobby Ross Jr.

cccu faculty who wish their institution's statement of faith was more generic or 'mere Christian':



CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

Popping the Bubble

The Supreme Court is reexamining 'buffer zones' against pro-life protestors.

The U.S. Supreme Court has repeatedly allowed "buffer zones" that keep abortion protestors from approaching medical facility entrances. So the court surprised many observers when it agreed to hear a challenge to a Massachusetts "buffer zone" law on January 15.

Mark Rienzi, lead counsel for the pro-life plaintiffs, argues that the state's 2007 law creating a 35-foot buffer zone around abortion clinics and other health-care facilities exceeds the high court's ruling.

In its 2000 decision *Hill v. Colorado*, the Supreme Court upheld Colorado's so-called "bubble law" by a 6-to-3 vote. The law established a 100-foot zone in front of medical facilities and prohibited protestors from walking within an "8-foot bubble" of people.

"The Court allowed the restriction

because the law had several key safeguards, all of which have been eliminated by the Massachusetts law," said Rienzi, a Catholic University of America law professor.

He declared the Massachusetts law "inescapably viewpoint-based"—and thus a violation of free speech—because it applies "only when and where abortion is allowed." It also lets staff promote abortion to potential patients in the buffer zone.

"These [laws] are being passed for one purpose: to shut down the speech of one opinion, which should be enough for the Supreme Court to reject them," said Brian Gibson, executive director of Pro-Life Action Ministries.

But in upholding the Massachusetts law a year ago, an appeals court disagreed, saying the free speech protections were similar to those in *Hill*.

In general, the *Hill* ruling had little effect on pro-life activism, said Michael New, a University of Michigan–Dearborn political scientist. Along with a handful of cities, just three states—Colorado, Massachusetts, and Montana—have buffer zones.

That's largely because six years earlier, the 1994 Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act had changed the face of abortion protest. "When it became a violation of federal law with tough penalties

'They don't want to shout. They want to speak like civilized adults and offer these women help.'

LAWYER MARK RIENZI

to block an entryway to an abortion clinic, the rescue movement in the United States pretty much vanished," he said.

But Rienzi said his clients aren't like the protestors of the 1980s and early '90s. They aren't challenging "laws that make it illegal to bar the door or tackle someone or engage in violence or destruction of a facility."

"All those things are illegal and, frankly, should be illegal," he said. "This is about the peaceful speaker. The petitioners in this case, they don't want to shout [or] wave gory signs. They want to speak like civilized adults and offer these women help."

When the government puts a line on a sidewalk 35 feet away, it gives those who want to help no choice but to shout, Rienzi said.

Bobby Ross Jr.



Under Discussion

Compiled by Ken Walker



Q: Should Christians read through the entire Bible in one year?

More than 7.5 million reading plans were completed by YouVersion users last year (25 of its 700+ are whole-Bible plans). BibleGateway.com will begin tracking completion rates for its 15 plans this year.

YES

"Comprehensive reading of Scripture through assigned daily readings dates back to the early church. The deep grasp of Scripture this discipline provides is essential to Christian discipleship. One-year plans are a great way to achieve that."

Joel Scandrett, professor of historical theology, Trinity School for Ministry

"Varying paces mitigate against strict rules. But daily reading forces us to read portions of Scripture to which we are not naturally drawn, feeding us with the whole counsel of God and giving us the fullest possible picture of who God is."

Dane Ortland, Bible publishing director, Crossway Books

"I'm hesitant to prescribe when or how much people should read. It's important to grasp the big story and how each smaller story (including ours) fits in. The time required depends on the person. There is no one-size-fits-all."

Kevin Scott, acquisitions editor, Wesleyan Publishing House

"What's important is regularly listening to God through his Word. If a reading plan motivates you, use it. But if it becomes a chore that deters you from Scripture, don't get caught up in the method; remember the reason."

Rachel Barach, general manager, BibleGateway.com

"It's a good thing for every Christian's 'bucket list,' but I've never been a big fan. Most people never get past February; they hit Leviticus and give up. The most important thing is not how much Scripture we read; it's how much we apply."

Whitney Kuniholm, president of Scripture Union USA

NO

Identity

Jesus Is More All Right with Jews

Why messianic Jews are being accepted.

Whether more Jews are accepting Jesus remains a matter of debate. But more American Jews seem to be increasingly accepting of other Jews who accept Jesus.

A Pew Research Center study released in October reported that 34 percent of American Jews think believing Jesus is the Messiah is compatible with being Jewish. Thirty-five percent of ultra-Orthodox Jews agreed. By comparison, 94 percent of all U.S. Jews said a person can be Jewish and work on the Sabbath, and 68 percent said a person can be Jewish and not believe in God.

"This does not mean that most Jews think those things are good," said Alan Cooperman, deputy director of Pew Research Center's Religion and Public Life Project. "They are saying that those things do not disqualify a person from being Jewish. [But] most Jews think that belief in Jesus is disqualifying by roughly a 2-to-1 margin."

Still, some see the survey positively. "The Pew survey highlights a quantum shift," said Richard Harvey, senior researcher for Jews for Jesus. "Jewish identity is more and more seen in cultural and ancestral ways rather than through religious expression."

Markers for Jewish identity have shifted, said Russ Resnik, executive director of the Union of Messianic Jewish Congregations. "The gatekeepers are still holding the line against us, but a lot of Jewish people in the larger community recognize we're here to stay, that we're part of the Jewish community, that we're concerned about Jewish causes."

According to Pew, messianic Judaism is still small: Of Americans with a Jewish background or identity who practice a religion other than Judaism, only 2 or 3 percent say they're messianic. A similar percentage say they're "Jewish and Christian." (About two-thirds just say they're Christian.)

Yet they are a distinctly visible minority. One reason for that is their mission efforts. For example, Chosen People Ministries recently opened the multimillion-dollar Messianic Center in Brooklyn, New York, to attract the borough's many ultra-Orthodox residents. It launched with the organization's largest outreach campaign ever. "We've had very little opposition," said president Mitch Glaser. "The Jewish community is more used to us."

But suspicions remain. Ruth Guggenheim, director of the Baltimore-based Jews for Judaism, warned members of the Brooklyn community that the missionaries will, as she told *The Times of Israel*, "make inroads because they are offering free services to the community and unconditional love."

Derek Leman, rabbi at Tikvat David

Messianic Synagogue in Roswell, Georgia, said faithful Jewish living has worn down opposition more than overt evangelism has. In recent decades, he said, "more messianic Jews have participated in the mainstream Jewish community. Many of us see ourselves as fellow travelers on a journey with God with the rest of the Jewish community, and we take a posture of humility about the reasons we believe in Yeshua."

Messianics are being accepted in the academy as well. The 16th World Congress of Jewish Studies included a first-time panel on messianic Jewish studies. Gershon Nerel, a historian of Jewish believers in Jesus, said organizers included the panel "because the topic reflects not only a developing social reality within contemporary Jewry but also a growing field of scholarly research." Though Jewish believers in Jesus are marginal, they are salient and impossible to ignore, he said.

Still, Glaser noted, there is "considerable prejudice in the Jewish community toward those who believe in Jesus. And there are far more of us than the Jewish community is ready to admit."

Kevin P. Emmert

What's essential to being Jewish?

Percentage of U.S. Jews saying the following are essential:

- Remembering the Holocaust **73%**
- Leading an ethical and moral life **69%**
- Working for justice/equality **56%**
- Being intellectually curious **49%**
- Caring about Israel **43%**
- Having a good sense of humor **42%**
- Being part of a Jewish community **28%**
- Observing Jewish law **19%**
- Eating traditional Jewish foods **14%**

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

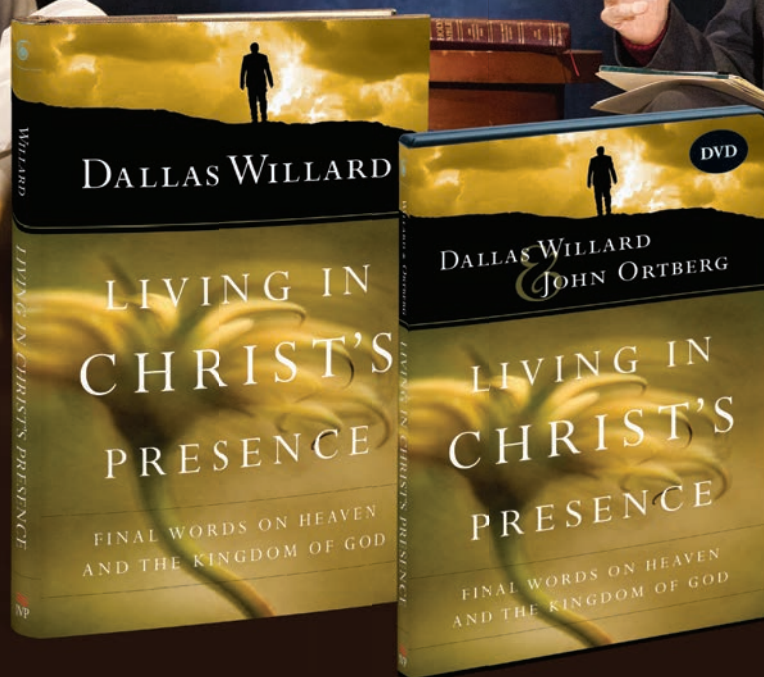
PARTING WORDS

A CONVERSATION *with* DALLAS WILLARD



"Part of what's wonderful about him is the way he is far from perfect, as all of us are, and he has his own set of struggles. But you get the sense when you are with him that this is not just somebody who is in spiritual formation, but somebody who is actually living in the reality of the kingdom. It has taken over his body in ways that I want it to take over my body."

—John Ortberg on Dallas Willard
at the Knowing Christ Today Conference, February 2013



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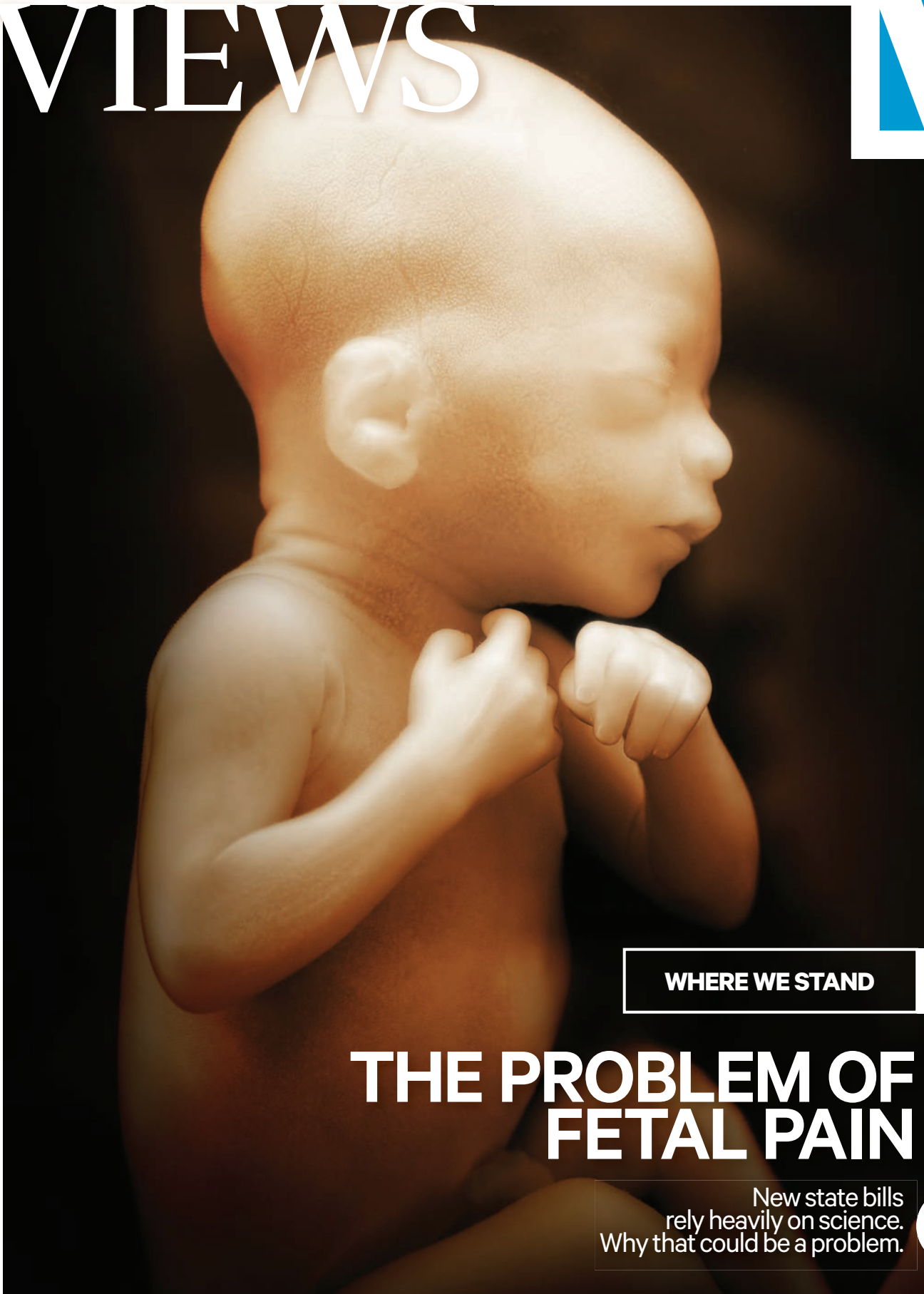
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VIEWS



WHERE WE STAND

THE PROBLEM OF FETAL PAIN

New state bills
rely heavily on science.
Why that could be a problem.





IF YOU HAVE A CHILD—or are on Facebook—you know how stunning ultrasound images are. In the 1950s, Ian Donald, a professor of midwifery in Scotland, took the “echo-sounding” used in Glasgow shipyards for metal inspection and began applying it to OB/GYN settings. Because of the progress spurred by Donald, a Christian who opposed abortion, we now know with startling precision how babies develop in the womb.

At week 20, for example, an unborn baby is about the length of a banana. He has a face and sexual organs. He has *eyebrows*. He is about halfway through his journey into the world. And, if his life is tragically ended by abortion, he experiences intense pain.

This last claim is the lynchpin on which a host of new, successful state restrictions on abortion hinge. In 2010, Nebraska

It is wise to recount the history of eugenics, because it shows how quickly scientific consensus can change—even in a decade or two.

claims, pain is straightforward: It is bad. If we have a bone of compassion, instinctively we want to stop it in others.

Unfortunately, the science surrounding fetal pain is murkier than the NRLC and other pro-life groups suggest. Kanwaljeet Anand, a pediatrician who introduced newborn surgery anesthesia in the 1980s, has testified in court and published papers suggesting that

or two. We don’t wish this to be true, but research may soon confirm that unborn babies can’t experience pain until much later in development. Meanwhile, abortion providers could find ways to perform “pain-free” abortions. Of course, in these cases we would still vehemently oppose the abortion, because we believe it takes a life, not just a life that feels pain.

While the medical jury is still out, the pro-life movement must continue to wield philosophy, law, religion, and history to argue the personhood of the unborn child. In the past century, Judeo-Christian teachings on human dignity have given legs to everything from abolition to women’s suffrage to educating persons with disabilities. Those teachings are a superior resource in a pluralistic culture in which human rights hold strong rhetorical sway. As political columnist Kirsten Powers wrote this summer, “Human-rights movements have traditionally existed to help the voiceless. . . . Yet in the case of abortion, the voiceless have progressively lost rights.” This January, on the anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, hundreds of thousands of Americans will attend the March for Life in Washington, D.C., to defend those very rights.

Science is a conditional, not ultimate, good. An example that takes us back to Donald: Ultrasounds have convinced many abortion doctors and pregnant women that an unborn child is really a person. But in a terrible irony, they have also convinced many would-be parents to abort children with Down syndrome and congenital disorders. Ultrasound images can lead to good or evil. It’s up to pro-life voices to teach people what—or who—they are really seeing when they look at one. **CT**

KATELYN BEATY is CT managing editor.



became the first to ban nonemergency abortions after 20 weeks, based on research indicating that’s when fetuses start to feel pain. Since then, 12 other states have followed suit. In November, South Carolina Republican Lindsey Graham introduced the Pain Capable Unborn Child Protection Act in the Senate, a companion to the bill that successfully passed in the House. “Not since Congress voted to ban the brutal partial-birth abortion method has a more important piece of pro-life legislation come before Congress,” said Susan Muskett of the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC).

So far, fetal pain bills are promising incremental steps in a post-*Roe v. Wade* landscape. A spate of 2013 polls showed that a plurality of Americans, including pro-choice ones, support a 20-week abortion ban. Where the question, “When does human personhood begin?” gets mired in competing religious and philosophical

at 20 weeks, unborn babies have the brain receptors to feel pain. But a comprehensive *Journal of the American Medical Association* review from 2005 states that pain isn’t possible until about 30 weeks. At that stage, abortion is illegal in most states anyway. Pro-life and pro-choice voices bandy about both studies to show that science is on their side.

But if we have any historical memory, we know science is a fickle handmaiden. About a century ago, universities and government bodies were investing in research to create a better, stronger human race. Supposedly solid genetic and evolutionary science “proved” that racial minorities, people with low IQs, and even the poor were diluting the gene pool and needed to be dealt with, often by forced sterilization and abortion.

It is wise to recount the history of eugenics, because it shows how quickly scientific consensus can change—even in a decade

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Is the \$17 Trillion Federal Debt Immoral?

When a country borrows this much in excess, it risks spiritual bankruptcy.



David P. Gushee
Immoral and Unwise

At the moment my fingers hit these keys, the U.S. government debt had reached \$17.071 trillion, or \$58,853 per citizen. Our debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio sat at 107 percent. Our credit rating had fallen to AA plus, with a negative outlook—the first time our rating has been downgraded. By all these measures, our country is falling behind Canada, Great Britain, Germany, and other peer nations.

Most progressive evangelicals who

address government spending focus on compassion issues. They connect God's care for the poor to U.S. government spending priorities. This often seems to mean by default that all cuts to social welfare spending are bad, and that all increases are good.

I agree with my progressive evangelical allies that our government—which projects spending \$3.77 trillion in fiscal 2014—seems to have sufficient resources to provide for the sick, the aged, the poor, and the uninsured. I agree with an overall reading of the Bible that prioritizes physical human needs over most other priorities. But I protest a too-easy move from “God cares for the

poor and calls Christians to do the same” to “God wants the secular government of the United States to spend x on social welfare.” Translating a sacred text into a political ethic is not that easy.

Still, we have a moral problem on our hands: While our nation budgets \$3.77 trillion for spending in fiscal 2014, it forecasts revenue of \$744 billion less than that. If a nation does that for long enough, it ends up with a debt of \$17 trillion—and rising.

A government that develops a pattern of spending considerably more than it raises behaves immorally. But its immorality is not simply the immorality-as-immediate-hardheartedness-to-the-poor, so often decried by my friends.

In biblical terms, borrowing *itself* is problematic. Certainly, the Bible regularly calls for generous lending and debt forgiving. But when it speaks of borrowing, the Bible is negative, and not just when addressing individuals.

Borrowing is emblematic of national weakness that invites subservience to creditors (Deut. 15:6; 28:12). Borrowing for short-term needs risks long-term decline and even enslavement (Neh. 5:3–5). Creditors gain power over debtors (Prov. 22:7), though the powerlessness may not be visible until later.

We Americans are feasting with borrowed money. We risk becoming a beggar nation. My father used to speak about the trouble people run into when they have “champagne tastes on a beer budget.” That’s us. We tax ourselves like a beer country and spend like a champagne country.

Christians of all political persuasions must call for fiscal responsibility from our government, in all budget categories, and accept the hard results when it comes to

our favorite programs. The precise mix of budget cuts and revenue increases needed for a balanced budget is a political judgment. But this is the direction we need to go.

DAVID P. GUSHEE, author of *The Sacredness of Human Life*, is director of the Center for Faith and Public Life at Mercer University in Atlanta.

Gary Moore Not So Immoral

My deficit-despising tea party friends borrow to finance homes and businesses. Few of them would consider it immoral to finance life-saving surgery for a child. So why does borrowing suddenly become immoral when our government does it?

Partisanship by both parties causes Americans to judge Washington's extreme borrowing based on whether it funds our preferred causes. Those causes are what I call *guns* and *butter*.

The butter is health care for retirees and poor families, and it's a key concern at the moment. But historians estimate about one-half of our current federal debt is due to guns—in general, to waging war. There's a remarkable correlation between our country's wars and its debt. My friends who fret most about the debt seem the quickest to support the country going to war.

During the Clinton administration, defense spending fell, and federal deficits turned to surpluses. By the time President George W. Bush took office, *The Economist* projected we might have the entire federal debt paid off by 2013. Bush's considerable tax cuts and funding of two wars turned that projection into a false prophecy. The deficit spiked when Wall Street collapsed and the government increased deficit spending to goose the economy.

Despite our anxiety over the deficit, our economic picture is rosier than most realize. Washington's current annual deficit is much smaller than it was during the Great Recession. Our accumulated federal debt as a percentage of gross domestic product is one-half what it was at the end of World War II.

Half the federal debt is owed to Americans, who collect interest on U.S. Treasury securities. Total interest payments on the federal debt as a percentage of GDP are lower than during the Reagan years, when interest rates were much higher.

