

# AFRICANUS JOURNAL

Vol. 9 No. 2 | November 2017



# Contents

- 3 Goals of the Journal
- 3 Life of Africanus
- 3 Other Front Matter
- 5 Transforming the Mass Media of Entertainment  
TED BAEHR
- 15 Families Are Forever: Why Eternal Families Just Won't Work  
HAROLD CARL
- 24 Review Article of *Youth Ministry in the 21st Century: Five Views*  
DEAN BORGMAN
- 32 Review of *Sharecropper to Entrepreneur to Pastor* and *The Corridors of Strange Darkness*  
WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER
- 38 Review of *Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Acts*  
TOON H. YEO
- 40 Review of *The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision*  
DAVID A. ESCOBAR ARCAY
- 43 Review of *One God in Three Persons: Unity of Essence, Distinction of Persons*  
DAESUNG KIM
- 45 Review of *The Epistles of 2 Corinthians and 1 Peter: Newly Discovered Commentaries*  
AÍDA BESANÇON SPENCER
- 46 Review of *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking*  
GRACE MAY
- 48 Review of *A Christian Guide to Spirituality: Foundations for Disciples*  
LESLIE MCKINNEY ATTEMA

- 50 Review of *Biblical Equality in Christ's Service*  
WOODROW E. WALTON
- 52 Review of *Partners in Christ: A Conservative Case for Egalitarianism*  
JACOB R. RANDOLPH
- 54 Review of *Catching Ricebirds: A Story of Letting Vengeance Go*  
WOODIE TERRELL
- 55 Review of *Healing the Gospel: A Radical Vision for Grace, Justice  
and the Cross*  
GEMMA WENGER
- 57 Review of *Woodlawn*  
BOB YERKES WITH JEANNE DEFazio
- 59 Review of *Just Peace: Ecumenical, Intercultural and Interdisciplinary  
Perspectives*  
APRIL SHENANDOAH

## 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>

© 2017 by the Africanus Guild

## 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*

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary faculty publications only and hard copies of this journal may be ordered by emailing [cumebookstore@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:cumebookstore@gordonconwell.edu), [books@gordonconwell.edu](mailto:books@gordonconwell.edu), or telephoning CUME library at 617-427-7293.

Each author is solely legally responsible for the content and the accuracy of facts, citations, references, and quotations rendered and properly attributed in the article appearing under his or her name. Neither Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, the Africanus Guild, nor the editorial team is responsible or legally liable for any content or any statements made by any author, but the legal responsibility is solely that author’s once an article appears in print in the *Africanus Journal*.

### *Summary of Content*

This issue has three articles on issues publicized by mass media: how to transform it, what is the meaning of the Mormon’s “families are forever,” and ways to minister to youth today 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

# Transforming the Mass Media of Entertainment<sup>1</sup>

TED BAEHR

The mass media creates the culture that shapes the hearts and minds of children and teenagers. By the time they reach seventeen, average children will have spent up to 64,000 hours or more with the mass media, according to recent figures from the Motion Picture Association of America, the Kaiser Family Foundation, the United States Census Bureau, and other groups – but only 800 hours in church, if they attend a church service once every week. The goal of MOVIEGUIDE® and the Christian Film and Television Commission® (CFTVC) is to redeem the values of the mass media and, thereby, redeem the character of children and teenagers, our future leaders. That is the mandate God has given this ministry.

## Personal Reflections

In 1946, at the height of the Golden Age of Hollywood, I was born to Theodore Baehr (whose stage name was Robert “Tex” Allen) and Evelyn Peirce. Both of my parents were successful stage, screen and television actors. Along with the Golden Age Westerns featured in his stage name, like *Ranger Courage* (1936) and *Law Of The Range* (1936), my father starred in such noted films as the archetypal serial *The Perils of Pauline* (1934), Joseph Von Sternberg’s version of Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment* and the classic screwball comedy *The Awful Truth* with Irene Dunne and Cary Grant (1937).

Growing up in New York with extended times in Hollywood and on location with movie productions in which my father was acting, I followed reluctantly in my parents’ footsteps, performing in commercials, movies, television, and on stage, but I was neither fond of waiting in the background nor of being in front of the camera.

What I did enjoy from a very, very young age was living the high life, which included everything from horse shows to fancy trips to self-indulgence. After my mother died in 1960, when I was a young teenager, I renounced the concept that I thought was God and dove completely into a sordid life of drugs and looking for love (of course in “all the wrong places”). I even tried to bring as many people as I could with me on the road to perdition by throwing parties with lethal concoctions, from which some never recovered and ended their precious lives. The fun was always appealing and always a mirage.

After studying abroad, I graduated with high distinction in comparative literature and as a Rufus Choate Scholar from Dartmouth College. I then received the Juris Doctor from New York University (NYU) School of Law, where I served as the editor of the NYU Law School newspaper, the editor of the *Drug Law Review* and the editor of the *Environmental Law Review*. At the same time, I was involved in radical causes, including leading the Law School Coalition to End the War in Vietnam, the National Lawyers Guild, and starting the environmental movement at the United States Attorney’s Office in the southern district of New York and the environmental studies at NYU Law, motivated by a particular disdain for big business.

## Rescued and Directed by God

In 1975, God rescued me from the bondage to sin. I had begun financing independent movies for Cannon Films, when an older friend who had come to know Jesus Christ at the Billy Graham Crusade in New York City in 1957 suggested that I read the Bible to show her what was wrong with it. Reading God’s word in order to refute it changed my perspective both professionally and

---

1 This article is adapted from Jeanne C. DeFazio and William David Spencer, eds., *Redeeming the Screens: Living Stories of Media “Ministers” Bringing the Message of Jesus Christ to the Entertainment Industry*, House of Prisca & Aquila Series (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016), ch. 1.

personally. God rescued me. Suddenly, life made sense. Chasing after empty promises lost its appeal. Hedonism relinquished its hold on me by God's grace alone. There was no withdrawal from stopping the addictions, only the peace that comes from a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Immediately, I was compelled to marry my beloved. The week before the wedding, a friend asked me if I wanted to accept Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and be filled with His Holy Spirit. I did. Filled with the Holy Spirit through my new faith in Jesus Christ, I decided to attend seminary at the Institute of Theology at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine.

To support myself through seminary, I was offered a position miraculously as the director of the television center at the City University of New York (CUNY) and was hired at the same time to head the television and radio ministry of Trinity Church at Broadway and Wall Street.

During my tenure at CUNY, I worked closely with academia, researching the impact of the media. I joined with more than sixty professors to develop and test the first intergenerational media literacy course. Being troubled by my previous financing of salacious and violent movies, I started the Good News Communications ministry in 1978 to redeem the mass media of entertainment. Again, miraculously, I was elected president of the Episcopal Radio and Television Foundation in 1979 and began conceptualizing another ministry, the Christian Film and Television Commission®. During my tenure, the Episcopal Radio and Television Foundation won an Emmy Award for Best Animated Special for *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe*, which aired on the Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) and was watched by more than 37 million viewers. I was nominated for another Emmy Award for one of the programs in the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) Perspectives Series, *War and Peace*, for which I served as the executive producer, creative director and host.

In 1983, while I was serving on the communications board of the National Council of Churches and working with the National Religious Broadcasters, the great movie producer Ken Wales (*The Pink Panther*, *Christy* and *Amazing Grace*) introduced me to George Heimrich and his work at the Protestant Film Office. Ken and George informed me about the history of the church film offices and the Motion Picture Production Code that had been used to improve movie content. George recounted the story of the breakdown of morality in the entertainment industry. He said that part of the reason for the breakdown of morality in movies and television today, and in the culture at large, is that people of faith retreated from being salt and light in the culture.

From 1933 to 1966, Christians comprised one of the predominant forces in Hollywood. During that period, the Roman Catholic Legion of Decency and the Protestant Film Commission (which started several years after the Legion of Decency) read every script to ensure that movies represented the largest possible audience by adhering to high standards of decency. As a result, *Mr. Smith Goes to Washington*, *It's a Wonderful Life* and *The Bells of St. Mary's* rang out across the land. It had taken ten years and God's grace acting through three dedicated Christian men to position God's people as such a powerful moral influence on Hollywood. As the documentary *Hollywood Uncensored* all too clearly demonstrates, in 1933, prior to the involvement of these Christians, American movies were morally bankrupt – full of nudity, perversity and violence. From 1922 to 1933, churchgoing men and women tried everything, including censorship boards, to influence Hollywood to make wholesome entertainment. Nothing succeeded until Christians volunteered to work alongside the Hollywood studios to help them reach the largest possible audience.

When the Protestant Film Office closed its advocacy offices in Hollywood in 1966 (in spite of many pleas to continue by the top Hollywood entertainment industry executives), not only did it open the floodgates to violence (*The Wild Bunch*), sex and Satanism (*Rosemary's Baby*) and perverse anti-religious bigotry (*Midnight Cowboy*), it also caused a severe drop in movie attendance from 44 million tickets sold per week to about 17 million. Inspired by George Heimrich and George's beloved wife, Lucille, I began contacting prominent members of the entertainment indus-

try and formed the Christian Film and Television Commission™ ministry and, in 1985, MOVIEGUIDE®: A Family Guide to Movies and Entertainment.

In his will, George Heimrich donated his Protestant Film Office files to my Good News Communications, where they are now archived. My ministry uses the same vision for positive change to redeem the values of the mass media of entertainment according to biblical principles by influencing key entertainment executives to adopt higher moral standards and by informing and equipping the public, especially parents with children and extended families. Based on these principles, MOVIEGUIDE® has been analyzing movies in depth since 1985. Over the years, we have developed a comprehensive method of analyzing movies that helps us pinpoint which movies will succeed and why.

Adam Smith, the father of free market economics, broke with the tradition of his peers by studying success rather than failure. In the process, he came up with the most successful economic model ever. This is exactly what MOVIEGUIDE® tries to do.

To understand the economic viability of a movie, we look at its entertainment and artistic value and then, beyond that, at its production value, content, worldview, philosophy, theology, politics, economics, genre, themes, characters and actors. Each film is viewed aesthetically, thematically, morally, biblically, cognitively and spiritually in more than 150 different categories. Through its annual analysis, MOVIEGUIDE® has constantly chosen 25 percent to 40 percent of the winners at the box office, whereas other groups and critics have consistently chosen only zero to 8 percent of the winners. In 2013, 52 percent of our award winners were among the top twenty-five movies at the box office in the United States and Canada. MOVIEGUIDE® has found that movies that adhere to traditional Christian values and biblical morality consistently outperform all other categories. We bring this comprehensive system to bear on film finance to help give a better experience to those who want to improve the entertainment industry. Box-office figures are the truest measure of what the public chooses to see in movies. For instance, in 2013, nine of MOVIEGUIDE®'s top picks for best family movies and best movies for mature audiences made it into the top ten movies at the box office for North America—more than ever before! In contrast to this—none, or, at most, only two—of the top choices of most other major film critics made it into the top ten. The MOVIEGUIDE® critics and judges' prognostications were also more accurate than those of such renowned critic associations as the American Film Institute, the National Board of Review and the Broadcast Film Critics.

To do all these things properly not only takes a knowledge of basic critical standards and movies, including understanding the history of movies and film theory, it also involves a philosophical knowledge that takes into account what has been called the queen, or handmaiden, of philosophy: theology. That is the level of knowledge I expect of the editors and writers who work at MOVIEGUIDE®, and that is the level of knowledge that all Christians should demand from MOVIEGUIDE® and from all other Christian leaders in the burgeoning mission field of mass media ministries.

Parents, children and other moviegoers write us to say that they trust MOVIEGUIDE®, because we use these comprehensive critical tools to review movies. Entertainment industry executives also call to tell us how helpful and important our reviews are because we give them accurate, verifiable information based on objective standards, not subjective whims. A Wheaton College graduate told us, "College students raised with MOVIEGUIDE® grew in discernment and Christian faith. Those I saw raised with other so-called faith-based reviews drifted into theological and moral liberalism." The good news is that concerned and discerning moviegoers trust MOVIEGUIDE®, demonstrated by the fact that our website, [www.movieguide.org](http://www.movieguide.org), has more than 15 million hits per month and is still growing. In summary, MOVIEGUIDE®'s aesthetic standards match the aesthetic standards of the general movie-going public: the movies we commend do much better at the box office. Thus, the better the quality rating from MOVIEGUIDE®, the more money a film made at

the box office. Also, our MOVIEGUIDE® awards gala tends to pick the best movies appearing in the top ten and top twenty-five at the box office and at the home video store, while many other film critics are picking the worst movies seen by the fewest number of people.

### God's Transforming Impact on Hollywood

As a result of an unexpected and miraculous telephone conversation with Sir John Templeton, beginning in 1988, the Christian Film and Television Commission™ ministry initiated the Annual MOVIEGUIDE® Faith and Values Awards Gala and Report to the Entertainment Industry in 1992 in Los Angeles. The Gala features two prestigious Epiphany Prizes for the most inspiring movie and TV Program each year, rewarding the movie and the television program that help people know God and understand him better. Other prizes include the Faith and Freedom Award for promoting positive faith and values; the Kairos Prize for spiritually uplifting screenplays by first-time and beginning screenwriters; the Kairos Pro Prize for spiritually uplifting screenplays by established screenwriters; the annual Grace Award for the most inspiring performances in movies and television, given to the two actors whose performances best displayed God's grace and mercy toward us as human beings: the MOVIEGUIDE® Teddy "The Good News" Bear Award for the ten best movies for families and the MOVIEGUIDE® Papa Bear Awards for the ten best movies for mature audiences. We seek to acknowledge movies, TV programs and actors truly deserving of praise and those persons responsible for bringing them to the screen. To add glamour to the event, actors and actresses are invited to host and to present the awards. Music and entertainment are also added to make it a memorable event. We even hand out Bibles and other redemptive materials to make certain we carry out our mission to reach Hollywood for Christ. Within this context of elegance, I present Movieguide®'s *Report to the Entertainment Industry*. Through careful analysis of box office figures and MOVIEGUIDE® criteria on all the major movies released (nearly three hundred a year) by the six studios controlling the industry, I present valuable and unique information to the highest-level Hollywood leaders through a high-impact report.

The purpose of the gala and the report is:

- To encourage filmmakers to continue to make movies with moral and spiritually uplifting values
- To share the concerns of the majority of the American public in regard to the negative influences of today's movies
- To present an in-depth study of the annual movie box office receipts and not only dispel myths that extreme sex, violence and nudity sells, but also show that family movies and movies with morally uplifting, Christian values and positive Christian content make the most money by far.

By God's grace, this *Report to the Entertainment Industry* is having an impact. When we started MOVIEGUIDE® in 1985, the major studios in Hollywood released few movies with any positive Christian content or values – less than 1 percent! By the time we started the annual Gala and Report in 1992 and 1993, however, there were 27 such movies, or about 10.38 percent of the market share. Twenty-five years later, in 2016, at least 184, or 63.88 percent, of the movies released by the movie industry contained at least some positive Christian, redemptive content. This is a numerical increase of more than 581 percent and a percentage increase of more than 515 percent! Also, when we started in 1985, less than 6 percent of the major movies were aimed at families. In the past several years, movies marketed to families have increased to about 40 percent of the top movies released in your local movie theaters. Finally, when we started in 1985, there were only about one or two movies being made with strong, explicit Christian content or values, but last year there were 67 such movies, That is at least a 3,250 percent increase!

The former chairman of a major Hollywood studio told me he attributed all these positive shifts directly to MOVIEGUIDE®'s influence as well as the Christian Film and Television Commission®'s box office analysis and *Annual Report to the Entertainment Industry*. Many major movie studios now have a Christian, faith-based film division, and several studios are producing major movies with strong and overt Christian or biblical content. Also, now, all the major studios, not just Disney, are creating movies for young children and families. Additionally, there is an increasing number of positive faith-based and family-friendly independent films, even though these movies do not garner a significant share of the box office, which is dominated by the major entertainment industry studios.

This does not mean, of course, that the studios are not making morally bad and sadistically violent movies any more, but it does mean there are fewer and fewer of such bad movies and an increasing number of good ones. It is our prayer that the movie industry will make more and more commendable movies and remove all the offensive elements from all of them.

All along the way, we have been helping and encouraging Christian filmmakers and even non-Christian filmmakers to put faith-based, family-friendly content in their scripts, movies and television shows and improve their storytelling abilities so they can reach and influence as many people toward the good as possible.

### **MOVIEGUIDE® Protects the Eyes of Innocence**

Even though we have seen the number of movies and other entertainment with positive, morally uplifting, Christian content increase tremendously in the past thirty years, we have also witnessed an increase in special interest groups that would seek to kill, steal and destroy the Christian moorings of our nation. These groups work tirelessly to put more graphic violence, more explicit sex, more same-sex content and more corruption into our entertainment media. Wise viewers do not need me to remind them how negatively these harmful elements affect children and grandchildren. Even though these groups work to change children's thinking, at MOVIEGUIDE®, we work tirelessly to protect our children and grandchildren from the harmful effects of the media. As our Lord Jesus said, "Whoever causes the downfall of one of these little ones who believes in me – it would be better for him if a heavy millstone were hung around his neck and he were drowned in the depths of the sea!" (Matt 18:6 CSB). You and I must oppose this vicious onslaught against our children. If we do not take a stand for righteousness in order to protect them, then we will be as responsible for our children's downfall as those who attack and destroy our children's hope and faith. As Proverbs 25:26 warns, "If the godly give in to the wicked, it's like polluting a fountain or muddying a spring" (NLT).

As a result of our work, an increasing number of entertainment companies are now asking us to become active in guiding their future. As one Christian leader has said to me several times, "Never have so few done so much with so little." That, of course, is because God is doing it, and we are just participating in his grace, and because supporters have donated time, energy and resources to the Christian Film and Television Commission and MOVIEGUIDE® to redeem the values of the mass media.

When Hollywood releases more movies like *Captain America: Civil War*, *God's Not Dead* (1 and 2), *Miracles from Heaven*, *Risen*, *Heaven Is for Real*, and *Son of God*, many children living in a vast cultural wasteland are given new hope in Jesus Christ. Clearly, the entire world needs more movies like these and fewer or no movies that inspire vulgarity, violence and sex outside of marriage. That is why our mission is focused on inspiring key people in Hollywood to make morally and aesthetically good movies.

By God's grace, we have seen an explosion of inspiring, faith-friendly family movies being produced. Many of these movies are animated and reach the top of the box office charts, such as

*Frozen*, which MOVIEGUIDE® picked as the best movie for families in 2013. *Frozen* promotes a Christian, biblical view of love and has grossed more than \$1.64 billion worldwide so far at this writing, including home video sales. The success of faith-based and faith-friendly movies and television shows like *Dolly Parton's Christmas of Many Colors*, *The Bible*, *Despicable Me 2*, and *The Blind Side* is no fluke. It is a miracle from God.

When Christians abandon the mass media, they abandon their culture and their compatriots. When Christians get involved in the mass media, God honors that commitment with success.

### More Specifics on Redeeming the Values of the Mass Media and the Culture: 1985-2016

Here are some developments that have encouraged us in our ministry:

- In the five years from 2002-2016, movies with strong or very strong Christian, redemptive content or worldviews earned at least \$21.21 billion at the North American box office, averaging about \$4.24 billion at the North American box office each calendar year, up from \$0.21 billion in 1996, the first year we kept such numbers in our Annual Report to the Entertainment Industry. This growth represents an increase of 1,919 percent. And, it doesn't include what such movies earned after the calendar year ended.
- In 2016 alone, movies released with strong or very strong Christian, redemptive content or worldviews averaged \$57,905,690, generating ticket sales of about 6,694,299 per movie, or 448,518,033 ticket sales for all 67 movies with strong or very strong Christian, redemptive content or worldviews (the average ticket price in 2016 was \$8.65 according to the National Association of Theater Owners). And this doesn't include what such movies will earn in 2017. (There are always a few movies with strong or very strong Christian, redemptive content at the end of the year, such as *Les Miserables*, *Hidden Figures* or *Sing*, which earn millions after the New Year's holiday.)

The above numbers only calculate the cost and cost effectiveness for what is called the domestic theatrical box office in the United States and Canada. They do not include box office figures overseas or home video sales figures.

In the wake of the success of such Christian, redemptive blockbusters as *The Passion of the Christ*, *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* and *The Lord of the Rings* movies in the first half of the twenty-first century, two of the top three small, independent movies in limited release at the box office from 2007 through 2013 were also strong Christian, faith-based movies. *Fireproof*, the biggest success, earned \$33.46 million in the United States and Canada, while *Amazing Grace* earned \$21.25 million.

The success of these independent films led to Christian movies such as *Soul Surfer* (earning \$43.85 million) and *Courageous* (earning \$34.52 million), released in more than 2,200 and 1,200 theatres domestically in 2011, respectively. Consequently, in 2014, the Christian movie *Heaven Is for Real* earned \$90.8 million, with *God's Not Dead* and *Son of God* not far behind with \$60.7 million and \$59.7 million, respectively. In fact, dollar for dollar, *God's Not Dead* is now one of the five most successful independent movies ever produced. Finally, two faith-based movies released in 2016, *Hacksaw Ridge* and *Miracles from Heaven*, earned nearly \$67 million and more than \$61 million, respectively. Clearly, MOVIEGUIDE®'s support for such Christian movies is making a significant difference.

