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Goals of the *Africanus Journal*

The *Africanus Journal* is an award-winning interdisciplinary biblical, theological, and practical journal of the Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME). Its goals are to promote:

- a. the mission and work of the members and mentors of the Africanus Guild Ph.D. Research Program of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston;
- b. the principles of the Africanus Guild (evangelical orthodox Christian men and women who are multicultural, multiracial, urban-oriented, studying a Bible without error in a cooperative way);
- c. Christian scholarship that reflects an evangelical perspective, as an affiliate of GCTS-Boston. This is an interdisciplinary journal that publishes high quality articles in areas such as biblical studies, theology, church history, religious research, case studies, and studies related to practical issues in urban ministry. Special issues are organized according to themes or topics that take seriously the contextual nature of ministry situated in the cultural, political, social, economic, and spiritual realities in the urban context.

Scholarly papers may be submitted normally by those who have or are in (or are reviewed by a professor in) a Th.M., D.Min., Ed.D., Th.D., ST.D., Ph.D., or equivalent degree program.

Two issues normally are published per year. <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/boston/africanusjournal>

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Life of Julius Africanus

Julius Africanus was probably born in Jerusalem, many scholars think around A.D. 200. Africanus was considered by the ancients as a man of consummate learning and sharpest judgment (*Ante-Nicene Fathers* 6:128). He was a pupil of Heracles, distinguished for philosophy and other Greek learning, in Alexandria, Egypt around A.D. 231–233. In A.D. 220/226, he performed some duty in behalf of Nicopolis (formerly Emmaus) in Palestine. Later he likely became bishop of Emmaus (Eusebius, *History*, VI.xxxi.2). Origen calls him “a beloved brother in God the Father, through Jesus Christ, His holy Child” (*Letter from Origen to Africanus* 1). Fellow historian Eusebius distinguishes him as “no ordinary historian” (*History*, I. vi.2). Eusebius describes the five books of *Chronologies* as a “monument of labor and accuracy” and cites extensively from his harmony of the evangelists’ genealogies (*History*, VI. xxxi. 1–3). Africanus was a careful historian who sought to defend the truth of the Bible. He is an ancient example of meticulous, detailed scholarship which is historical, biblical, truthful, and devout.

Even though Eusebius describes Africanus as the author of the *Kestoi*, Jerome makes no mention of this (*ANF* 6:124). The author of *Kestoi* is surnamed Sextus, probably a Libyan philosopher who arranged a library in the Pantheon at Rome for the Emperor. The *Kestoi* was probably written toward the end of the 200s. It was not written by a Christian since it contains magical incantations (*Oxyrhynchus Papyri* III.412).

The Greek text of Africanus’ writings may be found in Martinus Josephus Routh, *Reliquiae sacrae* II (New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1974 [1846]), 225–309, and Martin Wallraff, Umberto Roberto, Karl Pinggéra, eds., William Adler, trans., *Iulius Africanus Chronographiae: The Extant Fragments, Die Griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller* 15 (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007).

The extant writings of Julius Africanus may be found in vol. 1, no 1, April 2009 edition of the *Africanus Journal*.

Other Front Matter

Editorial team for the issue: Jennifer Creamer, J. Saemi Kim, Seong Park, Nicole Rim, John Runyon, Aída Besançon Spencer, William David Spencer

Resources

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Summary of Content

This issue has three articles on evangelism: its future and its global and local nature, and numerous reviews of books in the disciplines of Bible, theology, missions, history, ministry, and psychology.

THE AFRICANUS GUILD



L to R: Quonekuia Day, Mark Chuanhang Shan, Jennifer Creamer

“If not for the Africanus Guild, I would not even think of getting a Ph.D. and would not have had the chance to teach my own course at Gordon-Conwell, and be trained to be a Bible teacher, and for this I am most grateful.” –Benjamin Fung

Benjamin Fung’s Ph.D. was received from North-West University in South Africa 2017
Quonekuia Day and Mark Shan are Ph.D. candidates with London School of Theology.
Jennifer Creamer received her Ph.D. from North-West University in 2016.

The Africanus Guild is a support program set up to assist selective, underrepresented constituencies to pursue research Ph.D.s from North-West University and London School of Theology. The Guild is especially oriented to the multicultural, multiracial urban scene. Accepted students are mentored by a Gordon-Conwell faculty member. Candidates may complete the Th.M. at the Boston campus and then apply to the Guild.

GORDON  CONWELL
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Reflections on the Future of Evangelism¹

GARTH M. ROSELL

During the summer of 1983, it was my privilege to join with nearly five thousand evangelists from 133 countries for the first International Conference of Itinerant Evangelists. Held at the RAI Conference Center in Amsterdam (Holland), from July 12th through the 21st, this unusual gathering featured hundreds of carefully selected men and women who were “involved in evangelism at a grass roots level” from Asia (836), Africa (750), Latin America and the Caribbean (452), Europe (753), Oceania (106), North America (857) and the Middle East (87).² The purpose of the conference, as envisioned by Billy Graham (its primary sponsor), was to bring actual practitioners of evangelism together for fellowship, study, worship, prayer, mutual encouragement and the exchange of ideas and information. Under the guidance of Leighton Ford, who chaired the Program Committee, dozens of workshops on specialized topics were offered, materials on evangelism were distributed and plenary sessions for worship, celebration and prayer were scheduled. What impressed me most, however, were the evangelists themselves! Their contagious love for Jesus, their absolute certainty that God had called them to be evangelists, their determination to share the good news with a needy world and their willingness (if need be) to face persecution, hardship and even martyrdom for the sake of the gospel -- all of this touched me deeply.³

What I did not realize fully at the time, however, was the fact that at Amsterdam I was witnessing in microcosm the much larger changes that were already taking place in global Christianity. In his bestselling book *The Next Christendom*, Philip Jenkins called these changes a “revolution.” “We are currently living through one of the [most] transforming moments in the history of religion worldwide,” wrote Jenkins in 2002, as “the center of gravity in the Christian world” shifts “inexorably southward, to Africa, Asia, and Latin America.” The “era of Western Christianity has passed within our lifetimes,” Jenkins argued, “and the day of Southern Christianity is dawning. The fact of change itself is undeniable, it has happened, and will continue to happen.”⁴

Jenkins is not alone, of course, in making such an assessment. Andrew Walls, Mark Noll, Todd Johnson and a host of others have chronicled these important shifts in great detail and such publications as *The World Christian Encyclopedia* and the *Atlas of Global Christianity* have undergirded those claims with statistical evidence.⁵ Taken together, they present a powerful and persuasive argument.

Yet, in retrospect, these enormous changes should not have caught me without warning! The massive migrations of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries had flooded our burgeoning cities with people from around the globe and a world at war in the twentieth century had sent

1 This article is adapted from a presentation at the North American Symposium on Great Awakenings, held from May 29th to the 30th, 2015 at the Montreat Conference Center in Montreat, North Carolina.

2 Figures are from the “Records of the 1983 International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists (Amsterdam 83),” Wheaton College, The Billy Graham Center Archives, Collection 253. Amsterdam’s RAI Exhibition and Convention Centre, located near the RAI railway station, is one of the largest convention sites in the Netherlands.

3 A second and much larger International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists, with over eight thousand participants from 173 countries, was held in Amsterdam during the summer of 1986. Records of that gathering can be found at Wheaton College, The Billy Graham Center Archives, Collection 560.

4 Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 2-3.

5 See Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross, editors, *Atlas of Global Christianity: 1910-2010* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press, 2009); David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian and Todd M. Johnson, *World Christian Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001); Mark A. Noll, *The New Shape of World Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013); Andrew Walls, “Eusebius Tries Again: Reconceiving the Study of Christian History,” in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (2000).

America's own sons and daughters to places they could scarcely have imagined while growing up in the small towns that dotted the American landscape. Equally important, one could argue, was the cumulative impact of the thousands of faithful missionaries -- during the era that historian Kenneth Scott Latourette famously called the "Great Century" of missionary expansion. These remarkable missionaries showed their slides at countless church suppers, they wrote letters home from the field and they told fascinating stories around dinner tables when they were on furlough. How else can one explain the remarkable world vision that was imbedded so deeply in the youth movements of the 1940s or the worldwide urban crusades of the 1950s and down to our own times?

From its earliest years, in fact, Youth for Christ was known as "Youth for Christ, International" and its very first staff evangelist, Billy Graham -- the son of a dairy farmer from North Carolina -- was already setting his sights on a world far beyond our national shores. When my own evangelist father, Merv Rosell, expressed a desire to preach the gospel in Latin America while preaching on one occasion in the upper Midwest, an old Swedish friend tried to dissuade him with the comment, "Mervin, Minnesota is big enough for anyone!" But Dad and his circle of evangelist friends were having none of it. Writing in a letter from Birmingham, England in 1947, my father's good friend Billy Graham commented that he was already considering an evangelistic outreach in Africa and he invited Dad to join him. "You could preach [and] lead the singing," he suggested with tongue in cheek, "and I could take the collection!"⁶

Indeed, when the very first "Youth for Christ Congress for World Evangelization" was held in August of 1948 -- with a list of participants that reads a bit like a "Who's Who" of future evangelical Christian leadership -- Beatenberg (Switzerland) was selected as the site. The list of delegates at that important conference, representing forty-six nations and speaking eighteen different languages, met for twelve days of study, prayer and fellowship. "The burden of this conference," as the organizers phrased it, "is the final and complete evangelization of the entire world in our generation." We "are not here for a vacation," the participants were reminded, and "we are not here to trifle with time and opportunity." Rather, "the Holy Spirit has brought us together for prayer, for Bible study, for heart-searching, for waiting upon God. May it please [God] to give us a new and greater insight into the task of world evangelization and the means by which it can be accomplished NOW!"

"May we go from the alpine heights of Beatenberg into the world," the conference program materials continued, "conquering and to conquer. May it please God through this conference to do a new thing in our day -- the effects of which shall never die until we see [God] face to face!" So from 6:30 in the morning until 9:30 or 10:00 at night -- closing each day with a season for repentance, confession of sin, and personal consecration -- we will remain diligently at the task.⁷

The sense of urgency was palpable! Although I was not at that gathering in Beatenberg, I can certainly remember many other occasions as a young boy listening to my father and his evangelist friends -- sometimes around our dining room table -- expressing the same sense of overwhelming urgency along with a sense of wonder at what God seemed to be doing through Youth for Christ and other youth organizations during the 1940s. They were glad to be part of it, to be sure, but they also knew that they had not created it. As Billy Graham has often said: "If I take any credit for what God is doing, my lips will turn to clay."

Subsequent gatherings, planned and funded by the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), were held in places such as Montreux (1960), Berlin (1966), Lausanne (1974), Manila (1989) and Cape Town (2010). Not only did the focus of all these gatherings remain squarely on

⁶ Billy Graham to Merv Rosell (February 27, 1947) in the Papers of Mervin E. Rosell.

⁷ The quotations are taken from the seven-page program materials used by the author's father, Dr. Merv Rosell, when he attended the "Youth for Christ Congress for World Evangelization" held at the Beatenberg Bible School in Beatenberg, Switzerland from August 10-22, 1948. See also Garth M. Rosell, *The Surprising Work of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), pp. 124-125.

worldwide evangelization, but the documents they produced -- including The Lausanne Covenant (1974), the Manila Manifesto (1989) and the Cape Town Commitment (2010) -- clearly echoed that theme. And, as we are all aware, Billy Graham's own ministry has been conducted literally around the globe -- from Seoul, Korea to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.⁸

Consequently, as Mark Shaw has suggested in his fascinating book, *Global Awakening: How 20th-Century Revivals Triggered a Christian Revolution*, the Christian church -- while declining in parts of North America and Europe -- is growing by leaps and bounds in places like China, Brazil and sub-Saharan Africa.⁹ I was reminded of this when I had the honor of giving a brief greeting to a Conference of Chinese Seminarians -- numbering over one hundred and coming from fifteen or twenty different educational institutions across North America -- who had gathered on the Hamilton campus of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary to think about ways in which they might strengthen the rapidly growing church throughout China. These remarkable men and women, in the fullest sense of the term, represent the next generation of Christian leadership in that important part of the world. As I sat around the tables listening to them talk and pray, I sensed the same kind of urgency and wonder that I had overheard as a boy. If their prayers and strategic planning come to fruition, the future of Christianity in China is very bright indeed despite the enormous persecution under which they are currently living and working.¹⁰

It should not catch us unaware, moreover, to discover that the new leadership for world evangelization and the new centers of energy and influence in world evangelization are increasingly emerging from Asia, Africa and Latin America. The Korean church, as one example, is now the second largest supplier of Christian missionaries worldwide!

In my own city of Boston, what is being called a "quiet revival" has been underway for more than a generation. In their fascinating book, *The Cat and the Toaster: Living System Ministry in a Technological Age*, Urban Voice Series, Doug and Judy Hall -- founders of Emmanuel Gospel Center and friends who have ministered in the greater Boston area since the 1960s -- argue that Boston's "quiet revival" began in the 1960s among African-American and Puerto Rican Pentecostal congregations in the South End, and then spread to the Haitian, Brazilian, Chinese and Korean communities with dramatic results. Over a fifty year period, the Halls are now convinced, Boston has been experiencing the kind of genuine spiritual awakening that has not only significantly increased the number of congregations and overall church attendance throughout the city but has also had a profound impact on community development, education, missions and evangelism.¹¹

God is, after all, sovereign in evangelism -- as in all other spheres of life -- and God will build His church wherever, however and whenever He wills to do so. The call to evangelism, when it is genuine, must always come from above. While godly women and men can recognize and confirm the call, the commission to "do the work of an evangelist" must always come from God.¹² As Billy Graham phrased it in his address to those who gathered at Amsterdam: "One of the greatest needs today is for the church throughout the world to recognize and recover the legitimacy and importance of the gift of the evangelist."¹³

My own father, Merv Rosell, offers a striking illustration of these important principles. Sensing God's call to be an evangelist while he was still a teenager, he began to preach in churches -- large and small -- throughout the upper Midwest. With an obvious gift for communication, he was

8 For a listing of the places where Graham preached see *Just as I Am*, pp. 736-739.

9 Mark Shaw, *Global Awakening: How 20th-Century Revivals Triggered a Christian Revolution* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010).

10 The China Seminar Conference, North America 2015 sponsored by the Harold John Ockenga's Center for World Missions at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, May 25-29, 2015.

11 Douglas A. Hall and Judy Hall, *The Cat and the Toaster: Living System Ministry in a Technological Age*, Urban Voice Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2010), pp. xiii-xv.

12 See Eph. 4 and 2 Tim. 4.

13 Billy Graham, *A Biblical Standard for Evangelists* (Minneapolis: World Wide Publications, 1984).

welcomed by eager listeners in packed sanctuaries. Everyone, it seemed, wanted to hear the young phenom. But as the months passed, Dad became increasingly frustrated and in despair. “God called me to be an evangelist,” he had believed, “but all I seem to be doing is entertaining those who come to hear me. Where is the evidence of true repentance from sin and genuine transformation of life?” So falling on his face in what St. John of the Cross might have called a “dark night of the soul,” Dad pled with God to make clear whether his call to be an evangelist was genuine or simply his own misguided fantasy.

Soon after that night of wrestling with God, he again found himself behind the pulpit with an eager audience before him. But as he began his sermon, he sensed that something was radically different. His facility with words seemed to have vanished. The easy flow of his message had been replaced by garbled sentences and disjointed thoughts. Surely God was giving him the answer he had sought, he thought to himself, so in the middle of his sermon, he abruptly stopped preaching and readied himself to walk out the door to find what God really wanted him to do. But then something amazing began to happen. People from all over the sanctuary began to rise from their seats and make their way forward, with tears in their eyes, to kneel at the altar in repentance. Soon the front of the sanctuary was filled. God had given my father the answer he sought but He had also taught him an even more important lesson: namely, that it is only by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ’s atoning work on the cross, that anyone is truly forgiven and restored. The forgiveness of sins is God’s work -- not ours -- however gifted we might be. During his sixty years of ministry, until his death at the age of 89, Dad never forgot that lesson. God gave him the privilege of preaching to enormous crowds both at home and abroad, and tens of thousands made their way to the altar, but Dad never forgot that he was simply the messenger and that God alone was the One Who produced the results.

Well, you might be asking, what does all this have to do with the future of evangelism? Well, actually quite a lot, I would suggest! For the clues to where evangelism is heading, I am convinced, can be found in gatherings such as Amsterdam ‘83 and in experiences such as the one that confirmed my father’s call to be an evangelist. Some years would pass, I must admit, before I began to understand some of the important implications of what I was privileged to witness at Amsterdam and to hear in conversations with my father: namely, (a) that across the centuries of Christian history, God has been pleased to call women and men, from every tribe, tongue and nation, to do the work of an evangelist and that He will undoubtedly continue to do so until Christ returns; (b) that Christ will continue to build His church among every people group in every corner of this troubled globe and the very “gates of hell will not prevail against it”; (c) that these faithful evangelists will face enormous new challenges and many obstacles as they seek to spread the gospel in an increasingly hostile world; and (d) that those who seek to do the work in their own strength will surely fail but that those who discover the joy of giving all the glory and honor to God will hear the Master say “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

As the North American Symposium on Great Awakenings at Montreat, North Carolina, at which this paper was first presented, focused much needed attention on spiritual awakenings. Like many participants at the conference, I was impressed again and again throughout the conference by the intimate relationship that seems to exist between revival (the renewal of God’s people), reform (the impact of that renewal on culture) and evangelism (the proclamation of “Good News” by both word and deed).

These three words are connected at the hip, so to speak, and one does not make full biblical sense without the others. I first began to discover that important set of connections during my student days at Princeton Theological Seminary while working with Professor Lefferts A. Loetscher, a wise and gentle historian. Among the many books that he assigned for me to read was Timothy L. Smith’s *Revivalism and Social Reform*. That book literally revolutionized my thinking -- so much so that I wrote to Professor Smith and asked if he would take me on as a doctoral student.

To my delight, he agreed to do so and eventually became not only my doctoral mentor but also my treasured friend.

Smith's argument in the book is deceptively simple: namely, that America's mid-nineteenth century religious revivals, reinforced by a passionate quest for personal and corporate holiness, unleashed a flood of evangelical social activity, mobilizing tens of thousands of new recruits for the battles against slavery, poverty and greed. Far from abandoning their longstanding commitment to sound theology, biblical authority, personal holiness and the missionary mandate, these nineteenth century evangelicals believed it was precisely because of those commitments that they were obligated, to borrow the words of the Prophet Micah, to "act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with their God" (6:8).