Economists at the International

Monetary Fund, a frequent critic of excessive federal debt, recently estimated that the United States can handle another \$10 trillion of debt.

We should always be prudent about debt, as the Bible commands. But other biblical concepts prompt us to rethink our unwillingness to share more butter. Paul taught us to fill our minds with "those things that are good and that deserve praise" (Phil. 4:8, *GNT*). This includes thinking about America's vast assets as well as its relatively modest liabilities. Moses taught, "The king is not to have a large number of horses for his army" (Deut. 17:16, *GNT*). But we spend as much as the rest of the world combined on defense.

America now has enormous economic inequality. But God told Moses that the Promised Land was to be distributed according to the relative size and needs of the tribes (Num. 26:54). In this way, socioeconomic equality was embedded in the very DNA of Israel's agrarian economy. Moses encouraged trade, which led to inequality. But he prevented too much economic concentration by also instituting the concept of Jubilee, where all property was returned to its original owners every 50 years.

GARY MOORE, author of six books on faith and finance, is a veteran of Wall Street finance and founder of *FinancialSeminary.org*.

Amy E. Black Immoral as a Lifestyle

Policy analysts at leading think tanks across the ideological spectrum describe U.S. debt and budget woes as nearing "apocalypse," "catastrophic failure," and a "fiscal train wreck." When a range of experts who rarely agree on anything reach consensus, we should take notice.

Accruing debt itself is not immoral, but a culture of debt most certainly is. Debt has become the American way of life, one that threatens our flourishing and that of future generations. In our personal lives, we make daily budget decisions. Many choose to take on debt for expensive items deemed worthy investments or necessities—the purchase of a home, replacing a leaky roof, loans to defray the expense of college tuition. Such borrowing seems prudent. On the other hand, many Americans accrue debt

to artificially maintain an extravagant lifestyle or accumulate beyond what they can ever repay. Such practices violate the principle of wise stewardship.

The same logic applies to lawmakers and the economic decisions they make. Most economists agree that deficits arising during downturns can help stabilize the economy. But government budgeting in recent years has been reckless. Most economists also agree that continued deficit spending in good times can stifle growth and negatively affect credit markets.

Too often, however, lawmakers overlook sound economic principles in favor of political expediency. They find it easiest to expand spending without raising revenues. They avoid scrutinizing current programs and policies to see what is truly essential. Instead, they simply borrow more.

Our collective unwillingness to make hard decisions and accept shared sacrifice burdens future generations. Annual deficits of more than \$1 trillion a year, the national debt exceeding \$17 trillion and continuing to grow, and the exponential rise of entitlement spending have created an unsustainable future for us, our children, and our grandchildren.

Both Democrats and Republicans have contributed to the problem. Instead of wasting time and energy casting blame, lawmakers should come together to solve the crisis. Ignoring complex political problems does not make them disappear.

The path Christians should encourage starts with the biblical principles of wise stewardship and shared sacrifice. We must seek justice and give special concern for society's most vulnerable members. Government programs and services benefit us all and help secure the common good, and we all have an interest in maintaining a stable and well-functioning system.

Given the current budget realities, however, we will need to make sacrifices to ensure future stability. The current situation is called a *crisis*, and rightly so. It is a sign of moral failure that we continue practices that almost everyone—left, right, and center—agrees are unsustainable. Our nation's leaders must find the political will to address the burgeoning debt with meaningful and substantive reform. And we should applaud their courage and willingly share the burden.

CT

AMY E. BLACK, author of *Honoring God in Red or Blue*, is associate professor of political science at Wheaton College (Illinois).

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an author and
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God in Costume

Why we need symbols in order to see him.

I was a teenager trying to entertain 2-year-old Laura as she squirmed in her high chair. Thinking myself a clever babysitter, I held up her laminated placemat, which featured a photograph of Mickey and Minnie Mouse.

"Is this a picture of Donald and Daisy Duck?" I asked.

"No," she giggled.

"Is it Goofy and Pluto?"

"Nuh-uh!" she squealed.

"Well, who are they?" I asked, gearing up for the inevitable right-answer celebration. But her reply caught me off guard.

"Strangers in costumes."

Laura is grown now, but I've been thinking about the pragmatism she exhibited as a toddler. Her no-nonsense take on the world (at least the world of Disney) is a perfect example of what sociologist Philip Rieff and philosopher Allan Bloom both described as a "low symbolic hedge."

I encountered this idea in *The Shattered Lantern*, a book by Catholic writer Ronald Rolheiser. If many Westerners have trouble perceiving God's presence in daily life, then perhaps, says Rolheiser, the problem is that our culture lacks potent symbols.

The ability to use symbols distinguishes humans from other animals. Consider eating. All animals use food for sustenance and pleasure. But humans can employ candlelight, china, toasts, and blessings to imbue a meal with significance. Through symbols, eating can embody romance, friendship, honor, or celebration.

I must confess: I usually have neither the time nor the inclination to bother with such symbols. When, for instance, I eat on the run, my symbolic hedge is low; food is just fuel.

But Rolheiser warns that a low symbolic hedge drains the meaning out of experience. To illustrate, he imagines a middle-aged man beset by chronic back pain: "What does this

pain mean? It can mean that he has arthritis, a medical symbol; or it can mean he is undergoing some midlife crisis, a psychological symbol; or it can mean that he is undergoing the paschal mystery, that this is his cross, a religious symbol. Or it might mean all three. The symbols with which we enter and interpret our experience can be low (suffering arthritis) or high (being part of the paschal mystery!).

"God's apparent absence in ordinary experience is intimately connected to the diminished height of our symbolic hedge."

I came to Rolheiser's book because two friends—a Christian and a skeptic—had confessed to longing for a sharper awareness of God's presence. Their failure to "feel" God left both women wounded.

The Shattered Lantern reminded me that sensing God's presence is not the same thing as faith. God is near whether we feel him or not. "Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed," Jesus declares (John 20:29). Saint John of the Cross famously wrote of the "dark night of the soul," claiming that sometimes God withdraws his presence.

Still, John of the Cross noted that in other cases the problem has more to do with our "blindness." Given that Jesus encourages us to seek in order to find (Luke 11:9), Rolheiser would have us cultivate a contemplative receptivity to God—trusting

that, in general, we can sense his presence.

In a culture of narcissism, pleasure-seeking, and restlessness, that receptivity can seem futile. A low symbolic hedge is both a cause and a symptom of our problem. Where earth once seemed, in the words of Elizabeth Barrett Browning, "crammed with heaven," it now often appears as flat as a laminated placemat. Where the poet saw "every common bush afire with God," we see only shrubs.

Our low symbolic hedge is, in part, a byproduct of the modern dogma that nature is all there is. But it's also the fruit of our Reformation heritage, with its wariness of superstition. After all, Laura was right: Mickey and Minnie really are just strangers in costumes.

But what about cases when there's truly more than meets the eye? When bread and wine are not just food and drink, but emblems of a body broken? When baptismal waters plunge us into death and resurrection?

The ancient Israelites were not above raising the symbolic hedge when they needed to awaken themselves to God. In 1 Samuel 7, they pour out buckets of water to express repentance, and build "ebenezers" out of rocks to memorialize God's provision and deliverance. Sometimes water is more than water, stone more than stone.

Much has been made of young evangelicals leaving "low" Protestant congregations for more liturgical churches. Maybe part of what they're seeking is a higher symbolic hedge. What would happen if our worship enveloped them with biblically grounded symbolism? Certainly, we should remain wary of counterfeit "strangers in costumes." But we must also help ourselves remember that we've been invited into the drama of a mysterious and wonderful gospel—a truth stranger (in the best possible way) than fiction.

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When young evangelicals leave 'low' Protestant churches for liturgical ones, maybe they're seeking more symbolism.

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MUD ALIVE

N. D. Wilson is a best-selling author, observer of ants, and easily distracted father of five. His latest book is *Death by Living*.



Why Kids' Stories Need a Dose of Darkness

There's no resurrection without death.

In the Christian world, stories laced with dark content—especially for children—will always spook whole flocks of eyebrows into concerned flight. The “content” of a book or film is parsed out, every bit of shadow flagged and sniffed at by mothers like they’ve discovered a malicious growth hormone in a suspicious chicken nugget.

As an author who writes novels for children, I am often questioned about my choice of ingredients. A boy discovers and opens dozens of tiny magical doors. Should be a lark, right? Why does it need to be dangerous? Why include loneliness, father hunger, and a terrifying enemy?

Two functional orphans living in a roadside motel are taken to Ashtown, a place where many of the world’s wildest secrets have been kept for centuries. Sounds like a great little slumber party. So why include pain? Why must the children face hardships? Why must the villains be so, well, villainous? Wouldn’t it be better for everyone if the evil was jokey? Lighthearted? More like a school rivalry than a matter of salvation or damnation?

Yipes. No. Wrong. F.

Think on this: God’s artistic choices should govern our own. More than any other type of artist, Christian artists should be truth-lovers and truth-tellers. More than any other consumer, Christian readers—and parents of young readers—should be truth-seekers.

I would understand if hard-bitten secularists were the ones feeding narrative meringue to their children with false enthusiasm. They believe their kids will eventually grow up and realize how terrible, grinding, and meaningless reality is. Oh, well—might as well swaddle

children in Santa Clausian delusions while they’re still dumb enough to believe them. But a Christian parent should always be looking to serve up truth. The question is one of dosage.

Shelter your children. Yes. Absolutely. But use a picnic shelter, not a lightless bomb bunker, and not virtual reality goggles looping bubblegum clouds. Feast with them on fiction in safety, laugh with them through terrible adventures seething with real weather. They should feel the wind and fear the lightning and witness the fools and heroes—and yet stay protected.

Faithful artists should provide sabbaths, not escapes. We should be crafting periods of rest and inspiration that will feed, fuel, and empower readers to engage more deeply in reality as faithful men and women. To step out of the shelter when the time comes.

In your picnic shelter, pack stories that bless the meek and shatter the proud. Stories that use hardship to burn away the dross in characters. Stories that honor the honorable and damn the damnable.

Childhood is the time for truth, and adulthood is the time for a deeper understanding of the same. To seed courage, we must show fear. To reveal triumph, we must build enemies. To tell the truth about what it means to be heroic, we must spin a fiction

full of danger.

Wisdom from G. K. Chesterton: “If the characters are not wicked, the book is.”

We must tell stories the way God does, stories in which a sister must float her little brother on a river with nothing but a basket between him and the crocodiles. Stories in which a king is a coward, and a shepherd boy steps forward to face the giant. Stories with fiery serpents and leviathans and sermons in whirlwinds. Stories in which murderers are blinded on donkeys and become heroes. Stories with dens of lions and fiery furnaces and lone prophets laughing at kings and priests and demons. Stories with heads on platters. Stories with courage and crosses and redemption. Stories with resurrections.

And resurrections require deaths.

We do no one any favors when we pretend away darkness in the world. We’ve only neutered the need for grace. And we’ve neutered the glorious triumph on the other side of darkness. Yes, darkness should be mediated and even muted in art for children (and adults). At some point, the knowledge of evil can damage a reader or viewer.

But the relationship between good and evil in our stories should mirror the relationship between good and evil in God’s stories. That relationship should present one consistent worldview in art meant for 8-year-olds and in art meant for 80-year-olds. Our goal is to produce and consume truth, to feed, to be strengthened, and to rise up from our narrative sabbaths ready to live harder lives, ready to love and laugh more deeply. We emerge from such stories ready to step into the roar of glory that leads us all to our own graves and out the other side.

Our stories should feed us, young and old, for that journey.

CT

Childhood is the time for truth, and adulthood is the time for a deeper understanding of the same.

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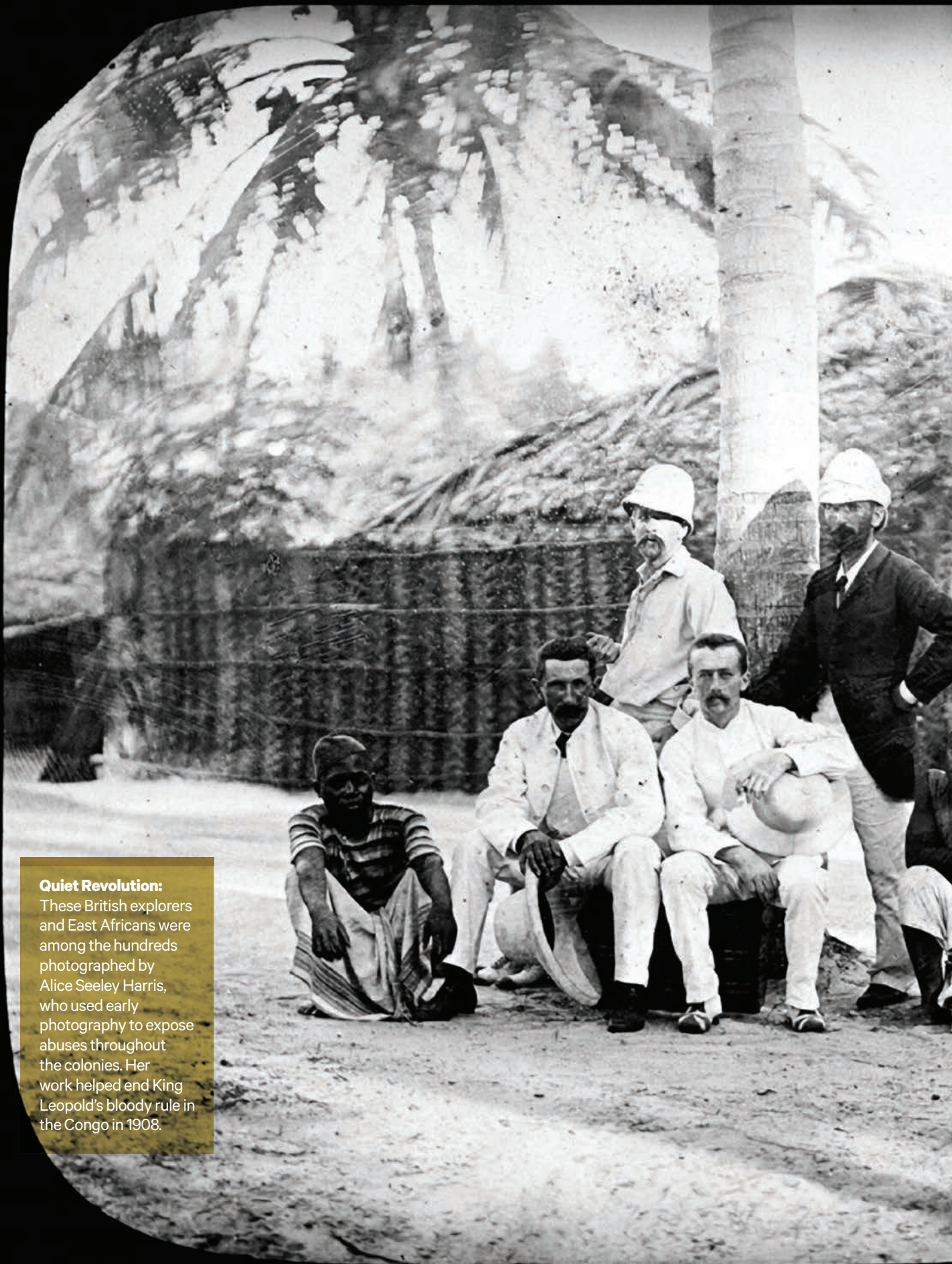
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Quiet Revolution:

These British explorers and East Africans were among the hundreds photographed by Alice Seeley Harris, who used early photography to expose abuses throughout the colonies. Her work helped end King Leopold's bloody rule in the Congo in 1908.

THE WORLD THE MISSION- ARIES MADE

THEY DIDN'T SET OUT TO CHANGE HISTORY.
BUT ONE MODERN SCHOLAR'S RESEARCH
SHOWS THEY DID JUST THAT.

by ANDREA PALPANT DILLEY

FOR MANY OF OUR CONTEMPORARIES, no one sums up missionaries of an earlier era like Nathan Price. The patriarch in Barbara Kingsolver's 1998 novel, *The Poisonwood Bible*, tries to baptize new Congolese Christians in a river filled with crocodiles. He proclaims *Tata Jesus is bangala!*, thinking he is saying, "Jesus is beloved." In fact, the phrase means, "Jesus is poisonwood." Despite being corrected many times, Price repeats the phrase until his death—Kingsolver's none-too-subtle metaphor for the culturally insensitive folly of modern missions.

For some reason, no one has written a best-selling book about the real-life 19th-century missionary John Mackenzie. When white settlers in South Africa threatened to take over the natives' land, Mackenzie helped his friend and political ally Khama III travel to Britain. There, Mackenzie and his colleagues held petition drives, translated for Khama and two other chiefs at political rallies, and even arranged a meeting with Queen Victoria. Ultimately their efforts convinced Britain to enact a land protection agreement. Without it, the nation of Botswana would likely not exist today.

The annals of Western Protestant missions include Nathan Prices, of course. But thanks to a quiet, persistent sociologist named Robert Woodberry, we now know for certain that they include many more John Mackenzies. In fact, the work of missionaries like Mackenzie turns out to be the single largest factor in ensuring the health of nations.

'This Is Why God Made Me'

Fourteen years ago, Woodberry was a graduate student in sociology at the University of North Carolina–Chapel Hill (UNC). The son of J. Dudley Woodberry, a professor of Islamic studies and now a dean emeritus at Fuller Theological Seminary, he started studying in UNC's respected PhD program with one of its most influential figures, Christian Smith (now at the University of Notre Dame). But as Woodberry cast about for a fruitful line of research of his own, he grew discontented.

"Most of the research I studied was about American religion," he says of early graduate school. "It wasn't [my] passion, and it didn't feel like a calling, something I could pour my life into."

One afternoon he attended a required

lecture that brought his vocational drift to a sudden end. The lecture was by Kenneth A. Bollen, a UNC–Chapel Hill professor and one of the leading experts on measuring and tracking the spread of global democracy. Bollen remarked that he kept finding a significant statistical link between democracy and Protestantism. Someone needed to study the reason for the link, he said.

Woodberry sat forward in his seat and thought, *That's me. I'm the one.*

Soon he found himself descending into the UNC–Chapel Hill archives in search of old data on religion. "I found an atlas [from 1925] of every missionary station in the world, with tons of data," says Woodberry with glee. He found data on the "number of schools, teachers, printing presses, hospitals, and doctors, and it referred in turn to earlier atlases. I thought, *Wow, this is so huge. This is amazing. This is why God made me.*"

Woodberry set out to track down the evidence for Bollen's conjecture that Protestant religion and democracy were somehow related. He studied yellowed maps, spending months charting the longitude and latitude of former missionary stations. He traveled to Thailand and India to consult with local scholars, dug through archives in London, Edinburgh, and Serampore, India, and talked with church historians all over Europe, North America, Asia, and Africa.

In essence, Woodberry was digging into one of the great enigmas of modern history: why some nations develop stable representative democracies—in which citizens enjoy the rights to vote, speak, and assemble freely—while neighboring countries suffer authoritarian rulers and internal conflict. Public health and economic growth can also differ dramatically from one country to another, even among countries that share similar geography, cultural background, and natural resources.

In search of answers, Woodberry traveled to West Africa in 2001. Setting out one morning on a dusty road in Lomé, the capital of Togo, Woodberry headed for the University of Togo's campus library. He found it sequestered in a 1960s-era building. The shelves held about half as many books as his personal collection. The most recent encyclopedia dated from 1977. Down the road, the campus bookstore sold primarily pens and paper, not books.

"Where do you buy your books?" Woodberry stopped to ask a student.

"Oh, we don't buy books," he replied. "The professors read the texts out loud to

'One stereotype about missions is that they were closely connected to colonialism. But Protestant missionaries not funded by the state were regularly very critical of colonialism.'

~ Robert Woodberry

us, and we transcribe."

Across the border, at the University of Ghana's bookstore, Woodberry had seen floor-to-ceiling shelves lined with hundreds of books, including locally printed texts by local scholars. Why the stark contrast?

The reason was clear: During the colonial era, British missionaries in Ghana had established a whole system of schools and printing presses. But France, the colonial power in Togo, severely restricted missionaries. The French authorities took interest in educating only a small intellectual elite. More than 100 years later, education was still limited in Togo. In Ghana, it was flourishing.

Like an Atomic Bomb

Those who know Woodberry can easily picture him there in West Africa—a tall, lanky man searching for answers with doggedness and precision. He might double as a film-noir private detective if you tossed a trench coat on his shoulders, turned up the collar, and sent him down a dark alleyway.

"It was fun to watch his discovery process," says Smith, who oversaw





Woodberry's dissertation committee. "He collected really rare, scattered evidence and pulled it together into a coherent data set. In one sense it was way too big for a doctoral student, but he was stubborn, independent, and meticulous."

What began to emerge was a consistent and controversial pattern—one that might damage Woodberry's career, warned Smith. "I thought it was a great, daring project, but I advised [him] that lots of people

wouldn't like it if the story panned out," Smith says. "For [him] to suggest that the missionary movement had this strong, positive influence on liberal democratization—you couldn't think of a more unbelievable and offensive story to tell a lot of secular academics."