Since the mass media creates the culture that shapes the hearts and minds of future generations, our children and grandchildren, ministries like MOVIEGUIDE® and the Christian Film and Television Commission, including the annual Faith and Values Awards Gala and *Report to the Entertain-*

ment Industry, are indispensable and deserve the support of every concerned citizen and group that cares about the future of our children and grandchildren, the future of the United States and the future of the whole world.

In 2016, studios were inspired to put at least some positive Christian content in nearly 64 percent of Hollywood's major theatrical movie releases. In fact, 72 percent of the Top 25 Movies at the Domestic Box Office actually had strong or very strong Christian, biblical, redemptive or moral content or even worldviews and only two of the Top 25, 8 percent, were R-rated. Also, the stronger the Christian content, the more money a movie made at the Top 25 box office.

As noted above, since MOVIEGUIDE® has been presenting the Epiphany Prize for the Most Inspiring Movie, motion pictures with strong or very strong Christian, redemptive content have gone from earning only \$0.21 billion at the box office in North America to about \$4.24 billion at the box office, selling hundreds of millions of tickets each year in the United States and Canada alone. The movies mentioned above are all great examples of this explosive growth in movies with strong, often overt Christian content and values. A clear example of such success is *The Blind Side*, the most popular overtly Christian blockbuster movie in the last 10 years, but so are faith-friendly movies like *Frozen*, 2016's *The Jungle Book*, the *Iron Man* movies, *Despicable Me*, 2015's *Cinderella*, and *Big Hero 6*.

Here are some more specific examples:

In 42, Branch Rickey told Jackie Robinson that Jesus Christ was the strongest man who ever lived because he was strong enough to turn the other cheek. Tony Stark in *Iron Man 3* talked about people going to heaven and hell and he took the villains to church. Clark Kent, aka Superman, went to church to confess, and, under the guise of Superman, manifested many Christological, allegorical characteristics in *Man of Steel*. Captain America fought against vengeance and politically correct tyranny, and recommitted his stance to absolute morality in a Christian cathedral in *Captain America: Civil War*. The wisdom of a little boy, the physical incarnation of the Word of God, confounded the rabbis in *The Young Messiah*. A little girl held onto faith and was miraculously healed in *Miracles from Heaven*. An atheist reporter learned to believe in miracles in *Miracles from Heaven*. Jesus Christ's physical resurrection was once again shown as undeniable in *Risen*. An agnostic found Jesus and faith in *Risen*. The world saw the miraculous happen in *Sully*. Also in *Sully*, the individual triumphed over pompous bureaucracy, political correctness and technology. Prayers were answered in *The Finest Hours*. Christian conviction overcame politically correct persecution in *Hacksaw Ridge*. A Christian missionary taught poor children in the slums of Kenya how to overcome their circumstances in *Queen of Katwe*. A family was reunited in love in *Finding Dory*. An elephant found her courage by singing praises to the Lord in *Sing*. The Holy Spirit was invoked and a miracle happened in *Zootopia*. Love and self-sacrifice became the spiritual weapons against socialist tyranny in *The Hunger Games: Catching Fire*. Bilbo the humble Hobbit, Dwarf King Thorin and their twelve dwarf companions confronted the evil dragon who had seized the kingdom of the dwarves in the visual trilogy adaptation of the devout Roman Catholic Christian J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Hobbit*, as Gandalf brought the light to fight the evil necromancer who was conquering the world under the cover of darkness (despite good people ignoring what was happening). Gru found love thanks to the prayers of his adopted daughters in *Despicable Me 2*. Christian hymns lifting up Jesus Christ were sung in Old Norse, and Christian self-sacrifice triumphed in *Frozen*. Free enterprise, an aspect of the Protestant work ethic, was lauded in *Monster's University* and *Turbo*, as Mike and Sulley worked their way up the ladder of success from the mailroom and Tito saved the taco stand he owns with his brother by creating and executing a well-conceived marketing plan. Oscar Diggs, the future Wizard of Oz, confessed and cried to God for help in *Oz, The Great and Powerful*. Stranded in space, NASA astronaut Dr. Ryan Stone asked for prayer and help from God while looking at a picture of Jesus Christ carrying a child in *Gravity*. Thor learned from his father, Odin, that they are not gods, but mortal, in *Thor: The Dark World*. *The Croods* took a leap of faith

to follow the Light. *Captain Phillips* was willing to sacrifice his life to save his crew. The prodigal daughter came home to her family and Jesus Christ in *Grace Unplugged*. *Jack the Giant Slayer* discussed heaven and hell, finding God, obeying God and wanting to find God, while monks, king, queen, princess and others prayed to God and monks fashioned a crown of glory to defeat evil (1 Pet 5:4). A young outcast teenage boy found salvation watching a church's *Black Nativity* Christmas musical.

As in previous years, movies with strong or very strong Christian, redemptive, biblical and moral content and values did much better at the box office in 2016 than movies with excessive or graphic foul language, sex, nudity, violence, alcohol use and illegal substance abuse. Thus, movies with strong biblical and Christian worldviews and content were some very big moneymakers.

Statistically, 80 percent of the top ten movies in the United States and Canada in 2016 had strong or very strong Christian, redemptive, moral or biblical content and worldviews. Also, 90 percent of top ten home video sales in 2016 as of Dec. 1, 2016 had strong or very strong Christian, redemptive, moral or biblical content and worldviews, and 80 percent of them have been honored by MOVIEGUIDE®'s Awards Gala in the last two years.

There were, however, some new lows in filmmaking in 2016, such as the graphic sex and violence in *Deadpool*, the occult worldview in *Doctor Strange*, the perverted atheism in *Sausage Party*, the Stalinist propaganda in *Neruda*, the New Age sermon to children in *Kubo and the Two Strings*, and the promotion of Islamic jihad in *Birth of a Nation (2016)*. A couple of these movies made a lot of money, but most of them flopped.

Assessing the major movies released by the entertainment industry in 2016, we noticed that positive acceptability ratings from MOVIEGUIDE® (+1 to +4) earned more than twice as much money as those with negative acceptability ratings (-1 to -4). This statistic means that the most family-friendly movies in 2016 were also the most successful movies of the year. Also, the most family-friendly movies (+1 to +4) earned more than three times as much money as the least family-friendly movies with unacceptable ratings from MOVIEGUIDE® (-3 and -4). In addition, R-rated movies made less money than movies with other ratings. In fact, according to a 22-year study by *The Numbers*, G-rated movies earn more than twice as much per movie than R-rated movies.

In 2016, the most popular television movie of the year by far was *Dolly Parton's Christmas of Many Colors: Circle of Love*. Over two nights in December, the movie attracted 15.74 million viewers. This is equivalent to earning \$136.15 million in two nights on opening weekend at the theatrical box office, which would be very close to a record. This shows that not only do moviegoers want family-friendly movies containing strong Christian, moral values and biblical principles, so also do TV viewers.

Hollywood cannot afford to ignore the 2.44 billion Christians around the world, including America's 233 million Christians, the 201.2 million people in America who say they have made a personal commitment to Jesus, and the 117 million Americans who say they go to church weekly. Neither can Christians afford to ignore the influence that Hollywood has on future generations and on the society in which they live. This is a mission we cannot afford to abandon.

The MOVIEGUIDE® staff prays that God will raise up people in the body of Christ who will support our vision and join the movement to clean the screens. If we want to turn society right-side up, we have to stop simply discussing worldviews and be willing to act on a Christian worldview and disciple the nations, as Jesus commanded us. That action requires not only a personal faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ, it also requires a commitment to the values which Jesus and his disciples taught in the New Testament, empowered by the baptism of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ, as happened on Pentecost, as recounted in chapter two of the Book of Acts and as described elsewhere in the New Testament Scriptures.

We can turn perverse cultures right-side up. A small group of Christians did just that in England during the early 1800s. Led by William Wilberforce, John Newton, and other Christians, they brought revival to England, which reformed faith and values throughout the fabric of their society.

By God's grace, acting on a consistent biblical view of the world, our small team at the Christian Film and Television Commission® has helped to turn a significant portion of the entertainment industry right-side up. A former head of one of the six top Hollywood studios once told us personally, "You have shown through your *Report to the Entertainment Industry* that producing good movies is morally responsible and financially lucrative." We could not have done this, however, without properly understanding and using the values taught in Scripture, nor without the power of the Holy Spirit that comes through faith and trust in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We welcome and greatly appreciate your support in helping us to carry out this mission to redeem the values, as well as the worldviews, of the mass media of entertainment. Together, with God's help and direction, we can ensure that the Good, the True and the Beautiful will continue to spread throughout Hollywood and throughout the nations.

Ted Baehr, founder of the Good News Communications, Inc., dba the Christian Film and Television Commission® ministry and MOVIEGUIDE®: A Family Guide to Movies and Entertainment, received the Juris Doctor from New York University School of Law. He attended seminary at the Institute of Theology at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. Ted was president of the organization that produced *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* for CBS-TV in 1980, boasting 37 million viewers and winning an Emmy Award. Baehr produced programs for PBS television. Ted has been a featured guest on Oprah, Hannity and Colmes, CNN, ABC, Fox News, MSNBC, and Entertainment Tonight. He has spoken at the European Parliament, the Parliament of the U.K., The Parliament of Norway, The Duma in Russia, Oxford, Yale University, Dartmouth College, the University of Virginia, U.C.L.A, and many other prestigious institutions. In 2012, Ted was the 4th Dean's Distinguished Lecturer at the Pepperdine University Graduate School (GSEP). In 2005, Ted was Chairman of the Institute for the Study of Media at the Center for the Arts, Religion and Education at the Graduate Theological Union at U.C. Berkeley. Ted's Annual Movieguide® Awards includes two Epiphany Prizes for the Most Inspiring Movie and TV Program, Grace Prizes Spiritually Uplifting Performances that Reveal God's Grace, Faith & Freedom Award and the Kairos Prize for Spiritually Uplifting Screenplays.

Ted Baehr has written for *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Times*, *Time Magazine*, *USA Today*, *The L.A. Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Hollywood Reporter*, *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* and *U.S. News and World Report*. His books include *How to Succeed in Hollywood (Without Losing Your Soul)*<sup>2</sup>; *The Culture-Wise Family: Upholding Christian Values in a Mass Media World* [with Pat Boone]; *The Amazing Grace of Freedom: In the Life, Times and Movie of William Wilberforce* [co-authors Susan Wales and Ken Wales]; *Narnia Beckons: C. S. Lewis's The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe – and Beyond* [with James Baehr]; *Frodo & Harry: Understanding Visual Media and Its Impact on Our Lives* [with Tom Snyder]; and *Faith in God and Generals*.

Ted Baehr at [www.movieguide.org](http://www.movieguide.org) has many additional resources including MOVIEGUIDE® television programs and MOVIEGUIDE® radio programs. Every episode mixes weekly movie reviews with exclusive interviews with the filmmakers, family tips on media wisdom and insights on current cultural events.

---

2 Reviewed by William David Spencer, *Africanus Journal* 6:2 (November 2014): 51-54.



# The **HOW TO SUCCEED IN HOLLYWOOD** (WITHOUT LOSING YOUR SOUL)

# SEMINAR

## LEARN THE ART

- Premise
- The 3 Acts
- Story Beats
- Character Arcs
- Using Subtext
- Scene Construction
- Drawing Emotion
- Creating Suspense
- Building Empathy
- Providing Entertainment Value

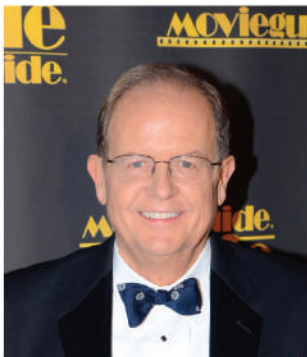
## AND BUSINESS

- Protecting Rights
- Understanding Contracts
- Finding Funding
- Effective Marketing
- Distribution Options

## OF FILMMAKING

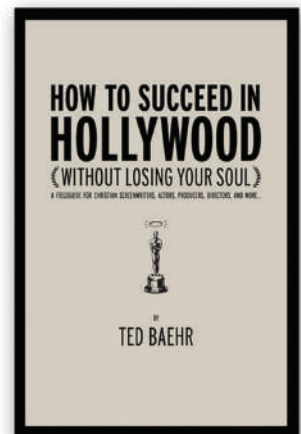
Four Days of  
Instruction,  
Practice &  
Critique

For information on dates and locations  
contact [evelyn@movieguide.org](mailto:evelyn@movieguide.org)  
(805) 383-2000



Based on 30 years of research and analysis of thousands of movies and on relationships with many Hollywood professionals, Dr. Ted Baehr and industry professional instructors teach faith-based movie making with information on how to reach large audiences with high quality entertainment.

Available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com)  
Paperback: 564 pages  
Publisher: WND Books  
ISBN-10: 1936488272  
8.1 x 5.5 x 1.6 inches



# Families Are Forever: Why Eternal Families Just Won't Work<sup>1</sup>

HAROLD CARL

“Families are Forever.” This was the title of a 2014 year-long curriculum for primary children of the followers of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS), complete with a touching theme song, “Families Can Be Together Forever.”<sup>2</sup> The LDS Temple Visitors Center on Temple Square in Salt Lake City, and many other temple visitors’ centers around the world, can be visited where a lot of square footage is devoted to promoting the idea of eternal marriage and eternal families. But from whence do these ideas come? How have they developed in LDS theology? Do the ideas of eternal families and eternal marriage even work given an LDS theological framework?

The theology and principles of eternal families and eternal marriage are not found in the *Book of Mormon*. The LDS “scriptural” support for this doctrine is first found primarily in *Doctrine and Covenants*, sections 131 and 132.<sup>3</sup> They are reported to be revelations given by God to Joseph Smith, recorded in 1843.<sup>4</sup> In these revelations, Smith is said to have received a “new and everlasting covenant” from the Lord.<sup>5</sup> This covenant is so important to followers that, once received, it must be obeyed. Those rejecting it will be damned. No one can reject this covenant and enter into God’s celestial glory. In terms of its revelation to humankind, it is “new.” But in God’s economy, its conditions are thought to have been instituted from before the foundations of the world.<sup>6</sup>

**Celestial marriage is for time and for all eternity.** Often in the affairs of human beings, covenants, contracts, and vows are entered into that are not made through the Holy Spirit and his representatives. These contracts are in effect until the contracting parties die. This is the state of marriages not made by God, through his representatives, and through His word.

But there are contracts and marriage covenants which are in effect “for time and all eternity.” Celestial marriage, interchangeably called eternal marriage in LDS writings, is one of these eternal covenants. *The Doctrine and Covenants* says:

If a man marry a wife by my word, which is my law, and by the new and everlasting covenant, and it is sealed unto them by the Holy Spirit of promise, by him who is anointed, unto whom I have appointed this power and the “keys of this priesthood; and it shall be said unto them – Ye shall come forth in the first resurrection; and if it be after the first resurrection, in the next resurrection; and shall inherit thrones, kingdoms principalities and power, dominions, all heights and depths – then shall it be written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, . . . and if ye abide in my covenant, and commit no murder whereby to shed innocent blood, it shall be done unto them in all things whatsoever my servant hath put upon them, in time, and through all eternity; and shall be in full force when they are out of the world; and they shall pass by the angels, and the gods, which are set there, to their exaltation and glory in all things, as hath been sealed upon their heads, which glory shall be a fullness and a continuation of the seeds forever and ever. Then they shall be gods, because they have no end; therefore shall they be from everlasting to everlasting, because they continue; then shall they be above all, because all things are subject unto them. Then shall they be gods, because they have all power

---

1 This paper was presented at the Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in Atlanta, Georgia, November 2015, at the Other Voices in Interpretation Study Group.

2 *Families are Forever* (FAF) (Salt Lake City, Utah: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2013), 28.

3 Mormons recognize four books as their standard works of Scripture: *The Book of Mormon* (BOM), *The Doctrine and Covenants* (D&C), *The Pearl of Great Price* (PGP) and the Bible.

4 *The Doctrine and Covenants of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (D&C) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), 266.

5 D&C 131: 1-4, 265-266; 132:4, 6, 19, 26, 27, 266-269.

6 D&C 132:4-6, 267.

and the angels are subject unto them.<sup>7</sup>

Joseph Fielding Smith, the tenth president of the LDS, taught that celestial marriage was the most important ordinance in the Gospel of Jesus Christ:

There is no ordinance connected with the Gospel of Jesus Christ of greater importance, of more solemn and sacred nature, and more necessary to the eternal joy of man, than marriage . . . Through this covenant, perhaps more than through any other, we accomplish the perfect decree of the divine will.<sup>8</sup>

More recently, the LDS First Presidency made a proclamation on the family that marriage between a man and a woman is ordained of God, and the family is central to the Creator's plan for the eternal destiny of His children.<sup>9</sup> It is easy to understand the high importance placed on marriage within the LDS church. Eternal marriage is foundational for many areas of LDS theology and practice.

**God showed the eternal intent of marriage in the first marriage on earth.** Adam and Eve were married by God before death entered the world. Therefore, the LDS reason, their marriage and all subsequent marriages were intended to be eternal. Adam and Eve taught the law of eternal marriage to their descendants until it was lost due to the wickedness of the hearts of humans. Through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, God has restored the Gospel and the law of eternal marriage to the earth.<sup>10</sup>

Jesus refers to God's original marriage declaration in Matthew 19:4-9. Moses permitted people to have a certificate of divorce due to the hardness of their hearts. But that was not God's original intent in marriage. Marriage properly conducted makes two one flesh. Those whom God has joined together are meant to be together for time and for all eternity. They are by definition inseparable forever. This is also what Paul had in mind in 1 Corinthians 11:11, "Nevertheless neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man, in the Lord" (KJV).<sup>11</sup> *Gospel Principles* explains:

Moreover, what God joins together is eternal. Unfortunately, most of the marriages are not by the will of God, but by the will of man. Marriages among Latter-day Saints are eternal marriages, if they are properly performed, because the Eternal Father gave the covenant of marriage which is received by couples who go to the temple to receive this blessing there.<sup>12</sup>

According to the LDS, the false doctrine that marriage is temporal and only for this life is the outgrowth of apostasy. It stems from a misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Matthew 22:23-32 and Mark 12:24-27 by unbelieving Sadducees. They denied the resurrection and were trying to trap Jesus. So Jesus answered them according to their folly. They are the "children of this world." (He and the disciples do not belong to this world.) Those like the Sadducees (the unrighteous) neither marry nor are given in marriage in the world to come. They are like the angels in heaven – eternally single without eternal increase. For marriage to be for time and all eternity, it must involve worthy persons and be consecrated in the temple, under priesthood authority.<sup>13</sup>

---

7 D&C 132:19-20, 268.

8 Joseph Fielding Smith, *The Way to Perfection: Short Discourses on Gospel Themes* (WTP), 11<sup>th</sup> edition (Salt Lake City, Utah: Genealogical Society of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1958), 232.

9 Gordon B. Hinckley, *The Family: A Proclamation to the World* (FWP) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The First Presidency and Council of the Twelve Apostles of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1995).

10 *Gospel Principles* (GP) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2009), 219. See also WTP, 242-43.

11 Joseph Fielding Smith, *Selections from Answers to Gospel Questions* (ATGQ) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The First Presidency of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1971), 262-269.

12 WTP, 241.

13 Joseph Fielding Smith, *Doctrines of Salvation* (DOS) in vol. 2, ed. Bruce R. McConkie (Salt Lake City, Utah:

In a biblical Christian worldview, Matthew 19 and Matthew 22 have to be understood as contextual for one another. It may well be that marriage prior to the fall, had the fall not taken place, would have been for time and all eternity. Adam and Eve would have lived forever in a blissful, sinless, married state. The language of Genesis 2 and Matthew 19 does suggest this. However, Genesis 2 and Matthew 19 have to be taken in the context of Matthew 22 and in the context of the fall. Whatever the state of marriage prior to the fall, the fall changed everything. The eternal blissful existence in the garden was lost for sin, pain, death, disharmony, and the dissolution of many relationships. Adam and Eve would now return to dust. Perhaps the “eternal” sounding language in Genesis 2 has more to do with a pre-fallen eternal existence on earth than an eternal existence of the redeemed in heaven. One also has to wonder how odd the Sadducees and Pharisees would have thought it, had they understood Jesus to be suggesting that a “priest” marry anyone in a “temple” and that for “time and all eternity.” No biblical teaching even approaches these ideas.