Their love for the Bible, to phrase it another way, with its repeated instructions to care for the poor, to be honest in business dealings, to look after widows and orphans, and to treat one's neighbor as one might wish to be treated that made so many evangelical Christians willing to risk life and fortune to fight injustice, to care for the needy, to reform prisons and to rid the nation of the scourge of slavery.

This is why, in short, spiritual awakenings are so vitally important. Indeed, I would suggest, only a spiritually healthy and spiritually awakening church can produce lasting social reform and evangelistic outreach. And how can spiritually moribund churches be awakened? Quite simply, by following the instructions in II Chronicles 7:14 to repent of our sins, to join with other believers in united, believing prayer and by continuing faithfully to teach and practice the principles found in Holy Scripture.

Well, to come back to the central question with which we began, what will evangelism look like in the future? While no one can predict the future with certainty, I think we can be quite sure that evangelism at its core will remain -- as D. T. Niles phrased it so eloquently -- simply "one beggar showing another beggar where he found bread."¹⁴

An even more powerful example comes from John's account of Jesus at the well in chapter 4 of his gospel. While traveling from Jerusalem to the Galilee, as you will recall from John's amazing account, Jesus passed through Samaria and stopped around noon at Jacob's well in Sychar. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water at the well, Jesus asked her for a drink. But "you are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman," she responded. "How can you ask me for a drink?" -- since Jews do not associate with Samaritans, and Jewish men do not converse with Samaritan women, and Jewish men most certainly do not drink from the cup of a Samaritan woman! But Jesus simply responded: "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." And so it was, we are told, that "many of the Samaritans from that town believed in [Christ] because of the woman's testimony. 'He told me everything I ever did.' So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers" (NIV). Here we have cross-cultural evangelism at its very best!

Those who are students of Christian history may already have noticed the haunting similarities between what I have been trying to describe about the world that is emerging in our own time, on the one hand, and the world that confronted the early Christians, on the other. In our world, it seems clear that the persecution of Christians is on the rise. For the early Christians, likewise, the world often seemed inhospitable and sometimes hostile. The martyrdoms of saints like Ignatius, Perpetua and Polycarp -- simply for the crime of refusing to worship the civic and ceremonial gods -- are striking reminders of the cost of discipleship in any era.¹⁵

14 D. T. Niles quoted in the *New York Times* (May 11, 1986).

15 See Bryan M. Litfin, *Early Christian Martyr Stories* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014); Joyce E. Salisbury, *Perpetua's Passion* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Candida Moss, *The Myth of Persecution* (New York: HarperOne, 2013);

Yet, the young church continued to grow -- from a handful in the first half of the first century, if we accept the figures of sociologist Rodney Stark, to nearly 34 million -- representing over half of the Roman Empire's population -- only three centuries later.¹⁶ And the Roman Empire was only a part of a much larger story. Christ's commission to his followers, as we find it recorded in Matthew 28, was to "go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" and to teach them "to obey everything I have commanded you" for "surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

And that is exactly what they did. From Jerusalem, where the church was planted at Pentecost, Christian missionaries and evangelists traveled East into Persia and India and parts of Asia; and they traveled South into Africa and they moved North into Syria and West into the very heart of the Roman Empire. Christianity, in short, was a global faith from its earliest years and it remained a global presence for nearly a thousand years! The notion that Christianity has always been largely a western religion -- confined essentially within the boundaries of the Roman Empire -- can no longer be sustained. Indeed, the recent scholarship produced by Todd Johnson, Sandra Kim, Samuel Moffett, Philip Jenkins, Andrew Walls and others tell quite a different story. See for example Philip Jenkins' recent book, *The Lost History of Christianity: The Thousand-Year Golden Age of the Church in the Middle East, Africa and Asia -- and How It Died*.¹⁷

It is true, of course, that the Christian presence -- while remaining dominant in parts of Europe -- did recede dramatically in places like North Africa, the Middle East and Asia Minor in the face of Islamic advance and the erosion of spiritual vitality. Yet for centuries -- perhaps even a millennium -- it had remained a genuinely global presence and it is reestablishing itself yet again in our own times and claiming the allegiance of nearly a third of the world's population. It is growing so rapidly in parts of Asia and Africa that the "center of gravity" of the world Christian population, as the Center for the Study of Global Christianity has demonstrated, has now shifted from Europe down into Africa.

Not everyone, of course, has welcomed this growth. Some worry that our evangelists and missionaries are proclaiming a gospel with far too much cultural baggage. Others are concerned that our methods are too prone to manipulation, too individualistic, too exclusivistic and too consumer-oriented. Still others are convinced that evangelism itself is "out of date," irrelevant, or, perhaps, even dangerous in our increasingly pluralistic world. There is wisdom, of course, in weighing these and other criticisms carefully for there is much to learn from our critics.

Yet, Christ's commission to his followers has never been rescinded and his call to "do the work of an evangelist" has never been cancelled. The early Christians certainly took Christ's great commission to heart and they used an astoundingly wide range of methods -- from preaching, teaching and house to house visitation to writing and personal testimonies. "In these first two centuries or so of the Church's existence," wrote Michael Green in his fascinating study of evangelism in the Early Church, "we find many faults, much that dishonors the name they professed. But we also find an evangelistic zeal and effort, exerted by the whole broad spectrum of the Christian community to bring other people to the feet of their ascended Lord and into the fellowship of his willing servants. This is a permanent reminder," Green concluded, "of the Church's first priority. Evangelism was the very life blood of the early Christians: and so we find that 'day by day the Lord added to their number those whom he was saving.' It could happen

and W. H. C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984); Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989).

16 Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997), see growth chart on p. 7.

17 Philip Jenkins, *The Lost History of Christianity* (New York: HarperOne, 2008); Todd Johnson and Sandra Kim, "The Changing Demographics of World Christianity," *The International Bulletin of Missionary Research* (April 2005); and Andrew Walls, "Eusebius Tries Again: Reconceiving the Study of Christian History," *The Bulletin of Missionary Research* (2000).

again, if the Church were prepared to pay the price.”¹⁸

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18 Michael Green, *Evangelism in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1985), p. 280. See also Michael Green, *Thirty Years that Changed the World: The Book of Acts for Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004).



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Saints Together . . . A Global Vision[†]

WOODROW E. WALTON

Embedded within Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth are four otherwise missed comments which are worth consideration for understanding both the nature and the life of the church. First of all are the two words "Saints together." The second explains in part the first two: "with all those . . ." The third amplifies the other part: "who in every place . . ." In other words the Church, that is, Christ's called out people, is not just in Corinth or in one particular congregant assembly, it includes "those others, not just us;" and expands outward, including "who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours" (1 Cor 1:2, NRSV). Notice the ending "both their Lord and ours."

Christena Cleveland in her insightful yet delightful book *Disunity in Christ* humorously takes issue with the "we" and "those" mentality which metamorphoses into the "us" and "them" frame of mind-- "those other Christians who are not quite like us."² "Categorizing pollutes our interactions with others."³

It is my purpose to draw out the implications of these small comments on the nature of the church as "Saints Together." The communion of saints is not just "us together," it also includes Christians whom we call "those others." The communion of saints is also in every place on the globe. It is a global community of saints because those others also call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul ends his greeting with acknowledging that Jesus the Christ is "both their Lord and ours (I Cor. 1:2)." In this article I will deal with the problems of parochialism, geographic ownership, and possessiveness which sometimes plague the Body of Christ from realizing its essential unity in Christ Jesus.

In our present world situation, the Christian Church appears to be regarded by those across much of Asia and northern Africa as Western. In reality, the church began in the Near East and extended into the upper Mesopotamian valleys, over the mountains into Elam, thence to Persia, before expanding westward into Europe. The Church also expanded northward from Jerusalem to Antioch in southeastern Turkey only to turn westward and northward, entering Europe through Greece and the Balkans, eventually reaching Rome, Spain (*Hispania*) and Portugal (Lusitania). To people of the New Testament period, "the ends of the earth," *ultimum terrae* (Latin) or *eschatou tes ges* (Greek), began at Gibraltar. From its very beginnings, the Church was a global reality, extending north and south, east and west, and every which way. Wherever the gospel of Jesus, the Christ of God, is preached, there is the Church. Wherever there are those who call upon the name of the Lord Jesus, there is the Church.

The early Apostolic Father, Ignatius of Antioch, in A.D. 112 wrote a letter to Christians in Smyrna in which he wrote that, "wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic church" (*To the Smyrnaens*, ch. III, 8.2). His reference is not to an organized church. At that time the term "catholic" referred to what was global or universal. We are saints together wherever we are found, wherever we may be, and under whatever condition. As Mark Dever states in his article, "We All Should be Catholic," appearing in the May 2014 issue of *Christianity Today*: "What unites us as saints must always be stressed rather than the things that distinguish one from the other."⁴ The opening words of the Nicene Creed: "We believe in one holy and catholic and apostolic Church,"

1 This essay was first presented at the Other Voices in Interpretation Study Group at the national meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Nov. 20, 2014 in San Diego, CA.

2 Christena Cleveland, *Disunity in Christ: Uncovering the Hidden Forces That Keep Us Apart* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 66-76.

3 Cleveland, *Disunity*, 66.

4 Mark Dever, "We All Should be Catholic," *Christianity Today*, May 2014: 43-45.

were confirmed by bishops from areas as diverse as York in England to Edessa in Kurdistan and Nisibis near the Caspian Sea. “What shall we say about ourselves, the new race of Christians whom Christ has raised up in all cities and all countries by His own coming? We are all called Christians, by the one name of Christ, wherever we may be found. On the day of Sunday we come together, and on the appointed days we fast . . .” wrote Bardaisan (A.D. 154-222), the Persian Christian of Edessa, who lived between A.D. 154 and 222. This comment was preserved in an ancient Syriac document of uncertain origin.

In the anonymously written Epistle to Diognetus V (A.D. 130), the writer states, “For the Christians are distinguished from other men neither by country, nor language, nor the customs which they observe.” The writer continues, “For they neither inhabit cities of their own, nor employ a peculiar form of speech, nor lead a life which is marked out by any singularity.”⁵

One of the major points from these citations is that “church” designates a people, not an institutionalized organization such as the Roman Catholic Church or a voluntary association as Cumberland Presbyterian or Assemblies of God. Another of the major points is that “church” designates a way of living, not a way of worship, whether formal or informal, liturgical or non-liturgical. Still another major point is that “church” designates a calling, a vocation, not a closed fellowship of like-minded individuals. “Church” designates a single devotion, a fealty to Jesus, the Christ of God. One cannot join the church as one joins a civic organization; one is joined to Christ Jesus who integrates a person into the community of believers, the called out (*ekklesia*).

One of the best writings on the life of the Church was Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *Life Together*, written prior to 1945, the year of his death, but not published until 1954 by Harper & Row.⁶ The Church was called into existence by Jesus with his calling of his disciples and given a calling, a vocation. It is a life together with others in a shared ministry and vocation. There are times alone, but the times alone are what bonds us together. “Only as we are within the fellowship can we be alone,” writes Bonhoeffer, “and only he that is alone can live in the fellowship.”⁷ A person at comfort with one’s self in solitude is at comfort with others.

Life together within a community of faith in Christ is not simply one of socialization or comradeships, but one intended for the carrying out a shared mission. Believers draw together that they may, in strength, go out to bear witness to Christ Jesus. This is another issue: the saints are called to bear witness to the Christ, Jesus, whose they are. They are not to promote themselves. Who Jesus is and what He has done is the mission. That mission extends outward not only in bearing the good news, but also in compassion toward those who hurt. These are not two different things, but the two sides of one given mission.

The unity of the Church is in the shared mission: the witness to the Christ. What is really striking is that this shared mission is more apparent in our hymnbooks than anywhere else. There is hardly a hymnbook that does not have Charles Wesley’s “Love Divine, All Love Excelling,” a Methodist hymn; Augustus’ Toplady’s “Rock of Ages Cleft for Me,” a Reformed one; Martin Luther’s “A Mighty Fortress is our God,” a Lutheran one; “O Come, O Come Immanuel,” a Roman Catholic one; “Alas! And did My Savior Bleed,” an Anglican one; and the Eastern Orthodox “Day of Resurrection,” written by John of Damascus in the eighth century and translated out of the Greek in 1836 by Henry Smith, then incorporated within the Reformed Church in America’s Hymnbook: “Rejoice in the Lord.” Quite a shock, isn’t it? What is it that we are to be about? Is it not Jesus??

⁵ *Epistle to Diognetus V* [A.D. 130], trans. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds. American Reprint of the Edinburgh Edition, revised and chronologically arranged with brief prefaces and occasional notes by A. Cleveland Cox. Vol. I: *The Apostolic Fathers: Justin-Irenaeus* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1926), 25-30.

⁶ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York: Harper & Row, 1954). Originally published in Germany under the title of *Gemeinsames Leben*.

⁷ Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York: HarperCollins, 1990 Reprint), 77.

Sometimes, however, when confessional issues take central place, the person of Jesus is sidetracked and problems arise within the Church's mission. Each person comes to Jesus out of sin through his/her own life experiences. Peter the Apostle, the Apostle John, and Saint Paul, each powerful men after Jesus finished with them, were still distinct from each other in their witness to Christ Jesus. What is it about us that, when we make disciples of Christ, we do so after our own personal experience of Him?

There is another aspect of the nature of the Church which is seldom addressed or approached, but is implicit in Ephesians 1-3, the Church's presence across the annals of time. One can almost speak of the eternal nature of the Church, but not quite, for it is more of a durative one. Ephesians 2:7 reads "that in the ages to come... He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus." There Peter observed the fulfillment of Joel's vision of the future: "and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, ..." (Acts 2:17). Jesus also had a linear vision of the Church in his "High Priestly prayer" in John 17:20-26 when He prayed for those yet to come in succeeding years.

So, what are some very important implications of how what has already been said works out on the practical level? Christian theology, particularly when it comes to the nature of the Church, cannot be allowed to remain on an academic plain. When St. Paul writes to the Christians in Corinth and tells them that they are Saints together with all those who in all places call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, he is not referring to separate congregations in separate localities. "Paul writes," says Ambrosiaster in the fourth century, "to the church as a whole, because at that time leaders had not yet been appointed for individual churches."⁸ Regardless of Ambrosiaster's accuracy, the Church is global, not parochial. It is not the sum total of the number of church buildings as there were no church buildings until about A.D.200 (and many do not have them today). It was also heterogeneous, composed of many different people groups, racially, ethnically, and socially and organized lineally with Christ Jesus.

Today, Christians in China, Syria, Nigeria, Argentina, Indonesia and elsewhere comprise the Church. They have a common vocation. That vocation is one of making an impact upon the world through the spreading of God's mission upon the earth, reconciling all people to God. The Church is a living organism, not a paper corporation, and it is not simply one more of too many competing organizations seeking one's allegiance. In the words of an ancient Christian, the Church is a people without a city, without a country, without a citizenship, but whose allegiance is to one who has called it out to be a colony of heaven on earth, much as the Roman military post existed within the Macedonian city of Philippi. We are where we are in order to leave an imprint. Our citizenship is in heaven. Our orders come from there and from nowhere else. Matthew 16:18 records Jesus saying "on this rock I will build My church." This is the lineal aspect of the Church. Christ himself has ownership. He is the one who has our supreme loyalty without respect to time and place. It is not to Pope Francis, the Archbishop of Canterbury, or one of the Patriarchs of the Eastern Christian "bodies," or any of the popular pastors of the West, but Jesus the Christ before whom we all bow together. The "chief shepherd" is Jesus as First Peter 5:4 declares. Accountability is important but it begins and ends with Jesus as He is the head of the Church. Another aspect of the lineal measure of the Church is that of cohesion. All aspects of the Church's life coheres in Jesus. Cohesion is critical among all believers who recognize Jesus's ultimate authority over his Church. Cohesion also offers a protection against any pretension of autonomy both from within a single congregation or within the totality of the Church.

Autonomy has been a plague from the beginnings of the Church as indicated in the short letter of Third John. It can come in different guises. There is the minister who recognizes accountability

⁸ Ambrosiaster, "Commentary on 1 Corinthians" in *Ancient Christian Texts: Commentaries on Romans and 1-2 Corinthians*, translated and edited by Gerald L. Bray; Series Editors, Thomas C. Oden and Gerald L. Bray (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2009), 120.

to no one but Christ. Such a one becomes a loose cannon. Individual local congregations within Congregational associations are also susceptible to going off on their own, disregarding the life and authority of the association, believing itself more in line with what the Lord wants of them than is the association. This works both ways. Christ is indeed Lord of their congregation, but he is Lord over the entire gathering as well not just that one lone individual congregation. We are called to be saints together, not loose weapons going off “half-cocked” in different directions.

Before going on to the lateral and spatial nature of the church wherein a lot of problems reside, the linear needs to be addressed here. The Christian Church has a history and a future besides the present. What I am referring to here is not the historicity of Jesus and the historicity of the Resurrection. What I am critiquing is the lack within memberships of various congregations of any historical sense of the ongoing witness to the Gospel of the Christ, Jesus, from the days of John, who wrote down *The Revelation of Christ Jesus* on the island of Patmos, around A.D. 90 right to the present. I would judge that most church members in our congregations are ignorant of the Church’s first thousand years and its subsequent one thousand sixteen plus. The early Church won out, over those years, because it had not only a sense of its past but also of its future. It is its testimony to an ever-present presence, Jesus’s. Unless the Church under its ministers, pastors, educators, and teachers deals with its past, present, and future, their congregants will become a people without memory and without a vision of their future. They will have little sense of what they are here for in terms of their mission. The linear nature of the Church is very often overlooked. If ignored, loss of historical memory can lead to a demise of either a congregation or its denominational affiliation. Memory is critical to its sense of mission, not just its missions.

In one respect, this loss of memory, particularly among Protestants, has led to the present problem of disunity among believers. What glues Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox together as saints together are the key phrases of the Nicene Creed of A.D. 381 (the Constantinopolitan Creed): [1] We believe in One God, [2] We believe in One Lord Jesus Christ, crucified and rose again, [3] We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, [5] We believe in one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. This was before there was any such thing as a Roman Catholic Church; “holy” meaning given and possessed by God, “catholic” meaning universal not just local, and “apostolic” referring to its sent-out task of evangelism, teaching, and compassionate outreach in an otherwise cruel and dying world. This is all the more reason, there is dire need of overcoming any kind of present disunity.

Hopeful signs have appeared within recent years, and even before. In 1952, the Willigen meeting of the International Missionary Council located the missionary enterprise within the nature of God rather than in the activity of the Church. God’s mission defined the Church’s vocation: “outreach,” as Jesus commanded in Mark 16:15, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel...” Willigen’s message has affected the Catholic and Orthodox, Pentecostal, Protestant bodies, and evangelical Protestants outside of the Pentecostal renewals.

