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CREDO

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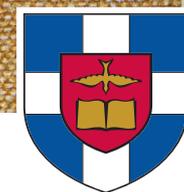
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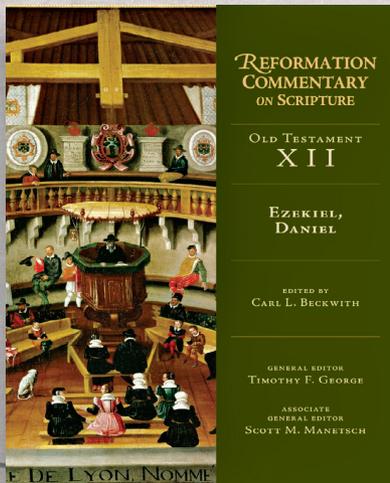
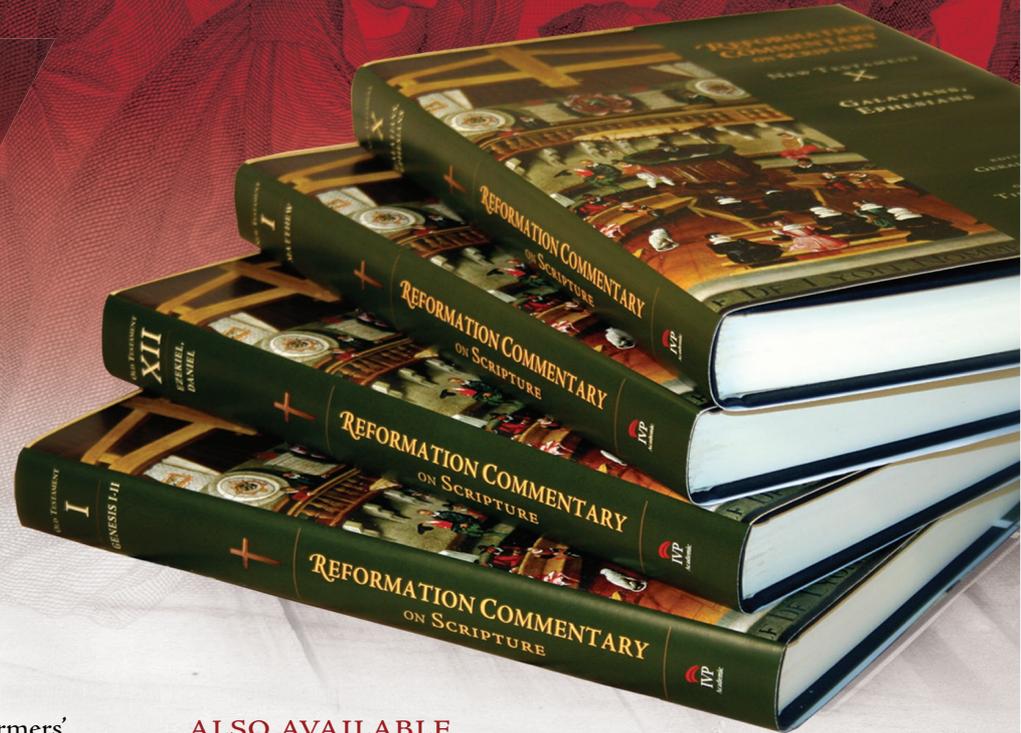
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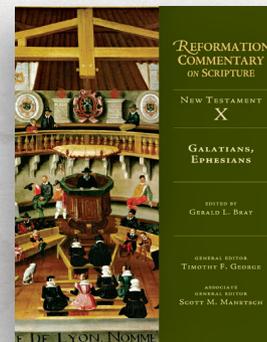
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Make Disciples of All Nations

G

o therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20). These words, spoken by Jesus after his resurrection, are famously known as The Great Commission. As disciples of

Christ, it is our great joy to go and tell the nations about the good news of salvation for sinners through Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior. The March issue of Credo Magazine seeks to ignite a passion for missions. And what better timing as this year marks the 200th anniversary of Adoniram and Ann Judson setting sail aboard the Caravan to take the gospel to Burma.

I know of no better example of modern day Judsons than Bill and Kelley Housley, present-day missionaries to Papua New Guinea. While I recommend every article in this issue to you, I want to especially recommend “As Though He Needed Anything.” In this article the Housley family chronicles their time taking the gospel to the Itutang. God has truly done an amazing work through the Housleys. After spending countless hours learning the language and translating the Scriptures, the time finally came to present the gospel to the Itutang. But notice, the Housleys did not begin in the New Testament, but started in Genesis, walking the Itutang through the entire storyline of Scripture. In doing so, the Housleys showed the Itutang where they are in salvation-history and built the biblical anticipation. After working their way through the Old Testament the Itutang saw themselves as great sinners in need of a great Savior. How incredible it was to read about the Itutang hearing, receiving, and believing in the gospel for the very first time! Truly, how beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news. Read, and re-read the story of the Housleys. I hope many will be so inspired that they also will take the gospel to the nations.



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10 Questions

Hip-hop artist **Shai Linne** discusses lyrical theology, the attributes of God, and John Newton.

Shai, what is “lyrical theology” and what sets it apart from the rest of hip-hop?

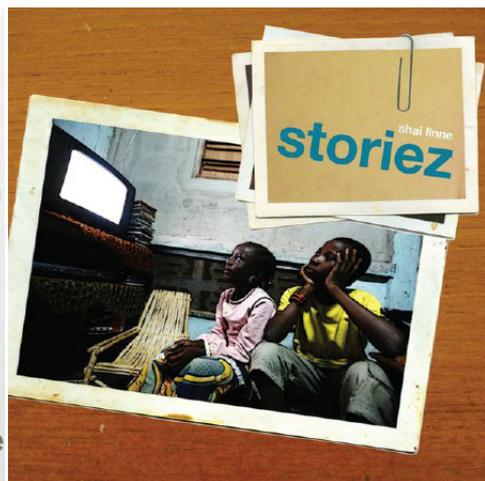
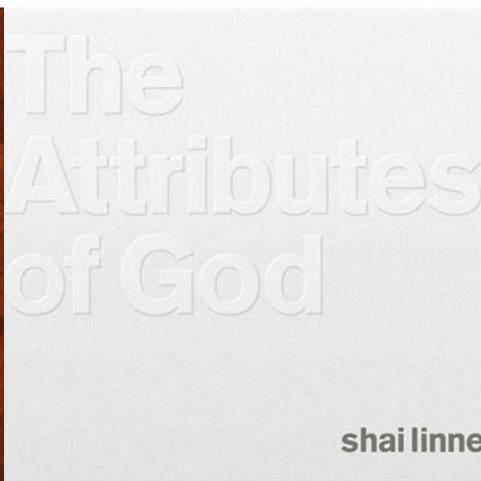
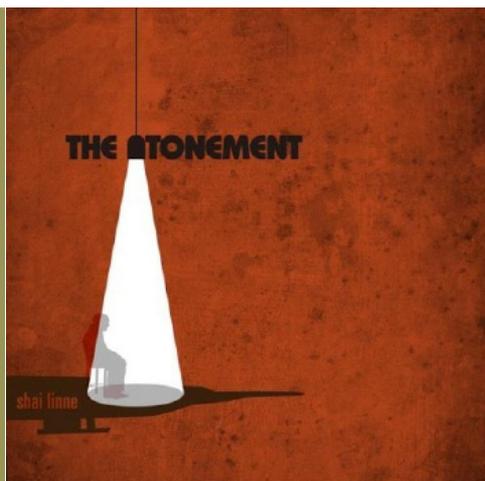
Lyrical Theology is basically using artful lyricism to provoke the study and knowledge of God, particularly in the context of hip-hop culture. This can take many forms, including expounding on biblical narratives,

explaining a particular scriptural truth, etc. What sets it apart from the rest of hip-hop is its explicit biblical, gospel-centered, Christ-exalting focus.

In the past you have been criticized for redeeming such a “depraved genre” as hip-hop. What is your response to this criticism?

To those who say, “How can you take that thing that is used for evil and glorify God with it?” My two word answer is “The Cross.”