**Eternal marriages create eternal families.** Eternal marriage and eternal families begin in the preexistence, in the spirit world. Heavenly Father lives in an exalted, eternal marriage relationship himself, with the heavenly Mother:

No matter to what heights God has attained or may attain, he does not stand alone; for side by side with him, in all her glory, a glory like unto his, stands a companion, the Mother of his children. For as we have a Father in heaven, so also we have a Mother there, a glorified, exalted, ennobled Mother.<sup>14</sup>

Heavenly Father and Mother are literally the parents of spirit children. These spirit children are procreated in the same way all other children are. There are multitudes of pure and holy spirits waiting for earthly tabernacles (bodies). When a man and woman are joined together in the temple in the eternal covenant of celestial marriage, they begin a partnership with God. Through their union, worthy mortal tabernacles are created for the spirit children of heavenly Father and Mother. Spirits cannot obtain perfection without bodies of flesh and bones. Only through physical birth into this life (sometimes called “this mortal probation”) and the resurrection of the dead can God’s spirit children become like their Eternal Father, return to him, and achieve their exaltation to godhood. This is why birth control is such a moral evil and a mortal sin. Birth control denies the spirit children of God mortal bodies in which to achieve their exaltation to godhood. The commandment to be fruitful and multiply given to Adam and Eve is applicable to LDS people today. Joseph Fielding Smith taught, in agreement with *Doctrine and Covenants*, that those who willingly disobey it will be damned.<sup>15</sup>

Once a couple is married in the Temple for time and for all eternity, they may form an eternal connection to their children by being eternally sealed to their children in the temple. Brigham Young wrote that, when a couple has received its endowments and sealings in the temple for eternity, children born to them are legal heirs to the kingdom and all its blessings. Their children are bound to them with an everlasting tie.<sup>16</sup>

The principle of sealing families to one another comes from a vision of the prophet Elijah to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery in the Kirtland Temple on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1836. At that time, first Bookcraft, 1955), 71-73. See also James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ: A Study of the Messiah and His Mission according to Holy Scriptures both Ancient and Modern* (JTC) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1981), 548, 564. Most biblical Christians understand Matthew 19 and 22 to function together to define the limits of marriage and how it functions in heaven.

14 *Achieving a Celestial Marriage: Student Manual* (ACM) (Salt Lake City, Utah: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1976), 129. See also James E. Talmage, *A Study of the Articles of Faith: Being a Consideration of the Principal Doctrines of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1972), 442-447.

15 DOS, 85-87; WTP, 233-239.

16 Brigham Young, *Teachings of The Presidents of the Church: Brigham Young* (TOPOCBY) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1997), 164-165, 171-172. See also WTP, 248-249.

Jehovah appeared, then Moses, then Elias, and then Elijah. Elijah's message is pertinent to this discussion and reminiscent of Malachi 4:5-6. Elijah came: "To turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the children to the fathers, lest the whole earth be smitten with a curse – Therefore, the keys of this dispensation are committed into your hands . . ." <sup>17</sup>

Elijah restored these "sealing keys" so that the priesthood of the LDS would have the proper authority to perform their ordinances. It is through this sealing power that families may be sealed to one another for time and all eternity. Children may be sealed to parents and parents to children. Dead progenitors may be sealed to their living descendants. Families are sealed to their departed forefathers:

The doctrine or sealing power of Elijah is as follows: - If you have power to seal on earth and in heaven, then we should be wise. The first thing to do, go and seal on earth your sons and daughters unto yourself, and yourself unto your fathers in eternal glory. <sup>18</sup>

Each family unit is to be linked to the generation which went before, until all the faithful who have proved their title to family membership through obedience to the gospel, shall be joined in one grand family from the beginning to the end of time, and shall find place in the celestial kingdom of God. In this way all who receive the exaltation becomes heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ in the possession of eternal family relationships. <sup>19</sup>

The LDS readily admit that Elijah's message inspired people to be concerned about their ancestors and descendants. The sealing of families, past, present and future, is what drives the LDS fascination with and attention to genealogy and family history. <sup>20</sup>

Prophet Wilford Woodruff gives personal testimony of sealing together his own family. He first sealed his mother, who passed into the spirit world when he was fourteen months old, to his father. He talked about redeeming four thousand of his parent's kindred in the temple. Many forefathers would not have heard the restored gospel or performed temple rites so they could be redeemed. While there will be preaching in the spirit world, there will not be baptism or giving in marriage. Someone in the flesh (in this life) must attend to this part of their salvation. When the LDS do this temple work, they "become saviors on Mount Zion" for the dead. "The dead are anxious for us to receive ordinances in their behalf, and God Himself watches temple work with great interest." The LDS hold the keys of salvation for their ancestors who have died without the restored gospel. Reuniting with ancestors in the spirit world will either be a time of joy or regret, depending on how well the LDS have done their temple work. So much of the temple work of the LDS is tied up in the concept of eternal families being forever whole and complete in the celestial kingdom. <sup>21</sup>

The eternal family unit continues only in the celestial kingdom. It does not continue in the lower levels of eternal glory. Worthy Mormons may expect to be part of a chain of ancestors from Adam until the end of time. Polygamist Joseph Fielding Smith rejoiced that, along with all his other family members, "my wives will be mine in eternity." Orson Pratt also drew similar logical conclusions about his multiple wives. <sup>22</sup> This is the divine plan of happiness which enables family

---

17 D&C 110:14-16. See also Joseph Smith, *The Teachings of The Presidents of the Church: Joseph Smith* (TOPOCJS) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2007), 306-314.

18 TOPOTCJS, 311-312. See also WTP, 256.

19 DOS, 67.

20 GP, 254.

21 Wilford Woodruff, *Teachings of The Presidents of the Church Wilford Woodruff* (TOPOCWW) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2004), 185-194.

22 DOS, 67-69. See also ACM, 130-131. See also Orson Pratt, *27 Rules of Celestial Marriage* (27R) (Mormon Chronicle, Oct 4, 2011; originally published in "The Seer," November 1853, pages 173-176 and December 1835, pages 183-187) <http://www.mormonchronicle.com/27-rules-of-celestial-marriage/>. This has been described as "the painful teaching about polygamy in eternity. It is documented history that LDS leaders practiced polygamy long after the church officially renounced it. But multiple wives in the afterlife is not a foreign concept even to some modern Mormons. Laurie Goodstein,

relationships to be perpetuated beyond the grave.<sup>23</sup>

**Celestial marriage is required for entrance into the highest heaven.** There are three levels of celestial glory. The highest is the celestial kingdom. In order to enter the celestial kingdom, people must enter into this order of the priesthood, which is “the new and everlasting covenant of Marriage.”<sup>24</sup> The gateway to eternal bliss is temple marriage, along with righteous and abundant family life. No man or woman may receive the fullness of exaltation alone. “Exaltation in the celestial kingdom will be granted to those only who enter and faithfully observe the covenant of celestial marriage.”<sup>25</sup>

**Only celestial marriage allows the possibility of eternal increase.** The idea of “eternal increase,” or “continuation of seeds,” is also introduced in D&C 131-132. This is the idea of eternal procreation by exalted people (those who have become “gods”). Exalted persons married in the temple for time and all eternity are able eternally to increase by conceiving and birthing spirit children.<sup>26</sup> During their exaltation in the eternal worlds, they “bear the souls of men.”<sup>27</sup> Bruce McConkie explains:

Those who gain eternal life (exaltation) also gain *eternal lives*, meaning that in the resurrection they have *eternal “increase,” “a continuation of the seeds,” a “continuation of the lives.”* Their spirit progeny will “continue as innumerable as the stars; or, if ye were to count the sand upon the seashore ye could not number them.”<sup>28</sup>

By contrast, the unmarried are denied “eternal increase.”<sup>29</sup> They inherit “the deaths.” They can have no spirit children.<sup>30</sup>

Faithful unmarried women may still be exalted. Unmarried women are judged by the desires of their hearts. If it is their heart’s desire to live in faithfulness to God and receive celestial marriage if it presents itself under the proper conditions, the Lord will not hold the fact that they did not marry on earth against them. For it is the responsibility of faithful men to take the initiative in the marriage contract. It is better to abide in an eternal state of “single blessedness” than to marry improperly.<sup>31</sup> LDS youth are encouraged to live a life now worthy of the kind of person they would like to marry and prepare to marry the right person, in the temple, at the right time. They are to marry only a person of the LDS faith with high standards.<sup>32</sup>

**Those who do not make the eternal covenant of celestial marriage are the servants of those who observe the covenant.** Those either married “till death do us part” or who do not marry become the servants of “those who are worthy.” They are appointed to be angels in heaven. These servants or angels remain separate and single without exaltation to godhood forever and ever.<sup>33</sup> The vast majority of people will enter into eternity as servants. Only those who honor the covenants of the Lord will be “sons.” Eternal marriage is “one of the greatest and most mandatory” covenants. If the LDS refuse to receive this and other blessings of the kingdom, they will be cut off from

---

“It’s Official: Mormon Founder Had Up to 40 Wives” (IO40) (New York Times U. S. Online, Nov 10, 2014) [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/11/us/its-official-mormon-founder-had-up-to-40-wives.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/11/11/us/its-official-mormon-founder-had-up-to-40-wives.html?_r=0), accessed July 2015.

23 FPW.

24 D&C 131:2, 266.

25 Spencer W. Kimball, *The Miracle of Forgiveness* (Salt Lake City, Utah: Deseret Book Company, 1969), 242-244.

See also DOS, 44.

26 D&C 131:4, 266; 132:19, 268.

27 D&C 132:63, 273.

28 Bruce R. McConkie, *Mormon Doctrine* (MD) (Salt Lake City, Utah, Bookcraft, 1966), 238, his emphasis. See also DACSM, 330 on D&C 132:22-25.

29 DOS, 64.

30 MD, 238. See also D&C 132:16-17, 25.

31 DOS, 75-77.

32 TTE, 97 – 101.

33 D&C 132:16-17, 268. See also DACSM, 329.

the higher blessings. They will receive no crown of blessing. They will be denied the fullness of knowledge and power. Like the Prodigal, they may return to the Father's house, but they will go as servants, not sons.<sup>34</sup> Civil marriage makes servants in eternity. They may live clean lives and be virtuous and honorable. But, if they do not receive the covenant of eternal marriage, they may still enter into the celestial kingdom, but they will enter as servants. Celestial marriage, on the other hand, makes gods in eternity.<sup>35</sup>

**Those who do not live a life of obedience are not guaranteed exaltation even if they observe celestial marriage.** Celestial marriage by itself guarantees neither entrance into the celestial kingdom nor exaltation. Only those who enter into and faithfully observe the covenant of celestial marriage will be exalted. A couple must "continue in faithfulness" to receive exaltation.<sup>36</sup> This is true for all LDS theology. There is always something to "do." Whether the promise is an eternal marriage, eternity in the celestial kingdom, or exaltation, works always figure into the equation. The requirements of exaltation in the celestial Kingdom are many.<sup>37</sup>

**Some receive the more sure word of prophecy.** Connected to these passages on eternal marriage in *Doctrine and Covenants* are several unusual doctrines of Mormonism. One is "the more sure word of prophecy." This doctrine teaches that a person may know by a personal special revelation that he is "sealed up unto eternity, by revelation and the spirit of prophecy, through the power of the Holy Priesthood."<sup>38</sup> D&C records the Lord's words to Joseph Smith:

For I am the Lord thy God, and will be with thee even unto the end of the world and through all eternity; for verily I seal upon you your exaltation, and prepare a throne for you in the kingdom of my Father, with Abraham your father.<sup>39</sup>

After one has received the first Comforter, the Holy Spirit, through the laying on of hands, one may receive this "other Comforter." Christ appears to them and assures by revelation their eternal destiny. They are protected against all manner of sin except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and the shedding of innocent blood. Their exaltation is assured. Their calling and election are made sure.<sup>40</sup>

**Polygamy is part of this covenant.** It is hard to extricate the doctrine of polygamy from "the new and everlasting covenant of eternal marriage" because they are interwoven with one another within the same revelation received by Joseph Smith. In fact, the revelation of eternal marriage is sandwiched in between the revelations on polygamy. D&C 132:1 opens with a discussion of the wives and concubines of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Solomon. The LDS church explains that Joseph Smith did not understand how these patriarchs could find favor with the Lord, while living in a way "contrary to certain modern moral standards, and he asked the Lord for light."<sup>41</sup> D&C 132 opens as follows:

---

34 WTP, 247-250.

35 DOS, 61-63.

36 MOF, 243. See also TTTF, 98. See also *The Latter-day Saint Woman: Basic Manual for Women, Part A* (LDSW) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2000), 66-74.

37 GP, 278. The current version of *Gospel Principles* categorizes and consolidates some requirements so as not to make the list look so daunting. The 1979 version gives the full list: be baptized and confirmed in the LDS Church; receive the Holy Ghost; receive the temple endowment; be married for time and all eternity; love and worship God; have faith in Jesus Christ; live the law of chastity; repent [in other words cease] wrong doing; pay an honest tithe; be honest with the Lord and others; always speak the truth; obey the Word of Wisdom; search out kindred dead and perform saving ordinances for them; keep the Sabbath; attend church meetings regularly; love and strengthen family members in the ways of the Lord; pray every day; honor parents; teach the gospel by word and example; study the Scriptures; obey the prophets; develop true charity. "In other words, each person must endure in faithfulness, keeping all the Lord's commandments until the end of his life on earth." *Gospel Principles* (GP79) (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, revised 1979), 291-292.

38 D&C 131:5, 266.

39 D&C 132:49, 271.

40 MD, 109-110.

41 DACSM, 327. Notes and Commentary on D&C 132:1-2.

1. Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you my servant Joseph, that inasmuch as you have inquired of my hand to know and understand wherein I, the Lord, justified my servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as also Moses, David and Solomon, my servants, as touching the principle and doctrine of their having many wives and concubines –
2. Behold, and lo, I am the Lord thy God, and will answer thee as touching this matter.

D&C then moves to the inviolable nature of the “new and everlasting covenant” of marriage when instituted properly (132:4, 7-27). Section 132 returns to the subject of polygamy in verse 34 through the end of the section (verse 66). It is hard for non-LDS people to understand how half of the “new and everlasting” covenant’ (on polygamy) could be set aside while the other half (on eternal marriage) stays in force.

Furthermore, according to D&C 132:34-35, God commanded Abraham’s polygamy. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, and Solomon did what they were commanded to do in taking many wives.<sup>42</sup> Biblical accounts give no such command. In fact, every instance of polygamy recorded in Scripture has a negative outcome.

Some of D&C 132 is clearly aimed at bringing Joseph’s first wife Emma in line with Joseph’s desire to have multiple wives. The Lord’s explicit and direct message to “my handmaid Emma Smith” here is that He is doing with Joseph what He did with Abraham. Therefore Emma must receive all of those [wives] given to Joseph. Emma is commanded to “abide and cleave unto my servant Joseph, and to none else.” If she will not abide this commandment, she will be destroyed. She must forgive his trespasses against her so that the Lord will forgive her trespasses.<sup>43</sup> Joseph lived out the commandment of polygamy. The LDS church admits as many as forty wives. Eleven of these marriages were to woman who had living husbands at the time he married them, even though marrying married women was adultery according to D&C 132:61-63. Ten of Joseph’s wives were teenagers – two 14-year-olds and two 16-year-olds when he married them. Joseph was married to one mother and daughter, Patty Bartlett Sessions and Sylvia Sessions Lyon. He was also married to several sets of sisters (Huntingtons, Partridges, Johnsons, and Lawrences).<sup>44</sup>

To complicate matters, the *Book of Mormon* uses exactly the same examples to forbid multiple wives and concubines. D&C 132 references Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, David, and Solomon. In the Book of Mormon, Jacob 2:23-28 says David and Solomon’s many wives and concubines were “an abomination” before the Lord and commands believers to have one wife and no concubines.<sup>45</sup>

Then the Lord’s divine will on multiple wives and concubines was reversed again by Wilford Woodruff in D&C Declaration 1 on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 1890. Woodruff states that the church is not teaching polygamy or plural marriage. He also states that the LDS are not permitting anyone to enter into the practice and denies forty plural marriages alleged by the authorities. This declaration was known as “The Manifesto.” However, the LDS church now admits that a percentage of its members practiced plural marriage well into the twentieth century.<sup>46</sup> This begs the question: How does one set aside an “everlasting covenant” which is a commandment of God? How does one set aside half of an “everlasting covenant”?

**There are things that can destroy the “eternal” sealing of an “eternal” family.** In *Doctrines of Salvation*, Joseph Fielding Smith mentions a number of scenarios where the sealing power of the

42 D&C 132:34-39, 270; 132:65, 273.

43 D&C 132:51-57, 271-272.

44 IO40; see also *Remembering the Wives of Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City, Utah: WivesOfJosephSmith.org, ND). Daniel G. Thompson, *An Overview of the 34 Wives of Joseph Smith Jr.* (Ephraim, Utah: Trigrace Ministries, ND). Daniel G. Thompson is also the author of the best work on Mormon evangelism: *Witness to Mormons in Love: The Mormon Scrapbook, Revised Edition* (Ephraim, Utah: Gospel Truth 4 U Publications, 2014).

45 BOM, Jacob 2:23-28, 121. See also Jacob 3:5, 122.

46 D&C, *Official Declaration-1*, 291-293. See also *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, “Plural Marriage” (New York: Macmillan, 1992), 1091-1095.

priesthood over eternal marriages and eternal families may be broken. There can be no exaltation to the fullness of the blessings of the celestial kingdom outside of the marriage relationship. Neither a man nor a woman can be singly exalted alone. If a man and a woman are elevated to separate kingdoms in the afterlife, the sealing power is broken because of the sins of one or the other party. No faithful person can be deprived of exaltation. So the sins of an undeserving husband cannot prevent a faithful wife from exaltation. In that case, the faithful person would be given to someone else in the afterlife who is faithful.<sup>47</sup>

While the goal is to have an unbroken chain of progenitors and descendants sealed to one another forward and backward through all eternity, there will be chains that will be broken – with missing links in the chain. The unworthy will have to stand aside. The worthy will be brought together and the chain will go on.<sup>48</sup>

Marriage according to the law of the LDS is “the most holy and sacred ordinance.” When it is broken, it brings eternal misery to the guilty party. Covenants made in the temple cannot be broken without dire punishment to the one who is guilty. However, the President of the Church holds the keys to the priesthood. This is the power to bind and loose in heaven and on earth. He may cancel the sealing with the sanction of the Lord if the circumstances warrant it.<sup>49</sup>

It is the duty of parents to teach their children well. However, there are some born under the covenant who rebel and deny the Lord. They lose the blessings of exaltation. If children sin too grievously, they will go to the telestial kingdom (the middle level of heaven) or, even worse, become sons of perdition.<sup>50</sup>

Parents may also fail to maintain their exaltation. Even parents who have been married for time and all eternity may fail to keep their covenants in some way and/or separate. If they do, their children will be taken from one or both of them and given to parents who are just and who keep the covenant of eternal marriage.<sup>51</sup>

**There are other logistical problems with eternal families.** In the section immediately above, Joseph Fielding Smith lists numerous scenarios where the sealings of eternal families may be broken. Hence, “eternal” family relationships are not really eternal. These all deal with situations where someone in the relationship is unfaithful or violates the covenant in some way. One has to ask, is there any instance in which “families can be together forever,” as the popular LDS children’s song goes?

It does logically follow that, if this system were true, worthy and faithful husbands and wives could possibly overcome all the hurdles Joseph Fielding Smith proposes and spend eternity as god and goddess, populating their own world with spirit children. It works for one generation. But for subsequent generations, for both the parents before and the children after, it does not work. No god is omnipresent in LDS theology. All gods have a physically located bodily existence in the afterlife. Hence, the faithful worthy parents are exalted to godhood and are given their planet to populate (planet A). The next generation, the current Mormon and his wives who are worthy and faithful, also enter into the celestial kingdom and eventually achieve godhood. They also progress to their planet (planet B) where they act as Father and Mother(s) gods. Their earthly children also complete all the requirements of exaltation and finally through eternal progression reach godhood. They too function as the deities of their own world (planet C). There may be an eternal familial relationship, but there is certainly not eternal togetherness under the LDS plan for heavenly bliss. The different generations are worlds apart, functioning as the gods of their own worlds.

---

47 DOS, 65.

48 DOS, 68.

49 DOS, 84.

50 DOS, 91.

51 DOS, 91-92.

There is a stark contrast here between the eschatology of the LDS religion and biblical Christianity. In biblical Christianity, all those who place their faith and trust in Jesus Christ and Him alone for their salvation receive eternal life by grace through faith (Eph. 2:8-9). They all spend eternity in God's heavenly kingdom in the presence of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Families *can* be together forever—not in the scheme of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but through a personal faith relationship with the biblical Jesus.

With half of the “new and everlasting covenant” set aside (polygamy), and so many ways that the LDS's own prophets teach that the eternal family may be severed, one wonders how the LDS can talk at all about eternal marriages and families.

I have personally proposed some of these difficulties to Mormon missionaries at a temple welcome center after visiting the eternal families' exhibit and walking through it with them. The missionary's response was “well, when we meet Heavenly Father, He will make all that clear to us.” That answer is typical of what former Mormons have said about irreconcilable logical and theological paradoxes they dealt with while they were in the LDS church. Ex-Mormons talk about an imaginary “Mormon shelf.” They are taught not to question difficulties but to accept them as true. One ex-Mormon speaks of placing each of these difficulties on her mental Mormon shelf, as if to say, “I'll deal with that someday.” The problem comes when there is so much on that shelf that the mind of a thinking person cannot support it. There is just too much cognitive dissonance to allow the mind to function. LDS people who have reached this point, and who hear the simplicity and truth of the biblical gospel of grace, are often drawn to its logical and theological consistency. In one very real sense, part of evangelism to the LDS is revealing to them all that necessarily must exist on their “Mormon shelf” for their faith and their view to function. That along with the truth and logical consistency of the biblical Gospel is what leads many out of Mormonism.