In 1974, the International Congress on World Evangelization was held at Lausanne, Switzerland, with John R.W. Stott of England and Billy Graham of the United States of America as significant figures. Divides began to crumble. They crumbled more when Peter John Neuhaus crossed over from being a Lutheran minister to being a Roman Catholic and therewith wrote his significant book *The Naked Public Square* which initiated the Institute on Religion and Public Life and a periodical entitled *First Things*. Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox contributors were invited. Other walls fell when it was discovered that we were, after all, saints together. This did not mean disunity was not still there. There were still residual suspicions.

When the Evangelical Theological Society was formed another dividing wall crumbled and Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal Evangelicals began conversing together about their common grounds of faith in Christ and the inerrancy of the Scriptures. It brought together also the liturgical Lutherans and non-liturgical Baptists, dispensational and non-dispensational groups, Adventists

and Mennonites.

There were other signs along the way, from the formation of Young Life for teens under Jim Rayburn, the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, Campus Crusade for Christ, and the Urbana Crusades. Nothing lowered the walls more effectively, however, than the Billy Graham Crusades. In more recent years, Henry Patrick Reardon, S.M. Hutchins, and others formed the Fellowship of Saint James, which initiated Touchstone, a Christian journal, conservative in doctrine and eclectic in its content, with readers and editors from each of the three branches of the Christian family tree—Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox. Reardon himself pastors an Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church in the Chicago area.

Probably the most newsworthy event was the elevation of Francis I, an Argentine Jesuit, to the Roman Catholic Papacy, and his openness to fellow believers in Jesus, be they Protestant or Orthodox. On June 24, 2014, Pope Francis met with Texas Pentecostal-Charismatic ministers Kenneth Copeland and James Robison at the Vatican. Together, “they agreed that all Catholics and Protestants need to come to know Jesus personally.”⁹ They also agreed with the Pope’s focus on the poor.

In the August/ September 2014 issue of *First Things*, Peter J. Leithart, president of Trinity House, Birmingham, Alabama, and an adjunct senior fellow at New St. Andrew College, wrote an article on “The Future of Protestantism” in which he proposed that the churches “must die to be raised anew.”¹⁰ He listed sixteen changes that he, as a Protestant believer, felt needed to take place for “the sake of the future Church.” His list covered two columns, one on page 25 of *First Things* and one column on page 26. Leithart explained that “Christianity and future are synonymous. If Protestant churches must die, they die in faith that they will be raised new, more radiant with glory than ever. For the Creator who said in the fifth and ninth and sixteenth centuries ‘It is good’ will not finish his work until we come to the final Sabbath, where everything will, once and for all, be very, very good.”¹¹

The future of the Church and its mission mandate are joined within its eschatological vision. In 1977, three years after the Lausanne Covenant, Jurgen Moltmann, in his book *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, commented that “the apostolic succession is, in fact and in truth, the evangelical succession, the continuing and unadulterated proclamation of the gospel of the risen Christ.”¹² For both Moltmann and Hans Kung, the apostolic succession is not in the successive laying on of hands from the apostles to now, but in the successive proclamation of the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus. In his 1967 work, *The Church*, Kung wrote, “as direct witnesses and messengers of the risen Lord, the apostles can have no successors. No further apostles were called... what remains is a task and a commission. The apostolic commission is not finished, but will remain to the end of time. The apostolic task is not completed; it embraces all peoples to the ends of the earth.”¹³

Kung is Dutch, Roman Catholic and writes like an evangelical Protestant. For him, “apostolic” designates the Church’s commission as well as its foundation. Far too often among evangelical Protestants the words “apostolic” and “catholic” stand in antithesis to the preaching of the gospel when in reality they designate the commission given to the apostles and the universality of the Church. We are “saints together,” though we come from all parts of the globe.

This raises the next concern, allowing the language of faith and the terms we use in expressing our faith in Christ Jesus stand in the way of being saints together. We are held together by the Lord, Christ Jesus, whether we be Roman Catholic, Church of the East, Syrian Jacobite, Coptic, or

9 News brief, *Christian Century*, August 6, 2014: 13.

10 Peter J. Leithart, “The Future of Protestantism,” *First Things*, August/September 2014: 23.

11 Ibid. 27.

12 Jurgen Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, translated by Margaret Kohl (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 358.

13 Hans Kung, *The Church*, translated by Ray and Rosaleen Ockenden (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1967), 355.

Protestant, Armenian, or Serbian Orthodox, but you would not know it by the language of faith which is expressed in confessional statements and the language of worship, whether liturgical or non-liturgical. This is the biggest hurdle for some people. Personally, I relate to the liturgical as well as I do to the participatory, non-liturgical worship of the Pentecostals. There is a yet bigger hurdle than the language of faith, worship and theological reflection. That biggest hurdle is what passes our lips from the pulpit, the pew, and what amounts to opinionated impression of each and every one of us “saints” so as to amount to “saints not all together.” I consider any statement made from the pulpit that compares or contrasts between me and another minister a breach of Christian ethics. There are also published works contrasting what is called Calvinism on one side and Arminianism on the other. Augustus Toplady, the hymnwriter of “Rock of Ages Cleft for Me,” and John and Charles Wesley, the latter being the lyricist of “Love Divine,” were on opposite sides of the Arminian-Calvinist issue, yet both of their hymns are in every Christian hymnbook from Presbyterian to Methodist to Pentecostal. One of our biggest problems within Protestant ranks is that we have an either-or mentality which reduces everything down to one or the other; and either side decides the other is wrong. It is a disease that has been passed down from the days of the Marburg Colloquy when the major Reformers could not come to a meeting of the minds as to the meaning of Jesus’ words at his last supper with his disciples. What should bring all hearts together has been a thorn that has prickled the Protestant and Reformed side of the Christian family tree. Our language is our biggest hurdle. There is a way out of this without damaging unity and personal conviction.

I believe it is not a communication problem *per se*. We understand and communicate only too well. It is more oratorical, convictional, and inferential. It is oratorical in that it comes mostly from lectern, pulpit, or podium. Lectern suggests a reading or teaching; pulpit, the sermon or message; and podium, a debater’s or public speaker’s stand. It is convictional when we speak from a position or conviction of which we are absolutely certain harbors no error. It is inferential when we infer from another person a position which is different from what is actually being conveyed so that we take offence. All three can be traced to what is deeply felt within our life experience of coming to faith in Christ and expecting others to have traveled the same identical road.

The truth is that we are all different and we have come to Christ from having traveled down different paths before coming into that faith relationship. What occurs is that each of us has a distinctive faith language which governs our prayer life and worship experience, whether private or public. It also affects how we interpret our conversion experience out of sin into the rest of faith occasioned by God’s grace through Jesus, who died in our place. We cannot deny that which brought us to that reconciliation with God. The deeper this is felt, the greater the cleavage may occur when faced with what may appear to be opposite from what any one of us has faced. The greater the experience of overpowering grace from God, the greater the chance of my becoming Reformed in my theological mooring, and a modern-day descendent of St. Augustine of Hippo.

When one considers the lives of Peter, John, Paul, Matthew, and of Mary Magdalene running back to tell the apostles, “He’s alive!” and their consequent lives, one can see different threads unraveling and re-threading and affecting their ministries. One would do well to reconsider Paul’s visit with Peter in Jerusalem, after Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus and an undisclosed period of time in Arabia and then back in Damascus. He writes in Galatians 1:18-20 of spending fifteen days with Peter and also with James, the Lord’s brother. In Galatians 2:9, he tells of being with James, Peter, and John with the right hand of fellowship extended to him and Barnabas.

The same can be repeated today by extending the hand of fellowship to those whose stories of conversion and modes of consequent ministry, gospel preaching, and life in Christ differ. We are saints together in a “panhistorical, pancultural”¹⁴ body of Christ. We have no business questioning

14 Robbie F. Castleman’s terminology in *Story-Shaped Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 15.

another person's story of conversion and his or her theological mooring. There is a place for give and take on positions taken. Tim Muehlhoff has recently produced a book on steering difficult conversations where differences are concerned. It is entitled *I Beg to Differ: Navigating Difficult Conversations with Truth and Love*.¹⁵ Before you differ with any one, question his or her belief, first "bite your tongue" and then ask how he or she came to the position taken. Muehlhoff suggests "begging to differ" and proceeding to tell your own story and how you came to your stand on different matters of Christian belief. Better that than end up as theological opponents.

The same applies to the liturgical-non liturgical issues relating to the form one's worship takes. One of the examples is that of the music issue: contemporary, gospel hymns, worship, praise, choral, full-choirs, organs, guitars, drums, anthems, acapella singing or musical accompaniment. How about the use of liturgical prayers as found in the *Book of Common Prayer*, *Book of Common Worship*, or *The Lutheran Book of Worship*? In the vast family of Christians, worship runs from the Roman Catholic Mass and to the Orthodox use of litanies to the Pentecostal Participatory non-formality.

In Orthodoxy the essence of worship "is the remission of sins and the 'sanctification' of the faithful."¹⁶ The dominant litanies are the Litany of St. James and the Litany of St. John Chrysostom. All litanies begin with the *trisagion*: "Holy, Holy, Holy." The worship of God the Father in the person of His Son, Christ Jesus, through the grace of the Holy Spirit accomplishes this expectation in the worship. One comes to worship, not to receive. Scripture is woven throughout the whole order of worship.

Admittedly, some Christians may feel out of place because of the ornateness of the worship. I find such worship majestic, yet I am also moved by the Pentecostal free style. We have no business to object to the variant forms of worship as the Lord Jesus is lifted up in song, prayer, and affirmation. We are saints together regardless of time and space, place, governance, or where we come out theologically and creedally as long as the apostolic consensus of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed of A.D. 381 is there. It is lineal as Christ is both the head and the foundation. It is linear as it is historical with a past and a vision into the future when Christ has overcome all pretenders. It is apostolic as there is a mission mandate. It is inter-confessional whereby all confessions confess that Jesus is Christ, Lord of Lord, and King of Kings.

In the dome of the Church of Holy Wisdom in Istanbul, Turkey, on the Constantinople side of that city, is a mosaic of Christ with arms extended outward. Even the Turkish conquerors had no way of eradicating its proclamation: *Christos Pantokrator: "Christ ruler over all."*

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¹⁵ Tim Muehlhoff, *I Beg to Differ: Navigating Difficult Conversations with Truth and Love* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014).

¹⁶ Geoffrey Wainwright and Karen B. Westerfield Tucker, eds., *The Oxford History of Christian Worship* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2008), 274.

The Need to Take World Missions Local in America¹

ANTOINE BREWSTER

Introduction

Beginning historically in the twentieth century, the United States has become a country known for sending missionaries to other nations. This became associated primarily with evangelicalism (drawing from many denominations) which some say has its foundation in earlier movements such as the Great Awakening. Garth M. Rosell writes in *The Surprising Work of God* that “one of the most distinctive features of evangelicalism has been its passion for world evangelization.”² Though Christianity has reached to the farther ends of the world in the twentieth century alone, it seems that the postmodern era has had an eroding effect on American culture and its view on Christianity. This article will explore the history of United States Christianity and its recent shifts. My conviction is that America needs 1) local missionaries to take the helm of the unchurched in the urban as well as the suburban populous and 2) the need for church planters to plant churches in unchurched areas. We need not be discouraged by postmodern United States.

Post-Christian America

Before we begin, it would be helpful to consider the challenge of postmodernism as it blocks the fulfilling of this need. The thought of a post-Christian America can only be defined in terms of what postmodern America has looked like since its inception in the 1960s. Postmodernism is in itself a “movement away from modernism because it rejects human reasoning as an invincible avenue to truth. This new approach to reality assumes that the human mind is *incapable* of apprehending truth in any absolute sense.”³ Whereas modernism regarded the power of humanity in itself to define truth apart from God in various mediums, postmodernism took the next radical step of questioning what is truth itself. Jesus says of Himself in John 14:6, “I am the way and the truth and the life.”⁴ Postmodernism disagrees with Jesus being the absolute truth saying that such an absolute cannot be defined.

The main tenets of this viewpoint are 1) *moral relativism* which says one can create one’s own truth as guide and evidence of how one lives and moves, 2) *religious pluralism* claiming multiple paths exist to what is truth and who is God, and 3) *choosing experience over faith or belief* as one’s authority. To define postmodernism loosely, it is a thought system that says one may do whatever one wants to do for whatever reason one pleases while accepting the same from others. It teaches tolerance as acceptable, disagreement as intolerance. Today, this worldview is permeating American culture and even affecting Christianity.

According to Operationworld.com, 28.9 percent of all Americans consider themselves to be “evangelical” among 77.62 percent of a nation that professes to be “Christian.”⁵ The Pew Forum has the number of “evangelicals” at 26.3 percent with historically black churches at 6.9 percent and mainline protestant churches at 18.1 percent of the population.⁶

The Pew Forum has a research survey on America’s religious landscape, breaking down church

1 This article was originally written for Dr. Bobby Bose, The World Mission of the Church, July 28, 2014, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston Campus.

2 Garth M. Rosell, *The Surprising Work of God: Harold John Ockenga, Billy Graham, and the Rebirth of Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 21.

3 Dan Story, *Christianity on the Offense: Responding to the Beliefs and Assumptions of Spiritual Seekers* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998), 157.

4 All Bible quotations are from the NIV 2011.

5 <http://www.operationworld.org/>, accessed 26 July 2014.

6 “Portrait and Demographics of United States Religious Affiliation: Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life,” <http://religions.pewforum.org/affiliations>, accessed 26 July 2014.

demographics, beliefs, and practices, and social and political views. Here is a breakdown of specific facts in these areas pertaining to evangelicals, mainline churches, and black churches⁷:

A) In what regions of the U.S. do members of evangelical Protestant churches live?

For evangelical churches, over 50 percent of citizens live in the south versus only 10 percent in the northeast. For mainline churches, 34 percent live in the south with 19 percent in the northeast and 18 percent in the west. For historically black churches, over 60 percent live in the south with 13 percent in the northeast.

B) Belief in God or Universal Spirit among evangelical churches:

Ninety percent of evangelicals and members of historically black churches and 73 percent of members of mainline churches believe in God with between 1 to 2 percent either not knowing or not believing in God.

C) Frequency of attendance at religious services among evangelical churches:

Thirty percent of evangelicals and members of historically black churches attend church more than once a week with 8 percent of members of mainline churches attending more than once a week.

D) Literal interpretation of Scripture among evangelical churches:

Fifty-nine percent of evangelicals believe that the word of God is literally true, word for word, versus 7 percent believe that it is a book written by humans. Twenty-two percent of members of mainline churches believe that the Word of God is literally true, word for word, versus 28 percent who believe that the Bible is a book written by humans. Sixty-two percent of historically black churches believe that the Word of God is literally true, word for word, versus 9 percent who believe that it is a book written by humans.

E) Life issues such as abortion:

Twenty-five percent of evangelicals believe abortion should be illegal in all cases versus 7 percent for mainline churches and 23 percent for black churches. When it comes to agreeing that the government should protect morality, among evangelical churches is 50 percent, mainline churches 33 percent, and historically black churches 48 percent.

F) Whether or not homosexuality should be accepted in society:

Sixty-four percent of evangelicals were not in favor versus 26 percent were in favor of discouraging same sex sexual behavior whereas mainline churches were 34 percent in favor versus 56 percent in favor and historically black churches were 46 percent not in favor versus 39 percent in favor.

So how has the church been affected in a day and age where the wave of the postmodernist movement is beating against the boat of the church? The answer to this is a generation of Christians who believe that they cannot express their faith boldly. Many feel that witnessing to others about the gospel is offensive and therefore not sensitive to the viewpoints of others. It has also created an atmosphere of fear as most believers do not want to be seen as intolerant. With this being true, there are also some Christians who have become closet Christians leading to the Great Commission either not going forth or, for others, compromise of the mission.

The American church is now in a place of attempting to be culturally relevant and using extra biblical methods of trying to reach the lost for Christ. A good example of this is when youth groups are mere hangouts instead of organic Christian ministries to adolescents. The results of this have been students who are “no longer engaged with adult church and had no place to go once they

⁷ <http://religions.pewforum.org/portraits>, accessed 26 July 2014.

graduated from high school. They did not benefit from inter-generational relationships, but instead were relegated to the youth room.”⁸

Another example are books, blogs, and opinions that try to separate the church from Christ as if the church were a negative concept or presence within today’s culture. One such book is *Mere Churchianity* by the late Michael Spencer. In a review by the Gospel Coalition, one criticism is: “Throughout *Mere Churchianity*, Michael’s view of the church goes back and forth like a yo-yo. He insists on the importance of community and yet also insists on the legitimate option of leaving the church as an institution. So, even though he remains within a church (and speaks well of his fellow church members), he doesn’t blame church-leavers at all and practically encourages them to head out the door.”⁹ This is part of a growing trend in the culture to make Christ relevant and one way is to separate people (who can hurt others) from Christ Himself (who does not hurt people, though the church is the body of Christ).

Another example is the book *Love Wins* by Rob Bell, wherein Bell explains his views on love, faith, and the afterlife. One of the controversies with this book is that Bell does not believe in hell as the Bible teaches it and gives his own rationale for pain and suffering. The subtitle of the book announces: “*A Book about Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived.*”¹⁰ *Love Wins* has a universalist theological viewpoint where Bell believes that every person will end up in heaven eventually. Another dangerous point within this book is its use of Scripture to back up its inaccuracies. What this book presents is dangerous to new believers and non-believers since it does not lean on belief in Christ’s sufficient work on the cross as one’s eternal security.¹¹

With these facts and figures, along with examples of the changing face of church in a postmodern age, Barna Group provides additional facts with their March 2014 survey called *Do You Go to Church?* According to their data, church attendance has dipped from 43 percent in 2004 to 36 percent in 2014 for overall church goers.¹² Fifty-nine percent of Millennials who grew up in church have dropped attending at some point along the way. Thirty-five percent of Millennials take an anti-church stance.¹³ Those who used to attend church weekly now attend church every four to six weeks but still consider themselves regular churchgoers.¹⁴

It sounds as though the church is dying in America, if not evolving. Where America once had a tradition of being a nation built on Christian principles, it has now become known as a nation that is pluralistic, humanistic, and relativistic. The church is embracing and being morphed by culture instead of it being the catalyst from which culture develops, as Reinhold Niebuhr details in *Christ and Culture*.¹⁵ Many Christians are afraid to be bold for Christ’s sake and abandon church for the sake of trying to be culturally relevant.