But my response to that particular criticism is usually to simply rephrase the objection. I would say something like, “Are you saying that you have a problem with me taking a medium that has been used



to blaspheme God and using it instead as a medium to praise and exalt God's holy name, proclaim His glorious gospel, speak biblical truth and magnify the infinite worth of the Lord Jesus Christ?" Arguments against "depraved genres" are ultimately arguments against redemption itself, because depraved genres are the products of depraved human beings, who need redemption. (In fact, "depraved genre" is a misnomer because it's ascribing moral value to a medium, which by definition is morally neutral until informed by content.) Once God has redeemed a person, it's fitting for the Christian to take the "genres" or vehicles (such as books, cameras, canvasses, the internet, language, musical forms, etc.) that he or she once used for evil and now use them to promote the glory of God. Those who make the objection (especially as they use the internet to do so) are often unaware that they themselves use "depraved genres" all the time.

You might be the first I have ever seen write a song on limited atonement. How has Reformed theology impacted your lyrics?

Reformed Theology has greatly impacted my understanding of Scripture, which obviously trickles down into my lyrics. It affects the themes that I tend to emphasize and it also impacts the way I word things. For instance, I have a song called "Penelope Judd", which is an allegorical children's song that never explicitly mentions Jesus or reformed theology. Yet, classical reformed emphases like imputed righteousness, the sufficiency of Scripture, radical corruption, etc. are found throughout if you dig beneath the surface a little. Though I rarely use "reformed" terminology in my songs, it permeates everything I do.

Your new album is on the attributes of God. What attribute of God do you think your generation needs to hear about the most?

Without a question, it's the holiness of God. Our culture assumes the love, mercy and grace of God. But none of those glorious truths make sense apart from understanding that God is infinitely holy.

Christians and the Arts. Why is it so important for Christians to produce high quality artistic material?

Excellent art by Christians commends the gospel in a compelling way. It is attractive because it doesn't stop at the creature, but points beyond itself to the ultimate Artist. It says, "This is what it looks like to not only be made in the image of God, but to be 'created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness'" (Eph. 4:23) In our world, which is characterized by rebellion against God, there are many obstacles to belief in Jesus. But very few provoke the kind visceral, immediate response of displeasure that bad Christian art does.

Where would you like to see further development by Christians in artistic fields?

Great question. The first thing that comes to mind for me is film. I long for the day when the evaluation of a film—"It was good"—no longer has to be qualified by "... for a Christian movie."

What is the difference between art for the church and art from the church? Can Christians in each of these categories get along?

Art for the church is art being used as a support for and pointer to the ministry of prayer and the word. For instance, all of the aesthetic choices made in a typical Sunday gathering of believers (music, architecture, interior design, graphics, etc.) would fall into this category. It would also apply to any Christian artist whose goal is the encouragement and edification of the church. *Art from the church* is the Christian artist who has been called vocationally as salt and light in the dark world of the arts as a representative of Jesus Christ in his/her particular field of expertise. We should not expect art from the church to be explicitly Christ-centered or gospel focused. Yet, these works should never ultimately contradict a biblical worldview. The first step towards these groups getting along is recognizing the necessity and value of the other group. This will come as pastors instruct their congregations so that these categories will be clear

in their minds.

Your historical hero is John Newton. Tell us, why Newton?

Many of your readers will know that Newton was at one time actively involved in the slave trade. When you hear him describe what he once was and then see what God made him to be, it can only be attributed to the abundant power of God's grace in his life. I resonate deeply with that, because that's my story too! Beyond that, I've never read anyone who had such a balance of strong doctrinal fidelity and theological commitment along with the heart of a tender, warm-hearted shepherd. His letters are a treasure of pastoral wisdom and insight. On top of that, he was a poet! Doesn't get much better than that.

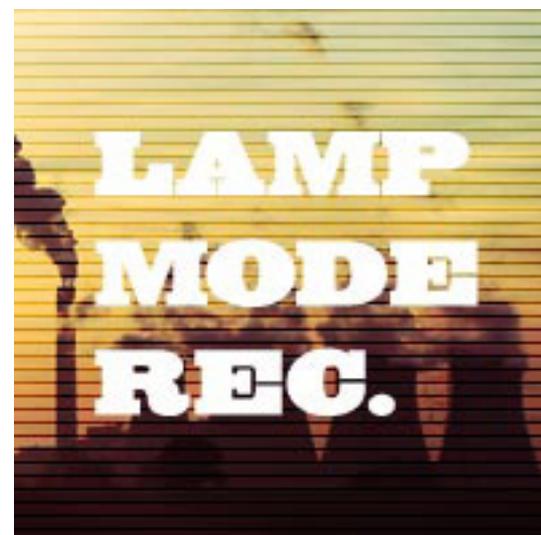
The Solus Christus Project (2005), The Atonement (2008), Storiez (2008), and now The Attributes of God (2011). What's next?

I'm working on a few projects right now. One that I'm really excited about is a children's album that I hope to release later this year. It's called Jesus Kids and it's intended to help parents teach their kids theology.

Congratulations on the birth of Sage Owen Linne. He may be the youngest Eagles fan yet! How does it feel to be a father?

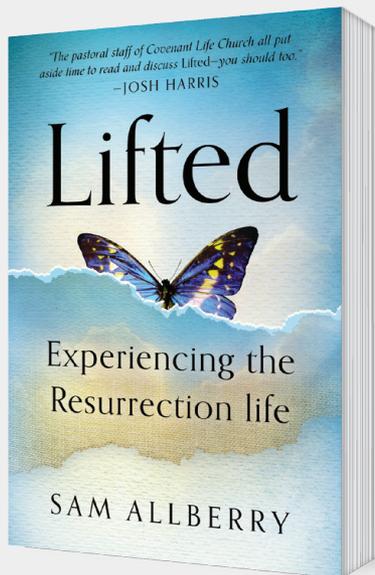
Thank you. As an Eagles fan,

he'll learn from a young age that our world is filled with disappointment! That will provide many opportunities to point him to the only one who will never truly disappoint. Fatherhood has been amazing and challenging at the same time. I have an incredible wife, which makes even the challenging times sweet in their own way. Seeing my son's neediness and utter dependence on his parents gives me a faint picture of my need for the Lord, which has certainly helped my prayer life. It's been a gift from God.



Shai Linne's most recent record, *The Attributes of God*, is published by Lamp Mode Rec. To find out more visit www.lampmode.com. You can also follow Linne's personal blog at lyricaltheology.blogspot.com and at twitter.com/ShaiLinne

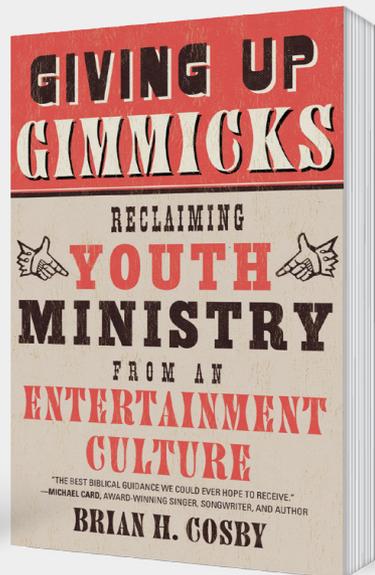
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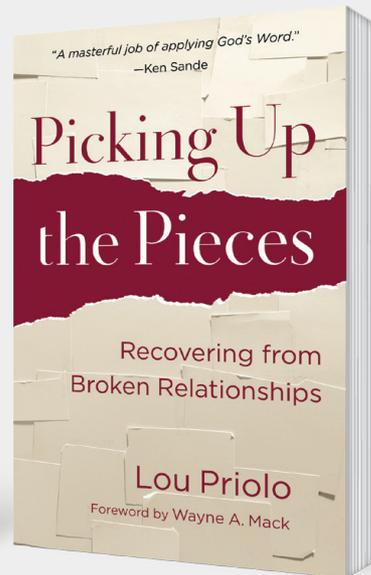
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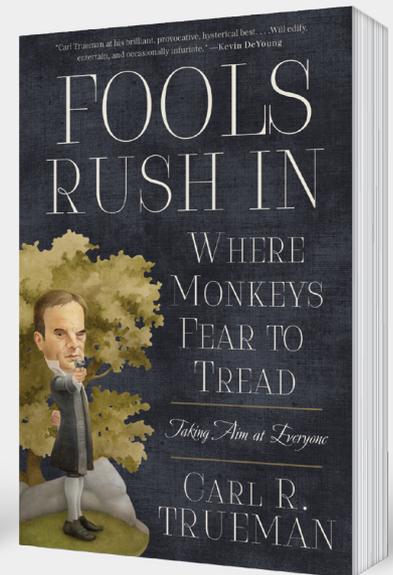
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Is Calvinism Anti-Missionary?