But the evidence kept coming. While studying the Congo, Woodberry made one of his most dramatic early discoveries. Congo's colonial-era exploitation was well

known: Colonists in both French and Belgian Congo had forced villagers to extract rubber from the jungle. As punishment for not complying, they burned down villages, castrated men, and cut off children's limbs. In French Congo, the atrocities passed without comment or protest, aside from one report in a Marxist newspaper in France. But in Belgian Congo, the abuses aroused the largest international protest movement since the abolition of slavery.

Why the difference? Working on a hunch, Woodberry charted mission stations all across the Congo. Protestant missionaries, it turned out, were allowed only in the Belgian Congo. Among those missionaries were two British Baptists named John and Alice Harris who took photographs of the atrocities—including a now-famous picture of a father gazing at his daughter's remains—and then smuggled the photographs out of the country. With evidence in hand, they traveled through the United States and Britain to stir up public pressure and, along with other missionaries, helped raise an outcry against the abuses.

To convince skeptics, however, Woodberry needed more than case studies. Anyone could find the occasional John and Alice Harris or John Mackenzie, discard the Nathan Prices, and assemble a pleasing mosaic. But Woodberry was equipped to do something no one else had done: to look at the long-term effect of missionaries using the wide-angle lens of statistical analysis.

In his fifth year of graduate school, Woodberry created a statistical model that could test the connection between missionary work and the health of nations. He and a few research assistants spent two years coding data and refining their methods. They hoped to compute the lasting effect of missionaries, on average, worldwide. "I felt pretty nervous," he says. "I thought, *What if I run the analysis and find nothing? How will I salvage my dissertation?*"

One morning, in a windowless, dusty computer lab lit by fluorescent bulbs, Woodberry ran the first big test. After he

WHAT THEY BROUGHT THE WORLD

William Carey. David Livingstone. Hudson Taylor. These are the rock stars of the modern missionary movement. Here are eight other missionaries who were bellwethers for global democracy.



CONGO

Alice Seeley Harris

A UK Baptist, Harris and her husband, John, were among the first people to use photography to promote human rights. In the early 1900s, colonialists used forced labor to extract rubber from the Congo's jungles—and villagers who resisted were castrated, burned, or had limbs cut off. The Harrises traveled throughout the United States and Britain disseminating photos and giving lectures detailing the abuses.



BOTSWANA

John Mackenzie

The British missionary partnered with a chief named Khama III to protect his land from being occupied by white settlers in South Africa. Their efforts birthed a pivotal land protection agreement. If not for Protestant missionaries, Botswana would most likely not exist today.



SOUTH AFRICA

Trevor Huddleston

The Anglican missionary to South Africa earned the nickname *Makhalipile*—"dauntless one"—in part for publishing *Naught for your Comfort*, a devastating critique of South African racial policies. His writings and later leadership with the Anti-Apartheid Movement helped turn British public opinion against apartheid.



INDIA

Ida Sophia Scudder

She vowed to never become one. But then Ida Sophia Scudder watched three women die needlessly one night at her parents' missionary bungalow and knew God was calling her to the mission field. Scudder addressed the plight of Indian women and the fight against bubonic plague, cholera, and leprosy. In 1918, she started one of Asia's foremost teaching hospitals, the Christian Medical College & Hospital.

finished prepping the statistical program on his computer, he clicked "Enter" and then leaned forward to read the results.

"I was shocked," says Woodberry. "It was like an atomic bomb. The impact of missions on global democracy was *huge*. I kept adding variables to the model—factors that people had been studying and writing about for the past 40 years—and they all got wiped out. It was amazing. I knew, then, I was on to something really important."

Cause or Correlation?

Woodberry already had historical proof that missionaries had educated women and the poor, promoted widespread

printing, led nationalist movements that empowered ordinary citizens, and fueled other key elements of democracy. Now the statistics were backing it up: Missionaries weren't just part of the picture. They were *central* to it.

"The results were so strong, they made me nervous," says Woodberry. "I expected an effect, but I had not expected it to be that large or powerful. I thought, *I better make sure this is real. I better be very careful.*"

Determined to be his own greatest skeptic, Woodberry started measuring alternative theories using a technique called two-stage least-squares instrumental variable analysis. With any statistical work, he knew, it was easy to mistake correlation for causation. There is a link, for example,

between eating oatmeal and getting cancer. But that doesn't mean that if you eat too many Quaker Oats, you're doomed. It turns out that elderly people, who have a higher risk of cancer as such, happen to eat oatmeal for breakfast more often. In other words, oatmeal doesn't *cause* cancer.

In the case of missions history, Woodberry had to ask: What if missionaries moved to places already predisposed to democracy? Or what if the colonizing country—New Zealand or Australia or Britain—was the real catalyst?

Like a mechanic taking apart an engine only to rebuild it, he had to counter his own theory in order to strengthen it. That meant controlling for a host of factors: climate, health, location, accessibility, natural

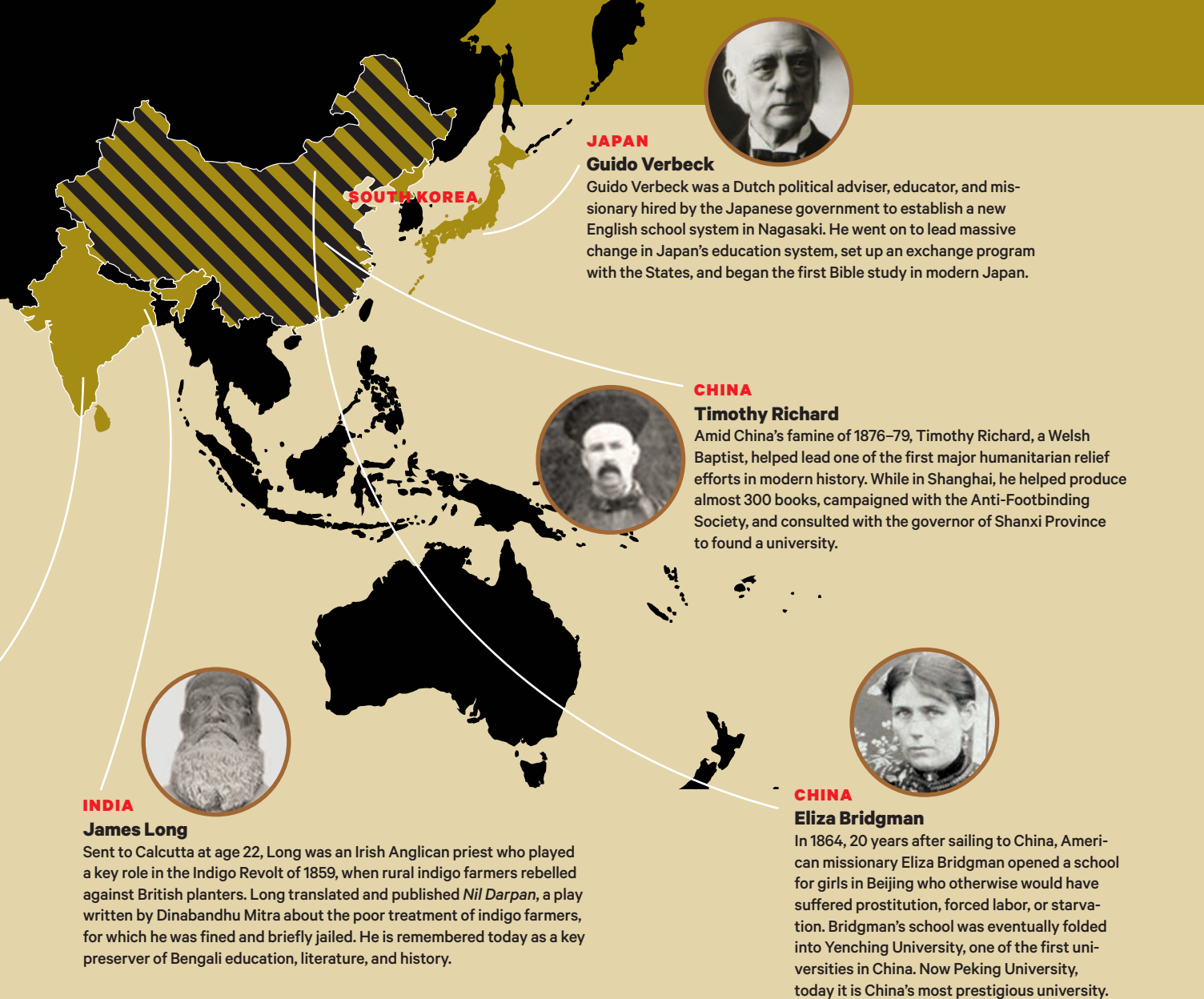
GOVERNMENT



Democratic



Communist in Transition



JAPAN

Guido Verbeck

Guido Verbeck was a Dutch political adviser, educator, and missionary hired by the Japanese government to establish a new English school system in Nagasaki. He went on to lead massive change in Japan's education system, set up an exchange program with the States, and began the first Bible study in modern Japan.



CHINA

Timothy Richard

Amid China's famine of 1876–79, Timothy Richard, a Welsh Baptist, helped lead one of the first major humanitarian relief efforts in modern history. While in Shanghai, he helped produce almost 300 books, campaigned with the Anti-Footbinding Society, and consulted with the governor of Shanxi Province to found a university.



INDIA

James Long

Sent to Calcutta at age 22, Long was an Irish Anglican priest who played a key role in the Indigo Revolt of 1859, when rural indigo farmers rebelled against British planters. Long translated and published *Nil Darpan*, a play written by Dinabandhu Mitra about the poor treatment of indigo farmers, for which he was fined and briefly jailed. He is remembered today as a key preserver of Bengali education, literature, and history.



CHINA

Eliza Bridgman

In 1864, 20 years after sailing to China, American missionary Eliza Bridgman opened a school for girls in Beijing who otherwise would have suffered prostitution, forced labor, or starvation. Bridgman's school was eventually folded into Yenching University, one of the first universities in China. Now Peking University, today it is China's most prestigious university.

resources, colonial power, disease prevalence, and half a dozen others. "My research assistants were entering all these variables, and the missions variable was amazingly robust," says Woodberry. "[The theory] kept on holding up. It was actually quite fun."

Fun, but hard to believe. Woodberry's results essentially suggested that 50 years' worth of research on the rise of democracy had overlooked the most important factor.

"When I started to present on this, no one was interested," says Woodberry. "I'd get two people in the sessions at conferences. It was not on anyone's radar." When scholars did show up, Woodberry came to expect hostile questions and the occasional angry interruption.

But at a conference presentation in

2002, Woodberry got a break. In the room sat Charles Harper Jr., then a vice president at the John Templeton Foundation, which was actively funding research on religion and social change. (Its grant recipients have included Christianity Today.) Three years later, Woodberry received half a million dollars from the foundation's Spiritual Capital Project, hired almost 50 research assistants, and set up a huge database project at the University of Texas, where he had taken a position in the sociology department. The team spent years amassing more statistical data and doing more historical analyses, further confirming his theory. With these results and his dissertation research, Woodberry could now support a sweeping claim:

Areas where Protestant missionaries had a significant presence in the past are on average more economically developed today, with comparatively better health, lower infant mortality, lower corruption, greater literacy, higher educational attainment (especially for women), and more robust membership in nongovernmental associations.

In short: Want a blossoming democracy today? The solution is simple—if you have a time machine: Send a 19th-century missionary.

Startling for Scholars

In spite of Smith's concerns, Woodberry's historical and statistical work has finally

Areas where Protestant missionaries had a significant presence in the past are on average more economically developed today, with comparatively better health, lower infant mortality, lower corruption, greater literacy, higher educational attainment (especially for women), and more robust membership in nongovernmental associations.

captured glowing attention. A summation of his 14 years of research—published in 2012 in the *American Political Science Review*, the discipline's top journal—has won four major awards, including the prestigious Luebbert Article Award for best article in comparative politics. Its startling title: “The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy.”

“[Woodberry] presents a grand and quite ambitious theory of how ‘conversionary Protestants’ contributed to building democratic societies,” says Philip Jenkins, distinguished professor of history at Baylor University. “Try as I might to pick holes in it, the theory holds up. [It has] major implications for the global study of Christianity.”

“Why did some countries become democratic, while others went the route of theocracy or dictatorship?” asks Daniel Philpott, who teaches political science and peace studies at the University of Notre Dame. “For [Woodberry] to show through devastatingly thorough analysis that conversionary Protestants are crucial to what makes the country democratic today [is] remarkable in many ways. Not only is it another factor—it turns out to be the most important factor. It can’t be anything but startling for scholars of democracy.”

“I think it’s the best work out there on religion and economic development,” says Robin Grier, professor of economics and

international and area studies at the University of Oklahoma. “It’s incredibly sophisticated and well grounded. I haven’t seen anything quite like it.”

When Woodberry talks about his work, he sounds like a careful academic who doesn’t want to overstate his case. But you also pick up on his passion for setting the record straight.

“We don’t have to deny that there were and are racist missionaries,” says Woodberry. “We don’t have to deny there were and are missionaries who do self-centered things. But if that were the average effect, we would expect the places where missionaries had influence to be *worse* than places where missionaries weren’t allowed or were restricted in action. We find exactly the opposite on all kinds of outcomes. Even in places where few people converted, [missionaries] had a

profound economic and political impact.”

The Nations’ Educators

There is one important nuance to all this: The positive effect of missionaries on democracy applies only to “conversionary Protestants.” Protestant clergy financed by the state, as well as Catholic missionaries prior to the 1960s, had no comparable effect in the areas where they worked.

Independence from state control made a big difference. “One of the main stereotypes about missions is that they were closely connected to colonialism,” says Woodberry. “But Protestant missionaries not funded by the state were regularly very critical of colonialism.”

For example, Mackenzie’s campaign for Khama III was part of his 30-year effort



to protect African land from white settlers. Mackenzie was not atypical. In China, missionaries worked to end the opium trade; in India, they fought to curtail abuses by landlords; in the West Indies and other colonies, they played key roles in building the abolition movement. Back home, their allies passed legislation that returned land to the native Xhosa people of South Africa and also protected tribes in New Zealand and Australia from being wiped out by settlers.

"I feel confident saying none of those movements would have happened without nonstate missionaries mobilizing them," says Woodberry. "Missionaries had a power base among ordinary people. They [were] the ones that transformed these movements into mass movements."

He notes that most missionaries didn't set out to be political activists. Locals associated Christianity with their colonial abusers, so in order to be effective at evangelizing, missionaries distanced themselves from the colonists. They campaigned against abuses for personal, practical reasons as well as humanitarian ones.

"Few [missionaries] were in any systemic way social reformers," says Joel Carpenter, director of the Nagel Institute for the Study of World Christianity at Calvin College. "I think they were first and foremost people who loved other people. They [cared] about other people, saw that they'd been wronged, and [wanted] to make it right."

While missionaries came to colonial reform through the backdoor, mass literacy and mass education were more deliberate projects—the consequence of a Protestant vision that knocked down old hierarchies in the name of "the priesthood of all believers." If all souls were equal before God, everyone would need to access the Bible in their own language. They would also need to know how to read.

"They focused on teaching people to read," says Dana Robert, director of the Center for Global Christianity and Mission

at Boston University. "That sounds really basic, but if you look worldwide at poverty, literacy is the main thing that helps you rise out of poverty. Unless you have broad-based literacy, you can't have democratic movements."

As Woodberry observes, although the Chinese invented printing 800 years before Europeans did, in China the technology was used mostly for elites. Then Protestant missionaries arrived in the 19th century and began printing tens of thousands of religious texts, making those available to the masses, and teaching women and other marginalized groups how to read. Not until then did Asian authorities start printing more widely.

Pull out a map, says Woodberry, point to any place where "conversionary Prot-

flagship journal," says Philpott. "In order to make this article fly, he had to leave no stone unturned and anticipate every hypothesis. It's an article whose thoroughness outpaces any I've seen."

But Bollen, whose talk prompted Woodberry's initial research (and who later cochaired his dissertation committee), offers a word of caution. "It's an excellent study. I don't see any particular flaw, but it's too bold to claim as an established fact. It's a single study. We have to see if other people can replicate it or come up with other explanations."

Yet so far, over a dozen studies have confirmed Woodberry's findings. The growing body of research is beginning to change the way scholars, aid workers, and economists think about democracy and development.

'I never felt really comfortable with the idea of missions. Then I read Bob's work. I thought, *Wow, that's amazing. They left a long legacy.*'

~ Robin Grier, economics professor

estants" were active in the past, and you'll typically find more printed books and more schools per capita. You'll find, too, that in Africa, the Middle East, and parts of Asia, most of the early nationalists who led their countries to independence graduated from Protestant mission schools.

"I'm not religious," says Grier. "I never felt really comfortable with the idea of [mission work]; it seemed cringe-worthy. Then I read Bob's work. I thought, *Wow, that's amazing. They left a long legacy.* It changed my views and caused me to rethink."

Sign of Greater Purposes

Skeptics remain, of course. In 2010, when Woodberry submitted his article to the *American Political Science Review*, the editors asked him to add case studies, run more regressions, and make all data and models public. For the article, he produced 192 pages of supporting material.

"It's a remarkable testament to his courage and endurance to get his work in a

The church, too, has something to learn. For Western Christians, there's something exciting and even subversive about research that cuts against the common story and transforms an often ugly character—the missionary—into the whimsical, unwitting protagonist we all love to love.

Woodberry would temper our triumphalism, to be sure, reminding us that all these positive outcomes were somewhat unintended, a sign of God's greater purposes being worked out through the lives of devoted but imperfect people.

Still, a little affirmation seems appropriate. As Dana Robert notes, "Bob's research shows that the total is more than the sum of its parts. Christians collectively make a difference in society."

Looking back now, more than a century later, we see just how long that transformative difference can endure.

CT

ANDREA PALPANT DILLEY, a writer based in Austin, Texas, spent part of her childhood in Kenya as the daughter of Quaker missionaries. She is the author of *Faith and Other Flat Tires* (Zondervan).





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2014
CHRISTIANITY TODAY
BOOK
AWARDS



If you're a faithful reader of *Christianity Today* (and if so, thank you!), you'll notice that the magazine you're holding is different from the version that arrived in your mailbox this time last year. So it's fitting that our annual book awards have some new features of their own—three, in particular.

First, beyond the winners in our ten regular categories, we've christened from among those winners our first-ever *CT* Book of the Year: *God's Forever Family*, Larry Eskridge's history of the Jesus People movement. Now, this is no exact science. And really, we wouldn't have gone wrong laying the extra laurel atop any of the competitors, or a dozen other books besides. You may have your own favorite to recommend. But we can't see any harm in generating buzz—or provoking debate—around a book our judges praised for its originality, meticulous research, and colorful character sketches.

Second, speaking of those judges, we've lifted the veil of anonymity from their comments. Our judges—best-selling authors, experts in their fields, and simply thoughtful people—have strained their eyes and brains reading and evaluating a thousand or more pages. They deserve to have their labors recognized. And you deserve to have your curiosity satiated.

And third, we've introduced a new awards category targeted at readers of *Her.meneutics*, *CT*'s popular women's blog. Just what qualifies as a "women's" book, you might ask. Don't women care about apologetics, theology, and history? Good questions. Certainly, the boundaries are harder to specify than, say, biblical studies. (And it's worth noting that we've encouraged publishers to nominate *Her.meneutics* entrants in the other "gender-neutral" categories—and vice versa.) There's no precise formula, to be sure, but the talented writers and editors behind *Her.meneutics* do a fantastic job hitting that "women's interest" sweet spot. We want to honor their work.

Whatever you think of our new look or its book awards, keep in mind that change at *CT* unfolds against the background of a core mission that *doesn't*. Our promise to you, faithful reader, is to never stop loving God and the books that glorify his name.

