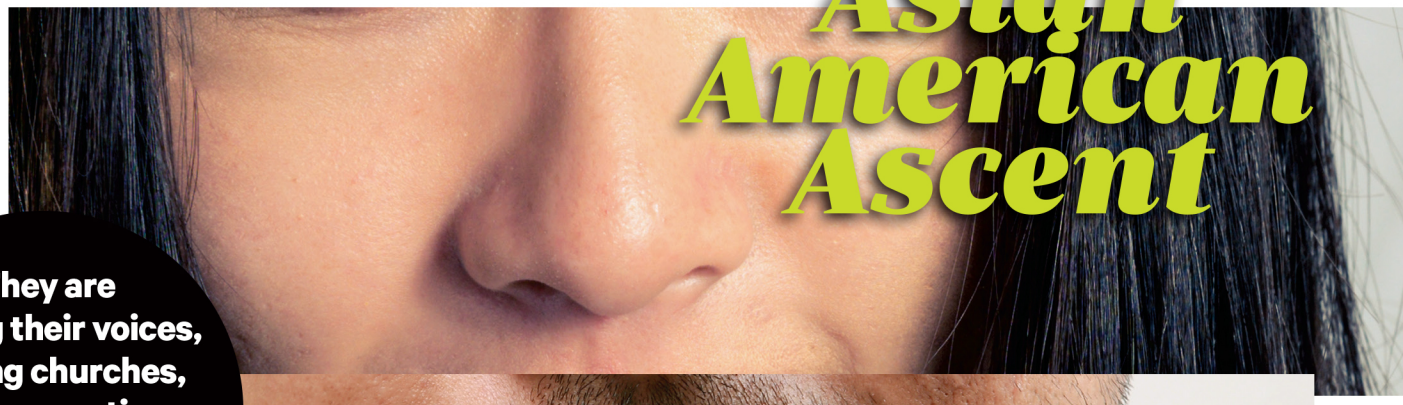
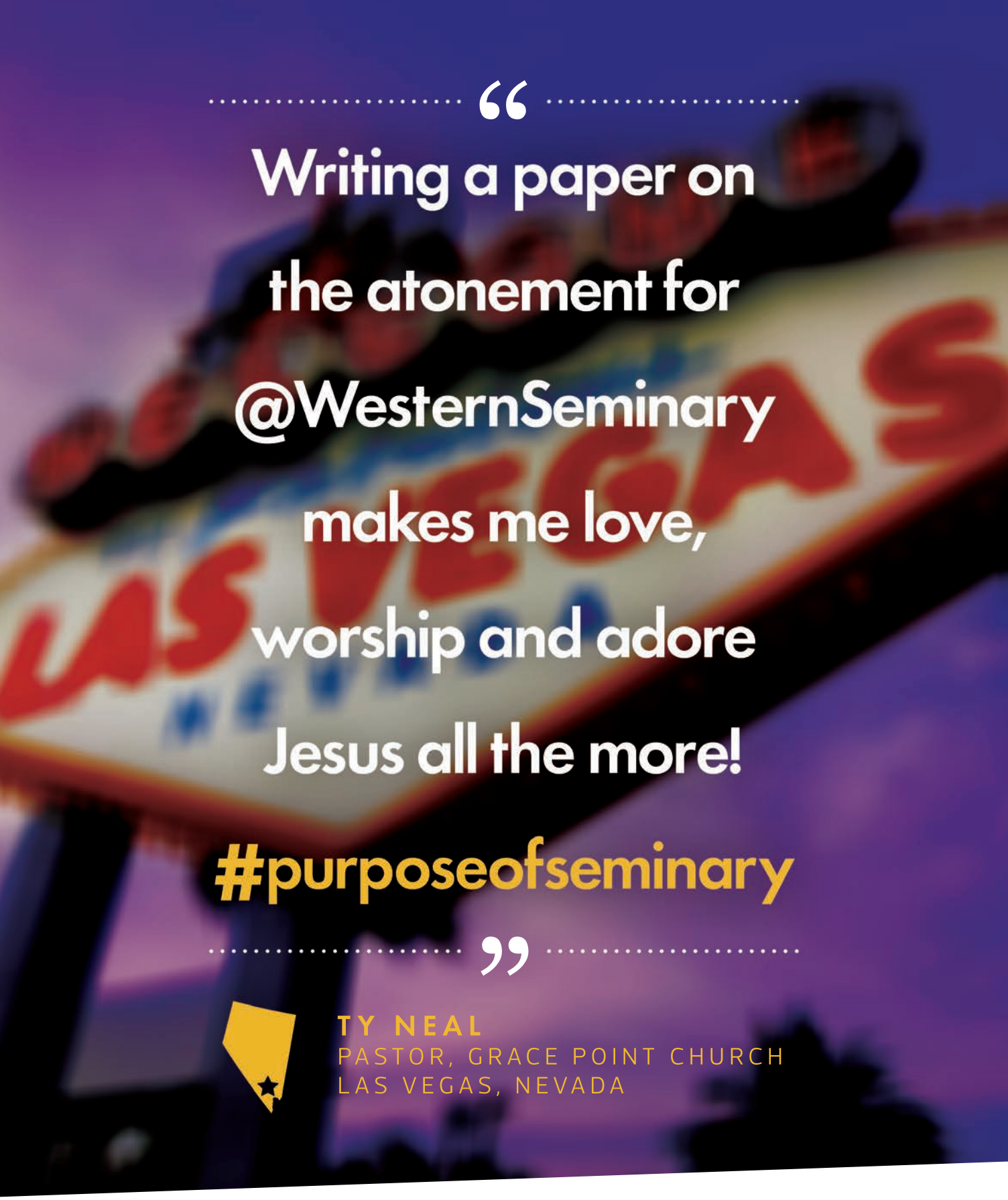
CT
CHRISTIANITY TODAY
OCTOBER 2014

Asian American Ascent



They are finding their voices, leading churches, and connecting with people others cannot reach.



Our trustworthy and accessible ministry training transforms lives. It also gets people talking. Come and see if what they're saying is what you're looking for in a seminary.

www.westernseminary.edu/voices

WESTERN SEMINARY
Gospel-Centered Transformation

$6.8 MILLION IN DAMAGES FROM SLIPS & FALLS

10 EXPERTS
IN RISK MANAGEMENT

5 FACTSHEETS
SPECIFIC TO FALL PREVENTION

1 TRAINING VIDEO
KEEP YOUR FACILITY SAFE

FOR EVERY RISK, THERE'S A REASON TO CHOOSE GUIDEONE.

Something as simple as a little misstep can still make quite an impact on your pocketbook – if you're underprotected. GuideOne churches have seen their fair share of slips and falls – 979 in 2011 alone. If you fall, we can help you get back up. Liability coverage. Safety tools. Helping hands. Just some of the many reasons more than 43,000 churches trust GuideOne Insurance.

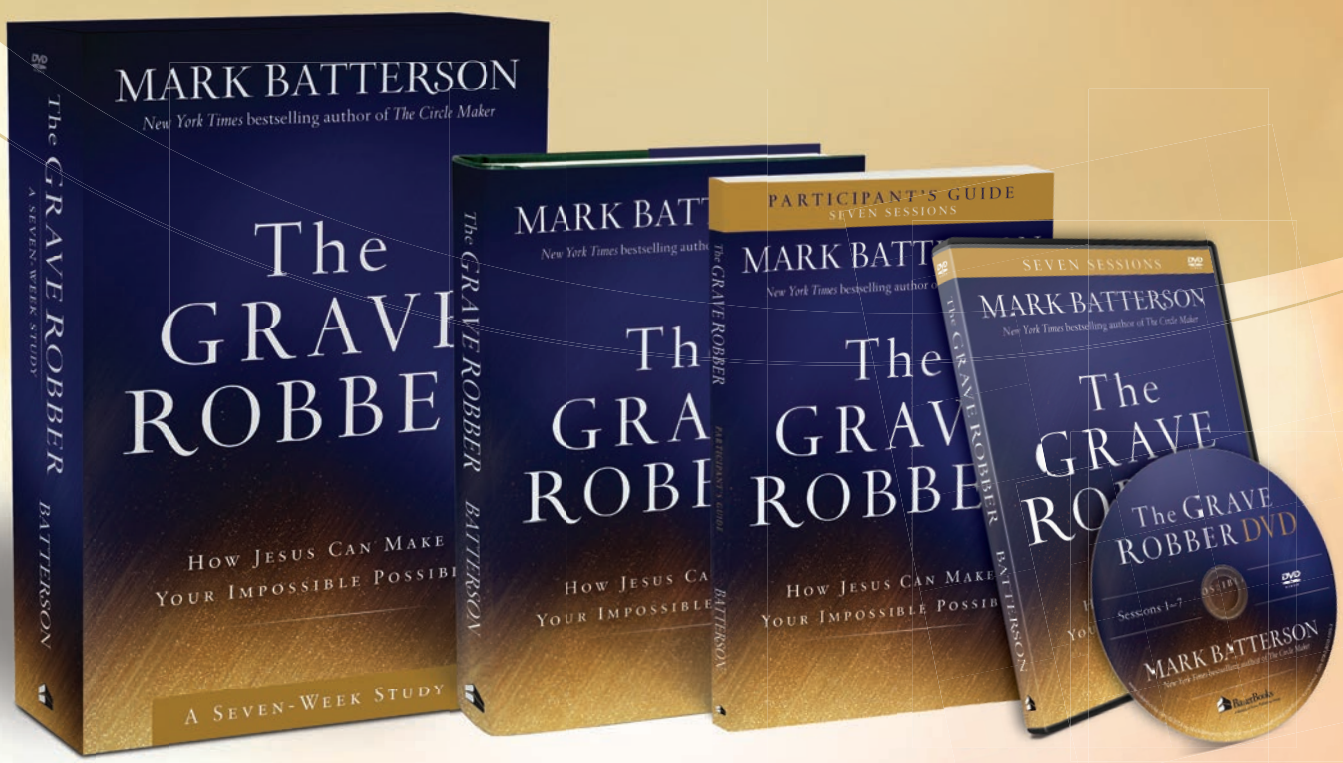
GUARD YOURSELF AGAINST RISK
TALK TO A GUIDEONE AGENT TODAY

800.233.2692
WWW.WEKNOWCHURCHES.COM

1111 Ashworth Road | West Des Moines, Iowa 50265 | 1-800-233-2692

GuideOne® Insurance

Perfect for Small Groups or Your Church to EXPERIENCE TOGETHER!



If you long to see God work in miraculous ways in the life of your church, you will love the faith-building, life-giving message found in *The Grave Robber*. Join Mark on on a seven-week journey as he walks us through the very spots where Jesus chose to reveal himself through miraculous events. Use the video curriculum to engage a small group or larger church campaign, then work through the study with the accompanying participant's guide.

Go to **MarkBatterson.com** for Free Resources

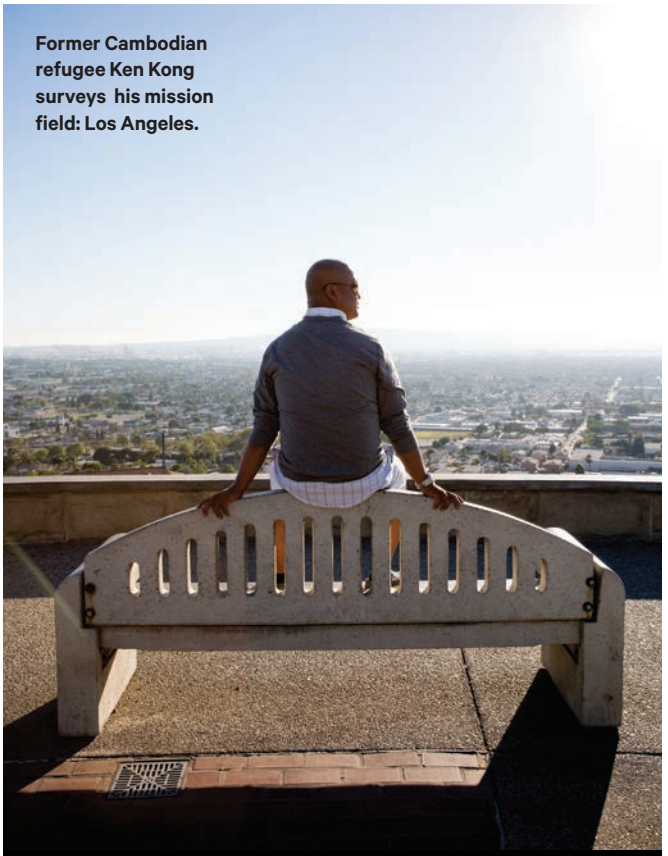
BakerBooks
Relevant. Intelligent. Engaging.

Available Wherever Books Are Sold •

CONTENTS

NEWS

COVER PHOTOS • SHUTTERSTOCK TOP AND BOTTOM RIGHT • KYLE CHRISTY



Former Cambodian refugee Ken Kong surveys his mission field: Los Angeles.

"After surviving harrowing financial desperation, I'm having a hard time believing that our years of prosperity were really blessings at all." p. 56

VIEWS

REVIEWS

ONLINE
Check out the latest news, information, blog posts, and more at **ChristianityToday.com**

CHRISTIANITY TODAY

On October 9, Kathy will celebrate 20 years since CT launched its first website, "Christianity Online."

PRINT AND ONLINE

Our education expert, Tim (pages 32 and 60), gets a new look at the college experience. His oldest, Fiona, just started a journalism degree at Asbury.

GLOBAL MEDIA MINISTRY

Matt is an obsessed birder, putting him in good company with other CT staff.

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
Unsolicited manuscripts and poetry are not accepted. A query letter must be sent first, describing a proposed manuscript. Any unsolicited manuscript will not be returned.

PERMISSIONS
Christianity Today grants permission for any original article (not a reprint) to be photocopied for use in a local church or classroom, provided no more than 1,000 copies are made, are distributed free, and indicate *Christianity Today* as the source.

EDITORIAL/ADVERTISING OFFICES
Editorial: cteditor@christianitytoday.com
Advertising: ctiad@christianitytoday.com
Christianity Today, 465 Gundersen Drive, Carol Stream, IL 60188-2415, 630.260.6200, Fax: 630.260.9401.
Advertising in *Christianity Today* does not imply editorial endorsement.

AUSTRALIAN AGENT
MediaCom, 14 Eton Road, Keswick 5061, South Australia

INDEXES
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.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES? GIFT SUBSCRIPTIONS? ADDRESS CHANGES? ctifulfill@christianitytoday.com, 800.999.1704 or write Christianity Today, P. O. Box 37060, Boone, IA 50037-0060

Use coupon code: CT14 for a **10% DISCOUNT**

The Gospel, Homosexuality, and the Future of Marriage

A Conference on Ministry in a Post-Marriage Culture

JOIN US AT THE ERLC NATIONAL CONFERENCE as we explore what the gospel means for the future of marriage and sexual identity. We'll equip you to defend marriage in the culture and strengthen marriage in the church with convictional kindness. Discover how your church can be a beacon of hope, clarity, and redemption.

THE ETHICS & RELIGIOUS LIBERTY COMMISSION
OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST CONVENTION

OPRYLAND HOTEL, NASHVILLE • OCTOBER 27-29, 2014 • ERLC.COM/CONFERENCE


RUSSELL MOORE


ROSARIA BUTTERFIELD


DAVID PLATT


CHRISTOPHER YUAN


R. ALBERT MOHLER JR.

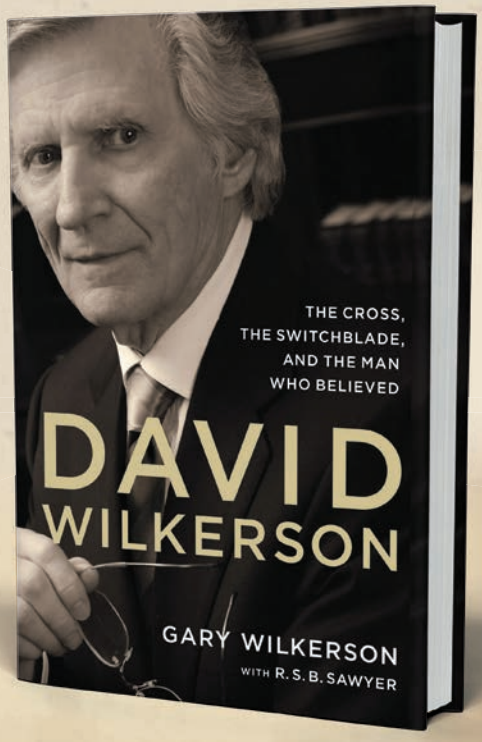

JIM DALY


SAM ALLBERRY

THE CROSS, THE SWITCHBLADE, *and* THE MAN WHO BELIEVED

A skinny preacher from rural Pennsylvania armed with only a cross and his faith took on the New York City slum world and its drug lords. DAVID WILKERSON brought to the streets of America's most crime-infested city a combination of tough love and the Gospel symbolized in his story *The Cross and the Switchblade* and now told fully within his life's story.

ZONDERVAN®
.com



Available everywhere books are sold.
PICK UP YOUR COPY TODAY.

EDITOR'S NOTE

ADAM CRUFT

CONFUSIONS ABOUNDING

Asian Americans cannot be pigeonholed.

MARK GALLI *Editor*

MANY ANOMALIES conspire when it comes to my experience with Asian American Christians.

In my first serious encounter, I was the object of racial discrimination. I secretly dated a Chinese Christian. Her father restricted her dating to only Chinese boys, hence our secrecy. Contrary to what I learned later, discrimination seemed not to be a white problem as much as a Chinese problem—that's how it seemed to my young mind, anyway.

Later encounters reinforced a common stereotype: I kept running into Asian Americans who were super students and who ended up in professions beyond my academic reach. When some Californians began complaining about the disproportionate number of Asians admitted to the University of California system at the expense of white students, I could only shrug and say, "They deserve to be admitted."

In the 1980s, I pastored a Sacramento church that sponsored a number of Laotian refugees. Other churches in the San Joaquin Valley sponsored Hmong refugees. The churches warmly welcomed these Asians and strove to help them adjust to American life.

Given my experiences, you can imagine my surprise when I started hearing Asian American Christians talk of being marginalized by the church. My confusion led to more reading and then listening, especially at gatherings CT recently organized across the country with prominent Asian American leaders, with the help of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and Fuller Theological Seminary. I've learned that my experience was indeed unusual, and indeed only made my confusions more apparent.

Here's one confession: I never thought of Laotians or Hmong as "Asian Americans." Americans, yes. Asians, yes. But when my mind conjured up "Asian Americans," I thought only of graduate–school educated, highly successful Japanese and Chinese Americans. I had dimly noticed that the Laotian and Hmong did not meld as easily into American life, but I had missed the challenge of balancing cultural identity and citizenship that binds Asian Americans of all stripes.

That inability to *see* the Asian American experience for what it has been and what it is—that's one motive behind our cover story (p. 38). I won't spoil the insights, other than to say I now have added to my Asian American encounters a small host of Christians who cannot be easily categorized, who lead the church in remarkable and diverse ways, and who are reaching people like no one else. When they have been marginalized, it appears that God has taken that experience (2 Cor. 12:9) and done something marvelous with it. **CT**

PERFORMANCE + VALUES

THAT'S WHAT MAKES GUIDESTONE *stand out.*

LIPPER
FUND AWARDS
WINNER
2012 · 2013
2014

With all the talk about the changes in healthcare, it's nice to know that our family has a God-honoring alternative.

Medi-Share is healthcare reform for Christians!

Medi-Share isn't insurance. It's a community of believers across America who share each other's healthcare bills. Our family share is about $300 a month! And **unlike insurance, we know our dollars never go to pay for procedures that are unbiblical.** Plus, the new healthcare law has a provision for health sharing ministries, so we don't have to buy insurance or face penalties.

Medi-Share is a healthcare choice Christians can believe in!

Request your FREE information guide today.
Visit **www.Medi-Share.org** *or call* **800-772-5623.**

- ***Over 100,000 members sharing your medical bills***
- ***Family options average around $300 a month***
- ***No enrollment period—you can join any time***

Medi-Share™
Affordable, Biblical Healthcare

Medi-Share is not health insurance. Medi-Share is not available in Montana.

REPLY ALL

33 UNDER 33

"33 Under 33" is breathtaking, to say the least. There has been too much gloom and doom from too many pulpits and books. After all, there is no set way to do church in the New Testament except for meeting together in Jesus' name and with the gifts of the Spirit to lead.

Of those featured, Wesley Hill stands out. Many of us gay Christians have had a hard road to walk. We desired to be able to speak freely of our struggles and to have prayer with others. We desired to be Christ's servants in many areas but were denied because of fear that even having thoughts and desires was evil.

Hill's openness should have been a part of church life from the days of Paul.

Ted Adams
Gresham, Oregon

I was greatly inspired by "33 Under 33." Now how about a sequel featuring the Abrahams of this world, who, instead of resigning themselves to puttering in the garden and taking cruises, use their golden years creatively to "do exploits" for the kingdom of God?

I recently visited Mount Rushmore and learned that its sculptor, Gutzon Borglum, began the work at age 58. Abraham heard God's call at 65, and the work that began in him continues to this day. Our churches are loaded with senior citizens. Many know they have some purpose yet in life. Can we encourage them?

Greg Moore
Rainier, Oregon

GLEANINGS

I don't know when I have felt as stunned as when I read "Immoral Minority," on how many evangelical and born-again churchgoers would do heinous acts for money. Are we sitting next to a fellow churchgoer who would kick a dog hard in the head, cheat, demean, and flip off others for the right amount of money?

Corinne Golden
Carlsbad, California

EDITOR'S NOTE: *In "Learning Who Latino Evangelicals Are" under News, we should have pictured the flag of the Dominican Republic. We apologize for this error, and thank Yanira Molina for her correction.*

STAYING ALIVE IN A SUICIDAL WORLD

To add to CT's Where We Stand, one way to help further reduce depression and suicide in the world, especially in our Christian communities, is by republishing an old idea: practicing *intrinsic religion*.

Gordon Allport described *intrinsic religion* as, in part, "practicing what one . . . deep down believes is true, characterized by the ability to not be overwhelmed by inconsistencies, staying open-minded." Staying open-minded does not mean rejecting the Bible. Rather, it means that since God does not change, we must. It also means that, if we want to avoid depression and suicide, we have to be entirely honest with ourselves and what we truly believe. Every mistaken belief we have is an opportunity for God to show his power by changing us for the better.

My work is so much easier when I depend on God to do the internal work. We cannot find God without God revealing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

COMMENTS? QUESTIONS? Our editors would love to hear from you. **E-mail:** cteditor@christianitytoday.com
Fax: 630.260.9401 **Address Changes, Subscriptions:** ctifulfill@christianitytoday.com

Introducing the *Life Application Study Bible*® Holman Christian Standard Bible edition.

MAKING TIMELESS TRUTH A PERSONAL TRUTH

"The Life Application Study Bible *is invaluable for its rich context and perspective, which enhances my Bible study greatly.*

I'm grateful for how this informs my living."

Welcome to the family.

New Living Translation · HCSB · NIV™ · KJV · NKJV NEW KING JAMES VERSION®

newlivingtranslation.com

TYNDALE

GOING THE EXTRA MILE AND ENJOYING THE JOURNEY

Right at Home®
In Home Care & Assistance

With roads impassable, Beau Green didn't hesitate trekking 2.5 miles in a snowstorm to make sure a client received care on time. Because going the extra mile, making a difference in people's lives, and being of service is what Beau and his wife Rachel thrive on as Right at Home franchisees.

As an in-home senior care provider, Beau and his team offer care services that allow seniors to continue living independently in their own home, such as medication reminders and assistance with daily tasks.

"We looked at what we wanted to do long term. With Rachel's health care background, and mine in business management, we thought Right at Home would be a good fit for us," Beau said. "It falls in line with our Christian worldviews of helping others and serving others, and we get to do that together every day."

A former college basketball player, Beau grew up in Kentucky, played for the University of Louisville and later at Samford, a small Christian College in Birmingham, Alabama where Beau fell in love with not only the area, but also his future wife. His in-laws have served the Birmingham community in church ministry, and now the Green's continue to serve in ministry with Right at Home.

> "We looked at over 60 different franchises, and ultimately it became apparent that Right at Home was a good fit. Right at Home has an unparalleled corporate support system, training, and a strategy aligned for success," said Beau Green, *Right at Home multi-unit franchisee*

At 30, Beau was the youngest Right at Home franchisee when he opened his first location in Birmingham. And at age 33, Beau opened their second location with overwhelming success.

For Right at Home franchisees, the average annual topline revenue is $1,033,777 with a gross margin of 37%.[1‡2‡]

"Our five year plan to purchase and open an office in Huntsville was realized in 18 months," Beau said. "There's no way to describe the way our business has grown in a failing economy. The only way to describe it is that the Lord has blessed our work."

There are over 78 million Baby Boomers today, growing at a rate of nearly 4 million every year.[3‡] Because people are living longer, the need to cover this substantial underserved market continues to increase exponentially.

"Our hope is to really add life to their years. With the help of our field staff, our clients are able to remain independent in their own home," Beau said. "It's what I would want for my family. We put ourselves in their shoes every single day."

If you want to serve with significance, consider becoming a Right at Home franchisee. Call **1-877-697-7537** or go online to **www.rightathomefranchise.com/CT** today!

‡ There is no assurance that your Franchised Business will do as well as those Franchised Businesses referenced above. Actual results vary from business to business. [1]Net Billings in 2013 for 249 Franchised Businesses open one year or more as of December 31, 2013; 83 or 33% of these Franchised Businesses attained or surpassed the represented level of financial performance. [2]Average gross margin in 2013 of 249 Franchised Businesses open one year or more as of December 31, 2013; 126 or 56% of these Franchised Businesses attained or surpassed the represented level of financial performance. [3]Source U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Right at Home, Inc. 6464 Center St., Ste. 150, Omaha, NE 68106. MN# F-4053. This information is not intended as an offer to sell, or the solicitation of an offer to buy a franchise. It is for information purposes only.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

himself to us, and when he does, we will know intrinsic religion.

I encourage everyone to keep trying different approaches to treating their depression, and to never give up.

Robert D. Neve
Executive Director, The Clearview Center
Omaha

HER.MENEUTICS

"The Hidden Blessing of Infertility" was thoughtful, but I was disappointed that author Karen Swallow Prior did not mention adoption as way to become a parent. Adoption is not for everyone, and I am glad that Prior has found fulfillment through other blessings provided by the Lord. But for many, adoption is a way to parenthood, a way mentioned many times in the Bible: Our Savior Jesus Christ was adopted by his earthly father; Moses by Pharaoh's daughter; Esther by her uncle, etc. And of course, we as believers are adopted into God's family.

Nancy Dubois
Grand Rapids, Michigan

OPEN QUESTION

I really enjoy the Open Question section. This past issue's question, "Would Jesus hang out in a strip club?" was particularly thought-provoking.

What all three respondents would agree on—and every Christian should agree on—is that no person is off-limits from the pursuit of God. He graciously comes for every one of us. The differences in the answers weren't so much about the people of the mission, but the location of the mission. And this is where I struggled.

I appreciated how Mike Foster said "no place is off-limits to the gospel." But then he says, "There is no context, environment, or event that Jesus would choose not to be in." I wonder if it is significant that when Jesus "ate with tax collectors, prostitutes, and sinners," it was in their own homes or the homes of friends, away from their place of business. Jesus goes after the people, but not always into the locations of their sin. Yes, the darkest places need the light, but strippers are still as lost when they leave the club as when they are in the middle of the stage.

Jake Chitouras
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, Canada

WATER WORKS

In the Global Gospel Project, it is a bit harsh to say that the Salvation Army "rejects baptism entirely." It is mostly our fault because we have not explained often or well enough our position, taken when William Booth discontinued the ceremony with water. This was mainly because of conflictive beliefs among his coworkers on the subject, which drove him to his Bible, where he found justification for his decision.

Basically, the Army sees baptism as a public and unambiguous testimony of one's new faith in Christ. We have always urged such witnessing, though not using any of the traditional ceremonies with water.

A Baptist theology professor gave me the best (short) statement of our position when he asked me, "Do you all still spiritualize baptism?" I like that. Understood thus, the repentant thief on the cross *did* get baptized: In front of others he expressed his admission of sinfulness and showed his faith in Christ, and Christ confirmed his faith.

Larry Repass
Newnan, Georgia

THE MOST TROUBLING PARABLE

Like author Alec Hill, I too have been troubled and puzzled by the "slave" parable in Luke. However, the example of Takashi Nagai—a godly man who survived the bombing of Nagasaki and went on to serve others, offering spiritual wisdom to millions—has helped me understand the spirit of being a slave to Christ. On Nagai's tombstone, it says, "We are unworthy servants, we have only done what was our duty" (Luke 17:10). His life is a testimony to the meaning of that parable.

Cheryl Touryan
Indian Hills, Colorado

A GRIEF TRANSFORMED

This is a beautiful testimony by Tara Edelschick. I find it interesting, though, that when faced with an open Communion table, Edelschick still realized the defining distinction of what it means to take Communion and follow Christ (you are either with him or against him), which seems to be one of the main defenses for a closed Communion table as well.

Andrea Ruffner Cavanaugh
Facebook

SEAN M. WORRELL / WIKIMEDIA

NET GAIN

Responses from the Web.

"All work has dignity because it belongs to our God-given cultural mandate (Gen. 1:28). Some people are suited for the trades, others for higher education. One is not better than another. The mistake is to turn higher education into vocational training, whether that's for white-collar or blue-collar jobs."

Christopher Benson, **JeffHaanen.com. "The Work of Their Hands," by Jeff Haanen and Chris Horst.**

"This keeps on happening over and over, dimming the light in more ways than one. This is not a comment on what and if Driscoll did, but a comment on our Christian love affair with celebrity Christians and big ministries."

Chip M Anderson, **Facebook. Gleanings: "Acts 29 Removes Mars Hill, Asks Mark Driscoll To Step Down and Seek Help," by Ruth Moon.**

"I'm preaching on it this Sunday. Thanks for the exhortation."

Matt Orth @lesswithoutyou
Her.meneutics: "Why Pastors Should Preach About Body Image," by Sharon Hodde Miller.

"As always, John Perkins nails it. It is long past time our churches pretend that racism no longer exists."

Robert J Mayer, CT **online comment. Thin Places: "John Perkins: The Sin of Racism Made Ferguson Escalate So Quickly," interview by Amy Julia Becker.**

"The funny thing about Scripture is a woman would do everything Ed exhorts men to do and come out perfectly feminine. It's not about replicating a certain portrait of your gender. It's about doing what God asks you to do."

Christopher T Casberg, CT **online comment. The Exchange: "Act Like Men: What It Means to Fight Like a Man," by Ed Stetzer.**

Experease

With Church Mutual, you get more than just insurance. You get your questions answered by industry experts — quickly and easily.

That's because insurance specialists, like Brad Barton, are ready to help. Brad takes about 6,000 calls from worship centers every year. Chances are, he's heard your question before — and can answer it right away. In fact, on average, calls to our National Customer Service Center have a 13.7 second response time, twice as fast as the industry average.* By focusing on the needs of religious organizations day in and day out, we have the unique expertise to put your mind at ease. Isn't that the kind of experience you'd like on your side?

Church Mutual has received consistently high ratings from industry analyst A.M. Best every year since 1952.

To learn more, call us at
(800) 554-2642
or visit
www.churchmutual.com.

* 13.7 seconds average response time for calls to our National Customer Service Center in 2013.