An Interview with Kenneth Stewart

By Matthew Barrett

Calvinism is largely anti-missionary. True or False?

It is historically false. Surprisingly, the charge that it is true seems to have grown up especially since 1960 when it was given respectability by the Southern Methodist University, Perkins School of Theology professor W. Richey Hogg. More recently, the charge has been repeated by the late historian of Southwestern Baptist Seminary, William Estep and the evangelical apologetics writer, Norman Geisler. A better knowledge of mission history would have kept them from making this indefensible claim.

What about the Reformers? Did Luther, Calvin, and others care about evangelism and missions?

In the sixteenth century, transoceanic missionary activity required both a supportive monarchy and a national program of overseas expansion. As neither Switzerland nor Saxony were maritime nations, their transoceanic missionary efforts awaited developments beyond their control. Until those developments came, Lutheranism concentrated on the missionary penetration of adjacent territories (Poland, the Baltic countries and Holland). Swiss Reformed mission-

ary penetration of Holland, France and Hungary ran along similar lines. And it was just as perilous work as missions to the tropics.

Many may be unaware that several “Genevan Calvinists” sought to take the gospel to Brazil. Who were these men and what is their story?

In the 1550’s, largely-Catholic France (which was itself playing colonial catch-up with neighboring Spain and Portugal) determined to try an adventure in South American colonization. Though they were unwelcome there (given the prior Spanish and Portuguese division of the continent) they focused their energies on an island off Brazil’s coast. But not enough French Catholics were willing to go on the colonial adventure and so Huguenots were welcomed (Genevans among them). These made a serious attempt to evangelize the aboriginal peoples on the Brazilian coast before being ordered home by the unsympathetic colonial governor.

Were Calvinists among some of the early settlers in the New World and if so what were their methods in sharing the gospel with Native Americans?

There were two notable efforts in Puritan New England. Puritan donors in Crom-



wellian England raised funds to assist the ministries to Indians of Richard Mayhew on Martha’s Vineyard (an island off Cape Cod) and of John Eliot, who travelled west of his frontier home of Roxbury, MA. The strategy of each was to organize distinctly Christian villages (called ‘praying towns’) for converted Indians and to as rapidly as possible produce Indian versions of the Scriptures with native preachers responsible for the proclamation. This came with amazing speed.

The Synod of Dort is famously (or infamously!) known for its defense of the doctrines of grace against the Arminian Remonstrance of the day. Do we see any signs of missionary zeal among the representatives at Dort?

More than is realized, there was a strongly pietistic element among the Dutch delegates to this international Synod hosted at Dordrecht 1618-

1619. This same Dutch Reformed pietism saw in the far-flung efforts of the Dutch East India Company to SE Asian regions such as the present Sri Lanka and Indonesia (formerly Portuguese territories) an opportunity for company chaplains to do missionary work among the native peoples. This happened before Eliot and Mayhew were at work in Massachusetts.

Thanks to Jonathan Edwards, we are left with the diary of David Brainerd. What kind of legacy did Brainerd leave behind in his efforts to preach the gospel to the Indians?

Globally, the missionary devotion and example of Brainerd was transmitted by President Edwards' *Memoir* of Brainerd. We know for a fact that it was in turn influential in fixing the outlook of subsequent missionaries to the East such as William Carey and Henry Martyn.

Calvinistic Baptists were among the pioneers of the modern missionary cause. What was the significance of William Carey's mission to India and the foundation of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1792?

Carey in particular, but also his circle including such persons as Andrew Fuller, were fully cognizant of earlier Reformation-based missionary effort – both in Massachusetts and in South India. Carey and his circle organized a non-ecclesiastical society of the like-minded that would, in due course, act like a

'leaven' to influence their (and other) denominations to officially sponsor overseas missions.

How did William Carey handle the protest from hyper-Calvinists that “when God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without you”?

There is actually some dispute as to whether these words of spoken objection were actually uttered. But if they were spoken, they were not *necessarily* the sentiments of an indolent Christian. There was an old Reformed attitude, left over from before the days of transoceanic exploration, that—since God is free to do all things—He might also have a way of saving those beyond human reach. But Carey and his circle, full of the new knowledge of the world mediated through the published travel journals of Captain Cook, understood and were made confident of the fact that nations not long before reckoned “beyond reach” were now, in the days of regular transoceanic navigation, made accessible. It was time for the right use of means.

Many Southern Baptists today argue that a zeal for Calvinism has undermined missions. From a historical standpoint, does such a charge hold water?

My personal view is that the reason why these charges were not made longer ago than 1960 is that before that time, fair-minded observers of world missions could plainly observe that missionaries of Calvinist sympathies were more than pull-

ing their weight. The noted missionary scholar Samuel Zwemer pointed out in 1952 (for instance) that Calvinists had been the pioneers of Protestant missions to Arab and Muslim societies. Such charges, when made today, strongly suggest ignorance of the historical record.

Are you encouraged by what you see in our day when it comes to Calvinists taking the gospel to the lost throughout the world? Where might there be areas of improvement?

This is a difficult question. As a Presbyterian, I cannot speak for what is taking place in the SBC. But I am conscious that the missionary energies (as well as other energies) of the church in the West are being sapped by materialism and that, in this existing context, scarce congregational resources are being diverted more and more into short-term missionary ‘stints.’ Moreover, not all evangelical and Reformed seminaries are maintaining their former levels of instruction in missions in this era of budgetary constraints. At very least, this is no time for evangelical Calvinists to be resting on the bare historical record of how our convictions have, in past, promoted missionary sacrifice; we must demonstrate that these same principles are operative now.

Kenneth Stewart is Professor of Theological Studies at Covenant College. He is the author of Ten Myths About Calvinism (IVP).



[Spain] Missionaries *Wanted*

by **Matt Williams**

[I]t was not long ago that the vast Spanish empire ruled the world. Spain sent out numerous missionaries, and the influence of her riches, culture, religion and language can still be seen worldwide, even here in the United States, where about 40 million people speak Spanish.

How things have changed! Today, Spain struggles with 21% unemployment, huge debt problems, and is nearly completely secularized. It is estimated that only about 0.2% of Spain is evangelical Christian. There are many rural areas with *no* Gospel witness at all. Luis Palau told me he thinks that Spain is the second hardest country in the world to reach with the gospel, calling it the “graveyard of missionaries.”

Many Americans assume that Spain is a Roman Catholic nation. This is not the case at all. One Spanish friend told me, “Historically, the Catholic Church in Spain has caused a lot of pain. Most young people would point to the Church as one of the reasons why they’re not interested in God.”

Here is a true story that captures the attitude of many Spaniards. Estrella is a preschool teacher in her early 30s. She lives in the south of Spain. As a little girl, she went to a school run by nuns. Recently she met an evangelical Christian for the first time in her life. Estrella asked, “What are the differences between your church and the Catholic church?” The Christian friend chose not to debate the differences between the churches, but to tell her about who God is. God is not only the Creator

of the universe but he is a personal God, affected and broken by our disobedience. Despite our desire we are incapable of restoring everything that is broken. But God, full of grace, has restored everything that we have broken through Jesus’ death. We need to accept Him through faith. Estrella responded, “Wow, I have never heard all that before. If people knew all this, there would be more people in your church. As an adult, I’ve always said that I am an atheist. But to be honest, I say that because I am really disappointed with the Catholic Church. I wonder if God is real. Actually, when things are tough, the first thing that comes to my mind is, ‘Oh God help me.’ I just don’t know.”

What can be done to help this country that is immensely loved by God? *Pray!* Let’s not neglect prayer. Do

you believe that prayer moves the hand of God? The need for missionaries in Spain is great. There is a need for short term and evangelistic outreaches that help local Spanish churches reach her neighbors. The key is to *help* the Spanish church, rather than starting new churches or new ministries that are unrelated to what the Spaniards themselves are doing. Spaniards are a proud people (remember, they used to rule the world), so we need to serve alongside of them.