Boston, Massachusetts and the Quiet Revival

Nonetheless, is a revival possible in the midst of a postmodern/post-Christian age with all of its non-Christian ideas and sweeping changes? The answer is “yes” and such a revival is happening

8 Dave Wright, “A Brief History of Youth Ministry,” Gospel Coalition Blog, 2 April 2012, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/a-brief-history-of-youth-ministry>, accessed July 2014.

9 Michael Spencer, *Mere Churchianity: Finding Your Way Back To Jesus-Shaped Spirituality* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook, 2010). <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevinwax/2010/06/09/mere-churchianity-a-friendly-critique>, accessed July 2014.

10 Rob Bell, *Love Wins: A Book About Heaven, Hell, and the Fate of Every Person Who Ever Lived* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2011.) Justin Taylor, “Rob Bell’s Love wins: A Response,” *The Gospel Coalition*, 13 March 2011, <https://robbell.com/portfolio/love-wins/>, accessed 26 July 2014.

11 <http://thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/justintaylor/2011/03/13/rob-bells-love-wins-a-response>, accessed 26 July 2014.

12 “Americans Divided on the Importance of Church,” Barna Group 2014, <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/culture/661-americans-divided-on-the-importance-of-church>, accessed 26 July 2014.

13 Ibid.

14 Ibid.

15 H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper, 1951).

right in Massachusetts, which is known to be one of the most unreached and liberal states in the nation. The Barna Group has ranked Boston in the bottom ten percent (or 91) on their list of Bible-Minded cities.¹⁶ Research by the Emmanuel Gospel Center (EGC) in Boston, Massachusetts gives deeper insight, however, into what has been coined the “Quiet Revival.”¹⁷

The “Quiet Revival” is described as “an unprecedented and sustained period of Christian growth in the city of Boston beginning in 1965 and persisting for nearly five decades so far. The number of churches in Boston has doubled during this period, though the population is about the same now as then.”¹⁸ According to EGC’s research, there were 318 churches in Boston in 1965 with a growth of over 575 churches as of 2010 in Boston.¹⁹ Furthermore, church attendance has increased from 3 to 15 percent in Boston as well, even despite population fluctuations experienced during the survey period.²⁰ Some of the indicators of the “Quiet Revival” include a focus on church planting along with prayer, collaboration among churches, leaders being properly trained, and community service by churches.

Boston is known for having a liberal political stance along with being postmodern in influence. These realities are in contrast with the fact that God is at work in Boston for the transformation of the city. Since the Lord is moving in such a mighty way in this city, this means that God is more than likely moving like this in other places as well.

A Brief look at Christianity in the United States of America

America has been known to be a nation that has produced many missionaries who have gone out to the ends of the earth. The United States of America itself was a radical experiment that began to take shape when the Puritans settled in North America in colonies that were the means for a new start for those who fled oppression under the royal crown in England.

Even before the Puritans would converge on Plymouth Rock, the British came to the shores of North America on what would be known as Virginia to establish colonies for the British crown. The Puritans would come sometime later, after leaving England for the Netherlands, and then come to America in what would become known as Massachusetts.²¹ This would set the religious backdrop in New England, where the Puritans would leave a legacy of Christian devotion that would later influence many including the nation’s founding fathers.

Later, other denominations such as Baptists, Quakers, Catholics, Presbyterians, and Methodists began to influence life in the thirteen colonies beyond that of the Puritans. Each would have a major impact on theological ideas and religious fervor among Christians throughout the colonies. The biggest impact upon the colonies would be the Great Awakening championed by Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. Many people were convicted of sin and converted to Christianity in large droves. This also led to evangelism of peoples in the west and to political influences for the colonies.²²

Looking forward we see the creation of organizations such as Youth With A Mission²³ and HeartCry Missionary Society,²⁴ evangelical and Pentecostal denominations, and parachurch

16 “America’s Most and Least Bible-Minded Cities,” Barna Group 2014, <http://cities.barna.org/americas-most-and-least-bible-minded-cities-2>, accessed 26 July 2014.

17 <http://egc.org/qr-definition>, accessed 26 July 2014.

18 <http://egc.org/qr-definition>, accessed 26 July 2014.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity: The Reformation to the Present Day*, vol. 2 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985), 221.

22 “Religious Transformation and the Great Awakening,” <http://www.ushistory.org/us/22c.asp>, accessed 26 July 2014.

23 <http://www.ywam.org/>, accessed 26 July 2014.

24 www.heartcrymissionary.com, accessed 26 July 2014.

ministries who have frequently sent out missionaries for decades. Though this is still true today, America is also on the receiving end of foreign missionaries who have come from varying places including South Korea, China, Nigeria, and more.²⁵ My firsthand experience with this was in downtown Boston in the summer of 2013 when I encountered Chinese missionaries singing and dancing in the street while evangelizing those who came in for a closer look.

America in itself has become a mission field in the midst of the new realities that America faces. John B. Kauta writes, “If Christianity is to be viable in America, it is essential that evangelization take place in our country because of the many challenges affecting the practice of religion. This call for re-evangelization is no easy task, given the prevailing cultural, political, and religious atmosphere.”²⁶ This means that there is a need for missionaries to be trained who understand the current national context and how that differs per state. We need to be like the citizens of Issachar in 1 Chronicles 12:32 who were people “who understood the times and knew what Israel should do.” We need those who can understand America’s history as a nation built on Christian principles and a strong Christian lineage, along with understanding anti-Christian movements.

Methods for Local Missions

So the question to be asked then is what are the best methods needed to reach our contemporaries in the United States of America with the good news of Jesus Christ? To answer that question is to look back at the “Quiet Revival” in Boston. What was the common thread from the late 1960’s through to the 2000s that has caused so much growth? It was the planting of churches in various parts of Boston. These churches were not randomly placed but rather placed strategically by the Lord through chosen vessels who were seeking His will before they went forth to do the work. The nature of the Quiet Revival in itself is God ordained in that it took place “without the investment of significant resources, human planning, or, the involvement of well-known revivalists or evangelists.”²⁷ This revival was similar to the Great Awakenings and the Azusa Street Revival that had sweeping changes and growth for the church in America. Ultimately, God’s will shall be fulfilled and He can do that which pleases Him when it comes to how the mission in America goes forth. Yet, we can still study how God is moving and doing that revival while being led by Him.

Beyond the “Quiet Revival” of Boston, there is a growing yearning for orthodoxy among evangelicals and Christians across denominational lines. For many, this return to orthodoxy also means a return to practical theology, employing modern technology and culture connectors to be used to spread the gospel. Social networks, mobile phones, face chat software, and other new technologies make it easier than ever to do God’s mission locally and abroad. We live in a microwave generation where we want things instantly. Social media allows for this to be made possible since access to the latest tweet, post, picture, video, sound clip, or viral media is accessible in seconds. Why not do the same with God’s word?

Another way to engage the culture is through the mediums of music, movies, and other forms of entertainment. There is a growing popularity in music forms such as Christian Hip Hop and Christian Contemporary music. These particular forms of music have a similar sound to the popular music of the day but have a message that is eternal. There is also the reality of Christian movie companies such as Sherwood Pictures who have produced successful and groundbreaking Christian films such *Fireproof*, *Courageous*, *God’s Not Dead*, *Do You Believe?*, *Black Nativity*, and

25 Rebecca Kim, “God’s New Ambassadors: Korean Missionaries in America,” *The Louisville Institute*, accessed 11 January 2016. staging.louisville-institute.ribbitt.com/Grants/abstract.aspx?id=7594.

26 John B. Kauta, “Is North America a Mission Field? What Does the World Church Say? The Challenges of Evangelization in America: Contextual Factors,” *Evangelization in America* (2014): 113-28. www.bostontheological.org.

27 Doug and Judy Hall, “Two Secrets of the Quiet Revival,” *New England Book of Acts* (October 2007), <https://sites.google.com/a/egc.org/newenglandsbookofacts/new-england-s-book-of-acts/section-one-overview/two-secrets-of-the-quiet-revival>, accessed July 2014.

War Room that communicate God's message of hope without compromise.

Churches can be planted with God's providence and leading. Relevant, uncompromised engagement of the culture can re-evangelize America for the glory of God. Even in the midst of postmodernism thus creating a post-Christian America, the church should not be discouraged. Hebrews 13:8 says that "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." As much as Christ is the same and unchanging, we too should be unwavering in our commitment to the work of Christ that is eternally constant.

Every day on the news we hear stories about shootings, poverty, unemployment, and negative reports about the church. The news provides the very things about which the church needs to be praying and actively seeking God's will as to how it can be effective in these areas and beyond. There are scattered sheep and lost people everywhere who are in need of a Shepherd. A postmodern culture has too much influence and not enough of God. Nevertheless, God is the redeemer of culture as Colossians 1:19-20 says, "God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in [Jesus], and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven."

In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus clearly says to His disciples and the church: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Whenever a nation begins to turn its back on the Lord, the Lord will raise up those who will minister to His people to bring them back into the sheepfold. There have been a variety of men and women of God who have been raised up to do this very thing such as Jonathan Edwards, Billy Graham, Betsey Stockton,²⁸ Lottie Moon,²⁹ and Paul Washer, among others. Today has a similar need, as we have clearly seen the influx of the postmodern movement, the decline in church attendance, and the embrace of cultural thought in the church.

Even with that, we have also seen that God is in the business of setting the whole church ablaze in revival that is so quiet that no popular preacher or evangelist alone can get the glory. Boston, which is one of the most liberal cities in the Northeast, is experiencing change even in its difficult spiritual climate, so why not the rest of America? As we pray for God to move on people's hearts to perform local missions, may our hearts be made bold but loving in the face of anti-Christian sentiment. Our re-evangelizing of the United States is not so much about re-establishing what the original idea for a republic should be. Rather than political, it is spiritual, as we seek for God's glory to be established in a place where His name is being threatened to be taken out of almost every government building, school, and beyond. May the Lord bless church planting and relevant, uncompromising ministry as we passionately reach America for Christ.

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²⁸ <http://thedisplacednation.com/2011/11/07/called-to-travel-overseas-for-the-benefit-of-others-7-female-missionaries-of-the-victorian-era>, accessed 6 January 2016.

²⁹ Ibid.

Review Article of *Paul & Money: A Biblical and Theological Analysis of the Apostle's Teachings and Practices* by Verlyn D. Verbrugge and Keith R. Krell (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015)

AÍDA BESANÇON SPENCER

Paul & Money: A Biblical and Theological Analysis of the Apostle's Teachings and Practices by Verlyn D. Verbrugge and Keith R. Krell shows *extensive* work. It has an impressively broad scope. It is not simply about “money”—the title is attractive to entice the reader. Rather, it has to do with “anything that has to do with how the world of finance intersects with our lives (e.g., job, financial transactions, poverty, patronage, theft, taxes)” (24). The book includes three broad parts: Paul’s work and his financial policies, Paul’s raising money for the mother church in Jerusalem, and other issues related to Paul concerning finances. The other issues include a good exposition of 2 Corinthians 8-9, the Thessalonian freeloaders, the rich and poor in Corinth, widows, rich Christians, taxes, and debts. As they summarize, *indeed* the book is “an academic exercise of carefully exegeting the Greek NT” in light of the “broader world of NT scholarship” (274). It is “*comprehensive*” (274). I appreciate that the study presupposes that the thirteen letters ascribed to Paul in the New Testament are by Paul and that the history of the early church described in Acts is reliable (24-25, 186, 196). Verlyn Verbrugge develops his doctoral dissertation on Paul’s collection leadership style as it relates to the Corinthians (19). Keith Krell has spent many years in his ministry attempting to follow Paul’s financial instructions (21). He and his church have been very generous donors to needy ministries. The final five pages outline some helpful practical principles (279-84).

What I have learned from Verbrugge and Krell is that interpreters have a challenge to resolve: how can we harmonize Paul’s thoughts on 1 Corinthians 9 with the ideas in Philippians? How can the same person write: “in preaching the gospel I may offer it free of charge” (1 Cor 9:18 NIV) and “I rejoice greatly in the Lord that *at last* you have renewed your concern for me” (Phil 4:10 NIV)? With which part of Jesus’s admonition to the Twelve do we begin: “Freely you have received, freely give” (Matt 10:8 NIV), or “the worker is worth his keep” (Matt 10:10 NIV)?

Verbrugge and Krell have disclosed the complexity of understanding Paul’s principles of finance. They have also brought to the fore that Paul envisioned church finances should be “manifesting the fruit of [the churches’] faith at work in their lives” (75). In other words, money and finances are crucial theological topics for all on which to reflect, but, especially, for *Christians*. *Paul and Money* begins with Paul’s decision to the Corinthians *not* to receive any money for preaching the gospel and Jesus’s admonition freely to proclaim God’s kingdom. Unfortunately, in my perspective, this leads its authors to a conclusion that appears to undermine the very Scriptures they uphold.

Verbrugge and Krell conclude that “Paul clearly refused to accept support from those among whom he was ministering” (40). He refused to receive any money, at least from churches while he was living in their midst (52, 81). In other words, he refused “to accept lodging and food from the people whom he was evangelizing” (1 Cor 9:15-18) (275). But, to accommodate all the New Testament data, they modify this principle by concluding that Paul did accept hospitality or “benefaction” from people who were *already* believers, but not from strangers (72, 97, 99, 103). It appears that the Roman ideals of patronage between friends (*amicus*, 85-87, 93-94, 99) then supersedes Paul’s decision not to accept support. Paul would accept money from believers who have become “*friends*.” In this way, the authors can understand Paul’s acceptance of hospitality from Aquila and Priscilla, Lydia, Phoebe, Gaius, and others (89, 93-94, 275)¹.

¹ Verbrugge and Krell agree that Paul “freely accepted support when he was among believers whom he had evangelized” (98). Bible citations are from the NRSV or the author’s translation.

However, this modified conclusion then leaves unclear Jesus’s admonition to the Twelve and the Seventy-two: “Do not take along any gold or silver or copper in your belts, take no bag for the journey, or extra tunic, or sandals or a staff *for* the worker is worth his keep” and “Whatever town or village you enter, search for some worthy person there and *stay* at his house until you leave” (Matt 10:10-11) and “Carry no purse, no bag, no sandals; and greet no one on the road....Remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the laborer deserves to be paid. Do not move about from house to house” (Luke 10: 4, 7). Paul’s practice appears to contradict Jesus’s teachings. As Paul himself repeated in 1 Corinthians 9:14, Jesus commands the Twelve to take nothing with them *because* “worthy is the worker of his/her nourishment” (Matt 10:10) and the Seventy-two to remain in the same house eating and drinking the householder’s things “*for* worthy is the worker of his/her pay” (Luke 10:7-8).

Missionaries who practice Verbrugge and Krell’s understanding have made life difficult when the newly converted national Christians try to live from their Christian ministry. My husband and I had friends in Jamaica who told us how some missionaries they knew told the Jamaicans that they need not contribute to their ministry because “God’s grace” took care of them. In reality, Christians from their home country sent them contributions. When they left, the locals told their new ministers that they were not going to contribute to them because “God’s grace” could take care of them too. But, if the missionaries had followed Jesus’s plan, the seekers would have been trained to share materially for spiritual work.

Probably, we have more examples in the New Testament of Paul receiving help and teaching positively about giving for spiritual work than we have any limitations on the practice.

Examples and Teachings of Paul Receiving and Not Receiving Financial Help

WHEN DID PAUL RECEIVE HELP?	WHEN DID PAUL TEACH POSITIVELY ABOUT RECEIVING HELP?	WHEN DID PAUL NOT RECEIVE HELP?
Rom 15:24 “by you to be sent” to Spain (<i>propempō</i>)	Gal 6:6 “let the one being instructed the word share with the one instructing in all good things” (vv. 9-10)	Acts 20:33-35 to Ephesians elders: “I coveted no one’s silver or gold or clothes...I worked with my own hands to support myself and my companions... an example that by such work we must support the weak”; Eph 4:28
1 Cor 16:6 “so that you may send me” (<i>propempō</i>)	1 Tim 6:18 Rich are “to do good, be rich in good deeds, to be liberal, generous”	1 Cor 9:12 no obstacle in way of gospel; 9:15 “I have made no use” of “these rights”; 9:19 “a slave to all” to win them
2 Cor 1:16 “I wanted ... you to send me on to Judea” (<i>propempō</i>)	Rom 12:13 “Contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality”	1 Thess 2:9 “we worked night and day” not to be a burden
Rom 16:2 Phoebe has been a <i>prostasis</i>	Titus 3:13 “Make every effort to send (<i>propempō</i>) Zenas...and Apollos”	2 Thess 3:6-15 “we worked night and day” not to be a burden... “a model”

Phlm 22 “Prepare for me a guest room”	1 Cor 9:3-12 “spiritual seed,” “material harvest”; 9:13-14 “The Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel”	2 Cor 12:13-18; 11:5-10 “I myself did not burden you.” “I proclaimed God’s good news to you free of charge.” “I robbed other churches by accepting support from them...my needs were supplied by the friends who came from Macedonia.”
Rom 16:23 “Gaius my host”	1 Tim 5:17 “double honor” to elders in preaching and teaching	
Acts 16:15, 40 Lydia: “stay at my house”; they returned to “Lydia’s”	2 Tim 2:6 farmer “ought to have the first share of the crops”	
Phil 1:5 shared in gospel; 2:25 Epaphroditus is “minister to my need”; 4:10 “now at last you have revived your concern for me”; 4:14-18 “you did well sharing with my trouble” ... “in beginning of the gospel...no church shared with me in matter of giving and receiving except you alone”; even in Thessalonica also “you sent me help for my needs more than once”; “I seek the fruit, the one being added to your account”; “I received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God”	(2 Cor 8-9 Macedonian example of giving)	
Acts 18:3 Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth	1 Tim 5:3, 7 give to widows in need-order of prayer	
Acts 21:4, 7, 8, 10, 15 He stayed with disciples at Tyre, Ptolemais, Philip the evangelist in Caesarea, Mnason of Cyprus	(Rom 15:26-31; 1 Thess 5:14; Gal 2:10) 1 Tim 3:2; Tit 1:8 elders hospitable	

But, then, how do we handle Paul’s reluctance to receive any money from Corinth, Thessalonica, and Ephesus? Of course, by “money” I include more than *drachmas*, but also food and clothing and housing (for which the *drachmas* would have been spent). While I still agree with the authors that financial gifts should be used to manifest the fruit of believers’ faith at work in their lives (75), may I suggest another hermeneutic that may help us harmonize the divergent messages that the New Testament appears to have about the Apostle Paul?