—Matt Reynolds, associate editor for books

BOOK of the YEAR



God's Forever Family

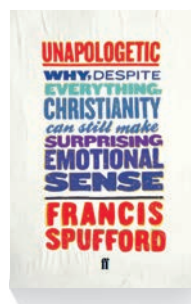
The Jesus People Movement in America

Larry Eskridge

(Oxford University Press)

— THE — 2014 CHRISTIANITY TODAY BOOK AWARDS

APOLOGETICS / EVANGELISM

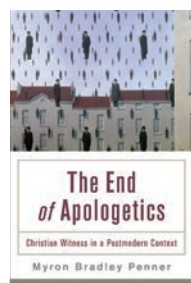


Unapologetic

Why, Despite Everything, Christianity Can Still Make Surprising Emotional Sense

Francis Spufford (HarperOne)

"Spufford admirably writes fluently and attractively for non-Christians. Most evangelicals will disagree with some views he holds, but this book is ideal to start a conversation with your skeptical friend or jaded family member." —*John Stackhouse, theologian, Regent College*



AWARD OF MERIT

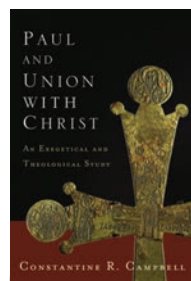
The End of Apologetics

Christian Witness in a Postmodern Context

Myron Bradley Penner (Baker Academic)

"This well-researched, lucidly written, irenic work demonstrates that postmodernism, far from being a gateway to relativism, atheism, and the death of the church, offers resources for furthering the gospel and strengthening discipleship. All reason-based apologists need to wrestle with it." —*Louis Markos, professor of English, Houston Baptist University*

BIBLICAL STUDIES



Paul and Union with Christ

An Exegetical and Theological Study

Constantine R. Campbell (Zondervan)

"Campbell (professor of New Testament at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) tackles a massive topic on which no consensus has ever been reached. He covers the waterfront in terms of judicious analysis of the relevant Scriptures, and he adopts sensible, convincing, multifaceted conclusions. Yet for all its learnedness, the book is so carefully structured and clearly written that the reader marvels at his argument's overall simplicity and persuasiveness." —*Craig Blomberg, professor of New Testament, Denver Seminary*



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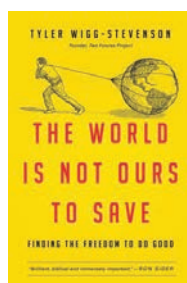
Charity

The Place of the Poor in the Biblical Tradition

Gary A. Anderson (Yale University Press)

"Anderson (author of 2010 award winner *Sin: A History*) examines the idea of charity in both the biblical text and church tradition at large. He questions the critique of charity as a product of self-interest, and instead gives a compelling argument for charity as a religious act, both in the way it shows faith in God and the way in which it can bear eternal rewards." —*Mary Veeneman, professor of theology, North Park University*

CHRISTIANITY AND CULTURE

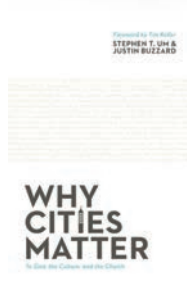


The World Is Not Ours to Save

Finding the Freedom to Do Good

Tyler Wigg-Stevenson (InterVarsity Press)

"Wigg-Stevenson offers insight and advice to a generation badly in need of visionary yet earthy wisdom. This book is freighted with the kind of realism capable of restoring and sustaining high ideals." —*Eric Miller, professor of history, Geneva College*



AWARD OF MERIT

Why Cities Matter

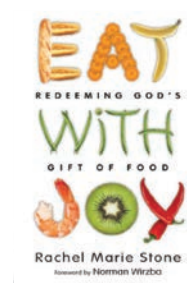
To God, the Culture, and the Church

Stephen T. Um and Justin Buzzard

(Crossway)

"The Bible says a great deal about cities, from Babel to Babylon, from Jerusalem to the New Jerusalem. Christianity spread in cities, and the early church was an urban phenomenon, as was the Protestant Reformation. More recently, we've tended toward a rural, small-town, or suburban emphasis. But the cultural significance of cities is increasing. This book shows how to proclaim the gospel in today's cities. The authors combine sociological research and biblical insight to create promising new paradigms for ministry." —*Gene Edward Veith, provost, Patrick Henry College*

CHRISTIAN LIVING



Eat With Joy

Redeeming God's Gift of Food

Rachel Marie Stone (InterVarsity Press)

"In this food-crazed society, with the First Lady fat-shaming, *Eat With Joy* offers wisdom for the challenges of health and 'proper' eating. The book serves up a solid theology of food—of receiving it, enjoying it, and giving thanks for it. It offers the perfect

blend of personal stories and research; Scripture and recipes.” —Caryn Rivadeneira, *Hermeneutics* writer, author of *Known* and *Loved*

AWARD OF MERIT

Crazy Busy

A (Mercifully) Short Book About a (Really) Big Problem

Kevin DeYoung (Crossway)

“Stop and measure the toll of life’s frantic rush, and humbly reflect on how sins (like pride) feed into our inner turmoil—this is the essential message of an essential book, a message more necessary than how-to lists for simplification.” —Tony Reinke, content strategist, *Desiring God*



THE CHURCH / PASTORAL LEADERSHIP

Reading for Preaching

The Preacher in Conversation with Storytellers, Biographers, Poets, and Journalists

Cornelius Plantinga Jr. (Eerdmans)

“Plantinga (former CT book award winner for *Not the Way It’s Supposed to Be* and *Engaging God’s World*) believes that preachers who read widely—novels, mysteries, biographies, poetry, and so on—are likely to become better at their craft. His thoughtful and winsome prose will encourage them to follow his advice.” —Douglas Brouwer, pastor, Fort Lauderdale, Florida



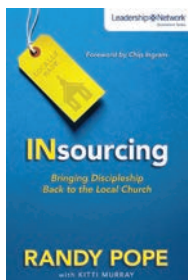
AWARD OF MERIT

Insourcing

Bringing Discipleship Back to the Local Church

Randy Pope with Kittie Murray (Zondervan)

“The lack of discipleship in North American churches is widely lamented, but few churches know what to do. Pope, pastor of Perimeter Church in Atlanta, outlines a disciple-making process that actually works.” —Howard Snyder, former professor of Wesley studies, Tyndale Seminary



FICTION

The Sky Beneath My Feet

Lisa Samson (Thomas Nelson)

“Readers will find ‘aha!’ moments in the deft, competent unfolding of Samson’s story about modern-day mystics, the church, and the imperfect people who find community with each other.” —Cindy Crosby, author of *By Willoway Brook*



AWARD OF MERIT

Every Waking Moment

Chris Fabry (Tyndale)

“This novel has authentic characters, a compelling narrative, and a complex exploration of the brokenness and hope of human life.” —Susannah Clements, department chair of literature, Regent University



HISTORY / BIOGRAPHY

God’s Forever Family

The Jesus People Movement in America

Larry Eskridge (Oxford University Press)

“This rich and surprisingly entertaining book is the definitive work on the Jesus People movement, a significant shaper of contemporary evangelicalism. Eskridge masters an incredible range of stories and sources. For anyone with a background in the Jesus People movement, Calvary Chapels, Vineyard churches, the Willow Creek Association, or the charismatic renewal that began in the 1970s, this is like reading an autobiography.” —Thomas Kidd, professor of history, Baylor University



AWARD OF MERIT

Sacred Scripture, Sacred War

The Bible and the American Revolution

James P. Byrd (Oxford University Press)

“Most Christians today would prefer to ignore violent passages in the Bible. Byrd makes clear that Revolutionary-era Americans used those passages to sanctify their own acts of violence, against both European and Native American enemies. While the book serves primarily to flesh out a more complete understanding of the Revolutionary mind, it also serves as a cautionary tale.” —John G. Turner, professor of religious studies, George Mason University



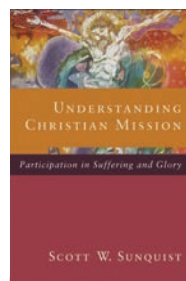
MISSIONS / GLOBAL AFFAIRS

Understanding Christian Mission

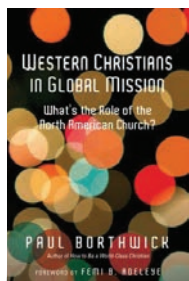
Participation in Suffering and Glory

Scott W. Sundquist (Baker Academic)

“Because missiology is a multidisciplinary field drawing from history, theology, and practice, it is exceedingly difficult to cover everything that’s required. Sundquist has done an excellent job at this daunting task.” —Timothy C. Tennent, president, Asbury Theological Seminary



MISSIONS / GLOBAL AFFAIRS



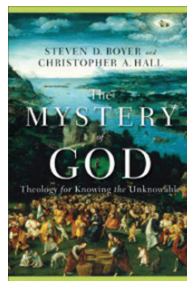
AWARD OF MERIT

Western Christians in Global Mission

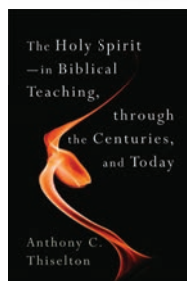
What's the Role of the North American Church?

Paul Borthwick (InterVarsity Press)

"Borthwick introduces Western readers (especially Americans!) to what they need to know to engage the diversity of global Christian faith. Offering both critique and encouragement, he reminds us of how Americans perceive themselves and how they are perceived by sisters and brothers around the world. It's a solid dose of humility to offset our pride at being so-called world leaders." —Scott Moreau, professor of intercultural studies, Wheaton College



"Boyer and Hall do an excellent job unpacking the subject of mystery, which is constantly alluded to in theological work but rarely carefully analyzed. The authors achieve clarity without sacrificing depth." —James Beilby, professor of biblical/theological studies, Bethel University



AWARD OF MERIT

The Holy Spirit

In Biblical Teaching, Through the Centuries, and Today

Anthony C. Thiselton (Eerdmans)

"This is perhaps the most useful survey of biblical and historical approaches to the doctrine of the Spirit available today. Concise and clearly written, it nevertheless covers vast territory. The result is a work of history and Scripture, scholarship and testimony, that draws from the best insights of mind and heart." —Gerald McDermott, professor of religion, Roanoke College

SPIRITUALITY

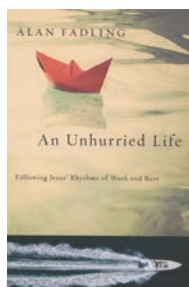


Death by Living

Life Is Meant to Be Spent

N. D. Wilson (Thomas Nelson)

"*Death by Living* is a reflective yet lively mishmash of theology, philosophy, and memoir. Wilson's mantra that 'life is meant to be spent' seeps from every pore of this book. Both playful and poetic, Wilson's carpe diem challenge is sweaty with urgency, his anecdotes buzzy with vibrancy." —Kristen Scharold, writer and editor, Brooklyn, New York



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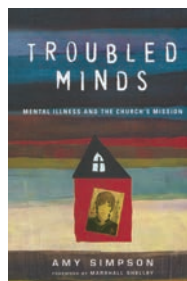
An Unhurried Life

Following Jesus' Rhythms of Work and Rest

Alan Fadling (InterVarsity Press)

"Can we gain inner peace and strength in our high-pressured, fast-paced lives? With insights and stories, Fadling, a spiritual director, demonstrates what it takes to experience empowered lives despite life's inevitable crises and urgent demands." —Harold Myra, former CEO, Christianity Today

HER.MENEUTICS



Troubled Minds

Mental Illness and the Church's Mission

Amy Simpson (InterVarsity Press)

"Simpson's sensitive recounting of her experience growing up with a schizophrenic parent forms the foundation for a book that belongs underlined and dog-eared on the shelves of every church leader. *Troubled Minds* is far more than an introduction to the issues surrounding mental illness and the church. It is a call to practical discipleship for everyone who seeks to follow the One who spent much of his ministry caring for the ill and those at the margins of his society—often the same people." —Michelle Van Loon, Her.meneutics writer, author of *Uprooted*



AWARD OF MERIT

Glimpses of Grace

Treasuring the Gospel in Your Home

Gloria Furman (Crossway)

"At first glance, this book might seem most appropriate for homemaking moms with young children. But Furman has much to say to any woman concerned about God's glory. Who can't relate to her stories of couch cushions distracting her from prayer or the morning her last coffee filter went AWOL? More than practical tips for holy living, the book is a beautiful theology of the mundane: fresh, honest, and filled with the good news of Jesus Christ." —Megan Hill, Her.meneutics writer

THEOLOGY / ETHICS

The Mystery of God

Theology for Knowing the Unknowable

Steven D. Boyer and Christopher A. Hall (Baker Academic)

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- *Funding Your Vision* (webinar series)

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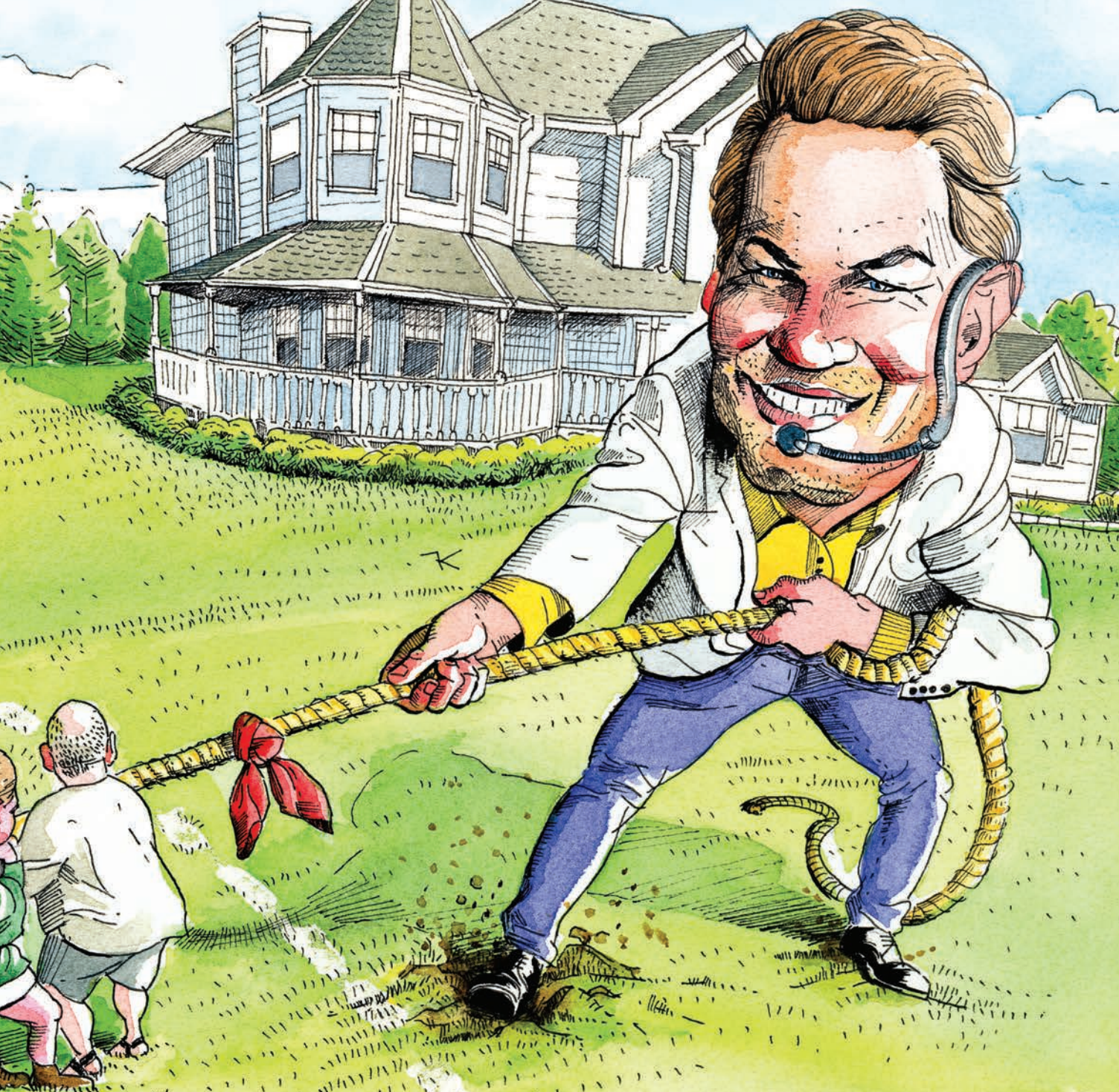


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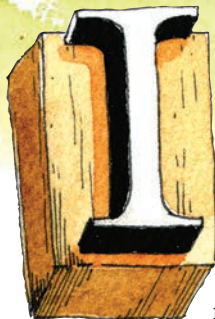
WHO owns the SERMONS?



by **BOB SMIETANA**



***When sermons
become books that
make millions in
royalties, churches
and their pastors
should know.***



IN THE LATE 1970s, Sealy Yates was sitting in his California law office when his friend Chuck Swindoll paid him a visit. Swindoll was then a relatively unknown pastor at First Evangelical Free Church in nearby Fullerton. He had run into some legal trouble and wanted Yates's advice. At issue: who owned Swindoll's sermons.

A few years earlier, Swindoll had allowed a friend to launch a radio program called *New Standard for Living*, which rebroadcast his sermons. The program had done well, and now Swindoll wanted to take a more active role by starting his own program. But his friend balked, and their dispute seemed headed for court. Swindoll wanted to avoid a lawsuit and asked Yates to mediate the situation.

Yates says his response was simple. "I asked Chuck, 'Who owns your

sermons?" His response was, "I don't know." Yates eventually settled the dispute and helped Swindoll launch *Insight for Living*, his popular broadcast ministry. After some legal research, Yates also crafted an agreement that guaranteed Swindoll the copyrights and the intellectual property rights to his sermons.

A copyright is the exclusive right to make copies, license, and otherwise exploit a literary, musical, or artistic work, whether printed, audio, video, or electronic. Intellectual property is whatever results from the original creative thought or copyright material. For example, a sermon series may be copyrighted as such—a series of sermons. If the pastor also holds intellectual property rights, he or she can then take content from that sermon series and create a book, for example.

Yates represents dozens of high-profile Christian authors, including Swindoll, David Platt, Mark Driscoll, and David Jeremiah. His firm's standard agreement grants the pastor all the intellectual property rights to their sermons. It also gives the

A judge eventually awarded Schuller about \$600,000, but ruled that the church owned the rights to broadcasts of the *Hour of Power* television show that featured his sermons.

Copyright Law Favors Churches

Disputes over the copyrights of pastors' sermons aren't likely to go away, said Frank Sommerville, a Dallas-based attorney who specializes in nonprofit law. That's partly because of the money at stake, and partly because current copyright law is stacked against pastors.

Sommerville says that under the Copyright Act of 1976, a pastor's sermons qualify as "work for hire." That means the copyrights and intellectual property rights actually belong to their employer.

"It's not the answer that pastors expect," said Sommerville. "They've always taken the position that God gave them the sermon as part of their ministry. It never crossed their minds that there would be a law that

nonprofit can't, because of the IRS restrictions on private inurement. He points to several recent private letters from the IRS, which denied charitable status to several religious nonprofits that wanted to publish books by their founders and let the founders keep the copyrights and the proceeds.

That led Sommerville to advise pastors to let their churches keep the copyright to their sermons. He admits that answer is not likely to please many ministers. But it's the simplest way to deal with the issue, especially since most ministers' sermons aren't worth a lot of money.

Things get more complicated when a pastor turns a sermon into a bestseller and earns a fortune in royalties.

Steven Furtick, pastor of Elevation Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, came under fire recently after a local television station reported on his plans to build an 8,400-square-foot house costing \$1.7 million. Furtick is reportedly paying for the house using his book advances. That raised questions about who exactly owns the rights to the sermons and the book, since some

'This is not a problem that gets easier to solve if you ignore it. The longer you wait, the more expensive it gets.' ~ Frank Sommerville, attorney

church permission to record the sermons and gives them an irrevocable license to use the content free of charge.

It's the only arrangement that makes sense, said Yates, a partner in Yates & Yates, a law firm that doubles as a literary agent for its clients. Preachers should own their sermons. If pastors don't own their sermons, that would essentially rob them of their livelihood, said Yates. Pastors wouldn't be able to preach the same sermon in more than one place. And they wouldn't be able to take their sermon notes with them when they moved to a new church, which is "ridiculous," said Yates.

Other well-known pastors have run into similar legal gray areas. In 2012, Robert Schuller and his family sued the Crystal Cathedral, claiming copyright infringement. They said the church had sold recordings of Schuller's sermons and kept the money for itself. The suit claimed that Schuller owned the copyrights to the sermons. He and his family asked for \$5 million in damages for copyright infringement and breach of contract.

would govern their sermons."

Sommerville's view is essentially this: A church hires a pastor to write and preach sermons. Since that's part of their job description, the sermon qualifies as work for hire and therefore belongs to the church.

Sommerville said that churches could run into Internal Revenue Service (IRS) headaches if they give pastors the intellectual property rights to their sermons. That's because intellectual property rights are considered charitable assets and thus have to be used for charitable purposes. The IRS bans "private inurement"—charitable assets resulting in personal gain (as when a pastor receives royalties for books to which the church holds the intellectual rights).

Sommerville said that sometimes churches get bad advice. "The problem is that intellectual property rights lawyers usually give churches the same answers that they give businesses," he said. "And they never talk about the tax implication."

A for-profit company can give away intellectual property rights if it wants, said Sommerville. But a church or other

of his books are based on his sermons and the church has reportedly run ads to promote them. (Elevation Church's executive pastor did not return phone calls requesting comment.)

Sommerville said that each church and pastor should determine who owns what when the pastor is hired. "This is not a problem that gets easier to solve if you ignore it," he said. "The longer you wait, the more expensive it gets."

What's a Pastor to Do?

When it comes to intellectual property rights, pastors and churches have three basic options:

1. A pastor can set up a separate nonprofit ministry, which holds the copyright to his sermons. The nonprofit ministry can then handle the proceeds from royalties, speaking engagements, and broadcast appearances outside the church. That's the approach taken by Swindoll, Furtick, and Jeremiah.

2. The pastor does all the writing—for

sermons and for books—on personal time, using his or her own computer and software. In that case, pastors would have to reimburse their churches for sermon copies made by staff or using church equipment, reproducing the sermon on audio, and so forth. The church and pastor would also sign a written contract that assigns all the intellectual property rights to the pastor.

3. The pastor can assign all the rights to the church. The second approach involved too many headaches for Mike Glenn, pastor of Brentwood Baptist Church, a megachurch just south of Nashville. So when Glenn finished his recent book, *The Gospel of Yes*, he assigned all the copyrights to the church. “In a way it was a relief to say to the church, ‘This is yours,’” said Glenn.

Brentwood Baptist is one of a number of congregations with a formal intellectual property policy for staff. It’s pretty straightforward: Anything that staff members create as part of their job duties—like the pastor’s sermons—belongs to the church as work for hire. Anything that staff members create during their spare time, using their own resources, belongs to them.

The rights to anything that’s created using substantial church resources—like books or songs—are transferred from the staff member to the church, under an agreement signed by both parties.