But to effectively reach the people of Spain, there is a need for Christians to *live* in Spain long-term; living out their faith in front of their Spanish neighbors in every aspect of life—home, business, friendships, and marriage. As they do this, the gospel comes alive as relationships are built. Spaniards have heard parts of the gospel story; but very few have seen it lived out, showing the daily difference that Jesus makes—the one who came to bring comfort, hope, purpose, joy, love, and peace. Spaniards are looking for these qualities as their economy collapses. Jesus offers them free of charge. But, since the number of evangelicals in Spain is so low, it is hard for Spaniards to hear about this solution. “And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?” (Rom 10:14)

There is also a great need to disciple Spanish believers. If new Christians are not given a strong theological foundation for their faith and what living a Christian life means, they

will quickly fall away due to the influences around them. Remember, only 1 out of 500 of their neighbors are believers (0.2%). Many of the young adults in the church where I ministered fell away from the Lord. Drugs, alcohol, sex, lack of Christian marriage partners which often led to Christians marrying unbelievers—these influences are real, and devastating to the Spanish church.

The university may be a key to reaching Spain. The postmodern universities mold the views of young adults into thinking that religion is merely an option. Once they move into the “real world,” their views are set, and it is much more difficult to talk with them about Jesus. In Barcelona there are 200,000 University students, but a mere 300 Christian students.

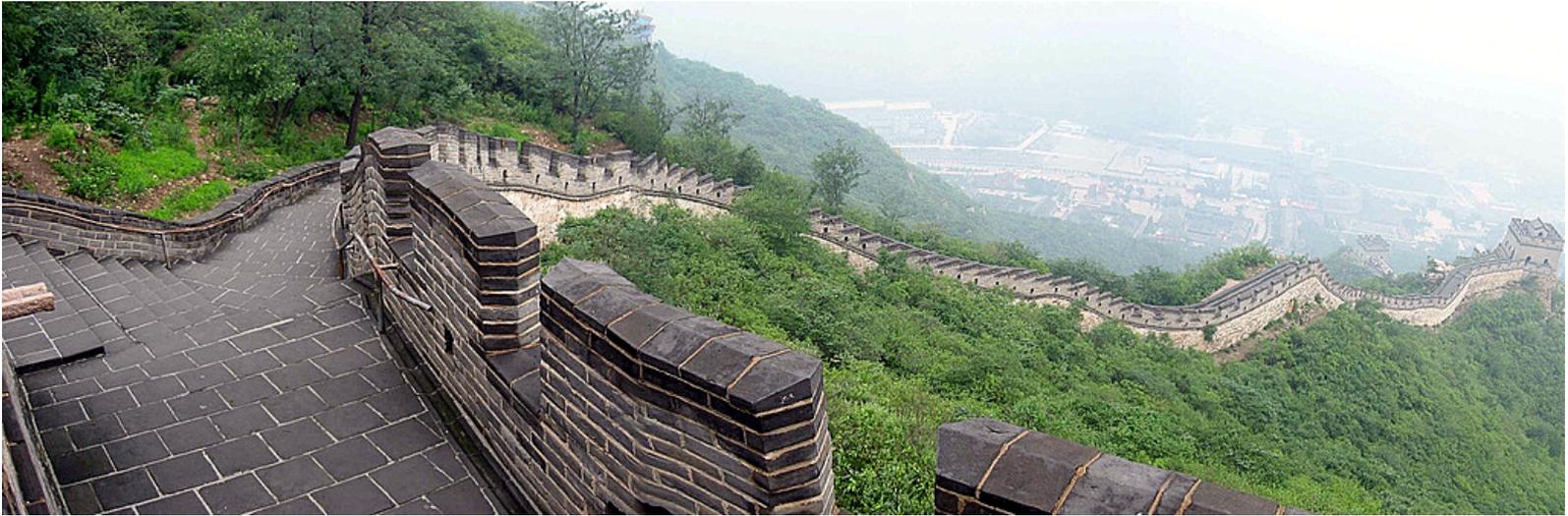
One of my Biola University students recently took a year to attend the University of Barcelona. They have various courses for foreigners to learn the Spanish language and culture. American students can enter Spain with a student visa and obtain wonderful opportunities for ministry. Teaching English informally to Spanish university students is a great way to spread the Gospel.

Some might think that such a ministry would be a “vacation,” spending a year in a beautiful tourist destination under the guise of Christian duty. Here is what my student said about her time in Barcelona, “No, I was not caring for AIDS victims, rescuing prostitutes, or digging wells. Instead, I was filling up nearly every moment with coffee times to develop

relationships with non-Christian peers, inviting them to go on hikes in beautiful areas around Spain, traveling with them, preparing Bible Studies for the University of Barcelona InterVarsity Christian fellowship group, etc. After 10 months I felt as though I was finally becoming a part of their culture. I was able to lead Bible studies entirely in Spanish, and I was developing relationships with people in many different areas so that I was seeing even more ministry opportunities. It is slow work in Spain.”

Many more ideas could be added to these, such as financially supporting current ministries and missionaries in Spain, translating the best biblical/theological works into Spanish so that Spanish pastors have the needed resources (such as the *Colección Teológica Contemporánea* and the *Biblioteca Teológica Vida*), sending work teams to help renovate Spanish churches, and prayer (yes, I’ll mention it again). The key is to realize that the Dark Continent is now perhaps found not in Africa, but in Europe, and to seek the Lord of the harvest as to *your* role in reaching the world with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Matt Williams, Ph.D., is Professor of New Testament at Biola University and former missionary to Spain (1996-2002). He is also the Editor of Biblioteca Teológica Vida and Colección Teológica Contemporánea.



[China] as a *Sending* Nation

by Calvin Wang

[O]ver the past sixty years, the phenomenal growth of the church in China is well documented. The first thirty years of growth took place in the severest of trials, the last thirty in a freer, yet still restricted and controlled environment. As the church in China continues to mature, it is beginning to play a bigger role in propagating the faith once for all handed down to the saints. Tobias Brandner recently observes, “One of the most remarkable events in the past 50 years of mission history is the internationalization of mission. Mission is no more a movement from north to south or from west to east; it is originating in all parts of the world and moving in all directions.” As a result, Paul Heibert implores the Western church to “recognize that

God is raising up a world church, and that we are no longer the center but partners with churches in other lands.”

Missiologists all over the world are hoping and predicting that the Chinese house church will accomplish great things in the years ahead. This hope is starting to materialize in the vision that has come to be known as The Chinese Back to Jerusalem Movement (BTJM). This movement simply notices that in the last two thousand years, the trajectory of the gospel has basically been moving in a Westward direction. It started with Jesus and the apostles in Jerusalem, gradually moved into Europe, then over to the Americas, and today has engulfed the strategic nation of China. Most estimates today would claim there are anywhere from 70

to 100 million Christians in China. Some prominent leaders in the Chinese house church believe it is their God ordained responsibility to pick up the gospel baton and carry it into some of the most unreached areas directly to their West, extending all the way back to Jerusalem.

It appears that in a multitude of ways, the Chinese house church has been sovereignly prepared by God to reach these hostile nations with the gospel. First, compared to western believers, Chinese believers are much closer to many of these unreached people groups (UPGs) culturally, geographically, linguistically, and economically. Second, compared to western nations, the Chinese government is much more closely aligned with these nations politically. As a result, it is easier and

less threatening for Chinese citizens to enter these Central Asian and Middle Eastern countries. Moreover, the Chinese missionaries can help break the stereotype that Christianity is a ‘western’ religion. Third, the fiery trials that the Chinese believers have endured over the past few decades have prepared them well for the type of opposition they will receive from these Hindu, Buddhist, and Muslim peoples in these nations. Fourth, as the nation of China continues to ascend in importance on the world stage, the demand to learn the Chinese language is escalating all over the world. This is providing natural platforms for Chinese missionaries in the heart of their mission fields. Finally, as the economic base of China continues to grow, this should lead to more missions giving on the part of Chinese believers and thus a greater ability to send workers from the most populous nation on earth.

However, there are still a number of obstacles and hindrances to the fulfillment of this grand vision. The Chinese government still views these house churches as illegal and therefore restricts any missional activity. More importantly, the Chinese house church has very limited access to good theological and missiological training. Unfortunately, the lack of missiological preparation and training has been a major factor leading to a large percentage of Chinese missionaries returning home after just a short time on the field. Other hindrances include a lack of qualified workers, scarce funds, and cultural

adaptation problems. These problems are not insurmountable, but simply reflect what one Asian pastor has observed, “We Asians do not yet have built into our church life the tradition of the missionary vocation.” Although this is not true for Korea any longer, it will take time for this missionary vision to truly capture the hearts of the entire Chinese church.