Paul allowed congregations to donate to him when they had a healthy view of money. In other words, Paul allowed congregations to pay him if paying him did not distract them from growing

as Christians. He took up his trade of tentmaking whenever he wanted to impress a point upon those to whom he preached. Paul explains to the Corinthians that, if he accepts their contribution, he would put an obstacle before the gospel (1 Cor 9:12, 19). Receiving remuneration was “lawful,” but Paul considered whether it “built up” the givers (1 Cor 10:22-23, 33). Verbrugge and Krell agree that 1 Corinthians 9:1-18 indicates that Paul saw nothing inherently wrong in being paid for preaching (281). However, Paul did not accept any money from the Corinthians. The Corinthians appeared to be afraid Paul and Barnabas were going to take advantage of them in some way (1 Cor 9:3, 6; 2 Cor 12:13-18). Even before the superapostles come on the scene, Paul has to defend the genuineness of his apostleship. They appear to think lower of those who are not wealthy (e.g., 1 Cor 9:1-23; 4:1-13). “Already you have become rich!” he exclaims in 1 Corinthians 4:8. In 2 Corinthians, it comes out more clearly that they thought that one of the criteria of true apostleship was receiving money. Therefore, when the false apostles were receiving money from them, they were in one sense *proving* their apostleship (2 Cor 2:17; 11:12). “We are not peddlers of God’s word like so many!” and “forgive me the wrong of not burdening you,” Paul ironically concludes in 2 Corinthians 12:13. The false apostles were acting like sophists who were paid to entertain. Verbrugge and Krell allude to this practice (55, 143). City after city was being won over by these orators and the whole world was honoring them.² The sophists developed into one of the most popular forms of entertainment, rivalling the theater.³ Thus, the Corinthians both feared being taken advantage of financially and desired to pay in order to prove the recipient’s worth. If Paul had allowed the Corinthians to support him financially, such a move would have confirmed the false apostles’ claims and undermined what Paul was trying to teach the Corinthians, that wealth and payment are not proper criteria for establishing authenticity of leadership.

Paul did not allow the Thessalonians to support him financially (1 Thess 2:9; 2 Thess 3:8) either, but for different reasons. For their edification, he, Timothy, and Silas worked among them in order to show that a person does well to work with his hands. The Thessalonians had a consistent problem of having persons who refused to work. So Paul writes them, “to admonish the idlers” and “aspire to... work with your hands...so that you may...be dependent on no one” (1 Thess 4:11-12; 5:14). Thus, in 2 Thessalonians he can command them to keep away from believers who are living in idleness” because “we were not idle when we were with you, and we did not eat anyone’s bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate” (2 Thess 3:6-10).

This command was similar to Paul’s command to the Ephesian elders to work hard so they could give (Acts 20:34-35; Eph 4:28).

The Philippians appear to be the only congregation recorded in the New Testament from which Paul allowed *and* welcomed financial support. He states that “in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church contributed to me (*koinōneō*) into the matter of giving and receiving except you alone” (4:15). From the beginning of their acquaintance until the time of Paul writing Philippians during his Roman imprisonment, the Philippians committed themselves to Paul’s work as partners in his ministry. In the beginning of the letter’s reason for thanksgiving, only in Philippians does Paul mention the *koinōnia* or financial and spiritual partnership he had with the church (Phil 1:3-5, 7). He hearkens back to that *koinōnia* at the end of the letter with almost an admonition: “Now, *at length* you have revived your thought for me” (Phil 4:10). Although Paul says that he does not speak out of need, he tells them that they “did well having been partakers together with Paul of his affliction” (*sugkoinōneō*, 4:14). Paul does not so much seek the gift (4:17), but rather he affirms the Philippians sharing with his own distress by financially contributing to

2 Bruce Winter, “Entries and Ethics of Orators and Paul,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 44:1 (1993): 58-64.

3 Aída Besançon Spencer, *Paul’s Literary Style: A Stylistic and Historical Comparison of II Corinthians 11:16-12:13, Romans 8:9-39, and Philippians 3:2-4:13* (New York: University Press of America, 1998), xviii-xix.

him. (Fellowship has to do with financial partnership with others.) Ultimately, the Philippian gifts to Paul benefitted the Philippians as acceptable gifts to God (Phil 4:17-18).

Even to the Corinthians, Paul tells that his needs were supplied by the Christians from Macedonia (2 Cor 11:9). When Paul was in Thessalonica, the Philippians sent money there several times to Paul (Phil 4:16). Acts 18:5 suggests that Paul stopped working as a tentmaker in Corinth when Timothy and Silas arrived from Macedonia.

To be allowed to contribute financially to Paul and his ministry was a privilege. In contrast with the Corinthians, the Philippian church must have had a healthy view of money. In contrast with the Thessalonian church, the Philippians did not hesitate to work. When they contributed to Paul's work, they did not feel enslaved by that giving. They did *not* think that financial remuneration proved Paul's authenticity as an apostle. Paul treated the Philippians as his equals but, I think, not simply because they were his "friends" but because of their healthy view of remuneration. Lydia may have been wealthy as a trader in purple, but the Macedonians as a group were in some kind of severe affliction and were in extreme poverty according to 2 Corinthians 8:1-2, in contrast with the Corinthians who had financial abundance at this time (2 Cor 8:14).

Verbrugge and Krell have appropriately separated Paul's practice and teachings related to remuneration from those proclaiming about the gospel (Part 1) and Paul's practice and teachings related to giving to those in physical need (Part 2). But, they did not convince me that Paul never accepted lodging and food from those being evangelized. I think to separate the subtle relationships of "stranger," who is being evangelized, to "friend," who is now a believer, is quite artificial. Paul would embark on a continuous relationship with someone from welcoming seeker, to newly committed believer, to mature believer. Moreover, the showing of hospitality to strangers is such an important biblical theme (e.g., Heb 13:2), I find it impossible to believe that Paul would encourage others to be hospitable, but not receive hospitality from those *not* his friends.

I also thought that their discussion on tithing is well intentioned but potentially harmful. They correctly note that a 10% gift is not mentioned in the NT. In chapter 12 they stress the "freedom of individual giving" (270), and in the conclusion hint that we should give "more than a mere 10 percent of our income" (272, 279). When it comes to debts, they use the OT as a helpful guide (267), but not when it comes to giving (269). The OT believers gave much more than 10%. I have estimated they may have given away about 30% of their material wealth.⁴ Since most evangelical Christians do not even donate 10% of their income (Barna found that 12% of born-again Christians gave 10% in 2012—88% did not),⁵ while approximately 15% is given to our federal and state governments, simply undermining the tithe would result in Christian readers giving *less* rather than more. Paul's principle of *equality* among believers is a much more drastic model we should accentuate (2 Cor 8:13-15) (174).

Nevertheless, there is much to appreciate in *Paul and Money*. For instance, the summarizing of many helpful evangelical studies all in one book, such as the five economic ancient levels,⁶ the five basic reasons Paul was so committed to the collection for the Jerusalem church,⁷ and Paul's concern for the poor (277). As long as readers carefully evaluate some of the authors' conclusions, I would recommend this book to those who would like a readable discussion in one volume of all of Paul's economic views in the context of academic evangelical scholarship.

4 First tithe, second tithe, 10% every third year, 10%? unpicked produce (Deut 18:4-5; 14:22-29; 24:19-22).

5 Barna.org, accessed Nov. 2015.

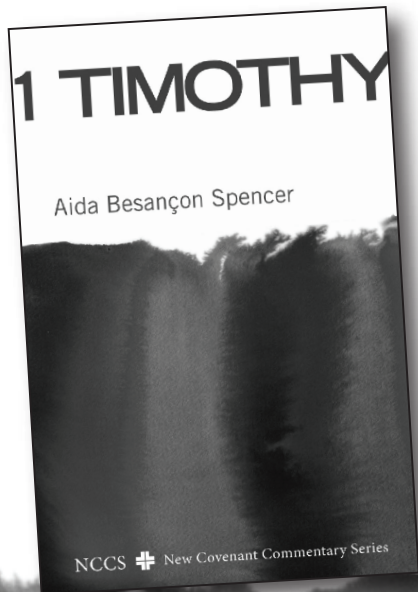
6 ES/PS 1-3 3% truly wealthy-political and military elite, such as Sergius Paulus, Cornelius, Erastus; ES 4 (7-15%) well to do veterans, merchants, traders, such as Priscilla and Aquila, ES 5 (22-27%) economically stable merchants, traders, farmers, artisans, such as Paul; ES 6 (30-40%) subsistence level unskilled workers, wage earners; ES 7 (25-28%) truly poor. (108-11)

7 Assist the poor, thank the Jewish Christians for their part in Gentile salvation, gift as proof of God's work among Gentiles' salvation, act of worship, and foster unity-the Gentile believers saw the Jews as brothers and sisters. (132-141, 146, 159, 194)

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***Review of Christianity in Roman Africa: The Development of Its Practices and Beliefs* by J. Patout Burns and Robin M. Jensen
(Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2014).**

DONALD FAIRBAIRN

It is well known that the traditional division of early Christianity into “Eastern” (Greek-speaking) and “Western” (Latin-speaking) regions obscures the fact that Africa—both “Greek-speaking” Egypt and “Latin-speaking” Roman Africa—has had a profound impact on the development of Christian belief and practice. Indeed, one could easily make a case that Africa has had a far more profound impact than Greece and Rome themselves. Accordingly, a book like this one—providing a thorough and well-documented account of the development of Christianity in Roman Africa, with no tendency to see Africa as a mere appendage of Rome—is most welcome.

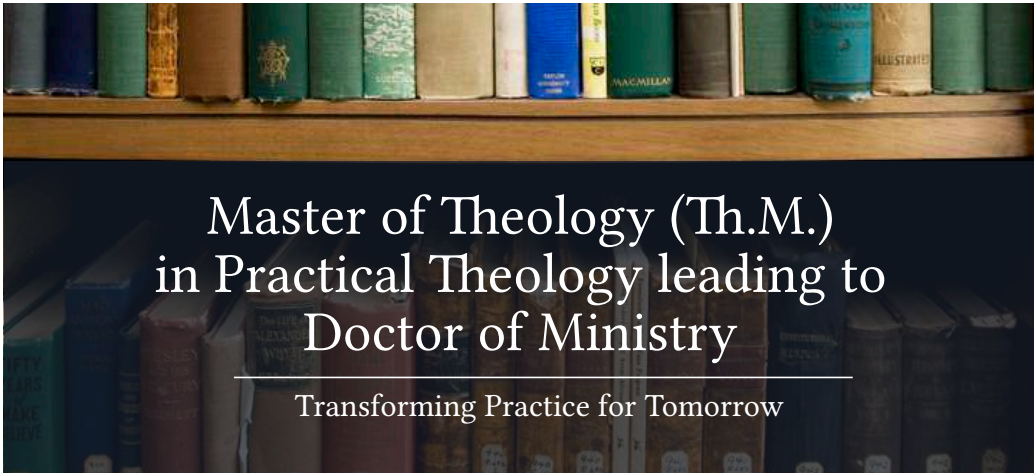
The book is written collaboratively by two major scholars of early African Christianity, in consultation with four other notable experts. It begins with three chapters sketching out an overview of Christian history in Roman Africa from the beginnings to the seventh-century Arab conquest, then follows with a chapter surveying the archaeological evidence for African Christianity. The heart of the book comes in chapters 5-12, each of which addresses a major practice/belief of African Christianity by combining archaeological and literary evidence (the latter coming mostly from Tertullian, Cyprian, and Augustine). These chapters successively address baptism, preaching and the Eucharist, sin and readmission to the church, the clergy, marriage and virginity, death and burial, the cult of martyrs, and Christian piety. The book concludes with a chapter on the distinctive contribution of African Christianity to Christian theology as a whole, claiming that this contribution lies in defining the holiness of the church. The book’s length (nearly 700 oversized pages) makes it a bit of a stretch for use as a textbook in a church history survey course, and the fact that its subject is one that rarely gets covered in elective courses at college or seminary level means that few general students will read it cover-to-cover. Nevertheless, it will be an invaluable reference book for students writing papers on topics related to early African Christianity, and it can also serve as a textbook for graduate seminars on that subject.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the book is its discipline in achieving its goal. The book is purely descriptive, offering no discernible value judgments at all about whether a Christian ought to believe and do what the African Christians believed and did. Nor does the book take sides in the disputes within African Christianity: the New Prophecy (Montanism) and Donatism are taken with utmost seriousness, and the “Great Church” is labeled the “Caecilianist” movement in contrast to the “Donatist” movement. The book shows in expert fashion how these different movements were grappling with the same basic issue important to all African Christians: what does it mean for the church to be a holy body?

The book has one inconsistency that stands out to this reviewer. Although the historical overview extends to the Arab conquest in the seventh century (chap. 3), the discussion of literary evidence for each of the practices surveyed (chaps. 5-12) extends only to the early fifth century, with scarcely any mention of Fulgentius of Ruspe, the most noteworthy post-Augustinian African theologian. This inconsistency itself reveals the problem of historical categorization. What does the phrase “Roman Africa” mean? Is it a geographical moniker alone (referring to Western North Africa), or is it also a chronological one (referring to Western North Africa when it was ruled by the Romans)? If the latter, then perhaps the survey should have ended with the Vandal invasions in the early fifth century, as chapters 5-12 do. But if the former, then it would have seemed appropriate to follow the entire history of Western African Christianity to the Arab conquest, as chapters 1-3 do.

These problems of historical categorization aside, however, this book is a much-needed and valuable resource to help cotemporary Christians understand the region of the early church that has most shaped the later traditions of Roman Catholicism and Protestantism.

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**Review of *For [the] Integration of Revelation and Eschatology: The Collection of Learned Papers of [the] International Scholarly Conference on Historic Premillennialism* by Kwang Bok Lee, et al.
([Seoul?]: Hindol Publishing Group, 2012)**

FREEMAN BARTON

The authors of *For [the] Integration of Revelation and Eschatology* are concerned about the differences of opinion in society and in the church. The conference at which they presented these papers was intended to encourage a stronger agreement in the Presbyterian Church in Korea, particularly on eschatology, and more narrowly still on the millennium. As Kwang Bok Lee points out in the Preface, “I believe that it is most urgent to integrate different views of eschatology and to suggest a new direction for the future eschatological endeavor” (9). The intent is to use historic premillennialism to “play the central role in the integration of eschatology” (10). He prays that the book “may be used ...to enhance eschatological integration” (11).

The first two chapters are histories of millennial views. The first covers the whole of church history including developments in contemporary Korea. The second recounts the introduction of the subject into Korea, using the ministries of two outstanding Reformed Korean theologians. The third paper sets out to correct several weaknesses in Korean historic premillennialism. The fourth is a sharp critique of dispensationalism’s allegiance to Israel. The authors joust with amillennialism, tolerate dispensationalism because it is premillarian, brush off postmillennialism, and ignore realized eschatology and progressive dispensationalism.

The first chapter (20-79), “The Current State of Historic Premillennialism in Global Evangelical Theology,” is by Sung Wook Chung (Denver Seminary). Dr. Chung traces the history of millennial views from the first century to the present. For the first four centuries, historic premillennialism [HP] was the dominant view. Augustine was responsible for developing the amillennial position. That view prevailed for centuries. It was the view of Luther, Calvin, and other leaders of the Reformation. In the seventeenth century, HP began to revive.

Chung goes into some detail in connection with the last four centuries and HP’s entry into Asia, especially Korea. He mentions Henry Drummond and the Albany conferences as factors in the rise of HP. Beginning in the mid-nineteenth century, dispensational futurism began its rise to popular dominance, eventually rising to the top due to the influence of Hal Lindsey’s *The Late Great Planet Earth* and, more recently, the LaHaye’s and Jenkins’ enterprise, *Left Behind*. Now “while dispensationalism finds overwhelming support from the public, historic premillennialism continues to be the dominant view among the professionally trained theologians and scholars” (24). Chung examines the views of a number of American historic premillennialists—George Ladd, Robert Gundry, D. A. Carson, Craig Blomberg, George Beasley-Murray, Richard Hee, Ben Witherington, Wayne Grudem, Millard Erickson, Bruce Demarest, et al. (50-60). He does the same for Koreans—Byung Suk Min, Hyungtae Kim, Yoonsun Park, Sooam Park, and others, especially Hyongryong Park (60-69).

What follows summarizes Chung’s summary of Korean millennialism. The first missionaries brought both forms of premillennialism with them. Young men studied in Europe and the United States, and they brought back amillennialism. HP began to regain prominence in the scholarly world. Dr. Chung compares the strength and weaknesses of amillennialism and HP. He is easier on amillennialism than Kwang Bok Lee is (see below), but there is no doubt as to his preference. He quickly dismisses postmillennialism, and he thinks the original dispensationalism is fading.

Dr. Chung finishes by developing a plan to enhance the study of eschatology, especially of Revelation. He believes that, if we all get together and study the Scriptures carefully, we will “agree that historic premillennialism is the most biblical view” (79).

The second chapter (80-173) is “The Origins and the Development of Historic Premillennialism in Korea: A Comparative Study on [the] Eschatological Positions of Hyongryong Park and Kwang Bok Lee” by Hansoo Lee (Chongshin University). Each of the scholars treated here was a theological leader in his own generation (Park’s dates are 1897- ? and Lee’s 1946-). Each of them studied in the United States; each taught theology in Korea; each participated in the workings of his own denomination. Each published collections of his works—and each believed in historic premillennialism. Hansoo Lee compares and criticizes the variations in each man’s historic premillennialism in order to advance the “Korean Presbyterian ecumenical society” (capitalization sic, 89).

According to Hansoo Lee, “Park was the principle figure in the development of Reformed Theology in Korea” (84). He began teaching in 1930. Kwang Bok Lee was Park’s theological heir. He expanded on Park’s HP, and he promoted it throughout Korea. Park and Lee differed somewhat on the following points: hermeneutics, tribulation and rapture, the millennium, resurrection and judgment, new heavens and new earth, and nations in heaven. Hansoo Lee commends Kwang Bok Lee for his diligent study of the Scriptures, including his elucidation of historic premillennialism, and for his general positive influence on theology in Korea.

The third chapter (179-227), “Complementary Points to Historic Premillennialism,” is by Kwang Bok Lee (pastor, teacher). His intent is to deal with the perceived weaknesses in HP in order to deflect the criticism from amillennialists (180). The first question is whether nonbelievers are allowed into the millennial kingdom at its beginning. Lee answers in the negative, and he gives several reasons. Only believers in Christ (those living and those resurrected) go into the millennium (Rev 20:3-4). Gog and Magog come into play only after the millennium. To be sure, unbelief will spring up eventually. Some of the children born during the millennium will not be believers. John Walvoord agrees that “the lawbreakers of Gog and Magog are the descendents of the Christian believers who entered into the millennial kingdom” (196).