Harold Carl teaches Biblical Interpretation and World Religions at Summit Christian Academy in Lee's Summit, MO. He is a graduate of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (M.Div.) and Westminster Theological Seminary (Ph.D.). He has 23 years of campus ministry and teaching experience. He has published numerous papers on LDS theology and other topics.

**Review Article of *Youth Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Five Views*  
edited by Chap Clark, with writers Fernando Arzola, Brian Cosby,  
Ron Hunter and Greg Stier (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015)**

DEAN BORGMAN

As practical theology generally begins best with consideration of the Blessed Trinity’s self-revelation of justice, love and peace, so any theology of youth ministry takes its cue from the incarnation and life of Jesus. But what does this mean... and how can such a theology be achieved?

Veteran youth minister and writer Rick Lawrence issues a severe warning in *J. Jesus Centered Ministry*: “... ministry people, by and large, have simply and subtly forgotten that Jesus is at the center of everything.” Lawrence writes this book to encourage readers to “make a beeline for Jesus and the cross”<sup>1</sup> and he has spoken many times on this advice of Scottish Charles Haddon Spurgeon. This review will listen in on one of today’s challenges to youth ministry: Christ-centered lives that will last from family to continuing spiritual community for emerging adults.

In *Youth Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Greg Stier (founder and president of Dare 2 Share Ministries) brings a new twist to the story of Peter’s paying the temple tax with a coin from a fish’s mouth. Jesus says the tax is specifically for Peter and himself, leaving Stier to conclude all the other disciples to be under the age liable to pay such a tax (Exodus 3:14) (3-4). Stier concludes that this makes Jesus, along with Peter, the first leader of a teenage youth group!

That youth ministry should be Jesus-centered has been accepted by most for some time. Jesuit professor and psychologist, Charles M. Shelton, now deceased, wrote back in 1983: “A spirituality for adolescents is... first and above all *Christ-centered*.... The central characteristics of adolescent maturity is a developing and deepening relationship with Jesus Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

Youth ministry is, then, about following Jesus. But how do twenty-first century young people understand that? And how do practitioners of youth ministry follow Jesus in attracting students to Jesus—and helping *them* be his followers?

In the high piles of youth ministry books of the past few decades, most are about how to do youth ministry. But at least one emphasizes various models of youth ministry: Mark Senter (ed.) and colleagues pointed out strategic options in their *Four Views of Youth Ministry and the Church*. Clark, in his introduction to our present text, refers to the earlier *Four Views*. The four positions are:

Inclusive Congregational (Milan Nel), where a church “thoroughly integrates its adolescents”:

Preparatory (Wesley Black), seeing youth ministry as preparing “disciples in training”:

Strategic (Mark Senter), youth ministry as a church planting strategy; and

Missional (Chap Clark), where the emphasis is to focus on evangelism as the primary goal of ministry (xii).

In contrast to that helpful examination of missional models, *Five Views* attempts to move beyond models to consider deeper theological bases of youth ministry—theology that will include psychosocial and ecological considerations (xiii): “Our desire is to offer five relatively unique voices and perspectives on the *basics* and *foundation* of what youth ministry should be about now and

---

1 Rick Lawrence, *J. Jesus Centered Youth Ministry* (Group, 2014), xiv.

2 Charles M. Shelton, *Adolescent Spiritual: Pastoral Ministry for High School and College Youth* (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1983).

in the coming decades” (xiv). And yet, at one point, Cosby criticizes Arzola for not describing a model: “... I don’t really see your position being a distinct youth ministry ‘model’” (128). We’re left, then, to wonder if Clark is updating Senter’s *Four Views* (models), or attempting to offer deeper theological and philosophical perspectives—rather than merely five working models for youth ministry in this century.

View One: The Gospel Advancing View of Youth Ministry. Agreeing with Rick Lawrence (above), Greg Steir lays out his starting point:

The modern youth ministry model has largely abandoned the focus of Jesus and delivers, instead, a series of competing programs. We have exchanged mission for meetings. We have separated evangelism and discipleship. We have turned outreach into a program rather than a lifestyle. (4)

The reader, then, will find some overlap between Senter’s *Four Views* and Clark’s *Five Views*. For in proposing their theologies of youth ministry, the latter are forced to apply or illustrate their concepts with applications... or models of youth ministry. Still, they keep their emphasis on theological, and, to some degree, philosophical, assumptions.

Stier first presents his approach as “The Gospel Advancing View of Youth Ministry”:

At the core of the heart of Jesus is a desperate search-and-rescue mission for the lost.... like Jesus, then, we must cultivate in (youth) a driving passion to reach the lost.... the goal here is not more evangelistic programs but nurturing teenagers to live and give the gospel in word and deed in their spheres of influence (5).

Describing the success of his own Dare 2 Share Ministries, Stier concludes: “They had one purpose: to energize a generation to evangelize their world. Discipleship shook out from there” (7).

There is, of course, more to Gospel Advancing Ministry. It takes seriously research on the loneliness of digitally connected young people and how relationships in such an approach to youth ministry develop. It elicits earnest stories and reiterates the Gospel story, beginning with the ten percent of youth who respond to such a challenge. It includes the necessity of prayer, the assistance of adult models, parents who can coach and churches who will embrace this strategy.

The pattern of this book presents a position, and, then, offers critiques from four colleagues (first their appreciation, positive contributions noted, and, then, criticism of the position). Finally comes a response to these critiques from the writer of the chapter. We have, then, much to review. Beginning with reactions to Steir’s approach, we will mostly slip past the positives and focus on critical questions from the other four views.

Steir’s passion for following Jesus, evangelism and discipleship are lauded. Critiques of Steir’s Gospel Advancing Ministry include a fear of his limiting youth ministry to personal evangelism and discipleship, which may appear as a throwback to old Gospel tracks and warnings of personal doom. Presenting Jesus as “a youth minister” and “desperate to find the lost” is questioned in terms of his larger ministry. Steir’s lack of adolescent developmental background is also noted. In general, Steir is encouraged to enlarge the biblical and theological scope of his ministerial approach.

View Two is Brian Cosby’s “The Reformed View of Youth Ministry.” Brian Cosby is pastor of a Presbyterian Church of America (PCA) church and has written on youth ministry. If Steir’s emphasis seems to urge a return to personal (and group) evangelism and discipleship, Cosby sets his groundwork on grace as articulated by the Reformed, Protestant and Evangelical theological endeavor: “Youth ministries today often (unknowingly) emphasize what I call Home Depot Theology—‘You can do it; God can help’—as if Jesus were standing outside in the cold just begging for a chance to come in and take the wheel!” (37)

Cosby urges youth ministry to be “Consistently Reformed”: “... we need to make some clear distinctions between a *consistently Reformed* youth ministry—which I believe to be the biblical approach—and other views, some of which are represented in this book” (38).

In clarifying “Reformed,” he questions the biblical authenticity of parachurch organizations such as Youth Specialties and Young Life, as well as refuting Roman Catholic understandings of grace (38, 43). Such assertions might suggest more thorough explanations of the positions critiqued by Cosby.

Cosby reiterates what others have criticized in youth ministries: overusing entertainment and measuring youth ministry by success (rather than faithfulness).

Five *means of grace*, as taught by John Calvin, the Westminster Catechism, and taught in his PCA and other Reformed churches, establish biblical *methods* for youth ministry (42-43). Included in these five means of grace are two sacraments, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, which, according to Calvin, “echoing Augustine,” are “a visible form of invisible grace... signs and seals of God’s *covenant of grace*” (47).

Cosby’s five biblical methods for youth ministry are, first, the ministry of the *Bible*—“preaching, teaching, and reading—is the primary means by which God saves and sanctifies youth” (43). The next method is biblical *prayer* as “a means of grace by which God empowers, comforts, strengthens, sanctifies, and nurtures his people” (46). Youth leaders also need to press home the need to see *baptism* as “a holy pledge in its full fruition in *communing membership* at a local church” (47). Crosby sees his fourth method, along with baptism, as being neglected by most youth ministers. It is the second sacrament, *the Lord’s Supper*: “When believers partake of the Lord’s Supper, they partake of Christ’s body and blood really, truly, and *spiritually*.... If God has seen fit to ordain these sacraments as means of communicating his grace, then we should be dedicated to supplying their meaning (through teaching) and use (in worship) in our ministry with youth” (48-49).

Youth ministry must also include Gospel-Motivated Service. Service is a means of grace whereby God grows our faith, extends our love and brings us joy and peace (49).

Crosby sums up his approach: “God has already provided both the *content* and *method* of biblical youth ministry. These means of grace... should inform how we go about drawing young men and women into the church and into a life of faith” (52). His conclusion includes further warning about “youth groups” detached from the active life of the church—including parachurch ministries that pull youth away from godly families and truly, “sound and safe... Gospel communities” (50-52).

Crosby is praised by his collegial critics for his theological thrust—and his emphases on grace, prayer and the sacraments. Some worry he is minimizing the fun teenagers need, and Steir comments: “We don’t want youth group meetings to look like a liturgical service held in a medieval cathedral” (54). A deeper concern, especially from Clark and Hunter, is Cosby’s strict “overt boundaries offered by the single theological framework you use...” excluding those of “Wesleyans, Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or ‘nondenominational’ backgrounds who might just as forcibly build a legitimate and biblical case for their approaches” (56). Clark and Arzola also see Young Life and other parachurch organizations fulfilling part of the Gospel and functions of the Church better than many churches do (56-58, 61). Clark asks Crosby what he does with the many teens bored with church teaching (58).

View Three is Chap Clark’s “The Adoption View of Youth Ministry.” Chap Clark is a noted author, professor and chair of Youth, Family, and Culture at Fuller Theological Seminary. Since this description of his approach to youth ministry, Chap Clark has called together twenty-four youth ministry experts and edited *Adoptive Youth Ministry: Integrating Emerging Generations into the*

*Family of Faith* (2016). Here, picking up where Crosby left off and broadening the domain, Clark states:

I contend that the primary reason we have lost so many of the hearts and investment of our young when they leave the confines of the high school routine is that we have failed to provide them with the most vital resource they possessed in Christ: the God-given faith community (75).

Drawing on his own research (*Hurt 1* and *2*), that of Barna Research and Sticky Faith, and referring to sociologists such as Robert Putnam, Clark declares adolescents in today's society "to rarely experience... relationship with a dominant population of the church or society at large as something to which they belong" (82).

We have done our best to reach youth, even to bring them to passionate acceptance of Jesus Christ and the Christian faith, but we've seen passionate commitment to God fade as adult social expectancies are forced upon our young. Besides bringing young people to Jesus, which is the crux of the matter and initiation of life-long faith, we must "adopt" them into a continuing community of faith. He writes:

The goal of youth ministry as adoption is for every child, every adolescent, and every young adult to be so embraced by the community of faith that they know they always have a home, a people, and a place where they can discover who they are and how they are able to contribute (85).

Obviously our reviews of these positions in a single article are sadly superficial. Briefly, his colleagues give Clark positive responses... still, with critical questions and suggestions. The spiritual goals of this perspective are lauded, but some wish Clark to have been more specific about the biblical, theological and external workings of his view. One sees God and God's grace lost in the performance of such a paradigm, and another views this "model as incomplete and unbalanced" (98). More positively, one wonders: "The adoption model works well as long as the worldview of the parents and the teen has been shaped toward this idea. A gap that catches many of our teenagers is the move to college" where they may not find a church with such an inclusive community (105).

Clark accepts criticisms of his view but thinks they stem mostly from the difficulty of his short essay to stress a complete theology (e.g., on the grace of God). A more critical point is Clark's insistence (vs. Hunter and Cosby) on the whole church beyond a parish, believing parents and home church can hardly be the primary disciplers and mentors of their children over the span of a lifetime.

View Four is Fernando Azola's "The Ecclesial View of Youth Ministry." Fernando Arzola is a former professor (and author of a text) of youth ministries, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Nyack College, and now Dean of the Orthodox, St. Katherine College. Beyond Brian Cosby's emphasis on the dogma and practices for youth ministries in the Reformed tradition, Arzola makes a case for a return and resurgence of ancient styles. He stakes his position in strong terms:

Let's be honest. Protestant youth ministry has all but deleted ecclesiology from its theological radar... it is nonexistent in contemporary youth ministry.

... it is important to teach Christian teens that ecclesiology preceded the biblical canon for over three hundred years. As long as youth ministries do not reclaim a historically orthodox understanding of ecclesiology, it will perpetuate the myopic and thin contemporary North American expressions of pop-worship and neo-discipleship based on mega-ministry personalities, cultural trends, and repackaged curriculums decided by a handful of publishers (113).

Arzola might have mentioned the strong liturgical renewal movement of the twentieth century, but he does amply cite scholarship to back up “... an increase in the scholarly examination of ecclesiology... in recent years” (113). Endnotes stressing this assertion are quite extensive (187). For this article Arzola appeals to the works of Reformed Donald G. Bloesch, the Methodist Thomas C. Oden and Episcopalian Robert E. Webber—quoting particularly Oden and Webber at some length.

Modernism (or the Enlightenment) with its individualistic rationalism and pragmatism has robbed the church, in Webber’s words, “... of its mystical self concept, so that it is now regarded as little more than a human organization made up of individuals” (117). Arzola’s alternative is not quite clear. His version of the “historically orthodox church” is not quite Eastern Orthodox, though his discontents fit the general critique of conservative Protestantism by Orthodox and Catholics.

Arzola is very clear in his criticisms of American Evangelical theology of the church. From the Reformation and Enlightenment, it has developed its own kind of pragmatic and individualistic measures of ministerial success. Arzola reminds us that Reformed Evangelicalism’s emphasis on the “invisible church” has left it careless about the unity, holiness, catholicity and continuity of the visible church: “the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church” (my quoting from the Nicene Creed). Arzola wants these four creedal characteristics rediscovered by the contemporary church and its youth ministries: (1) The Church is One (2) The Church is Holy... (3) The Church is Catholic... (4) The Church is Apostolic (117-120).

From this, Arzola suggests three practices for youth ministry. (In the overall context of this book, youth ministries seems somewhat of a minor issue of this chapter).

#### Reappropriating Historically Orthodox Youth Ministry Practices

*Practice 1: Reappropriating the Four Characteristics of the Church: one, holy, catholic and apostolic (120-121)*

*Practice 2: Reappropriating an Incarnational/Visible Understanding of the Body of Christ (122)*

*Practice 3: Developing a More Formal Teaching of Ecclesiology (122- 123).*

To many readers of this book, I think this chapter may come off as a “minority report”—partly because they are not familiar with the church’s patristic age and/or because they have little or no contact with Catholic and Orthodox youth leaders and youth groups. Surprisingly here, there is little argument for a more liturgical approach—an appreciation of the attractiveness and power of the Divine Liturgy or Eucharist in churches who follow such central ancient traditions today. Some bewilderment may also come because Arzola has chosen to deal with theory, his version of the “what” and “why” of historic orthodoxy in church and youth ministry rather than any “how” to do youth ministry or teaching (141).

The four responses to Arzola show a collegial bond among the authors. They genuinely applaud him for his criticism of youth ministry separated from the church, youth programs pragmatically designed and for general ignorance about church history. His emphases on a theology of the church and its need for unity and holiness strike a cord among them. They acknowledge that his viewpoint finds resonance among many disillusioned with the church as it is, including critiques from some brilliant scholars—such as Bloesch, Oden and Webber.

Stier, however, doesn’t find exciting youth ministry in Arzola’s essay; it seems to him to suggest rather dry teaching about the ancient church. He wants to hear greater stress on connecting youth to a dynamic Christ (125-126). Cosby, as might be anticipated, rejects Donald Bloesch as representative of Reformed thinking—neo-orthodox perhaps, but not Reformed orthodoxy. And he finds Arzola theologically vague on the one hand, and without “a distinct youth ministry ‘model,’ on the other (126-129). Steir would put *truth* before *unity*. Clark finds more positive in Arzola’s

position—its theological bent, emphasis on the past and ancient church and ecclesiastical focus. But he wonders how this will actually work out in the youth ministry field Clark knows so well. Clark does see ways many of Arzola’s concerns might be worked into his adoptive youth ministry model. Hunter sees Arzola as being caught up in the “paleo-orthodox” movement—especially of Oden and Webber. Recognizing the importance of Arzola’s ancient church emphasis, Hunter wants to take him back further to Israel’s *Shema*, integrating youth ministry, church and family around a teaching and discipleship in the love of God and neighbor. This brings us to our final view and D6.

View Five is Ron Hunter’s “The D6 View of Youth Ministry.” Ron Hunter is executive director of Randall House and publisher of D6 Curriculum. D6 refers to Deuteronomy 6, the powerful *Shema*: “Hear, O Israel: The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might.... Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away....” (Deut 6:4-5, 7 NRSV).

Hunter criticizes today’s church and youth ministry for their “silo” effect, a “metaphor (for) a ‘system process, department, etc. that operates in isolation from others,” and for their “McDonalization... idea of finding the expert... such as youth ministers, children’s ministers, preschool ministers and others” (147-148). This widespread criticism of youth ministry and movement toward family ministries has been mentioned by Hunter in his response to Arzola (referring to Stuart Cummings-Bond and Mark DeVries). According to Hunter: “D6 describes generational discipleship lived out through both the church and the home.... (I will provide) five primary focal points for youth ministries who operate with a D6 philosophy. The purpose of this chapter is to share God’s original plan for generational discipleship that includes both church and home discipleship” (148).

Between family youth ministry advocates these days, there are those who argue for the abolition of Sunday School and youth groups, and those who would integrate some age segregation and family unification at church. With its own particular style, D6 leans somewhat toward the latter—though he later on suggests separate pre-school and youth ministers with older youth—“... each minister... of each age should connect to the other with intentionality” (159).

What then are the five focal points describing the role of a D6 youth pastor under this model? Hunter admits there is no explicit reference to youth ministers in the Bible. He will take, instead, instruction to pastors and leaders generally and apply such to the D6 model.

Following instructions from the Apostle Paul to church leaders, he finds several roles for a D6 youth pastor. (1) To be a “Transformational Leader.... Leaders who implement a transformational style of leadership understand the value of helping followers become stronger.... Youth leaders invest in the future of teens and help develop parents to share in the spiritual development of their kids” (155, 157). (2) “Leaders must see programs as a tactical way to accomplish a bigger strategy.... If transformational leaders bring revolution, then spiritual revolution can only occur by pointing students to Christ, the greatest transformational leader.” (3) “Build Team Approach among Staff and with Volunteers. Guiding philosophies become stronger when adopted by every staff leader” of whatever age group. (4) “Teach Students. Youth pastors teach the students vital concepts, character building, biblical values, and how to use their God-give talents in life.” (6) “Teach Parents to Be Coaches.... By investing in the parents as well as the teens, youth pastors help both groups thrive as they live out their faith in any environment” (157-161).

In conclusion, “D6 knows no time limit, no cultural boundary, and no geographical preference... D6 represents God’s original plan for how to nurture a Christ-follower generationally from birth throughout the circle of life” (162).

In their responses to Ron Hunter's D6 program, his colleagues pick up on his ambiguity about age-segregated youth ministry (seeming both to criticize and to adopt to some extent). They are also quick to point out that few families (and churches) are able to sustain such spiritual responsibilities as suggested for spiritual, intact-families. There are too many broken, overly busy families in our society today. Hunter's strong emphasis on a biblical pattern is weakened by his admission that the Bible says nothing about youth pastors, *per se*. After praising Hunter's passionate quest for biblical discipleship, Clark, especially, questions the number of families able to be adequate spiritual disciplers and coaches of their children, as well as pointing out that in his total emphasis upon the partnership between youth pastors and parents, the function of the spiritual family beyond the local parish is missing (170-171). Consideration of teenagers with no parent available is the main concern of Hunter's fellow authors.

Hunter's rejoinder is to point to the estimated 48 percent of American youth who are in two parent homes. Coming from a home suffering divorce when he was 14, he recognizes this limitation, but believes we must begin with what God has left intact—which to Hunter seems to be God's approach in Scripture.

Each of these five authors has in mind particular weaknesses in contemporary churches and youth ministries. None claim their corrective view and model to be completely original—or, as Ron Hunter has put it: "None of us has found the exclusive way to minister to youth" (174). They have rather drawn on biblical and theological scholarship, along with current research, to produce for us provocative and encouraging approaches to the crisis of youth evangelism and long-term youthful spiritual formation in this century.

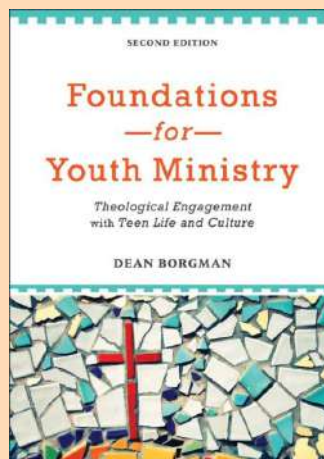
Chap Clark, in the book's "Afterword: Where from Here?" makes this clear:

The point of this book is not to determine who is "right" but to give each one a voice and then have a conversation... to get the youth ministry world to think deeply about what it means and looks like to care for and nurture the life and faith of those who have not quite entered into the peer-driven status of adulthood... our greatest hope is that people will be less committed to a single "view," program, or philosophy of ministry, and, in communion with their own church or ministry "family," more open to God leading as they design their ministry perspective and strategy (179).