Church Mutual®
INSURANCE COMPANY
Listening. | Learning. | Leading.®

NEWS

WITNESS

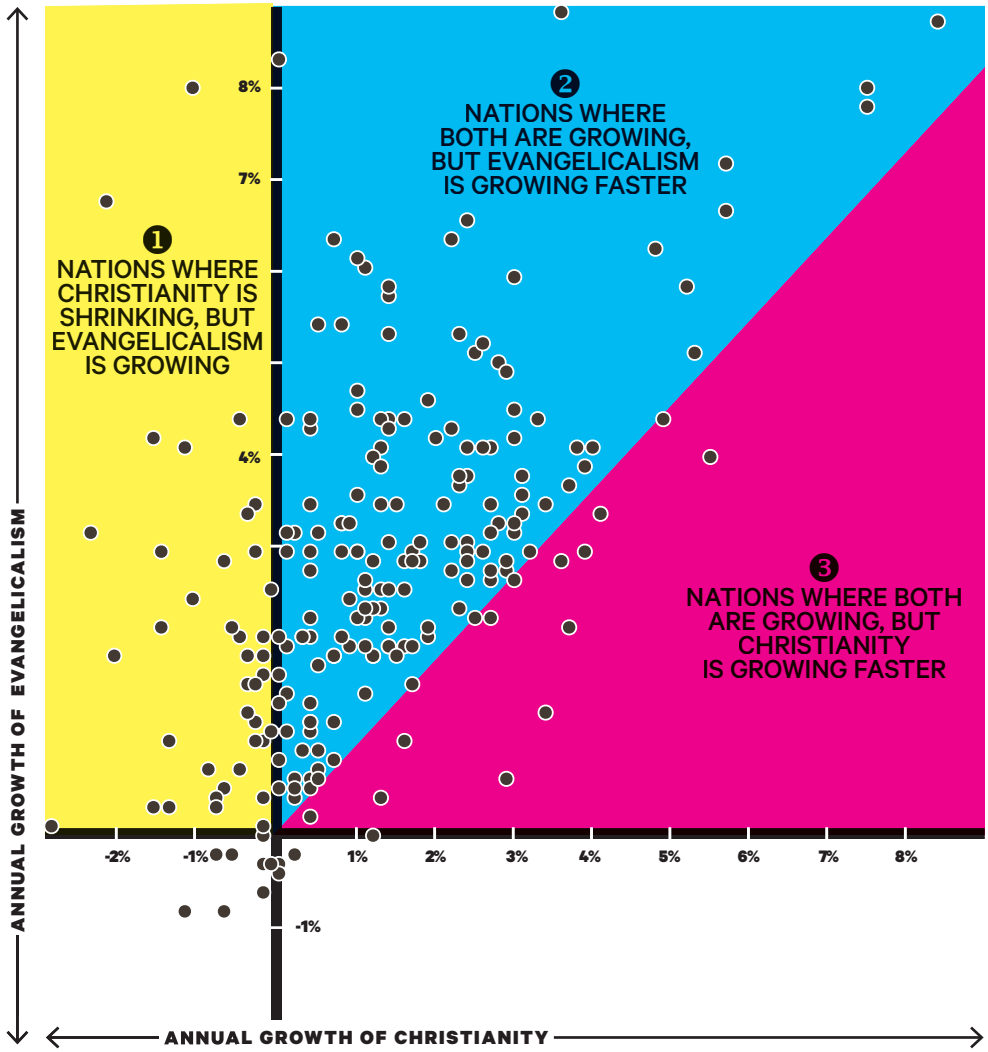
HERE COME THE HEALERS

LIBERIA: Ebola survivors Kent Brantly of Samaritan's Purse and Nancy Writebol of SIM are part of another viral trend: medical missions. The Christian Medical and Dental Association (CMDA) recently registered 1,500 student residents planning such careers (it expected less than 300). "We're seeing a huge renaissance in medical missions," said CEO David Stevens. The CMDA trained 60 new missionaries in August, joining 700 in the field. Up to 70 percent of African health care is provided by faith-based groups.

COURTESY OF SAMARITAN'S PURSE

More Evangelicals Almost Everywhere

In nearly every country of the world, evangelicalism is growing whether or not the overall church is as well. In only 16 nations, total Christian growth outpaced the growth of evangelicalism from 2000 to 2010. And in only six nations, both declined. While evangelicals remain a small minority in many countries, notes missions researcher Justin Long in crunching *Operation World*'s latest research, world Christianity is becoming more evangelical.



RON ROHRSSEN / FLICKR

ZIMBABWE

Africa's bad boy bets on megachurch tourism

Officials in cash-strapped Zimbabwe are tapping a new source of revenue: megachurches. After watching tourists pour into Nigeria to visit pastor T. B. Joshua's megachurch, Zimbabwe's tourism minister, Walter Mzembi, has eliminated import taxes on church vehicles, offered incentives to hotels and restaurants that provide services to churches, and declared two churches to be "religious tourism destinations"—including 40,000-seat Zion Christian Church (left). "Basically we are designating temples as tourism centers, and philosophically this was done by King Solomon," Mzembi told the *Zimbabwe Independent*. The South African nation has long suffered under President Robert Mugabe, who has been accused of rigging elections, wrecking the economy, and attempting to control churches. Mzembi expects religious tourism to raise $1 billion a year—a full 20 percent of Zimbabwe's total tourism goal.

CHINA

Christian 'conscience of China' free at last

Christian attorney and activist Gao Zhisheng was finally released after finishing his eight-year term in a Chinese prison. His family claims that torture left him in poor health, and according to Gao's wife, police still visit his house daily to inquire about his actions. Meanwhile, authorities arrested a Canadian Christian couple who operated a coffee shop near China's border with North Korea and led tours to the closed kingdom. The arrests appeared to be part of a larger sweep by the Chinese government to clear the border of Christians who may be helping North Koreans flee. American missionary Kenneth Bae, who led tours before North Korea sentenced him to 15 years of hard labor, is now the longest-imprisoned American there since the Korean War.

IRS relaxes rules on starting religious charities

In the wake of a scandal involving stalled applications from tea party groups, the IRS announced that a new three-page form will help ease its 66,000-application backlog of filings for 501(c)(3) status. Far shorter than the standard 26-page form, Form 1023-EZ will be available to groups with less than $50,000 in gross receipts and less than $250,000 in assets. The move will ease the burden of tax-status filing for many religious charities. Groups will not be prescreened, thus lightening the IRS's load by about 70 percent.

EUROPE

Human rights court affirms religious hiring

The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has favored the employment rights of religious organizations over individuals. By a 9–8 vote, it upheld the firing of a Catholic priest whose contract teaching religion at a Spanish public high school was not renewed after he joined a rally against clerical celibacy. The decision echoed the U.S. Supreme Court's unanimous 2012 *Hosanna-Tabor* ruling, which found that religious organizations are not subject to all federal antidiscrimination laws. But the ECHR's Russian judge, Dimitry Dedov, provoked discussion with his dissent that celibacy "cannot be justified by any public interest or religious autonomy." Religious freedom experts worry the narrow split doesn't bode well for European religious groups being free to follow their own policies.

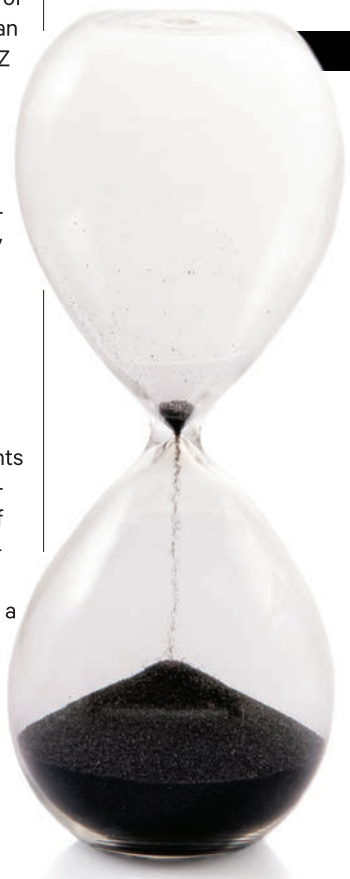
Suicide of pastor's kid muzzles 'watchdog'

After the suicide of Southern Baptist college president Ergun Caner's teenage son, online Christian "watchdogs" said one of their own had gone too far. Montana pastor and radio host J. D. Hall, a frequent critic of the Brewton-Parker College president, criticized 15-year-old Braxton Caner's behavior on Twitter. The Wartburg Watch blog decided Hall had "overstepped the boundaries of decency, love, and good judgment," while Fox News's Todd Starnes labeled it "theological thuggery." Hall announced he would "back away" from "fighting a war" for reform in the Southern Baptist Convention. "In my zeal, there has been a disconnect between my theology and my methodology," he wrote, regretting he had been "adversarial rather than pastoral." Prominent Caner critic James White called for a ceasefire "for a meaningful period of time" (it lasted two weeks after the funeral). Brewton-Parker spokesman Peter Lumpkins said, "It's time to stop social media abuse."

UNITED KINGDOM

Will churches boycott Vicky Beeching's songs?

After British songwriter turned TV pundit Vicky Beeching told interviewers, "I feel I have given myself permission" to pursue a lesbian relationship, she said American churches told her they would boycott "Glory to God Forever" and her other worship songs. The week she identified in press reports as gay, her 2010 album, *Eternity Invades*, hit No. 10 on the UK's Official Christian and Gospel Albums Chart; her 2007 album came in at No. 35. The 35-year-old Anglican, who left Nashville's CCM scene to comment on church news for the BBC, said she still makes much of her living from church royalties. "Why take a chance of a worshiper stumbling over any evident disparity



SHUTTERSTOCK

SPLIT SEEKERS

The New York Times analyzed a decade's worth of Google searches in America's hardest and easiest counties to live in. Among the top terms most correlated with poverty: the end times. With wealth: digital cameras.

SEARCH TERMS: HARDEST PLACES	SEARCH TERMS: EASIEST PLACES
2. antichrist	**1.** elph
6. about hell	**3.** nb-41
7. the Antichrist	**6.** sd1400
10. the Rapture	**7.** sd1300
16. go to heaven	**8.** sd400

[between] a song's message and its writer?" *World*'s Warren Cole Smith told CT. But Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission president Russell Moore noted that he still sings the hymn "God of Grace and God of Glory" even though its writer, Harry Emerson Fosdick, denied core Christian doctrines.

SINGAPORE

Pastor spent church funds on wife's pop music career

More details have emerged in a court case deciding whether a prominent Singapore megachurch engaged in innovative evangelism or fraud. Prosecutors allege that City Harvest Church pastor Kong Hee was the "invisible" manager of his wife Ho Yeow Sun's pop music career. They claim he diverted more than $50 million of church money to fund her albums and then cover his tracks when her career went bust. Kong asked church members to buy copies of Ho's albums to boost ratings before her American debut, and the church itself purchased $500,000 in unsold albums. Since the church had voted to fund Ho as part of the church's Crossover Project, aimed at reaching unchurched youth through Ho's made-for-MTV songs, no harm was done, Kong's attorney argued.

Christian college cuts ties after denomination investigates

The Kentucky Baptist Convention (KBC) ended its investigation of claims that Campbellsville University had fired a theology professor for "being too conservative," concluding that conservative theology was welcome among faculty. Nevertheless, the school decided to remove itself from denominational oversight of trustees and phase out KBC funding ($1 million of its $57 million budget). In response, KBC president Chip Hutcheson accused Campbellsville of acting like a "husband who wants to divorce his wife but still offers to live with her." The funding has ended, but the groups will work on a new partnership.

Lilly church claims Chase mismanaged millions

Christ Church Cathedral, the religious home of philanthropist Eli Lilly, has sued JPMorgan Chase, alleging the church lost $13 million due to the bank's big fees and bad investments. Chase, which the Securities and Exchange Commission is investigating for oversteering clients to the bank's own products, headed two trusts that Lilly posthumously left for the Indianapolis church. The lawsuit claims Chase decided "to purchase over 177 different investment products, mostly from itself, using church funds because they produced the highest revenues to [Chase]." The Lilly Endowment, which seeks to strengthen American churches, has given $1.8 billion to enable 50,000 pastors to take sabbaticals.

HID IN (HALF) OUR HEARTS

48%
Self-identified Bible readers who memorized any verses in the last year.

64%
Congregations that held Bible memorization events for children in the last year.

THE BIBLE IN AMERICAN LIFE

SHUTTERSTOCK

CHINA

Churches support crackdown on cult

China sentenced 25 cult members to up to 8 years in prison after 5 members bludgeoned a woman to death in a McDonald's restaurant for resisting their efforts to recruit her. The Chinese government is pointing to the widely publicized trial, and nearly 1,000 arrests since June, as evidence of its crackdown on Eastern Lightning—formally known as the Church of Almighty God. The cult believes Jesus was reincarnated in the form of a Chinese woman named Deng. Working to protect new Christians from such cults, house church leaders have cautiously partnered with government efforts and have increased efforts to teach solid theology and church history (see "Deadly Lightning," March).

PHILIPPINES

Christian town wants out of new Muslim province

After 17 years of peace talks seeking to end decades of violence, the Philippines agreed this spring to let Islamist rebels create a local government based on Muslim principles. But inside the Moro Islamic Liberation Front's new autonomous region of Bangsamoro is Wao, the region's only Christian-majority town (pop. 50,000). The town, on the archipelago's southern island of Mindanao, wants out and has asked to be placed under the direct control of the Philippines central government. "We prefer to stay out of Bangsamoro, although we support the right to self-determination of local Muslims," Wao mayor Elvino Balicao told AsiaNews. "I hope Manila will listen to us before there are problems."

Church Life

Outside Insight

Some say it's the new norm. Others don't consider it biblical.

Mark Driscoll tells Mars Hill he's taking a break.

COURTESY OF MARS HILL

As Mark Driscoll nears the possible end of his leave from Mars Hill Church, the question is: Will the Seattle megachurch's new governance calm concerns about his leadership?

Current and former pastors levied charges against Driscoll this summer, including verbal abuse and lying about manipulating a bestseller list.

Driscoll took an "extended focused break" in August after the Acts 29 church planting network removed him from membership. "We no longer believe [Mars Hill's board] is able to execute the plan of reconciliation" with critics, wrote president Matt Chandler. Days later, speaker Paul Tripp explained he had resigned from Mars Hill's Board of Advisors and Accountability (BOAA) because it was an "inadequate replacement for a biblically functioning internal elder board that is the way God designed his church to be led."

Mars Hill leadership had comprised 24 elders (mostly church staff and members). In 2007, the structure became the seven-member BOAA: Driscoll, two other executive pastors, and four independent members. Mars Hill explained it was seeking greater objectivity in the board. After Tripp and another independent member (Chicago megachurch pastor James MacDonald) resigned this summer, Mars Hill replaced them with two Seattle businessmen who are members, and created an additional elder board involving seven lead pastors.

A deeper question raised by the Mars Hill saga asks if nondenominational churches can better govern their congregation and disciple their pastors with elders drawn from within the church body, or if they should seek outside expertise.

The external accountability board is increasingly prevalent, said Scott Thumma, a megachurch researcher at Hartford Seminary. "In some sense, megachurches wouldn't exist if they didn't adopt business practices," he said. Pastors of large institutions "want somebody who has more experience [helping] discern a way to go," he said, and such leaders are in short supply in any given congregation.

Dave Travis, CEO of Leadership Network, says external boards are becoming more common among churches of all sizes, driven by the increasing ease of long-distance communication but mainly by the recent growth in church planting. "Even those traditions that would say 'we don't like external control' tend to exercise a lot of control over new churches [they plant]," he said.

The Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability (ECFA) accredits churches, but only if a majority of the board is "independent" (they can be church members but not employees). Such boards promote "strong, effective governance . . . without partiality, undue influence, or conflict of interest," states ECFA, which currently accredits more than 100 churches (including Willow Creek Community Church, LifeChurch.tv, and Northland, a Church Distributed). It accredited Mars Hill in 2012.

But Tripp argues that churches should not be structured like other nonprofits. External boards "at best can provide financial accountability," he wrote. "But [they] will find it very difficult to provide the kind of hands-on spiritual direction and protection that every Christian pastor needs." He noted: "A distant, external accountability board can never work well because it isn't a firsthand witness to the ongoing life . . . of the church."

Even though Travis attends a congregationalist church himself, he sees the debate as far less settled. "There are several Scriptures about the qualifications of elders and overseers, but little practical direction," he said. "The Bible didn't give a handbook or organizational chart. Paul and the other apostles apparently exercised some 'extra local' authority among churches—even churches that Paul had never visited."

Carl Trueman, a church history professor at Westminster Theological Seminary, suggests churches might do well to separate the two, reserving financial oversight for external elders and church discipline for internal elders. "When there are large sums of money, you need to take some account of external accountability," he said. "But we shouldn't allow the needs of financial accountability to change how we shape our church government."

At its core, how a church organizes power is about people, he said. "Good polity is there for people's souls. The tragedy of some megachurches is [they've] taken a huge toll on individuals. Polity is all about accountability to one another."

"I think the congregation can be cared for really with just about any polity," said Mark Dever, lead pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church. He believes a congregational approach is most biblical. "But I want to be very respectful of God's sovereignty and his ability to use [even] bad polity to still do very good things."

Morgan Lee

HEADLINES

Discipleship

Africans Don't Read African Christians

New research spotlights what the continent's believers are missing.

Want to learn from an African Christian leader? There's Augustine, Cyprian, and many other African theologians from the church's first centuries. But you're unlikely to find a living author in your library or bookstore.

Now, a new study, polling more than 8,000 Christians in four languages across three countries, has found that African Christians aren't reading African Christians, either.

In the Africa Leadership Study, a quarter of Central Africans, a third of Angolans, and half of Kenyans named a preacher or pastor as their favorite author. Majorities in Angola and Kenya named authors whose writings were explicitly Christian. High percentages also named African writers.

However, "overlap between the two was low, with relatively few respondents identifying favorite authors [who] were both African and Christian," said Robert Priest, a professor of international studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, who presented the findings to the American Society of Missiology.

The lack of prominent indigenous authors was also evidenced by the library holdings of five major Christian higher education institutions in Kenya, where only one African Christian (John Mbiti) ranked among the top 15 authors with the largest presence on the shelves. Kenyan Christian bookstores had a significantly different top 15, but only one African author (Dag Heward-Mills) cracked their lists. Other commercial booksellers and street vendors didn't have any African Christian authors among their top 15.

Demand is one major reason for the paucity. While 38 percent of the world's evangelicals are in sub-Saharan Africa, many "see products, including books, from the West as superior and are willing to buy them," said Francis Bukachi, executive director of Hope Alive Initiatives in Ghana.

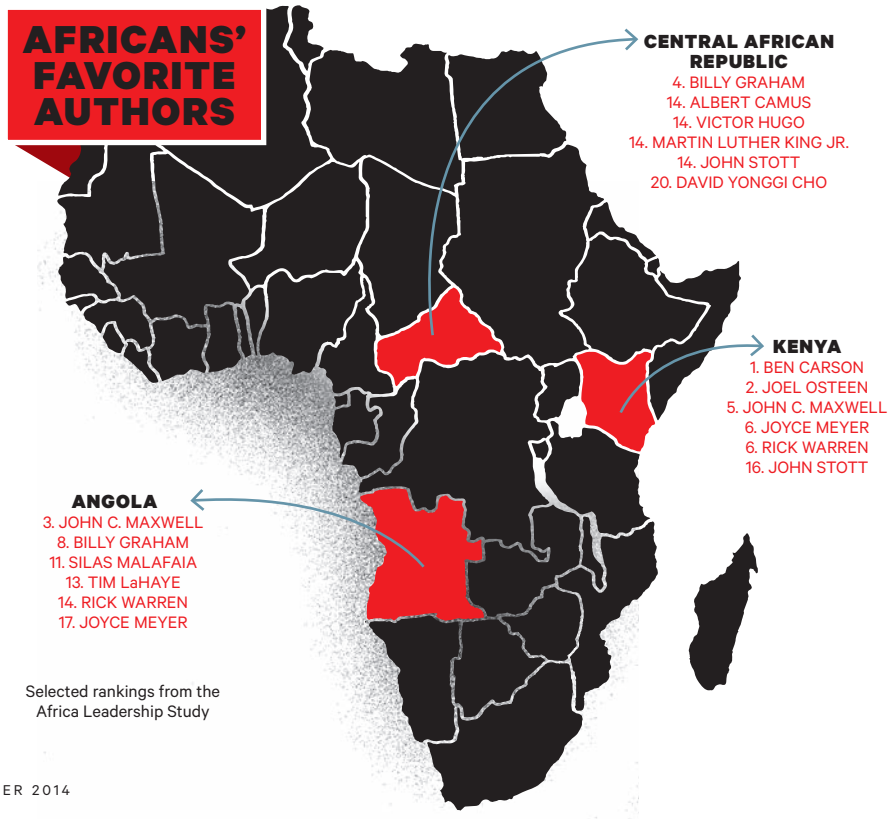
Pieter Kwant, program director of literature for Langham Partnership International, agrees. "We've had a theological stream running 'from the West to the rest,' including all our books," he said. But, he added, "the questions that are being asked in the majority world are not being answered by the West."

For instance, says Bukachi, issues like female genital mutilation, wife inheritance, polygamy, honoring ancestors, and nepotism are rarely covered by Western Christian authors.

Priest's study found that Africans read about as much as Americans do: One-third read six or more books last year. But writing is not a priority for many African Christian leaders, who "prefer to communicate orally," said Bukachi.

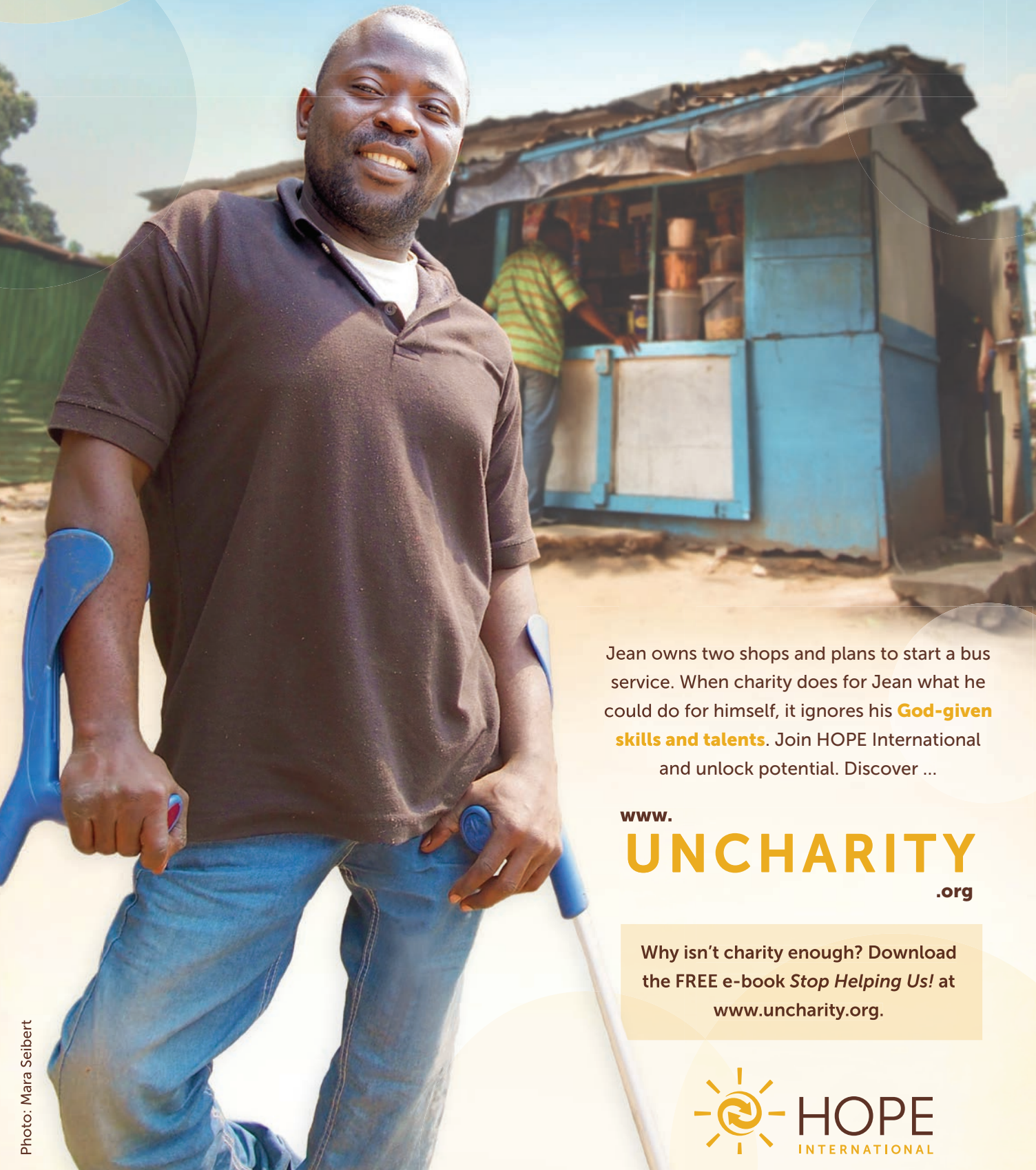
Priest said that certain evangelical missionary groups may have propagated the idea that preaching fulfills "kingdom purposes" better than writing. And a struggling publishing industry throughout Africa doesn't inspire confidence in African Christian leaders. "Because the marketing and distribution side is weak, authors don't have the foggiest idea where their writings are going to go or whether people will read them," he said.

African Christians are still teaching and learning from other African Christians, says Francis Omondi, canon of All Saints Cathedral in Kampala, Uganda. "[But] most of the reflections, experiences, and learning over the years are not captured or documented," he said. "Therefore relevant and contextual knowledge is not being retained in the community." **Kevin P. Emmert**



Selected rankings from the Africa Leadership Study

Charity overlooks Jean's potential.
Uncharity unlocks it.



Jean owns two shops and plans to start a bus service. When charity does for Jean what he could do for himself, it ignores his **God-given skills and talents**. Join HOPE International and unlock potential. Discover ...

www.UNCHARITY.org

Why isn't charity enough? Download the FREE e-book *Stop Helping Us!* at www.uncharity.org.

HOPE INTERNATIONAL

Photo: Mara Seibert

HEADLINES

Religious Freedom

Why Your Bible Was Made in China

Does it matter that the Good Book is printed where many Christians lack one?

Should consumers worried about the origins of their clothing, coffee, and chocolate focus on a more spiritual item: the Bible?

Chances are good that your favorite Bible was printed in China. The overwhelming majority of Bibles sold at Christian bookstores or Barnes & Noble were printed there, said Mark Bertrand of Bible Design Blog. And more publishers are joining in.

"A lot of people have misgivings about that," he said. "Some of it is, 'Oh, our Bibles are printed in Communist China.' Others are concerned about the economic situation, about what conditions these Bibles were produced under."

The Chinese government's restriction of Bible distribution is also troubling, said ChinaAid's Bob Fu. "When brothers and sisters are being persecuted and arrested for their beliefs based on the same Bible, what does it mean to purchase an exported copy that says MADE IN CHINA?"

Since China's only legal printer of Bibles, Amity Printing Company, published its first Bible in cooperation with the United Bible Societies (UBS) in 1987, 117 million Bibles have followed. More than half of those were printed in the last six years, including 12.4 million in 2013, making China the world's biggest Bible publisher. Three out of four of last year's Bibles were produced for export.

"The simple reason is that China is a manufacturing powerhouse in world trade," said Amity board member David Thorne. "The more complex and interesting answer is that it is the outcome of God's hand on the mission of the church."

Choosing a printer comes down to "quality and competitive price," said Tim Bensen, a buyer at Tyndale House Publishers. "We print all over the world," he said. "Amity does good work."

Printing Bibles is more difficult than printing other types of books, and requires a certain amount of expertise, he said.

Randy Bishop, director of Bible production at HarperCollins Christian Publishing, agrees. "Bibles have more steps in the production process," he said. "However, the main feature that makes a Bible unique is thin paper. It takes a special expertise to print, fold, gather, and bind Bible paper."

Along with providing skilled employment at above-market salaries, Amity maintains government standards in work practices and uses environmentally friendly materials, said Thorne. And the UBS share of Amity profits is used to subsidize Bible distribution in rural China, where Scripture is harder to obtain.

So when an American purchases a Bible made in China, it doesn't mean a Chinese Christian will now lack one. The difficulty Chinese Christians have in acquiring Bibles isn't because of Amity's printing abilities, but because of government restrictions on sales, said Barry Werner, chief operating officer of Bibles for China.

The official Three-Self Patriotic Movement churches are the only ones who can order—and sell—the Bibles. That leaves organizations like Bibles for China, which gave away about 200,000 Bibles in rural China last year, to place their orders through the church.

But the bigger problem is Christians' lack of money, said Thorne. "As demand has increased year-by-year, larger publishing quotas have been approved. Because of funding shortfall, sometimes the church has not managed to utilize its entire annual quota."

While the current sales arrangement is often frustrating, it's eased by technology, said Brent Fulton, president of ChinaSource. "China leads the world in terms of people accessing the Web via their smartphones, and you can get a Bible app just like you can anywhere," he said. "There's no limitation to that."

And maybe Westerners seeing MADE IN CHINA on their Bibles, Fu said, "can be a reminder to pray for those who made these Bibles." **Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra**

China now exports 75 percent of the Bibles it prints.

SCOTT BRAUER

SERVING TOGETHER

AFRICAN AIDS CRISIS, 2000

JESUS HAS ALWAYS sent His followers to help the suffering. For over 60 years, World Vision has served the church—those with the faith and compassion to carry the burdens of others—as it serves the world's most vulnerable.

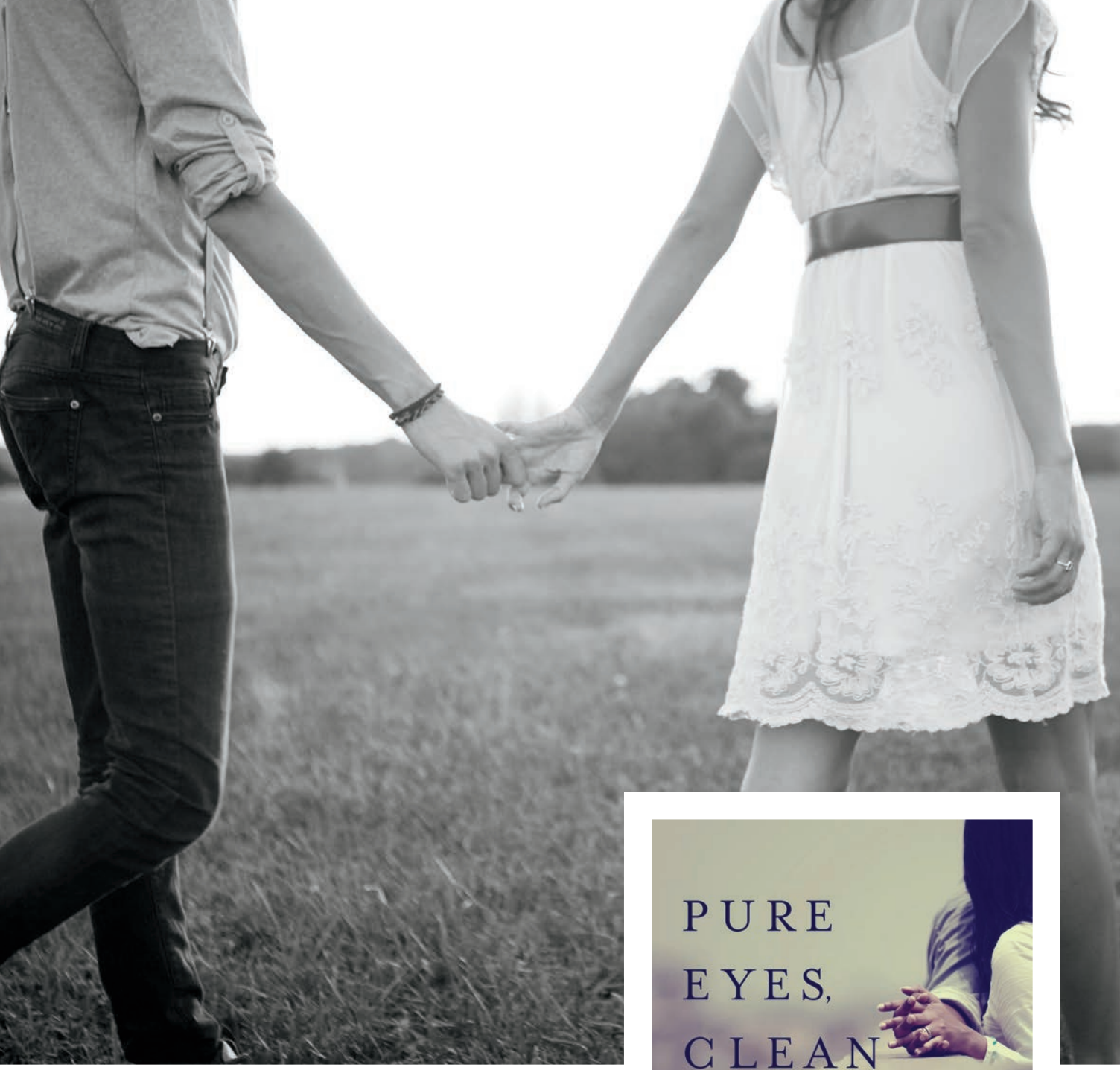
IN THE MARGINS

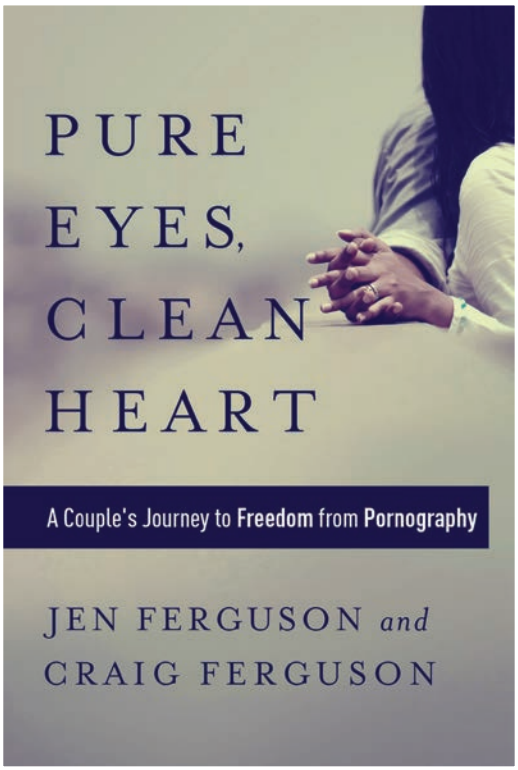
WE BELIEVE Jesus still calls His people to bring hope and transformation to the world's hardest places. Together, we serve Him, leading the way to fullness of life for children and families living in poverty. **Join us in the margins.**

worldvision.org/church

World Vision®

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organization dedicated to working with children, families, and their communities worldwide to reach their full potential by tackling the causes of poverty and injustice.