I doubt that Walvoord would agree with Lee on his interpretation of Jesus’ words that “at the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage” (Matt 22:30). Lee states, “In other words, people will not reproduce the same in the millennium as they do in this world. Yet, the Bible makes clear that there will be descendants in the millennium. No one knows the method of reproduction” (192).

Another weakness in HP is its understanding of Revelation 20 and 21. Chapter 20 is an overview of the millennium, and chapters 21-22 describe it: “... the millennium is the promised new heavens and earth where believers will experience heaven not only spiritually but also physically” (203). Another problem is HP’s neglect of the signs of the times. It also misinterprets the seven successive periods of church history represented by the seven churches in Revelation 2-3. HP is too much like amillennialism: “The fact is, all interpretations of historical premillennialists should differ from that of the Amillennialists” (capitalization sic, 221).

Dr. Lee has dismembered so thoroughly the millennial view which he sets out to defend that one is inclined to question how much HP he still has left. And his quixotic interpretations do not seem helpful to the integration that he touts in the preface.

Chapter four (229-280), “A Critique of Dispensationalism from a Historic Premillennial Perspective: Inappropriately Privileging Israel,” is by Craig Blomberg (Denver Seminary). Blomberg traces the history of dispensationalism from its beginning in the mid-nineteenth century to the development of progressive dispensationalism in our age. He deals with the tribulation and the idea that the church is a temporary substitute for Israel. Most of his time is spent on the issue of Israel

itself. God states in Genesis 12 that Abraham would be blessed and would be a source of blessing – and of cursing. What relevance do the Jews and Israel have today? Half the people of the United States believe that the nation of Israel is the fulfillment of prophecy. Among evangelicals the number rises to 70 percent. One hundred percent of the dispensationalists agree (232).

Israel is the nation “born in a day” in 1948 when Britain voided its mandate to govern Palestine. Its seventy-five year history is impressive. Is it the fulfillment of the prophecies concerning territory and politics? No. There is no question about Paul’s position in Romans 9-11. He is dealing with ethnic Jews, and he foresees a large scale conversion of Jews to Christ shortly before the parousia (232).

What about dispensational premillennialism? What about the national political aspects of Genesis 12, Ezekiel 37-39, and most of the other prophecies? The promises go far beyond anything that has happened so far. They include salvation, prosperity, and land. These passages say nothing that would give Jews a license to establish a state in Palestine (238). This is how the millennial groups line up: “Against both amillennialism and postmillennialism, historic premillennialists agree with the dispensationalist in rejecting supersessionism or replacement theology – the notion that the church has *entirely* become the recipient of all biblical promises to ethnic Jews” (238, his emphasis).

It is not quite that simple. There is nothing in postmillennialism or amillennialism that would exclude leaving a place for the Jews. This reviewer is an amillennialist who regards the present state of Israel as part of prophecy. The Israeli treatment of the Arabs has not been particularly impressive for the people of Yahweh who made them responsible for the orphan, the widow, and the stranger.

Blomberg notes that HP differs from dispensationalism about the quantity and quality of aid given to Israel. Much good is prophesied for the Jewish people, much of which will be received during the millennium. Blomberg observes, “What is noteworthy here, however, is that there is nothing that requires a Jewish political state in power in the geographical territory historically known as Israel. The turning to the Lord by large numbers of Jews could happen all around the world” (266). Blomberg shows that people of faith are the children of Abraham, the paragon of faith: “What could not be clearer in the Bible is, in fact, that from the coming of Christ onward, those through whom all the peoples of the world will be blessed are Christians, Jew and Gentile alike. Thus, the only appropriate application of the promise and threat of Genesis 12:3 today is that all who bless Christians will be blessed and all who curse Christians will be cursed” (237-238).

This book is interesting and valuable on a number of points. It provides much history of millennialism, especially in Korea. It shows some of the theological relationships between a mission sending country and a mission receiving country. It notes the significance of graduate education in another culture. It shows softness toward dispensationalism and a strong animus for amillennialism. It shows that the same differences about the millennium in the English-speaking world are present in Korea. The English of the Korean contributors is impeccable. I doubt that the book would attract many readers from the general evangelical public. It would be of interest to scholars who pay a lot of attention to eschatology. A Korean student writing a paper on the introduction of theological views into her country would do well to consult it. I also have some doubts about whether its stated goal is realistic. It is intended to be an instrument of ecumenicity—bring the scholars together to study the Bible and everyone will agree. “I perceive historic premillennialism as the best fitting framework of biblical eschatology... Historic premillennialism at large proves to be the most intelligent and integrated doctrine of biblical eschatology” (21). Is it possible to convince a large majority of dispensationalists, postmillenarians, and amillenarians that historic premillennialism is superior?

Freeman Barton (Ab.T., M.Div., Ph.D., M.L.S.) is a graduate of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He taught at Berkshire Christian College for fifteen years, worked four years in college libraries, and fifteen at Goddard Library (GCTS, Hamilton). He is the author of two books, *Heaven, Hell, and Hades* on individual eschatology, and *Mary Queen of Scots*

at *Berkshire Christian College*, a detailed analysis of the college's last three years. He has contributed a number of articles to journals, including "Evangelicals in Defense of Hell," *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, and chapters in collections which he edited, including *Our Destiny We Know*. He edited *Henceforth: Journal for Advent Christian Thought* for thirty-eight years.



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Review of *NIV God's Word for Gardeners Bible* edited by Shelley Cramm (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014)

WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

This is a very beautiful and perceptive devotional Bible (NIV 2011), full of edifying insights drawn from gardening (sowing, planting, growing, harvesting) imagery in the Bible. It reminds us that the Bible is itself filled with references to flowers, fruits, vegetables, and grains, and editor Shelley Cram displays her avid love of these and of her Lord in this truly edifying compilation of devotionally oriented expositions.

The thirty-nine page introduction is very helpful and the succeeding analyses of plants and planting, harvests and meals, and other agricultural and comestible activity, as well as flowers and their delights, and related parables, allegories, and imagery also assist in orienting the reader. The care with which Editor Cramm and the editors at Zondervan have put into this study Bible is laudable. The expository articles are set up usually in single page entries throughout the text, identifying a text verse, referencing corresponding verses for comparison or contrast, then following with a brief lesson, including a quotation from one of numerous resources of gardening advice throughout history that aptly illustrates the spiritual point under discussion, ending each entry with a prayer. These articles are organized into four tracks a reader can follow: "Garden Work" draws out analogies about maturing in grace from the metaphorical imagery of preparing soil, sowing, planting, tending, fertilizing, paring, harvesting. For example, her discussion of dust mulch cites a 1947 gardening source to illustrate Proverbs 4:23, "Above all else, guard your heart, for everything you do flows from it." She observes, "Current organic gardening practices recommend applying mulch to the ground to impede the growth of weeds and loss of moisture...We can imagine our garden beds as symbolic of our hearts, susceptible to weeds of ill-thinking and moisture loss – the precious, soul-satisfying sense of God's Spirit evaporating as the day's fear and worries heat up..." (713). "Garden Tour" finds spiritual advice from the garden in Eden straight through to "Revelation's urban garden" (according to the book's promotional flyer). This track contains the entries I enjoyed the most. For example, her commentary on Deuteronomy 11:11 broke out of the one page rule, expanding to four pages, detailing the topography of Israel, including quoting from an 1899 eyewitness account of a journey to Israel (221-224). "Garden Tools" centers on advice about growing our character in godly fashion. For example, 1 Samuel 2:3, "Do not keep talking proudly," is illustrated by a quotation from 1834, pointing out how a humble plant "spreads a fragrance around its wearer" (319). "Garden Stories" comments on the lessons drawn specifically from garden imagery that we find throughout the Bible. For example, her comments on Jesus's teaching on "the true vine" in John 15 amplify to six subsequent entries (1215-1220), referencing gardening sources from 2002, 1974, 1909, and 1883. A very helpful set of appendices include a "table of weights and measures" (1475), annotated endnotes (1476-1490), a bibliography of all sources cited (1491-1504), an "index of readings in canonical order" (1505-1512), and two pages acknowledging all the people and organizations upon which the editor drew to compile this book. And to make it as completely reader friendly as possible, at the bottom of each entry is a brief direction where to go to wend one's way to the next one in the sequence (e.g., "To read another Garden Story, go to page 263 for your next daily reading" [914]).

Altogether, this Bible is 1514 pages. Given the sheer breadth of what Editor Shelley Cramm had to encompass, one cannot expect to have the depth of a book length exposition on the Bible's variety of plants and trees, or even the details expected from an entry in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*. Yet, the details she does select are well chosen, very informative, and work well for her purpose of illustrating spiritual truths. If one wants to know more – there

is the bibliography. This is a first edition, but I noticed relatively few typos to “prune” (see below¹) or questions to be addressed (e.g., on page 296, is there any clear evidence in the Bible text that Jacob’s seventy sons supported their murderer Abimelek, as the devotional entry claims? “[Abimelek’s] slaughter of the 70 men who supported his ascent to power [Judges 9:5]”?). I stopped checking for typos after page 1038, having seen that this is a well-edited text. No editorial team ever catches everything and the few misses can be corrected in the next edition. I believe, however, most readers, enthralled by these delightful expositions, will probably not notice anything.

Also, important to realize is that *God’s Word for Gardeners Bible* does not pretend to replace a solid study Bible. I used it alongside Zondervan’s *Archaeological Study Bible* and *TNIV Study Bible*, both of which have excellent notes. But, at the same time, *God’s Word for Gardeners Bible* is not just a desultory trip through the flowers. If other study Bibles are meat and milk, this one is a nourishing meal of vegetables, full of practical, digestible, devotional insights, as skilled compiler Cramm provides a careful exposition of nearly every herb and plant and tree and flower in the Bible. It is an immense offering. She writes with great beauty of phrase, apt insights, quotations from an astonishing variety of garden books from ancient to contemporary times. Her readings are not haphazard; they are well thought-through, and she has dug deeply into each passage she explains, ascertained the point that Scripture is making, as it describes the bitter taste of an herb or the growth of a tree or the nourishment from a hidden tuber that lets us see a dimension of what the Bible text is revealing that we may not have glimpsed. An example is her entries in the Song of Solomon. She wisely notes, “And while this book is certainly a story of God-established favor for romantic love, some say this is also a picture of God’s love for us, of Christ’s love for the church,” deftly avoiding the contention between those who see it strictly as a love poem and those who spiritualize it completely until it is just about Christ and us. Essentially, she is asking a new question: what does the Scripture intend to teach us in each particular reference to a plant or a tree? And she answers by taking the reference at face value, explaining it, and then drawing out the spiritual dimension she sees being applied in the text.

Today, we are told, over half of the world’s population live in urban centers (54% according to both the United Nations [www.un.org] and the World Health Organization [www.who.int]). And, though we still sing the hymn “Come, Ye Thankful People, Come”: “First the blade, and then the ear, then the full corn shall appear. Lord of harvest, grant that we wholesome grain and pure may be,” the pavement-covered reality for many of us is very different than that of the people whom author Henry Alford was addressing in 1844. Small city gardens and window boxes (both of which are celebrated in *God’s Word for Gardeners Bible*) can still remind us to link to the rest of God’s creation and teach us something about how God tends and grows the physical world around us and, in extension, the spiritual world within us.

Each time I reach the end of the Bible and start over again I try to follow a different theme that the Lord lays on my heart and see how it develops and expands my understanding of how to please God and walk more nearly down the center of God’s will. This study Bible filled me with delight and provided a helpful perspective on many Scriptures. For example, while Shelley Cramm was highlighting Psalm 139:24 and then 146:5 for us, I paused between them to contemplate Psalm 144:12 as well: “Then our sons in their youth will be like well-nurtured plants, and our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace.” Why? Because, by page 703, her tour through the

1 Page 126, 2nd paragraph, line 1, after word #8 needs a “to” to read: “Israelites to make”; p. 288, paragraph after the inset quotation, line 3, after the 6th complete word needs an “of” to read: “picture of righteous”; p. 443, 2nd paragraph, next to last line, 3rd and 4th words from the end are reversed, but should read: “Yet in the darkness”; p. 470, 4th paragraph of text, 2nd line, 3rd and 4th words from the end of the line repeat “Yet” twice; p. 558, paragraph after the quotation, line 3, 2nd complete word “is” should be “in” to read: “instilling in us”; p. 687, paragraph after quotation, line 1, omit the stray word #5 “us” to read: “encouraged to be”; p. 1228, 2nd paragraph, 5th line, omit stray word #2 “of” to read: “Jesus’ demeanor must”; p. 1249, paragraph 3, 2nd line, omit stray word #2 “of” to read: “fruits familiar”; p.1282, paragraph after quotation, line 6, omit stray parenthesis mark between words 6 and 7.

imagery had opened my eyes to notice every agricultural reference and, as a father of a son myself, I was now enjoying the fruit of expanded vision, enriched by an image I had not previously noticed. So this was a great gift.

Rev. Dr. William David Spencer is Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Theology and the Arts at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Boston Campus/Center of Urban Ministerial Education and is cofounder and coeditor of *Africanus Journal*. His most recent books are *Redeeming the Screens: Living Stories of Media "Ministers" Bringing the Message of Jesus Christ to the Entertainment Industry* (edited with Jeanne DeFazio) (2016) and the award-winning novel *Name in the Papers* (2013). He blogs with his wife, the Rev. Dr. Aida Besançon Spencer, at aandwspencer.com (Applying Biblical Truths Today).



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Redeeming the Screens

Living Stories of Media "Ministers"
Bringing the Message of Jesus Christ
to the Entertainment Industry

EDITED BY JEANNE C. DEFazio &
WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

How does the future look to us? Well, clearly we realize we now live in a world of screens, from the microcosmic universe of the smartphone . . . to the imposing vigil of the multiplex giants, looming over us in Imax and 3-D—more "real" than real—and to all the screens in between, from computers to iPads, to muted, high definition flat-screens pouring out images in homes, restaurants, banks, businesses, schools, doctors' offices, and hospitals, and on and on everywhere we turn. We cannot change this reality, so what these Christians, and so many like them are doing is trying to find ways to redeem what we put on these screens: what message we are sending out in word and image to the watching world.

So, clearly, our task, whether we have been called to create or not, is to join these artists as "screen redeemers," assisting the Holy Spirit in reconciling the world to God (2 Cor 5:18–19) through helping the pervasively influential means of the media adjust its goals to the mission of Jesus Christ.

"*Redeeming the Screens*' words endorse the challenge of bringing Christ to the modern media. I am proud to be a Catholic priest as well as a member of SAG-AFTRA, sharing my love for Jesus on Christian TV stations each week and also doing films and commercials on the secular scene."

—MICHAEL MANNING, TV host of *Word in the World*. Author of *15 Faces of God*

"*Redeeming The Screens* makes such impressive sense that empowering entertainment for the sake of our Lord's glory has become possible. Anyone involved in media production will treasure this book because it provides live models of how ministers combine their passion, talents, and faith to deliver God's truth. This book has provided a superb example of how this is to be accomplished. A warm and glowing book which I will share with many of my personal and professional friends."

—JOSEPH NASSRALLA, CEO & Founder of The Way TV, Duarte, CA

"Although all Christians are called to be lights, few will ever know the depth of this calling the men and women portrayed in this book have known. Their stories will challenge, humble, and inspire you to break out of your protective bubble and go into all the world and preach the gospel, even if that world is on Sunset Boulevard."

—MICHELE PILLAR, Speaker; Author of *Untangled*; three-time Grammy Award-nominated singer

Jeanne C. DeFazio holds an MA in Religion from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She is currently an Athanasian Teaching Scholar at Gordon-Conwell's Center for Urban Ministerial Education in Boston and a co-author with Teresa Flowers of *How to Have an Attitude of Gratitude on the Night Shift* (2014) and co-editor with John P. Lathrop of *Creative Ways to Build Christian Community* (2013).

William David Spencer is Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Theology and the Arts at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Boston Center for Urban Ministerial Education. He is the recipient of twenty one awards for writing and editing and is the author of several hundred articles, reviews, poems, stories, and thirteen previous books, including his latest, the urban adventure novel *Name in the Papers*.

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WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

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**Review of *Our Global Families: Christians Embracing Common Identity in a Changing World* by Todd M. Johnson and Cindy M. Wu
(Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015)**

MEGAN E. LIETZ

In *Our Global Families*, Todd Johnson and Cindy Wu explore how a common identity can facilitate the pursuit of unity, justice, and peace in a dynamic and interconnected world. Johnson, Associate Professor and Director of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell, uses his expertise as a demographer to capture readers with compelling statistics and paint a multifaceted picture of the global church. Wu, a GCTS alumna (MAR), complements Johnson's voice as seen in illustrations from her experiences in ministry and her perspective as an Asian woman. Together, the authors produce a work that is both scholarly and practical, making people aware of the impact of globalization while equipping them to respond from the framework of family. Writing from an evangelical point of view to Christians in general, Johnson and Wu work to facilitate a growing awareness of the Christian and human family, foster a common identity, and encourage the development of irenic relationships.

In the opening section of their book, the authors explore trends within global Christianity with an emphasis on how, in the previous 115 years, it has become a faith that does not draw simply from a dominant cultural, political, or linguistic framework, but from diverse perspectives (15). They go on to explore the global religious landscape and how globalization contributes to an unprecedented interconnectedness that “[has] the power to bring us together or to pull us apart” (39). In Part Two, Johnson and Wu lay a theological foundation for both Christian identity and shared humanity. They suggest that, to be responsible Christians and global citizens, Christian believers should embrace their God-given connection with all people and see their primary identity as followers of Christ, shaped by universal as well as provincial realities. In the third section of their book, the authors explore ways in which solidarity can be developed among Christians and within the global human family. They call believers to have a strong Christian identity while loving and respecting all people. More specifically, they suggest that solidarity be developed through covenantal hospitality (138-139). In their final section, the authors discuss the limitations of what Christians can do, thus checking unbridled and potentially counter-productive optimism, while providing practical advice on what can be done to work towards unity, justice and peace in the world.

Johnson and Wu build a firm theological foundation that both encourages and equips people to foster life-giving unity in our Christian and global families. I found the strength of the book to be in its use of Scripture and evangelical values to support engagement with other Christian denominations and religious beliefs. While pursuits of social justice and ecumenisms are often associated with more theologically liberal traditions, Johnson and Wu spur evangelicals to action while drawing upon worldviews and language this constituency can understand and receive. Though, at times, I found the text to be too broad and lacking in depth, it does a masterful job at laying a foundation for reflection on the issue of forging a common identity. It positions people for deeper explorations and equips them to begin taking viable actions towards fostering unity, justice, and peace in an interconnected world. Furthermore, the authors' framing and discussion of the issues reveal that, though the book is introductory, the knowledge that undergirds their arguments is nuanced and complex. On this account, *Global Families* is appropriate for a foundational seminary course, people beginning to engage outside of their theological tradition, or individuals seeking a viable framework for ecumenical activities or interfaith dialogue. It offers an accessible introduction for Christians to work across theological divisions to continue Christ's work of unity, justice, and peace in the world.