Amidst the complexities of our postmodern, post-Christian and digital societies today, and despite discouraging statistics and impressions, there is renewal within Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Evangelical and Emerging and Pentecostal circles. Young people are following Christ, families are trying to follow the *Shema*, and churches are being blessed. May this book and this article encourage the positive and provide a needed challenge to improve upon what we are missing in ministering to youth.

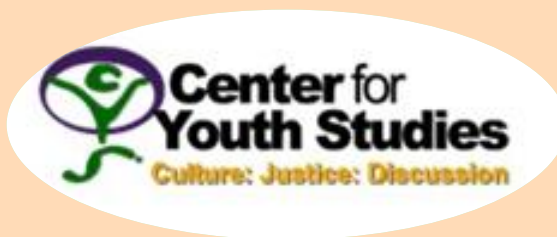
Dean Borgman is a retired (but still teaching) Professor of Youth and Family Ministries and Social Ethics at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. His experience in youth work is both suburban and urban, church and parachurch, national and international. He was involved in Young Life (YL) for several years, including YL's early urban work on Manhattan's Lower East Side and YL's Urban Training Institute in New York City. He has taught for several years in Liberia and Kenya, besides leading classes and workshops in several countries. His books include *Hear My Story: Understanding the Cries of Troubled Youth*, 2003, and *Foundations for Youth Ministry: Theological Engagement with Teen Life and Culture*, 2013. He is also the founder and general editor of Culture and Youth Studies (formerly the Center for Youth Studies: <http://cultureandyouth.org>). Dean received a Youth Ministry Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association of Youth Ministry Educators in 2006 and from Youth Specialties in 2013. Dean and Gail live in Rockport, MA, and have four children and eleven grandchildren.

# A Must-Have Resource for Youth Ministry



[www.bakerpublishinggroup.com](http://www.bakerpublishinggroup.com)

“Dean Borgman, a nationally known youth ministry expert, offers a new edition of his influential classic. Reaching a broadly ecumenical audience, this book challenges readers to think about the theological nature of youth ministry. Questions for discussion and reflection are included. This thoroughly updated edition was previously published as *When Kumbaya Is Not Enough*.”



[www.centerforyouth.org](http://www.centerforyouth.org)

*Providing relevant informational resources and promoting global collaboration towards a comprehensive systems approach to ministry with youth.*



Reviews of *Sharecropper to Entrepreneur to Pastor: Looking Back and Giving Thanks* by John Henry Womack (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2016) and *The Corridors of Strange Darkness: Struggling with the Experience of Glaucoma* by Eugene L. Neville (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2015)

WILLIAM DAVID SPENCER

The brilliant, troubled art and social critic John Ruskin (1819-1900) once observed, “Great Nations write their autobiographies in three manuscripts – the book of their deeds, the book of their words, and the book of their art” (1877 preface to *St. Mark’s Rest*). Ruskin’s well worded summary could as easily be applied to two accounts captured in two very different autobiographies by two remarkable individuals. Both colleagues pastored churches in Greater Boston, but, in order to arrive at their separate ministries, both struggled with great adversity, though coming from two different worlds, the rural and the urban, where their goals were similarly blocked by nearly insurmountable challenges.

John Womack’s story begins far from Boston in the Virginia Piedmont of 1944. Chapter 1 introduces us to this sixth child of a sharecropping couple and the lot dealt to him at birth of complete systemic limitation, set in stone by the constantly stultifying opposition of pre-integration racism. He captures this cycle of regimentation of his earliest years in a narrative filled with insights and illustrated from his struggle to survive. His descriptions of child labor are viscerally commonplace for they are firsthand:

Unlike today’s simpler system that allows farm owners to have a larger profit margin, tobacco farming was a time-consuming, labor intensive process with hard-won earnings. We picked two or three leaves at a time and put them on a stick. We then put them in a barn to be cured and that would take four to seven days. After this period of time, the leaves were taken out of the barn, put into a storage house, and there they would stay until we completed the harvesting of all tobacco. At the end of this process, we sorted the leaves by grade and wrapped them for marketing. We stacked the leaves in stalls, restacked them, packed and repacked them to be ready for display at auction and then sold. We had to get up at five o’clock in the morning to work before going to school, and we would start working again as soon as the school day ended. We took a break to eat supper or dinner, then continued working until ten or eleven o’clock at night – sometimes as late as midnight. There was very little time for study. If we did not get it done at study hall in school, it did not get done. Those who grew up on the farm as sharecroppers were programmed to fail if you counted success the way that most people did. There was little opportunity for consistent formal education. During my childhood, there was little opportunity to see or to experience anything beyond rural life and its ritual (6).

At the same time, his parents were fighting to give their children the best opportunity and “they taught me how to survive in a hostile world and to stand up for what was right.” He recounts how his father “stood up to his white boss – the farm owner” (11), who demanded the family work on Sundays and the children skip school to work on the farm.

Yet, despite this ritual of programmed repression, this young thinker began to apply himself in school, since “Dad taught us to work hard and to do an excellent job” and “my mother, in addition to being our home teacher, was also the spiritual leader of the home. She made sure that we went to church and Sunday school every week” (11).

Chapter 2 tells us of a teacher and a 4H Club farm agent who noticed the intellectual gifts of this child and became mentors. Home life, however, was difficult and the pressures on the parents were felt by the children. John, deeply sensitive to God's presence and requirements, despite the hardships, struggled as a child to bring reconciliation to his family as one by one the children abandoned the home: "My older brothers left home carrying a grudge against our dad. During those times, being young, we did not fully understand forgiveness. And, considering all that we went through, it was also hard to forgive. Many of us left home before God placed it in our hearts to forgive our dad. I can remember speaking to my older brothers about this, telling them that we needed to forgive our father and think more about mom and our younger siblings whom we left at home" (10).

While his grades were not high, young John's persistence was very intense, and, breaking free of the sharecropper's life after graduation, he decided to join the military, partly as a way to create an opportunity for himself to afford advanced study. Chapter 3 is an entertaining account of his adventures in the navy, being a sailor who didn't know how to swim, and, after that rough and tumble beginning, entering the next phase of his adventures as a professional football player.

Chapter 4 reminisces about his family life and how the lessons both positive and negative from his birth family were used to create the warm family he has today. This is a very gentle and tender chapter of a love that still endures.

Chapter 5 begins what I consider to be the standout contributions of this book as it reflects on the experiences he has recounted with "Ten Vital Lessons for Survival and Thriving as a Black Man in America." This and the lessons in the following chapters alone are worth the price of the book.

Chapter 6 chronicles his "Entrepreneurial and Business Life" and we learn of various occupations he explored like salesperson, janitor, floor stripper, iron worker, gas station manager, house painter, carpet cleaner, and how he drew on the experience of each of these to become a successful business entrepreneur.

Chapter 7 then brings these insights together to provide "Ten Vital Lessons Learned as a Successful African-American Entrepreneur."

Chapter 8, "The Foolishness of God: 'You Don't Have to be a Star in my Show'" keys off 1 Corinthians 1:25-31 to trace his spiritual journey and how he traveled from deacon to preacher, pursuing his education at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary's Boston campus/Center for Urban Ministerial Education, beginning with its certificate program and progressing on through the degrees until he earned a Doctor of Ministry degree, while all the time establishing his successful businesses and caretaking his family. "To be honest," he admits, "I wanted to quit because the business was growing rapidly. However, I was inspired by the teaching and learning experience, and I wanted to stick with it. I prayed to God daily to give me the strength, the energy, the desire, and love for Him to carry me through day by day. My hours during the ten years of going to night school involved rising between six and seven o'clock every morning and going to bed in the evening between half past eleven in the evening and three o'clock in the morning. When I look back over my life I do not know how I made it – surely it was God who brought me through" (76). The journey arrived at him becoming the pastor of influential Metropolitan Baptist Church, in the Dorchester area of Boston, and a valued member of Gordon-Conwell's board of trustees, though "many could not understand why I would pastor a church when I was running a successful business" (79).

Chapter 9 shares his "Ten Vital Lessons Learned as a Pastor," while Chapter 10 recounts his "Community Service Experience," and Chapter 11 explains his resulting, active approach to retirement. As Chapter 12 gives his final reflections on this book of his deeds, words, and the art of his life, his story goes full circle, concluding with a fascinating discourse on what he calls "Sharecropping for Christ," wherein he draws parallels between the life of a sharecropper and

that of a servant of Christ. Because this book is real, he ends it with three interesting appendices: Appendix A provides a chart explaining how the financial system of the farm at which the author's birth family was employed was set up to keep the family in debt and servitude. Appendix B gives a brief history of sharecropping, Appendix C a more detailed description of his naval experience at sea on the USS Wasp (including its ocean retrievals of various astronauts), while Appendix D provides selected newspaper articles chronicling his success in business, with Appendix E reflecting on "A Ministry of Mission: Mobilizing the Underprivileged to Become Christian Entrepreneurs." Appendix F ends the book with a poem.

These days Christian readers and viewers appear to want all their books and movies presented like reality television series, all slapping on the label: "Based on a true story." This book is not simply "*based* on a true story." It is a true chronicle by a devout Christian who literally lived, as one of the newspaper accounts puts it, a "Rags to Riches Story," as this "Former Sharecropper Owns Business" (133). Or, as another business writer entitles his piece: "Womack's Firm Was Built from the Ground Up" (134). From a child who started life literally picking tobacco from the ground and is completing it as a successful businessman, pastor, and family man whose advice is sought in all these spheres, this book is a fitting gift to all who start with nothing and want to create something for their families and their Lord.

The other remarkable and renowned Boston area ministerial leader is the Reverend Eugene Neville, founder of Mount Moriah Baptist Church, today one of the most established and respected of all of Boston's churches. An honors graduate of Barrington College and of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston, he is an original and creative writer who divides his story into 31 "corridors" and frames it with his struggle with glaucoma, a moving cautionary account he shared with *Africanus Journal* readers in our April 2015 (Vol. 7, No. 1) issue. Now he has expanded that story and contextualized it into a fascinating larger work, interpreting it symbolically so that his entire life story is framed by his struggle with glaucoma as a powerful metaphor for all "the proliferation of injustices forced upon people of color" (3). But he does not limit his audience, seeing the larger picture in its global aspect as trouble affecting all humanity:

There are many life challenges and diseases that impact the lives of millions of people around the world. Life will always remain filled with a plethora of unending, enigmatic challenges. For example, while some serious diseases are curable with proper immunization and medical treatments, there remain numerous others that are incurable and have devastating outcomes. I have chosen to use this medium to share with you information about an invasive disease that is seldom discussed in the African-American or other minority communities. Nevertheless, it is one that carries, embedded within itself, life-altering physical, emotional, and spiritual realities (7).

He begins his detailing of these "physical, emotional, and spiritual realities" in chapters 1 and 2 and then expands the intensely personal nature of his narrative as chapter 3 recounts his struggles as the tenth child of a thirteen-child family, entering early into a "corridor" of "anger" (20) with "self-hatred" (22). His birth family was very strict and corporal punishment was exacted by parent as well as by sister (24). By his 20s, the author found himself wandering within a "corridor of fear... cycles of despair" and "feelings of failure" (26). His was not solely a family-driven despair, as across the United States of the 1960s and 1970s, cities exploded in violence (including both Rev. Neville's Boston as well as the birth city of the present reviewer).

But down the center of this plight of children reared in such an environment of violence and upheaval ran the grace of God. Rescued from gang-related violence by the correction of his family, this young man began to realize that his family's women were not being cruel to him, but they were struggling to preserve his life from the violent deaths experienced by so many other young African-American men of this period, and he came to realize, that, at the same time, "the gospel was clearly

explained to me by my other older sister” (33). As a result of this good cop/bad cop strategy of his siblings, orchestrated by God, even if unconscious to the sisters, he had his encounter with Jesus Christ, who became his Lord and Savior, and his attitude and perspective on life started altering.

Now the “corridors” of “family drama,” “strange darkness,” “anger,” “correction,” “fear,” and “unrest” begin to give way to new “corridors” of “wise counsel,” “new life,” “faith,” and soon “academia,” “blessing,” “ministry,” and “good times,” as the gospel of grace changes his life.

After the struggles described in the earlier chapters, chapters 11-15 begin to detail this miraculous change until Chapter 16 recounts his entrance into his calling as “I was ordained a Christian Minister” (43), under the watchful leadership of Boston’s famed congressman and renowned pastor Rev. Dr. Michael Haynes.

But, just as the author was arriving at this “blessing” of “ministry,” chapter 19 reveals that a new set of corridors were opening up before him with a new set of struggles with which many ministers can identify, including false lawsuits, church battles, and painfully slow progress to build an enduring church (48). And all through these new struggles, he is being beset by a new silent enemy, whose siege was almost unnoticed among all the other hurdles the author was crossing. This new enemy was “an extremely severe condition called *primary angle closure glaucoma*” (63).

Now everything in his narrative begins to come together as all the preceding “corridors” of his struggle and deliverance in Christ lead into his steadfast determination to build the church as a lighthouse for God, even as the darkness was stealing away his outer but not his inner sight.

What makes this book ultimately the story of triumph is the author’s steadfast determination to accomplish God’s goals for him, even in the descending darkness. He sees the bigger picture of his own life within God’s great plan of reconciling the world, as he reflects within himself and then counsels his readers:

Our lives are encumbered by so many difficult situations that it becomes hard for some to believe that God really cares and loves them. Nonetheless, no matter how one may feel, God does love us. God’s love for us is awesome, inexplicable, unconditional, and incomprehensible. The Holy Scripture unveils this truth about God, who said:

My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. (Isa 55:9)

Sometimes God uses the darkness to bless us immeasurably. Only God can change gross darkness into a glorious cosmic wonder. The greatest reversal in all of creation was not when God spoke to the darkness at creation when he said, “Let there be light.” Rather, it was on that Friday afternoon on a hill called Calvary where God’s one and only Son, Jesus the Christ, vicariously suffered, bled, and died for all of our sins (60).

Eugene Neville’s story is inspiring not because it is filled with platitudes and has a storybook ending designed to make readers feel good, but because it reveals the courage of a Christian who has struggled with the terrifying prospect of losing his sight and has courageously undergone procedures unthinkable for a busy pastor, like lying “prostrate, remaining as still as possible, with the head in a face down position for approximately twenty hours each day, for a period of several weeks...or a few months” to allow a surgically inserted gas bubble to seal a hole in the macular area of his eye (70). Who could withstand such a regimen within the overwhelming demands of ministry? And yet he did just that. Today, he notes, “I am pleased to say that I am still in the process of healing,” and, though, some of his work has been “curtailed,” “it has not stopped me from participating in a wide variety of creative activities and other meaningful ventures” (75). His resulting reflections are full of enlightened resolve and everyone struggling with any kind of long-term condition will benefit from his counsel. As he explains:

I wish I could say that the illusive shadows of darkness have totally dissipated, but that would be misleading and untrue. The adversary leaves us alone but only for a brief season – then it comes back with intense vengeance. However, my mind, heart, and soul have been made whole by the “healing wounds” of Jesus Christ. Although the struggles and vicissitudes in this life may continue, they nonetheless have been stripped of their capacity to paralyze me with fear. The purpose of my life has become clearer. At this particular season in my life, I am no longer trying to identify illusive shadows or run away from painful realities of life. Instead, there still remains deep inside of me a yearning that beckons me to live out the remaining years of my life, not in vain, but in a manner pleasing to God. Also, I still have a burning passion to be of help to somebody (75).

The wise insight of this spiritually astute pastor expands the meaning of his very real physical suffering as he explains to readers, “Philosophically and theologically, I have come to believe that this corridor, through which I now walk, is an earthly temporal place. This place is one in which all of our life experiences coalesce in order to prepare us for the last corridor. Into this transitional corridor all of our questions, doubts, fears, disappointments, troubles, strange imaginations, dreams, aspirations, blessings and beliefs mysteriously conjoin, ultimately validating what we believe” (77).

Thoughtful, insightful, consciousness-expanding, this book is immeasurably valuable to all who suffer but still want to serve Christ with power despite the limitations put on them in this fallen world. Everyone should read it.

And here is the point of my review. To me these two books are worthwhile, both specifically and generally. Specifically, John Womack’s reflections are significant for any would-be entrepreneur or business person starting at a disadvantage who wants to build something to last that pleases Christ and helps people. Specifically, Eugene Neville’s assessments are healing balm to all of us with medical conditions who want to see our lives turn out worthwhile, accomplishing our goals both temporal and eternal. Generally, I believe everyone will benefit from reading how two different people through great struggle overcame obstacle after obstacle to carve out a place for themselves and for the kingdom of God. My advice is read these books and then give them away to someone who needs to be encouraged.

Few of us could know how we would react to such challenges as these two authors have faced in their lives, but their personal records and wise counsel, entirely based on their own authentic experiences, are teaching manuals for each of us. They make us aware not to neglect our education, our families, our own bodies, or our care of others, including our neighbors who are in the same struggle we experience. Whatever our lot in life, Jesus can make us winners too.

Rev. Dr. William David Spencer is Distinguished Adjunct Professor of Theology and the Arts at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary’s Boston Campus and is founder of its Athanasian Teaching Scholars program, cofounder of its Africanus Guild Ph.D. support program, coeditor of *Africanus Journal*, and the author or editor of 14 books and hundreds of articles, chapters in books of others, editorials, reviews, stories, and poems. His most recent book, co-edited with educator and former actress, the Rev. Jeanne DeFazio, recounts the stories of Christians at work for Christ in Hollywood, *Redeeming the Screens: Living Stories of Media “Ministers” Bringing the Message of Jesus Christ to the Entertainment Industry*. He blogs with his wife, the Rev. Dr. Aída Besançon Spencer, at [aandwspencer.com](http://aandwspencer.com) (Applying Biblical Truths Today).

# 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*.

**Media, Examination, and Review Copies:**  
Contact: James Stock  
(541) 344-1528, ext 103 or James@wipfandstock.com

**Orders:** Contact your favorite bookseller or order directly from the publisher via phone (541) 344-1528, fax (541) 344-1506 or e-mail us at orders@wipfandstock.com

PA House of Prisca & Aquila Series

"Having heard Apollon, Priscilla and Aquila teach him aright and more accurately expounded to him the way of God" (Acts 18:26)

## 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

ISBN 13: 978-1-4982-3446-7

\$27 | 222 PP. | PAPER

## Review of *Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Acts* edited by Esther Chung-Kim and Todd R. Hains (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2014)

TOON H. YEO

*The Reformation Commentary on Scripture: Acts* helps to reintroduce us to the beauty of the lost legacy of expositions by the great Reformers of 500 years ago. This commentary is especially designed for those who are interested in Reformed theology and its literature. Certainly, this book may also help those who are serious about the interpretation of the Scripture to see good traditional interpretations based on historical context with good applications. Every section is followed by an overview which helpfully directs our study. The editors then provide comments from different Reformation commentators, while providing sufficient information in footnotes for their works. We are grateful that InterVarsity Press published this series to follow *The Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*.

The coeditors of this volume are Esther Chung-Kim and Todd R. Hains. Chung-Kim is Associate Professor of Claremont McKenna College and Hains is a Ph.D. candidate in historical theology at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. Timothy George, who is the Dean and Professor of Divinity at Beeson Divinity School and the General Editor for this series, provides the introduction. He explains that the goals of the series are to renew contemporary interpretation, to strengthen contemporary preaching, to deepen understanding of the Reformation, and to advance Christian scholarship (xix-xxi). In order to help the reader grasp more out of the book, George briefly describes the historical context of the Reformation, the patterns in the Reformation, and the schools of exegesis of that time. The book provides excerpts from commentaries by Reformation leaders from various backgrounds, such as the Magisterial Reformed (Luther, Melancthon, Bucer, Calvin, Zwingli, Bullinger), Radical Reformed (Menno Simons, Peter Walpot, Michael Sattler, Dirk Philip), and British Reformed (John Donne, William Perkins, John Knox). Other commentators include Erasmus, who was considered a biblical humanist and the Counter-Reformers, such as Cardinal Cajetan and John Eck.

Chung-Kim and Hains provide a helpful twenty-one page “Introduction to Acts,” which covers “Scripture and Tradition” and the content of “Acts of the Apostles,” and includes the “Office of the Word,” “The Sacrament of Baptism,” “The Community of Goods,” and “Suffering” (xlv-lvi). In addition, the editors supply several appendices, including a “Timeline of the Reformation,” with a map of Europe during the Reformation for 1337-1691, and a collection of biographical sketches (totaling 430 pp.).