How can foreigners assist the Chinese house church’s missional vision? First and foremost, the Chinese house church is in desperate need of the strength, power and wisdom of God; and these items are mainly obtained through prayer. Yi Du Kam, in pondering how foreigners can partner with the Chinese house church in the BTJ movement, succinctly states, “It is entirely possible that the most effective ministry for the Western Christians is that of prayer.”

Second, foreigners can seek to take their knowledge and experience to China in order to train future missionaries. This, according to many missiologists who are familiar with the Chinese context, is probably the greatest service foreigners can provide for Chinese Christians. Third, many Western Christians have been quick to give money to support Chinese missionaries, showing their faith and confidence in our Eastern brothers and sisters. However, great

THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT STILL VIEWS HOUSE CHURCHES AS ILLEGAL AND THEREFORE RESTRICTS ANY MISSIONAL ACTIVITY.

care and caution should be exercised when sending funds to majority world churches. Issues of corruption and dependency arise when money is not carefully given and accounted for. One Chinese pastor shares a surprising yet very reasonable truth: “No Asian Christian is moved to give sacrificially when he knows that the bulk of the support is from the West. Why should we Asians support our pastors and pay to maintain our buildings when a distant mission board will meet all our bills? Financial dependence robs us of our dignity. It creates a spirit of dependence and weakens the sense of stewardship.” Western Christians can give in strategic ways that will empower the Chinese church, and not weaken it or create dependence. However, they should work through organizations that understand these missiological problems and have developed a plan to avoid them.

Now may God the Father, who is able to do immeasurably more than all we could ever ask or imagine, according to his power, raise up the Chinese house church to reach the UPGs in the 10/40 window. To him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.

A Scale from 1 to 10

How much should the **Old Testament** influence our interpretation of the **New Testament**?

6 | **Craig Blomberg**

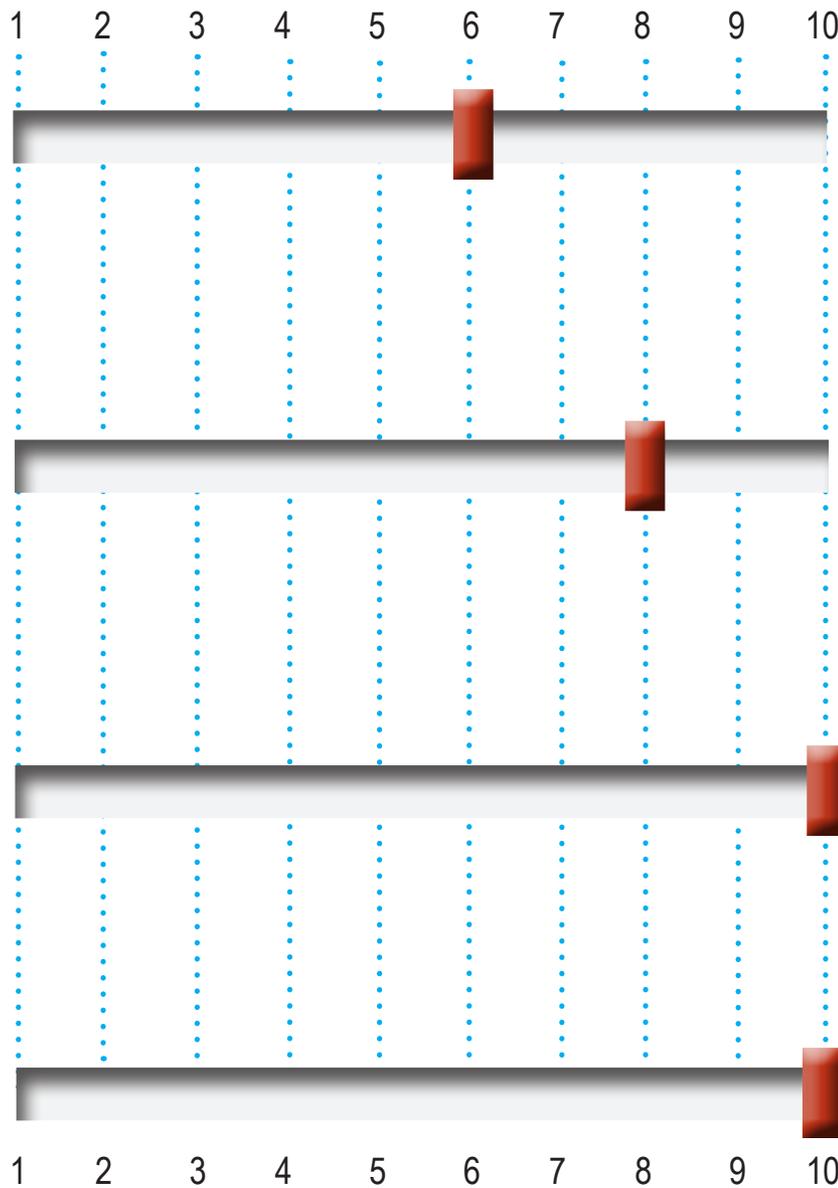
{Denver Seminary}

Because all the NT writers were likely familiar with all of the OT, the OT becomes an important subset of the more general category of historical background that should always be taken into account in interpreting texts. Sometimes there may be an explicit quotation, or an allusion, or a mere echo. Other times, the OT is simply part of the pervasive worldview of the NT writer. The NT writers regularly use the OT creatively and flexibly, under the inspiration of the Spirit. The immediate context of any NT passage and its meaning interpreted on its own can always trump historical background if the evidence pushes us in that direction.

10 | **Robert Plummer**

{Southern Baptist Seminary}

The Bible is one book with many chapters. Subsequent chapters should always be read in light of previous ones.



8 | **Darrell Bock**

{Dallas Theological Seminary}

We have to pay attention to the Old Testament and the background it gives us, but we also must recall that Jesus and the apostles have the right to build on that material. I believe they do so in ways that complement what God has already committed himself to do.

10 | **Andrew Hill**

{Wheaton College}

“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching” (2 Tim 3:17-17). I take this reference to include the OT (if not primarily the OT at the time the letter is written). The Bible is a unified story of God's redemptive work in history to reclaim, restore, and reinhabit his creation. Both the first and the second Testaments are essential to understanding God's story.



[Patrick] Inspiration for the *Mission* of WILLIAM CAREY and his *Friends*

by Michael Haykin

[W]hen, in 1805, William Carey, Joshua Marshman and William Ward summarized the principles upon which they would base their mission at Serampore in India, they drew a comparison between what they were assured would happen in India and what God had done in the British Isles nearly fifteen hundred years earlier.

He who raised the sottish and brutalised Britons to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, can raise these slaves of superstition, purify their hearts by faith, and make them worshippers of the one God in spirit and in truth. The promises are fully sufficient to remove our doubts, and to make us anticipate that not very distant period when He will fam-

ish all the gods of India, and cause these very idolaters to cast their idols to the moles and to the bats, and renounce for ever the work of their own hands (The Serampore Form of Agreement).

Despite the immense task facing them in India, they had confidence in the God who had brought their distant ancestors, also “slaves of superstition,” to a genuine faith in Christ. Thirteen years earlier, in 1792, Carey had made a number of references to this evangelization of the British Isles in his epochal work, *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians, to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. He did so by distinguishing between those missions that sought to expand the dominion of “popery,” usually “by force of arms,” and those that

genuinely extended the kingdom of Christ. Among the former he lists the Roman mission of Augustine of Canterbury and Paulinus; among the latter it is the name of Patrick that receives the most attention.

The next year [435] Patrick was sent from Scotland to preach to the Irish, who before his time were totally uncivilized, and, some say, cannibals; he however, was useful, and laid the foundations of several churches in Ireland.

This statement, along with that from the Serampore Form of Agreement, would appear to indicate that the evangelistic success of Patrick, and his spiritual heirs in the Celtic Church was a source of encouragement to Carey. How much more Carey knew about the historical Patrick is not clear; but he would certainly

have been thrilled and inspired by Patrick's evangelistic zeal and God-centered spirituality.