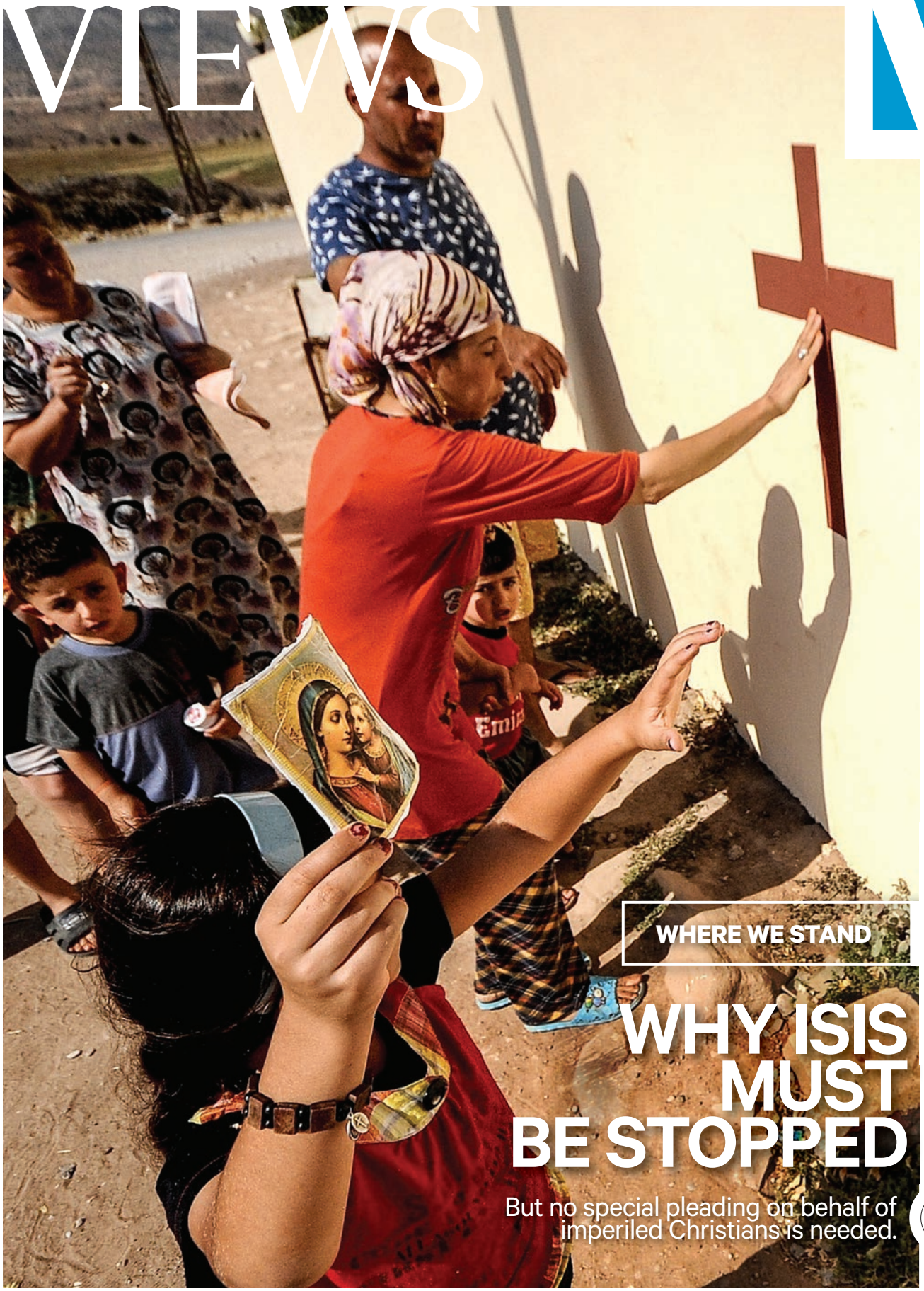
renew

A candid account of a married couple's journey after discovery of the husband's pornography addiction. Filled with empathy, biblical insight, and hope for true healing.

DISCOVERY HOUSE
PUBLISHERS

dhp.org | 1-800-653-8333

VIEWS



GAIL ORENSTEIN / NURPHOTO / CORBIS

WHERE WE STAND

WHY ISIS MUST BE STOPPED

But no special pleading on behalf of imperiled Christians is needed.

Before the kingdom of God arrives, we are called to stop injustice wherever it assails the oppressed.

HERE'S A CHILLING thought experiment that, given the arc of world events, might seem eerily like a peek into the not-so-distant future.

Imagine a community of Middle East Christians under assault from a ferocious, well-armed band of terrorists. The Christians live peaceably and faithfully, their presence stretching back centuries. The terrorists aim to destroy them or drive them out, and they have both the power and ruthlessness to prevail. Imagine, further, that the United States can halt the onslaught and restore harmony—but only by deploying military might. Should Uncle Sam send in the troops?

Now repeat the same thought experiment, but replace the besieged Christians with a community representing some other religious faith. Then ask yourself, once more, whether America should intervene to prevent genocide.

GAIL ORENSTEIN / NURPHOTO / CORBIS

If the first scenario stirs you to demand boots on the ground, but the other doesn't, perhaps some soul-searching is in order. Why favor an aggressive national response only when Christians need protection?

Of course, few of us give voice to such blatant chauvinism. We're unlikely to tolerate a foreign policy governed by crude religious litmus tests. And yet, as Christians, the suffering of fellow believers tends to pierce our hearts more profoundly. We sympathize, often achingly, with the plight of non-Christians under persecution. But it's savagery against Christians that really gets our blood boiling.

It's important to keep this in mind as we encounter anti-Christian cruelty, with depressing regularity, in today's headlines. This summer, the world awoke to discover a jihadist army, styling itself the Islamic State (also known as ISIS), brutally seizing power across Iraq and Syria. In conquered territories, ISIS has proclaimed a new caliphate and introduced a draconian brand of Islamic law. Christians—along with dissenting Muslims and obscure religious minorities like the Yazidis—confront a terrifying choice: Leave home, convert to Islam, or die a martyr.

ISIS must be stopped. That much is certain. But how? By whom? To what extent? All are prudential questions that must be answered by those closest to the situation. Yet as we advance this case, we ought to refrain from making Christian suffering the clinching factor, as in *These monsters massacre Christians, and something has to be done*. Raise your hand if you've never entertained that thought. No need to scold yourself. Yet consider how it starts us down a problematic path.

Trouble is, the "something" needed to strangle ISIS is shaping up to be military force. President Obama ordered air strikes to help refugees escape the coming slaughter. It may turn out that nothing short of full-fledged assault will dislodge ISIS. Safeguarding American national security and averting humanitarian disaster may require wiping ISIS off the map.

But that's a far cry from wanting this particular enemy vanquished because—and *only* or *mainly* because—it oppresses Christians. The U.S. oath of enlistment requires soldiers to defend the Constitution against enemies, foreign and domestic. We might dream about heroic soldiers sweeping into town and stomping all over the bad guys. But they haven't signed up to stand between persecuted Christians and their persecutors.

Partiality toward Christians, however natural, shouldn't disproportionately influence American foreign policy judgments. We need to remember what the military is, and isn't, for.

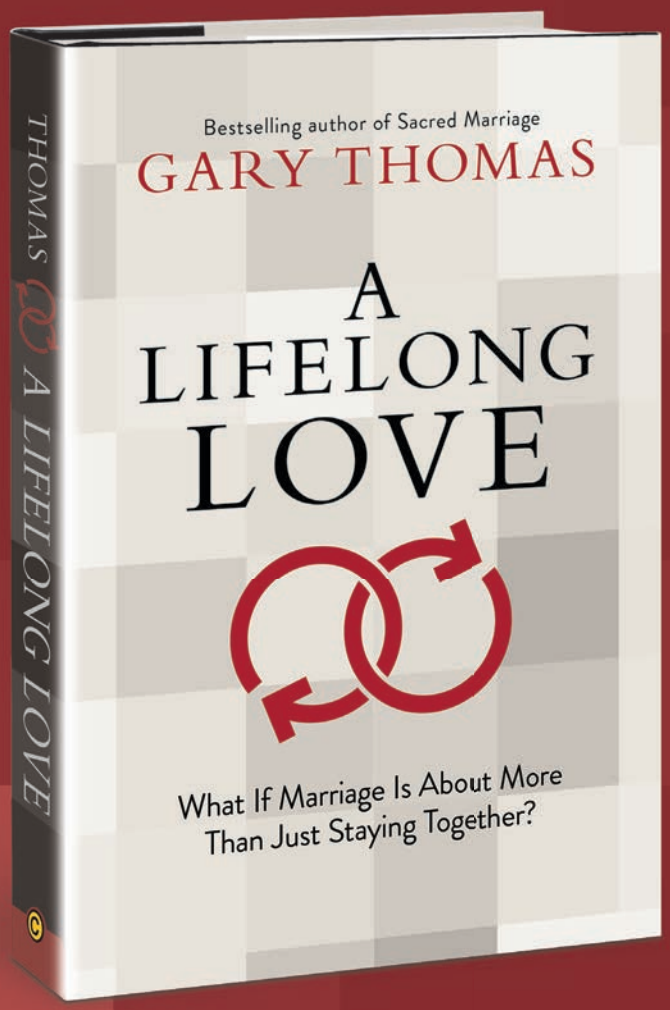
A recent multifaith petition, spearheaded by the Catholic conservative Robert George, strikes a proper balance. The statement (endorsed by evangelicals, including Russell Moore, Eric Metaxas, and Jim Daly) calls for defeating ISIS, but without giving off the slightest whiff of faith-based special pleading.

It's not hard to envision a future of spiraling danger for Christians in the Middle East. And if the situation for Christians grows more precarious, the temptation to enlist American soldiers as avenging angels may intensify. Here's the sobering reality: As a global church, we will have to prepare ourselves to witness thousands of our brothers and sisters face extermination or exile, even as it lies within America's power to militarily save the day. That's a nightmarish thought, and it sounds cold-hearted even to suggest it. But even our own Messiah declined to summon angels to save his skin.

There's something natural and right about praying for justice to rain down and scorch the evil (look at the Psalms!). But let's not be selective about who counts as an enemy. Whenever any group, religious or not, finds itself at the dangerous end of rifles and swords, we are looking at the evil of injustice. And before the kingdom of God arrives, we are called to stop injustice wherever it assails the oppressed.

Maybe that means wielding military force against groups like ISIS, and maybe it doesn't. Either way, let's guard against the subtle temptation to desire one course of action when Christians are in the cross hairs, and another when they aren't. **CT**

MATT REYNOLDS is CT associate editor of books.



A Good Marriage Is Something You Make

You want your marriage to have eternal purposes. You long for it to inspire others. But what does it look like to build a sacred marriage in the midst of dirty dishes, work deadlines, and car pools? *A Lifelong Love* gives you the practical tools you need to craft a spiritually purposeful marriage in real life.

Available in print and digital editions everywhere books are sold.

David C Cook®
transforming lives together

OPEN QUESTION *Three Views*

Do the Common Core education standards endanger religious freedom?

Why a nationwide standard for classrooms may cause concern.

JMAES O'BRIEN

Kevin Theriot
Yes, Beware Belief Police

Common Core will likely have only an indirect effect on religious liberty—at least initially. But advocates for religious liberty and the family still have genuine cause for concern. Common Core creates another tool for big government (judges, legislators, and education policymakers) to control the beliefs and actions of parents and their students.

The Supreme Court has long recognized that parents have the right to direct the education—religious and otherwise—of their children. In 1923, the Court ruled in *Meyer v. Nebraska* that parents have the right to teach their children a foreign language at a young age. Two years later, the Court bolstered parental rights in the *Pierce* case, in which it held parents could educate their children in parochial instead of state-mandated public schools.

But lower courts have seriously undermined parental rights in recent years. A federal appeals court denied the right of parents to opt their public school children out of explicit sex education in Massachusetts. And the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals infamously said in 2005 in another sex-education case, "Once parents make the choice as to which school their children will attend, their fundamental right to control the education of their children is, at the least, substantially diminished."

The harmful trend is that parents *cannot* opt their children out of classes that conflict with their religious convictions. That restriction is likely to creep into parochial schools and even homeschooling through national education standards specifying what all students must be taught in order to move on to higher education. Voluntary alignment with Common Core standards is a growing trend among parochial and private schools. College entrance exams and the GED exam are aligning with Common Core, so homeschooling parents may also feel pressure to align with Common Core. The net effect is further restriction on parental freedom.

Parents have much more direct control of that process when decisions about curriculum are made locally. Allowing the federal government to make decisions historically left to local school boards necessarily weakens the individual parent's ability to influence those decisions.

That prospect is particularly alarming given the federal government's recent track record of disregarding the religious convictions of people of faith. Though the Supreme Court ruled against it, the Obama administration took the legal position that

its interest in providing national health care trumps a faith-based business's right to refuse to cover medical care that violates its beliefs.

These attempts to coerce business owners and ministries to adopt a type of national secular orthodoxy suggest Common Core national education standards could be used to bolster this secular orthodoxy. All who are concerned about religious liberty should be on guard against the use of Common Core to create a Common Morality.

KEVIN THERIOT is a senior counsel with Alliance Defending Freedom.

Karen Swallow Prior
No, Standards Are Needed

I'm old-fashioned enough to think the primary responsibility of public schools is to teach reading, writing, and arithmetic. These skills are a significant predictor for adult success, as numerous studies have shown. The Christian community needs public schools—where 93 percent of American students are educated—to cultivate these most basic skills.

So many myths and misunderstandings have proliferated about Common Core that some of its critics seem not to realize that Common Core is limited solely to these two foundational subjects: math and language arts.

Common Core does not cover additional knowledge-based content areas such as social studies and science—subjects more prone to ideological, political, and religious controversy. Common Core State Standards aim at exactly what the name suggests: cultivating in all students, in all schools, a strong core of the basic skills necessary for success during the school years and beyond. Common Core is merely the foundation upon which those states and private schools that adopt the standards can construct a building of their choosing.

Another set of misconceptions about Common Core arises from lost distinctions among standards, curriculum, and testing: *standards* are the goal; *curriculum* is a means of accomplishing the goal; *testing* is the measure of success in meeting the goal. Common Core consists only of standards (or goals). Curriculum and testing are up to schools to adopt.

Weaknesses in curricula point Christians to a tremendous opportunity in both the free market and the marketplace of ideas. Christians are particularly equipped to create and provide back-to-basics, skills-based curricula aligned with these strong educational standards. Not taking advantage of this opening for cultural influence would be to squander a unique opportunity.

Fears about Common Core's potential to infringe upon religious liberty stem from broad concerns about governmental overreach. Yet let's not throw out any babies with the bath water. A prominent supporter of Common Core, Samuel Rodriguez, president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, points out that across the nation, students in impoverished and minority neighborhoods are held to lower educational standards. This, he says, "dishonors the intellect, work ethic, and soul of these children even as it handicaps our nation's future."

As an English professor, I am particularly impressed by the standards for reading, which are vocabulary-rich and evidence-based. Equipping the students who are the future of our nation with the most basic intellectual and life skills will help religious liberty to flourish.

KAREN SWALLOW PRIOR is professor of English at Liberty University.

Kristen Blair
Yes, By Limiting Choice

Who decides how and what children learn? Common Core has pushed this question to the forefront of fierce national debate. The Common Core standards do not constitute an explicit threat to religious freedom. But the standards over time will likely diminish local choice.

From its inception, Common Core has disenfranchised parents, students, and schools while circumventing democratic principles. The standards were implemented without significant input from parents or the public. The federal government has tiptoed around laws preventing it from controlling curricula, monetarily incentivizing states to adopt common standards. Forty-five states quickly adopted the untested English and math standards for their public schools.

This robs the public of meaningful influence. To whom should parents complain about byzantine strategies for solving simple math problems, or a high-school curriculum divested of much classic literature? Granted, these questions are academic, not religious. But consider: *They are no longer open for discussion.* Muting parents' voices on these concerns presages a disquieting disregard for their input on other matters. Credible research shows that the more parents are involved in their children's education, the better their children do in school.

Leading education historian Diane Ravitch writes, "No one will escape [Common Core standards'] reach, whether they attend public or private school." A publishing juggernaut, Common Core–aligned materials are flooding the market. Private and parochial schools face unprecedented curricular and testing pressures to adopt public-school standards.

Parents seeking a holistic faith-based (Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish) education for their children may be dismayed at the incursion of Common Core's narrow, school-to-work ideology into sectarian school pedagogy. Nonpublic sectarian schools that emphasize preparing students for college are voluntarily implementing Common Core because of its influence on college admissions and curricula.

Proponents dismiss curricular concerns, parroting the line that Common Core is a set of standards, not a curriculum. This is true but also disingenuous if left unqualified. Standards, curricula, and tests form a trifecta; standards drive curricula and testing. At least 12 states have adopted national science standards (which are Common Core–aligned). Featuring established "core ideas," the standards present a stance on evolution that surely will contradict some parents' religious beliefs.

An air of inevitability surrounds national standards. But parental outcry is reaching state legislatures: Several states have repealed Common Core; others are reviewing it. A mother myself, I believe in the power of mad mamas to topple titans. But this one is a true Goliath. **CT**

KRISTEN BLAIR is an education writer and coauthor of the parenting book *From Santa to Sexting*.

Wesley Hill teaches New Testament at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania, and is writing a book about friendship.

A Severe Separation

Embrace goodbyes for what our bodies tell us they are.

People can't say goodbye anymore," writes the poet Les Murray. "They say last hellos."

Take, for instance, a recent experience I had with some good friends. They had packed the last of their belongings for a cross-country move and showed up at my door before hitting the road. I tried to make small talk, awkwardly fending off the inevitable parting. Finally, they gave me a hug, and I blurted out, "We'll have to get together again this fall. Maybe I can make a road trip down to see you." A *last hello* is what I was saying, not a *goodbye*. I couldn't bring myself to say the latter.

Once, at the end of a degree program, I went to my favorite professor's office for a similar parting. I had taken multiple classes with him, and his teaching had left a permanent mark on me. I wanted to say that I would miss our regular conversations. We talked uncomfortably for a few minutes. I rose to leave. "Well, I won't say goodbye," he mumbled, avoiding eye contact. "You can ask my wife—I don't do goodbyes."

In his book *A Severe Mercy*, a memoir of Christian conversion and student life in Oxford, Sheldon Vanauken tells the story of his last meeting with C. S. Lewis, who had become a friend. The two men ate lunch together, and when they had finished, Lewis said, "At all events, we'll certainly meet again, here—or *there*." Then he added: "I shan't say goodbye. We'll meet again." And with that, they shook hands and parted ways. From across the street, above the din of traffic, Lewis shouted, "Besides, Christians *never* say goodbye!"

There is, of course, something admirable in all these stories. Recognizing the ties that bind us all together, across the miles and years, is part of what it means to be a Christian: We are bound in what Paul calls "the unity of the Spirit" (Eph. 4:3). On the other hand, minimizing the significance of saying goodbye can blind us to an equally important truth: Separation—the kind that we feel in our bodies—*matters*.

Christians believe not only in a future bodily resurrection. We also believe in the importance of our bodily lives *now*, with all the benefits that physical companionship entails. Food prepared and eaten together, eye contact initiated and sustained, hands clasped in prayer, shoulders and backs offered when a neighbor's furniture needs to be moved—all these things and more are gifts that can be exchanged only when we are *with* each other. Paul recognized this when he wrote from Corinth to the church he had founded in Thessalonica: "As for us, brothers and sisters, when, for a short time, we were made orphans by being separated from you—in person, not in heart—we longed with great eagerness to see you face to face" (1 Thess. 2:17, NRSV).

Avoiding goodbye when we have to move and face the prospect, in some cases, of never seeing each other again in this life denies the importance of our bodily life together. Brushing over "farewell" denies that the pain of separation is *real*—that no matter how many texts or phone calls or Facebook updates we share, we won't be available for each other in the same way anymore.

Saying goodbye is important, in the end, because it's one way of reminding each other that we are God's bodily creatures.

One Christian who understood this better than most was pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Separated from his friends and family when he was arrested during World War II, Bonhoeffer wrote, "[T]here is nothing that can replace the absence of someone dear to us, and one should not even attempt to do so; one must simply persevere and endure it."

Rather than downplaying the significance of saying goodbye, Bonhoeffer wanted to experience the full force of a farewell. "[W]e have to suffer indescribably from the separation," he wrote. Only in that way "do we sustain communion with the people we love, even if in a very painful way." God keeps our goodbyes painful, Bonhoeffer said, in order to highlight how vital our past togetherness was.

So these days, whenever I have to move away from friends, or bid farewell to friends moving away from me, I try to let myself mourn. With Bonhoeffer, I grieve the physical distance that will yawn between my friends and me. Rather than immediately imagining the future bridge that will close the gap, I want to acknowledge the ache of it in the present and not rush too quickly into comfort.

The word *goodbye* is actually a contraction of "God be with you." Saying goodbye is important, in the end, because it's one way of reminding each other that we are God's bodily creatures. We want him to watch over us and keep our love for one another alive, right now, even before the day of our eventual reunion. CT

ADAM CRUFT

"OUR EMPLOYEES ABSOLUTELY DESERVE FINANCIAL BENEFITS.

I wish we could afford them."

We hear it all the time. "We're a ministry, not a business. We just don't have the money to offer financial benefits." But the truth is, affordable financial benefits are not out of reach.

MMBB Financial Services thoroughly understands the needs of faith-based organizations. And as benefits consultants, we will tailor an affordable plan so that everyone in your organization will enjoy retirement, disability and life insurance benefits that are sensible and secure.

To find out more, visit us at **MMBB.org**. Or call **1-800-986-6222**. We may just have some very good news for you and your employees.

MMBB
A Financial Services Ministry

REAL PLANNING, REAL SOLUTIONS. THAT'S OUR CALLING.

David Neff is the former editor in chief of *Christianity Today*.

Beauty for the Many

What a Christian ethic looks like outdoors.

As I write, my eldest daughter and her family are having a wonderful vacation at an Arizona mountain cabin. This cabin rests on land that my father bought more than 50 years ago from a retired missionary in our church.

The private property is surrounded by public lands. They were originally created as part of President Theodore Roosevelt's larger effort to preserve America's most beautiful countryside for the benefit of all its citizens. During his presidency (1901–08), Roosevelt set aside 230 million acres for public use—5 national parks, 150 national forests, 18 new national monuments, 51 bird reserves, and 4 game preserves. He also established the U.S. Forest Service, headed by his good friend Gifford Pinchot, the first American to make forestry his profession.

As real outdoorsmen, Roosevelt and Pinchot hated to see the wilderness despoiled by business interests that did not comprehend the fragility of the forests. Roosevelt, an avid hunter, grew concerned that efficiently organized commercial hunters were driving a number of game species toward extinction. This led him to commit to the conservation movement.

Roosevelt and Pinchot fought battles on two fronts. Railroad and lumber interests controlled Congress, which resisted funding Roosevelt's Forest Service and setting aside lands for public use. When Roosevelt founded the Bull Moose Party, its 1912 platform reflected this struggle: "Behind the ostensible government sits enthroned an invisible government, owing no allegiance and acknowledging no responsibility to the people. To destroy this invisible government, to dissolve the unholy alliance between corrupt business and corrupt politics, is the first task of the statesmanship of the day."

Roosevelt and Pinchot also argued with those who revered nature too much to think of it as "natural resources." So they differed markedly from their friend and sometime camping companion, nature-mystic John Muir.

Muir was alienated by his harsh Bible- and child-thumping upbringing. As *Books & Culture*'s John Wilson wrote in *The New York Times*, "Muir did not settle into bitterness. On the contrary: he took an inexhaustible delight in the natural world, seeing in it the hand of a God who differed greatly from the grim deity of his father." For Muir, the Book of Nature was, even more than Scripture, a primary source for knowledge of God; human development, he thought, drowned out God's voice.

Muir and Pinchot broke their friendship over a flock of sheep. Muir thought domestic sheep ruined mountain meadows. Pinchot thought ovine grazing could be managed for the public good. When Pinchot wouldn't back down, Muir said, "I don't want anything more to do with you."

Pinchot summed up his ethic for the forests in the phrase "the greatest good to the greatest number for the longest time." This implied three things: First, to not use available natural resources would be a waste. Second, in using them, waste must be prevented. Third, resources must be preserved and developed "for the benefit of the many, and not merely for the profit of a few."

I side with the conservationists, who emphasize natural resource management for the common good.

Pinchot adapted his principle from the utilitarian philosophers Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, extending their maxim ("the greatest good for the greatest number") into the future ("for the longest time") because forests take ages to develop and a long time to repair.

Utilitarianism is not specifically Christian. But in Pinchot's hands, it became a kind of common-good thinking.

I side with Pinchot's conservationists, those who emphasize natural resource management for the common good. Muir's nature mysticism was essentially private and individual. But Pinchot's conservationism was clearly intended for the benefit of all.

Augustine of Hippo was the first Christian thinker to argue that human well-being cannot be achieved apart from seeking the welfare of all. Such concern is a seedbed of virtue, calling forth sacrifice and servant leadership.

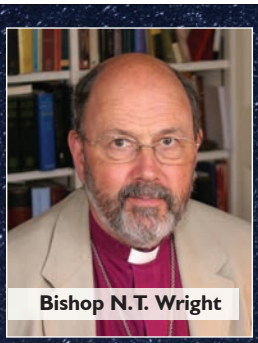
Five generations of my family have now enjoyed our mountain home. In an alternate history, our property and the neighboring wilderness could have been spoiled by commercial development. But thanks to the last century's crusading conservationists, the surrounding lands and wildlife have been enjoyed by millions of hikers, campers, and birders. It is worth remembering their efforts and not taking America's forests and recreational resources for granted. **CT**

ADAM CRUFT

MERE ANGLICANISM
Conference 2015

January 22-24, 2015

Charleston, South Carolina | Register Online | www.MereAnglicanism.com

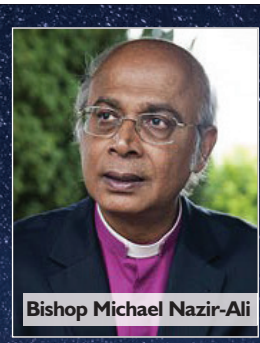

Bishop N.T. Wright


Alister McGrath

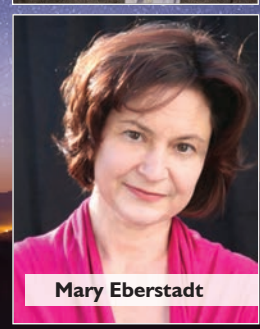

Os Guinness

SALT & LIGHT

The Christian Response to Secularism


Bishop Michael Nazir-Ali


Ross Douthat


Mary Eberstadt

This year's guest preacher is the Rev. Dr. John Guest.

Please visit our website for speaker bios and a complete conference schedule.
Our weekend includes individual sessions and a panel discussion with all the speakers.

All are welcome

DATES: January 22-24, 2015 | PRICE: $169 (includes MP3 downloads)
LOCATION: Charleston, South Carolina

Register Online @ www.MereAnglicanism.com

Silent No More

Asian American Christians are growing in influence and audience. Will they be embraced by their broader church family?

By Helen Lee

Peter Hong brings his unique brand of multiethnic ministry to Chicago's diverse Logan Square neighborhood.

PETER HONG raises his voice to the congregation he pastors in Logan Square, a mixed-income neighborhood in Chicago. "Your entire debt is paid in full!" he shouts, as "Amen!" and "All right!" echo back from the pews. As he bounds across the stage, his red-checked shirt untucked over jeans, he exudes enough energy to fill the cavernous, high-ceilinged Seventh-day Adventist church that New Community Covenant rents on Sundays.

The pews are packed full, with a multiethnic, multigenerational gathering that includes more than Hong's fellow Korean Americans. Hong is 44 but brims with youthfulness as he displays his own brand of impassioned preaching, a firebrand of grace. But then the tone of the service shifts as Hong jumps off the stage and confesses without pretense: He is bone-weary from more than 12 consecutive years of ministry. Congregants return the flow of grace, pouring down the aisles in droves to surround and pray for him.

One of the people who approaches Hong is Trinity Evangelical Divinity School professor Peter Cha, who has mentored countless Asian Americans as an educator, pastor, and former staff member with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. Decades ago, Cha doubted that Asian Americans could have this kind of influence in the broader church. "In the 1990s, Asian American pastors were asking, 'Can an Asian American ever serve as lead pastor of a multiracial church?'" says Cha. "Now as we see the example of pastors like Hong and many others, we can laugh at the absurdity of that question. But back then it was a genuine concern."

It's still possible to miss the ways Asian Americans are shaping American Christianity. With just a few exceptions, Asian Americans rarely headline major conferences, attract media attention, or top Christian publishing's bestseller lists. But thanks to their bicultural heritage and the particular challenges it brings, Asian American Christians are finding they have unique voices and gifts that allow them to connect with both non–Asian American audiences and segments of the church that no one else can reach.

A Broader Call

From the tonal Chinese spoken all around you as you walk into the modern, yellow-hued building of Bay Area Chinese Bible Church (BACBC), you might assume that you'd crossed an ocean to get there.

In fact, BACBC, right down the street from Oakland International Airport, began as a ministry to English-speaking Chinese Americans in the 1950s. It then developed a ministry for Cantonese-speaking immigrants from Hong Kong, and added a service six years ago for migrants who speak Mandarin (as well as another campus). Every Sunday it attracts more than 1,000 attendees spanning multiple generations, languages, and cultures. Yet its senior pastor does not even speak Chinese.

Steve Quen is a fourth-generation, American-born Chinese whose father fought for the United States in the Korean War. Quen draws on both Western and Chinese culture to manage his culturally complex congregation, which he has attended for more than 40 years and led since 1997. "Here in the Bay Area is a huge unchurched Asian population. Who is reaching them? Not all Asian Americans are going to feel comfortable in an Anglo-evangelical church," Quen says. "Our church can reach a Chinese American's whole family, from his grandparents, to his parents, to himself and his kids."