At the beginning of this commentary, the editors lead us to see that Acts is an historical account of the deeds of the apostles “in the power of Jesus by the Spirit” (1). For the Reformers, Acts demonstrated God’s sovereign hand was at work in history. God led his church through the work of the Holy Spirit, who was promised by Jesus Christ during Pentecost. Most of the commentators believed that Christ himself is the One who baptized them through the power of the Holy Spirit (7-8), and the promise of empowerment by the Holy Spirit is integral to Christ’s great commission to witness to all nations (Acts 1:8). It is encouraging to see that each of the Reformation commentators had similar views about the role of the Holy Spirit in the church. Moreover, the Reformers and Anabaptists believed that the selection of church leadership must include both God’s divine calling and a confirmation or commission of the congregation (16-17, 76-77, 201). In the interpretation of having “everything in common,” the editors reveal debates among the commentators. Most commentators believed the practice of sharing property should be “both voluntary and exemplary,” yet the Radicals believe that those who do not hold this teaching despise the apostolic teaching for “the community of goods was a necessary mark of the true church” (53,

55). It is good to see the editors present different viewpoints on the issues of baptism, leadership office, and sharing property, so we can have a healthy balance of several perspectives. However, it is quite disappointing to see that the resource for the Radicals and Anabaptists' arguments is quite limited in this book.

In the early church, Christians faced many persecutions, yet the Lord added to their number day by day through the apostles' preaching and miracles. The devil did not let go but instead attacked God's church by using internal defects (such as Ananias and Sapphira's case), internal disunity (negligence), and the martyrdom of Stephen (60, 71, 97). However, God brought good out of Stephen's martyrdom: disciples were scattered and spread the Gospel to other regions, and Paul, the persecutor of the Gospel, became the apostle to the Gentiles. Through Paul and his coworkers, the Gospel was brought to Galatia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia. Although they encountered persecution from both Jews and non-Jews, this did not interfere with their work. The Radical Reformers remind us that persecution is "an expected if not necessary aspect of Christian faith" (197) and "everyone who wants to live a life of blessedness must suffer persecution" (199). This strong language should be taken wisely and not be mistaken for being ascetic. At last, the editors lead us to the end of Acts, when Paul arrived at Rome, under chains, and "the final leg of the Acts 1:8 program" (359). When he arrived there, he preached "the Gospel of salvation through faith in Christ" (367). The editors show us the Reformers' exegesis who conclude the book "by praising God's grace and provision, praying that Christ will abide with them to the end" (367).

In conclusion, we have to acknowledge that this book is not a regular Bible commentary that provides an exposition of the Bible; instead it is a collection of quotations from commentaries and works of different authors from the Reformation period. Surely, this does not mean that the book does not provide interpretations of the text. On the contrary, many different interpretations are provided to lead us to see that we all have struggled with similar issues throughout the history of the church. In other words, this book may give us answers about the Bible and our daily lives through those Reformation-era commentators.

Toon H. Yeo, D. Min. (Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, MS) is a missionary teaching at China Reformed Theological Seminary (Taiwan). He has completed additional advanced study (Th.M.) at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, MA.

## Review of *The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision* by Gerald Hiestand and Todd Wilson (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015)

DAVID A. ESCOBAR ARCAY

Driven by Puritan theologian and Dutch divine William Ames, who in *The Marrow of Sacred Divinity* affirmed that *Theologia est Scientia vivendo Deo*, meaning “Theology is the knowledge of how to live in the presence of God,” *The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision* confronts one of those elusive and false dichotomies that has shaped the life of the church, namely: “Can a Christian minister be both a pastor and a theologian?” (7). This is described as a crisis of identity due to the claim that “we’ve lost touch with the ancient traditions of the church” (9). The authors are the founders of the Center for Pastor Theologians, whose mission is to “help pastors provide intellectual leadership to the church and to the church’s leaders” (10). The underlying assumption is that “pastors aren’t viewed as theologians, but as practitioners” (10). *The Pastor Theologian* makes the case that pastor theologians are a rare species since pastors “no longer traffic in ideas” (11). The pastorate is not viewed as an intellectual calling. This underscores a division of labor between theologians and pastors that does not have historical precedent. Jonathan Edwards, Samuel Hopkins, Joseph Bellamy, and Nathaniel Taylor were all pastor theologians “who combined spiritual urgency with profound learning” (12). Of course, this was a time when the word “theologian” was synonymous with pastor. However, *The Pastor Theologian* informs us that nowadays this is not the case for “theology has become ecclesially anemic, and the church theologically anemic” (13), a reality that has led to a new division of labor where “pastors aren’t theologians and theologians aren’t pastors” (14). Despite this predicament, *The Pastor Theologian* envisions and advocates “for a return of the pastor theologian who has a shepherd’s heart and a pastor’s primary vocational identity, yet who functions as an intellectual peer of the academic theologian and, as such, produces theological scholarship” (15-16).

*The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision* proceeds from chapters 2 to 9 to resurrect the paradigm for the pastor theologian. Chapter two provides an account of the relationship between the church, the pastorate, and theological scholarship through five major periods, namely: Apostolic Fathers to Constantine (A.D. 90-300), Constantine to the monasteries (300-600), monasteries to the universities (600-1200), universities to the Reformation (1200-1500), and the Reformation to the Enlightenment (1500-1750). Theologians here are described and examined under three headings, namely: clerical, nonclerical, and monastic. Chapter three documents how theologians from the Enlightenment to the present ended up in the academy. *The Pastor Theologian* points out that the Enlightenment in Europe and the Revolution and the Second Great Awakening led to the “tragic divorce between the theologian and the pastor” (42).

Chapter four discusses the challenge of the theological anemia of the church. *The Pastor Theologian* points out that the evangelical church has lost its way, not because of the absence of contemporary theologians and scholars, but because “pastors, not professors, are the theological leaders of the church” (57). The local pastors are not only no longer endowed with the theological capacity they once enjoyed, but also are no longer able to be a “broker” of theological truth, a position not fully embraced by the authors since this position represents in their view a “demotion” and one that leads pastors to have mere middle-management positions. Thus, the task of theology is up to the academy and not the pastoral community, a mistaken belief that has delayed the church from experiencing theological recovery.

Chapter five examines the challenge of the ecclesial anemia of the church. It addresses the popular claim that evangelical theology is too removed from the needs of the local church. Two

challenges related to this claim are the diverging social locations and diverging theological methods of the academy and the church. The former highlights the different pressures, needs, and vocational priorities that the pastor and the theologian have. The latter describes the different questions that the pastor and the theologian face, particularly exacerbated by the academic guild-specific rules that govern evangelical theology and the hostile culture that undergirds the modern university and the resulting lack or discouragement of theological engagement on explicitly Christian matters that are of utmost importance to the local pastor.

Chapter six proposes a taxonomy of the pastor theologian. The authors examine the pastor theologian as local theologian, popular theologian, and ecclesial theologian. The local theologian “is a theologically astute pastor who ably services the theological needs of the church” (81). The popular theologian “is a pastor who writes theology” (83) and whose writing is “an effort to help other pastors and the laity better understand the importance of relevant issues in theology” (84). The ecclesial theologian is “a local church pastor who views the pastoral vocation from a theological vantage point” and “who provides theological leadership to God’s *ecclesia*” (85, 86).

Chapter seven provides a vision of the pastor theologian as ecclesial theologian. *The Pastor Theologian* highlights eight characteristics of the ecclesial theologian’s scholarship and identity. The ecclesial theologian (1) inhabits the ecclesial social location; (2) foregrounds ecclesial questions; (3) aims for clarity over subtlety; (4) theologizes with a preaching voice; (5) is a student of the church; (6) works across the guilds; (7) works in partnership with the academic theologian; and (8) traffics in introspection. Ten practical steps are suggested in chapter eight as critical for the ecclesial-theologian paradigm. The local pastor is urged to pursue the vision of the ecclesial theologian by following these ten strategies: (1) getting a Ph.D. (reasons for such an endeavor are provided); (2) building a staff that values theology; (3) getting networked (a case study of a church is presented); (4) guarding study time with a blowtorch; (5) reading ecclesial theology and good literature (another case of teaching pastor is provided here); (6) urging pastors to refer to their workplaces as their primary study place; (7) building study-and-writing leave into the pastor’s schedule; (8) recruiting a pastor-theologian intern (a case study is presented); (9) earning buy-in from church leadership; and (10) letting the necessity of love trump one’s love of truth.

Chapter eight concludes by stating that “theology serves the church” and that “all our scholarship ought to drive us deeper into our love for God and his people” (122). Academics, pastors, and students are urged in chapter nine “to seriously consider the church as the best place to satisfy both their theological and ecclesial impulses” (19). Professors are asked to embrace and hold out the vision of the ecclesial theologian. Pastors are asked to embrace their intellectual gifts for the “church needs pastors who are capable of connecting – with robust intellectual integrity – the deep truths of God and our contemporary context” (127). Students are asked to “take seriously the need for, and believe in the possibility of the ecclesial theologian” (128). The chapter closes with a prayer to God. The appendix offers an excellent survey of the ratio of clerical, nonclerical, and monastic theologians in order to “help orient the reader to the larger narrative of the pastor theologian” (133).

Reading *The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision* is an enriching experience for three reasons. Firstly, I was quickly reminded of three little, yet significant, books that echo similar pastoral and theological themes, namely: Piper and Carson’s *The Pastor as Scholar and The Scholar as Pastor: Reflections on Life and Ministry*, Kopic’s *A Little Book for New Theologians: Why and How to Study Theology*, and Thielicke’s *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*. Secondly, I was alerted to the illuminating role that history plays in today’s contemporary challenges. Thirdly, while I am content to witness a group of God-exalting and Gospel-loving pastor theologians who are committed to sound biblical study, theology, and church history, I am equally joyful and hope-

ful (as a teacher of clergy and lay leaders) that this conversation will remain a sign of the beginning of a generation of Christian leaders who are courageous enough to retrieve the catholicity of the church for the renewal of the church by resurrecting the ancient vision of the pastor theologian.

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.

A portrait of David A. Escobar Arcay, a Black man with short hair and glasses, smiling warmly. He is wearing a grey suit jacket over a red and white striped shirt and a red tie. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

# Advancing Passionate Practitioners

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY  
**GORDON CONWELL**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

[gordonconwell.edu/dmin](http://gordonconwell.edu/dmin) | (800) 816-1837

**Review of *One God in Three Persons: Unity of Essence, Distinction of Persons, Implications for Life* edited by Bruce A. Ware and John Starke  
(Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015)**

DAESUNG KIM

In recent years, those involved with the heated debates on gender relations and the role of women in the home and church have been appealing to the doctrine of the Trinity to support their view in several ways. Some have appealed to the Trinity in order to prove their idea of mutual submission between men and women, whereas others have argued that women should submit to men based on their own different interpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity. The major issue is whether there is an eternal hierarchy of authority among the three Persons of the Trinity. All Evangelical Christians on both sides of the subordination debate agree with the idea of the ontological equality of the Trinity. However, some believe that the three Persons of the Trinity are eternally equal in authority, while others believe that the second and third Person of the Trinity are eternally subordinated to the supreme authority of the first Person of the Trinity. This book, *One God in Three Persons* contains eleven essays by a group of hierarchical scholars who argue for the latter position. In this review, as an egalitarian, I will focus on three controversial claims made by the complementarian authors.

The hierarchical idea of the equality of essence of persons of the Trinity along with the eternal functional subordination of the Son to the Father is self-contradictory. Millard Erickson shows this flaw in his statement: “if the Son is essentially subordinate to the Father... that means that there is a difference of essence between the two—Father’s essence includes supreme authority, while the Son’s essence includes submission and subordination” (Millard Erickson, *Who’s Tampering with the Trinity? An Assessment of the Subordination Debate*, 250). This self-contradictory idea then leads us to reject the unity of the divine essence between the three Persons of the Trinity, making it not too different from Arianism or Semi-Arianism, which the ecumenical council of Constantinople in the fourth century clearly declared to be a Christian heresy. Therefore, accepting this hierarchical idea would be threatening to the orthodox view of the Trinity


Most authors in this volume, particularly Christopher W. Cowan and Kyle Claunch, argue that the Father sending the Son indicates that the Son is under the Father’s authority because the sent one is subordinate to the sender (chs. 2 and 3). This view, however, causes a serious problem if we associate the Father sending the Son in terms of authority and subordination. If Jesus always has to act in subordination to the Father’s authority, was his coming really a free act among the Persons of the Trinity? If Jesus is not free, is the triune God free? If the Father is the only one who is free within the Trinity, how can there be a Trinity? This also raises the question of divine child abuse. If Jesus did not come voluntarily, but was commanded by the Father, his death and suffering on the cross could be considered to be a divine child abuse by the Father. In fact, being sent does not indicate subservience to the sender. Rather the Scriptures show that the one sent has also full authority as the sender (Matt. 10:40; Luke 10:16; John 5:23; 7:16; 8:18; 12:44-45; 13:20).

The theory of eternal sonship of Jesus is another controversial argument that the authors use to support their theory of eternal subordination of the Son to the Father. Michael J. Ovey argues that “the Son’s submission arises from his sonship” (131), that Jesus is eternal Son of God and, like all sons, he is dependent on and submissive to God the Father. It is quite surprising that Wayne Grudem even states that denying an eternal sonship of Jesus is denying the Trinity (28). I do not agree with any of these arguments. In the Scriptures, the term “Son of God” is never unequivocally


referred to Jesus in a pre-incarnate state. Jesus is the Son of God only during the incarnation. Also, we must be careful not to use any anthropomorphic notions of human relationship into the divine life of the Trinity.

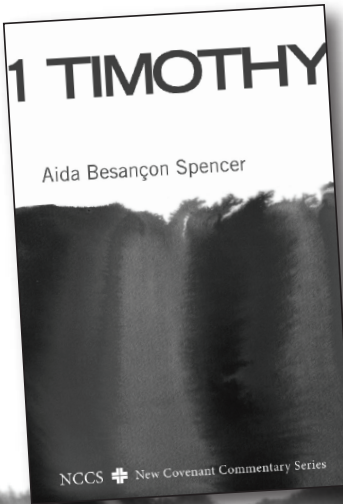
Although I do not agree with most of the hierarchical views in this volume, this book is recommendable for those who are interested in the hierarchist perspective on the role of man and woman in relation to how the Father and the Son relate to each other within the Trinity. Those who are seeking both the hierarchist and egalitarian perspective in one volume should consult Dennis W. Jowers and H. Wayne House (eds.), *The New Evangelical Subordinationism? Perspectives on the Equality of God the Father and God the Son*.

DaeSung Kim is a doctoral student in Systematic Theology at the London School of Theology and is a member of the Africanus Guild program at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He is currently serving as a youth and young adult pastor at Quincy Youngsang church.

NCCS  New Covenant Commentary Series


---

*From Aida Besançon Spencer*  *CASCADE Books*



**1 TIMOTHY**

Aida Besançon Spencer

NCCS  New Covenant Commentary Series

**1 TIMOTHY**

ISBN: 978-1-55635-991-0 / \$22 / 192 pp.

"By explaining both lexical, grammatical, historical, and theological matters, and by focusing consistently on canonical connections and pastoral application, Aida Spencer has written a lucid commentary that will prove helpful for general readers, students, and pastors alike."

**ECKHARD J. SCHNABEL**, Associate Editor, *Bulletin of Biblical Research*

"Dr. Spencer provides a carefully researched, well-balanced, and well-written exposition with special attention given to the difficult and controversial texts relating to women, men, and to all Christians. Highly recommended."

**JOHN R. KOHLENBERGER III**, Editor, *The NIV Greek and English New Testament*

"Both readable and detailed, this is a work that wise expositors will keep within easy reach."

**GENE L. GREEN**, Professor of New Testament, Wheaton College and Graduate School

**2 TIMOTHY AND TITUS**


ISBN: 978-1-62564-253-0 / \$21 / 184 pp.

"Concise and readable, [this volume] also provides in-depth analysis of the flow of each letter, and serious word studies sensitive to both biblical and Greco-Roman usage. . . . [it] is especially sensitive to the gender-oriented instructions concerning leadership and conduct in Titus and 2 Timothy. Highly recommended."

**JOHN R. KOHLENBERGER III**, Editor, *The NIV Greek and English New Testament*


"Aida Spencer's rich exposition of Paul's last letters is a welcome companion to her work on the first of the Pastoral letters, 1 Timothy. . . . Spencer carefully attends to the world of the author and his recipients, framing his message within the cultural matrix of the Greco-Roman world. At the same time, she helps pastor, teacher, and student bridge the gap between the message then and now. Listen and relish as you hear the timbre of the apostolic voice afresh and anew."

**GENE L. GREEN**, author of *The Letters to the Thessalonians*



**2 TIMOTHY and TITUS**

Aida Besançon Spencer

NCCS  New Covenant Commentary Series

available in bookstores | Tel.: (541) 344-1528 | orders@wipfandstock.com | www.wipfandstock.com

Review of *The Epistles of 2 Corinthians and 1 Peter: Newly Discovered Commentaries*, The Lightfoot Legacy Set vol. 3 by J. B. Lightfoot, edited by Ben Witherington III and Todd D. Still, assisted by Jeanette M. Hagen (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2016)

AÍDA BESANÇON SPENCER

Ben Witherington and a team of others have gathered J. B. Lightfoot's notes on 2 Corinthians and 1 Peter and transformed them into print. This must have been an enormous amount of work. Instead of "newly discovered commentaries," the book should have been subtitled: "newly discovered notes," because the reader looking for full commentaries will be disappointed. In effect, what we have here are grammatical notes such as we might find in the Baylor University Handbook on the Greek Text series, but simpler. From the 354 pages of text, the notes on 2 Corinthians contain 74 pages and the notes on 1 Peter contain 44 pages. The Appendices are more usable because they contain full essays of thoughtful material: The Mission of Titus to the Corinthians (10 pp.), St. Paul's Preparation for Ministry (10 pp.), "The Letter Killeth, but the Spirit Giveth Life" (7 pp.), Lessons of History from the Cradle of Christianity (47 pp.), and The Christian Ministry (90 pp.). Lightfoot's own notes end with page 282. After these pages, the last two appendices are essays by C. K. Barrett and J. D. G. Dunn on Lightfoot as a scholar. The work ends with a list of Lightfoot's works in chronological sequence and monographs, articles, essays on Lightfoot or his works, and author and Scripture indices. I found most helpful the summary on the history of development of the Christian ministry. It is a solid summary of the evangelical nonhierarchical view of ministry helpful for seminary students or pastors. The excursus on the use of first person plural in St. Paul's epistles is also a sound summary. The notes may be of help as interpreters work through the Greek text. As far as I could discern, Lightfoot always concluded with orthodox ideas. However, frequently they are only notes, not completed thoughts. The book is also helpful, as the editors suggest, to encourage original language study and original historical context study of the Bible. The editors summarize that Lightfoot approached his study of the New Testament "carefully" and "prayerfully," "with 'the highest reason and the fullest faith.' Not one or the other, but both." "Faith and reason need not be at odds with one another," especially if it is "faith seeking understanding" (xxxvi-xxxvii). They are correct in their idea that Lightfoot is an encouragement to today's scholars who should also study the New Testament with the fullest faith but also the highest reason. Sometimes today, reason, maybe not the highest, wins over faith as academics seek first to please the contemporary fraternity, not the ever-present and ever-contemporary God. Lightfoot's perspective provides a corrective.

Aída Besançon Spencer is Professor of New Testament at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She is a founding editor of the *Africanus Journal*. She has written numerous articles, essays, chapters, and books, including *1 Timothy* and *2 Timothy and Titus* in the New Covenant Commentary Series.

## Review of *The Mind of the Spirit: Paul's Approach to Transformed Thinking* by Craig S. Keener (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016)

GRACE MAY

*The Mind of the Spirit*, Craig Keener's latest volume on the Holy Spirit, will stimulate scholars, pastors, counselors and thoughtful Christians to reflect anew on the transformative intersection of God's Spirit and the human mind. In contrast to the ancients who pitted reason against passion and academics today who tend to bifurcate the life of the spirit and the mind, Keener sees God embracing and renewing both for the benefit of the believer and the church. Many readers, especially multicultural evangelicals with a high view of the Scriptures, who value studying the Bible in community, can expect to be encouraged and empowered in their faith. The 280 pages include detailed excursuses and copious footnotes.

Throughout *The Mind of the Spirit*, Keener connects the twin themes of the Spirit and the mind in Paul's epistles. In chapter 1, he delves into pagan attempts at obtaining wisdom that falls prey to human license and unbridled passion. In chapter 2, he covers the believer's unity with God with its promise of re-alignment with God's perspective and will. In chapter 3, he unfolds the arduous struggle of the person under the law who knows what is right but does what is wrong. In chapter 4, he depicts God's Spirit at work, motivating the believer to pursue what is right. In chapter 5, he depicts the believer's mind, informed by the coming age to lead a life devoted to Christ's body over one's individual concerns. In chapter 6, he considers how God's Spirit imparts the Word to the mature, that is, those who have ears to hear it. In chapters 7 and 8, respectively, he provides a parallel to "the mind of the Spirit" (Romans and Corinthians) with that of "the Christ-like mind" in Philippians and "the heavenly mind" in Colossians.

Keener's extensive treatment of ancient Greek philosophies from Platonism to Stoicism brings out how much Paul appreciates the worldviews that influenced his readers' day to day decisions. In contrast to such competing values, Paul offers his readers a distinctly Christian alternative, an identity "embedded in a new community, a new relationship with God, and thinking as Christ would" (33). The key for Paul is faith, which is not reducible to pure emotion or reason, but is rather recognizing and responding positively to God's truth (44). Fueling the identification with Christ is nothing less than the indwelling Spirit. Therefore, our union with Christ is not an exercise in mental gymnastics but an acceptance of Christ's righteous status and a trust in God's "righteousness-forming work" in us (52). Instead of viewing sanctification as a fight to the finish, Paul envisions the mind of faith freeing a person from the burden of living under the law, whether that be from the guilt of past sins or the bondage of living impulsively according to the flesh (52).