Patrick's World and Mission

The world in which Patrick was born around 390AD was part of the Roman Empire. With the way Patrick is linked to all things Irish, it is hard to believe that Patrick was not born in Ireland, but he wasn't! He was born into a Christian home in what is now Wales, or southern Scotland, or possibly even England (to the horror of every loyal Irish patriot!). When he was sixteen years of age he was taken captive by Irish pirates and, as a slave, lived in Ireland for the next

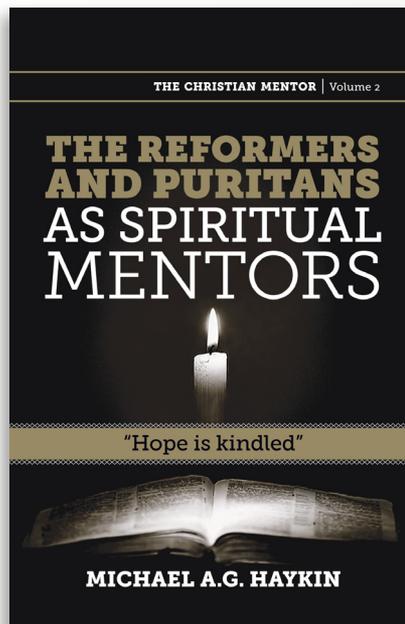
six years or so. It was there in Ireland that he was converted with, in his words, "all my heart to the Lord my God, who had regard for my abjection, and mercy on my youth and ignorance" (Confession 2—the Confession of Patrick is one of his two genuine writings).

When Patrick was in his twenties, he escaped from captivity in Ireland and went back to his home in what had been the Roman province of Britannia. Here he would have stayed, glad as he was to get back to his family and friends. But not long after he got back, he had a dream in which he saw the Irish coming to him, asking

him to return to Ireland to presumably share with them the good news about Jesus Christ (Confession 23). Patrick returned to the north of Ireland in the early 430s, where he stayed for the rest of his life. As he wrote:

I came to the people of Ireland to preach the Gospel, and to suffer insult from the unbelievers, bearing the reproach of my going abroad and many persecutions even unto bonds, and to give my free birth for the benefit of others; and, should I be worthy, I am prepared to give even my life without hesitation and most gladly for his [i.e. Christ's] name, and

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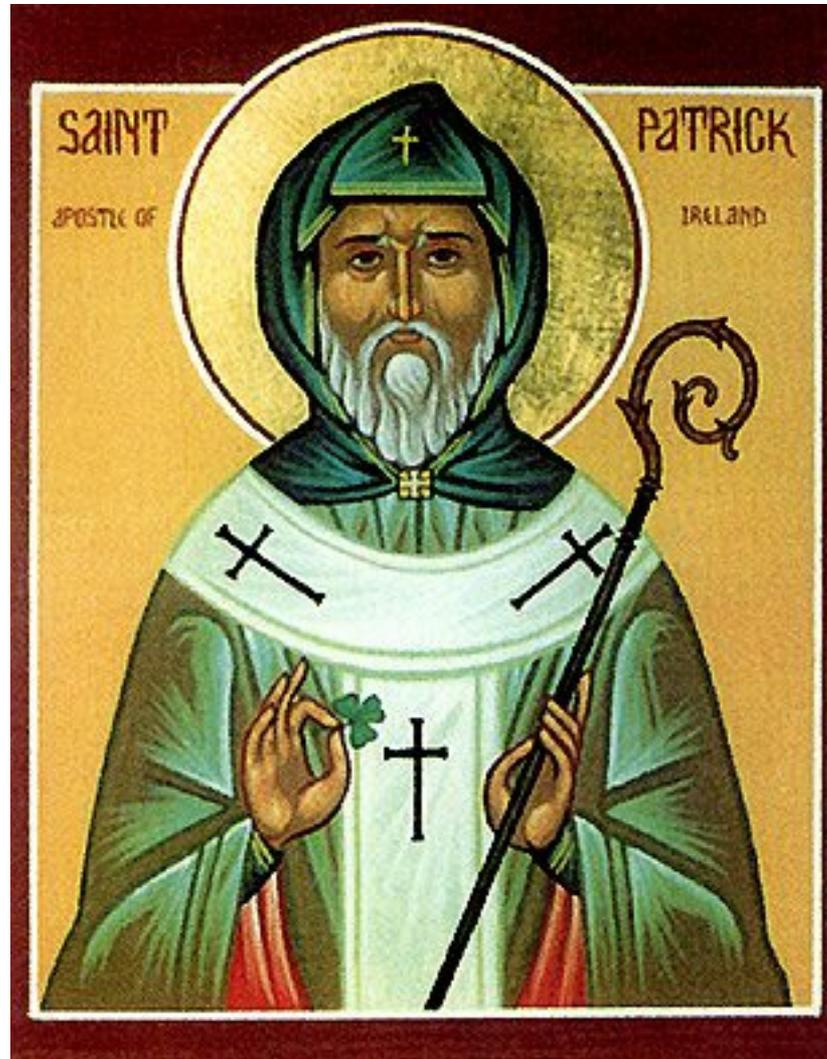
it is there that I wish to spend it until I die, if the Lord would grant it to me (Confession 37).

This text reveals a man who has a deep certainty of the will of God for his life: to live out his days in Ireland so that the Irish might come to know God as he had done. His ministry in Ireland was extremely successful, though he certainly had not evangelized the whole of Ireland by the time of his death, which was around 460AD.

His missionary labors, however, were not without strong opposition, presumably from the Celtic Druids in Ireland. In one section of his Confession he says: “daily I expect murder, fraud, or captivity.” Patrick’s response to these dangers reveals the true mettle of the man: “I fear none of these things because of the promises of heaven. I have cast myself into the hands of God Almighty, who rules everywhere, as the prophet says: ‘Cast thy thought upon God, and he shall sustain thee’” (Confession 55).

There was not only external opposition, though. Many of Patrick’s Christian contemporaries in the Western Roman Empire appear to have given little thought to evangelizing their barbarian neighbours.

As one scholar, Máire B. de Paor, has noted: “There was seemingly no organised, concerted effort made to go out and convert pagans, beyond the confines of the Western Roman



Empire” during the twilight years of Roman rule in the West. Did the Church in the West regard the barbarians as somehow less than human and therefore beyond the pale of evangelism?

Whatever the reason, Patrick’s mission to Ireland stands in splendid isolation. Thus, when Patrick announced his intention in Britain to undertake a mission to the

Irish there were those who strongly opposed him: “Many tried to prevent my mission; they would even talk to each other behind my back and say: ‘Why does this fellow throw himself into danger among enemies who have no knowledge of God?’” (Confession 46).

Patrick, though, was assured of the rightness of his mission to Ireland. He knew himself called to evangelize Ireland. He had a deep sense of gratitude to God for what the Lord had done for him. “I cannot be silent,” he declared, “about the great benefits and the great grace which the lord has deigned to bestow upon me in the land of my captivity; for this we can give to God in return after having been chastened by him, to exalt and praise His wonders before every nation that is anywhere under the heaven” (Confession 3).

Most importantly he had a robust understanding of what Scripture clearly teaches on this matter: the very same texts, passages like Matthew 28:19–20 and Mark 16:15–16, that spoke to William Carey and his friends had spoken to Patrick centuries earlier (Confession 38–40).

Michael Haykin, Ph.D., is Professor of Church History at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

From the Horse's Mouth

What is the mission



Andrew Farley

Senior Pastor of Ecclesia

Author of *The Naked Gospel*; *God Without Religion*; *A Climate for Change*

The mission of the church is to know Jesus Christ and to bear the fruit of his Spirit. We only truly love in the “agape” way when we first grasp how he demonstrated his love for us—by forgiving us all our sins; by freeing us from the impossible standard of the Law; and by giving us a brand new identity in him. Once we see the glory of his new covenant promises to us, we can transmit his love to the world around us!



of the church?