Megan Lietz is a proud alumna of Gordon-Conwell's Center for Urban Ministerial Education, where she received her Masters of Divinity. She now serves as a Research Associate at the Emmanuel Gospel Center, a Boston-based ministry committed to the vitality of urban churches and their communities, and is pursuing ordination at Abundant Life Church in Cambridge, MA.

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REACHING FOR THE NEW JERUSALEM

A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City

Edited by
SEONG HYUN PARK

AÍDA BESANÇON SPENCER

WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

The task of this book is to examine the biblical and theological meaning of the city and our mission within it. It starts with the premise that the garden is lost, and we are headed toward the New Jerusalem, the city of God. In the meanwhile, we dwell in earthly cities that need to be adjusted to God's city: "[T]he fall has conditioned us to fear the city . . . though, historically, God intended it to provide safety, even refuge. . . . We have to band together and act to take back our communities if we are to help God in the divine task of reconciling the world to Godself by assisting God in adjusting our communities to God's New Jerusalem, rebuilding our own cities of Enoch on the blueprints of Christ . . . to go into all the world and share his good news, building the Christian community along the lines of the New Jerusalem, a city of light in which God is revealed." (from the Introduction by William David Spencer)

Toward achieving this goal, this single, accessible volume brings together the biblical, the systematic, and the practical aspects of urban ministry by various contributors who are urban practitioners and theologians themselves, and have taught at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Boston Campus.

URBAN VOICE 978-1-62564-060-4 / \$26 / 234 PP. / PAPER

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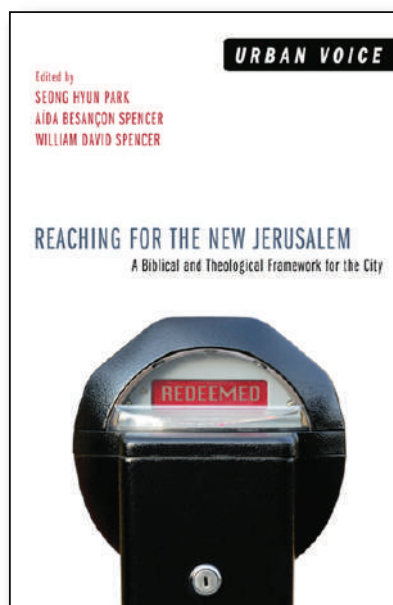
WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER (ThD, Boston University School of Theology) is Ranked Adjunct Professor of Theology and the Arts at the Boston Campus of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He is the author of *Mysterium and Mystery: The Clerical Crime Novel*, *Dread Jesus*, *Name in the Papers: An Urban Adventure Novel*, and co-editor of *Chanting Down Babylon: The Rastafari Reader*.

"The many authors of this book offer a fresh paradigm for our mission and ministry in the city—to rebuild our cities of Enoch on the blueprint plans of the New Jerusalem, the blueprints of Christ."

ELDIN VILLAFANE, Professor of Christian Social Ethics; Founding Director of the Center for Urban Ministerial Education (CUME), Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

"Written by a diverse cadre of urban theological specialists and practitioners, this compilation is timely, scholarly, relevant, probing, and enlightening. Like a spiritual laser, rays of hope and healing keep flashing through the pages of these articles written by men and women of solid biblical faith who every day work, research, teach, and 'pray for the peace of the city' as they point us to the 'beautiful city of God.'"

MICHAEL E. HAYNES, Pastor Emeritus, Twelfth Baptist Church, Boston, MA



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Review of *Be Not Afraid: How One Polish Pastor Triumphed over Hitler, Stalin and Death Itself* by Jozef Baluczynski as told to Rob Starner (self-published in the USA by Rob Starner, 2015)

WOODIE C. S. TERRELL

“And they overcame him (the devil) by the blood of the Lamb, and by the Word of their testimony. And they loved not their lives unto the death” Revelation 12:11

What a wonderful and exciting adventure this little book is. The glimpses behind the foul stench of Nazi occupation and devastation of so many lives and the subsequent tossing of people’s lives to suit the mandates of Stalin’s regime are of themselves a fascinating reading experience, but within these stories is the life of an extraordinary man. Jozef Baluczynski has shared his remarkable reminiscences and inspiring testimony with Christians of his own country and many others, and now his daughter and son-in-law have brought his words to us in the West. Most of us in the West know little of the desperate lives of the people of Poland and the Eastern European Countries during the devastation of two wars and Communist occupation. Jozef Baluczynski shares their amazing chronicle of perseverance through the hell of both Hitler and Stalin. This is a man with minimal schooling but a ravenous love of and passion to share the Word of God.

I was quickly absorbed into the journey of Jozef Baluczynski. I found my curiosity clamoring to know what happened to him, his family, and the world around him. I felt transported into a world beyond my culture and understanding, and whirling into a depth of faith of which I have only heard. Over and over, Jozef often pauses to emphasize pastorally some of the lessons learned as he maneuvered through his war-torn world as a Christian, evangelist, and pastor, leading others in their seemingly impossible lives of Christian faith. His direct conversations with the reader share faith lessons that go deeper into prayer, a deep understanding of Scripture, and a challenge most unexpected. Jozef Baluczynski’s continual goal is to win his reader to know, love, and follow Christ as Savior and Lord, and to challenge the reader too to follow Jesus in service.

This is not an academic study, but serious academics would do well to read prayerfully its pages. More than a devotional or inspirational quick read, Jozef’s amazing walk of faith against all odds will challenge even the strongest Christian and encourage those struggling with even the most evil of challenges.

Woodie C. S. Terrell presently works with and pastors at a women’s homeless shelter. Her husband, George, and she spent several years in missions as part of a very cultic Jesus-people group, but when they left, they were able to rebuild their lives and help others get out of the group and get back on their feet and follow Christ. Both attended seminary at the American Christian College and Seminary. They were ordained through the International Gospel Fellowship of Churches and Ministries in 1998.

Review of *Wesley on the Christian Life: The Heart Renewed in Love* by Fred Sanders (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015)

DAVID A. ESCOBAR ARCAJ

Wesley on the Christian Life begins by making two assertions: first that “evangelicals inside of Methodism are well aware that the Methodist movement has become what it was once a reaction against” and second that “there is a great need for Wesley’s kind of stirring in our time because his message is medicinal for much that ails us all today” (15). Regarding this latter point, *Wesley on the Christian Life* states of Wesley:

He perceived the inherent unity of things that we have, to our harm, learned to think of as separate, or even as opposites. He saw that holiness of heart and life was internally and necessarily linked to the free forgiveness of sins. He saw the connection between justification and sanctification, and was able to communicate it powerfully. He was possessed of one central faith, that man is justified by faith and perfected by love (15).

The task of *Wesley on the Christian Life* is two-fold: (1) to introduce Wesley’s theology and spirituality and (2) “to recommend (with a few caveats) a generally Wesleyan approach to living a balanced Christian life” (15). The author Fred Sanders (a Wesleyan theologian), who came to faith in Jesus Christ in a Methodist youth group, presents the warmhearted evangelical Protestant John Wesley. His approach is as follows:

His teaching on the Christian life trades heavily on being born again, on deeply felt heart religion, on justification by faith alone, on awareness of original sin and total dependence on God’s grace, on active cultivation of spiritual disciplines, and on striving for growth in knowledge and grace. His view of the Christian life is fed by the great tradition of Christian orthodoxy and is crowned by an experiential, evangelical Trinitarianism (18).

Wesley on the Christian Life closes its introduction by acknowledging the role of John’s brother Charles Wesley, who “not only co-labored with John in the work of revival, but also actually preceded him in several important ways,” (19) and by underscoring that John Wesley “was above all a preacher and a pastoral theologian,” one whose field of expertise can be called “practical divinity” (21).

Chapter one of *Wesley on the Christian Life* briefly describes John Wesley’s life and character. The aim is to present John Wesley as a spiritual guide. Sanders narrates his early life, the background of his grandparents (nonconformists or dissenters from the Church of England), his evangelical conversion at Aldersgate, his role in the 1740s revival, the ways he built and organized the Methodist movement, and facets of his personal life particularly his marriage.

Chapter two focuses on John Wesley’s evangelical conversion at Aldersgate. The aim is to describe why John Wesley considered that Anglicans in the 1700s were *almost Christians*, namely, his theological convictions guiding the doctrine of justification and regeneration and his challenge and call for the church in his time to live and embrace Scriptural Christianity.

Chapter three explores John Wesley’s approach to Christianity as a heart religion and defend it against misunderstandings. Sanders states the reasons for Wesley’s view: a spiritual decline in eighteenth century England that calls for a focus on regeneration and justification; the human problem is a heart problem; his indebtedness to George Whitefield and Puritanism; the impact and relationship of heart religion to singing and hymnology; and the transition from holy temper to holy mercy that causes John Wesley to affirm that “mere knowledge is confessedly too weak” (101) and to call (when writing to Wilberforce) for the abolition of slavery in England. “It was heart religion that brought down slavery” (100).

Chapter four examines in what ways the first epistle of John defined John Wesley as a theologian. The aim is to present why 1 John was John Wesley's favorite book. Sanders cautions about the danger of a "canon within a canon," stating that 1 John called the attention of John Wesley because in this epistle he found "a portrayal of the Christian life as fellowship with God in the light" (105), helping us understand Wesley's theology by reading it as "John first, then Paul" or "John plus Paul." Wesley drew from Protestant and Catholic traditions for his Protestant doctrine of holiness.

Chapter five delves into John Wesley's explanation of the role of justification by faith for conversion and as the basis for sanctification. Sanders's aim is to present how John Wesley sought to affirm article eleven of the Thirty-Nine articles of the Church of England, while guarding it from or against antinomian understandings. Chapter five describes various events that shaped John Wesley, namely, his reading and reaction to James Hervey's work *Theron and Aspasio*, which was indebted to Marshall's *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*; his sermon entitled "The Lord of Righteousness," preached as a reflection on the disagreements that led to division in the church, and his troubled engagement with the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness (due to his intuition that it can lead to believers shielding themselves from the demands of the law, resulting in antinomianism).

Chapter six describes John Wesley's articulation of the doctrine of grace as it includes aspects of forgiveness and empowerment. Sanders describes John Wesley's holistic doctrine of grace ("first grace, then law"), his nomophilic doctrine of grace as seen in the table of contents of the *Standard Sermons* and in the principles derived from his exposition of the Sermon of the Mount. His doctrine of grace permeates his preaching (which led to evangelical awakening in the eighteenth century) and which includes "the power of God for transformation" (170).

Chapter seven focuses on John Wesley's articulation of the means of grace. John Wesley's goal for ministry was "to bring the soul into personal contact with the gracious God" (173) by God's appointed means of grace. Sanders delves into John Wesley's calls for balance between the Moravians' theological presuppositions (meaning their underestimation of the means) and others' overestimation of the means of grace. Charles Wesley sang about John Wesley's means of grace. John Wesley saw the danger in lumping together the means of grace and the spiritual disciplines. He had an exhaustive list of spiritual disciplines, which includes: prayer, searching the Scriptures, the Lord's Prayer, meditating, and Christian conferences.

Chapter eight tackles John Wesley's teaching that Jesus "saves to the uttermost," which is also called: entire sanctification, Christian perfection, and perfect love. Sanders presents John Wesley's vision of the perfect life. Sanders acknowledges that this is perhaps Wesley's most controversial teaching and the one that separates the Methodist from the Calvinist-Evangelical wings of the Revival. He provides Wesley's definition of sanctification and whether it can be completed; examines the principle of real change; analyzes Wesley's characterization of the benefits of union with Christ; explains what is Christian perfection; elaborates on the major objections to Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection, and lays out for the reader a Reformed critique and commendation of Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection (J.I. Packer's *Keep in Step with the Spirit*).

Chapter nine delves into John Wesley's articulation of catholicity, meaning that "a Christian's life could not live out in isolation from the universal church" (219). Sanders presents the catholic spirit of John Wesley. He describes the great tradition of Christian spirituality; Wesley's admonition against triumphalism and narrowness in his sermons; Wesley's efforts at an ecumenism that reached "across time, through the great tradition" (235) and Wesley's cooperation across the Calvinist-Arminian divide. Spurgeon, a Calvinist Baptist, stated that "Wesleyanism wasn't the main danger of his, or any, age. The main danger is Christians failing to be wide awake, failing to be fully Christian" (239-40).

Finally, chapter ten briefly explains the Trinitarian character and pattern of John Wesley's theology and how it undergirds his spirituality. Sanders presents the Trinitarian theology of John Wesley. He begins with an appreciation of Wesley's trinitarianism; focuses on the gospel-centeredness and experientially-based character of Wesley's trinitarianism; the Trinitarian theology of Methodism in Charles Wesley's hymns, and cites evidence in Wesley's sermons that "true religion is Trinitarian" (250).

There are two things that I appreciate about *Wesley on the Christian Life*. One is the potential for learning (and for retrieving the Christian tradition for the renewal of the church) that the theology of John Wesley has for the contemporary American evangelical church. The other thing that I value about this biography is the practical character and identity of John Wesley. We may disagree about particular and core doctrinal issues, but we need to treasure that practical theology and divinity as well as practical concerns of the Methodist minister who is celebrated and esteemed not only by the Christ followers and disciples of Wesleyan, Methodist, Holiness, Pentecostal, and Charismatic churches worldwide, but also by any Gospel-lover and serious student of the Scriptures and church history who should be wholeheartedly grateful for Wesley's thinking on what it means to live as a Christian.

David A. Escobar Arcay is professor of education and leadership at Nova Southeastern University, Orlando, Florida and serves as instructor for Gordon-Conwell. He is a graduate of Boston College (Ph.D.), Harvard University Graduate School of Education (M.Ed.) and Rhode Island College (M.A.T.). He is also a triple *summa cum laude* Gordon-Conwell graduate (M.A., M.Div, and Th.M.) where he was awarded the Christian Social Thought and Presidential Awards. His passion for The Great Tradition, the Reformers and the Puritan theologians has led him to study for a M.A. in Christian and Classical Studies at Knox Seminary in Fort Lauderdale, FL and a Th.M. in Reformation and Post-Reformation and Systematic Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary.

Review of *The Energy of Forgiveness: Lessons from Those in Restorative Dialogue* by Mark S. Umbreit, Jennifer Blevins, and Ted Lewis (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015)

CHARLENE EBER

In *The Energy of Forgiveness: Lessons from Those in Restorative Dialogue*, “the authors describe many paths for achieving wholeness and healing through forgiveness...the underlying premise of the book is that if we connect with the suffering of others, tame our egos and embrace humility, cultivate mindfulness and presence and tap into the mindfulness of a story, we can move beyond human conflict and achieve reconciliation” (xi).

The authors’ introductory chapter identifies the energy of forgiveness as a gift of awakening and restorative dialogue as a path to healing wounds. Part one explores forgiveness for victims of crimes, with illustrations depicting how a tragic car crash gave way to reconciliation, how a woman in prison found answers to her life, and how another woman connected with her father’s murderer. Part two demonstrates forgiveness illustrated by examples of the coming together of broken families and a daughter’s journey to recovery from past incest. Part three examines forgiveness in schools, showing how a circle of sixty overcame racism and how a classroom out of control calmed down. Part four examines forgiveness in the workplace, describing how a hospital staff transcended workplace tension and how a nonprofit organization found a new beginning. Part five analyzed forgiveness after an act of vandalism united a high school, showing what brought a new-Nazi youth to apologize, how a 9/11 death threat opened a door for Muslims, and how a neighborhood community circle challenged everyone’s heart. The book concludes with thoughts on how an effective witness for peace produced forgiveness.

The authors wrote this book “to show that healing and wholeness can be attained even in situations where inconceivable pain and injustice have been experienced” (xi). Their sources included accounts from several clinical settings where the book’s strategies on practicing forgiveness were applied. They also referenced books, periodicals, and online journals and quarterlies including: *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life, Peace Making Circles and Urban Youth*. The book’s intended audience is multicultural, multiracial, urban-oriented, and focuses on the Bible in a cooperative manner.

I agree strongly with the book’s explanation of forgiveness as a profound, life-changing experience for people who have been hurt by others: “Forgiveness is paradoxical in that if one relies on forgiveness language or if others prescribe it as an expectation, the depth of that experience can be significantly compromised. By the same token, many people experience deep forgiveness without ever using the language of forgiveness” (back cover endorsement).

The strength of this book lies in its timely topic. Forgiveness is key to reconciliation in societies, devastated, as they currently are by violent mass shootings, as well as other acts of terrorism and racial and cultural tension. I appreciated how biblically sound *The Energy of Forgiveness* is. Jesus calls each of us to forgive so that we may be forgiven (cf. Matt 6:9–13). According to Mark 3:28, God’s forgiveness is not based on the magnitude of the sin, but the magnitude of His love. Sins are not too great for God’s complete and unconditional love. The Bible does actually mention one unforgivable sin—an attitude of defiant hostility toward God that prevents us from accepting his forgiveness. Those who do not want his forgiveness are out of its reach. But forgiveness is the attitude of a loving heart. And it is reciprocal: a heart which accepts God’s love and forgiveness and reaches out to extend that love and forgiveness to others. The authors bring this spiritual reality home beautifully in *The Energy of Forgiveness*. I appreciated its principles and strategies for individual and collective forgiveness. They made this book an excellent resource.

Charlene Eber has been a celebrated cooking show hostess, TV and film producer, and director. She has contributed a chapter to editors Jeanne DeFazio and William David Spencer's *Redeeming the Screens*.



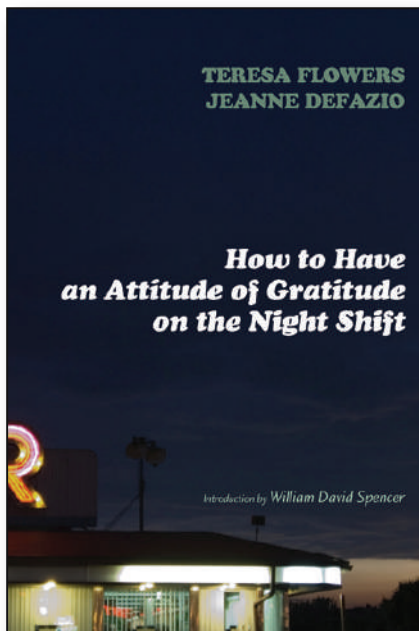
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—Dr. William David Spencer, Co-founder with his wife, Dr. Aida Besançon Spencer, House of Prisca and Aquila Series for Wipf and Stock Publishing, South Hamilton, MA

How to Have an Attitude of Gratitude on the Night Shift



**TERESA FLOWERS
JEANNE DEFAZIO**

Introduction by William David Spencer

“The world needs the kind of simple, loving, faith-filled philosophy espoused in *How to Have an Attitude of Gratitude on the Night Shift*. It has a searing beauty that reaches deep down into one’s heart.”