The two insights that I find most hopeful and helpful from Keener both relate to Paul's understanding of the change that God brings about in our lives. After pointing out the inadequacy of self-control and self-mastery (82), Paul appeals to "the gift of righteousness" as the only way to undergo genuine transformation (97). Thus, it is not only God's decision to adopt us but God's commitment to change us that are brought about by divine grace. In addition, evidence of the transforming of our minds is revealed in actions and attitudes that support the unity of the body. The church can display its understanding of the manifold grace of God by valuing ethnic diversity in its membership and relying on a variety of spiritual gifts. Keener has convinced me that Paul adhered to a vision of God's new order, which has already broken through and empowers us through the mind of the Spirit to live as a new creation *now*.

Rev. Dr. Grace May is Executive Director of Women of Wonder, Inc. (WOW!), a ministry that seeks to see Christian women leaders soar, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies at the William Carey International University in Pasadena, CA, and Adjunct Assistant Professor of World Missions at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She is also an ordained

minister in the Presbyterian Church (USA). She is a contributing author to *The Quest for Gender Equity in Leadership*, *Growing Healthy Asian-American Churches*, *Proclaiming the Scandal of the Cross* and *The Global God*. She lives in New York City with her mother and relishes tasting different cuisines, traveling and meeting God and the body of Christ in new and refreshing ways.

**WS WIPF & STOCK**

An Imprint of WIPF and STOCK Publishers

wipfandstock.com • (541) 344-1528

## The Quest for Gender Equity in Leadership

Biblical Teachings on Gender Equity and Illustrations of Transformation in Africa

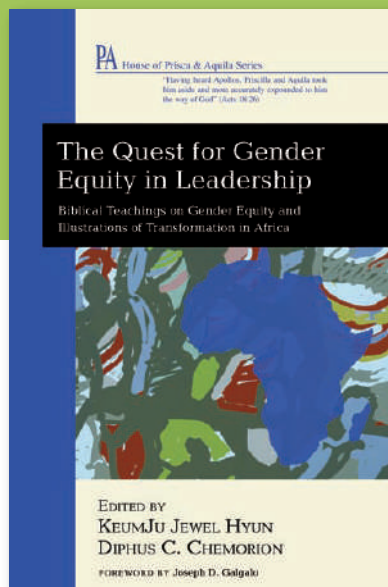
EDITED BY **KEUMJU JEWEL HYUN**  
& **DIPHUS C. CHEMORION**

FOREWORD BY **Joseph D. Galgalo**

The call for gender equity in leadership has become a global concern. From a Christian perspective, all forms of gender prejudice are sinful because they violate God's intention for creating both men and women in God's image. Although many Christian authors have published books and journal articles to address gender-based injustice, very few publications have approached the subject from an African perspective. This book is meant to fill the existing gap. With a specific reference to the African context, this book explores the phenomenon of equity in leadership from various dimensions, such as African culture and traditional religion, church tradition, biblical interpretation, as well as from the perspective of contemporary socio-economic and political realities in Africa. By giving vivid examples of success stories of men and women working together, the authors have demythologized the view that women cannot be leaders. In addition, this book is intended for general readership by Christian men and women throughout the globe. For universities and colleges that teach gender studies as a subject, the book can serve as a class text or reference resource. Seminaries and theological institutions will also find it handy for training and mentoring Christians to promote equity in the church, ministry, business, and family.

**KeumJu Jewel Hyun** is founder and president of Matthew 28 Ministries, Inc., focusing on Christian women's leadership development and economic empowerment in Kenya. She is adjunct professor of Theology of Work at Bakke Graduate University and co-editor of *Some Men Are Our Heroes: Stories by Women about the Men Who Have Greatly Influenced Their Lives*. Jewel holds a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Ministries degree from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts, as well as a Master of Science degree in Nuclear Physics from Yonsei University, Seoul, Korea. She and her husband have two adult children and four grandchildren.

**Diphus C. Chemorion**, an ordained minister, is director of Postgraduate Studies and Associate Professor at St. Paul's University, Kenya. He is the author of *Community Participation in Scripture Version Design: An Experiment in Translating Jonah into Sabao!* and *Introduction to Christian Worldview: Meaning, Origins and Perspectives*. He also co-edited *Contested Space: Ethnicity and Religion in Kenya*. He holds a Master of Theology from Candle school of Theology, Emory University, and a Doctor of Theology in Old Testament from Stellenbosch University, South Africa.



ISBN: 978-1-4982-9333-4 | \$31 | 260 PP. | PAPER

"*The Quest for Biblical Equity in Leadership* is good biblical scholarship and engaging story-telling from a fresh African perspective that will provide new insights to readers from any continent."

—BRAD SMITH, President, Bakke Graduate University

"This book . . . takes a particular issue of vital significance in the modern world—gender equity—[and] provides fascinating insights into a number of African cultures. It showcases some excellent African scholarship from both male and female theologians . . . and provides a fine example to the rest of the world of using biblical principles to critique culture from the inside. Congratulations to the editors and the writing team for producing such a useful compilation."

—MARY EVANS, Author, Former Vice-Principal and Old Testament lecturer, London School of Theology

"I have witnessed first-hand how Jewel Hyun embodies the quest for Biblical equity in leadership in Africa. Her faith-filled ministry in Kenya is a wonder to behold, and transformational to experience. As a result, the book in your hands is filled with Biblical wisdom and practical implications that will stand the test of time."

—STEPHEN A. MACCHIA, Author, Founder and President, Leadership Transformations, Inc.

### Media, Examination, and Review Copies:

Contact: James Stock  
(541) 344-1528, ext 103 or James@wipfandstock.com

**Orders:** Contact your favorite bookseller or order directly from the publisher via phone (541) 344-1528, fax (541) 344-1506 or e-mail us at orders@wipfandstock.com

## Review of *A Christian Guide to Spirituality: Foundations for Disciples* by Stephen W. Hiemstra (Centreville, VA: T2Pneuma Publishers LLC, 2014)

LESLIE MCKINNEY ATTEMA

*A Christian Guide to Spirituality* is a dialogue of Christian Reformed spirituality written in the form of a fifty day devotional by Stephen W. Hiemstra to help God's people understand more clearly Christian spirituality and to nourish and deepen their faith in God.

The author uses the classic catechetical instruction (The Apostle's Creed, The Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments) as the foundational structure for the devotional and offers a brief commentary on each of the daily components. The Reformed church has used these three statements of faith, a summary of essential Christian doctrine, for nearly two thousand years to instruct, morally and ethically guide, and inspire new believers in Christ.

Stephen W. Hiemstra of Centreville, VA is an economist, pastor, and writer. During his lengthy career as an economist, he has published multiple studies, articles, and book reviews for the government. In his Christian ministry, he has published two books: *A Christian Guide to Spirituality* and, most recently, *Prayers of a Life in Tension*. Additionally, as an avid blogger, he has encouraged pastors through an online pastor-themed blog ([www.t2pneuma.net](http://www.t2pneuma.net)) through Bible studies, commenting on relevant books, and reflecting on various spiritual topics.

*A Christian Guide to Spirituality* is divided into six chapters. The first chapter is the introduction to the devotional and reflects upon four key philosophical questions, Who is God? (metaphysics); Who are we? (anthropology); What should we do? (ethics); and How do we know? (epistemology). The next three chapters cover each of the three statements of faith (the Apostle's Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments). Chapter five includes eight daily devotionals on the Spiritual Disciplines. And the final chapter, "Conclusions," covers two important concluding questions for reflection and dialogue, "What are the big questions of the faith? and How do we nurture our walk with the Lord?"

All fifty daily devotionals include a key Scripture reference, a short reflection, prayer, and questions for personal reflection or group dialogue.

I gained much from reading this devotional. Of course, being a devotionalist myself, I love to read and grow in my faith through devotional writings. But this devotional is unique. *A Christian Guide to Spirituality* not only encouraged me to spend time with the Lord, but it also helped me learn and grow in my understanding of the basic principles of the faith. In fact, I learned a great deal from the author's comments and reflections on each component of the three statements of faith with the guided discussion questions. For example, in Day 23 –*Praise the Name*, the author comments on the phrase, "Hallowed be thy name" in verse 6 of the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6:9). The author emphasizes the fact that, when we honor God's name, it is in keeping with the Third Commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." Now, if I had really thought about it, it probably would have dawned on me that these two statements ("Hallowed be thy name" and the Third Commandment) are intrinsically tied together, but I never realized this before. The author helps readers see the connection between the two and the significance of obeying the commandment to honor God by using God's name properly. This is just one example of the many gems of wisdom that *A Christian Guide to Spirituality* offers the reader.

The devotional is unique in another way as well—it serves as a devotional apologetic to the faith. Many in the faith may not feel equipped with the knowledge to defend the Christian faith intelligently to nonbelievers, but this book will strengthen and sharpen a believer's apologetic skills

so he or she can more confidently and intelligently defend the faith. This is a much-needed skill in this post-Christian era in which we are living.

I can imagine this devotional being used for personal devotions or in a small group context within the church for either new or seasoned believers to dialogue on matters of the faith and, as a result, to grow together spiritually as a strong, healthy community of saints.

In summary, *A Christian Guide to Spirituality* serves as an excellent tool to foster a vibrant and life-giving relationship with the living God, to expand one's understanding and knowledge of Christian Spirituality so as to walk in the holy ways of Christ, and to strengthen and equip God's people to give a reason for the hope that is within us.

Leslie McKinney Attema is former pastor of community at Pilgrim Church in Beverly, MA and also served as associate pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Freeport, TX. She preaches, teaches, and specializes in women's ministry. She is also a trained spiritual director. In 2017, she transitioned to Belize, Central America with her husband to serve God in international missions.



**WIPF & STOCK**

An Imprint of WIPF and STOCK Publishers

wipfandstock.com • (541) 344-1528

## Accepted in the Beloved

A Devotional Bible Study for Women  
on Finding Healing and Wholeness  
in God's Love

Leslie Ann McKinney

Are you struggling with fully accepting that God loves you?

If you or someone you know has suffered abuse, you are not alone. Abuse of women is a global problem. One out of every four Christian women suffers from physical, emotional, spiritual, economic, or sexual abuse. Women who have suffered abuse often find it difficult to experience God's love.

*Accepted in the Beloved* is a Bible study that will help and encourage women who desire to know and experience God's love and acceptance, and will help equip pastors or pastoral caregivers to support and assist survivors of abuse.

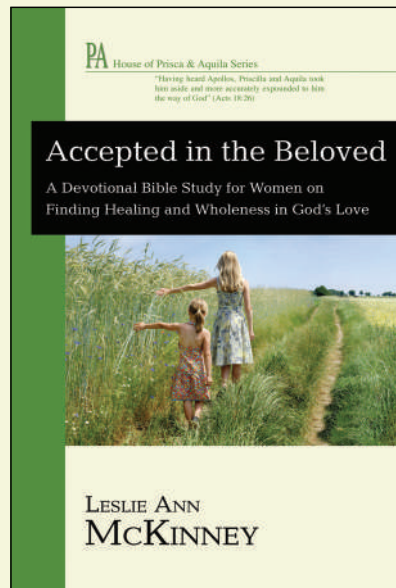
The six-lesson journey through *Accepted in the Beloved* will encourage healing, growth, and transformation. Each lesson includes three different sections: Learning God's Truth, to enlighten the mind through a study of the truths in God's word and to accurately illuminate the character of our loving Creator; Experiencing God, to encourage a deeper experience of God's presence through contemplative exercises that develop heart knowledge of God's truth and foster spiritual transformation; and Sharing God's Love, to encourage women to reach out beyond themselves as they apply what they have learned from the study to their lives and relationships.

With an encouraging tone and transformative content, *Accepted in the Beloved* will help women find healing and wholeness in the love of the crucified Lord.



House of Prisca & Aquila Series

"Having heard Apollos, Priscilla and Aquila took him aside and more accurately expounded to him the way of God" (Acts 18:26)



ISBN 13: 978-1-55635-936-1 / 56 pp. / \$12 / paper

**Leslie McKinney Attema**, who has received her M. Div. and D. Min. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, has served as pastor of community at Pilgrim Church in Beverly, MA and associate pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Freeport, TX. She preaches, teaches, and specializes in women's ministry. She is also a trained spiritual director. She is now serving God as a missionary in Belize, Central America with her husband, Lee.

available in bookstores | (541) 344-1528  
orders@wipfandstock.com | www.wipfandstock.com

## Review of *Biblical Equality in Christ's Service*, 2 Volumes by G. J. A. Sittler (Bangalore, India: Brilliant Printers Pvt. Ltd., 2014)

WOODROW E. WALTON

G. J. A. Sittler's work on the role of women in partnership with men in ministry is the first two-volume study this reviewer has ever seen. It is not only impressive in its printed size of two volumes but also in its scope and thoroughness. The scope is almost panoramic in that it refers to all possible sides of understanding from the strict evangelical scholars to Catholic scholars, such as Jesuit Joseph A. Fitzmyer and Jerome Murphy-O'Connor. Louis Berkhof (Reformed), Ben Witherington, III (Methodist), N.T. Wright (Anglican), Gordon Fee (General Council of the Assemblies of God), Craig Keener, Aída Besançon Spencer, Catherine Kroeger, and Gilbert Bilezikian are all among his other referents.

Dr. Sittler's depth of investigation is apparent by his biblical references, his use of in-depth linguistic studies done by Thayer, Liddell and Scott, Eugene Nida, and Mounce. His own conclusions are drawn from his consultation with insights furnished by commentators, as George Buttrick, Bromily, Mounce, Richardson, Kidner, Dunn, and Goldingay, to name just a few.

The author's thoroughness is apparent by his reliance on primary sources, like the biblical records themselves, as well as works on biblical hermeneutics, translations, and journal articles focused on specific instances within the biblical records such as in studies of Acts 18:1-2 and Romans 16.

Sittler's breadth of learning is evidenced by his five earned degrees and by his reliance upon lexicographical studies of the three biblical languages of Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, and his dependence upon early Christians' histories. Such studies and research has led Sittler to take a strong stand for the equality of man and woman in Christian service and evangelism without taking issue with those who insist on the primacy of men in evangelism, teaching, and ministry. He states his case and leaves it at that.

The two-volume work is not a narrative. It does not flow as a narrative does. It is definitely a textbook and is filled with references within the text itself in place of footnotes or endnotes. This is not a critique of the work but an observation. A student or minister can still read it with ease. Each section has an excursus set apart from the main flow of the discussions as "Questions that must be asked." This is a plus for students and a reminder for other readers such as pastors, Christian educators, and interested laypeople.

Each chapter is subdivided into divisions, parts, and sections. Each section is divided by Roman numerals, numbers (1, 2, 3, et al), and letters of the English alphabet. This is another plus for Sittler's two-volume work as it defines the progression and direction of the argument as it unfolds.

Both volumes offer a bibliography of consulted and cited works and listed books on women's issues, relevant resource materials, commentaries on selected books of the Bible, general commentaries, books on spiritual gifts and the Holy Spirit, hermeneutics, and the journals and translations of the Bible consulted for the discussion presented by Sittler in favor of biblical equality for women along with men in the spread of the biblical message.

It came as a surprise to this reviewer that there was no reference in either volume to the seminal work of John Otwell entitled *And Sarah Laughed: The Status of Women in the Old Testament* and published by Westminster Press in 1977. Otwell dedicated his book to his wife Marion Grace Otwell, who also contributed to it by a careful editorial reading. Very recently, in fact in 2016, Otwell's work was cited by the Wijngaards Institute for Catholic Research in an appeal to Pope Francis to request the Re-instatement of the Ordained Diaconate for Women (see <http://www>).

womenpriests.org/classic2/otw\_cnt.asp 9/29/2016). Since Otwell was a Protestant, a Professor at the Pacific School of Religion, and had his work published by a Presbyterian published house, its absence is notable in the extensive bibliographies offered in any of the volumes of *Biblical Equality in Christ's Service*. Sittler's contribution, nevertheless, is a magnificent piece of work in and of itself in setting forth the equality of women with men in the presentation of the biblical message and particularly of the gospel.

Aside from the surprising omission of Otwell's research, this reviewer highly recommends the reading of *Biblical Equality in Christ's Service* by both students and those in full-time ministry as this is an intensive study and powerfully reasoned defense for the equality of women and men in the service of Jesus. Of the two volumes, the second is the thickest in number of pages and is also the more substantial of the two volumes.

Though *Biblical Equality in Christ's Service* reads more like a reference work than a narrative there is a symbiotic relationship between the author's references and his flow of argument for men and women serving equally together. One can also draw a similarity to George Marsden's magisterial *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925*, 2d ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) in that, in this reviewer's belief, *Biblical Equality in Christ's Service* is going to have the same effect as Marsden's book which excited considerable attention within and without Christian academic circles for its completeness in which "no stone was left unturned."

One last observation merits attention and it is not offered as a criticism. The equality of men and women in ministry is to a degree present within the Orthodox Churches in that the priests themselves are usually married and their wives take part in the life of the church. Frederika Mathews Green is the wife of an Eastern Orthodox priest and at the same time is on the editorial staff of *Christianity Today*, a prominent Evangelical journal. Women are not permitted, however, to be priests. It would be interesting to have a consultation on men and women together in Christ's service with Orthodox scholars like Andrew Louth, Kallistos Ware, and Patrick Henry Reardon, as well as with leading women in the church.

Woodrow E. Walton is an ordained Assemblies of God minister and member of the Evangelical Theological Society. He and his wife, Joy, make their home in Fort Worth, Texas. A graduate of Texas Christian University (B.A., 1957), the Divinity School of Duke University (B.D. [M.Div.], 1960), he also obtained another graduate degree from the University of Oklahoma (M.A., 1972), and a Doctor of Ministry degree from Oral Roberts University (1993). He and his wife, Joy, are with Christ Church Assembly of God in Fort Worth.

## Review of *Partners in Christ: A Conservative Case for Egalitarianism* by John G. Stackhouse (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2015)

JACOB R. RANDOLPH

John Stackhouse has written a practical, honest, and helpful volume which will aid the Christian in his or her approach to the role(s) of men and women in ministry. He begins his book by appealing to the goodwill of Christians: we are all on the same team, and he wants his readers of all persuasions in this debate to keep that in mind. He then seeks to set parameters for “who’s who” in the discussion. What does it mean to be patriarchal or complementarian, egalitarian or feminist? He distinguishes his own approach to Christian feminism as such: “someone who champions the dignity, rights, responsibilities, and glories of women as equal in importance to those of men, and who therefore refuses discrimination against women” (14). Stackhouse seeks to discern the goodness of God’s Word as it relates to gender: “...we can properly ask ourselves, Why is this commandment of the Lord *good*, as well as right? For if our interpretation of God’s Word seems to result in something *bad*, it may be that it is our own badness that is being confronted and needs reorientation...” (21).

With this in mind, he sets out to present an argument for an egalitarian approach to Scripture which attempts to rise above the drawn-out arguments that have taken place over the last thirty-odd years. He lays out multiple theological principles. The first is equality, “that men and women are equal in dignity before God” (47). The second is the establishment of what he calls “gospel priorities,” or, worded differently by Stackhouse, “holy pragmatism.” What this means is that the advancement of God’s kingdom is *the* essential thing, and therefore some important but secondary concerns are, at times, sacrificed for the sake of the kingdom’s in-breaking in various cultural situations. While partnership between men and women in every arena of life is the ultimate vision for gendered relationships in the kingdom, this is not always possible or advisable in the here and now. In many places in the world the scandal of gender equality has the potential to drown out the scandal of Jesus, and in these cases the gospel must take precedence. He qualifies this as the principle of divine accommodation: that God works within human limitations and within historical circumstances in order to accomplish his greater will, the advancement of his kingdom. This is important to Stackhouse’s argument, for he proposes that societal structures are not ordained by God in the sense of a single or ideal socio-cultural norm to be adopted at all times in all places; rather, God works in and through all types of broken systems (including American evangelicalism) in order to move both individuals and communities forward in his redemptive program. A third principle, eschatology, is applied in order to illustrate two things: first, that the “holy pragmatism” of God extended to the early church and her writings; the biblical authors expected Christ’s imminent return, and this shaped their approach to the world. Thus, “it would make sense—given gospel priorities, holy pragmatism, and eschatological expectations—for the apostles to teach a policy of cultural conservatism (“Get along as best you can with the political powers and social structures that be”) in the interest of accomplishing the one crucial task: spreading the gospel as far and as fast as possible. And they do” (56). The second thing eschatology illustrates is that God’s redemptive program continues today as he shapes not only individuals, but cultures and societies. Christians today carry the same mantle as the first century church in their approach to culture: to get along well whenever it’s possible, to celebrate God’s goodness in reflections of redemption within the culture (such as the abolishment of slavery or the move toward gender equality), and to preach the gospel that holds all societies and kingdoms to account. Therefore, he argues, the time is ripe for certain women in the church to take hold of their calling in places where the social scandal of prominent, leading women no longer exists. In fact, Stackhouse argues that it is now patriarchy,

not feminism, that is a cultural stumbling block, and therefore it must be set aside in those more progressive communities, as circumstances allow.