Jonathan Leeman

9Marks Ministries

Author of *The Church and the Surprising Offense of God's Love*



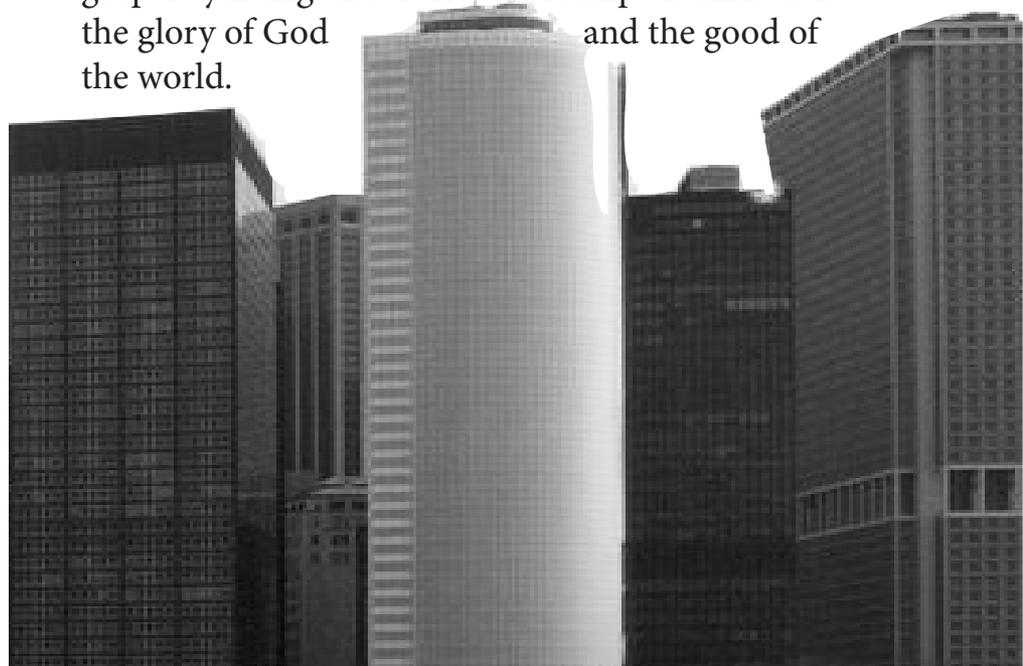
Trevin Wax

Managing Editor of The Gospel Project at LifeWay Christian Resources

Author of *Holy Subversion; Counterfeit Gospels*

Broadly, God has given his new covenant people on Planet Earth the glorious tasks of proclaiming the God-man Jesus—his substitutionary sacrifice and resurrected Lordship—and of living as a distinct society of Spirit-filled kingdom citizens who, little by little, are learning to embody Jesus' own love, mercy, and justice toward one another first and the nations second, all for the sake of displaying the matchless glory of the Father. For the purpose of fulfilling these great tasks and ends, Jesus has authorized regular gatherings of two or more new covenant members to constitute themselves as official outposts of the kingdom, or local churches, by exercising the keys of the kingdom through preaching the gospel, binding and loosing those who confess the gospel with baptism and the Lord's Supper, teaching everything that Christ has commanded, and spurring one another on to the aforementioned love and good deeds.

The church is a sign and instrument of the kingdom of God, a people united by faith in the gospel announcement of the crucified and risen King Jesus. The mission of the church is to go into the world in the power of the Spirit and make disciples by proclaiming this gospel, calling people to respond in ongoing repentance and faith, and demonstrating the truth and power of the gospel by living under the lordship of Christ for the glory of God and the good of the world.



As
Though
He
Needed
Anything

*By Bill, Kelley, Madison,
and Sabra Housley*

We were sitting in the middle of the small Sunday school classroom at Clifton Baptist Church, in Louisville, Kentucky, taught by Dr. Bruce Ware. In a few weeks, we would be sent out from our church family in order to plant a church in Papua New Guinea. As we listened to the Scripture being read from Acts 17:24-25, we were struck anew with the fact that mission work is not a sacrifice or even a service as men tend to think of it. It is the privilege of gathering worshippers for the glory of God! “The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, nor is he served by human hands, *as though he needed anything.*” Our wonderfully huge and glorious God, who could send out his message of grace in any way, shape, or form of his choice, has chosen to spread his written Word through the mouths of sinful, yet redeemed men. Each of us has the magnificent pleasure, privilege, and opportunity every day to be a conduit of his gracious salvation to those who are still living separated from their Creator. Amazing! What follows is a brief account of the part that God has given our family the privilege to play in *his* story.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA SINCE 2003

In 2001 our two sending churches began to seriously pray about the work that we were to be sent out to do. They prayed faithfully for our training, for our future co-workers, and for the future church plant. Individual families met together for special prayer times each month to lift us up before the Father. We know that this is the strong base that our present ministry is built on and we love that we are not here alone. We are simply ambassadors, the “sent ones,” who are representing a far larger body and a far larger vision of reaching the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It was September, 2003 when we first stepped off the plane with our two daughters, Madison (7 years) and Sabra (5 years), into the humid tropical air of Madang, a town in the country of Papua New Guinea. The country itself is a third world country, occupying half of the large island right above Australia. There are approximately 860 indigenous languages (over one tenth of the world’s total). Our destination, Madang, was a beautiful coastal town. The air and the people were friendly and right away we rented an apartment in town about two miles from the market and settled into learning the national Tok Pisin language. We spent six months learning the language and studying the culture. We teamed up with two other families, the Moores and the Zieglers, in order to start surveying interior villages for allocation. We were excited, looking for one of the 700 or so unwritten languages to work with. The plan was to find a hard-to-reach place that was receptive to our presence, allocate our three families to that village, and then live among them following the incarnational example of Christ. We would learn their language, write the orthography for it, begin literacy classes, work on translation and Bible lessons, and then finally present the gospel of Jesus Christ in their own vernacular. It was a radical church-planting strategy, but we knew we were working alongside a very radical God. We had a human plan based on strategy, biblical principles, and reasoning of course, but it was more than that. It was *his* plan. It was *his* commission - his very Great Commission. It was our sheer delight to be part of it.

Beginning in 2004, we made plans with great expectations. The three men were in charge of the survey and the ladies stayed at home and prayed for wisdom and direction for the men. Our mission aviation Cessna pilots first helped us find a fairly untouched area via an aerial pass. Next time around, the helicopter pilot took the men in, checking out the temperature towards outsiders and gathering more information at each stop. Then, through a 10-day hike on foot, the Lord narrowed the path down to the Middle Ramu Valley of Papua New Guinea—to a language group called Inapang and to a village called Itutang. The village was only accessible via

helicopter or by foot. Our favorite team saying is, “Hard to reach places are hard to reach!”

THE INAPANG

The Inapang people group consists of about 3,500 souls. They are hunters and gatherers and live in nine separate villages each about an hour hike from the next. The villages are situated in a wide circle encompassing a large marshy swamp. The village of Itutang, where we live, has 400 souls. They had a small church that a traveling priest had started forty years ago. At least once a year someone from the affiliation traveled

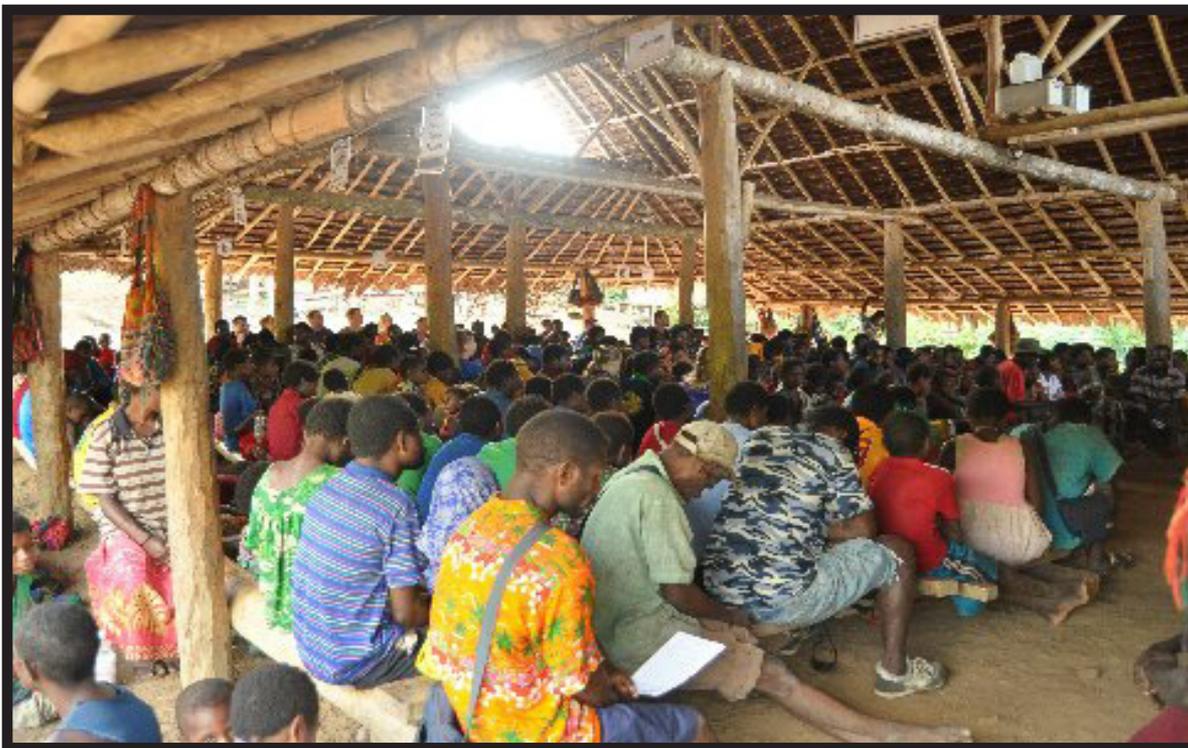
through, spoke to them in the national language, baptized their babies, gave them proper names to replace their “heathen” names, and then Itutang was checked off for another year. In the ten days of survey it became very evident to the men that this was a place