On the opposite coast, Jeanette Yep serves as global and regional outreach pastor at 66-year-old Grace Chapel in Lexington, Massachusetts. She is the first Asian American pastor on staff at Grace, which has moved over the past decade from being majority-white to one-third

STATISTICS • PEW RESEARCH RELIGION & PUBLIC LIFE PROJECT PHOTO • MATTHEW GILSON

Who Are Asian Americans?

34 ETHNICITIES ARE INCLUDED IN THE TERM "ASIAN AMERICAN"

6 ETHNICITIES MAKE UP **83%** OF ALL ASIAN AMERICANS

- Chinese
- Filipino
- Indian
- Vietnamese
- Korean
- Japanese

Peter Cha (left) has mentored countless Asian Americans. He now teaches at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Right, more than 1,500 Hmong American youth attended this year's HLUB conference at Wheaton College.

multiethnic. Yep represents a growing number of Asian American pastors who are called to staff prominent, historically Anglo churches.

"For Grace Chapel as a whole, I present as an Asian American pastor who loves God and his world," she says. "My ethnicity is part of who I am. I'm aware that I'm Asian, and I'm not ashamed of it. I hope the younger folks in the congregation begin to think that having folks on the pastoral staff who look like me and who love God and his world is normative and right."

Just as churches like Grace seek to diversify their leadership and congregation, many churches that began with a clear Asian American focus now sense a broader call. Several years ago, Lighthouse Christian Church, a pan–Asian American congregation in Bellevue, Washington, began to focus intentionally on its neighborhood—fully realizing that doing so would change its ethnic composition.

Jackie Siochi, a 46-year-old white stay-at-home mother whose family happened to visit a Lighthouse fall festival, became a Christian at Lighthouse five years ago and is now a lay leader. "The first time I came here, I was sitting in a room full of Asian American strangers, but I felt so comfortable," she says. "Everyone wanted to serve me, bring me a cup of coffee, and get to know me. I was so welcomed."

Lighthouse associate pastor Nancy Sugikawa believes Asian cultural values such as hospitality and a strong family atmosphere are attractive no matter one's background. "Our church no longer makes reference to focusing on any cultural group," says Sugikawa. "But if we are going to . . . share the burdens of those from very different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, we are going to be stretched. And God is preparing us for this."

Cross-Cultural Connection

David Choi, 39, is another leader well prepared to be "stretched." Church of the Beloved, which Choi planted in 2012, has already expanded to two locations in Chicago and a third in Seattle. Visitors to the city center Chicago location might assume it is pan–Asian American, but half the attendees are internationals, representing at least 25 countries.

"I had to navigate two cultures growing up," Choi says. "There is not a single Asian American who didn't have to do that. So I can put myself in the shoes of people who are in different cultural contexts and demonstrate that I value their context and culture. Then they become so open to the gospel."

I witness the fluidity of Choi's cultural competency one summer evening on the campus of Wheaton College. As I sit in Edman Chapel, I'm surrounded by more than 1,500 amped-up Hmong American youth. The Hmong are an ethnic minority group in Southeast Asia and China who immigrated to the States in the 1970s and '80s to escape political persecution. Many of their now-teenaged children are here in force at the biennial HLUB ("love" in Hmong) Conference, sponsored by the Christian and Missionary Alliance. Choi is warming up the students, shouting newly learned phrases such as *Koj zoo nkauj!* ("You are beautiful!") alternating with Korean words. "Kimchi!" he yells, and the crowd roars in laughter. "How do you

MATTHEW GILSON

PHOTO • COURTESY OF HMONG DISTRICT

know Korean?" Choi asks, amused. "Korean dramas?" He gets an even bigger cheer.

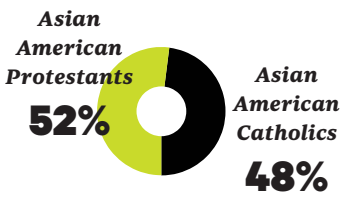
Cross-cultural connection established, Choi exegetes the parable of the Prodigal Son, tells stories about growing up Korean American, then gives a simple altar call. The response is like nothing I've ever seen. Hundreds and hundreds stand, creating a traffic jam of teenagers waiting to meet with counselors. Of course, it's the work of the Holy Spirit. But I can't help thinking that Choi's heritage is one gift the Spirit is using to move so powerfully this particular night, among youth you'd rarely find in an Anglo-dominated evangelical setting.

The Perpetual Foreigner Syndrome

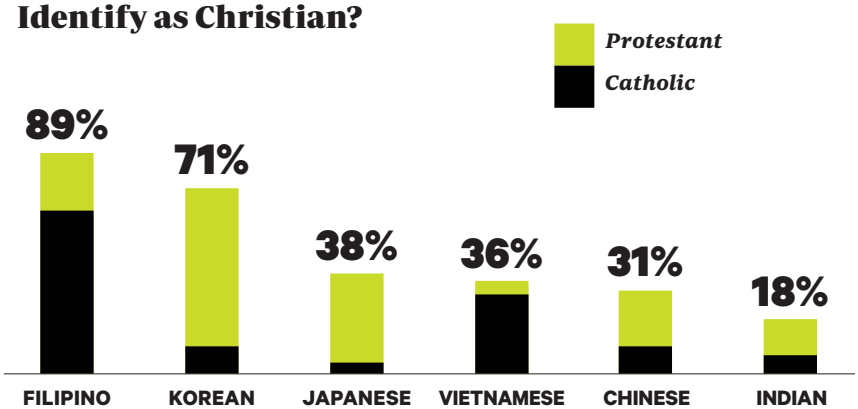
Asian Americans' multicultural competence is rooted in the pain of marginalization. The "model minority myth" perpetuates the idea that Asian Americans

How Many Asian Americans Are Christians?

42% OF ALL ASIAN AMERICANS IDENTIFY AS CHRISTIANS.



How Many Asian Americans Identify as Christian?



STATISTICS • PEW RESEARCH

'I had to navigate two cultures growing up. There is not a single Asian American who didn't have to do that. So I can put myself in the shoes of people who are in different cultural contexts and demonstrate that I value their context and culture.' **David Choi**

A refugee from the killing fields of Cambodia, Ken Kong now ministers to Southeast Asians in Long Beach and beyond.

KYLE CHRISTY

are a well-educated, high-achieving, perfectly assimilated monolith. In reality, you'd be hard-pressed to find an Asian American who hasn't felt at some point like an interloper in his or her own country.

Marie Yuen, an American-born Chinese writer, recalls the moment in kindergarten when a blonde-haired, blue-eyed classmate wanted to tell her a secret. "She said to me, 'The secret is, you look funny! With your black hair and your pointy eyes! I bet your mommy and daddy talk funny, too. I bet it sounds like *ching chong chong Chinaman chink*!'

"I used to love my long, black hair, but that night, my mom cut my hair short so I could never be teased about it again," Yuen says. For most of her adult life, she has grown her hair to waist-length or longer, a symbolic defiance of the hurt she weathered as a child.

Such experiences are as frequent in church contexts as in schools. Drew Yamamoto, a Reformed Church in America pastor, remembers preaching in the Midwest to compliments, but not the kind he hoped for. "One white man said to me, 'You speak English really well.' I answered back, 'You do too.' I'm a third-generation Japanese American. People would ask me where I was from, and I would tell them San Francisco. They would ask what nationality I was, and I would reply, 'American.' Which would frustrate them!"

In his book *Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White*, law professor Frank H. Wu describes the "perpetual foreigner" syndrome, confirmed every time Asian Americans are asked the seemingly innocent question, "Where are you *really* from?" Wu writes, "More than anything else that unites us, everyone with an Asian face who lives in America is afflicted by the perpetual foreigner syndrome." White Americans—even those with a more recent immigration history than Asian Americans whose families have been here for generations—are generally not subject to the same line of questioning.

North Park Seminary professor Soong-Chan Rah remembers speaking with a group of white seminary professors visiting the host church where his congregation met on Sundays. When Rah invited the professors to stay for worship, one of them quickly replied, "Oh, I can't stay. I only speak English."

"Why did he assume the service was going to be in Korean after a half-hour conversation with me in English?

"He assumed . . . this is where I belonged, as an immigrant pastor leading an immigrant congregation speaking a foreign language," says Rah. "It's a common experience of marginalization that Asian Americans have in the church, to be viewed as foreigners and outsiders."

Speaking As One Voice

Most Asian Americans have learned to gracefully tolerate these misconceptions. But such ignorance has taken on a more institutionalized form all too frequently in recent years, expressed in Christian books, conference skits, curricula, and offhand comments in social media that have perpetuated stereotypes, sometimes quite crude, of Asian Americans.

Responding to these repeated offenses, a group of Asian American Christian leaders released "An Open Letter to the Evangelical Church" in October 2013. (Full disclosure: I was one of the original organizers of the effort.) Initially signed by 83 leaders from East Asian, Southeast Asian, and South Asian backgrounds, the letter represented a wide range of ages, professions, and theological persuasions.

'I fear evangelicalism won't take us seriously. It's unclear to me whether most white Americans, and in particular white American Christians, care about the issue of race.' **Jonathan Tran**

More than 1,000 people, including many non–Asian Americans, have added their signatures, reflecting a collective frustration at Asian Americans being treated as outsiders and foreigners in the church.

"The Open Letter was so crucial," says Jerry Park, associate professor of sociology at Baylor University. "Asian American evangelicalism had been playing along with white evangelicalism for several decades. Why don't we have more of a presence at the table in white evangelicalism? As our nation continues to diversify, white evangelicalism is not becoming diverse. If

STATISTICS • L2 FOUNDATION

ON A QUEST FOR A RECONCILED CHURCH

This summer, Eugene Cho, lead pastor of Quest Church in Seattle, was enjoying a sabbatical from active ministry and blogging—until events in Ferguson, Missouri, caught his attention. "I kept envisioning Michael Brown's body, lying on the ground, completely exposed for hours," Cho says. "Then seeing the anger and frustration of people protesting and the responses to the protests, I felt it was . . . a necessity to respond."

So Cho sat down to write a heavy-hearted blog post: "Please don't ignore it. Five ways that Christians and churches must engage Michael Brown's death." Cho is one of a number of Asian American leaders who consistently challenge the church to pursue racial reconciliation. "I don't want a conversation about racism to be black and white," he says. "It's important for Asian Americans to speak on matters of race, as people who have been both perpetrators and victims. The church is called to speak out about justice, and not only when it involves our own kind."

Ever since Cho planted Quest in 2001, the church has brought issues of race to the forefront in ways many of its congregants had never experienced. Bo Lim, professor of Old Testament at Seattle Pacific University (SPU), remembers a service early on in which Cho preached about the struggles of being an ethnic minority. "I found myself weeping. My wife was weeping. I looked around the room and saw many others weeping," says Lim. "Quest helped me understand the gift of my ethnic background."

And Quest starts naming that gift early. Its children's ministry, Global Village, is decorated with images of children from every tribe, tongue, and nation. A bookshelf features books with titles such as *The Skin You Live In*, *Shades of People*, and *All Kinds of Children*. "Our library includes books you wouldn't see in 99 percent of churches," Cho says.

But Quest has gone beyond simply affirming all racial and ethnic backgrounds. For the past 10 years, the church has hosted an annual "Faith and Race" class for 4 to 6 weeks, open to non-Quest attendees. Billy Vo, director of the Asian American Ministry program at SPU, still remembers attending as a seminary student. "We talked about stereotypes, white privilege, and the idea of race as a social construct. I appreciated this, since these weren't concepts I engaged in any substantial way in other churches or in seminary. Quest was the first Asian American–led church I'm aware of that made race matter."

Doing this type of reconciliatory work, however, is no easy task. "We have messy conversations," says Quest executive pastor Gail Song Bantum. "Our expectation is not that people have arrived in this area, but we create spaces to allow us to journey together, to hear others' stories. Knowing someone's stories is what breaks down barriers to reconciliation."

Ultimately, this is what drives Cho, Bantum, associate pastor Brenda Salter McNeil, and other Quest leaders to embrace the ministry of reconciliation, and to engage with national events such as Brown's shooting death. "The integrity of the church is at stake. When it's all said and done, it's not a race issue for me; it's a gospel issue," Cho says. "The gospel is so extraordinary that it begins to inform and, we pray, transform all aspects of our lives. We talk about race and racism because we believe in the gospel." —*Helen Lee*


Eugene Cho

PAUL KIM

CHURCH MODELS CREATED BY ASIAN AMERICANS

In just a few decades, churches created by Asian Americans have evolved from being primarily monocultural to including a broader and more complex spectrum of models:

The Asian Immigrant Church

These churches were created primarily by and for first-generation immigrants. But they also offer ministries for their English-speaking children of all ages. Larger churches in this category have extensive, global ministries that stretch their original, Asian-specific focus, but they still retain a strong ethnic identity.

The English-Ministry Offshoot

As the English-speaking next generation become adults, many found the Asian immigrant church context restrictive. New models began to emerge in which English-speaking generations took ownership of their own ministries and formed either fully- or semi-independent churches, while maintaining a strong connection to their immigrant parent churches.

The Historic Church

These churches began as Asian immigrant churches planted by Japanese or Chinese immigrants and have operated for more than a century. Some morph into pan-Asian or multiethnic churches; others strive to retain their cultural history and heritage; still others do both.

The Pan-Asian Church

A number of Asian American churches have either transitioned from being a historic congregation or launched with a primary focus on reaching second- and next-generations of Asian Americans. They serve a primarily Asian American congregation from a wide range of cultural backgrounds.

The Multiethnic Church

Asian American pastors have launched churches with the intention of being diverse or lead churches that have become so over time. These typically feature a mix of pan-Asian and non-Asian congregants, as well as diverse worship styles and leadership teams. In some cases they also reflect wide socio-economic diversity.

The House Church

A growing number of Asian American pastors embrace the call to plant missional communities, resulting in innovative expressions of church in smaller gatherings.

Grace Chapel's Jeanette Yep (right) says, 'I hope the younger folks in the congregation begin to think that having folks on staff who look like me and who love God is normative and right.'

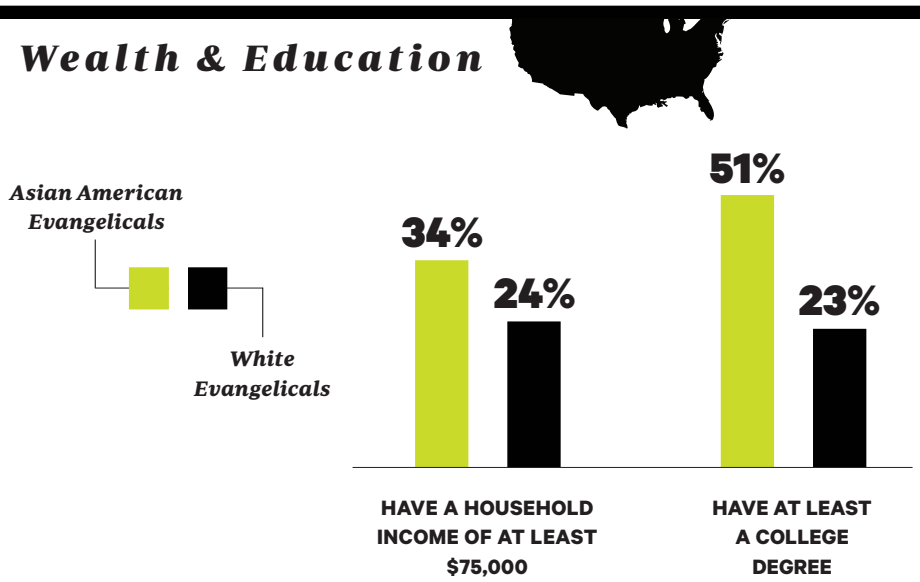
SHAWN HENRY

you look at all the institutional influences in evangelical Christianity—the media, publishers, political presence—it's almost entirely white."

Kathy Khang, another initial organizer of the Open Letter, sees it as a key moment of public identification. "To have people sign, to put down their names, to identify who they are and what they do—it was a moment in our Asian American evangelical history to say, 'We are a very diverse community, but together we care deeply about the marginalization that is going on.' It was unbelievable to finally speak as one voice into the church that we love."

The Open Letter prompted several evangelical institutions to respond. The Exponential church-planting conference and LifeWay Christian Resources (the publishing arm of the Southern Baptist Convention) issued public apologies for their roles in releasing racially insensitive materials. (LifeWay's apology came 10 years after publishing a VBS curriculum called "Rickshaw Rally." It included a song with the line, "Wax on, wax off, get your rickshaw ready!"—referring to the movie *The Karate Kid* and using the rickshaw as a focal point, even though it had become a symbol of oppressive class

Wealth & Education



STATISTICS • PEW RESEARCH

THE SECRET TO INTERVARSITY'S STAFF DIVERSITY

Kathy Khang still remembers the moment she was invited to join The Daniel Project (TDP), InterVarsity Christian Fellowship's (IVCF) first leadership development program for Asian American staff. "I was floored that IVCF wanted to invest in me as a leader—an Asian American, a woman, a mother of three young kids, a wife. Then I cried because I thought, *I cannot make this happen—the travel, the logistics of childcare*. It didn't seem possible."

Khang discussed her concerns with then-supervisor Greg Jao. He asked Khang's teammates, "How can we help support Kathy to accept this opportunity?" Her colleagues volunteered to cover every logistical challenge, from childcare to providing meals to transportation for Khang's three kids to school and activities. "For the organization and my staff team to . . . invest in the longevity and development of an Asian American colleague—I realized, *This is my place. These are my people*," Khang says. More than a decade later, Khang is still on staff, serving as IVCF's regional multiethnic ministries director.

COURTESY OF KATHY KHANG

'I was floored that IVCF wanted to invest in me as a leader. It didn't seem possible.'

Kathy Khang

It's this kind of intentional, personalized effort that IVCF has used to encourage Asian American employees, most notably with its TDP program. In the early 2000s, IVCF's then-national director of Asian American Ministries, Paul Tokunaga, had been reading Jim Collins's best-selling *Good to Great*, which describes the "Level 5 Leader" as an ideal archetype in "great" companies. "Those same qualities are often found in Asian American leaders—that blend of personal humility and professional will. But our Asian American staff weren't getting the choice assignments," Tokunaga says. "Our leadership style is different, and we don't often promote ourselves."

To combat the discrepancy between the rising numbers of Asian American students involved in IVCF and the limited number of Asian Americans in midlevel and senior leadership, in 2003 Tokunaga and a team of long-standing Asian American staff developed TDP. The 18-month program for a select group of 14 individuals included training, mentorship, and interactions with high-level leaders in IVCF. Tokunaga hoped both the participants and the organization would see dividends from the investment. No one could have predicted the results. "I thought that would be the only one we could do," he says. "We never dreamed the program would take off from there. It had a life of its own."

Of the initial cohort, 12 (including Khang) were promoted within two years of completing TDP. As participants benefited from the focused training, so InterVarsity gained new perspective on what effective leadership could look like. Nikki Toyama-Szeto is the senior director of the International Justice Mission Institute and previously directed IVCF's Urbana missions conferences. "Leadership in a Western context is thought of as raising your hand and contributing, or volunteering for high-profile tasks. Asian Americans don't always naturally lead in these ways," says Toyama-Szeto, who was part of the first TDP cohort and directed its third iteration in 2011. "Many supervisors were surprised that their own staff were selected for this premier program. The project had a huge impact on changing the perception of what leadership qualities look like."

In 2003, IVCF had only a handful of Asian Americans in mid- and senior-level leadership. Today, it has two Asian American vice presidents (including Tokunaga), three national directors (including Jao), and three regional directors. IVCF also has built up the channel of midlevel Asian American area directors. InterVarsity president Alec Hill says TDP has helped the organization recast how to develop its leadership pipeline. "Leadership development has to be intentional; it doesn't happen well accidentally. If you want to be more inclusive of a particular group, you have to be specific."

Daniel Projects are funded through IVCF's capital campaign, and a percentage of the total overhead helps to support all ethnic-minority staff throughout the organization. Further, Tokunaga has helped launch Daniel Projects for black, Hispanic, and female employees, to name a few, for a total of ten projects since its inception. And as some TDP graduates are called away from campus ministry, their influence has broader implications in the church. Jennifer Ikoma-Motzko, from TDP's first cohort, now leads as the senior pastor of Japanese Baptist Church in Seattle.

"Today, I serve as the first female senior minister of a 115-year-old Japanese and Baptist church—words that people do not normally associate with someone who looks like me in the pulpit," says Ikoma-Motzko. "TDP gave me access to dynamic female and male senior ministry leaders, especially Asian American leaders, who encouraged me to lead."

Joe Ho, another member of the first TDP cohort, now directs Asian American Ministries in IVCF. He says, "The Daniel Project was a watershed experience in my InterVarsity career. It has also been critical to my ability to lead effectively in church contexts. I draw on the skills and confidence I gained virtually every day." —*Helen Lee*

systems throughout Asia.)

But the letter was not without critics, including Asian Americans. Some disapproved of its public nature—one Asian American wrote, "I am not signing this letter. . . . A mass letter like this does not edify the entire body of Christ." Others objected to the focus on racial identity in spite of Paul's instruction in Galatians that "there is no Jew nor Greek . . . for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Ken Fong, who with Daniel D. Lee directs Fuller Theological Seminary's new Asian American Initiative, observes that even Asian American leaders vary greatly in how they conceive of their ethnic and racial identity. "Western evangelicalism has contributed to [Asian Americans']

'What we do may be viewed as on the fringes of evangelicalism. But as the center is faltering and showing weakness, there is much to be learned on the fringes. Will you see a need for what we bring?' **Ken Fong**

lack of self-awareness," Fong says. "People have been raised to think, *I have a born-again identity, so I don't need to understand issues of self-identity*. If the only Asian Americans in an organization are the ones who feel like everything is okay, then they are giving an organization a false sense of representation."

Perhaps the biggest unanswered question after the Open Letter is whether evangelicalism will move beyond apologies for specific slights to fully understanding the issues that prompted it. "I fear evangelicalism won't take us seriously," says Jonathan Tran, associate professor of religion at Baylor University. "It's unclear to me whether most white Americans, and in particular white American Christians, care about the issue of race."

Living with Painful Pasts

One of the challenges with a phrase like "Asian American" is that it represents an immense diversity of cultures and people groups, including those from East Asian, Southeast Asian, and South Asian backgrounds.

Billy Vo, who directs the Asian American Ministry program at Seattle Pacific University, is a second-generation Vietnamese American. "Like many Southeast Asians who grew up fatherless, I wanted to assimilate into the East Asian context because that is where I saw my first examples of healthy Asian American homes and men," he says. "But now I've become self-aware of my own racial identity formation, what is part of my own story. Asian American Christianity can be articulated as an East Asian reality, rather than the diverse, multicultural reality that it really is."

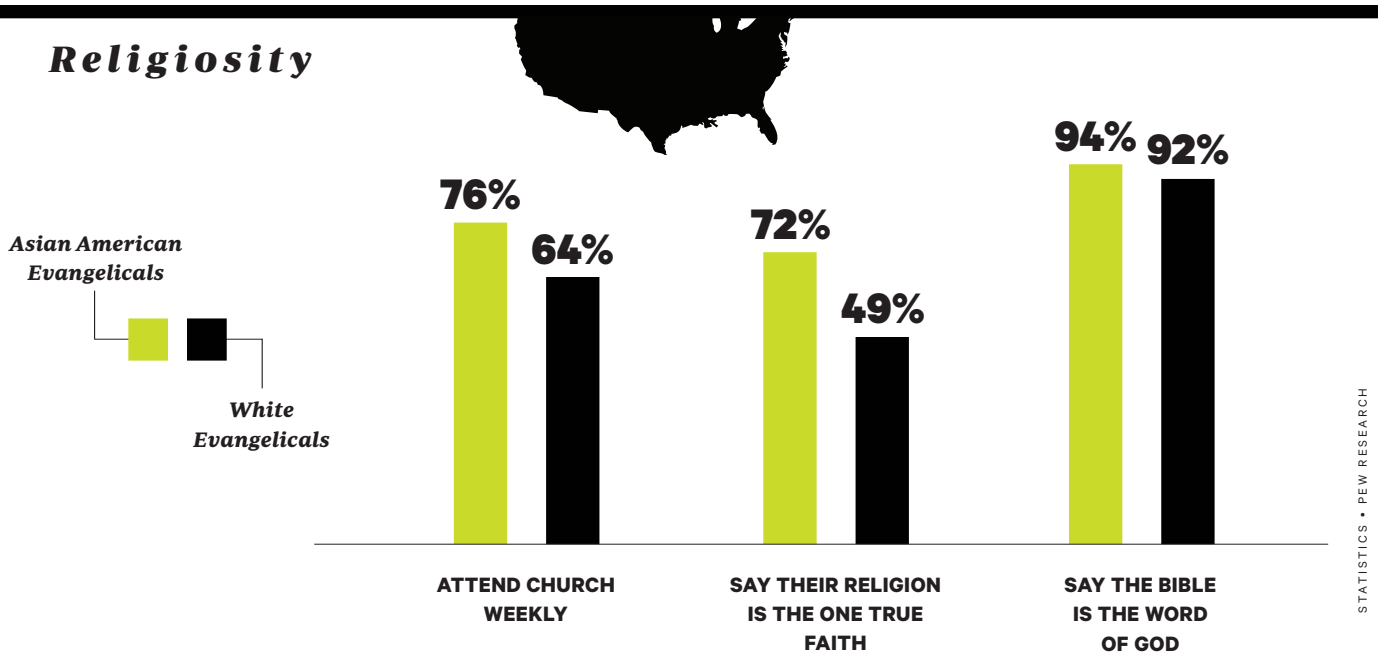
For numerous Asian Americans, pain comes from forms of trauma, such as being rejected by parents or ripped from one's homeland as a child. Ken Kong directs the Southeast Asian Catalyst and works on staff with the Navigators. This summer he visited Cambodia, from which he fled at age 4 to find safety at a Thai refugee camp. But as he walked on the same road he traveled with his parents decades ago, his heart started racing. He remembered what his family witnessed: decomposing bodies, ragged and bloodied clothes, remains of people who had encountered landmines placed by the Khmer Rouge.

With their country engulfed in a brutal civil war, the Kongs had no choice but to leave it behind, the journey itself life-threatening. Kong says, "The American church needs to know that our past pains still haunt us to this day. My father and mother, both strong believers, still live in pain. They lost three kids on that journey."

As Asian American Christians grow in understanding and embrace painful experiences, they can bring these perspectives to help all Christians grasp what it means to live as aliens in a reality that is not their true home.

Reaching the Fringes and the Center

At the same time, as Asian American Christians and the broader church partner together, they also bear witness to the power of Christ's love to unite people across ethnic and racial lines.



COURTESY OF KEN FONG

Chinese Americans and other young adults gather at Quarter Life, the post-college group at Ken Fong's Evergreen Baptist Church of LA.

Seeing many of his peers leave their parents' Indian churches, Ajay Thomas planted Seven Mile Road Church in Philadelphia five years ago. Second-generation Indian Americans make up most of Thomas's congregation—and not all of their parents approve. "Some in my parents' generation love and pray for us, and some think we're a cult," Thomas says. "My non-Indian church-planting friends can't relate when I tell them I have 35-year-old professionals with kids who can't come to Seven Mile Road because of parental pressures."

Early in his ministry, Thomas made an unusual connection with the small, aging St. Mark's German Evangelical Reformed Church. "For a largely German church to meet a second-generation Indian guy, to let me preach in their pulpit, then to join with us—it was amazing," Thomas says. Before long, St. Mark's gave their six-acre, three-building, $2 million property to Seven Mile Road, and a number of St. Mark's members later joined.

St. Mark's didn't just choose to give Thomas a chance to exercise his voice in their cultural context, but also subsumed its culture into that of Seven Mile Road. Will that happen in more Christian institutions in the coming generations? Fuller's Fong says, "I think that Asian Americans want to say to the larger church body, 'We do exist, and we have important things going on we would like to share with the wider body, but that doesn't mean we want to replace you at the center. What we do may be viewed as on the fringes of evangelicalism. But as the center is faltering and showing weakness, there is much to be learned on the fringes. Will you see a need for what we bring?'"

Even as Asian Americans lead more churches and Christian institutions, North Park Seminary's Rah believes that "the real question is, How fundamentally is the culture of your organization changing? How fundamentally are the narratives in the church changing to include us?"

I think back to my time at Hong's church in Chicago—his exuberant preaching, the vulnerability he displayed in sharing his struggles, and the protective way his church surrounded him in prayer. I remember how distinct the service felt, like nothing I had experienced at other Asian, Asian American, or majority-white evangelical churches.

"I am not trying to imitate anyone. I am not trying to mimic anyone. I'm doing what's intuitive to me," says Hong. "Sometimes Asian Americans can be assimilationists, and they take what they are taught in seminary hook, line, and sinker. But you have to find your own voice by building upon both your ethnic and cultural heritages."

Hong and other Asian American leaders are reaching both the masses and margins of evangelicalism, born out of their bicultural heritages that seek to merge the best of both their Asian and American influences. Will evangelicalism fully welcome and include these voices, or turn them away for being too different, too foreign? It is probably still too soon to tell. **CT**

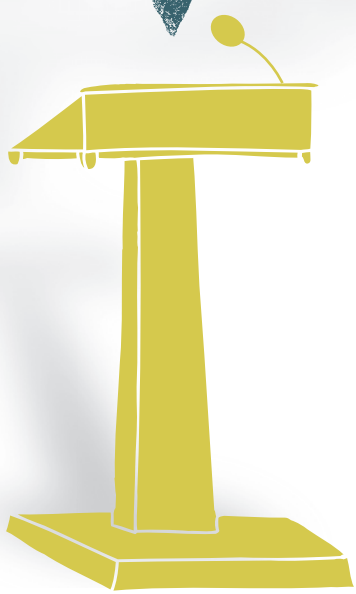
HELEN LEE is associate editor for IVP Books/IVP Praxis at InterVarsity Press and a former CT editor. She is the author of *The Missional Mom* (Moody) and coeditor of *Growing Healthy Asian American Churches* (IVP).

— GLOBAL GOSPEL PROJECT —

People of the Words

WHY THE PULPIT—AND NOT THE SCREEN—STILL BELONGS AT THE CENTER OF OUR CHURCHES.

BY MARGUERITE SHUSTER



LONG AGO THE APOSTLE PAUL WROTE, "God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe" (1 Cor. 1:21, NRSV used throughout). Preaching, he implies, is essential to God's purposes. At the same time, Paul tacitly acknowledges that preaching hardly looks like a sensible means to God's ends. Just words? And inevitably imperfect words at that. Foolishness! Foolishness even then.

But had Paul lived today, in a culture as visual—and as increasingly inattentive to extended verbal discourse—as ours, might he have spoken differently? Might he have said that God has decided to use the foolishness of our feature films, our advertising, and our visual art to save those who believe?

After all, we have learned to be sensitive to cultural context of both the historical possibilities constraining the writers of the biblical texts, who had never seen a movie screen or a television or a tablet computer, and the demands of our own situation. Paul said in the same letter, "I have become all things to all people, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. 9:22). Evangelicals in particular have been quick to adopt new methods, eager to use all suitable means in the hopes of saving some. We can't deny the power of the visual to move us, to connect with the heart as well as the head. Preachers have long been taught to speak so that people can *picture* what they are talking about. Images, especially moving images, compel us in ways words alone generally do not. Surely we should take advantage of these gifts.

Besides, God did make a physical, visible world. He did not choose to create solely spiritual creatures entertaining abstract ideas. He became incarnate in his world, acting in it on our behalf. In the Wisdom Literature as well as in Jesus' parables, we are encouraged to look at the natural world to gain understanding—from the diligence of the ant, to the power of yeast, to the worry-free beauty of lilies. In the sacraments (baptism and the Lord's Supper), we speak of the Word made visible. And we consider those rare Christians who have no sacramental observance whatsoever to be practicing a truncated version of the faith.

So did the Reformers take a wrong turn when they moved decisively away from the significant emphasis on the visual in both the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches? The Reformers moved the pulpit to the center of the sanctuary, where the altar had been. Some even engaged in what many of us now see as excess: smashing stained glass windows and removing artwork that had been understood at least in part as picture books for the illiterate.