“Preaching is the main part of my job, so the sermons belong to the church,” said Glenn. “At some time, the church might decide to give me the rights. But they belong to the church.”

LifeChurch.tv, an Edmond, Oklahoma-based multisite congregation, has a similar intellectual property policy. The church gives away all of its resources, including sermon videos, children’s curricula, and its YouVersion Bible app. So it was essential for them to have a clear intellectual property policy, said Bobby Gruenewald, innovation leader at LifeChurch.tv. “If we are going to give away content for free, we couldn’t be in a situation where we are paying royalties.”

The church also holds copyrights to all of the sermons by LifeChurch.tv pastor Craig Groeschel, who has written several books. But he wrote them on his own time, then adapted them for sermon series.

Gruenewald said that the leaders at LifeChurch.tv consulted with outside counsel before crafting their policy. Staff learn about the policy when they are hired, and the church provides ongoing training so everyone knows the rules.

“We want to be sure that we are doing

the right thing for our staff,” he said. “We don’t want to create any false expectations.”

Perhaps the church’s most valuable intellectual property is its YouVersion Bible app, which has been downloaded for free more than 100 million times. YouVersion was originally Gruenewald’s idea, but he doesn’t hold any intellectual property rights to it.

“I get asked all the time: ‘Do you wish you still owned the rights to YouVersion?’” he said. “I don’t have any regrets at all.”

From Contract to Sermon to Book

At least one Christian publisher asks pastors trying to get their sermons published to prove they own the sermons.

“If a pastor is employed by a church, we would consider that pastor’s sermons works for hire. The rights to those sermons are owned by the particular church where the works were created, unless the pastor and church had a written agreement to the contrary,” said Marilyn Gordon, director of rights and contracts for Baker Publishing Group. “If a pastor wants to publish his sermons, we would require documentation on the ownership of the sermons.”



But what if a pastor preaches from notes, rather than from a full manuscript, and then only loosely ties the book to the sermon or sermons? What if the pastor preaches regularly at a church but isn’t considered an employee—often the case in small, rural churches?

Gordon said that Baker determines sermon ownership on a case-by-case basis.

Paige Mills, an intellectual property lawyer and a member of the Nashville law firm Bass, Berry, and Sims PLC, advises churches to work out their policy ahead of time. They should have a written agreement with their pastor, one that covers sermons and books based on sermons.

“It’s a fine line to walk,” she said. “Obviously most pastors don’t make a huge salary—and if they can supplement their salary by writing, the church may be fine with that and give them the rights. The main thing is thinking about it ahead of time and figuring out what they want to do.”

Yates is still not convinced that a sermon qualifies as work for hire under copyright law. Pastors are called to study and preach the Word, not to create intellectual property rights for a church, he said.

“Just because you are hired doesn’t make everything you do work for hire,” he said. “I don’t know of any church that hired a pastor to create intellectual property.” (A magazine, for example, hires writers to create intellectual property.) But the church “didn’t hire you to create intellectual property. Then why should the church get intellectual property rights?”

In any case, the details are best addressed during the hiring process. “I always ask [the pastor], what is your agreement?” Yates said. “If a pastor doesn’t own the intellectual property rights, then the church does, and [pastors] have no rights.”

CT

BOB SMIETANA is coauthor of *Good Intentions: Nine Hot-Button Issues Viewed Through the Eyes of Faith* (Moody).

Spicing Up

Did a small change of ingredients in the Nicene Creed create a new recipe, or enhance the original?

— GLOBAL GOSPEL PROJECT —

For the first year of the Global Gospel Project, *CT* focused on doctrines about the person of Jesus; in year two, we looked at God the Father. For year three of the project, we will look at doctrines related to the Holy Spirit. Recently, the Holy Spirit—specifically its role inspiring the expressive, charismatic spiritual gifts—has been at the center of debate among American Christians. But historically, the debate has focused on the Spirit's place in the Trinity. It is a leading factor in the long-standing division of the church between East and West.

The Eastern Orthodox Church and the Western churches (Catholic and Protestant) disagree over the *Filioque*, a Latin term in many ways as abstract as it sounds. Bradley Nassif, professor of theology at North Park University in Chicago, unravels the mystery of the dispute and explains the issues at stake.

Not all doctrines apply to everyday life, the *Filioque* being a good example. Even these, however, can end up impacting everyday relations between branches of the global church. If there is any practical application, then, it is to continue praying for the healing of division in the church.

—The Editors

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BY BRADLEY NASSIF

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I love food, especially Middle Eastern cuisine. My Lebanese grandmother is to blame for that. When I was a boy, she would spend hours in the kitchen kneading dough, grinding lamb, boiling cabbage, mixing spices, rolling grape leaves, making baklava, and baking bread. Cooking was a way she showed her love.

The foods were elaborately prepared with time-tested techniques, each having a special Arabic name (too ornate to pronounce in English). Many dishes went back centuries, some to the days of Jesus. These treasures of the palate were artfully displayed on the kitchen table. Salads, desserts, side dishes, and main courses offered the best of Grandma's Mediterranean gems. I especially loved her hummus, a chickpea dip now popular in America. Grandma died many years ago. For years I longed for her hummus. So this past summer, I took up cooking to try to remake some of her favorite dishes, including

hummus. But to my dismay, I failed as I mixed the wrong ingredients and spices over and over again. “What am I doing wrong?” I asked. “Why can’t I make hummus like Grandma did? Do I need to add more lemon? Is garlic necessary or optional? Must I use olive oil, or will canola oil do just as well? What’s essential and what’s not?” Eventually, I discovered the balance. Now my hummus is to die for—at least according to my family.

Similarly, Christians have a long tradition of enjoying a delicate combination of ingredients that compose a proper understanding of the Trinity. That beautifully balanced doctrine of the Trinity came in the fourth century, after church leaders reflected on how God exists as a unity of three equally divine and equally eternal Persons. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God—three divine Persons sharing one divine nature. The doctrine was eventually summarized in the Nicene Creed.

The heresy the Nicene Creed stood against was Arianism. The heresy was named after Arius, a priest who believed that Jesus was not fully God but rather

a created being through whom God the Father made the world. If Arius and his followers were right, enormous consequences would follow: The church would be wrong to worship Jesus as God. Salvation through Jesus would be impossible because only God can save—and Jesus would not have been fully God.

One Small Change

We won’t quote the whole Nicene Creed here, but a passage from it forms one of the strongest dividing lines between Eastern and Western Christianity. It reads: “We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of life, who proceeds from the Father; who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified.” When the creed was first written, the clause *who proceeds from the Father* was intended to safeguard the divinity of the Holy Spirit. By saying the Holy Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father, the creed maintained that the Spirit is fully God because he partakes of the Father’s divinity.

Here is where the trouble began. The Christian West (later the Roman Catholic Church) added the Latin phrase *Filioque*—“and the Son”—to the above lines. Hence, the Spirit “proceeds from the Father *and the Son*.” The Protestant Reformers of the 16th century, including Martin Luther and John Calvin, supported the *Filioque*.

Most evangelicals are barely aware of the

issue. The Eastern Orthodox Church, however, has insisted on preserving the original wording of the Nicene Creed, keeping the *Filioque* out. For the Orthodox, the *Filioque* was never agreed upon by the whole church (East and West alike). And, more important, they believe it is simply wrong.

If truth be told, many people—Orthodox, Catholics, and Protestants alike—dismiss the dispute as obscure and inconsequential. But is it trivial? Or is it important to the way we conceive the Trinity? Does one small change affect the whole of Christian life and thought?

Issues at Stake

To understand what the global church has been debating for the past 1,500 years, let’s go back to Grandma’s hummus. What would happen if we added an extra spice to the original dish—say, jalapeño? Would this ruin the quality of the original dish? Those with a taste for classic cuisine would answer with an emphatic “Yes!” The recipe is no longer hummus.

But imagine that, instead of adding an ingredient, we simply rearranged the order in which the original ingredients were put together. Let’s say we used the very same chickpeas, lemon, garlic, salt, and olive oil Grandma did, but just changed the order in which they went into the mixer. Rearranging them might actually help us remember all the original ingredients better, while ensuring the same delicious taste. That way, the hummus remains as true as ever,



Christians have a long tradition of enjoying a delicate combination of ingredients that compose a proper understanding of the Trinity.

and Grandma and her ancestors stay happy.

That's how it was with the Filioque. The Eastern churches believed that adding "and the Son" to the Creed would change the very heart of the Trinity (a dish of a different kind). The West claimed there was no real change to the doctrine, just a rearrangement of the same ingredients that would ensure the original recipe.

What were the issues at stake in this controversy?

First, the debate centered on how the members of the Trinity related in eternity, not how they related in the world, such as when the Spirit was sent at Pentecost. Also, when asked how the Spirit's "procession" takes place, no one knew. It was a mystery found in the Bible and confessed by the church for centuries.

On the Orthodox side are two camps, one strict, the other moderate. Many strict thinkers regarded the Filioque as dangerous and heretical—a view held by people such as Photios (9th century), Mark of Ephesus (15th century), and Vladimir Lossky (20th century). They claim the Filioque confuses the eternal relations among the divine Persons and destroys the priority of the Father within the Trinity. If both the Father *and* the Son are sources of the Godhead, then the Spirit is subordinated to both, leading to a belief in two gods. Lossky has even blamed the Filioque for the Catholic emphasis on papal supremacy (a position today's more moderate Orthodox writers find farfetched).

Meanwhile, moderate Orthodox interpret the Western view on the Filioque to mean essentially the same thing as the Eastern view, thus preserving the divinity of the Spirit and the priority of the Father within the Godhead. Gregory of Sinai (13th century), for example, followed Maximos the Confessor (7th century) by refining the Western view to suggest that the Spirit eternally proceeds from the Father "through" the Son. Metropolitan Kallistos Ware sees it much the same way today. Regardless of the strict or moderate positions, Eastern theologians agree that there are two issues at stake in the Filioque debate: the truth of the doctrine itself, and unilaterally altering a creed that was accepted by an earlier ecumenical council.

In the West, Augustine first introduced the Filioque in his treatise *On the Trinity* (published in 419). There, he interpreted John 15:26 as referring to the Spirit, who "proceeds from both the Father and the Son." Following Augustine, the Council of

Is the Filioque trivial? Or is it important to the way we conceive the Trinity?

Toledo (589) in Spain became the first Western council to support the Filioque. Rome accepted the doctrine in the 11th century. During subsequent negotiations with the East in the Council of Florence (1438–9), the West reaffirmed it. This confirmed how far apart the two traditions had grown.

The West argued that the Filioque was not, in fact, adding anything to the creed. Rather, it was a clarification intended to defend the faith against the Arian error that Jesus was less than divine. The Filioque rightly showed that the Spirit's procession from both the Father and the Son did not stray from the faith. As for the pope's right to alter the creed in this way, this was thought to be a privilege granted by Christ himself.

Does Scripture have anything to say about the Filioque? It does, though modern interpreters question whether the Bible explicitly teaches a theology of the Spirit's procession. The East would cite John 15:26 ("the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father," NASB), 3:16, and 14:26–28 as evidence that the Father alone is the origin of the Son and Spirit. Key texts supporting the Western position were Romans 8:9 and Galatians 4:6, where the term "Spirit of Christ" was thought to denote the Spirit's eternal origin from the Son.

In addition, the West often equated the eternal relations in the Trinity with temporal activity in this world, as when Jesus promised that he would send his disciples "another Paraclete" (advocate) when he departed this world (John 14:16, Douay-Rheims).

Taste for Yourself

So are the East's and West's Trinitarian views genuinely incompatible? Beginning in the eighth and ninth centuries, people certainly began to think that they were. As the centuries passed, power, authority, and heated conflict often ruled in the debate. Yet something more important was at stake: the fear that innovation had destroyed the purity of the faith and abandoned the teachings of the church fathers.

In recent years, theologians from both sides have gathered to reexamine the

subject. The most notable attempt to heal the split is the North American Orthodox-Catholic Consultation and its document "The Filioque: A Church Dividing Issue? An Agreed Statement." One of the group's several conclusions reads as follows:

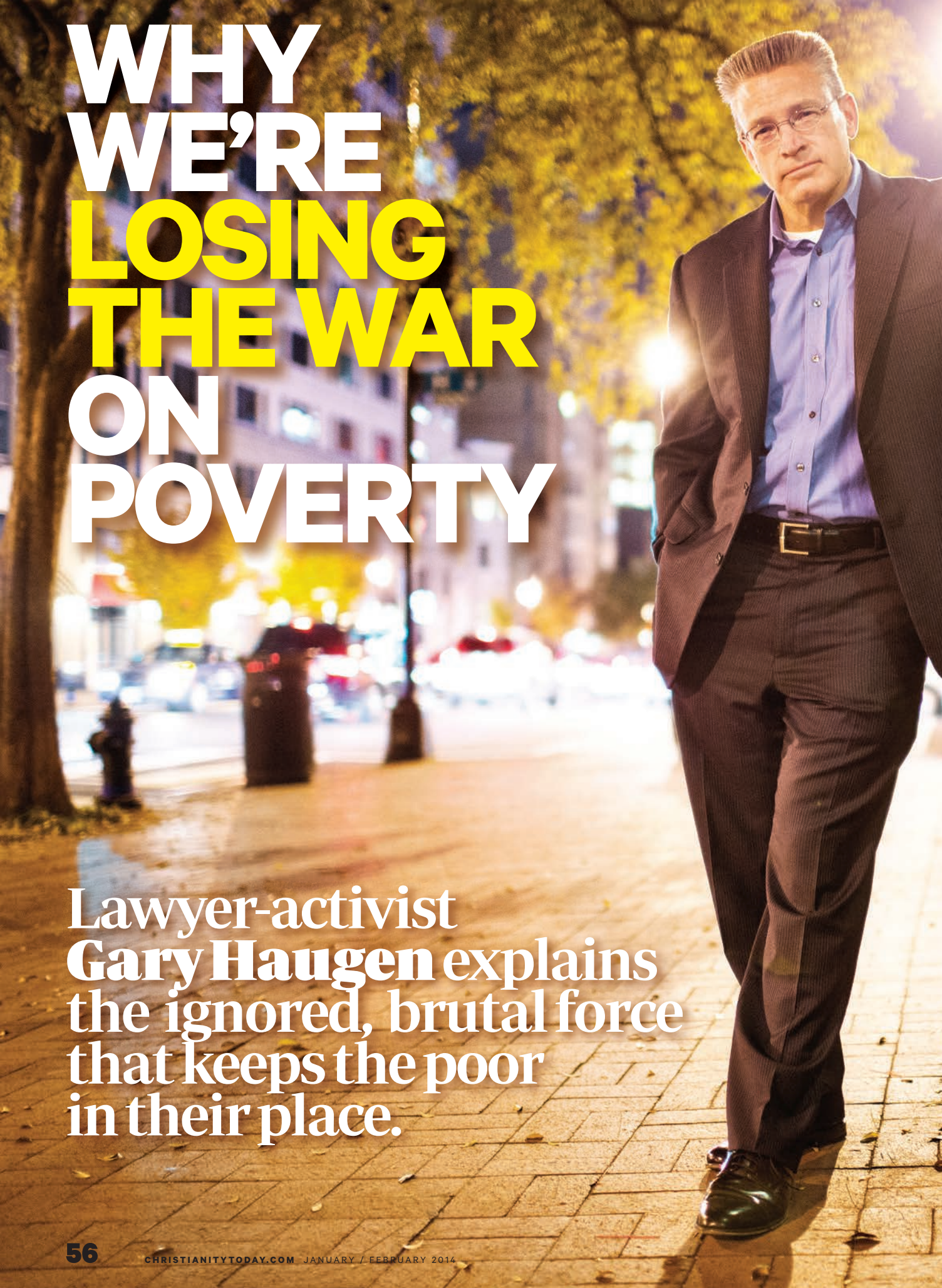
We are aware that the problem of the theology of the *Filioque*, and its use in the Creed, is not simply an issue between the Catholic and Orthodox communions. Many Protestant Churches, too, drawing on the theological legacy of the Medieval West, consider the term to represent an integral part of the orthodox Christian confession. Although dialogue among a number of these Churches and the Orthodox communion has already touched on the issue, any future resolution of the disagreement between East and West on the origin of the Spirit must involve all those communities that profess the Creed of 381 as a standard of faith.

And that takes us back to Grandma's hummus. Is the Filioque like an added ingredient? Three options are on the table: one from the West, two from the East. The West says the doctrine actually enhances the Nicene Creed by clarifying the inner life of the Trinity. But "strict" theologians in the East think it creates an imbalance among the members of the Trinity, destroys the Father as "sole source" of the Son and Spirit, and violates church unity. Orthodox "moderates" agree that church unity is violated, but think the Filioque can be true if we say that the Spirit proceeds from the Father "through the Son." Only if, in other words, the Son mediates—not causes—the Spirit's procession from the Father alone.

Readers will have to taste the theological hummus for themselves to see if East or West faithfully follows Grandma's original recipe.


CT

Bradley Nassif is professor of biblical and theological studies at North Park University in Chicago.

A full-page photograph of Gary Haugen, a man with short, light-colored hair and glasses, wearing a dark suit jacket over a light blue button-down shirt and dark trousers. He is walking on a city sidewalk at night, looking towards the camera. The background is a blurred city street with warm streetlights and trees.

WHY WE'RE LOSING THE WAR ON POVERTY

Lawyer-activist
Gary Haugen explains
the ignored, brutal force
that keeps the poor
in their place.



ONE NIGHT in December 2003, an 8-year-old girl named Yuri was abducted, raped, and brutally murdered in the remote Quechuan village of La Union, Peru. The next morning, her 11-year-old brother found her nearly naked body dumped on the main thoroughfare of their village.

Yuri's story opens *The Locust Effect: Why the End of Poverty Requires the End of Violence* (Oxford University Press), the new book from Gary Haugen, founder of International Justice Mission (IJM). Yuri's murderers escaped prosecution, while another man was wrongly convicted and sentenced to 30 years in prison. The book's first chapter, titled "What the World Can't See," pinpoints a basic source of entrenched poverty overlooked by well-intentioned outsiders: corrupt government officials who allow criminals to victimize the poor with impunity. For instance, national statistics find 90 percent of murders in Mexico go unsolved.

The lack of reliable law enforcement, Haugen argues, exposes the poor to the worst predatory violence, undermining the good accomplished by the billions of dollars aid agencies spend annually to fight poverty.

Haugen wants Westerners—and the aid agencies they support—to be as determined in fighting criminal violence against the poor as they are in relieving hunger and treating HIV/AIDS. He spoke recently to Timothy C. Morgan, CT senior editor of global journalism.

Interview by
Timothy C. Morgan

Photo by Scott Suchman

What is “the locust effect,” and how does it affect poor people?

Picture a poor farmer trying to scrape his way out of poverty. Just when the crops have started to show promise, the locusts descend and devour all of that hard work. That’s the locust effect—the way violence impacts the poor in the developing world. The traditional things we do to assist the poor to get out of poverty don’t stop the violence. *The Locust Effect* tells the story of the hidden plague of violence.

Your book stresses the rule of law and law enforcement. We know churches don’t have police powers or the power to prosecute, so what can religious leaders do?

I hope Christians will recover their role in building communities where the poor are protected from violence. Christians played a wonderful role in sounding the alarm on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. They became world leaders, confronting it and engaging it. It showed the church at its best.

Christians provide moral authority for ensuring that justice systems don’t just serve a political faction [or] moneyed interests, or are used for extortion or corrupt purposes. You can find again and again where Christian leaders led that fight 100 and 150 years ago.

Should Christians primarily work through churches to help create a more just society?

You can look to the struggle against slavery in the 19th century, to the struggle against child labor, to the civil rights movement. In each, the church had a critical role in not only being an advocate, but also deploying specialized expertise and skills in the work of justice. At the turn of the 20th century, the amazing police reform in New York City was influenced by a Presbyterian minister, Charles Henry Parkhurst.

Throughout history are hidden other stories of Christians taking up their biblical, prophetic role—not of seizing governmental power, but of using their power as citizens and their moral voice to ensure that the state’s power was used to protect the weakest. In Scripture, God’s people exhort the rulers, the authorities, to exercise their power with justice. The fight for law enforcement is now being engaged in the developing world. The violence

manifest in the developing world is actually against the law.

The problem is not that the poor don’t get laws. The problem is that they don’t get law enforcement. There is a functional collapse of law enforcement systems in the developing world; the poor are left utterly vulnerable to violence. This is another historic opportunity for the people of God to be on the side of justice in very practical ways.

Critics might say this is yet another example of paternalism, of trying to cast off the white man’s burden. How would you respond?

I’ve actually had a marvelous conversation with William Easterly, the author of *The White Man’s Burden*. We’re trying to allow countries to develop so that everyone thrives. The critique of traditional aid is that it ignored the on-the-ground political and governance problems that undermine the effectiveness of that aid.

There’s a problem with pouring aid into circumstances where poor people are not protected from predatory violence. If what we’re observing is true—that the poor are living in lawless chaos—then we are going to be significantly disappointed in the outcome of our poverty alleviation efforts.

You say violence against the poor has been invisible. How?

When people think of poverty, they tell you what they see: the shacks, the dirty water, the hungry families. Those are all the visuals that immediately come to mind.

What they don’t see are the assaults, the slap across the face, the rape, the torture by police, and the extortion. It’s intentionally hidden by the perpetrator. The victims are scared and ashamed, and it’s difficult for them to speak. People don’t talk about the things they don’t have solutions for. People working in the development field and in poverty-fighting or public health don’t often come from law enforcement.