Stackhouse garners immediate attention simply by virtue of the *tone* of his writing. It is markedly ecumenical in voice, carefully and patiently setting out his argument as a *via media* between both radical Christian feminism and rigid evangelical complementarianism. This is the kind of book that moves the reader to consider, perhaps for the first time, big-picture questions, questions that often get lost in the minutia of exegetical arguments and the political rhetoric that have become part and parcel of the evangelical gender debate. Stackhouse invites us to see the current landscape of evangelicalism through a lens that is both sympathetic and realistic. Furthermore, this book is enjoyable to read. The chapters are brief and to the point, and he does not belabor hypotheticals or issues which are peripheral to the task at hand. It is conversational, easy to read, and a well-constructed argument flows from his pen.

There are a few minor weaknesses that stand out. The most pressing one is the author's decision to brush over the careful and constructive exegetical work that has been done to place more difficult biblical texts (e.g., 1 Tim. 2; Eph. 5; 1 Cor. 11, 14) in their cultural and contextual settings. He states that "considerable effort has been expended by biblical feminists to explain one or another of these texts in a way that does not entail patriarchy...[t]aken as a whole, however, the pattern of hierarchy seems evident" (66). What Stackhouse fails to recognize, however, is that an exegetical survey of these passages can, in fact, evidence what he is trying to accomplish in his broader thesis; namely, that residing within the text there is divine accommodation for the present historical circumstances, but that viewed canonically (that is, through the teleological scope of Scripture) the movement of men and women toward mutual submission is clear. It is granted that the author's goal is not an exegetical survey, but a theological paradigm; that said, his interactions, however brief, with the texts in question would be strengthened by addressing research of New Testament scholars in the field.

One further weakness may be noted. Stackhouse presents too optimistic an assessment of church history in its engagement with questions of gender. He states that in most of history leading up to the modern age "the church avoided scandal by going along with patriarchy, even as the Bible ameliorated it and made women's situations better than it was under any other culture's gender code" (71). This summary massages a darker side of the church's relationship with women, wherein at multiple points the church (or a significant arm of the church) propagated hierarchical systems, assumed an inherent, God-ordained gradation of the sexes, and the Bible was misused in order to subjugate *all* women as inferior to *all* men. This is, of course, not a universal indictment of the church, but the historical pattern is substantial enough to warrant a more nuanced analysis.

These considerations aside, the book provides a strong paradigm for a biblical-hermeneutical position that can be understood and embraced by all, not just scholars or teachers. Stackhouse gives us a fresh perspective on the biblical gender debate and helps readers navigate through the often roaring voices of entrenched patriarchalism or radical feminism to form a conviction that can be lived into and that honors the God who "made them male and female."

Jacob R. Randolph is a graduate of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (MA, Church History; MA, New Testament). He began Ph.D. studies at Baylor University in 2017.

## Review of *Catching Ricebirds: A Story of Letting Vengeance Go* by Marcus Doe (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2016)

WOODIE TERRELL

Did you ever wonder what it's like to live in the middle of a revolution, to be the child of someone who works for the government under siege or just trying to find enough to eat day by day while hiding from murderous *freedom fighters*? Did you ever wonder what it would be like to be in the midst of the slaughter of your leaders, your neighbors, possibly your family and wondering if you might be next? This is that story. Marcus Doe was eleven years old when a two-pronged revolution came to Liberia. His beloved *Pa* worked closely with President Samuel Doe. A comfortable life instantly became a struggle for survival, of running and hiding and grappling with making sense of the who and why and what was happening in the grip of constant hunger and fear. He recalls, "The gruesome sights did not seem to bother the rebels at all. The further we got behind enemy lines the more I realized that the rebels were not who they said they were. They were not what the children at the well had promised; freedom fighters coming to bring new order and wealth and food. No. They were Killers" (100).

Hearing the angry threats of the rebels, death surrounding as he flees through the midst of bloated bodies in the streets, always wondering "where is my Pa, my brothers," and with little faith in God in this animistic culture, Marcus sinks deeper into fear, bitterness, anger, hatred: hatred for the rebels, hatred for his loss and hatred for God. His young broken heart cries, "What kind of a God would allow a child to suffer like this? God did not hear my prayers. He's absent. He's not listening. God does not really have the whole world in His hands" (188). More and more this lost boy becomes an angry man with a deep longing for revenge: "Every time I thought of revenge, a warmth covered the cold ache of my grief. My life was a tragedy but I determined not to become a victim. Just the way I triumphed on the soccer field, I would get even" (189).

For twenty years he holds his story deep in his darkening heart while a refugee in Ghana and then in America. Then Marcus begins to find his footing in tragedy, turning to faith in Christ and bit by painful bit this once-innocent, barefoot, soccer-playing child, once known to his family as *Jungle Boy*, but whose nation and life was ripped in pieces by war, finds his heart beginning to heal by forgiveness (228).

Following a new path, Marcus Doe studied at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, preparing for ministry with a call to bring healing to his nation of Liberia and to share the pure Gospel of the fathomless love of Christ with the wounded people, the victims whose nation, families and lives have been devastated, as well as the stained and fearful rebels, the guilty who slaughtered and abused them. Marcus Doe finds he is called to be a *minister of forgiveness in Liberia* (256), to all of these and who knows to whom else?

I loved this story and turned every page with tears and hope for healing for Marcus, his family and the peoples of Liberia. Academics, let your heart be broken again. Theological students, remember why we do this. Pastors, be reminded of the transforming love of Christ. Christians of all walks, feel the heart of God longing for a lost and found *Jungle Boy*. Thank you, Marcus, for telling your story, though it is one among thousands in your country and throughout our war-torn world. We need to hear you. We need you to shake our world.

Reverend Woodie CS Terrell, reared a Christian, wandered off into numerous side tracks, some of these Christian-Cult-ish, until she, too, was called back to the heart and love of God. She gained her Theological Masters online with seven children at home through American Christian College and Seminary. She thanks Doctor Woodrow Walton, Larry Baker and so many others for their guidance and patience and Osborn Ministries for their global heart and faith in her. Her husband and she are ordained through the International Gospel Fellowship of Churches and Ministries. She is a Minister and Board Chair at House of Hope, a local women's shelter, where broken lives come to heal.

## Review of *Healing the Gospel: A Radical Vision for Grace, Justice and the Cross* by Derek Flood (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2012)

GEMMA WENGER

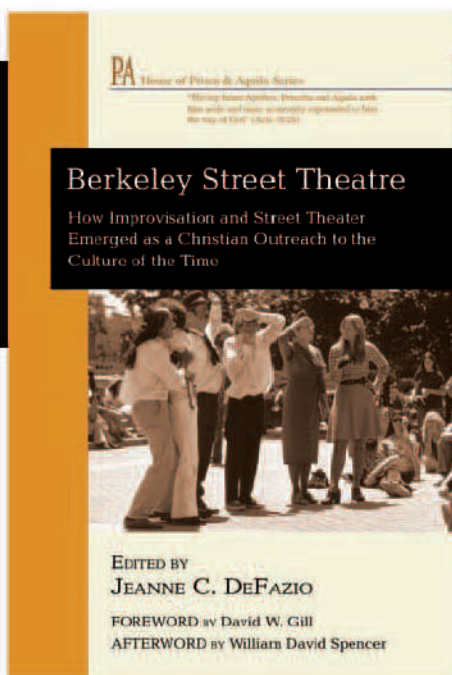
*Healing the Gospel* was written to help those struggling with faith to understand the doctrine of grace and the doctrine of substitutionary atonement. Chapter one, “The Limits of Law,” provides a New Testament model as a thesis for the book: God’s justice required making things right through God’s mercy and compassion which restored humankind to right relationship through Jesus’s redemptive work. In the subsequent chapters, entitled “God’s Justice,” “Salvation Means Healing,” and “Loving Sacrifice,” Flood offers an understanding of atonement based on God’s restorative justice and explains how Jesus’s loving act of sacrificial atonement is rooted in God’s restorative justice. Chapter six, entitled “The Tyrant of Wrath,” opposes the idea that Jesus died to appease a violent God. Chapter seven, “Incarnational Atonement” identifies Jesus as the sinless second Adam, whose act of substitutionary atonement (1 Pet 2:24) fulfilled the Adamic (Gen 3:16-19) covenant, restoring all those who accept Him as Lord and Savior (John 3:16) to Adam’s intimate love relationship with God the Father. As Paul states (Rom 3:24-26), all are justified freely by grace through the redemption that came by Jesus. God presented Jesus as a sacrifice of atonement, through the shedding of his blood, to be received by faith. Jesus did this to demonstrate his righteousness. In chapter nine, “The Theology of the Cross,” Flood explains Jesus’s redemptive work as a model of gracious restoration. In chapter ten, “A Crucified People,” the book concludes with a treatise on living the theology of the cross through love of enemies. *Healing the Gospel* brings home the message that God does not love us because Jesus died for us, but Jesus died for us because God loves us.

Derek Flood is a writer, artist, and theologian. He holds a Masters in Systematic Theology from the Graduate Theological Union. This book began as a blog article and the final work was honed through years of testing and dialogue with friends and critics. The author referenced firsthand accounts, Scriptures, the early church fathers, Luther, and Spurgeon. This book’s intended audience is multicultural.

In the past quarter of a century, I have pastored many who struggle with the doctrines of grace and substitutionary atonement. I like this book because it is scripturally based and sound. Its strength lies in the fact that the author explains the message of Jesus’ redemptive work in lay terms for the benefit of a wide readership. I would recommend it as a resource for seminary courses on theology and pastoring.

Gemma Wenger is a former child actress who ministered in prisons and on skid row before expanding her ministry to churches, radio, newspapers (*The Hollywood Times*), evangelical outreaches, and television ministry. She preached at the Hollywood Bowl Easter Sunrise service produced by the Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) which was televised worldwide. She has made multiple guest appearances on such TBN shows as *The Joy Program* with Jay Jones, *Calling Dr. Whitaker*, and *Behind the Scenes* with Paul Crouch. After numerous appearances on TBN, she developed her own shows currently airing worldwide on Time Warner Cable, Isaac Television, The Way TV, Jadoo Television, and Roku: *Gemma Wenger’s Hollywood* and *Beauty for Ashes*. Gemma Wenger has contributed a chapter to *Redeeming the Screens* (House of Prisca and Aquila Series, Wipf and Stock Publishers).

*Berkeley Street Theatre* chronicles Christian World Liberation Front's 1969–1975 ministry to the counterculture. Founded by Jack Sparks, CWLF was featured in the June 1971 *Time* Magazine's epic "Jesus Revolution" edition. Reverend Billy Graham sponsored the CWLF outreach and referred to CWLF as a highly effective outreach to the counterculture. The book included a foreword by David W. Gill, former CWLF leader, scholar, and author, contributing chapters from BST's members: Gene Burkett, Charlie Lehman, Susan Dockery Andrews, Father James Bernstein, and Jeanne DeFazio, editor of the book. Part Two of this work outlines Christian guerilla theater following the timeline of BST with contributing chapters from: JMD Myers, Joanne Petronella, Jozy Pollock, Olga Soler, and Sheri Pedigo. William David Spencer's afterword details the cultural contributions of the Jesus movement. This book will appeal to the baby boom generation as well as millennials. It is a resource work for anyone interested in religious history, Christian theater and the arts, and in how baby boomers embraced the Jesus Movement. The photos of BST's Sproul Plaza performances will charm all readers.



# Berkeley Street Theatre

How Improvisation and Street Theater Emerged as a Christian Outreach to the Culture of the Time

EDITED BY JEANNE C. DEFazio

FOREWORD by David W. Gill

AFTERWORD by William David Spencer

"*Berkeley Street Theatre* is a call for Christians to use theater to attract and convict seekers . . . I highly recommend the reading and use of *Berkeley Street Theatre* for those interested in history, thoughtful and creative outreach, and practical, hands-on information."

—AIDA BESANÇON SPENCER, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, author of *God through the Looking Glass: Glimpses from the Arts*

"Many people have had negative church experiences but still want to know more about God. If they are reluctant to step back into a church community, Christian theater is the perfect parable to bridge the gap. I wholeheartedly endorse this book because it models theater as Christian outreach."

—TERESA FLOWERS, author of *How to Have an Attitude of Gratitude on the Night Shift*

"I recommend this book because it explains how Christian theater brings people to Jesus. This book combines love of Jesus and love of performing arts together. Bravo!"

—MONICA "HAPPY" C. VALDIVIESO, performing artist

"Theatrical production is the perfect opportunity to show Christian truths modeled in everyday life. People don't want to be talked at, but rather want to draw their own conclusions from entertaining productions. This book clearly shows faith in action through a theatrical approach to ministry."

—GEMMA WENGER, M. Ed., *Beauty for Ashes: Television and Radio Ministry*, Los Angeles

Jeanne C. DeFazio holds an MA in Religion from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. She is currently an Athanasian Teaching Scholar at Gordon-Conwell Center for Urban Ministerial Education in Boston and a co-editor with William David Spencer of *Redeeming the Screens* (2016), a co-author with Teresa Flowers of *How to Have An Attitude of Gratitude on The Night Shift* (2014), and a co-editor with Joan P. Lathrop of *Creative Ways to Build Christian Community* (2013).

ISBN: 978-1-5326-0047-0 | 148 PP. | \$20 | PAPER

**Media, Examination, and Review Copies:**  
Contact: James Stock  
(541) 344-1528, ext 103 or James@wipfandstock.com

**Orders:** Contact your favorite bookseller or order directly from the publisher via phone (541) 344-1528, fax (541) 344-1506 or e-mail us at orders@wipfandstock.com

## Review of *Woodlawn* by Todd Gerelds, Mark Schlabach, and Bobby Bowden (New York: Howard Books, 2015)

BOB YERKES WITH JEANNE DEFAZIO

*Woodlawn* is a story of redemption for a racially violent society. Todd Gerelds, son of high school coach, Tandy Gerelds, was a first-hand witness to this story of racial reconciliation. Gerelds's account of his father's career as a high school coach begins with a history of the civil rights movement in Birmingham, Alabama. He researched Birmingham civil rights history in newspapers and periodicals and books.

For the benefit of a wide readership, *Woodlawn's* first chapter explains that Cynthia Holder and other African-American students integrated the all-white Woodlawn High School six weeks after the Watts riot in Los Angeles, California and two years after Woodlawn's Sixteenth Street Baptist Church was bombed (September 16<sup>th</sup>, 1963). The authors set the tone and provide the theme of Christian faith and conduct to the book by explaining that Pastor Jesse Dansby prepared these African-American students to integrate Woodlawn High by instructing them to read Psalm 37:1-9 every morning:

Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. (KJV)

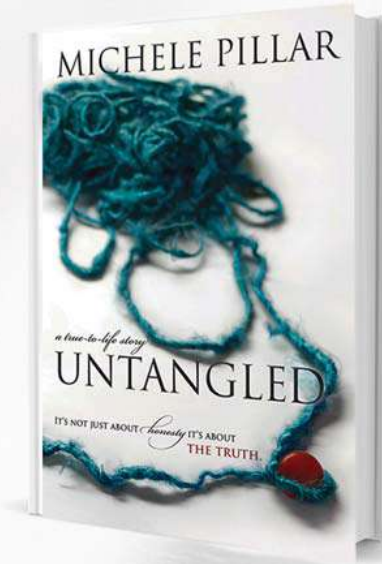
Tandy Gerelds, Woodlawn's newly-hired science teacher and assistant football coach, found among his new athletes "Touchdown Tony Nathan." Nathan's athletic prowess was tempered by his Christian mentors, local pastors who shared Scripture, Christian faith, and God's love, challenging the team to receive Jesus so the team could share both the same uniform and the same heart. The book concludes with the 1974 account of Woodlawn's team making Alabama history by drawing 42,000 fans into Legion Field where the interracial Woodlawn High School Colonials scored against Banks High, bringing racial healing to Birmingham, Alabama.

As a former circus acrobat and as a catcher in trapeze acts, I, Bob Yerkes, understand how important it is to develop trust and move in tandem with fellow athletes. I identified with the fact that Woodlawn's team members prayed together before practice and games. Hollywood stuntwoman Tree O'Toole and I prayed together before dangerous "high" work or "stunt doubling." *Woodlawn* is a strong story because it identifies the power of Jesus' love to heal and restore a racially violent society. I found no weakness and nothing to disagree within it. *Woodlawn* is scripturally based and brings a message of Jesus's healing love to its intended multicultural and urban audience. I recommend it for seminary courses in Urban Ministry.

Bob Yerkes is legendary among Hollywood's top stuntmen. An award for excellence in performance has been named for him. Among his many accomplishments, he has contributed a chapter to Jeanne DeFazio and William David Spencer's *Redeeming the Screens*. Jeanne is also the co-editor of three other books, *Creative Ways to Build Christian Community*, *How to Have an Attitude of Gratitude on the Night Shift*, and *Berkeley Street Theatre*.



# MICHELE PILLAR



"With raw honesty and great courage, Michele tells her receptive story that we might find hope & freedom. Great book!"  
-Ruth Graham

Book Available at  
[www.MichelePillar.com](http://www.MichelePillar.com)



"Michele's women's event, The Clothesline, is restoration in bite-size pieces"-Allison Allen from WOF.

To view video clips visit: [www.MichelePillar.com](http://www.MichelePillar.com)

MICHELE PILLAR MINISTRIES | 22 CENTURY BLVD STE. 450 | NASHVILLE, TN 37214  
FOR MORE INFORMATION ON BOOKING, MUSIC AND MORE, VISIT [WWW.MICHELEPILLAR.COM](http://WWW.MICHELEPILLAR.COM)



**Review of *Just Peace: Ecumenical, Intercultural and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* edited by Fernando Enns and Annette Mosher  
(Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013)**

APRIL SHENANDOAH

*Just Peace* is a collection of essays by contributing authors that relates, for the benefit of a wide readership, a scripturally based theology of light and peace for a violent world. The contributing authors, including Fernando Enns, Jürgen Moltmann, Eduardus Van Der Borght, and others, are all major peacemakers. Each essay explores the hope of achieving world peace by applying biblical principles. Fernando Enns, Ph.D. is a Professor of Theology and Ethics at Vrije University in Belgium. Annette Mosher, Ph.D., is a theologian and Assistant Professor of Ethics at the University of Amsterdam. In this book, the authors reference Scripture, major world theologians, and research periodicals from the University of Hamburg's Peace Institute, among other sources.

A strength of this book is its grounding in Scripture. Laying the foundation for a “peace theology,” Dr. Olav Fykse Tevit’s foreword references Isaiah’s prophetic words (Isa 2:4): “And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more” (viii). Enns and Mosher’s introduction also references Jesus’s words (John 14:27): “Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God” (1), reminding the reader that Christians are identified by bringing Jesus’s peace, their spiritual heritage, to the world. Enns, in chapter one, quotes Luke 2:14: “Glory to God on high and peace to men of good will,” reinforcing that peace comes from love, justice, and freedom, which are God’s gifts through Jesus’s redemptive work and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. As an example, Enns describes Kingston, Jamaica’s violence and cites the courage of those who build a peaceful community in Kingston by creating safe spaces, for example, theatres for children, allowing them to express their sorrows and joys. I agreed with Enns’s idea of creating space for peace as a solution in violent communities. I am also in favor of Enns’s advocacy of “peace education” in schools, seminaries, and universities (13).

Jürgen Moltmann’s chapter, “On a Culture of Life and the Dangers of Time,” identifies the religion of death that confronts postmodern society. Moltmann details, with great spiritual sensitivity, the rejection of life that terrorism embraces, pointing out that reverence for life stems from reverence and love of God and accepting the transforming peace of Jesus (John 14:27) (3).

Mosher’s chapter describes Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s attempt to create space for peace in Nazi Germany, in the 1930’s and 1940’s, pointing to Bonhoeffer’s vision of the servant church as a bearer of the message of peace to the world. I appreciated Mosher’s espousing of orthodox Christian doctrine by quoting Bonhoeffer’s goal of the Christian church: to be justified, Spirit filled, in communion, focused, and formed by a Trinitarian understanding of God (3).

Hans de Wit reflects on Andres Pacheco Lozano’s shift from “war ethics” to “peace ethics,” providing the reader with a paradigm shift toward a theology of “just peace” moving beyond the standard of “just war” (viii).

The book concludes by explaining that truth, forgiveness, and reconciliation restore God’s justice and the peace of Jesus in a chaotic world. I particularly enjoyed Donald Kraybill’s final chapter identifying the role of forgiveness in peace building among individuals. Citing Charles Carl Robert’s killing of five Amish girls in Lancaster, PA, Kraybill tells the story of how the Amish families visited Robert’s family to offer forgiveness—the lesson of the place of forgiveness in the Christian life even in the face of injustice. As a collection of essays about justice and peace-making,

this work is strong in appeal to professionals and lay readers alike. I recommend this book for anyone exploring the concept of biblical peace. It would also serve as a supplemental text for seminary courses.

April Shenandoah is the author of *Your Tongue Determines Your Destiny* and is an Ambassador of Prayer. She contributed a chapter to editors Jeanne DeFazio and William David Spencer's *Redeeming the Screens*.