It's not that the Reformers ignored the visual. Rather, they actively worried that it would supplant the Word (and also about breaking the second commandment, which forbids idolatry). Thus, "Scripture alone, faith alone, grace alone" was the rallying cry of the Reformation, and we can readily cite texts like Romans 10:17: "faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ."

The Reformers believed the Holy Spirit made special use of Scripture and hearing the Word preached in bringing people to Christ in a way that is absolutely essential to faith. Why so? Historical circumstances, including corruption in the Western church that compromised its claims to authority, naturally played an important role. Protestants came to understand Scripture rather than tradition as the decisive arbiter of Christian truth. But there was and is more to it than historical circumstances. Two key issues are worth highlighting: the limitations of images with respect to conveying meaning, and the matter of personal address.

IMAGES AREN'T ENOUGH

No one doubts that visual works evoke emotion, but if you ask artists what their work *means*, they justifiably respond, "If I could tell you, I wouldn't have painted [or sculpted or filmed] it." And discerning people commonly disdain "preachy" art—art that betrays its integrity in order to convey a message overtly. But what Christian symbols and actions mean is nearly everything. Is a cross merely an

Preaching the gospel is not simply a matter of conveying information. When the Word is truly preached and received, it enters the soul through hearing—with hope and promise, challenge and absolution, blessing and solace.

arbitrary arrangement of pieces of wood or nothing but an ancient method of execution by torture or a sign of our salvation? The pieces of wood do not tell us, and we do not know without being told. Is the Lord's Supper an odd ritual, an inadequate snack, or, at the very least, a fellowship that we share precisely as we remember Jesus' death on our behalf? Even stained glass windows had to be explained in sermons.

Professors today who teach good classes or write good books on "theology through film" usually have a sophisticated knowledge of classical theology. And if they did not teach these classes or write these books, people might never discover the ways Christian themes appear in movies. If the classical knowledge is no longer transmitted through words, we'll lose the ability to see the visual arts with deeply Christian eyes.

Something similar is true of acts of Christian charity. When the culturally oppressive character of some missionary work becomes all too clear, some think the best way forward is simply to help people with their pressing needs, tacitly—but only tacitly—in the name of Christ. It hasn't worked, at least not as *Christian* witness. First Peter 3:15 instructs us always to be ready to make a defense, or give an answer, to anyone who inquires about the hope that is in us. Apart from such an answer, apart from proclamation of the gospel, good works and other evidences, however much appreciated, do not lead to knowledge of Christ. Jesus himself provided a definitive word on these matters when he refused to provide the family of the rich man in Hades with a sign: "If they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, neither will they be convinced even if someone rises from the dead" (Luke 16:31). Even the greatest of miracles—visible manifestations—will not convert a heart that is closed to God's Word.

Words also help us to make necessary discriminations—something strongly resisted in some circles today, since distinctions and judgments about truth seem anything but welcoming and tolerant. However, such discriminations are indispensable to preserving Christian truth and fostering moral discernment (1 Cor. 11:19; Heb. 3:12–13).

For example, when the young church faced one of its first critical doctrinal decisions, as to whether Jesus was *essentially* one with God or only *like* him (the Arian controversy), scoffers derided the debate as a controversy over an *iota*—the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet—since the terms in question (*homoousios*, "of the same substance," and *homoiousios*, "of like substance") differ only by that one letter. The church believed, however—as orthodox Christians in all major branches of the church continue to believe—that there is a real sense in which our salvation is at stake here: If Jesus is not God, he cannot save us. Doctrinal mistakes at crucial points have consequences with ever-expanding import, just as heading off a path at the slightest angle eventually leads one very far from one's intended destination. G. K. Chesterton put it strikingly:

> The Church could not afford to swerve a hair's breadth on some things if she was to continue her great and daring experiment of the irregular equilibrium. . . . It was no flock of sheep the Christian shepherd was leading, but a herd of bulls and tigers, of terrible ideals and devouring doctrines, each one of them strong enough to turn to a false religion and lay waste the world. . . . A slip in the definitions might stop all the dances; might wither all the Christmas trees or break all the Easter eggs.

Chesterton provides a graphic visual imagery—given in words—to make a point about a precision that images alone can't achieve.

FOR BLESSING OR CURSING

However, meaning and truth in the abstract, no matter how precise, will not suffice if they do not penetrate our hearts and minds. To this end, the power of words is just as compelling and probably more mysterious. Why is it that words, unlike sticks and stones, can break far more than bones? Anyone baffled by the biblical witness that blessing and cursing make a real difference in the world should consult children reared in homes where their parents' words have profound positive or negative effects on them. Many adults will testify that a single statement made to them when they were young continues to ring in their ears in an inescapable way. A word spoken to us from the outside has incredible power, far more than the words we speak to ourselves. For example, who is more likely to abstain faithfully from eating pork, one who tries to stick to a diet for personal reasons or one whose religion forbids eating it?

Words spoken by others can manipulate and destroy, but they can also rebuild and console. That's what happens when another pronounces forgiveness to us. And it's bad advice to tell people to forgive themselves, for that is precisely what we are not constituted to do. We need to be told by another that we are forgiven. And simply knowing is not enough. We need to be told again and again even what we know.

A Christian kindergarten teacher I know told me the story of a little girl caught in the middle of a vicious divorce. Climbing into my friend's lap, the girl said, "Tell me again that Jesus loves me. I keep forgetting." The girl knew in her head that Jesus loved her, but she still needed to hear it from the outside. So affirms the old gospel hymn by Katherine Hankey: "I love to tell the story, for those

who know it best / Seem hungering and thirsting to hear it like the rest."

Preaching the gospel, then, is not simply about conveying information. When the gospel is truly preached and received, it enters the soul through hearing—with hope and promise, challenge and absolution, blessing and solace. It does not merely command, but gives what it commands, by the power of the Holy Spirit. It does not ask the hearer to believe 20-some impossible things before breakfast as an evidence of faith. Rather, it conveys the reality of the living Christ as the one thing truly necessary to a human life and an eternal future.

Pictures, static or moving, cannot do such things. To say that is not to deny that the arts enrich human life or to bar them from entering the sanctuary. Indeed, they can have positive value. However, visuals sometimes intrude, as when PowerPoint additions to sermons (whether text or image) split the hearers' focus and seriously impede direct address. Entirely secular analysts make the point when they ask us to imagine Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech presented via PowerPoint, or when they provide a mock slideshow to accompany Abraham Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address." A video clip that does not make the precise point of a biblical text and serve to bring the text home ends up overwhelming the sermon. It ends up implying that something besides the Word will really enable us to live faithfully before God and our neighbors.

God created the physical world by speaking (Gen. 1; Ps. 33:6, 9). We might even suggest that he constituted us as human by speaking, in giving us our distinctive role in creation (Gen. 1:28). We may think as we look at another, "Speak, that I may see you"; and we may be ashamed when, hearing a seriously physically impaired person speak, we recognize that we did not previously see her truly at all. Jesus himself is known as the Logos, the Word, through whom all things were made (John 1:1–3). And the term *logos* carries the sense of the structure of all reality. So maybe God's choice of preaching, of using words, to give new life to those who believe is not so foolish after all. CT

MARGUERITE SHUSTER is Harold John Ockenga Professor Emerita of Preaching and Theology, and senior professor of preaching and theology at Fuller Theological Seminary.

AUSTRALIA PASTOR MARK SAYERS SAYS TRUE LEADERSHIP HAS TO BE ABOUT MORE THAN BOOK SALES AND RETWEETS.

INTERVIEW BY DREW DYCK

MATTHEW DEUTSCHER

Rising Above the Spectacle

IN 2008, MARK SAYERS was leading a Melbourne church known for being culturally engaged and missionally inventive. But a simple question threw it all into doubt. Shortly after the birth of their first child, Sayers's wife asked if he thought the church would be around when their daughter turned 14. "I was silenced by the question," says Sayers, 40. "I was forced to confront the answer: a resounding *no*."

Why such a bleak outlook? "We were recognized for our revolutionary spirit, our imagination, hipness, and creativity. But we didn't have the structures and the leadership to sustain, cultivate, and grow it over the long haul," says the author of *The Vertical Self*, a 2010 biblical take on identity in an age of consumerism. Sayers was also disheartened by spiritual immaturity among his fellow ministers. "We had rallied together to reach what we saw as the chaotic postmodern culture. Yet instead of us reaching it, its chaos seemingly had swamped us."

This set Sayers on a quest to find a ministry approach that would stand the test of time. Today Sayers leads the Australia-based Red Church, which seeks to "show others that despite everything our culture tells us, there is another story." A keen exegete of contemporary culture, Sayers published a series of books tracing cultural trends' historical roots. His latest, *Facing Leviathan: Leadership, Influence, and Creating in a Cultural Storm* (Moody Publishers), explores ways Christians can lead effectively in a "society of spectacle" while facing the threat of Leviathan: an embodiment of personal, social, and institutional sin and chaos. *Leadership Journal* managing editor Drew Dyck recently talked to Sayers.

In your 20s you founded several unconventional churches designed to reach people shaped by postmodernism. Then you became disillusioned with that approach. What happened?

During the 1990s the idea that we were entering a "postmodern" era became popular in the Western church. Some leaders started to sound the alarm. The church had been compromised by "modernity." We had to adapt to "postmodern times" or face irrelevance, they suggested. Everything had to change.

This assessment had some problems. Yes, there was a French philosophical movement called postmodernism, but the West wasn't completely rejecting modernity. We weren't dispensing with such things as rationalism, the hope that technology can build a better future, or industrialism, capitalism, and democracy. Plus, Christian leaders underestimated

how difficult it would be to incarnate the gospel into postmodern culture. It wasn't the way a missionary might incarnate into Masai culture in Kenya, by simply shedding the imperialist garb of modernity and Western culture. Things were far more complex.

We realized that the kind of liquid faith communities we founded—those that reacted against anything that represented mainstream Christian culture—weren't sustainable. There was also a disturbing lack of people coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus, which was why we were doing ministry in the first place.

You wrote about a particularly challenging season of ministry. What did that time teach you about leadership?

I was burnt out from ministry, then became engaged in a battle with bipolar disorder. I was wondering how I could continue pastoring and writing and just survive. The psychiatrist told me I needed to have a quiet life, sleep well, and rest. A couple of weeks later we found out we were having twins, which meant the exact opposite of a quiet life and rest. I was overwhelmed and wondered what God was doing to me.

Things hit bottom when my bipolarity got the better of me. I was in the middle of preaching a sermon when I became disoriented and walked off the stage and out of the church building. I thought I had blown it. But the church supported me. The twins came and the next couple of years were exhausting. My mental health was still a battle. All I could do was rely on God.

The strange thing was that our church grew, and my leadership style was transformed. A number of people told me that one of the defining moments in our church's turnaround was the moment I walked off stage. I learned that God shapes leaders in the midst of storms.

In what ways did your leadership style change?

The way I had measured success was wrong. It wasn't about retweets, book sales, and buzz. It was about dying to self in public. It was not about building a career or a name. It was about operating out of complete dependency upon God. He was far more interested in what he wanted to do in me than in what I was doing. So I became focused on passing the baton to others, stepping out of the way so others could flourish. I learned that Christian leadership in a shallow age had to depend on him. I learned that when God leads you through suffering and trial, and when you press into him, you return with spiritual authority.

A lot of blogs today are devoted to critiquing the Christian subculture. They highlight "Christian nightmares" and argue that "Jesus needs new PR." Is there danger in that?

Critique can be healthy. However, many have failed to understand that there's been a profound power shift within the church. Today a blogger with strong opinions and a large audience is probably more influential in contemporary Christian culture than someone leading a large organization.

The shift has some serious implications. It is easy to have opinions when you don't have any skin in the game. A blogger with controversial ideas and a large readership will probably land book deals and speaking invites. We are tempted to build a career around critique and deconstructing without ever having the responsibility of building something. The danger is that you can become parasitic: You live off the Christian scene you are critiquing. There is a world of difference between pundits and prophets.

What do you mean by leading in a "cultural storm"? Is our moment in history that unique?

We are not in a totally unique moment in history. But we are in one of those transitional moments in which the meanings attached to foundational institutions—marriage, government, ethnicity, citizenship, education, religion, commerce, and production—are constantly examined, questioned, and reframed.

Cultural theorist Philip Rieff noted that cultures tend to cycle between revolutions of *control* (in which discipline, tradition, and convention are valued) and revolutions of *release* (which favor transgression, defying convention, and rejecting tradition). Writing in the '60s, Rieff believed the West was in a revolution of release, which creates a kind of anticulture. Such a culture questions the legitimacy of any institution or tradition. It's a kind of cultural self-hatred, which eats away at foundations. And there are few solid places on which to build a foundation. The individual is tossed about by the waves. So in a storm, a particular kind of leadership is required.

What kind?

You need leaders who identify the safe rocks on which to stand—the biblical foundations of wisdom, faith, justice, holiness, family, and communal life. You need leaders who can differentiate between the genuine prophetic biblical voice, which calls culture back to God, and the deconstructive impulse within modernity, which wants to return to the chaotic and primal. In a culture powered by individualism, you need leadership rooted in Jesus' sacrifice upon the cross. And in a time when people either run from power or abuse it, you need the servant leadership modeled by Christ.

You differentiate between "mechanical" and "organic" leaders. Why has organic leadership triumphed?

To paint in broad brushstrokes: *Mechanical leadership* sprang from the Enlightenment. In the Enlightenment imagination, with its values of measurement, organization, and rationality, the leader par excellence is a successful hero figure: powerful, commanding, and conquering. With determination and organization, the leader creates systems as powerful as the hero himself.

Romanticism arose in reaction to the Enlightenment and shaped the *organic leadership* mode. In the Romantic vision, the leader was not an achieving hero, but rather a creative genius. The leader influences through innovation, art, and dangerously brilliant ideas. The Romantic vision imagines the creative genius as a heretic, always pushing boundaries and breaking taboos.

Over the past two centuries, these two modes have vied for attention, gaining traction in different cultural spheres. For some time, the mechanical held sway in the contemporary church. But in recent times, the organic has gained prominence. Even our language has changed: Go back a century, and the language used to describe young ministers included terms like "moral," "faithful," "diligent," and "trustworthy." Today's pastors would rather be described as "creative," "authentic," "subversive," and "unique." Even leaders who fit into the mechanical mode clothe their language in the organic.

Even though the organic leadership

MATTHEW DEUTSCHER

A NUMBER OF PEOPLE TOLD ME THAT ONE OF THE DEFINING MOMENTS IN OUR CHURCH'S TURNAROUND WAS THE MOMENT I WALKED OFF STAGE WHILE BATTLING BIPOLAR DISORDER. GOD SHAPES LEADERS IN THE MIDST OF STORMS.

model has triumphed, you write that it comes with its own temptations.
The great challenge for organic leadership is its underlying assumptions—especially the belief that in order to lead and influence, we must shed structures, traditions, and discipline. It is obsessed with creating, but also with rebelling against convention. Thus the "creative leader" may break new ground but leave a trail of destruction. The organic mode fails to recognize the doctrine of original sin. In its attempt to create, it can unleash destruction.

You write, "Without realizing it, leaders can paint their dysfunction over churches, ministries, and mission fields." How does that happen?
We are in period of great flux in the West, when identity, sexuality, and influence are all being redefined. Moments like this actually tend to see a rise in important leaders who can minister to a culture in chaos. Yet leaders themselves can become victims of the chaos. The culture of chaos has created a landscape of broken relationships, broken families, broken concepts of gender, and broken ideas of identity.

We have a whole generation of Christian leaders who have emerged in this broken landscape, thus the brokenness is within them. God is the only one who can heal this brokenness, yet the implicit message of contemporary culture is that we can mend this brokenness through external affirmation. Therefore we must create an audience who will tell us who we really are. So when young (and not so young) leaders gain influence, there is a huge temptation to use ministry to create an audience that feeds our sense of self. Our inner lives are sacrificed, and our solitude and communion with God is swapped for constant broadcasting and affirmation addiction.

You have some harsh words for Christian celebrity. What's wrong with Christian leaders trying to build a platform and gain influence?
We need to disentangle the idea of celebrity and the idea of Christian leadership. The technologies at hand mean that it is easier than ever to engineer our own "knownness."

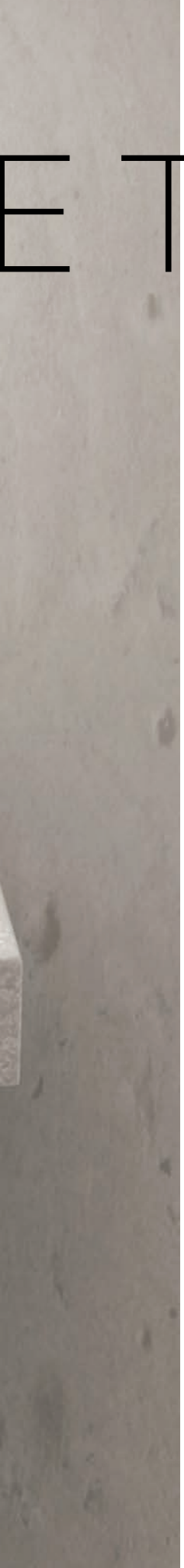
But does God want every one of us to have a huge influence? There are plenty of stories in the Bible and Christian history that show he has allowed some people to have widespread influence. At the same time, the kingdom of God is an upside-down kingdom. In C. S. Lewis's *The Great Divorce*, there is a lady in heaven who is famous for her holiness, who on earth was virtually unknown. There is a big difference between platform and spiritual authority.

***Facing Leviathan* spends a lot of time covering cultural developments in 19th-century Paris. Why spend so much time on that era?**
I wanted to show how many of the issues we think are unique to our time have actually confronted the church for a long time. Nineteenth-century Paris was wrestling with new ideas in politics, art, terrorism, technology, sexuality, and secularism. It was in many ways the first modern city, reinvented around creativity, consumerism, and a highly visual media landscape. It was filled with competing ideologies: conservative, liberal, Christian, atheist, socialist, capitalist. It is a great period to examine in order to allow the reader to examine our own culture with fresh eyes.

It's humbling to realize that what we see as the issues of our day are much older. When you realize this you discover that previous generations of Christians have wrestled with these questions. For example, in the mid–20th century, a whole generation of leading intellectuals and writers—T. S. Eliot, Dorothy Sayers, Evelyn Waugh, and numerous others—were concerned by what they saw as the destructive trajectory of modern culture, and returned to faith. Such stories give hope that something like that could happen again. **CT**

MEDITATION

BLESSED AR



E THE BROKE

. . . AND RICH ARE THE FINANCIALLY DESPERATE. JUST ASK MY FAMILY.

BY CARYN RIVADENEIRA

IT HAD BEEN MORE THAN A YEAR since I had seen her. We'd had our share of good conversations when our kids had attended Christian school together, but her frown moving toward me through the crowd left me looking for escape routes.

She arrived with hands held out to hold my shoulders as she looked me over, shaking that frown at me.

"We've *missed* you," she said. "How *horrible* that you had to leave."

I breathed. "It's not horrible. Far from it."

She grabbed my hand.

"No, really," I said. "Public school is where God wanted us. It was hard to leave, but the school has been a blessing."

She winked. "It's good you can say that."

"I'm not just saying that. I *mean* it."

"I'm sure you do."

And I did. We had left the school because we couldn't pay the tuition. Years of facing under- then unemployment, compounded by mounting medical debt, will do that. But I had sensed God calling us to our local public school for a long time.

Frowny Face obviously couldn't believe that. Neither did the people who pitied us during our "terrible" season of being broke. Not with a quiet belief system that's grown rather insidious among the faithful.

It's a belief system implied every time a Christian told me to *have faith*, to keep our kids enrolled in the Christian school because *God will provide*. It's a belief system that many Christians don't name and claim outright but still subtly embrace. It's the belief that God confirms our faithfulness by adding zeroes to pay stubs, by keeping us healthy, by giving us spouses and babies. That while God may allow the occasional step back or stumble, really he is all about upward and onward, bigger and better.

It's a belief system that won't entertain a God who doesn't consider our comfort, that can't imagine a heavenly Father who gave Solomon wisdom and wealth but gave us patience and a brush with poverty. It's a belief system that leaves little room for a God who might take away to enrich in ways that have nothing to do with health or wealth.

Most of us would explicitly eschew the prosperity gospel. Still, I believe it has wormed its way through time and place, from its Pentecostal roots to smiley megachurch preachers, even to the most conservative wings of evangelical faith. It crosses racial and socioeconomic boundaries and wraps snug around our hearts, holding us in a grip we don't even want to shake off.

FEAST OR FAMINE

I certainly didn't want to—not when Jehovah Jireh was providing gobs and gobs above our means. Or, back in the days when I believed the solid stream of income was God *blessing* us, rewarding us for our faith and our giving. Certainly not the day

LOOKING BACK AT THE FEAST YEARS, I HAVE TO SQUINT TO SEE GOD. I BARELY NOTICED HIM WHILE DANCING AROUND THE KITCHEN WITH THE CHECK IN MY HAND.

my husband walked into our kitchen and put an envelope on the counter.

"Open it," he said. Inside was a check from his business's first quarter, for far more than we had made the entire year prior. I hugged him, and I expected nothing less. My husband is brilliant and hard-working, and we had dedicated the company to a God who blessed that kind of ingenuity. And so he did.

For a time. But after surviving harrowing financial desperation—when a nasty economy beat down that once-thriving business, followed by uninsured births and other medical expenses—I'm having a hard time believing that our years of prosperity, of having more money than we knew what to do with, of lavish vacations, of never thinking about grocery or heating costs, of sending kids off to schools with hefty price tags, were really blessings at all.

That is, if my new understanding of *blessing* is accurate.

Looking back at those "feast" years, I have to squint to see God in my life. He was there, of course, but I barely noticed him while dancing around the kitchen with the check in my hand.

Contrast that to the "famine" years—the ones when we never knew how we'd meet expenses, when we worried we'd lose our house. Or the most desperate day, when my husband told me we were done, broke, out of money, out of credit, the day I questioned the truth of Jesus' words. *What daily bread? What about asking and ye shall receive? What about a good Father giving fish, not snakes?* When I think about that day—those days—when I'd landed hard at the rock bottom of faith, when I'd landed in that pit of despair, it's there: the memory of times that glisten with God's presence and goodness.

THE BEST THING

Before those days, I didn't understand how Jesus could say the poor—in spirit and otherwise—were blessed. Or why it would be so hard for the rich to enter the kingdom. Not when I grew up and lived in a leafy suburb and attended a church where the poor were pitied and the rich were God-fearing. When I heard talk of being "blessed," it was usually about good health or promotions. Fair enough, I suppose. It's a very Old Testament understanding of a God who blessed people materially (see Abraham, Solomon, Job), as a friend reminded me.

"We were *blessed* to get upgraded to first-class," one might say in my circles without fear of reproach. "Hawaii is such a long flight."

Though the unexpected or just-in-time financial boons can speak to God's provision of daily bread, the uninterrupted prosperity of summer homes and promotions and perfect health, of never having to ask or rely on God for anything, don't often lead us closer to him. The easy and comfortable seasons don't push us to our knees, seeking respite in his might and mercy. They don't lift our hands in praise of his provision and wonder. Not like being in need, like being broke—in its various definitions—does or can.

Despair tries to crush us. But for those who follow Jesus, even the most spirit-draining moments can be blessed if we lean back into the hands of Hope. This is the stuff of the Psalms (see 142 and 143 for starters) and the assurances of Paul. After his time in prison, he wrote, "We despaired of life itself. . . . But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God" (2 Cor. 1:8–9). The Message transliteration continues: "It was the best thing that could have happened."

Indeed. Because despair done right (laid out, cried out, given over to God) ushers us into God's presence like nothing else. Having to depend on God, learning to keep our eyes peeled for him, and experiencing his presence, his sustenance—finding him good amid the bad—*is* a blessing.

But to experience this, we need to confess the chokehold that the prosperity gospel has on us. We need to replace it with a different gospel, a "despairity" gospel, if you will. It's the same gospel David discovered in the miry pits, the one Paul unearthed in prison, the one I discovered those nights I thought I'd collapse from the weight of unpaid bills and creditors calling. It's the one others have found while burying loved ones too soon, mourning dreams or opportunities, suffering through any dark night of the soul—only to make it through one night and be met in the morning with fresh mercies and the mysterious presence and sustenance of a good God.

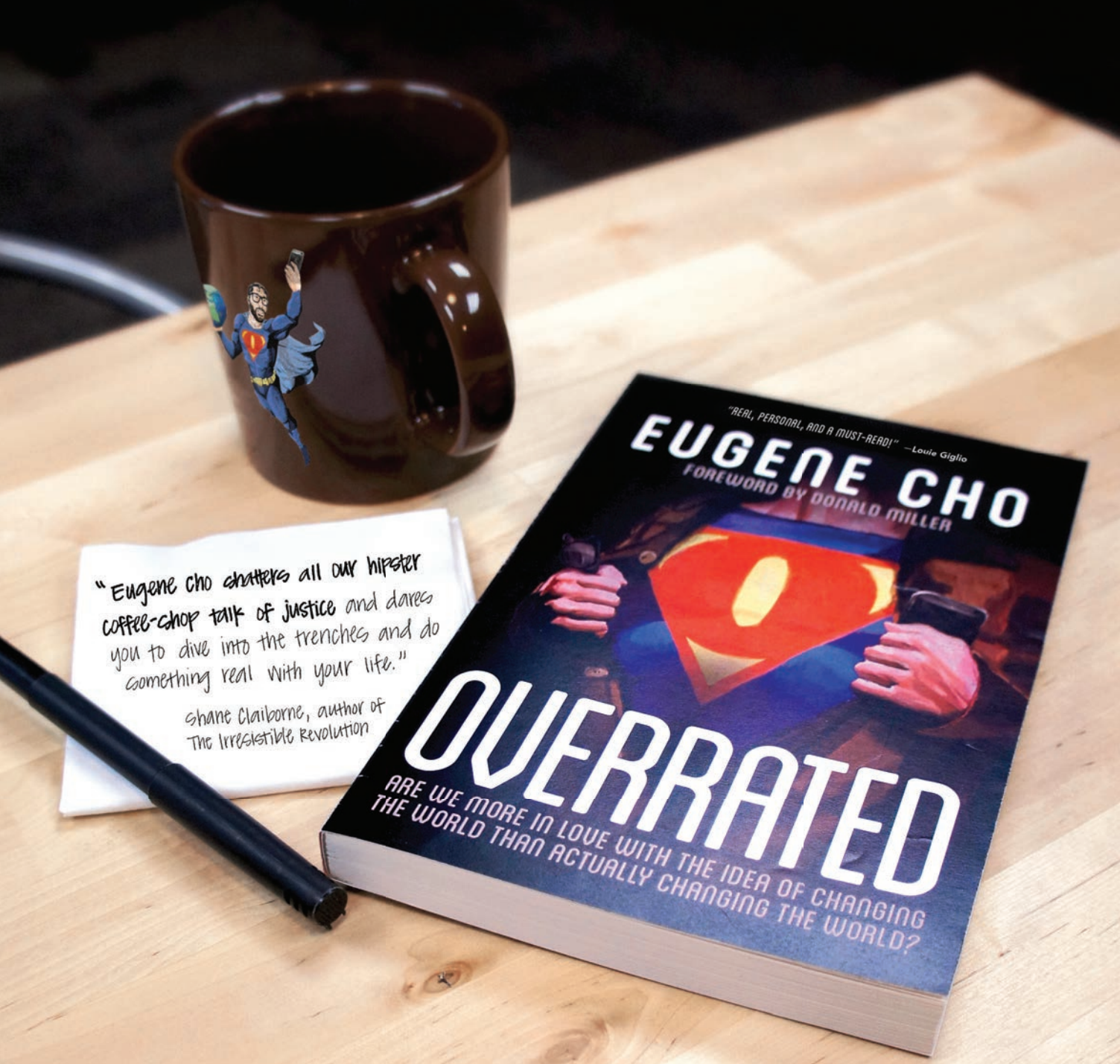
NOTHING TO FEAR

While my family and I are not out of any financial woods, I'm grateful the worst seems to have passed, that we can now work to pay off debt and pay bills on time. But as we step farther away from the deepest, darkest moments of our desperation, I'm afraid I'll lose touch with God.

So far, though, God has shown me I have nothing to fear. Even as we've "prospered" a bit financially, God hasn't removed this thorn of desperation or the need to cry out for rescue ("Dear God, the IRS!"). In the past few weeks alone, friends have prayed me through a financial freak-out when all I could do was shake a fist to the skies. God didn't put out the financial fires, but he walked with us through them. And like Isaiah knew, I wasn't burnt alive. The One who calls me by name saved me.

The blessing I have found is one that the gospel of upward and onward, carefree and comfortable, will never offer. It is a peace that prosperity cannot proclaim. And it is very good news for the desperate and broke. **CT**

CARYN RIVADENEIRA, a regular contributor to Her.meneutics, is the author of *Broke: What Financial Desperation Revealed about God's Abundance* (InterVarsity Press). Visit her at *carynrivadeneira.com*.



This book is my confession. It's painful and honest, but it's mine. And it's this: I am more in love with the idea of changing the world than actually changing the world...and that I, too, need to be changed in the process.

This isn't a message of guilt or shame. But it is a call, to both you and me, to be less infatuated with telling a good story and instead live the good story—a story of faith, hope, courage, and justice.

Eugene Cho is the founder and visionary of One Day's Wages, a grass-roots movement of people, stories, and actions to alleviate extreme global poverty. He is the founder and Senior Pastor of Quest Church, an urban, multi-cultural and multi-generational church in Seattle, Washington, where he lives with his family.

Available in print and digital editions everywhere books are sold

David C Cook
transforming lives together

TWO TRADITIONAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITIES EMBRACED MICHAEL CLIFFORD'S VISION FOR ONLINE ED. THEY ARE NOW GIANTS IN THE FIELD.

The Unlikely Innov

BY PAUL GLADER

PHOTO BY ANACLETO RAPPING

STEPPING OUT OF THE SWELTERING SUN in March 2004, Jerry Falwell Sr. walked into a sprawling 6,000-person call center at the University of Phoenix, where throngs of recruiters were cold calling prospective students.

"Is there a mirror making the room larger?" Falwell asked. "Or are all these people real?"

"They are real, Dr. Falwell," said Michael Clifford, a fundraising consultant and entrepreneur in the world of higher education. He had invited Falwell to visit the fast-growing, for-profit university to get ideas for a then-struggling Liberty University, which Falwell had founded in 1971.

Falwell was skeptical about Clifford's boosterism for online learning. "Son, you can't learn on a computer," Falwell had once said during a phone conversation, according to Clifford.

At the time, Liberty's distance education enrollment was growing more than 20 percent a year to serve nearly 10,000 of the school's 17,000 students. But few Liberty programs were delivered entirely over the Internet.

When Falwell toured the call center and heard about Clifford's plans to turn around a near-bankrupt Grand Canyon University, something clicked. "Falwell left that meeting understanding the power of online," Clifford says. "That's when the light bulb went on—that you could go online and do it big."

A five-year strategic plan for Liberty came out a year later, calling for more money for "experimental" ideas to market the school and recruit students that could supercharge enrollment and growth.

Fast-forward 10 years, and Liberty—and the struggling Arizona college that inspired it—are among the largest Christian universities on earth.

ator

Under Brian Mueller's leadership, Grand Canyon University (right) has grown both online and on campus.

ABOVE • CHRISTOPHER BARR PHOTOGRAPHY
RIGHT • TY HESTER / LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

At the time of Falwell's visit, Grand Canyon University (GCU) was an obscure Phoenix college on the verge of collapse. Founded by Southern Baptists in 1949, by 2003 it had nearly closed and was $16 million in the red.

The school cut faculty and staff pay for three years running. Clifford remembers walking around the campus. "It was a disaster. The swimming pool was filled in. No Internet access. And there was no air conditioning in the dorms in Arizona!"

Today GCU is the sole Christian, for-profit college traded on the stock market. It hosts NCAA Division I basketball, is rapidly building out its campus, and is adding majors for its roughly 60,000 students (52,000 online). It has a market capitalization of $2.1 billion.