What can the average American Christian do about violence against the poor thousands of miles away?

It begins by asking, “What about the violence in this community?” It’s the same thing as the AIDS epidemic. There’s tremendous shame around it. People do not want to talk about it. The World Health Organization says that gender



Frontline Compassion: IJM helped a Guatemalan mother and her gang-raped daughter (top) put three men in prison for the crime. It also assisted police in the Philippines free 12 women from sex-trafficking at a high-end bar (bottom). Experts estimate 375,000 Filipino women and girls are sex-trafficked.

violence [accounts] for more death and disability for women and girls between the ages of 14 and 44 than car accidents, malaria, and war combined.

Ask about the violence against women and girls. Observe whether people experience the police as people you run to or run from when you’re in trouble. People who work intimately with the poor frequently are quite familiar with violence, but they don’t know what to do, so they don’t readily talk about it.

There is a solution for violence: the basic service the rest of us rely on every day, law enforcement.

Westerners
are not going
to parachute
in and save
the day.
This is a
fundamental
struggle
for justice
that's going
to have to be
owned by
the local
community.

Some Christians see the pursuit of social justice as less important than evangelization. What do you say to them?

If we say we love the God we can't see, and we don't love the brother who we can see, the Bible says the love of God is not in us. Jesus also said that to love someone is to do what you would want done for you in similar circumstances. Do unto others. This is

simply saying that we love our neighbors who are suffering under violence when we come to their aid.

Our proclamation of the goodness and love of God simply has no credibility if we're unwilling to love them [at] their point of greatest need. The work for justice is a way of simply obeying the very explicit biblical command. Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, the Bible says. It's a simple act of obedience.

As to hierarchy of proclamation, the Bible says that we are to love in word and deed. Why would I try to create a hierarchy between breathing in and breathing out? You have to do both—to proclaim truth in the world and to love [your] neighbor.

Some Christians fear that church-based justice advocacy will eventually displace formation and discipleship as the church's core mission.

Almost none of those Christians would ever live that way toward the people dearest to them, their own family. What if the only thing you did was [tell] your children about the Christian faith and [you] never showed them love? That's just not the way Christian parents act. In fact, they know that if they preach to their kids but don't actually love them, that none of that preaching is going to convey the truth.

These tired, false dichotomies are from another era when the gospel was divided between word and deed. Historically, the people of God, when they [are] obeying Christ, are used [by] God to bring justice to people.

I'm on the side of hope. I've seen it with my own eyes, and I've seen it profoundly in history.

Who are the American church's ideal partners for fighting violence?

The ideal partner is the body of Christ around the world. Westerners are not going to parachute in and save the day. This is a fundamental struggle for justice that's going to have to be owned by the local community.

Another partner will be governmental authorities within that community, within that country. This recovers Christian interaction with government. Romans 13 says the authorities are actually ministers of God in order to do justice in the community. Christians in other eras shaped the way the government went about seeking justice and peace in the community.

What models can you point to?

In the city of Cebu, Philippines, IJM partnered with community leaders to rally the justice system to protect children from sex trafficking. That's Project Lantern. One critical partner was the church, Protestant and Catholic. The victimization of children in the commercial sex trade was reduced by nearly 80 percent because law enforcement protected the children instead of the sex traffickers.

What of that model could be reproduced elsewhere?

That's the exciting news. It's now being replicated in Manila and Pampanga. We're also seeing the government itself beginning to foot the bill and take the initiative. IJM is a partner, but it's no longer the prime moving force. The government itself is setting up specialized units. Fast-track courts are being established to address sex trafficking. Safe places for the survivors of sex trafficking are being established. It's being taken nationwide in the Philippines. We're at the front end of this effort.

Have you ever had a moment when you regretted getting on a plane bound for Kigali, Rwanda, to investigate the 1994 genocide? Your life hasn't been the same since.

Absolutely true. There were moments, when I was knee-deep in the carnage in Rwanda, when I was regretting having gotten on that plane.

But what I have seen is the way God, by his grace, has given birth to a reinvigorated movement of justice in the Christian community. He has used Christians to rescue thousands of individuals and to begin transforming whole communities.

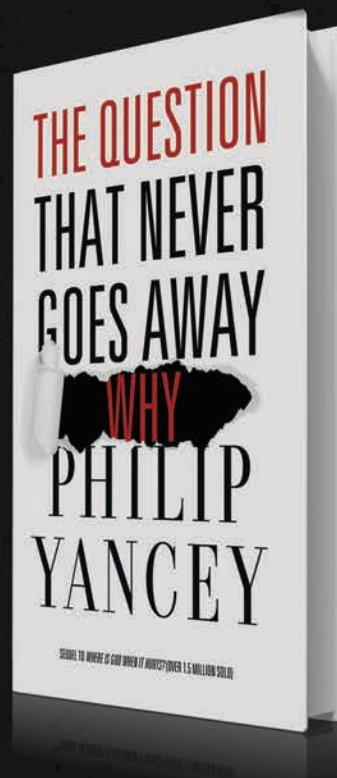
I consider myself the most privileged person to see this transpire in my lifetime. It has felt like a hard and difficult journey, but the joy and hope and grace of God that I've experienced in it has felt like a profound privilege.

My own part in the story, honestly, feels quite small. He didn't really need me in any way in order to get that done, but he is so gracious to include me.

He has paid back with encouragement and fellowship from the most extraordinary people of courage. The church is now very eager to hear God's call to the work of justice. It's a great privilege to be a part of it. **CT**

Go to ChristianBibleStudies.com for "Love That Brings Real Change," a Bible study based on this article.

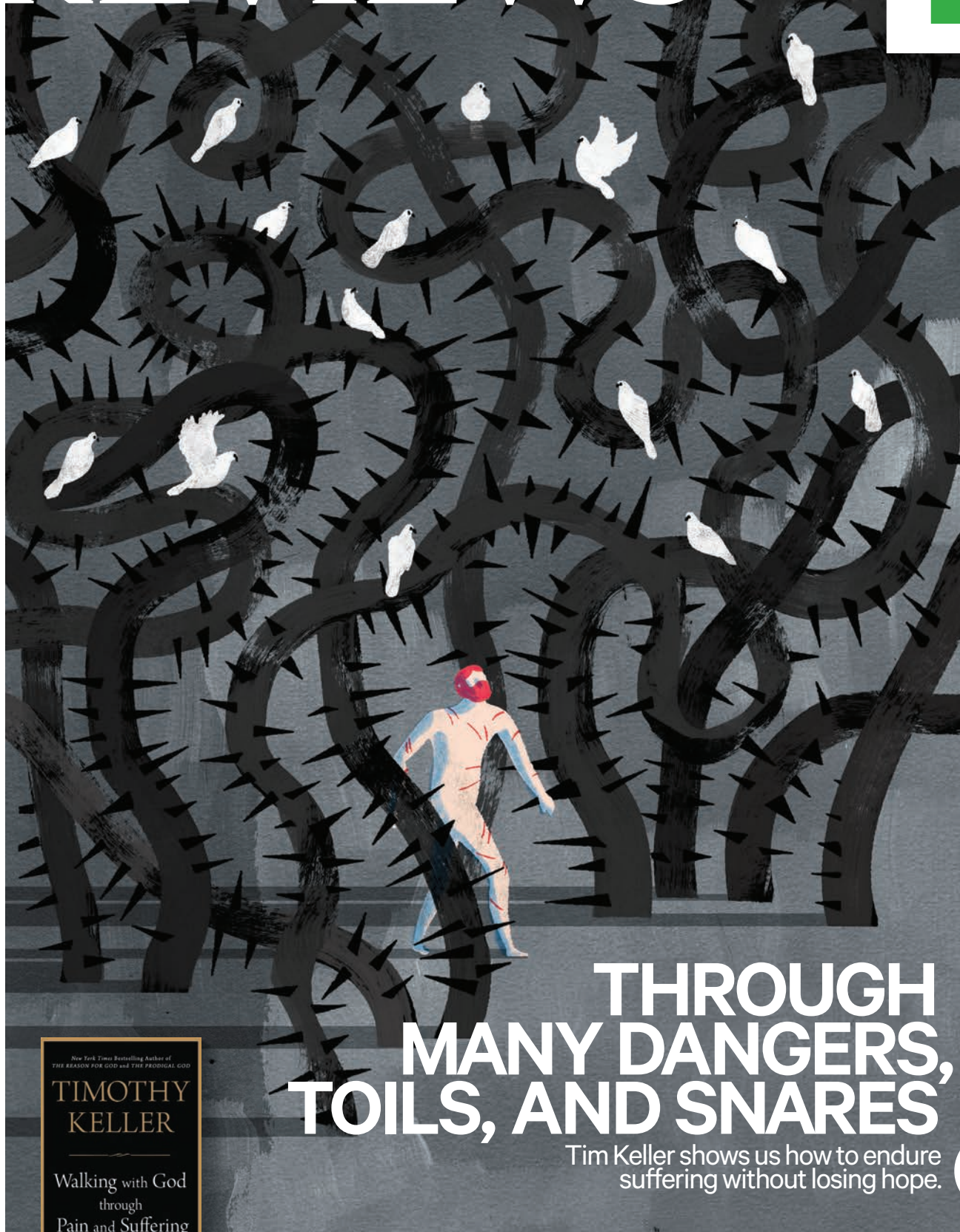
"My mother led such a faithful life.
Why would God allow Alzheimer's
to invade her mind?"



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REVIEWS



New York Times Bestselling Author of
THE REASON FOR GOD and THE PRODIGAL GOD

**TIMOTHY
KELLER**

Walking with God
through
Pain and Suffering

THROUGH MANY DANGERS, TOILS, AND SNARES

Tim Keller shows us how to endure
suffering without losing hope.





Suffering can make even secure and mature Christians wonder: How can I believe that God is good, that he is *with* me and *for* me? It is by no means certain that suffering people will find comfort in Christianity. Some Christians even choose to reject their faith after they have suffered. Having experienced severe losses myself and written about them at length, I was curious to learn how Timothy Keller's latest book would handle this difficult subject.

As it turns out, *Walking with God through Pain and Suffering* (Dutton) ★★★★★ adopts a surprisingly broad perspective. The book is at turns apologetic, theological, and pastoral. As an apologist, Keller, founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, explains how other religions and philosophies address and answer the problem of evil and suffering. After exploring these options (Stoicism, Buddhism, and several others), he demonstrates convincingly that the Christian answer is both more intellectually satisfying and personally helpful. But, he adds, it must be the genuine Christian answer rather than some insipid and superficial expression of Christianity.

It is only in the past 200 years, Keller argues, that Westerners have used evil and suffering as an argument against the existence (or goodness) of God. He is especially critical of the modern and secular view of suffering, which places all confidence in human reason and assumes that God, if he exists at all, exists solely to make us happy. This view helps explain why so many people avoid suffering at all costs, do their best to manage and minimize it once it interrupts their lives, and often yield to utter hopelessness when it persists. In the end, a secular view leaves us empty and alone, stripped of answers, devoid of all comfort and confidence.

The Christian answer to suffering, on the other hand, is more consistent, complete, and humane than any of the alternatives. It is attentive to human emotions. It views God as both sovereign and suffering. It alone satisfies the human longing for meaning and significance. And it is by far the most hopeful. Keller sums up the

Christian perspective with the metaphor of a furnace. The flames of suffering consume our sinful inclinations, and yes, this is painful. But this purification process makes us holy, provided we turn to the God who reveals himself as both transcendent and present, Victor and Victim, Lord and Servant.

PATHWAY THROUGH THE VALLEY

At certain points, Keller appears to move from the lectern to the pulpit. As a theologian and preacher, he provides a thorough, balanced, and nuanced view of suffering from a biblical perspective. On some occasions, suffering manifests God's judgment on all sin (our expulsion from the Garden) or punishment for individual sin (David's adultery). On other occasions, its causes appear random and unfair (the anguish of Job).

Keller is cautious about sweeping statements that imply a single answer for every circumstance. Drawing from Scripture, he shows that there are varieties of suffering: some our own fault, some the result of betrayal and loss, and some utterly mysterious. And he asserts that no two people respond to suffering the same way. Some grow angry; others fall into depression.

Nevertheless, we can know this with certainty: All people suffer, but God has provided a pathway through it in Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus' suffering defeats suffering and turns evil back on itself, precipitating its destruction. He opens the way for us to regain fellowship with God and share in his glory.

Keller offers sage counsel to lead us through the valley of the shadow of death. Here, the preacher leaves the pulpit and joins us in the living room. He sets a realistic and practical course of action. "We are to meet and move through suffering without shock and surprise, without denial of our sorrow and weakness, without resentment

or paralyzing fear, yet also without acquiescence or capitulation, without surrender or despair."

Thus we can and must walk through suffering, even when the pathway is shrouded in darkness. We can weep, too, for the Bible itself provides a rich language of lament (the Psalms, for instance), thus affirming the legitimacy of human emotion. Jesus himself died with a psalm of lament on his lips, crying, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Ps. 22:1; Matt. 27:46).

We can trust God, because the biblical story will help us endure when our own little stories seem confusing and we feel forsaken. And we can pray, as Job did. Though filled with anguish and despair, Job continued to wrestle with God—unlike his friends, who talked about God but never really knew him. In that story, so important to Keller, God reveals himself to be almighty and approachable, transcendent and personal, and the ultimate answer to Job's suffering.

We can also think, thank, and love, which will enable us to endure and mature. Thinking requires us to focus our minds on the eternal truths revealed in the biblical story. Though we will never be able to think our way out of suffering, it is possible—and helpful—to think about the biblical truths that make our suffering comprehensible. Thanking, in turn, forces us to reorder our loves and relocate our glory, turning our attention to the One who bends suffering to his glory and our benefit. Loving means pursuing the virtue that reflects God's nature most perfectly. God chose the way of love in the Cross; we can, too, in our suffering.

Finally, we can place our hope in God's sovereign control over the future. At the right time Jesus will return to establish his kingdom on earth, renewing all things and wiping away every tear. The end result will be so wonderful that even the worst suffering we've endured will seem beautiful and holy in light of God's final act of redemption.

THE HUMAN ELEMENT

Keller has become a kind of modern church father. The talents that have enabled him to excel as a pastor, church planter, and best-selling author are all on magnificent display in his latest book. He has read widely, he demonstrates an impressive command of the Bible and Christian theology, and he

Keller is especially impressive in the way he identifies the apparent tensions of the Bible before going on to resolve them, time and again, in Jesus Christ.

dares to engage secular culture without being defensive or obsequious.

Keller is especially impressive in the way he identifies the apparent tensions of the Bible before going on to resolve them, time and again, in Jesus Christ. Yet he is equally pastoral. He includes personal stories at the end of most chapters, written by people who have suffered, which add a human element to the book's apologetic and theological substance.

I'm left with only one question: Who will read this book? Obviously, many will,

simply because Tim Keller wrote it. It will surely help readers to think critically and rightly about suffering, and to reflect on it from a Christian perspective.

But is it for someone coping with the early stages of some acute loss? I am not so sure. Sometimes, before people are ready to read a book about suffering—especially one so substantive—they need friends simply to be *with* them in their suffering. If you know someone in this condition, you might think about waiting a year before recommending this book.

In the meantime, go ahead and read it for yourself. I can't think of a better resource for understanding suffering, enduring it with hope, and helping others whose suffering runs too deep for any word except the Word—the One who is truly with us and for us. **CT**

GERALD L. SITTSE is professor of theology at Whitworth University and author of *A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows through Loss* and *A Grace Revealed: How God Redeems the Story of Your Life* (Zondervan).

Where Heaven and Nature Sing

Joy is the cornerstone of our faith—and a healthy society. By Jake Meador

Joy for the World: How Christianity Lost Its Cultural Influence and Can Begin Rebuilding It
Greg Forster
(Crossway)



In *Joy for the World: How Christianity Lost Its Cultural Influence and Can Begin Rebuilding It* (Crossway) ★★★★★, Greg Forster, program director at the Kern Family Foundation, helps American Christians understand the church's complex relationship to the surrounding culture. Beginning with the premise that the Christian life is grounded in divine joy, he argues that our approach to cultural engagement should flow out of that same joy.

This book is the first offering in Crossway's Cultural Renewal series. It is split into three parts, each derived from the classic Isaac Watts hymn "Joy to the World" that inspired the title. The first section, "Let Men Their Songs Employ," looks at the unique challenges facing the American church as it attempts to bring the gospel to bear in all areas of life.

Part two, "Let Earth Receive Her King," relates the dynamics of the spiritual life to Christ's three offices of prophet, priest, and king. This section offers a helpful, balanced account of the spiritual formation necessary for engaging the culture of a particular community.

Finally, in part three, "He Comes to Make His Blessings Flow," Forster turns to three particular topics—sex and family, work and the economy, and citizenship and community—and puts forth a

Christian response to each.

Though all three sections are valuable in their own way, I suspect Forster's opening reflections on the fraught relationship between Christian faith and American identity will make the greatest impact. Here, he manages to distill fairly academic social critiques into an accessible package.

To begin, Forster lays out what makes the United States such a unique nation. Historically, we have maintained a strong cultural consensus around specific religious beliefs, but without ever enshrining those beliefs in our founding documents. Despite having no established religion, we have a very religious citizenry.

Explaining this hybrid system, Forster writes, "The basic idea behind freedom of religion is that societies need some level of moral agreement, but don't need—and shouldn't expect—agreement on all moral questions." Of course, previous social critics have noted the flaw with this model. In *The Idea of a Christian Society*, T. S. Eliot argued that liberal democracy of the sort found in America is "a tendency toward something other than itself." In other words, a secular liberal democracy lacks the cultural resources necessary to justify its own existence.

Where do these cultural resources come from? And how do they form a society

dedicated to something profounder than preserving itself? This is where Forster's further reflections—on both the spiritual life and more practical matters—enter the equation. What happens when Christian citizens, instructed by their faith, pursue the full range of civic, political, business, and familial vocations? The outcome, more often than not, is a joyful, flourishing, purpose-driven society. Forster is especially skillful in discussing the role of economics and how our 9-to-5 jobs can promote the good of all creation.

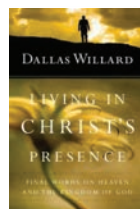
At the bottom of these arguments and observations is the cornerstone of divine joy and its outworking in the lives of individual Christians. Forster portrays the Christian life as both eminently useful and profoundly delightful.

Such careful—and interesting!—analysis is found throughout this book. By beginning with divine joy and the role it plays in Christian faith, Forster starts off on the right note. And by combining deep learning with clear, accessible prose, he carries that tune through to the end. *Joy for the World* envisions a place where heaven and nature sing—if not in perfect harmony, then at least from the same songbook. **CT**

JAKE MEADOR is a writer and editor from Lincoln, Nebraska.



Living in Christ's
Presence: Final Words
on Heaven and the
Kingdom of God
Dallas Willard
(InterVarsity Press)



'Bless You,' Really

An excerpt from *Living in Christ's Presence: Final Words on Heaven and the Kingdom of God*.

Blessing is the projection of good into the life of another. It isn't just words. It's the actual putting forth of your will for the good of another person. It always involves God, because when you will the good of another person, you realize only God is capable of bringing that. So we naturally say, "God bless you."

You can bless someone when you will their good under the invocation of God. You invoke God on their behalf to support the good that you will for them. This is the nature of blessing. It is what we are to receive from God and then give to another.

Now we need to deepen that just a little bit, because it isn't just a verbal performance. It isn't "bless you" said through gritted teeth. It's a generous outpouring of our whole being into blessing the other person. So, among other things, you don't want to hurry a blessing. It becomes a habit that we say thoughtlessly, "God bless." Well, that's better than a lot of other things we could say, but we want to be able to put our whole self into our blessing. That is something we need to be thoughtful about. We don't just rattle off a blessing. It's a profoundly personal and powerful act.

In Numbers 6:24-26, we find the great Aaronic blessing. This is the blessing Moses instructed his brother, Aaron, to place on the people of Israel. Thank God for it! When you try to improve on it, you realize you are not going to make much headway.

"The Lord bless you." That means "God bring good consistently into your life." "The Lord bless you and keep you." That means "God protect you. God build around you his safekeeping. The blood of Jesus and the Spirit of Christ be over you and keep you." Stop for a moment and think about saying that to someone: "God bless you and keep you." Imagine looking them in the eyes when you say it. This is very intimate and can be threatening. I've done this with groups where people broke out in tears and broke out in laughter because it touched so deeply.

Emphasize *you*. This needs to be very personal. "God bless you and keep you. God make his face to shine upon *you*." There's so much about the face of God in the Bible. One of the most precious things that we can have is living before the shining face of God. Now, if you have trouble with the shining face, find a grandparent somewhere and watch their face shine on their grandchild; that can give you a little idea. There is such radiance that comes out of a person with the shining face. And your face is meant to shine. Glory is meant to be shared from God to human beings. Glory always shines.

CT

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Wilson's Bookmarks

From John Wilson,
editor of *Books & Culture*.

READING FOR PREACHING

CORNELIUS PLANTINGA JR. (EERDMANS)

For gists and piths, you won't find a better book than this one, which grew out of a series of summer seminars for preachers that Plantinga has led at Calvin College since 2003. Anyone who works with words—not preachers only—will find instruction and delight here. *Reading for Preaching* is a marvel of concision, blunt good sense, sharp insight, and intellectual generosity. Buy one for yourself and one for your pastor. (If you are a pastor, buy a second copy for a friend in the pulpit.) [Editor's note: Read more about this CT Book Award winner on p. 45.]