—TONY DUKE, founder, Boys and Girls Harbor, East Hampton, NY

“*How to Have an Attitude of Gratitude on the Night Shift*, with poetry by Teresa Flowers and narration by Jeanne DeFazio, is a precious collection of brilliant invocations of healing and grace for everyone in this world of trial and tribulation. It is a beautiful jewel to keep for everyone to read.”

—TED BAEHR, founder, MOVIEGUIDE®, Camarillo, CA

“In a world where the sacredness of youth is desecrated by abortion, abuse, and divorce, the poetry of Teresa offers us images of hope and dignity, the hope and dignity that only God’s love and power can bring. Read Teresa’s poetic words and feel a surge of the life of God sweeping into our broken world with an intimate embrace.”

—FATHER MICHAEL MANNING, Catholic priest whose ministry is television, *The Word in the World*, Riverside, CA

ISBN: 978-1-4982-0776-8 / \$5 / 36 pp. / paper

Teresa Flowers is a Deacon at Pilgrim Church in Beverly, MA and the Director of Pilgrim Church’s Community Meals Program. She is a contributing author to the book *Creative Ways to Build Christian Community*, which is co-edited by Jeanne C. DeFazio and John P. Lathrop (2013).

Jeanne DeFazio holds an MA in Religion from Gordon Conwell Seminary. She is currently an Athanasian Scholar at Gordon Conwell’s Center for Urban Ministerial Education in Boston and the co-editor, with John P. Lathrop, of the book, *Creative Ways to Build Christian Community* (2013).

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**Review of *Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith* edited by Jeffrey W. Barbeau and Beth Felker Jones
(Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015)**

WOODROW E. WALTON

Barbeau and Felker's *Spirit of God* is a collection of fourteen presentations given at the twenty-third annual Wheaton College Theology Conference which deals with Christian renewal in the community of faith as expressed in the subtitle. It is divided into two major parts. The first part presents perspectives from both biblical and historical research. The second section focuses on doctrinal and practical issues.

The biblical and historical section is not a pure narrative type of biblical and historical study, but rather a comparative history both in its biblical presentation and in its examination of subsequent Christian history. In chapter two, where Sandra Richter deals with the work of the Holy Spirit in Scripture, she compares the work of the Holy Spirit, as related in the older testament with what is described in the New Testament. While different in substance, but not in kind, Gregory W. Lee compares "The Spirit's Self-Testimony" as found within the Christian experience in the Eastern Mediterranean world with that of the Christian experience in the Western. He chooses Basil of Caesarea as representative of the Eastern Church and Augustine of Hippo of the Western.

In chapter four, Matthew Levering deals with a long-standing controversy over inclusion of the phrase "and of the Son" (*filioque*), first done at the Synod of Braga in A.D. 675, in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed. It was opposed by the eastern branch of the Church, but favored by the Church in the West. In 1013, the Roman Church added its stamp of approval. Levering's focus is on Thomas Aquinas' handling of the controversy since, by his time (the late thirteenth century), there were divergent views on the procession of the Holy Spirit on both sides (Western [Roman] and Eastern [Orthodox]). Levering does a masterful job on the progression of the discussions from Aquinas' time into the present twenty-first century.

Chapters five, seven, and eight focus on the Pentecostal "experience." Jeffrey Barbeau traces modern "Pentecostal" and "Holiness" influences back to the eighteenth century Wesleyan revivals. Allen Anderson, in chapter seven, centers primarily on the global dynamic of the "baptism" of/in the Holy Spirit as it occurred in Africa south of the Sahara, South America, India, and China, and barely touches upon the impact of Pentecostal Churches in North America. Estrela Alexander picks up what Barbeau and Anderson have left undone, but, rather than addressing the Pentecostal and Charismatic renewal as it influenced the various denominations within the United States and Canada, she focuses upon the African American churches.

With regard to the aforementioned chapters, this reviewer found Estrela Alexander's chapter the most interesting part of the entire book. Of all that is written, as far as this writer is aware, little has been written on the role of the Holy Spirit within the African American churches as a whole and of the differences that exist among the different African American denominations.

The second half of *Spirit of God* deals with doctrinal and practical issues such as biblical interpretation (Kevin Vanhoozer), creation theology (Amos Yong), salvation (Michael Welker), worship (Geoffrey Wainwright), social justice (Douglas Petersen), and Christian unity (Timothy George). In the closing chapter, Jeffrey Barbeau and Beth Jones offer their understanding of how the renewal that the Holy Spirit brings to the global Christian community affects the life of that community in both faith and practice.

There is no clearly enumerated order of specifics as to how the Holy Spirit brings about Christian renewal within the global church. This reviewer does see a logical pattern of thought that

emerges from the different contributions. Building upon the ancient Trinitarian life of the church, the Holy Spirit not only “pours out” God love into “our hearts” (Rom 5:5) by which we are saved, the Spirit also sanctifies us by conforming us into the likeness of Jesus. Once this occurs, the Holy Spirit then empowers the church to go into all creation with the Good News both in witness and in social justice. This is where the hermeneutical issue is resolved. Kevin Vanhoozer states it perfectly: “Biblical interpretation is ultimately a means of spiritual formation, of transformation unto Christlikeness (p. 165).” This reviewer heard a person recently say that the best interpretation of the Bible was not something he read but his father’s life.

Wainwright’s discussion on the Spirit of God and worship summarizes the book best (p. 196) when he cites the opening of “The Order for the Administration of the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion” in the Church of England’s *Book of Common Prayer*: “Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.”¹ The book is worth the reading for pastor, student, and layperson.

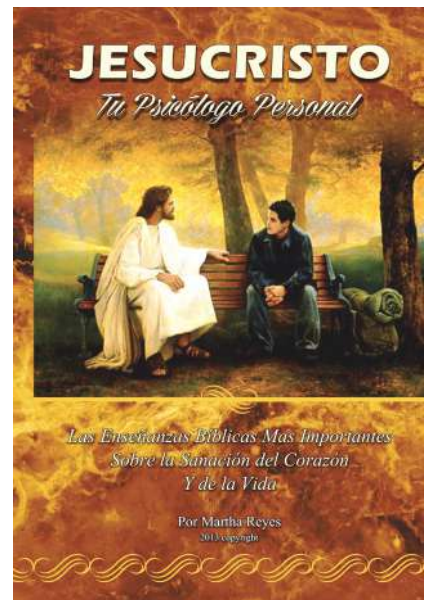
Woodrow E. Walton, D. Min, is a retired minister of the General Council of the Assemblies of God and has had experience in the pastorate, the mission field (Africa and Mexico), healthcare and correctional facilities, rescue missions, and truck stops over the years. He holds a B.A. from Texas Christian University; a B.D. (M. Div.) from Duke Divinity School of Duke University; an M.A. from the University of Oklahoma; and a D. Min., from Oral Roberts University.

JESUCRISTO, Tu Psicólogo Personal

Este libro está dedicado a todos los que pacientemente sufren sin perder la esperanza; a los que aún en medio del llanto, encuentran momentos para sonreír; a aquellos capaces de intentar una y otra vez el proceso que re-escribe una historia; a aquellos a quienes la vida ha impuesto una doble carga la cual han aceptado con mansedumbre y fidelidad; a aquellos que escogen creer a pesar de los silencios y las ausencias, y a aquellos quienes conservan su mirada en la meta sin desvanecer. Para todos ellos hay una respuesta necesaria y valiosa al final de esta encrucijada. Está en vísperas de revelarse al dialogar con Jesucristo como psicólogo personal.

Por Martha Reyes, Copyright 2013

MARTHA REYES, international inspirational singer, founder of Hosanna Foundation and PhD candidate in Psychology is the author of *Jesús y la Mujer Herida (Jesus and the Wounded Woman)* and *Jesucristo, Tu Psicólogo Personal (Jesus is Your Own Personal Psychologist)*, Martha’s books music CDs, and DVDs of her performances and teachings are available for purchase via hosannafoundation.com and marthareyes.com.



1 <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-worship/worship/book-of-common-prayer/the-lord's-supper-or-holy-communion.aspx>, accessed 1 August 2016.

Review of *Integrative Approaches to Psychology and Christianity: An Introduction to Worldview Issues, Philosophical Foundations, and Models of Integration*, third edition, by David N. Entwistle (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2015)

MARTHA REYES

This book's introduction, "The Fork in the Road," explains that Christianity is more than theology, it is an encounter with Jesus that redeems and reorients human lives and less a system of thought than it is a commitment to follow God with heart and mind and soul that lays claim to all of life (3). I identified with this statement as a psychologist myself and the founder of Hosanna Foundation, where I counsel, free of charge, low income Hispanic women and men. I found this book to be a valuable resource because its chapters explore historical views on faith and science and offer a comparison of the soul of psychology and the psyche of the soul. The book explains, in laymen's terms, epistemology as a way of knowing truth, the nature of world views and metaphysics, the philosophy of anthropology, how to understand and make models of interaction (antagonistic models of disciplinary relationship, intermediate models of disciplinary relationship, integrative models of disciplinary relationship), and the integration of research and practice. This is the third edition of this book, which includes six models for relating Christianity to psychology. The book ends with emphasis on the reader discerning his/her place in the integration process.

For readers unfamiliar with earlier editions of the book, the thesis is identified by its author: "To reclaim a holistic view of God's sovereignty that will promote an integrative framework that is both psychologically and theologically sound" (xi). The author wrote this book to demonstrate that the disciplines of psychology and theology share an overlapping interest in the nature and functioning of human beings. I found the book to be scripturally aligned, egalitarian in approach and intended for a multicultural audience.

Author David N. Entwistle is a licensed psychologist who spent the first decade of his professional life providing psychotherapy in residential and outpatient settings. Since 1996, he has been on the faculty of Malone College in Canton, OH, where he has served as chair of the Psychology Department and has taught courses in the undergraduate psychology, graduate counseling, and graduate Christian ministries programs. In addition to teaching and writing, Entwistle conducts research on how patients cope with chronic medical conditions. This research served as a basis for his models of integration of research and the practice of psychology.

As the author explains, this book is born out of a desire to help Christians who are interested in the study or application of psychology to walk worthy of the vocation. I agree with the author and am convinced that Christian faith and Christian theology are critical to the discipline and practice of psychology. I was also encouraged by the author's prayer for his book to lead its readers to worship God as they consider the work of God's hands and recognize their place within God's world (ix-x). This book's strengths include questions at the end of each chapter to help readers evaluate both the material and their own approach to integration. I found the book to be ideal as a textbook for students of psychology and other behavioral and social sciences (social work, sociology, theology, counseling, pastoral counseling) at both the graduate and undergraduate level. It is also commendable as a text for seminary courses because is written for the broader readership of psychologists, counselors, pastors who are interested in integration.

Martha Reyes is an inspirational singer, the author of *Jesús y la Mujer Herida (Jesus and the Wounded Woman)* and *Jesucristo, Tu Psicólogo Personal (Jesus is Your Own Personal Psychologist)*. A psychologist and the founder of Hosanna Foundation, she is a contributing author to *Redeeming the Screens*, edited by Jeanne DeFazio and William David Spencer.

Review of *Untangled: A True-to-Life Story* by Michele Pillar (self-published, 2014 [Savage, MN: Broadstreet, 2016])

SHERI PEDIGO

Untangled consists of personal, transparent stories written in cinematic or novel style about the life of Michele Pillar, a contemporary Christian music singer and songwriter who has earned three Grammy Award nominations. She is an author and speaker who counsels and ministers nationwide. *Untangled* focuses on the Bible as God's revelation using Scripture to relate its message.

The introduction, "You Can't Frighten the Dead," describes the author's childhood account of abuse in a home with alcoholic parents. Author Pillar recalls hiding under her bed as a child, feeling the presence of God and praying to Him although she had not been told about Him. She had never gone to church, but it felt like "church" to her underneath her bed.

At thirty, Pillar explains her choices brought her back to that same earthly home and serious contemplation of suicide: "In 1 Samuel 5:1, King Saul's public image was more important to him than anything else. He didn't take the time to build the inner strength necessary to lead the people. This deceptive road led him to tragedy, the taking of his own life....Even though I started out serving God with vim and vigor, spiritual sloth had lulled me to sleep and straight back to this horrid house" (10-11). Demons tormented Pillar. Jesus, in His great love and mercy, appeared at her point of need.

The book's thesis identifies Jesus's love and mercy as antidotes for the hurting and suicidal, since Jesus loves and forgives when we disobey but repent and he lovingly restores our lives. The author wrote this book to reveal her roadmap of restoration in Jesus: "I scared myself when I behaved in 1985 as if I'd never known Jesus, holding sleeping pills in the palm of my hand. At best, I was dancing on the edge of grace. At worst, He did not know me yet. Although I was doing many things in His name before that time, I don't think I was doing 'the will of Jesus' Father'" (17). She explains how she rebuilt her relationship with Jesus and her shattered life: "The security of my relationship with Him rests in His promises, but the depth of our relationship rests with me—spending time with Him, getting to know Him, enjoying His love and giving that love away. Serving Him plays a part, but service alone is not enough. I know that now" (18). The author ends the book with this reflection: "He'll carry me on to the Land of Forever where there are no twin beds for protection....for only Love will remain. But until that day, we'll be right here, together, untangling" (169).

I recommend *Untangled*. The book will appeal to a general audience for its strength lies in the fact that the author doesn't sanitize her story, but makes it real so that need for the redemptive love of Jesus shines through: "I know that showing people my flaws doesn't in any way dilute or diminish Jesus' beauty and power. My flaws don't change who He is. My flaws don't lessen His love for me. Jesus is the Beautiful One *in spite of* my knots and *for the sake of* my knots. And He sees me as beautiful, and so I'm learning to do the same" (18). Pillar's honesty allows the reader to experience Jesus's forgiveness and love. I found nothing to disagree with in this book and no weakness to comment on. Counseling courses that focus on the power of forgiveness could include this book as required reading.

Sheri Pedigo is a singer, songwriter of sensitive, popular, country-style songs with spiritual overtones (sample "Love Me" and "Butterfly" on YouTube). She can be visited on her website <http://www.sheripedigo.com>. Sheri shares her testimony in a chapter entitled "The Flight of a Butterfly" in editors Jeanne DeFazio and William David Spencer's book about the Hollywood revival, *Redeeming the Screens: Living Stories of Media "Ministers" Bringing the Message of Jesus Christ to the Entertainment Industry*.

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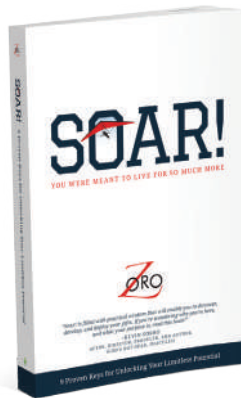
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Review of *Jesus and Magic: Freeing the Gospel Stories from Modern Misconceptions* by Richard A. Horsley (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2014)

JOZY POLLOCK AND MEL NOVAK

In his introduction, author Richard Horsley explores the concept of miracles prominent since the European Enlightenment (3), providing an interpretation of Jesus's healings imbedded in two assumptions: healing and exorcisms are miracles and miracle is a concept appropriate to antiquity. Sources for the historical Jesus are individual sayings and "Jesus stories" which focus narrowly on the miraculous (iv). This book examines the concept of miracles rooted in rationalism. Horsley suggests that the Enlightenment's concept of miracles is not applicable to biblical texts in general and specifically to the Gospels' healings accounts. He maintains that the Gospels are sustained narratives which are the historical sources for Jesus in the historical context.

Horsley's thesis identifies the Enlightenment's historical context as limiting the significance of Jesus's miracles in light of His mission portrayed by the Gospels (restoration and redemption of humankind) (Eph 4:23–24). The book demonstrates that Jesus's miracles are relational and interactive and that the ancient Mediterranean world granted the possibility and reality of miracles (4).

Horsley defines "miracle" as "a striking work which is outside the ordinary course of nature, which is done by God's almighty will and such that witnesses thereof regard miracles as extraordinary and supernatural" (3). He exposes the fallacy that belief in miracles is said to be an expression of an irrational childish state by researching ancient and modern texts to highlight the Enlightenment bias regarding Jesus's miracles (4). The book cites ancient sources, including Josephus's *Antiquities* and *Jewish Wars*, Herodotus's *History*, and Plato's *Republic*, establishing an understanding of the mindset of Jesus's contemporaries. Horsley also cites modern sources, including *Harvard Dissertations on Religions* and *Notre Dame Studies in Theology* to define rationalism as not accurately determining the validity of Jesus's miracles. The book ends with evaluating the miracles of the Gospels as credulous in view of the mindset of the ancient Mediterranean.

Richard Horsley is a Professor of Liberal Arts and the Study of Religion at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, and holds a Ph.D. from Harvard. He authored *Historical Jesus Theories*, *Jesus in Context, Power, People and Performance*, *Jesus and the Spiral of Violence*, and *Galilee*.

This book has a multicultural slant and focuses on the Bible data. Its intended audience is academic but anyone who has experienced a miracle and those who want a scriptural and historic perspective on miracles would benefit from reading it. We agree with the author's understanding of miracles as culturally determined as the strength of the book. We appreciated the fact that Horsley exposed the fallacy of modern thought that belief in miracles is irrational (4). We confirmed the author's understanding of the Enlightenment's historical context as limiting the significance of Jesus's miracles in light of His mission as portrayed in the Gospels. We believe that any course dealing with cultural and theological understandings of miracles would benefit from including this book as required reading.

In a global context of terrorist acts, violent mass shootings and racial tension, miraculous answers to prayer in the name of Jesus are the evidence of his redemptive work as portrayed in the Gospels. We thank Richard Horsley for making that point so beautifully in his book, *Jesus and Magic*.

Jozy Pollock is a former Los Angeles County penal system chaplain and former wife and assistant to the famous magician Channing Pollock. Mel Novak is an actor and skid row and prison pastor. Mel and Jozy contributed to chapters in Jeanne DeFazio and William David Spencer, editors of House of Prisca and Aquila Series, *Redeeming the Screens* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2016).

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