Liberty, by enrollment measures, is now the sixth-largest online university in the United States, with more than 100,000 (90,000 online) students. (The largest is the University of Phoenix with 241,000 students.) Liberty also hosts Division I football, and is rapidly adding buildings and majors, including a faith-based medical school, on its 7,000-acre Lynchburg, Virginia, campus.

"Grand Canyon and Liberty are using the same strategy, but one is for-profit and one is nonprofit," Clifford says. In 10 short years, both have become the largest Christian colleges in the country—largely by anticipating the enormous demand for online college education.

Love it or hate it, call centers, million-dollar online advertising budgets, and online learning have become the elixir of growth for colleges—including Christian schools—in the past decade. But some critics wonder if schools can "do" Christian higher education in a formulaic manner, or if more hands-on care for students' moral and spiritual well-being is needed.

Despite such misgivings, online higher education continues to grow. A 2013 report by the Online Learning Consortium found that 7.1 million students, or roughly 30 percent of all students, were taking at least one online course in 2013. The percentage of academic leaders rating learning outcomes in online education as the same or superior to face-to-face instruction grew to 74 percent in 2013, up from 57 percent in 2003.

More Christian schools are following suit. Regent University, Indiana Wesleyan, and The King's College (where I am a professor) offer individual classes and college degree programs either partially or entirely online.

But in less than a decade, Liberty and Grand Canyon became giants in the field. Much of the recent success at these schools can be attributed to a disciplined dual strategy of aggressive online degree programs for some students and the traditional on-campus experience for other students.

SUCCESS AND CONTROVERSY

Some credit (or blame) for the for-profit college boom (and bust) should also go to Clifford, an enigmatic player who has changed the higher-education landscape. An unlikely innovator, Clifford skipped college to play brass in bands, the circus, and Broadway shows. During this time, he began using cocaine and other street drugs heavily. A piano tuner for Clifford's band began reading the Bible to him.

"It changed my life," he says. "I became a born-again Christian." Clifford took on fundraising projects for several evangelical Christian leaders of the 1980s and early '90s. Campus Crusade's Bill Bright urged him to get into online education, predicting that education would be a "pretty hot stock on Wall Street," says Clifford. He realized online education could reach the roughly 50 million working American adults who, like himself, hadn't obtained a college degree.

The strategy also, he realized, could make himself and other investors rich, fulfilling his "dream of becoming a philanthropist," he says.

Investing as CEO of Significant Federation in Rancho Santa Fe, California, Clifford helped found or rescue six largely online universities—Bridgepoint Education Inc., Grand Canyon Education Inc., L.A. College Intl., Patten University, Chancellor University, and Victory University.

Grand Canyon went public in November 2008, proving a successful initial public offering (IPO) at the depths of the financial crisis. Bridgepoint Education completed its own IPO that April, both deals making Clifford a wealthy man, at least on paper. In 2009, his 6.5 percent stake in Grand Canyon was valued at $47.5 million.

But the for-profit college industry

'Grand Canyon and Liberty are using the same strategy, but one is for-profit and one is nonprofit,' Clifford says. In 10 years, both have become the largest Christian colleges in the country—largely by anticipating the enormous demand for online college education.

‘I’m a strong believer in Christian higher education. We need to make it accessible to all social classes in a very affordable way.’

BRIAN MUELLER

ABOVE RIGHT • BRIAN STERRETT / CBP 2014

faced intense government scrutiny of its quality standards, recruiting techniques, and practices of taking government loan money. Four of the schools Clifford tried to rescue were closed or sold. But Grand Canyon and Bridgepoint remain behemoths in the for-profit college industry.

A U.S. Government Accountability Office report found enrollment in for-profit colleges had soared to 1.8 million in 2008, up from 365,000 a few years earlier. Some schools made about 90 percent of their revenues from federal student aid. Other for-profit schools, meanwhile, had student loan default rates of 40 percent. Several schools are fending off lawsuits alleging unethical recruiting, grade inflation, and fraudulently retaining students.

Clifford closed insolvent for-profit schools, losing millions of dollars. “I went to the Lord. The clear message I got was to go back to my love, which is Christian education.” He is now a consultant for Christian schools, having signed contracts with three and expecting five more by year’s end. His goal is to tell more success stories like Grand Canyon’s.

ACCESSIBLE, AFFORDABLE, CHRISTIAN

A Christian worldview, affordability, and accessibility are three key reasons why online Christian higher education still appeals to tens of thousands of new students each year.

Early on, Grand Canyon’s leaders realized that if the school could emphasize online education and use a for-profit model, they might achieve a rapid turnaround. The school was the first regionally accredited university to convert to for-profit. As the school prepared to go public, it recruited Brian Mueller, president at the University of Phoenix’s parent company, Apollo Group. During Mueller’s leadership as chief executive of the University of Phoenix Online, enrollment grew from 3,500 to 340,000.

Why did Mueller take the helm at Grand Canyon? “I’m a strong believer in Christian higher education,” he told *Christianity Today*. “We need to make it accessible to all social classes in a very affordable way.”

In 2008, Grand Canyon became a publicly traded company, selling 10.5 million shares for $12 each. The money it raised, Mueller says, has allowed the school to boost its advertising and marketing budgets to $90 million per year, enroll more students at reasonable tuition rates, and add more academic majors and buildings. Its stock, now selling for about $45 per share, gives the company a market capitalization value of $2.1 billion.

This fall, Grand Canyon will have some 11,000 students on campus. The hope is to grow to 30,000 on campus by 2020. (Grand Canyon has 55,000 students online in a program for working adults.) The school has expanded its campus to 175 acres and will open a sister campus in Mesa, Arizona, by 2016.

Mueller says the average student on campus is 18 years old and pays an average discount rate (after institutional scholarships) of $7,800. By contrast, the average online student is 33 years old, is

Liberty University has 13,000 students on its Virginia campus, about a tenth of its current enrollment.

pursuing a graduate degree, and pays an average discounted rate of $9,000.

By comparison, the 119-member schools in the Council for Christian Colleges and Universities averaged $24,355 per year for tuition in 2013–2014, $5,739 less than the average tuition cost at private four-year colleges, but substantially higher than both Grand Canyon and public four-year colleges. Grand Canyon's loan default rates and dropout rates have improved, but it still lags behind many nonprofit schools in these categories.

Besides their geographic locations and taxpayer status, Mueller finds that the main difference between Grand Canyon and Liberty is the statement of faith. "We don't have students sign a statement of faith," he says. About 70 percent of students report seeking a Christian worldview, but the others come for a different reason. "We welcome them here," he says. "Most of what we do is voluntary from a spiritual enrichment perspective."

Trace Urdan, an investment analyst at Wells Fargo in San Francisco, follows the for-profit college industry. He says Grand Canyon is "for Christians but also for people who are not necessarily evangelicals." Urdan says he was impressed by the school's approach that encourages moral decision-making and discourages binge-drinking, drug abuse, and promiscuity. At the same time, he is glad the school does not require dress codes, signed statements of faith, or mandatory chapel as do many evangelical colleges.

"I would never send my child to Oral Roberts University," says Urdan, an Episcopalian and Yale alum. "I could send my child to Grand Canyon."

BIG AND FAITH-BASED

When Falwell Sr. started Liberty, his dream was to create a world-class university that evangelicals could be proud of—what Brigham Young University is to Mormons, or Notre Dame is to Catholics.

"My father was talking about playing those schools in football," says Jerry Falwell Jr., president of Liberty. He felt that "Christian young people should have the choice of a big college experience."

Falwell Sr., who died in 2007, always thought students should not have to choose between a small Christian college and a large state school that might be hostile to their values. "Why can't there be both?" he used to ask, according to his son.

'The only thing that is going to save Christian colleges is a robust online operation.'

MICHAEL CLIFFORD

The growth of high-speed Internet in U.S. homes was a key to realizing Falwell's dream. "We were in a position to serve a much larger group of [working adults]—folks with jobs, mortgages, families. They could not uproot," says Falwell Jr. Liberty avoided the collapse faced by other online schools largely because it keeps residential tuition rates lower than competing schools and avoids aggressive recruitment. The 950 admissions counselors, IT workers, operations and administration staff, and other Liberty Online staff work out of a 100,000-square-foot former Sears outlet.

Liberty aims to grow to 16,000 students on campus by 2020, up from 13,000 at present. It reinvests its budget surplus into its campus, faculty, and degree programs. It plans to grow its online enrollment by no more than 3 percent per year. Growing at a slow, steady rate "brings in the students who really want to be here and really want a Christian education," Falwell Jr. says.

He sees career training and job placement as increasingly important in higher education. "We instill Christian values in our students. [But] if you don't have a job, you can't pay your loan back no matter how good a Christian you are."

The huge growth in Liberty Online has fueled the current building boom on the sprawling campus, which has added $500 million worth of Jeffersonian-style buildings in just four years.

"In the first few years I worked here, my job was to keep the creditors at bay and just to make payroll. It was survival mode all the time," Falwell Jr. says. "We have reached a point where Liberty is on solid ground."

CLOUD-BASED FUTURE?

Some higher-education analysts believe the go-go days for online and for-profit higher education are over. One of the biggest players, Corinthian Colleges International Inc., plans to close, selling 85 of its school locations and closing 12 others.

But Clifford and Grand Canyon's Mueller remain bullish about the future, and at least one education expert understands why. Kevin Kinser, who teaches education at the State University of New York at Albany, studies for-profit colleges. He admits that for-profit colleges are struggling for a sustainable business model. "That is what makes Grand Canyon so intriguing. They seem to have found a business model that works."

Yet higher-education traditionalists argue that colleges should not be on the stock market because they cannot serve two masters—investors and students. Furthermore, Christian leaders reason that the ideal Christian college should focus solely on rigorous degree programs with a residential campus life that integrates faith and learning.

Clifford says he has a bigger idea. He thinks Christian colleges should use Internet cloud technology to put an entire university into an online network and offer degrees "anywhere, anytime, anyhow."

"The only thing that is going to save Christian colleges is a robust online operation," Clifford says. Similarly, Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen, who coined the term "disruptive innovation," has predicted that many American universities could go bankrupt by 2030 due to their inability to adapt to new online education technology.

Others are less pessimistic about traditional higher education. In 2013, an Institute for Public Policy Research report pointed to "distinctiveness" as a durable competitive advantage. "Salvation comes not so much from their position in the national rankings as from their position in the chosen peer group," the report said.

That is a notion that leaders at both Liberty and Grand Canyon would applaud. Mueller thinks that enrollments at Christian colleges would double if they were more affordable. "There is just no end to the appetite in this country for private, Christian education that is affordable," Mueller said. "People want their children in this kind of environment." CT

PAUL GLADER is director of the Phillips Journalism Institute at The King's College, New York.

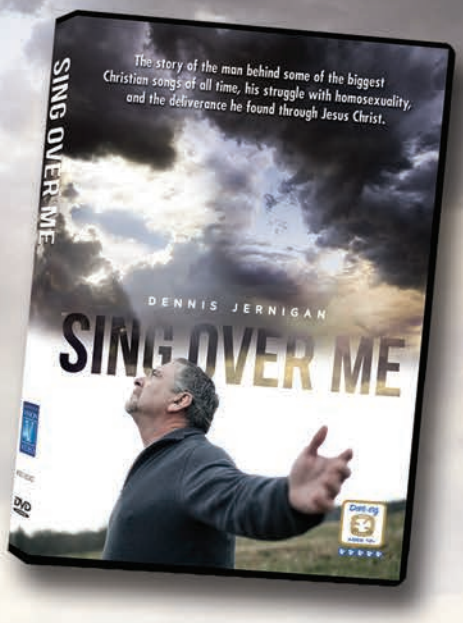
DENNIS JERNIGAN

SING OVER ME

You've sung his songs, now meet the man behind the music and hear about his deliverance from homosexuality

Since the early 1990s, Christians all over the world have been singing the songs of modern-day psalmist Dennis Jernigan, including "You Are My All in All," "Thank You, Lord!" and "When I Fell in Love with You." His music and ministry, sparked by his life-long struggle with homosexuality and the healing that came through his relationship with Jesus Christ, have led him on a remarkable journey of redemption. Now he shares his inspiring story so that all may have a deeper understanding of God's love.

This is a film about hope, identity, and the transformative power of the Gospel. By telling his story, Jernigan puts forth an example of what God can do in the lives of those who put their trust in Him. Nothing is impossible with God, and He wants to bring healing and freedom to all. 87 minutes.



DVD - #501604D, ~~$19.99~~
Limited time sale $14.99

THREE WAYS TO ORDER:

- **Go to www.VisionVideo.com:**
  Please reference code **C2D1014** in catalog source field.
- **Call 1-800-523-0226:**
  Please mention source code **C2D1014** when ordering.
- **Mail to** (include $3.99 s/h):
  Vision Video – Dept. C2D1014
  PO Box 540
  Worcester, PA 19490

YOUR SATISFACTION IS GUARANTEED!

Sin had bound me through and through;
With every failure the darkness grew;
Your love fell down with crimson hue;
And then I gave my heart to You.

From "When I Fell in Love with You" by Dennis Jernigan

www.SingOverMeMovie.com

GATEWAY FILMS VISION VIDEO

Why 68% of Christian Men Watch Porn

A new generation of porn addicts is about to flood the Church - are we ready?

By Terry Cu-Unjieng

Are we really supposed to buy into the idea that 68% of men in Church watch porn regularly? Could this just be sensational rhetoric? Not according to a national survey among churches. The survey conducted over the past five years revealed that 68 percent of Christian men and 50 percent of pastors view pornography regularly.[1] But even more shocking is that 11-17 year-old boys reported being its greatest users. The Church is in the sexual battle of its life. As these boys become adults, the Church will be flooded with porn addicts. Pastor James Reeves of City On A Hill Church DFW has successfully tackled porn addiction in his church. He warns, "This problem is going to sweep through the Church like a tsunami wave of destruction and we're not prepared for it".

Dr. Ted Roberts, Host of the Conquer Series

A Grassroots Movement for Change

In response to this growing epidemic in the Church, a group of filmmakers took it upon themselves to create a DVD teaching curriculum on sexual purity called the Conquer Series. The Series is the first of its kind to show men how to retrain a brain that's hooked on porn, using biblical principles and powerful insights. "The shocking statistics were the game-changer for me," says director, Jeremy Wiles. "So, we spent two years developing a five-hour discipleship curriculum, interviewing top Christian experts on this subject and shooting battle reenactments to illustrate the war that every man faces with sexual temptation. I wanted to give men proven principles on how to find freedom," adds Wiles.

The team recruited Dr. Ted Roberts, a former U.S. Marine fighter pilot, to be the host of the Conquer Series. As a former Pastor and head of Pure Desire Ministries, Dr. Roberts has counseled men for over 30 years - mainly dealing with pornography issues. "Our goal with the Conquer Series is to give men a battle plan for purity. We've got a great tool here that will change lives, but we need pastors to partner with us to fight this battle," Dr. Roberts said.

The Typical Church Approach Doesn't Work

According to Dr. Roberts, churches often treat this issue as a moral one, but fail to recognize it's mainly a brain problem, "We tell men to try harder, pray harder, love Jesus more."

Dr. Roberts adds, "But, what starts off as a moral problem, quickly becomes a brain problem. Telling a man to try harder is only tightening the 'noose' of bondage." Today, science sheds new light on biblical truth regarding strongholds of the mind and how a person becomes enslaved to sin.

A Highjacked Brain

Understanding the brain is pivotal. When a woman is nursing her child and she's skin-to-skin with her baby, her brain releases a neurochemical called oxytocin, which emotionally bonds her to her child. The same thing happens during sex. God designed oxytocin as the glue for human bonding. During a sexual release, oxytocin, along with other neurochemicals, are released and cause us to emotionally bond with our partner.

1. Pure Desire Ministries, "Porn Usage in Evangelical Churches" (2009).

When you watch porn, powerful neurotransmitters such as dopamine are also released, which bond you to those images. This is why Satan attacks our sexuality so much, because in attacking human sexuality it actually interferes with human bonding.

According to neuropsychologist, Dr. Tim Jennings, "Any type of repetitive behavior will create trails in our brain that are going to fire on an automatic sequence." The result is years of bondage. This is how 68% of Christian men can love the Lord with all their heart, but be trapped in sexual bondage. The repeated viewing of porn literally changes the physical structure of their brain.

A Process for Pastors to use to Fight Pornography

Wiles is confident the Conquer Series will embolden church leaders to tackle the problem by giving them a high-quality video curriculum and study guide that can be used by leaders in small men's group meetings. "Pornography is a really tough subject for a lot of pastors to openly confront," said Wiles. "This cinematic Series will give them confidence that they can restore men using proven Bible-based principles."

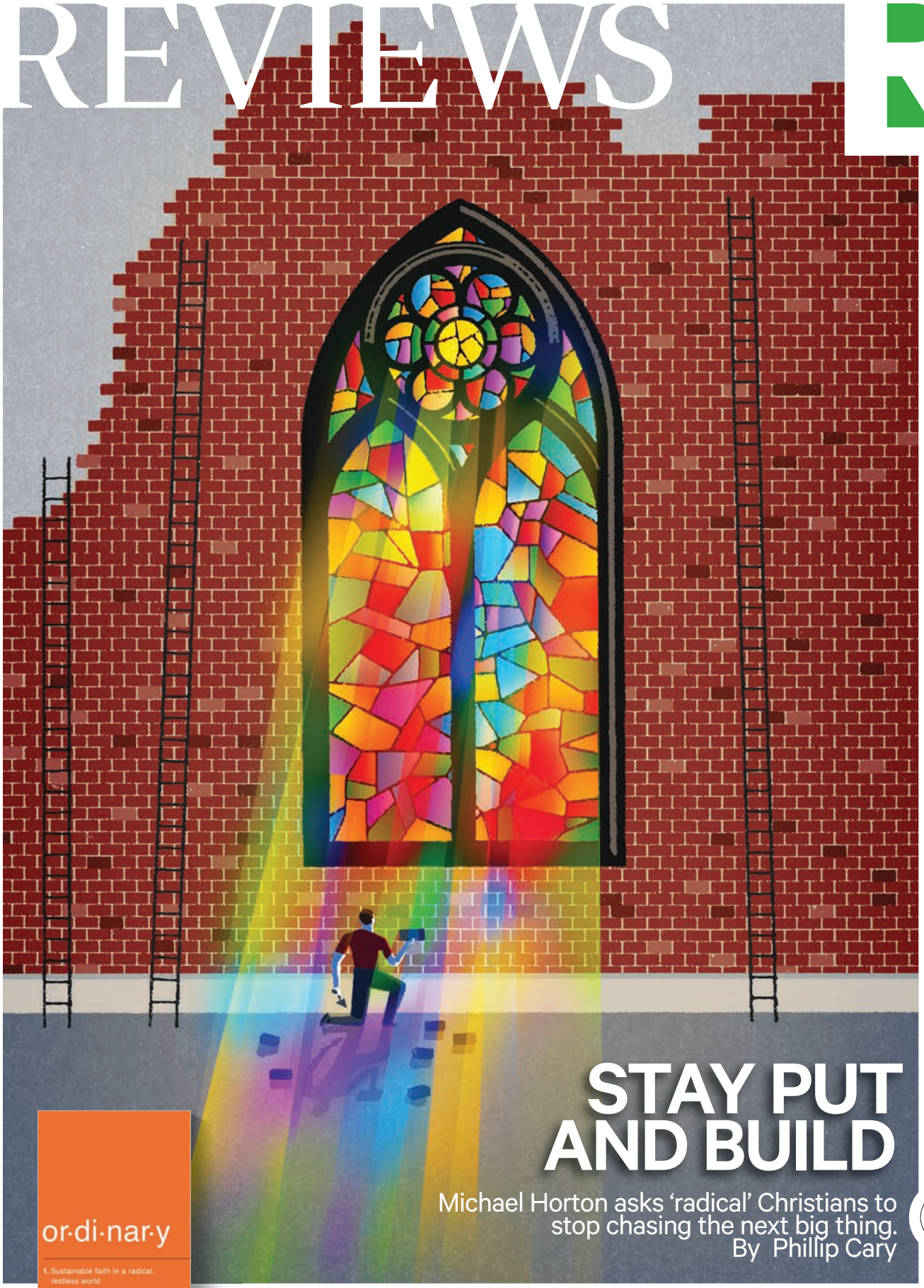
The Conquer Series has been getting a lot of positive feedback. Jason Royalty, a men's group leader from Springfield, Tennessee, said, "This DVD series has been so helpful to the 15-18 men that meet together for this class. Understanding how God has made us and also understanding the enemy's tactics has been key to seeing victories in these men's lives."

Paul Cole, President of Christian Men's Network, agrees, "When the Conquer Series begins to be a part of who we are, it will begin to change what we do and who we are as a church."

The Conquer Series is a 6-disc DVD set, which includes five 1-hour long teaching DVDs and a leader's DVD. They are currently offering a 14-day money back guarantee, so if you want to see if this is something for you or the men in your church, then here's a chance to try it risk-free.

Order at ConquerSeries.com

REVIEWS



KEITH NEGLEY

STAY PUT AND BUILD

Michael Horton asks 'radical' Christians to stop chasing the next big thing.
By Phillip Cary

Sometimes you can tell quite a bit about a book from its cover. On the outside, Michael Horton's *Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical, Restless World* (Zondervan) ★★★★½ looks a lot like David Platt's bestseller *Radical*, and that's no accident. Horton, editor of *Modern Reformation* magazine, a founding figure behind the White Horse Inn's teaching ministry, and host of its radio show, aims to provide an alternative to trendy calls for radical living. He thinks such calls serve mainly to make ordinary Christians anxious about whether they're really Christian enough, and pastors anxious about ensuring that their ministries are radically transformative.

Horton comes to their aid with a Reformational perspective that diagnoses such anxieties as the outgrowth of works righteousness. If we are justified by faith in Christ alone, then we need not be anxious to show how Spirit-filled we are by living extraordinary, radical lives. Having already received the promise of the Spirit in baptism—*God's* promise, which we can trust he will keep—we are free to serve our neighbors with ordinary good works. We are freed from establishing our credentials before God or our own consciences. And we are even free, Horton states, to enjoy our neighbors as gifts rather than making them into our own projects, as if it was our job to transform their lives.

Horton argues that the underlying theology behind oft-heard calls to be wild and crazy radical believers—as if Christianity were an extreme sport—is works righteousness in a new, consumerist mode. For some time, *radical* has been a favorite word of advertisers and ideologues alike. Every website with something to sell now routinely promises a transformative experience.

Instead of another call to be radical, extraordinary, or transformative, Horton would have us return to the ordinary means of grace, those practices of the church in which God has promised to make himself known: preaching the gospel, teaching the faith, administering the sacraments, and worshiping with a local congregation. Instead of advertising life-changing experiences or the next big thing, the aim is a sustainable faith for the long haul. The great strength of being ordinary, after all, is that you can do it for a lifetime.

THE CONTRARIAN'S DILEMMA

Ordinary continues the long-standing work of the White Horse Inn on behalf of launching a new Reformation among Western evangelicals. But the tone is notably less shrill than Horton's 2008 book, *Christless Christianity*, which attacked various celebrity preachers by name. Seeing the cover, I expected a few juicy remarks about megachurch pastors like Platt. My expectations were disappointed, which is a good thing.

Feisty contrarians can be fun to read, but they often fail to build up the church. And Horton seems to be outgrowing some of his contrarian urges. An explicit message of the book, in fact, is that it's time for the "young, restless, and Reformed" to grow up. Restlessness is to be expected in an adolescent, but the church needs to foster something better than the perpetual adolescence promoted by our culture and institutionalized in many youth groups. We need to build up the church, and the restless tend not to stay put and build.

In a similar vein, we are often reminded that "radical" means getting to the root of things (as the Latin *radix* means "root"). But a good gardener (in one of Horton's illustrations) does not keep pulling everything up by the roots and moving it around. You need to stay put for a while, untransformed, if you are to grow. It's like being married, in that the key virtues are faithfulness and constancy, not radical transformation.

Or consider one of the best vignettes in the book, which illustrates Horton's point that *ordinary* doesn't mean *mediocre*. A passerby once stopped at a massive construction site and asked what everybody was doing. "Hauling dirt," replied one. "Cutting stones," said another. "Building a cathedral," said a third. *All true.* For the only way to build a beautiful church is to do a great deal of mundane, unglamorous labor, and to do it conscientiously and well. The impatient desire to be radical and extraordinary, to hasten the coming of the next big thing, interrupts the humble work required to accomplish something excellent.

The impatient desire to be radical and extraordinary, to hasten the coming of the next big thing, interrupts the humble work required to accomplish something excellent.

But Horton faces a tricky problem. As a critic of the church on behalf of the church, he has to be careful about what he is tearing down. It's too easy to take potshots at celebrity preachers and high-powered ministries, especially when your own ministry has gained visibility and grown rather high-powered itself. The White Horse Inn, after all, is now much more than a radio program: It is a multimedia entity that presents conferences, podcasts, blogs, publications, and various "special offers" on its website.

The great problem for a contrarian who loves the church is that relentless, highly visible criticism can feed further anxiety, driving harried pastors to look yet again for the latest new technique, strategy, or ideology that will genuinely make a difference. So Horton's chapter against "super-apostles" came as a pleasant surprise. Instead of inveighing against celebrity preachers, it focused on the ordinary work of ministry, the day in, day out of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care. A book written like this won't grab attention like a scathing polemic, but that's part of the point.

GETS THE JOB DONE

The great alternative to consumerism and celebrity culture within the church is preaching the gospel, and Horton does a fair amount of that in his book. For all his Reformed emphasis on doctrine, he knows that faith is not just a matter of believing the right doctrines, much less learning how to get saved. It means first and foremost being united with Christ, given by God's sure promise, so that we can trust that our ultimate transformation is in his hands. Knowing this allows us to love our neighbor for our neighbor's sake, not in order to prove how

transformed we are.

Horton, in the edifying and noncontrarian mode most evident in the second half of the book, clearly aims to present good news for pastors in particular. He emphasizes that their regular work of preaching and administering the sacraments is the covenanted means of God's redeeming grace—the transformation that cutting-edge conferences and websites can only talk about. It is like a reminder that the work of hauling dirt and cutting stone *is* the work of building the cathedral.

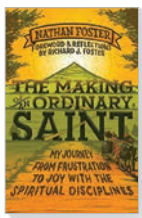
I hope pastors and many other ordinary Christians will find this book an encouragement to trust more deeply in the promises of God. *Ordinary* is not perfect, showing the weaknesses of a book written too quickly by someone who writes too many books. It's a bit long-winded, a bit repetitive, and not always well organized. But like the work of preaching—which does not require superb, earth-shaking sermons every Sunday—it gets the job done. And the job is not to say something memorable of one's own, but to point to what God has already said. An author who does that has done the proper work of the church. **CT**

PHILLIP CARY teaches philosophy at Eastern University in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. He is the author of *Good News for Anxious Christians: 10 Practical Things You Don't Have to Do* (Brazos Press).

Catching the Spirit's Draft

Richard Foster's son experiments with 'going saint.' By Jen Pollock Michel

The Making of an Ordinary Saint: My Journey from Frustration to Joy with the Spiritual Disciplines
Nathan Foster
(Baker Books)



In a recent interview with *The New York Times*, writer Anna Holmes recalled a "withering note from a professor" who had given her a C- for the sin of writing in the first-person. "The *I* tends to crowd out everything else," he scolded.

As writers, we learn early to beware the intruding *I*, which can easily fall into a mechanical repetition: *I went. I saw. I liked.* Worse, *I* trips easily into self-indulgence. In writing, as in life, it's good that we're warned against the heavy-footed "I."

In *The Making of an Ordinary Saint: My Journey from Frustration to Joy with the Spiritual Disciplines* (Baker Books) ★★★★½, Nathan Foster handles his "I" with a good deal of grace. On the brink of an existential crisis, Foster (a social worker) forswears buying a red convertible, deciding instead to "go saint." What he envisions as a yearlong experiment with the 12 spiritual disciplines introduced by his father, Richard Foster, in the classic 1978 book *Celebration of Discipline*, turns into four. In the process, his efforts at spiritual practice travel the distance from "frustration to joy."

In the opening chapter, "Submission," Foster introduces us to "drafting," and it becomes an apt metaphor for the book. "Drafting," he writes, "is when two or more cyclists ride inches behind each other, creating a sort of wind tunnel." On a grueling 224-mile ride—when "Mother Nature brooded from every direction, wobbling my flimsy cycle back and forth"—Foster abandons his hesitations about riding so closely in a group and submits himself to the "boredom of the paceline." Although he didn't "expect to find a way to actively practice a spiritual discipline in the windy, scorched Ohio farmland," spiritual practices keep finding Foster in unexpected places.

With the exception of having a famous father, Foster is as "ordinary" as the book's title suggests, and readers draft behind him in recognizable winds: the challenges of marriage and parenting, career ambitions (and jealousies), self-doubt, accumulated regrets. There's no patronizing sense that Foster's got a thing (or 400) to teach us. Instead, functioning as a wilderness guide into the "presence and longing" required for spiritual maturity, Foster writes with humor and humility, earnestness and consistent courage. The sheer beauty of this kind of "ordinary" spiritual life is the unexpected progress it makes. "Like watching a little seed, [we] don't necessarily notice any sprouting, and then one day the forest is alive."

For all the engaging introspection of Foster's *I*, however, he neglects the church's role in spiritual growth and health. Early in the book, he notes, "I have next to no expectation of church facilitating a space for me to connect with God." Later, he admits that "through this project, the exact practice of each discipline was surprisingly turning out to be something highly individualized." With some exceptions, Foster formulates his spiritual journey as a solo ride.

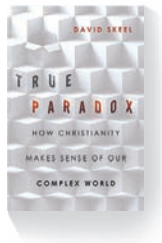
I wanted Foster to nudge me, with more faith and hope, into an imaginative vision of "drafting" in the communion of the saints. He aptly argues that spiritual practices form virtues in us, training us to do what is right. As well, he recognizes our "habit of sabotaging good" in our lives, illustrating the importance of the disciplines for ordering our desires. We must be taught to love the lovely.

I grant how the church is hard to love, how we could prefer to do without her company. But if spiritual practices form us, they don't form us in a relational vacuum. They also inform our broader view of human flourishing, teaching us how to love and serve one another.

We need the church to become spiritually mature. Or, at the very least, we must *learn* to need it. **CT**

JEN POLLOCK MICHEL is the author of *Teach Us to Want: Longing, Ambition and the Life of Faith* (InterVarsity Press).

True Paradox: How Christianity Makes Sense of Our Complex World
David Skeel
(InterVarsity Press)



Limiting Law's Reach

An excerpt from *True Paradox: How Christianity Makes Sense of Our Complex World*.

If everyone, both citizens and those who govern them, is tempted to misbehave, as a Christian understanding of the justice paradox teaches, we should not be surprised that no human legal system has ever produced a just social order. The human desire to control our own destiny and to assume godlike powers for ourselves explains why men and women have repeatedly convinced themselves that the history of failure does not apply to them—that they will be the ones to prove the past wrong.

[Yet] do Christians believe that every attempt to promote justice is therefore pointless? Not at all. A Christian understanding of the limits of law, combined with our obligation to promote the flourishing of others, can give us a vision of justice I call "law with a light touch."

If all of us are sinful, legal systems must play a double game: restraining the worst wrongs by the citizenry without empowering judges and prosecutors to do wrong themselves. The key to playing that double game well is to limit law's reach. One implication of this, ironically, is that a less ambitious legal system will often be more effective than a more ambitious one. When it comes to justice, less is often more.

One positive example of how this can work is the civil rights movement. In law schools, we talk a lot about the two great laws that were enacted thanks to the movement: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But changing the law wasn't Martin Luther King's primary objective. He was trying to change hearts. King fought and eventually died for the right to have relationship with those who refused to have relationship with him. He wasn't trying to put anyone in prison. In fact, he and his fellow protestors went to prison themselves in their quest to create true relationship in our communities. The true heart of the movement was relationship, not law.

The two laws that the civil rights movement did inspire were very unusual. Unlike many moral and social reforms, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act were not criminal laws. They were not designed to put offenders in jail or even to impose damages for the wrongs committed against blacks in the past. The objective of the Civil Rights Act was to give us a more integrated workplace, in which blacks and whites can work side by side. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 created the modern law of voting rights, giving us an integrated political community in which blacks and whites can vote side by side. The main reason these laws have been so successful is that they—unlike so many laws—actually help to create relationships in our communities.