A CURIOUS MADNESS

ERIC JAFFE (SCRIBNER)

The combat psychiatrist in question, Major Daniel S. Jaffe, was the author's grandfather. The war crimes suspect was Okawa Shumei, neither a military officer nor a government official but a writer and speaker whose ideas helped to lead Japan into war. Starting with the moment at the 1946 Tokyo counterpart to the Nuremberg trials that brought the two men into contact, Jaffe skillfully shifts back and forth between their stories while filling in the historical context. His narrative is fascinating on multiple levels—not least for a Japanese perspective on the war.

THE COLLECTED POEMS OF DENISE LEVERTOV

EDITED BY PAUL A. LACEY (NEW DIRECTIONS)

For your poetry-loving friend, this massive volume (with an introduction by poet Eavan Boland) would provide a yearlong feast. Born in England, Levertov (1925-97) came to the United States in her 20s and became one of the leading American poets of her generation. She lost some readers and gained new ones when she took a fiercely political turn in the 1960s. With the arc of her career laid out for us, it becomes clearer than ever before that she was fundamentally a religious poet whose work culminated in a deeply Christian vision.



To the Ends of the Earth

Evangelicals' foreign policy mission, then and now. Interview by Timothy C. Morgan

The American public often associates evangelicals with domestic political fights over abortion and same-sex marriage. But historically, they have been no less active in shaping events on distant shores. In *Evangelicals and American Foreign Policy* (Oxford University Press), Mark R. Amstutz, a political scientist at Wheaton College, analyzes evangelicals' long-standing engagement on global poverty, human trafficking, international religious freedom, and Israeli statehood. CT senior editor for global journalism Timothy C. Morgan spoke with Amstutz about the motivating factors behind evangelicals' engagement in foreign affairs.

What have you discovered about evangelical global engagement?

Churches, nongovernmental organizations, lay leaders, and missionaries have played an important part in the United States' role in the world. Beyond preaching the Good News, missionaries built schools, established clinics, and learned about the world. They were really the first internationalists for the United States. Diplomats like Benjamin Franklin and John Adams went abroad, but it was really evangelicals—orthodox missionaries—who started it.

In the post-World War II era, we've seen a significant rise in missions-related organizations, groups like World Vision or, in the field of microenterprise, Opportunity International. Humanitarianism has been a very important component of evangelical action in foreign lands.

What this shows is that evangelism abroad hasn't always been propositional. Evangelical diplomats, businessmen, and physicians want to share the Good News in places where missionaries aren't allowed, but the sharing of that Good News takes subtle forms.

Where does evangelicals' involvement in foreign affairs fall short?

The real danger comes when evangelicals speak out without adequate competence and knowledge. Church leaders can take initiatives that lack a sophisticated understanding of the issue at hand or a profound awareness of how Scripture speaks to it. You can end up using Scripture or the authority of the church for political ends.

What's behind the consistent evangelical support for Israel?

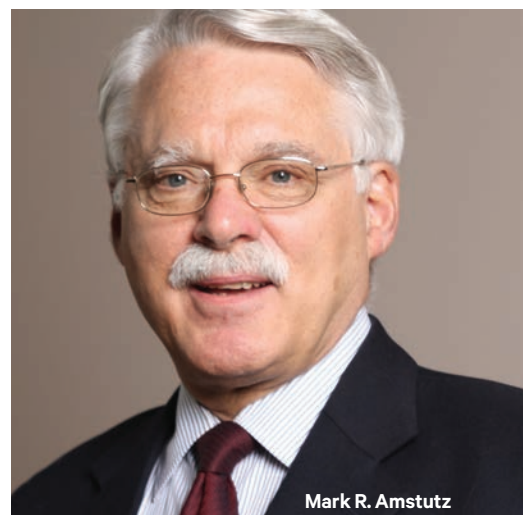
It's simply untenable to claim, as some do, that evangelicals offer unqualified support for Israel because of Christian Zionism, biblical prophecy, or the Left Behind series.

There are many factors behind evangelical support for Israel. One is simply that the United States is founded on Judeo-Christian principles. Evangelicals need to say that all people have God-given dignity and that Palestinians have the right to self-determination. We pray for some kind of resolution so that these two peoples can live in harmony. I'm not sure anybody should say, "Well, all the land from the Sinai to the Euphrates belongs to the Jews, because that's what the Bible says."

What can we learn from so-called foreign-policy "realists"?

Realists tend to emphasize the importance of strong nation-states. Without strong nation-states, it's very hard to secure human rights. Sophisticated realists would say, "We need strong states that are also morally good." But before you can have a morally good state, you have to have order, and the authority of government is basic to achieving that. A precondition to solving crises in places like Syria, Somalia, and Zimbabwe is having a central authority that can punish crime and enforce the rule of law.

Figuring out how to combine these two ingredients—effective authority and moral restraint—is difficult. The realist emphasizes the first, but Christians should remember that we need both.



Mark R. Amstutz

Evangelicals often promote "reconciliation" to resolve political disputes overseas. Will this bear fruit?

Christians should be at the forefront of political reconciliation. Extending the biblical concepts of reconciliation into the political sphere is very important. Having said that, until you have a foundation—a political community in which the people are willing to listen to each other and work cooperatively—it's very hard to see political reconciliation working. It's difficult to get antagonists moving in that direction.

Consider South Africa's transition to a post-apartheid era. South Africa is a miracle. It's not easy to change a constitution and bring about change. (Would that the world had more Nelson Mandelas.) The great advantage in South Africa was that something of that foundation was in place. The vast majority of people went to church on Sunday. They knew the Lord's Prayer. They knew that people had God-given dignity. That was huge. As the church began to adjust its thinking, and as religious groups began to change, there was just enough spiritual capital in South African society to allow a bargain between truth-telling and amnesty.

CT

**Untamed Ambition:**

The Underwoods (Kevin Spacey and Robin Wright) work together in their quest for power at any cost.

The House That Power Built

House of Cards shows the effectiveness—and perils—of naked ambition.

By David Corbin and Alissa Wilkinson

Few couples begin their day quite like Congressman Francis Underwood and his nonprofit executive/lobbyist wife, Claire: sipping a cup of black coffee over a cool cost-benefit analysis of who should commit adultery with whom. The power couple at the center of the Emmy-winning Netflix series *House of Cards* (whose second season premieres February 14) use any means at their disposal to claw their way to the top.

Francis and Claire (a seductive Kevin Spacey and a steely Robin Wright) struck a bargain early on in their relationship, we discover. They would pursue power, defeating by force and fraud anyone who got in their way. They would be absolutely honest with one another. And they would stop at nothing to help the other reach a goal—throwing a fundraiser, talking someone into voting for a bill, or strong-arming a former friend into

supporting new legislation.

As the first season opens, it has worked: Francis is the House majority whip and has the ear of the President's top adviser. Claire's environmental nonprofit is influencing corporations and politicians alike.

At first glance, *House of Cards* seems like the purest Machiavelli. Anyone who wants to succeed, the series seems to say, must free himself from any strict philosophical, let alone biblical, standards of right and wrong. There's just too much distance between how we ought to live and what it takes to live in reality. Instead, all we can do is build our political houses on lower, firmer ground: not on principles or convictions, but on figuring out who gets what, when, in a way that satisfies both the rulers and the ruled. Keep voters happy, keep your own power—no matter the inconvenient morals

and people who fall by the wayside.

This is the hand we've been dealt, the show says. This is the way the system works. If you don't like it, stay far away.

Which is exactly what many Christians intuitively want to do. After all, if the City of Man is utterly corrupted by the Fall, the moral thing to do is to abandon it altogether. No more difficult compromises or character-testing temptations—and, for that matter, no more disappointments. Shows like *House of Cards* seem to confirm every cynic's worst fear and secret hope—that the world really is as corrupt as we think.

A HOUSE DIVIDED

Yet behind *House of Cards*' portrait of marital ambition lies a faint clue to a better way—and a reminder of why Christians

House of Cards is an unlikely call for those claimed by Christ to stay within the messy world of politics.

shouldn't simply give up on the world. For behind this very modern series are two much older stories: William Shakespeare's most famous plays about political power, *Richard III* and *Macbeth*.

We're not the first to connect *House of Cards* to the Bard. *The New Yorker's* Ian Crouch described the series as "a good dose of *Richard III* spiced with a dash of *Macbeth*"—but the connection is more than stylistic. Richard and the dastardly Macbeths are indeed tyrants, but they are different types of tyrants. And much of the tension, and (inadvertent) insight, of *House of Cards* is of the slow unveiling of which type the Underwoods will become.

Richard III, as you may dimly remember from high school English, is a tyrant without a home. A bloody civil war between two

his own and deserted by his allies, Richard is left pleading for a horse. Alone and unrepentant on the battlefield, he is killed by Richmond. And after Richard is slain, "Richmond and Elizabeth, / The true successors of each royal house, / By God's fair ordinance conjoin together!" Richard's ambition comes to nothing, and against all odds, the two houses are reconciled so that "peace lives again."

There is no hope for a house-less Richard, and there never was. This, Shakespeare says, is where individualistic power-grabbing leads: devoid of conscience, powerless, dying friendless and alone.

Macbeth is quite different. The lord is no free agent. He has a king, a wife, and a house at the beginning of his play. Macbeth has earned the title of "Thane of Cawdor" through his loyal service to Duncan. And he and Lady Macbeth (though certainly no model of godly marriage!) love and sacrifice for one another.

But seduced by the tyranny of their desires, the Macbeths kill Duncan and ascend to the throne. This is surely one reason *Macbeth* is the more familiar of the two plays—it reminds us that tyranny is not just for inhuman nonlovers like Richard III. Men and women, husbands and wives, who were once willing to live faithfully within a good society, can become beasts in aspiring to become gods.

However, even as they pursue power and kill Duncan—something neither of them could have done alone—Macbeth and his wife act as each other's conscience. There's no leaving the past behind for them. Though Lady Macbeth at first says, "A little water will clear us of this deed," her continued relationship with her husband eventually convinces her—at least subliminally—that she drove him to an act from which they'll never recover. And her suicide changes Macbeth, who attempts a suicide mission of his own.

Certainly, the Macbeths' tale ends badly. Their relationship can't save them; their intentions are evil. But even in the midst of its tale of greed, murder, and punishment, *Macbeth* reminds us that good marriages and families temper us, challenging and redirecting our Richard-like individual ambitions. And though the Macbeths come to ruin, it's true that some impulse of love and loyalty can make for good houses and politics—something we see in those who take over from both Richard and the Macbeths.

MORE THAN GOOD DRAMA

Christians believe that our marriages, those fragile and precarious houses, are meant to point to another family: the house that Christ is building in the church, among his brothers and sisters. The church is—or is meant to be—a place where we learn how to give up our desires for individual power, for more and more, and live for the good of all. It is the one house that can tame our ambition and greed.

House of Cards sets a story of naked political ambition—a Richard-like pursuit of individual power at any cost—in the story of a house. In their ruthless grasp for power, Claire and Francis act together, bound by love and loyalty like the Macbeths. At least at first.

But the show explicitly leads into the second season asking whether this residue of love will ultimately overcome their individual pursuit of power. As the first season ended, it seemed that the Underwoods' house, the last place in the show where someone wasn't trying to usurp something from someone else, was swaying and about to fall. Will their house be restored? Or will they be undone by their own hunger for power?

In our age of faction, *House of Cards* is more than a well-made drama. It presents an unlikely call for those claimed by Christ to stay within the messy world of politics. Will we abandon our common life to the Underwoods—the Richards and Macbeths, with all their tragic ambition? Or will we return to the public square armed with a love of God and neighbor?

Of course, doing so would require us to build our house on something solid enough to stand.

CT

DAVID CORBIN is a professor of politics at The King's College. ALISSA WILKINSON is an assistant professor of English and humanities at King's and chief film critic at *Christianity Today*.



great houses in England—Lancaster and York—has produced the ideal political environment through which he ascends.

But to Richard, politics has little to do with houses—lasting legacies of loyalty and service. It is nothing more than blind individual ambition. He literally stands apart from the other characters throughout most of the play. Certainly, he needs political associations, like marriage to Anne. But he loves no one, especially not his wife: "I'll have her; but I will not keep her long."

For a while, it works. Yet by the end of the play, still without a true house of



New & Noteworthy

Tim Stafford's 2012 CT cover story profiled a young-earth creationist and a proponent of theistic evolution. For nine more dispatches from the crossroads of science and faith, check out his new book.

Compiled by Matt Reynolds

Circulation Statement

Statement required by the act of August 12, 1970, section 3685, Title 39, United States Code, showing ownership, management, and circulation of *Christianity Today*, published 10 times per year (with 2 combined issues J/F and J/A) at 465 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. Price per year: \$24.95. Publication No. 109-740. The names and addresses of the publisher and editors are: Publisher, Terumi Echols, 465 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188; Editor, Mark Galli, 465 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188; Managing Editor, Katelyn Beaty, 465 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. The owner is Christianity Today, 465 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. The known bondholders, mortgages, and other security holders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: None.

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Total No. Copies	124,500	120,500
Paid Circulation:		
1. Mail subscriptions	90,084	90,355
2. Sales through dealers and carriers, street vendors and counter sales.	2,399	3,733
Total Paid Circulation:	92,483	94,088
Free Distribution:		
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Total Free Distribution:	30,067	24,355
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Copies Not Distributed:		
(Office use, left over, unaccounted, spoiled)	1,950	2,057
Total:	124,500	120,500
Percent Paid and/or Requested Circulation	75%	79%

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Terumi Echols



THE ADAM QUEST

Eleven Scientists Explore the Divine Mystery of Human Origins

TIM STAFFORD (THOMAS NELSON)

We hear all the time that a debate is raging between two abstract entities called “science” and “religion.” We even hear sometimes from actual people purporting to represent one camp or the other. But we hear rather less from those who, straddling both worlds, tend to undercut the reigning stereotypes. CT editor at large Stafford set out to discover how 11 Christians in the sciences reconcile their research with their faith convictions. Though they “hold strong opinions” on various points, he reports, they “aren’t quick to condemn others” and “admit to seeing weaknesses in their own arguments. Fundamentally, they take seriously the reality that we, the human race, are still learning.”

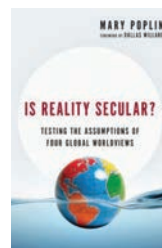


THE MORMON IMAGE IN THE AMERICAN MIND

Fifty Years of Public Perception

J. B. HAWS (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS)

In the years between the failed presidential bids of George Romney (1968) and his son Mitt (2008 and 2012), Mormons and their beliefs have been thrust into the public spotlight on many occasions. In *The Mormon Image in the American Mind*, Haws, professor of church history at Brigham Young University, looks at the events and personalities that have shaped American attitudes toward Mormons over the past half-century. Mormons, he claims, “must contend with a theology and a history that arouse suspicion and discontent,” and “the challenge . . . has been to navigate the American mainstream as a ‘peculiar’ but not ‘pariah’ people.”



IS REALITY SECULAR?

Testing the Assumptions of Four Global Worldviews

MARY POPLIN (INTERVARSITY PRESS)

As a professor in the secular university context (Claremont Graduate University in California), Poplin has an ideal vantage point from which to examine the worldviews that enjoy a taken-for-granted status today. Here, she examines the assumptions and implications of four dominant perspectives (secularism, naturalism, humanism, and pantheism), showing where they overlap—and where they clash—with the bedrock beliefs of Christianity. Knowing where our worldviews come from and where they lead “makes us less susceptible to the strong ideologies (left and right) of the media, education, and government of which we are often not consciously aware.”



TEENAGERS MATTER

Making Student Ministry a Priority in the Church

MARK CANNISTER (BAKER ACADEMIC)

In this book, part of Baker's Youth, Family, and Culture series, Cannister, professor of Christian ministries at Gordon College, warns church leaders against neglecting teenaged members of their congregations. “We can choose to value teenagers and applaud the life-giving breath they bring to every aspect of the church,” he writes, “or we can choose to lock our teenagers away in a youth program for seven years so that they don’t mess up anything. Too often we have chosen the latter approach: we develop wonderful age-appropriate programs for teenagers while isolating them from the greater community of the church.”

A composite image divided into four quadrants. The top-left quadrant shows a close-up of a white coffee cup filled with dark coffee, sitting on a wooden surface. The top-right quadrant shows a close-up of a donut with a thick, glossy chocolate glaze. The bottom-left quadrant is a solid black rectangle. The bottom-right quadrant is a solid light pink rectangle.

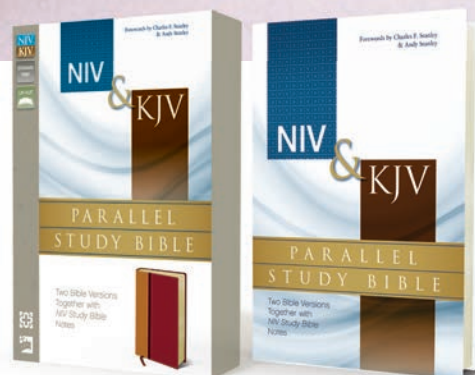
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a fire shut up in my bones

DISCERNING THE CALL
to vocational Christian ministry

Called to Someone,
Called to Something **p72**

Rerouted **p89**



Called to Someone. Called to Something.

How to recognize and evaluate the call to a ministry career.

Seminary student Keith Twigg knows firsthand that the call of God is sometimes dramatic and clear. Having just turned 30, he was living in the Bahamas and working for a multimillion-dollar sports betting ring. For Twigg, it was a sunny life. "I had everything I wanted in the world and was totally content," he says. Little did he know that in just a few years he'd be a believer and a minister.

In the midst of what seemed to be

a plush lifestyle, Twigg began to sense that God was speaking to him, sometimes even audibly. So he began reading the Bible. "The words jumped off the page at me, and I believed. Approximately two months after that, the father of a friend of mine led me to Christ."

Twigg packed up and moved back to San Diego, where he'd previously worked in resort management. Instead of rejoining the Southern California scene, he joined a church. "I immediately went to

a class on my first evening back, and I immersed myself in my church," Twigg says. "My involvement took the form of volunteering in just about everything: homeless ministry, kid's ministry, small groups." This led him to start ministries focused on discipleship and assimilation. "The pastors of the church noticed, and they offered me first an internship and then a staff position," he says.

Twigg now works as the director of a multisite church in Montana and

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‘The realization of a call in a person’s life may come like a clap of thunder or it may dawn gradually. But however quickly or slowly this awareness comes, it is always accompanied with an undercurrent of the supernatural.’

—Oswald Chambers

Wyoming. He is also living out his dream of attending Dallas Theological Seminary through a distance-learning program of online and intensive courses.

Twigg’s path from salvation to call to pursuing a professional ministry career is not only a testimony to God’s grace, but also fairly clear and direct. For others, the journey to a ministry career is murky and peppered with questions: How do I know if I’m being called? What is a calling anyway? Is it a dramatic moment or something more subtle? Do I need to hear God’s voice personally? What factors should I consider? Do I have to go to seminary? What about my “secular” career ambitions?

Professors and administrators from seminaries and Christian graduate schools have weighed in on these questions and delineate how to recognize and evaluate a call, as well as the next steps to consider.

What Is a Calling?

At its root, a calling is God reaching out to man in a way that is experienced subjectively, even mysteriously, by the individual. Oswald Chambers wrote, “The realization of a call in a person’s life may come like a clap of thunder or it may dawn gradually. But however quickly or slowly this awareness comes, it is always accompanied with an undercurrent of the supernatural.”

Other modern-day theologians agree. Mark L. Bailey, president of Dallas Theological Seminary (DTS), says, “How [God] chooses whom he uses, and uses whom

he chooses, is in the end a divine mystery, which should cause all to humbly worship him.” He points to his own faculty as an example. “In a recent workshop, I surveyed our DTS faculty. Not even one went to seminary thinking they would be a seminary professor. Along the way, with a combination of gifts, God-granted opportunities, and the encouragement of others, post-graduate education was pursued and teaching careers began and still continue.” As Bailey points out, those who hear a call often don’t end up in the type of ministry they expected to be in at the beginning. But looking back they can see how God directed them.

“I find God’s internal call to be quite subjective and even mysterious,” says Alvern Gelder, director of mentored ministries at Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He adds that Christians can trust God’s sovereignty to direct their ministry plans. “My Reformed theology affirms the sovereignty of God in matters of calling to specific ministry areas. I am serving where I am because God called me to it.”

Primary and Secondary Callings

Is a call to vocational ministry different than the general call of all Christians to follow Christ? The Rev. Dr. James K. Hampton, who trains and mentors future youth leaders at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky, suggests thinking in terms of a *primary* call (of all believers) to follow Christ, and a *secondary* call that for some is to full-time ministry. He cites the 1998 book by Os Guinness, *The Call*, which remains required reading at many seminaries today. “We recognize that all Christians are called first and foremost to God as their primary calling. We are called to *someone*,” Hampton says. “As we live into that primary call, God utilizes our spiritual gifting, our passions, our personality type, and our life experiences to help us live into a secondary calling. This secondary calling is our specific occupation—pastor, lawyer, teacher, etc. Our secondary calling is a call to *something*.”

One’s calling may lead to full-time or part-time, paid or unpaid ministry in a variety of career fields. “Unfortunately, the terms *sacred* and *secular* have been used [to refer to a calling] instead of more appropriate descriptions such as *vocational Christian*

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ministry, bivocational ministry, and lay ministry. All three are sacred," Bailey says. But experts agree there is support in Scripture for a unique calling of some to pursue full-time ministry as vocation.

Mark Hulbert felt this unique calling when he was 15 years old. "There is a specific, though not necessarily higher, call that is distinct from this general call," says Hulbert. "It is a call from the Shepherd to raise up laborers." Hulbert notes that his call was confirmed through personal study and time serving in "amateur" ministry. "As time progressed and my relationship with God deepened, I began to realize that no profession in my life, besides full-time Christian ministry, would ever satisfy my sense of what I was created to do."

The married father of one obtained a master's degree in theological studies in 2008 and recently earned a second master's degree in pastoral counseling. "As I progressed in my calling, I [sensed something was lacking] in my identity in ministry," he says. "In order to gain the skills necessary to counsel, I made my way to Asbury Theological Seminary, through which my calling has moved from a general ministry calling to a narrower view of being a counselor in the body [of Christ]."

For some, bivocational ministry is the answer to their calling. Like Paul who served as a tentmaker in Acts 18, Cesar Castillejos helps a church plant in St. Paul, Minnesota, through part-time youth ministry work, while continuing his duties as the owner of a company he started back in high school, One of One Clothing.

Castillejos planned to be an actor, not a pastor. But he liked working with teens, so he volunteered with Young Life. Five years later, a leader encouraged him to join the Young Life staff, and seminary studies at nearby Bethel Seminary soon followed. "I was going through seminary and trying to figure out what to do with the fact that I knew a lot of people in the bar and service industries," he says. In 2008, Castillejos started a church in a Minneapolis nightclub. He wasn't getting paid for the church role, but God provided him with a partnership to run Young Life part time for another church in the area. "I believe a 'calling' is when your passions and your gifts meet opportunity," he says.

continued on page 80

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Recognizing the Call

At age 16, Patrick Barrett felt his call to become a pastor. But he pushed against it—even when others recognized his gifts. “Family and friends always told me I was going to be a preacher. I didn’t want to be, so I denied it,” Barrett explains. Eventually God used an older lady in his church to change Barrett’s plans. “I told her about my desire to pursue a career in the arts. Her next words would change the course of my life. She told me that while music is great, God called me to be a preacher. If I were going to be a minister, then I needed to study about God and learn how to be a good minister. And literally, at that moment my thoughts changed, and I decided to heed the advice of so many and take a look at seminary.”

Barrett is now 27 and about to graduate with a master of divinity from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. “I describe the call to ministry in the words of the prophet Jeremiah. It is like ‘a fire shut up in my bones,’” he says. “As I look back over my life . . . I was always the counselor,

‘The Scriptures contain numerous narratives of particular persons called to ministry. This need not mean hearing the voice of God directly; under normal circumstances it probably comes through the community of faith.’

the one who was chosen to pray, and the one my family would ask to lead devotions on Sundays when we couldn’t get to church. It was always in me; I just didn’t realize what it was there for.”

“Many individuals felt a longing or a

tugging inside when they were called,” says Dr. F. Douglas Powe Jr., a Wesley Theological Seminary professor of evangelism and urban ministry. “It is this longing that lets them know something is not quite right in their lives, and it causes them to try to pinpoint what that longing is and how it can be satisfied. In many cases, individuals will try various things like changing jobs, [diet] changes, etc., to satisfy the longing. But it is to no avail until one figures out that God is calling to him or her.”

God may also use Scripture to cause a person to pay attention to a calling. Powe explains, “I witnessed an individual who had read and heard Isaiah 6 preached at various times in his life. When this person received a calling, the text seemed to be speaking to him personally, and he could not understand why. The text became unsettling.”

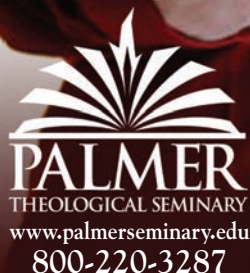
Experts say a call to a ministry career can often come through the encouragement of the surrounding Christian community. “The Scriptures contain numerous narratives of particular persons called to ministry. This need not mean hearing the voice of God directly; under normal circumstances it probably comes through the community of faith,” says Dr. Daniel I. Block, professor of Old Testament at Wheaton College Graduate School in Wheaton, Illinois. “In response to a need, [members of a Christian community] recognize persons who are specifically gifted to meet that need and then elect or commission them to do it.” Block cites Acts 13:2, where God tells the church at Antioch to separate out Saul and Barnabas for missionary work.

An exhortation from his faith community in his native Ghana, Africa, was the surprising call for Samuel Boateng. He’d helped lead Bible studies during high school and college, but he was planning to become an educator. Then the head chaplain of his university strongly suggested that Boateng consider pursuing full-time ministry. “I ignored his admonition thinking I would rather become a university professor. Not too long afterward, the pastor of the church I was attending invited me to his home and literally asked me to stop pursuing my own agenda and submit to going into full-time pastoral ministry,” Boateng says. “Both of these Christian

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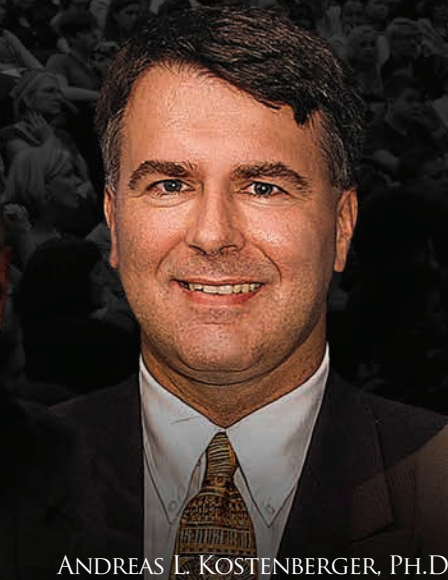
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leaders for some reason believed that the Holy Spirit had given me the gift and ability to serve God in that way. I didn't necessarily agree with them. In hindsight, I think the fear of being a pastor of God's people just threw me off completely. I believed being a university professor would be easier than leading church people."

Boateng received encouragement from peers, church members, mentors, and even his wife. "With my knees knocking in an inexplicable fear, yet feeling a deep-seated, overwhelming peace, joy, and satisfaction, I succumbed to my Lord to be one of his pastor-leadership trainers in the land of Africa," Boateng says. God opened doors and Boateng later received the Billy Graham Center Scholarship for International Christian Leaders to come to Wheaton for two years of advanced training in historical theology.

"The clearest evidence of the call of God is the affirmation of the community of faith. . . . If one is involved in a healthy church, often other people will recognize the call before the

'There isn't anything that says a pastor should be an extrovert or an introvert, a concrete or an abstract thinker. . . . If God is extending that call, then God understands how he has gifted that person.'

person does," says Wheaton's Block.

Fit for Ministry?

Experts say individuals have an obligation to consider their current fitness to respond to a call to vocational ministry. An important area is moral integrity. "Character or integrity is an

indispensable qualification for ministry success from God's perspective," says DTS's Bailey. He mentions 1 Corinthians 4:5, which talks about God bringing to light the purposes of one's heart. "Motivation of the heart will be a part of the evaluation at the judgment seat of Christ for eternal rewards."

Greg Meland, director of formation, supervised ministry, and placement at Bethel Seminary, specializes in helping students and alumni discern their callings. He believes moral integrity may be a reason for some *not* to pursue ministry. "I think some people aren't qualified to do vocational ministry. They are solid Christians, yet there are some things in their lives that should exclude them from vocational ministry."

While integrity is of utmost importance, Meland says that personality type is not a factor in who should consider a ministry career. "There isn't anything that says a pastor should be an extrovert or an introvert, a concrete or an abstract thinker. . . . The call to ministry is between God and the person. If God is extending that call, then God understands how he has gifted that person."

Attending a seminary or Christian graduate school can help improve one's fitness for ministry through the required developmental assessments of incoming students that examine an individual's gifts, strengths, personality, and even possible clinical issues. Alvern Gelder summarizes this process at Calvin: "We do psychological testing to screen out psychotic behaviors; and we use counseling, mentoring (group and individual), and internships to allow students to work on those areas needing personal or skill development," he says.

"If certain traits or characteristics are intractable, that might indicate that a person is not being called into a particular area of ministry," says Terry L. Brensinger, vice president, dean of the seminary, and professor of pastoral ministries at Fresno Pacific University (FPU) in Fresno, California. "If, on the other hand, they can be developed and even changed, then dealing with them is part of the transition into ministry. One of my students, for example, was habitually late and careless with his work, handing in assignments that neither moved the reader nor glorified God. When I told him

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that God, not to mention his congregants, deserved his best, he seemed surprised. And when I further suggested that his lack of preparation was not a reflection of his trust in the Holy Spirit, but rather an indication of his own lack of discipline, he was quiet. These were areas that he needed to weigh seriously as he reflected on his sense of calling; and thankfully, he has and is [doing that].”

Scripture contains passages that help in the evaluation of fitness for a ministry career, passages that list the necessary characteristics of those serving in ministry roles. David Massey, an enrollment counselor and master of divinity student at Phoenix Seminary in Phoenix, Arizona, cites 1 Timothy 3 as an example. “Paul talks about having the desire to be an overseer. Then he gives a list of what the qualifications for an overseer should be. I think it’s interesting that the first thing on that list is that you have to want it,” he says. He adds that some of the moral qualifications in that passage must be present as one considers a calling to ministry. “But maybe some of the other qualities aren’t there yet and you

need to get them. That’s why seminary is important. For instance, one of the qualities listed in 1 Timothy is ‘able to teach.’ When I felt called to ministry, I wasn’t able to teach. I was just this youth group kid who wanted to tell others about Jesus. But I was pulled aside by my pastor at the time, and he said, ‘You really need to get theological training.’”

A seminary or Christian graduate school may be the ideal place to flesh out God’s call to his service. “Jesus talks about loving God with heart, soul, and mind. Out of concern for the world and an eagerness to make a difference, it is easy for prospective ministers to underestimate the need for advanced training—and to forget about God’s different sense of timing,” FPU’s Brenninger says. “While there is much that is ‘practical’ about the ministry that can be learned on the ground, ministers also need good theory and refined skills.”

Kara Miller is a writer and communications professional in Chicago. You can follow her on Twitter @kara_chicago.



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Moody Theological Seminary student Tony Chuang is overflowing with passion for Christ and a desire to preach the gospel for the rest of his life. But this wasn't always his plan. God used the difficult experience of being deported to humble Chuang and turn his heart toward ministry.

Chuang's childhood in Taiwan involved daily idol worship and attending Buddhist temples.

As a young adult, he planned to become a computer programmer and make a lot of money. But Chuang struggled as an undergrad at a university in the United States. He took time off to figure things out, but the rules of

his student visa led the government to deport him. "They told me I had to leave. I was three and a half years into my bachelor's degree," says Chuang. "I was involved in a thriving campus ministry to Chinese students, and I was in my first dating relationship."

With his bank accounts frozen, Chuang returned home to Taiwan with almost nothing. There he fell into a deep depression. "I could relate to David in Psalm 42 saying 'my tears have been my food day and night.' . . . I hated God, but I could not deny that he is real." Chuang says that after he experienced four months of grief, God spoke to him in a vision of the cross, and the hate just melted away.

Chuang finished his undergraduate degree in Canada and began working as a computer programmer. "My passion to share the gospel and to read God's Word grew too strong, though. Moreover, my heart cried for the lost," Chuang relates. "I knew I had to do direct kingdom work full time." Before he applied to Moody, he met with several pastors to ask about their callings and get some help with confirming his own.

"During my undergrad years, everyone said, 'Wow! You'd make a great campus minister. You should consider doing this.' But I didn't pay attention then because I still wanted my \$60,000 per year computer job. So after God humbled me through the deportation, he built me back up. And he has given me so much more."



Tony Chuang

God took Jen Jones's practical plans to pursue a more flexible career and gave her a mission to equip future church leaders.

Jones was a certified public accountant before she took time off to be at home with her children. After Jones and her husband adopted their second child, they learned the child had a genetic disorder. The diagnosis meant that the mom of two needed a more flexible job when she reentered the workforce a few years later. "I began considering alternate careers since the demands of a finance career did not fit well with the demands of a special needs child," says Jones.

She enjoyed teaching the Bible in

women's ministry, and she loved languages. So Jones decided to pursue a doctorate in biblical studies with a goal of teaching at the university level. She and her family moved from upstate New York to Wheaton, Illinois, so she could attend Wheaton College Graduate School. "At that point, my pursuits were still based upon practical, external factors—my interests and the needs of my family," admits Jones.

Jones now realizes her practical plan was also the way God called her to serve him. "As I spent time in my studies, consciously seeking to encourage the students around me . . . I began to appreciate the gifts God had given me and saw how those skills could and should be used primarily to serve the church." She will earn her master's degree in May and plans to pursue a doctorate and then teach Old Testament at the seminary or university level.

"God used my involvement in the Wheaton community and the mentorship of my professors—who sought to encourage both my scholarly excellence and my spiritual growth—to gradually develop what some might term a 'calling to ministry.' The desire to go and teach hasn't changed," Jones states. "God has worked in my heart and I see teaching as meeting a role in His kingdom, as opposed to just meeting my end goal."

— K. M.



Jen Jones



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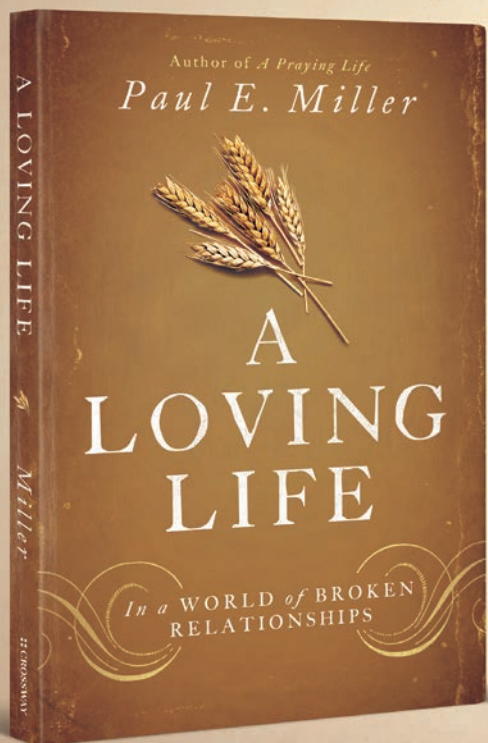
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Wheaton Academy Available Positions

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CONTINUED FROM PAGE 96

Trinity. They usually responded, “It’s a mystery.” In my heart I mocked their ignorance, saying, “The only mystery here is how you could believe in something as ridiculous as Christianity.”

Bolstered by every conversation I had with Christians, I felt confident in the truth of Islam. It gave me discipline, purpose, morals, family values, and clear direction for worship. Islam was the lifeblood that coursed through my veins. Islam was my identity, and I loved it. I boldly issued the call of Islam to anyone and everyone who would listen, proclaiming that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his messenger.

And it was there, atop the minaret of Islamic life, that Jesus called to me.

NOT THE MAN I THOUGHT

As a freshman at Old Dominion University in Virginia, I was befriended by a sophomore, David Wood. Soon after he extended a helping hand, I found him reading a Bible. Incredulous that someone as clearly intelligent as he would actually read Christians’ sacred text, I launched a barrage of apologetic attacks, from questioning the reliability of Scripture to denying Jesus’ crucifixion to, of course, challenging the Trinity and the deity of Christ.

David didn’t react like other Christians I had challenged. He did not waver in his witness, nor did he waver in his friendship with me. Far from it—he became even more engaged, answering the questions he could respond to, investigating the questions he couldn’t respond to, and spending time with me through it all.

Even though he was a Christian, his zeal for God was something I understood and respected. We quickly became best friends, signing up for events together, going to classes together, and studying for exams together. All the while we argued about the historical foundations of Christianity. Some classes we signed up for just to argue some more.

After three years of investigating the origins of Christianity, I concluded that the case for Christianity was strong—that the Bible could be trusted and that Jesus died on the cross, rose from the dead, and claimed to be God.

Then David challenged me to study Islam as critically as I had studied Christianity. I had learned about Muhammad from imams and my parents, not

from the historical sources themselves. When I finally read the sources, I found that Muhammad was not the man I had thought. Violence and sensuality dripped from the pages of his earliest biographies, the life stories of the man I revered as the holiest in history.

Shocked by what I learned, I began to lean on the Qur’an as my defense. But when I turned an eye there, that foundation crumbled just as quickly. I relied on its miraculous knowledge and perfect preservation as a sign that it was inspired by God, but both beliefs faltered.

Overwhelmed and confused by the weakness of the Islamic case, I began seeking Allah for help. Or was he Jesus? I didn’t know any longer. I needed to hear from God himself who he was. Thankfully, growing up in a Muslim community, I had seen others implore Allah for guidance. The way that Muslims expect to hear from God is through dreams and visions.

1 VISION, 3 DREAMS

In the summer after graduating from Old Dominion, I began imploring God daily. “Tell me who you are! If you are Allah, show me how to believe in you. If you are Jesus, tell me! Whoever you are, I will follow you, no matter the cost.”

By the end of my first year in medical school, God had given me a vision and three dreams, the second of which was the most powerful. In it I was standing at the threshold of a strikingly narrow door, watching people take their seats at a wedding feast. I desperately wanted to get in, but I was not able to enter, because I had yet to accept my friend David’s invitation to the wedding. When I awoke, I knew what God was telling me, but I sought further verification. It was then that I found the parable of the narrow door, in Luke 13:22–30. God was showing me where I stood.

But I still couldn’t walk through the door. How could I betray my family after all they had done for me? By becoming a Christian, not only would I lose all connection with the Muslim community around me, my family

would lose their honor as well. My decision would not only destroy me, it would also destroy my family, the ones who loved me most and sacrificed so much for me.

I began mourning the impact of the decision I knew I had to make. On the first day of my second year of medical school, it became too much to bear. Yearning for comfort, I decided to skip school. Returning to my apartment, I placed the Qur’an and the Bible in front of me. I turned to the Qur’an, but there was no comfort there. For the first time, the book seemed utterly irrelevant to my suffering. Irrelevant to my life. It felt like a dead book.

With nowhere left to go, I opened up the New Testament and started reading. Very quickly, I came to the passage that said, “Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.”

Electric, the words leapt off the page and jump-started my heart. I could not put the Bible down. I began reading fervently, reaching Matthew 10:37, which taught me that I must love God more than my mother and father.

“But Jesus,” I said, “accepting you would belike dying. I will have to give up everything.”

The next verse spoke to me, saying, “He who does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me” (NASB). Jesus was being very blunt: For Muslims, following the gospel is more than a call to prayer. It is a call to die.

BETRAYAL

I knelt at the foot of my bed and gave up my life. A few days later, the two people I loved most in this world were shattered by my betrayal. To this day my family is broken by the decision I made, and it is excruciating every time I see the cost I had to pay.

But Jesus is the God of reversal and redemption. He redeemed sinners to life by his death, and he redeemed a symbol of execution by repurposing it for salvation. He redeemed my suffering by making me rely upon him for my every moment, bending my heart toward him. It was there in my pain that I knew him intimately. He reached me through investigations, dreams, and visions, and called me to prayer in my suffering. It was there that I found Jesus. To follow him is worth giving up everything. **CT**

Nabeel Qureshi is an itinerant speaker with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries and author of *Seeking Allah, Finding Jesus: A Devout Muslim’s Journey to Christ* (Zondervan).

My decision would not only destroy me, it would also destroy my family, the ones who loved me most.

TESTIMONY



Called Off the Minaret

Would Jesus really ask me to forsake my Muslim family?

By Nabeel Qureshi

Allahu Akbar. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah. I bear witness that Muhammad is the messenger of Allah."

These are the first words of the Muslim call to prayer. They were also the first words ever spoken to me. Moments after I was born, I have been told, my father softly recited them in my ear, as his father had done for him, and as all my forefathers had done for their sons since the time of Muhammad.

We are Qureshis, descendants of the Quresh tribe—Muhammad's tribe. Our family stood sentinel over Islamic tradition.

The words my ancestors passed down to me were more than ritual: they came to define my life as a Muslim in the West. Every day I sat next to my mother as she taught me to recite the Qur'an in Arabic. Five times a day, I stood behind my father as he led our family in congregational prayer.

By age 5, I had recited the entire Qur'an in Arabic and memorized the last seven chapters. By age 15, I had committed the last 15 chapters of the Qur'an to memory in both English and Arabic. Every day I recited countless prayers in Arabic, thanking Allah for another day upon waking, invoking his name before falling asleep.

But it is one thing to be steeped in remembrance, and it is quite another to bear witness. My grandfather and great-grandfather were Muslim missionaries, spending their lives preaching Islam to unbelievers in Indonesia and Uganda. My genes carried their zeal. By middle school, I had learned how to challenge Christians, whose theology I could break down just by asking questions. Focusing on the identity of Jesus, I would ask, "Jesus worshiped God, so why do you worship Jesus?" or, "Jesus said, 'the Father is greater than I.' How could he be God?" If I really wanted to throw Christians for a loop, I would ask them to explain the

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