If the dignity that comes from our being made in the image of God requires that we seek one another's flourishing, as Christians believe it does, one positive contribution that laws can sometimes make is to foster relationships in contexts where they otherwise might not occur. The civil rights laws are a vivid example of this. CT

Wilson's Bookmarks

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

VILLAGE OF SECRETS

CAROLINE MOOREHEAD (HARPER)

The remote French village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon—where pastor André Trocmé, his wife, and the local network they headed hid many Jews and other targets of the occupying Nazis and their French collaborators during World War II—has been the subject of numerous articles, books, and films. But Moorehead's *Village of Secrets* is the best account I've seen in any medium. Emphatically *not* a debunking, this telling of the story is nonetheless deeply nuanced. And Moorehead is particularly interested in the way various streams of Christianity motivated the rescuers.

SIDNEY CHAMBERS AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

JAMES RUNCIE (BLOOMSBURY)

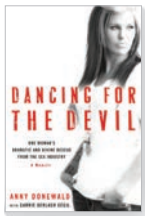
This is the third volume of the Grantchester Mysteries, a series begun with *Sidney Chambers and The Shadow of Death* and continued with *Sidney Chambers and The Perils of the Night*. Each volume consists of short stories; taken together, they constitute a lighthearted but theologically rich fictional chronicle of modern Britain, beginning in 1953, the year of Queen Elizabeth's coronation. The stories center on Chambers, an Anglican priest who often finds himself involved in murder investigations. Deft, witty, yet unconstrained by the literary hipster's horror of being thought uncool, they are quite delicious.

LIFE AFTER FAITH

PHILIP KITCHER (YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS)

There's a familiar image of the Academic—pedantic, narrow, or, in a more recent guise, intolerably smug and self-righteous. And there are professors who fit that description. But then there are people like Kitcher, a professor of philosophy who has also written books on James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* and Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice*. He concludes his new book, subtitled "The Case for Secular Humanism," by insisting that a "secular worldview ought to be forged in dialogue, even in passionate interaction, with all that has been most deeply thought about what it is to be human—including whatever can be refined out of religious traditions."

Dancing for the Devil: One Woman's Dramatic and Divine Rescue from the Sex Industry
Anny Donewald
(Howard Books)



Hope for Women in Hell

Rescued from the sex trade, Anny Donewald seeks to rescue others. Interview by Rachel Stone

Anny Donewald was 13 when a player on her coach father's NCAA basketball team began abusing her. Six years later, Donewald tumbled headlong into the sordid world of exotic dancing and prostitution. Facing the prospect of a second abortion, she prayed a simple, desperate prayer, and God intervened to save her (and her son's) life. In 2009 Donewald founded Eve's Angels, a ministry to women and girls exploited by the adult entertainment industry. Her book, *Dancing for the Devil: One Woman's Dramatic and Divine Rescue from the Sex Industry* (Howard Books), tells the story of her transformation and her ministry. Her.meneutics contributor Rachel Stone spoke with Donewald about her mission to bring hope and healing to women trapped in an earthly hell.

COURTESY OF HOWARD BOOKS

What is the most effective way to minister to strippers and prostitutes?
We want to offer a message of hope, rather than condemnation. Ultimately, I believe it's the Holy Spirit who convicts. They ought to know we're Christians by our love. But that won't happen if we come across as judgmental. If anything, that turns girls in the sex industry off from Christ. Besides, to these girls, the attitude is "I'm already in hell—why are you telling me I'm *going* to hell?" What they need, instead, is a sense that a different kind of life is possible.

Why do women and girls who've been abused find it difficult to speak up?
You blame yourself. It's hard not to think it was your fault in some way. We often think oppression of women is something happening elsewhere—like female genital mutilation in Africa. But in the States, we use sex to sell shampoo, cars, and deodorant. In a sex-saturated culture, women's sexuality becomes equivalent to their identity.

Earlier in life, you were interested in a music career. Do women and girls in the adult entertainment industry forget their former ambitions?
When a girl gets her soul murdered, all her dreams and hopes go out the window, and she goes into survival mode. She can't even think about the future. One of the goals of Eve's Angels is to give them hope for a future outside the strip club.

What's one story of a woman finding hope?
One girl, who started showing up at one of my Bible studies after turning 17, was snorting cocaine in the bathroom and coming out with white powder on her nose. She'd come to Bible study having not eaten for days, saying, "I don't even believe in your [expletive] God." I'd order a pizza for her. I'd ask her, "What do you want to do?" Finally, God told me to ask her if she was some kind of artist. "Yeah, I used to draw but not anymore," she said.

After she overdosed for the fourth time and came out of her coma, we got behind her, and she finished high school with honors. Now, at age 20, she's in college, studying art therapy, and working as a state director for Eve's Angels. She's also putting together a collection of paintings that draws attention to sex trafficking.

A lot of these girls just need a mom. Sometimes they end up calling *me* "Mom." We try, with Eve's Angels, to give them a family.

Why aren't you more insistent on telling these women, in Jesus' words, to "go and sin no more"?
We certainly want to see women leave the industry. But when Jesus commands the adulterous woman in John 8 to "go and sin no more," his word was creating a new reality in her. We have to remember that we don't have that same power, and that should make us more cautious in how we speak.


Anny Donewald

If you're working as a stripper, it's almost always the case that bad stuff has happened to you that hurts your capacity to choose differently. You've gone into a sort of alternate universe, which is why drug and alcohol abuse is common in that world.

You connect with women and girls by going into strip clubs—Eve's Angels, you write, is "the ministry that goes inside." Why is that important?
It's not enough to drop off gift bags outside the clubs or sit outside and pray. It's important to go inside. We need to keep in mind how staying outside comes across to the girls—that they must be avoided. Jesus wasn't afraid to talk to prostitutes, or to talk with the Samaritan woman who had five husbands. We shouldn't be afraid to go inside, to see these women as daughters and sisters—because "greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4, ASV). **CT**

Kuyper scholar Stephen Grabill (left) welcomes Evan to 'exile.'

Abraham Kuyper Goes Pop

A brilliant new film series pictures how to live out our salvation.
By Andy Crouch

The statesman and theologian Abraham Kuyper is all but forgotten in his native Netherlands, but his reputation continues to flourish in the United States among Christians looking for better ways to imagine their role in Western society. They often come to Kuyper for his account of the "cultural mandate"—the biblical theme of responsibility for the world so often neglected in narrower versions of conservative Christianity. But they stay for Kuyper's most distinctive contribution, his carefully developed account of culture's "spheres," each with its own features, functions, and significance. The family, government, science, art, education, and more are each essential. None can be reduced to the other, and each requires particular virtues and bequeaths us particular forms of flourishing.

Now, the Dutch Reformed heartland of western Michigan has given us a cultural product that Kuyper surely never imagined, but that would surely make him proud. It is designed to help the church reclaim our true calling: to live out our salvation, in the words its title borrows from the Orthodox writer Alexander Schmemann, "for the life of the world."

HERE COMES EVERYBODY

A curriculum of seven films each lasting 15 to 20 minutes, *For the Life of the World: Letters to the Exiles* advances a sophisticated theological anthropology. Schmemann's breathtaking sacramental view of ordinary life is here, as are Kuyper's distinctive spheres. Kuyper's fellow Dutch Reformed thinkers Herman Bavinck and Lester DeKoster contribute a high view of common grace and human work, respectively. Catholic theologians such as Josef Pieper and Hans Urs von Balthasar testify to the significance of the family and the centrality of beauty to the Christian life. Rigorously careful with its language, the curriculum unapologetically resorts to Greek in its first and last episodes to articulate core concepts of *oikonomia* (stewardship), *anamnesis* (remembering), and *prolepsis* (anticipation).

COURTESY OF ACTON INSTITUTE

The series makes the best case I have seen for the essential coherence of the Great Tradition's view of the world—and the creativity, beauty, and service that flow from that view.

Though true, the preceding paragraph is almost comically misleading. Because from that description you would surely never guess that our protagonist is a manically expressive 20-something named Evan (Evan Koons, who cowrote the script). Evan lives in a house filled with retro bric-a-brac, furnished circa 1940, and undisturbed by any technology invented since 1983. He is given to playing the ukulele, declaiming poetry, drinking lemonade from Mason jars—and to breaking the fourth wall, freezing the frame, and scrambling narrative sequence, using every trick of the postmodern visual storyteller.

When we meet him, Evan is in the throes of a quarter-life crisis. He's sure that if faith means anything, it must have implications for everything, but finds little guidance from the church toward a viable calling in a pluralistic world. Evan begins the series, and ends every episode, handwriting a letter to his fellow Christians: "Dear Everybody." The question that Evan finds most worrying is, "What is our salvation for?"

The Virgil who meets Evan in this dark wood is Stephen Grabill, avuncular, professorial, and frequently bow-tied. (A Kuyperian scholar in real life, Grabill very much plays himself throughout. But he also shows up as a hockey player, a baker, and a pipe-smoking psychotherapist.) Each episode explores the Christian vision for flourishing in a different cultural sphere—and the "exile" in which we currently languish, far from our true purpose and destiny.

It is almost impossible to convey in words the sheer inventiveness with which these themes are explored by Koons, Grabill, and their collaborators. (On camera, these include Dwight Gibson, Amy Sherman, and Anthony Bradley. Behind the scenes, joining directors Eric Johnson and David Michael Phelps, are Jars of Clay, many of the artists who helped create the *Nooma* videos, and an exhaustive list of contributors with Dutch-inflected last names.) They treat us to a balletic sequence evoking the Holy Trinity and the mystery of marriage; a Mumford-style hoedown on inaugurated eschatology; a wacky misreading, in front of increasingly indignant schoolchildren, of Shel Silverstein's *The Giving Tree*; and, in the series' most profound and rewarding episode, a wordless three-minute invocation of wonder and worship worthy of Terrence Malick.

Along the way are luminous interviews with the community development pioneer John Perkins and the artist Makoto Fujimura. Marionettes enact the story of Jean Valjean and the Bishop of Digne. A *Wallace and Gromit*–style contraption makes pancakes. A child climbs a tree; a carpenter hews a table; family and friends sit down at an outdoor feast.

DEEP POP

If all this sounds grab bag, it can feel that way at points—a curriculum for the Etsy generation, unblinkingly earnest and borderline twee. My teenagers loved the series unreservedly, but they laughed at its hipster bona fides. If you are a Gen Xer who insists on a side dish of irony at every meal, you may want to steer clear. Then again, Evan and his friends might be the tonic you need to recall just how wondrous, serious, and joyous the Christian story is and can be.

For the Life of the World comes from the Acton Institute, a Grand Rapids, Michigan, think tank known for its robust (not to say strident) advocacy for liberty in economic and political affairs, drawing mostly on the Catholic tradition. (Full disclosure: I spoke at 2014's Acton University, and the Institute is one of the distributors of CT's own curriculum on vocation, *Redeeming Work*.) Keen observers, or suspicious ones, will spot free-market economics in the episode on work ("Creative Service"), which seeks to show how markets create dignity for workers along the whole value chain. They will notice that the episode on government ("Order") quickly moves from social justice to hospitality—though that potentially individualistic transition happens in a moving, graceful, and, to this viewer, persuasive way.

But overall this series is marvelously catholic, in the small-*c* sense. All but the most progressive Christians (who will chafe at the traditional language for God and the implied endorsement of traditional marriage) and the most conservative (who may be alarmed at the Trinity being represented by three cherubic girls) will be able to watch it with profit and delight. It makes the best case I have seen for the essential coherence of the Great Tradition's view of the world—and the creativity, beauty, and service that flow from that view.

The Kuyperian tradition has excelled at producing high-flown philosophical treatments of culture. It has produced fewer examples of down-to-earth popular communication. Too often, meanwhile, Christian popular culture has been cut off from the faith's deepest roots. Very rarely do artists emerge who have the talent and training to present deeply Christian themes in widely accessible ways.

In *For the Life of the World*, some of those artists have emerged. This is Christian popular culture that embodies theological and spiritual maturity—and childlike humility. I can only hope that many of us will indeed watch and learn. And that we will then give ourselves away, as skillfully, promptly, and sincerely as these filmmakers have done, for the life of the world. **CT**

ANDY CROUCH is executive editor of CT.

New & Noteworthy

Compiled by Matt Reynolds

"'Stop this madness! Be done with the fluff, the bricks, and the despair-breeding, anxiety-multiplying self-righteousness! It's time to trust Christ—and Christ alone.'"

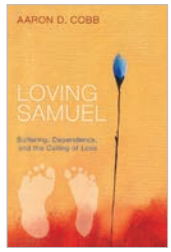
~ from ***Good News for Weary Women*** by Elyse M. Fitzpatrick

GOOD NEWS FOR WEARY WOMEN

Escaping the Bondage of To-Do Lists, Steps, and Bad Advice

ELYSE M. FITZPATRICK (RESURGENCE)

One year ago, Fitzpatrick, a popular author and Bible teacher, took to her Facebook page with a provocative question: What, she asked, is some of the worst advice routinely dumped upon churchgoing women? Hundreds of replies streamed in from women fazed by pressures to raise picture-perfect children, maintain immaculate homes, and keep their bodies impossibly slender and toned. "I knew that women felt burdened and wearied," writes Fitzpatrick, "but I didn't have any idea how much frustration, anger, angst, and despair was simmering just beneath the surface of so many hearts." *Good News for Weary Women* offers the finished work of Jesus Christ as an antidote to the burden of unrealistic expectations.

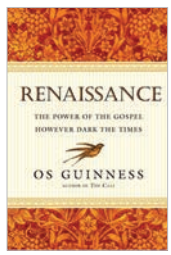


LOVING SAMUEL

Suffering, Dependence, and the Calling of Love

AARON D. COBB (CASCADE BOOKS)

Samuel, Cobb's son, died five hours after his birth, a casualty of the chromosomal defect known as Trisomy 18; the diagnosis had come in utero months earlier. Cobb, a philosopher specializing in medical ethics, has written a series of brief meditations on the challenge of welcoming Samuel into the world beneath a shadow of encroaching tragedy. "Those brief hours with him were some of the most important in my life," he writes. "They were at once peaceful, sad, and significant. Holding Samuel was an unexpected gift, a tender touch of mercy at the end of a difficult journey."



RENAISSANCE

The Power of the Gospel However Dark the Times

OS GUINNESS (INTERVARSITY PRESS)

These days, reasons for despairing over the future of Western Christianity—and the societies it has enlivened—aren't hard to find. Guinness, the renowned cultural commentator, is well-versed in the many reasons for pessimism regarding the church's fate. Surveying a range of internal and external threats, Guinness asks a pointed question in his latest book: "Can the Christian church in the advanced modern world be renewed and restored even now and be sufficiently changed to have a hope of again changing the world through the power of the gospel? Or is all such talk merely whistling in the dark—pointless, naïve, and irresponsible?" *Renaissance* balances realism about our precarious cultural situation with a hope grounded in the continuing sovereignty of God and his promises.

Reinhard Bonnke

GOSPEL CRUSADE

BRINGING GOOD NEWS TO AMERICA

WITH EVANGELIST

DANIEL KOLENDA

MORE INFO AT

GospelCrusade.org

407. 854.4411

Info@GospelCrusade.org

FREE!

Bring a Friend and Share the Good News!

★★★★★

1835 SOULS SAVED IN MIAMI, FLORIDA!!!

★★★★★

HOUSTON, TX

BBVA COMPASS STADIUM

FEB 20 & 21, 7PM

FEATURING...

JESUS CULTURE

with Chris Quilala

Leading Worship

★★★★★

2015 CRUSADES!

HOUSTON, TX

CHICAGO, IL

AND MORE!

GOSPELCRUSADE.ORG

info@gospelcrusade.org

JOIN CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY AND THE COLSON CENTER FOR THE

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM SUMMIT

OCTOBER 9 AND 10, 2014

STEVE GREEN | **JENNIFER MARSHALL**

Hobby Lobby — The Heritage Foundation

RUSSELL MOORE | **JOHN STONESTREET**

Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention — The Chuck Colson Center for Christian Worldview

AND MORE!

CEDARVILLE.EDU/FREEDOM

Pastor, Heal Thyself?

Supporting ministry leaders to face the mental health challenges of their difficult and lonely calling.

Preparing future pastors to deal with stress, burnout, and depression. **p78**

The important work of the Ministry Development Network. **p92**

WORKING IN THE SOIL OF DEPLETION

SEMINARIES ARE PREPARING FUTURE PASTORS TO DEAL WITH STRESS, BURNOUT, AND DEPRESSION.

By Amy Simpson

In his book *Overwhelmed* and elsewhere, well-known pastor Perry Noble has written about his struggle with depression and anxiety. He wrote of going on a date with his wife and acknowledging his misery:

> We were sitting at Outback, and I simply couldn't take it anymore. I told her, "We have a great house, we have nice cars, we're living comfortably, and the church is growing at a rate I never thought it would. I'm getting asked to travel and speak at conferences all over the country. *And I hate my life!*"
>
> Over the next three years, I experienced days that were so dark, so difficult, and so overwhelming that I considered taking my own life. I finally decided not to do it after I concluded that it would be the most selfish, cowardly act I could commit, and the pain I would cause my wife, my little girl, and my close friends wouldn't be worth it. But I still remember some of those long days when I just wanted out of here.

His story stands out in a culture where pastors rarely discuss their own mental health. But his experience is not unique. In recent years, several suicides among clergy and their families have signaled serious trouble. And well-publicized statistics paint a frightening picture of clergy mental health.

According to a 2010 *New York Times* article, "Members of the clergy now suffer from obesity, hypertension and depression at rates higher than most Americans." They are plagued by porous boundaries and constant accessibility to parishioners and others, thanks in part to cell phones and social media. According to *Pastors at Greater Risk* by H. B. London Jr. and Neil B. Wiseman, 45.5 percent of pastors report having felt depressed or burned out to the degree that they had to take a break from ministry.

Matthew Stanford, professor of psychology and neuroscience at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, says, "The likelihood is that one out of every four pastors is depressed." But this statistic would simply mirror the national average. In one Duke University study, pastors reported experiencing depression at *double* the rate of the general American population. High levels of stress make pastors' risk of depression and anxiety disorders much higher than the risk for people in other professions.

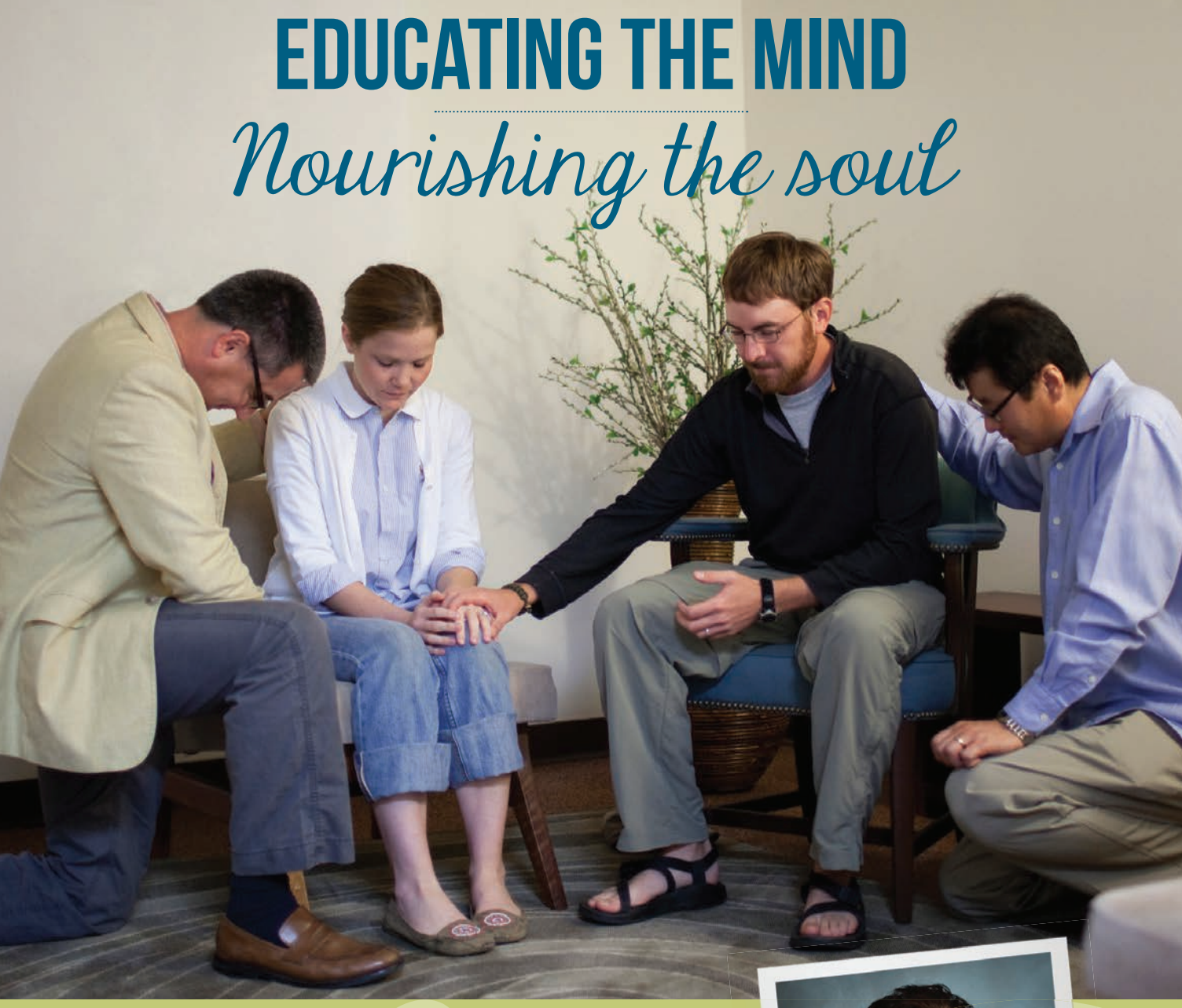
At the same time, claims Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources, many pastors are "reticent to say anything about their depression lest they be viewed as unfaithful to God and unable to help others."

CHALLENGES IN MINISTRY

This struggle with clergy mental health is happening within the environment of a larger-scale public mental health crisis. Each year, 26.2 percent of the American adult population suffers from a diagnosable mental illness. At the same time, an estimated 20 percent of

EDUCATING THE MIND

Nourishing the soul



"All of our counseling course work is embedded in a Christian worldview, so that integrating theology and counseling practice becomes a natural part of your work as a Christian who is also a licensed counseling professional."

-Dr. Virginia Todd Holeman Ph.D.
Professor of Counseling and a Leading Expert in Reconciliation and Forgiveness

Contact us today to begin one of 13 distinctive Master of Arts degrees (3 in counseling), a Master of Divinity, Doctor of Ministry, Ph.D. or Th.M degree, which can be pursued at our campuses in Wilmore, Kentucky and Orlando, Florida, or through our on-line program.

ASBURY *theological* **SEMINARY**

Call. 800.2ASBURY **Click.** asbury.to/degrees
Visit. asbury.to/visit **Learn more.** asburyseminary.edu

204 N. Lexington Ave., Wilmore, KY 40390
8401 Valencia College Ln., Orlando, FL 32835

children are at least mildly impaired by some type of diagnosable mental illness. And about 5 to 9 percent of children ages 9 to 17 have a "serious emotional disturbance." That translates to millions of individuals and families directly affected by mental illness. And pastors are regularly called upon to provide support in these emotional and mental crises.

In fact, the church is the first place many people go for help with mental illness. Among the people who have sought treatment, 25 percent have gone first to a member of the clergy. This is a higher percentage than those who've gone to psychiatrists, general medical doctors, or anyone else. And 25 percent of those who sought help from clergy had the most serious forms of mental illness. Most pastors are not equipped to give seriously ill people the level of care they need.

This high demand for care means church leaders are dealing with their own and others' mental health challenges simultaneously. "The church is still at the front line of mental illness issues," says James Coffield, PhD, associate professor of counseling and clinical director of the MA in counseling degree program at Reformed Theological Seminary of Orlando (RTS–Orlando). "Even in our very cynical culture, when people are struggling, there's something in them that says, 'There may be help in this church.' The average pastor will see some significant psychopathology in his or her ministry."

"In recent decades, we've seen much more pronounced loss of respect for the pastoral role—people feel free to say rather astounding things to their pastors that they wouldn't say to anyone else."

Coffield says even in his work as a clinician, "I don't see as much psychopathology as the engaged pastor."

The constant work of helping others—and often feeling in over their heads—can cause vicarious trauma (trauma caused by direct exposure to others' traumatic experiences), compassion fatigue, discouragement, and other forms of suffering. It can also be depleting.

"If you're a pastor," Coffield says, "you're getting calls late at night, helping people in crisis, doing premarital counseling with couples that have no business getting married. Each week, the average pastor will live with two or three of the five or six big hinge moments in a person's life: births, deaths, marriages, changing jobs. Their regular life includes those dramatic moments of other people's lives."

"Clergy are subject to the same pitfalls as everyone else, in the context of high conflict, high expectations, and high incidence of loneliness," says Dr. Margo Stone, clinical psychologist and associate executive director of Mid-

At Bethel Seminary, we're committed to equipping ministry leaders. But here, leadership means something more. It's about living our beliefs and bringing theology to life. It's about becoming thoughtful scholars and faithful servants. It's about developing our God-given talents while gaining the biblical foundation we need to think critically, discern faithfully, and act wisely. It's about using everything we've learned and everything we believe to make a real difference in our communities and our world.

seminary.bethel.edu

BETHEL SEMINARY

St. Paul | San Diego | Online

west Ministry Development Service in Westchester, Illinois. "In recent decades, we've seen much more pronounced loss of respect for the pastoral role—people feel free to say rather astounding things to their pastors that they wouldn't say to anyone else. This can be very hurtful and batter pastors' self-esteem. There's also the expectation that if your faith is strong enough, you should be able to rise above."

Many pastors are planted in what Stone calls "the soil of depletion, in which seeds of dysfunction and misconduct grow." Stone regularly works with pastors who have burned out, become ineffective, or experienced moral failure. She points to the harmful potential of spiritual, physical, and emotional exhaustion: "I have yet to meet a pastor who meant to hurt others. It starts in the soil of depletion."

Norm Thiesen, PhD, professor of pastoral counseling at Western Seminary in Portland, Oregon, agrees: "Pastors need to understand people, the problems they bring. They need to understand that a lot of the negative stuff people throw at them are not personal attacks; it's really about their own struggles and personal background. Pastors tend to personalize what's not personal. As a pastor, you aren't necessarily the cause; you're also not necessarily the cure."

David Clark, PhD, vice president and dean at Bethel Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, points to research conducted by the seminary two decades ago that highlighted the critical importance of mental, emotional, and relational health for those in pastoral ministry: "We learned that men and women in ministry struggle for two reasons: first, spiritual and relational failure—allowing the dark side of human sin and dysfunction and woundedness to spoil leadership effectiveness. And second, leadership failure—not knowing what it takes to lead people."

"The way to offer the best ministry to people in distress is by making sure you've cared for yourself physically, emotionally, relationally, spiritually," says Virginia Todd Holeman, PhD, chair of the department of counseling and pastoral care at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky.

"We're on the cusp of realizing the importance of mental health for pastors," says Coffield. "We can't train for

CAPITAL SEMINARY AND GRADUATE SCHOOL

With sites in Greenbelt, MD; Springfield, VA; Lancaster, PA; Philadelphia, PA; Indianapolis, IN; Boca Raton, FL; Memphis, TN—and access anywhere via internet—Capital Seminary and Graduate School is using 21st-century technology to prepare 21st-century Christian leaders to embrace 21st-century opportunities.

Discover the difference at *bible.edu* or by calling 866.275.8720.

knowledge alone. It's a difficult job in many ways. It can be very lonely. It's a wonderful calling, but with unique potential for burnout and the potential for escaping the stress in destructive ways."

SEMINARIES OFFER SUPPORT

Seminaries are recognizing their important role in supporting the mental health of pastors—both in building their health as they train, and in setting them up for healthy ministry in their future careers.

Coffield points to one tool all seminary on-campus experiences can provide: a cohort of friends. Working pastors, he says, "will not always feel like they can be honest about their doubts, struggles, and fears." The friends they make in seminary can be an ongoing support system of people who are walking through the same fires. RTS seeks to "provide a context so people can get ongoing relationships that will help them deal with the challenges of long-term ministry."

In addition, the school's faculty strives to provide students with "a place for personal assessment, to help students understand their strengths, weaknesses, potential trouble spots. This can be as simple as a quick personality test." Such inventories can help point out "anything that might make them have trouble with the job description."

Coffield also requires his students to evaluate their family history and difficult life circumstances, writing about them in formal assignments. "Many pastors have been shaped to pursue ministry because of very difficult things in their history. It's important to look at those things so they're not ministering out of personal deficit or trying to self-help themselves."

Western Seminary also formalizes self-reflection. Thiesen says the seminary offers a class that "helps students gain greater understanding of how God created them, what they need to work on." The school also offers courses to help students "tune in to" their spiritual lives. In pastoral counseling courses, Thiesen tries to help future pastors understand not only who they are, but also some of the challenges of the people they'll be asked to counsel. "I try to teach that we're not immune to emotional, psychological, spiritual issues in ministry."

"One of the main ministry tools is ourselves," Thiesen says. "It's hard to take people where we're not." Pastors need a sense of how God made them and what issues they bring to ministry. They also need to develop "prac-

"In one Duke University study, pastors reported experiencing depression at *double* the rate of the general American population. High levels of stress make pastors' risk of depression and anxiety disorders much higher than the risk for people in other professions."

continued on page 88

Step Into Your God-Sized Dreams

Mark Batterson believes in dreaming big and praying bold prayers: "Keep growing, keep stretching, keep learning." He says Regent University—with an emphasis on academic excellence and biblical truth—helped him sharpen his calling to Christian leadership. Our respected faculty and award-winning programs will help you sharpen your theological and leadership acumen with a focus on spiritual formation and biblical literacy. Ready to move toward your God-sized dreams? We'll help you take the next step.

Master of Arts in Practical Theology
Master of Divinity
Master of Theological Studies
Doctor of Ministry
Doctor of Philosophy

ON CAMPUS | ONLINE

Mark Batterson, D.Min. '12
Lead Pastor, National Community Church
New York Times Best-Selling Author

DIV140670

APPLY TODAY.
regent.edu/success | 800.723.6162

The School of Divinity is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), with approval for a Comprehensive Distance Education Program.

REGENT UNIVERSITY | School of Divinity

Christian Leadership to Change the World

BIBLICALLY ROOTED + THEOLOGICALLY FORMED

"Our joy as faculty is to participate in the transformation of students – in the life of their minds and beyond."

NICHOLAS PERRIN, DEAN OF WHEATON COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL AND FRANKLIN S. DYRNESS CHAIR OF BIBLICAL STUDIES

The Biblical and Theological Studies Department at Wheaton College Graduate School gives students an appreciation for the depth of our evangelical Christian heritage, thanks to an accomplished faculty from a spectrum of denominations. In the context of traditional biblical Christianity, faculty members are committed to helping students understand the theological underpinnings of their lives and calling within the context of Christ's Kingdom. We invite **YOU** to prayerfully consider exploring our community at Wheaton College Graduate School.

WHEATON.EDU/BIBLECT

Wheaton College Graduate School

For Christ and His Kingdom

DTS
Teach Truth. Love Well.

1 YEAR OFF SEMINARY

USE UNDERGRAD OR PARACHURCH TRAINING TO GET INTO MINISTRY FASTER

If you've taken Bible, theology, or ministry courses from a CCCU or ABHE university or a parachurch ministry such as YoungLife, Cru, or Kanakuk, you may qualify for up to one year (25%) off your seminary program from DTS. Advanced standing enables you to earn up to a year of credit (30 hours) toward a ThM or a full semester (16 hours) toward an MA, reducing your costs, and allowing you to begin fulfilling your calling more quickly.

DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

www.dts.edu/getcredit

continued from page 84

tices, habits to help us in ministry."

Bethel Seminary's approach places heavy emphasis on the importance of spiritual health and habits of self-care. The school conducted a 10-year longitudinal study that found a high correlation between spiritual relationship to God and emotional maturity and relationship to others. "A person can't be spiritual in a deep sense if they're emotionally stunted," says Clark.

"We're on the cusp of realizing the importance of mental health for pastors . . . . It's a wonderful calling, but with unique potential for burnout and the potential for escaping the stress in destructive ways."

Bethel has developed a "spiritual formation arc," a growth plan for students based in "a model of spirituality that is highly relational and demands a high commitment to emotional strength and maturity." The model asks students to consider what it means to be spiritually whole, including the psychological and relational elements of wholeness. The program provides psychological assessment and discussion of families of origin. The goal is "giving people the cognitive tools and developing relational habits that will allow them to experience emotional and relational healing so they become healthy and relational during their seminary experience," says Clark.

Asbury Theological Seminary takes a similar approach. About 10 years ago, the school initiated a major emphasis on Christian spiritual formation. New students are assigned to "faculty formation guides" with whom they check in three times during the course of their academic career. "We try to encourage students to think broadly about Christian formation in terms of loving community, loving their own transformation, and loving mission—service to others," says Holeman. This is a Christian formation process intended to keep such formation in the front of a student's mind, both during and after the seminary experience.

Asbury emphasizes self-care in a few of its ministry courses, one of which is required for all students. The school also offers a holistic approach to supporting students' health through its Community Formation office. The office engages students in physical service to the community, "getting people out of their own heads and reaching out to others." It provides opportunities for spiritual direction and referrals to local mental health professionals.

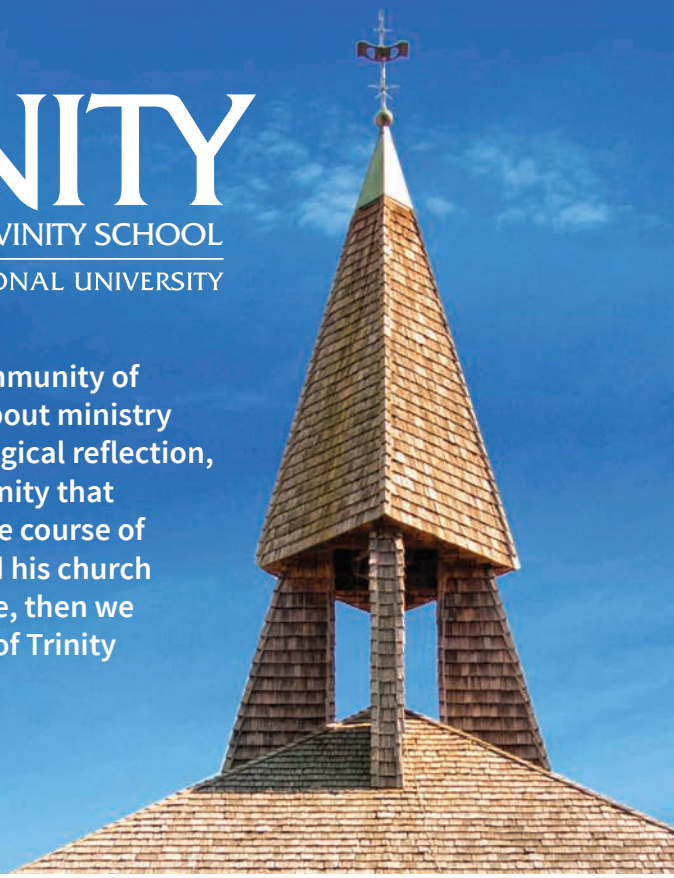
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois, takes a scientific approach from the beginning of a student's seminary career. New master of divinity students complete an assessment called Counselaid, a blend of tests designed to measure students' psychological, relational, and emotional health. Based on the results, students receive feedback on issues they should work on, possible recommendations to receive counseling, and other guidance as they begin preparing for a ministry career.

TEDS
πιστευθῆναι
τὸ εὐαγγέλιον
I THESS. 2:4

TRINITY
EVANGELICAL DIVINITY SCHOOL
TRINITY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

"If you are looking for a dynamic community of men and women who are serious about ministry preparation, biblical studies, theological reflection, and cultural engagement, a community that desires to make a difference over the course of a lifetime for the cause of Christ and his church in this country and around the globe, then we invite your prayerful consideration of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School."

David S. Dockery, *President*



TRINITY EVANGELICAL DIVINITY SCHOOL

UNITED IN THE GOSPEL
FAITHFUL TO OUR EVANGELICAL CONVICTIONS
COMMITTED TO THE GLOBAL CHURCH
DEDICATED TO CULTURAL ENGAGEMENT

STUDY WITH THE AUTHORS WHO WRITE THE BOOKS.

Trinity International University is a comprehensive university offering a wide range of bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees, as well as other programs, in multiple locations.

Trinity College
Undergraduate Programs
Adult Undergraduate Programs
Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Trinity Graduate School
Trinity Law School

Carl F.H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding
The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity
Jonathan Edwards Center at TEDS

LOCATIONS:
Main Campus: Deerfield, IL
South Chicago
South Florida
Southern California
Online

teds.edu | tiu.edu

But like other schools, Trinity hasn't overlooked the importance of spiritual habits and self-care. Dr. Keith Bjorge, assistant professor of counseling and chair of the counseling department at Trinity, says, "We are very passionate about spiritual formation, re-forming the student, continuing to make disciples." Every professor leads a spiritual formation group, getting to know students spiritually, emotionally, and relationally. Professors can speak into their lives and help them with challenges. But there is more: "There's an aspect where the professor will look at [a student's] fitness for ministry. Is the program a good fit?"

As for the struggles students bring with them to seminary, Holeman says, "Seminary is not a magical pill that makes all your mental health woes go away." In fact, Holeman has observed that seminary can cause disruption to a previously well-managed mental health condition. "Seminary is not a spiritual retreat; it's an academic setting with pressures that come with it. God uses seminary to refine students spiritually, but it can also activate symptoms. Students need to be aware of that and find support for it."

Seminaries are taking seriously their responsibility to provide students the help they need, along with services for maintaining health. Trinity, Bethel, two campuses of RTS, and Western Seminary all have counseling centers on campus. Asbury has an active referral program, helping students find what they need among counselors in the surrounding community.

HOPE FOR THE CHURCH

So what's the hoped-for outcome of this investment in students' short-term and long-term mental health? "Honest assessment of strengths and weaknesses so someone leaves seminary with a strong sense of how they will fit into the job," says Coffield.

Holeman emphasizes self-understanding as well: "Students will come to know themselves and their areas of vulnerability so they will be able to put into place whatever practices are needed to sustain them through difficult periods in ministry." She also voices her hope that "students who come to campus with mental-health

continued on page 94

FULLER'S ASIAN AMERICAN INITIATIVE

BE A NEW KIND OF LEADER.

Ken Fong has led the way in the trenches of Asian American ministry for more than 30 years. Daniel Lee is pioneering research that integrates theology with the Asian American experience. Together they've launched a first-of-its-kind Emphasis in Asian American Contexts at Fuller Theological Seminary. Prepare for God's calling with leaders like these.

FULLER
ASIAN AMERICAN INITIATIVE

FULLER.EDU/AAI

SHEPHERDING THE SHEPHERDS

THE IMPORTANT WORK OF DR. MARGO STONE AND THE MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT NETWORK.

Even ministers need ministry—and ministry to church leaders is essentially ministry to the church.

That's the idea behind the Ministry Development Network, a nonprofit that exists to minister to people in ministry. The network is a group of four centers in Columbus, Ohio; Kansas City, Missouri; Austin, Texas; and suburban Chicago, Illinois.

At the Chicago-area center, Midwest Ministry Development Service, Dr. Margo Stone and other counselors and psychologists provide assessments for candidates for pastoral ministry, support the emotional and mental health of pastors, and provide educational resources.

The center provides brief intensive programs for their clients with required and significant pre-program work (such as writing an autobiography). For a given client, the program might include a boundaries workshop; individual counseling; assessments (leadership style, personality, conflict resolution style, and more); training in psychological and emotional functioning; and specific recommendations for where the minister needs to continue developing, growing his or her skills, and celebrating strengths. Dr. Stone, who also sees pastors in long-term counseling through her private practice, will often refer her Midwest Ministry clients to other counselors as a follow-up. "We give them the best start we can, and then we tell them what work to do to keep on the right track."

This work often means offering crisis intervention in the wake of a personal crash or a scandal. But Dr. Stone's favorite work is preventive. She loves helping church leaders who haven't yet worked their way into a mental health crisis, moral failure, or broken marriage. With such preventive work, she focuses on helping ministers develop healthy boundaries and provides a safe place to process the inevitable stresses. "Pastors often feel isolated," she says. "They need a safe person other than their spouse. If they tell everything to their spouse, how will that spouse feel about the church?"

She says many people go into ministry from a place of idealism, which quickly results in disillusionment and discouragement. Part of her work is helping pastors find a new realism that will be sustainable. She also works to help ministers develop confidence, resilience, and conflict-management skills. "I help pastors name the truth of what's going on with them," she says. "Then we can address underlying problems."

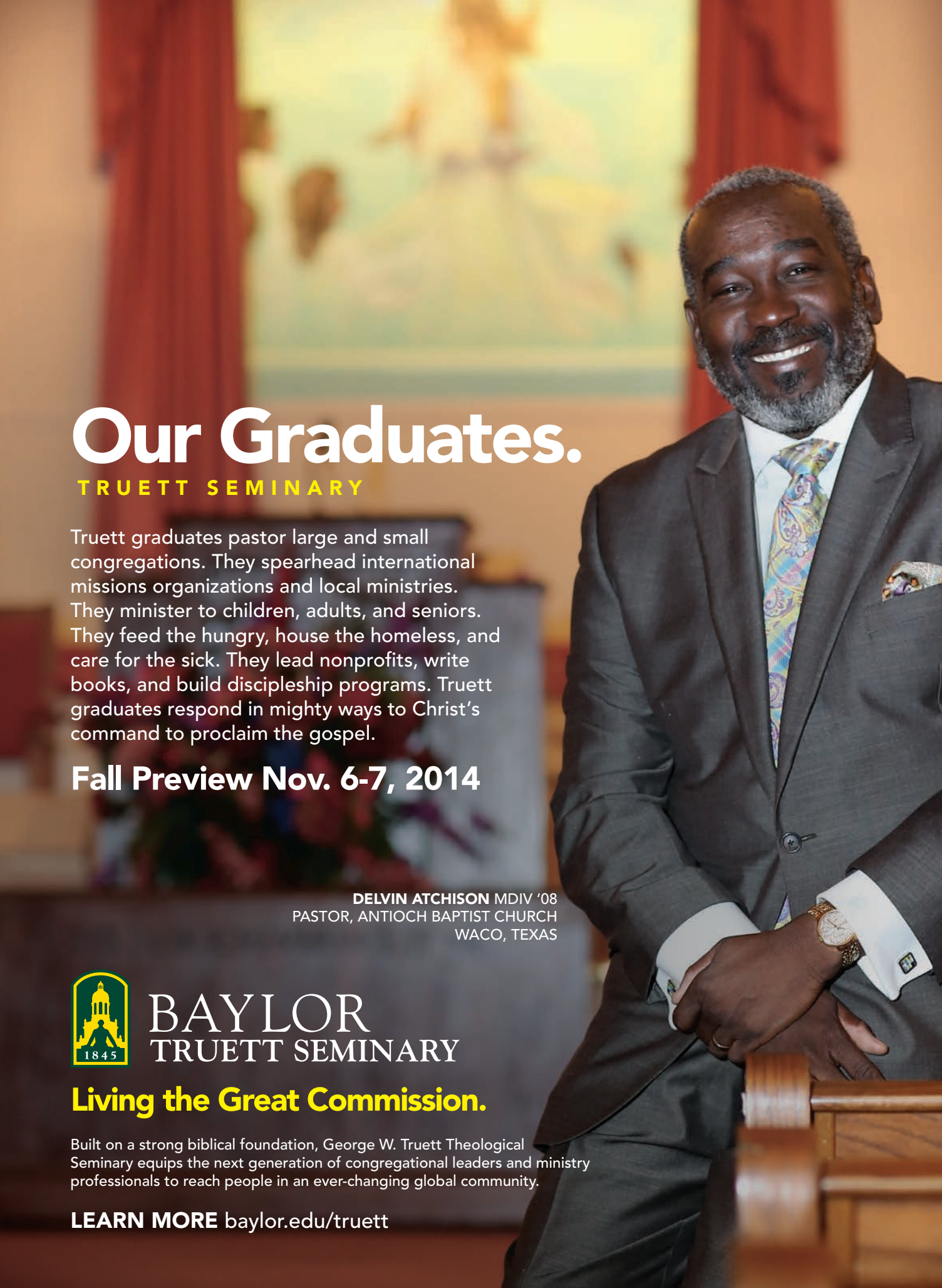
Before she started ministering to pastors, Stone spent 13 years in church ministry. "People from the outside tend to think, 'What a wonderful thing to work in ministry! You must be spiritual and happy all the time!' Instead, many pastors work long hours for low pay and low perceived interpersonal reward—they're lonely." Stone says the lifestyle of a pastor can lead some to depletion, which in turn can lead to a sense of entitlement. They begin to think, *I work so hard, and I deserve someone who will care about me and give me some attention.* This perspective can lead to misconduct.

Besides loneliness, Stone says church leaders are vulnerable to both over-engagement (tremendous stress) and disengagement (burnout). "Role ambiguity is also an issue," she says. "And pastors often have little external support for dealing with those stressors and maintaining healthy boundaries."

Dr. Margo Stone

Stone describes a key discovery that Ministry Development Network has made in its 40 years of experience working with pastors: "People who can separate the role of pastor from their personhood are much more likely to be able to minister with health and excellence. If you can't, then when someone attacks, it feels personal all

continued on page 96



Our Graduates.

TRUETT SEMINARY

Truett graduates pastor large and small congregations. They spearhead international missions organizations and local ministries. They minister to children, adults, and seniors. They feed the hungry, house the homeless, and care for the sick. They lead nonprofits, write books, and build discipleship programs. Truett graduates respond in mighty ways to Christ's command to proclaim the gospel.

Fall Preview Nov. 6-7, 2014

DELVIN ATCHISON MDIV '08
PASTOR, ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH
WACO, TEXAS

BAYLOR
TRUETT SEMINARY

Living the Great Commission.

Built on a strong biblical foundation, George W. Truett Theological Seminary equips the next generation of congregational leaders and ministry professionals to reach people in an ever-changing global community.

LEARN MORE baylor.edu/truett

continued from page 90

diagnoses will feel they can find support here, set realistic expectations for themselves as students, and learn how to manage the illness in a way that allows them to thrive. They'll need that skill when they get out into ministry."

Others hold similar hopes. For those students who pursue vocational ministry, Western Seminary's Thiesen desires "greater wholeness spiritually and relationally. Greater knowledge of God's Word and the skills to present it well, but also an internalized application of it . . . a lived-out experience of the grace of God."

"We're being an instrument in forming in students the image of Christ," Dr. Bjorge says. In addition to self-understanding and self-management, he wants students to leave Trinity with "a sense of what's going on in the people around me, what the people in my care are experiencing. How can I come alongside them appropriately and help them through the experience and manage their relationships well?"

"A person can't be spiritual in a deep sense if they're emotionally stunted."

Ultimately, a healthy ministry student who becomes a healthy church leader results in a healthy church. "Leaders are the key to effective organizations," says Bethel Seminary's Clark. "Leaders are like the spring, and no river will rise higher than the spring. No organization rises above the level of its leader. We want to produce spiritually mature, emotionally healthy leaders for ministry."

After all, the motivation for providing mental-health support is the same as for providing seminary education. In Clark's words, "It's for the building of the kingdom of God to the glory of God."

Amy Simpson *is the author of the award-winning* Troubled Minds: Mental Illness and the Church's Mission *(InterVarsity Press), a Co-Active personal and professional coach, a speaker, editor of Gifted for Leadership, and senior editor of* Leadership Journal. *You can find her at AmySimpsonOnline.com and on Twitter @aresimpson.*

Let Our PURPOSE Meet Your PASSION

You are probably thumbing through this section of the magazine because you want to fulfill a passion that burns within you.

At Columbia International University our purpose is to educate you from a biblical worldview to impact the nations with the message of Christ.

Wherever your God-instilled passion is leading you, the graduate and seminary programs at CIU will prepare you for a life of impact. Among our **31** program options, here are four to consider:

Offered fully online making it possible for you to complete your program without relocating.

Master of Arts in Muslim Studies

Master of Education

Combines intensive courses in Columbia, S.C., Atlanta or Korntal, Germany with online courses making it possible for you to complete your program without relocating.

Master of Divinity (Chaplaincy)

Master of Divinity (Ministry Leadership)

A TOP SOUTHERN REGIONAL UNIVERSITY
U.S. News & World Report
2009-2014

CIU Columbia International University

To Know Him and to Make Him Known

www.ciu.edu/purpose

"Everywhere I go I see the effects of this school."

Philip Yancey
Best-Selling Author
CIU Class of 1970

(800) 777-2227, ext. 5024 | yesciu@ciu.edu | 7435 Monticello Road | Columbia, SC 29203

continued from page 92

the time. You can't understand what's actually causing that person to attack."

Stone applauds seminaries' efforts to impart self-understanding and self-care habits to their students. The most critical supports seminaries can offer, she says, are self-care skills, people-management skills, clarification of the importance of family relationships, opportunities to examine their own needs that have influenced their choice to do ministry, and internships. "They need as much on-the-job training as possible," she says. "It helps resolve the disparity between idealistic expectations and the realities of ministry." She also speaks of the tremendous value in post-graduation peer support groups.

"... many pastors work long hours for low pay and low perceived interpersonal reward—they're lonely."

Stone has been doing this work for nearly 17 years and feels God's pleasure in it. "It's a privilege," she says. "This is what I'm called to. The process seems transformative for a lot of people—for pastors and often their spouses and families." She loves seeing pastors walk away with increased or renewed focus and passion for ministry, a better understanding of boundary issues, and better ideas for how to care for themselves, their families, and their churches. For Stone, this means a job well done. "Healthy spirituality and healthy psychology will never be at odds."

—*A. S.*

COMING FALL 2015

Welcome to Seminary 2.0

Seminary Reimagined

We've reimagined seminary education at Denver Seminary with the most extensive enhancement of our Master of Arts (50 hrs) and Master of Divinity (78 hrs) programs in over 60 years. The design will provide superior flexibility and personalization to match your interests, learning styles, and vocation. You'll be able to go deeper into the areas that match your gifts with the agility to move into ministry faster, adapting to the challenges and opportunities of our rapidly changing 21st century culture.

And you'll continue to receive the academic integrity, mentored learning, and meaningful missional engagement that have been the hallmarks of Denver Seminary since 1950.

Think you can't attend seminary? **Think again.**

DENVER SEMINARY®

Learn how Denver Seminary is reimagining seminary.

DenverSeminary.edu/reimagined

There's a better way to find a college :)

ChristianCollegeGuide.net has the tools you need to find the perfect college fit. Search and compare over 120 Christian colleges and universities by:

MAJOR • LOCATION • AFFILIATION • ATHLETICS • ENROLLMENT

ChristianCollegeGuide.net

Marketplace

Cost: 72 cents per character (each space and punctuation counts as a character); avg. 45 characters per line. Min. $61.20 (85 characters). *Christianity Today* check-marked box ☑ $22 each insertion; box around ad $43 each insertion. Ads set display style: $425 per column inch. Combination discount rates available for *Leadership Journal*. Prepayment and written confirmation needed to process ads. Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, or personal check accepted. Employment ads given priority. All other ads placed in first available issue. Deadline for reservation or cancellation is seven weeks prior to actual issue date. Address correspondence to: The Marketplace; 465 Gundersen Dr.; Carol Stream, IL 60188; or contact Stacy Smith, Sales Administrator, at: 630.260.6202 x4238; fax 630.260.9401; e-mail Marketplace@ChristianityToday.com.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

International Christian School of Vienna

seeks new director to start July 2015. More information at www.icsv.at/directorsearch.

Houseparents

Shelter Care, an organization serving youth, has openings for mature couples. The program, located in Akron, OH, uses a family model. Each couple is responsible for 4 youth. Position is FT, includes salary and excellent benefits package. If interested send resume to 32 South Ave.; Tallmadge, OH 44278; phone: 330.630.5600; fax: 330.630.5810; www.sheltercareinc.org.

Belhaven University

teaches each discipline on biblical foundations, and seeks faculty with terminal degrees in the following areas: dean of online studies (Jackson, MS), dean of faculty (Orlando, FL), business administration/finance (Chattanooga, TN), and business (Memphis, TN). See http://www.belhaven.edu/belhaven/employment.htm for details.

Mercy House

a shelter for homeless families in Harrisonburg, Virginia, is seeking a seasoned executive director with a passion for the homeless. Duties include working directly with the families, grant writing, staff management, and general oversight of the agency's finances, facilities and programs. For more information go to www.themercyhouse.org/openings.

Oxford Bible Fellowship

in Oxford, OH, seeks a lead pastor who places his relationship with Christ first and has a passion for preaching in a Christ¬-centered expository manner. As a church of 650+ attendees, including 300+ university students, we seek an experienced shepherd pastor who meets the standards of 1 Timothy & Titus. Visit OBF.org for more info.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Associate Pastor Opportunity

Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, a 29-year-old growing, relational, and vital ELCA congregation in Palm Beach County, Florida, is seeking candidates for the position of associate pastor. This person will partner with the lead pastor in serving the church with fresh energy into its desired future by assuming significant leadership roles and responsibilities.

Essential Qualifications:

- 0 -10 years of demonstrated leadership and ministry as an ordained pastor
- Excellent communicator in preaching, teaching, speaking, and writing
- Masters of divinity degree from an accredited seminary or theological school accepted by the ELCA.

Interested individuals should contact Rick Heltne, rheltne@simainternational.com.

45-year-old Evangelical Mission Organization

in the Midsouth seeking CEO to serve 250 missionaries in 43 countries. Send resume to lb5033@aol,com.

TRAVEL

Short-Term Teams, Missionaries and Churches

Best, most popular overseas medical insurance including free emergency medical/political evacuation. About $1.00 a day when traveling. Missionary furlough, terrorism, church-based teams, maternity, and more. We insure hundreds of agencies and churches. See www.missionaryinsurance.info; Good Neighbor Insurance, 866.636.9100; or www.gninsurance.com.

London, UK

Highbury Centre Christian guesthouse. Quiet location on private road, close to bus and train/tube station. Reductions for missionaries and full-time ministers. www.thehighburycentre.org.

TRAVEL

☑ **GOLDEN RULE TRAVEL** is a Christian agency specializing in wholesale and bulk rate airline tickets for church and missionary travel. We try extra hard to save you money! Call 800.950.3599 (FLYY) or go to www.goldenruletravel.com.

SERVICES

Church Conflict?

We identify the systemic sources of your conflict and provide innovative solutions to restore unity, make peace, and rebuild trust. 20 years experience; 603.495.0035; info@restoringthechurch.org.

Called to Preach?

www.IndependentBaptistAlliance.org; 352.621.4981. We can help with ordination and other topics.

EDUCATION

Degrees Through Correspondence

Low tuition. For a free catalog www.lbcs.org; 352.621.4991; or write Liberty Bible College & Seminary; 5480 S. Suncoast Blvd.; Homosassa, FL 34446.

Business As Mission (BAM)/ Social Enterprise

Online course, 16 weeks starting in January, full college credit, financial aid for missionaries, for more info contact david.befus@nwciowa.edu.

Transformational Leadership Certificate of Achievement

Open to all with no prerequisites or prior degree. www.BGU.edu/calead; 206.264.9100 ext.114.

EDUCATION

Earn Seminary Degrees Online

Columbia Seminary; www.ColumbiaSeminary.edu; CES@ColumbiaSeminary.edu.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

Write to Inmates

Fellowship with a saved inmate or lead an unsaved inmate to the Lord! E-mail matthew25.36ministries2013@yahoo.com.

MISSIONS

MissionNannys.org

Be a mission nanny. Volunteer women needed to serve overseas with missionary families as domestic/childcare help.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Open Your Own Reading Center

At home or commercial location. Students gain 2–4 grades in fewer than 60 hrs. Make a difference in the lives of others. We provide excellent training and materials. www.Academic-Associates.com; 800.861.9196.

BOOKS | TAPES | FILMS

Children's Sermon with Pattie & Bernie!

Book of 12 seasonally based skits for puppets or people! Put some pizzazz in your children's sermons! View sample script at www.pattiebernie.com.

Rare Bibles/Bible Leaves/ Manuscripts/Engravings

1200–1600s; dole57@yahoo.com; HISbooks.net.

BOOKS | TAPES | FILMS

The Deeper Christian Life and House Church Movement

Books and tapes. Free catalog; 800.228.2665; www.seedsowers.com.

Whispers of Wisdom by Barb Dunn

a personal reflection of journal entries, emails, and prayers that create a chronological "flashback" of her journey with God—from mammography to mastectomy. http://www.xulonpress.com/bookstore/bookdetail.php?PB_ISBN=9781498401418.

CHURCH SUPPLIES

Cushions and Upholstery

Church cushions and upholstery. Nationwide. www.pewcushions.com.

FOR RENT

Disneyworld Area 2-10 beds

Family resorts from $99. Discounted. www.condoneardisney.info.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 104

the largest college-prep track sponsored by the University of California–Irvine, as well as the Puente Program, which helps students enroll in public university. The same year I started EAOP, I began visiting the Minnie Street Learning Center, an afterschool community started and hosted by Mariners Church, a large, historic nondenominational church in Orange County. There we cleaned up the streets, tutored younger kids, and taught a computer class. I became the first student to be elected president of Puente. I learned how satisfying it was to make myself useful and serve my neighbors.

My junior year of high school, the other Puente leaders and I had a chance to travel to San Francisco to visit colleges. Reality struck me with a profound wound: I was undocumented. I learned that my status could bar me from traveling and attending college. I could no longer accept the evasive answers my mother gave when I asked if I could work to help pay our bills. As my graduation drew closer, we could no longer avoid the fact that my dreams of going to college could come to a dead end.

I also faced profound confusion about who I was and where I belonged. I felt I didn't belong anywhere—too American to return to Mexico, too foreign to belong in the States. Even though I tried to stay optimistic and dodge every insult fired at undocumented immigrants, I felt the effects. Guilt, shame, and depression all knocked on my door, and I welcomed them. I carried them around, believing I was somehow responsible for the "crime" I had committed at age 5. The accusations led me to fear my situation and future.

In this season of desperation, I learned how much a heavenly Father would provide.

TRUE IDENTITY

Much good came from the learning center: tutoring, role models (including the first positive male role model of my life), and leaders who spoke out on the complex issue of immigration because of people like me. But nothing more beautiful and powerful came from the center than the introduction to my Savior, Jesus Christ. I was 13 when I first heard in detail about the living God. At youth camps hosted by the center, I started asking questions and getting answers that filled my heart as I heard the Good News for the first time.

In 1999, I attended the Racing a Zealous Army one-week summer camp. As my peers shared their stories of faith, I poured out my heart and realized my need for the almighty God. I gave my heart to him and hungered to know more about him. One of the most significant verses I learned is Proverbs 3:5–6: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take" (NLT). I knew I could trust God with my future because he loves me and takes care of me.

By God's grace, I became the first person in my family to graduate from high school. After learning of my undocumented status, my high-school teacher, counselor, and other school staff did all they could to help me visit colleges. I received $10,560 in scholarships to help cover my freshman year at Biola University, in nearby La Mirada. Even knowing my status, sponsors at Mariners Church covered most of my tuition. They are daily reminders of God's love and hand in my life. I earned my bachelor's in psychology at Biola, then a master's degree in marriage-family therapy. Today, I work at Wilshire Street (part of the Lighthouse Community Centers) to create a support program for struggling families in Santa Ana.

I was also the first woman in my family to earn a college degree. Most have had no choice but to struggle as single parents or endure cyclical abusive relationships. Everything seemed to point toward that fate for me. At times I felt weak for being a woman. At an early age I watched my mother fight to be heard, as she was often ignored for being an uneducated single mother. God's grace allowed me to break out of these cycles.

I tried to dodge every insult fired at undocumented immigrants, but I felt the effects. Guilt, shame, and depression all knocked on my door, and I welcomed them.

At Biola I first learned about God's heart for the sojourner. I learned that Jesus himself was a child immigrant, and that he calls his people to aid the widow, the orphan, the oppressed, and the poor. I came to realize that not every manmade law accords with God's law. Most important, God drew me close to his heart for justice.

In the midst of these experiences, I had to define the core of my identity. I am a person of color. I am a woman. I am poor. I am fatherless. I am an undocumented immigrant. Indeed, it has been excruciating to see myself in the eyes of the world. But I have learned about my true identity. Above all other labels, I am a child of God. Like other immigrants, I want to use my education to help our country thrive economically, but my desire to serve God is central.

I can't help thinking about the recent surge of unaccompanied immigrant children to the States. Their stories sound too familiar, biblically and personally. My prayer is that some of God's servants would respond to their arrival in ways that make him known through word and deed—just as other servants made him known to me at age 13.

There is nothing I have left to fear. God has brought me this far, providing all along the way. I am struck with sincere gratitude for my mentors, but above all, I am in awe at the work my Father has done in my life. I give him all the glory. **CT**

ADRIANA MONDRAGON works at the Lighthouse Community Centers' Wilshire Street program. She has a BA from Biola University and an MA in therapy from Chapman University.

TESTIMONY

KYLE CHRISTY

Status: Beloved

In Christ I am more than the 'crime' I committed at age 5.

By Adriana Mondragon

As proud as I am of my Mexican heritage, there is only one place I can call home: the United States. I belong to the wave of immigrants who arrived in the country as children. All that remains from my early years in Mexico are a few blurry memories, drawn together from what my mother has told me.

My mother lost her first husband in a car accident in 1978. After his death, she traveled for the first time to the States to identify his body and take care of the funeral. She was left to fend for my two older siblings, mourning and under-resourced. About seven years later, she met my father, and I was born. When I was 3, he left our family to marry another woman.

Later, my mother's love for her oldest son compelled her to travel to the States a second time. She hadn't seen him since he moved to Orange County at age 14. When my brother learned she was going to leave me with my uncle, he insisted she bring me to keep the family together. Twenty-five years later, here I remain.

We moved into an apartment with my two uncles on Minnie Street in Santa Ana, California, once named the toughest city in the country in which to make ends meet. We faced challenging times. My mom hadn't been allowed to attend school past the second grade, so she worked mostly babysitting jobs. She wanted to give her children what she had missed: an education. Many times I wished my father had been there to help us financially. The child support was scarcely enough to meet our needs. But more than that, I was hungry for the warmth of a loving father who would protect us and ensure my mother didn't have to play the role of both parents.

A PROFOUND WOUND

As I entered junior high school, I excelled in math and dove into volleyball and basketball. I also joined the Early Academic Outreach Program (EAOP), CONTINUED ON PRECEDING PAGE

THE PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM AT GORDON-CONWELL PROVIDES A

FULL-TUITION SCHOLARSHIP

WWW.GORDONCONWELL.EDU/PARTNERSHIP

PHONE | 800.428.7329 EMAIL | ADMISSIONS@GCTS.EDU PROGRAMS | GORDONCONWELL.EDU/DEGREES

GORDON CONWELL

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HAMILTON ◆ BOSTON ◆ CHARLOTTE ◆ JACKSONVILLE

800.428.7329

Renewing MINDS

Integrating **top-tier** academics and Christian **faith**

In a friendly, close-knit learning community our students are challenged to grow intellectually and integrate their faith in every program of study.

Union faculty members are leaders in their fields who know their students by name. They invest in them through classroom teaching, mentoring and research collaboration. As a result, Union alumni excel in top graduate schools and in careers around the world.

Learn more about Union University's commitment to Christ-centered academic excellence. Visit us online or schedule a campus visit today.

uu.edu/welcome
JACKSON, TENNESSEE

UNION UNIVERSITY

EXCELLENCE-DRIVEN | CHRIST-CENTERED | PEOPLE-FOCUSED | FUTURE-DIRECTED