in need of the gospel of Jesus Christ in their heart language. Through their darkness and their animistic thinking, they looked at our white skins and believed us to be dead ancestors come back to show them the road to the wealth of the western world. Due to our prior studies of the country already, we expected this, but now we were seeing it first hand. So, as the men met with the village leaders and asked for permission to come and live among them, the people were eager for a plethora of reasons, both known and unknown, to take us in.

We were on the lofty heights as our team prayed with much excitement and then watched God answer those early prayers as we allocated to the village and made our homes in Itutang.

Moving day came and went and the reality of it all began to settle in. House building itself became a tool for the Lord to chisel away at the weakness of our hearts. Day after day of “slabbing” lumber and putting it up piece by piece finally culminated in a house we would call home. We chose to slab with chainsaws not because it was ten times more difficult than having the helicopter drop some lumber for us, but because we wanted to work with the people, sweat with them, build with them,

and live with them. Reality knocked again and we realized anew that we had just moved our two little precious girls into the jungle swamp, which seemed to be the official breeding ground for the entire world population of malaria-carrying mosquitoes. But



that is where the people were. The sights and sounds of our new home accentuated this wonderful, but rare experience. Those first months every unknown species of spider and beetle seemed to make its way to our home for introductions. More than anything else, we wanted to be able to clearly communicate Christ’s saving message to them one day. This was the goal that we kept in mind as we battled our fears and anxieties and attempted to learn this new unwritten language. One good day of language learning would be followed by three bad days

of trial and error. We would try to introduce ourselves to the villagers but instead said things like, “I am a tree.” And, while this provided much humor for the villagers, it wore on our souls. We would take the inner turmoil and put it in our Father’s hands knowing that we were the living epistles until the Scriptures could be translated.

Striking heat offset by oozing mud tried to muffle our attempts to be “out” where they were. Their gardens were hot, open to the scorching sun as they burned them to make the ground ready during dry season. During rainy season, the torrential rains would run along the trails turning them into slippery paths. God, by his grace, strengthened us to enter their lives and really become part of their village. In every valley, he lifted our eyes up to the hills of his glory. Through every trough, he moved our faithful senders to pray and write words of encouragement to us and then to pray some more. He held us there with the vision of himself coming to free his children who were being held captive and yet were still totally oblivious to their state of captivity to the enemy. We could not have done what he asked us to do here, but he was doing it through us.

Through daily dependence on the Word of God we found his strength enough for each day’s challenges. Language was learned, orthography was written, Bible translation and Bibles lessons for the creation-to-Christ teaching were prepared, and the first day of teaching was set. The teaching was to be over a four-month period. We would teach every morning from 7:30 - 8:30, Monday through Friday. The village built an airy open house with large posts and a palm frond roof for meeting. We hung up a long beaded timeline. Each 1/4” bead represented a year since the beginning of the world. The entire timeline was 50 yards long! The villagers helped put it up and then we marked the year 2007 on it. Then we marked the approximate birth date of the oldest man in the village, Awarankar, who was the last of the Itutang cannibals! Next, we asked him how far back he could remember and marked that date on the timeline as well. The entire span of knowledge of the world in this village measured 18 inches. The people’s history was filled

MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE, WE WANTED TO BE ABLE TO CLEARLY COMMUNICATE CHRIST’S SAVING MESSAGE TO THEM ONE DAY. THIS WAS THE GOAL THAT WE KEPT IN MIND AS WE BATTLED OUR FEARS AND ANXIETIES AND ATTEMPTED TO LEARN THIS NEW UNWRITTEN LANGUAGE.

with myths and animistic stories, passed down from their ancestors, of crocodiles and birds that married and gave birth to humans. The people shook their heads in disbelief when we told them that we were going to go all the way back to the very beginning before the very first bead on the timeline and tell them the whole story. We said we knew this story because God himself had written it for us. We told them that we were here because they were part of God’s story. Anticipation was in the air.

2007: THE LORD SAVES

The first day of teaching arrived and we met as a team to pray. We then headed from the open area of our hamlet into the narrow trail that leads through the village down to the meeting place. As we came upon the trail, something amazing happened. There on the trail was a dead snake. It’s not so amazing to see a dead snake, but usually when one is seen in the village, it is hacked into little piece and thrown off the trail. Whoever had killed this snake had left it whole on the trail with only its head smashed. All of us just sat there for a moment and stared as we thought back to the very first story of mankind. The creation, the deceit of Satan, the fall of man, the curses that we still live with every day . . . and the hope, the hope that we came to proclaim, “He shall bruise your head.” Thousands of years later in this little hamlet, we were strengthened as we realized afresh the faithfulness and the holiness of Christ, that he has indeed defeated Satan at the cross . . . and that even though they were still completely unaware

of their need for it, he was about to offer his gracious salvation to this little village called Itutang.

The people sat for four months, rain and shine, every day listening like little children. They heard about an eternal God and his eternal plan. They heard about the gracious Creator who made the place called Eden and how he, the Giver of Life, breathed his Life into Adam. They heard about how God made Eve and the entire universe, all of which was good in God's sight. They heard about God's command not to eat of the tree, as well as the unbelief and disobedience of both the man and his wife. They heard about the curse and they felt the pains of it sharply as they contemplated their own hard lives of gardening and gathering food and their endless struggle with working the land and bearing children in this remote area. But, they also heard the hope of the gospel. They learned that there is a deliverer coming. He is coming.

It was almost as if the villagers were living the story again. They were hanging on every word. When we taught about the Passover story in Exodus, we had a man come and take the red paint left behind from the drama that we had done in that morning's lesson and paint his own door. When we talked about the sin sacrifices that were offered in the Old Testament, my friend Mbarabensem came to me with her huge worry: "We are so sinful. We sin against this Creator God every day. I am so worried because we don't do these sacrifices and we never will be able to. We don't have animals to offer. There are no sheep or goats or anything like that here and if we did have them, we would need so many! What are we going to do?" We told her that there was more to the story and that at the end,

she would understand. "Just be patient and listen all the way to the end," we told her. As the story moved toward the climactic ending, they heard about God's very own Son, the perfect God-man who came to live among us. They heard the story of his life, his victory over disobedience. They fell in love with this Son of God who lived a sinless life while living among the poor and disabled. They heard the story of his death and his victory over sin. Their eyes were opened to the end of blood sacrifices when they saw the drama of the cross. The balloon filled with red dye was pierced under a white cloth and a perfect God-man's blood spilled out once and for all. And, they heard the story of his resurrection, victorious over death. He is alive! He didn't stay in the grave. He completely drank the cup of our Creator's wrath and was granted to sit down at the Father's right hand, having completed the eternal task perfectly. At the climax of our gospel presentation we witnessed God transfer Itutang souls from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. The Itutang church was born!

As with any new birth, when the labor subsides and you hold the beautiful newborn in your arms, the work has just begun. And so it is with the Church. We had a



village full of newborns, but they needed spiritual food. Thankfully, many of the adults were now literate. We printed all the translation portions that we had on hand and kept writing. Bible lessons, library books with Bible stories—anything we could think of we used. At the same time, we were working strongly on the translation process. We reviewed the Creation-to-Christ teaching again from the new viewpoint of being children of God, secure in His arms, and then we moved on to Acts. The translation stayed just ahead of the Bible lessons and each week they were printed for the people. This work has continued even today as we follow a teaching plan that provides a firm foundation and overview of the themes of the New Testament. After learning from the book of Acts, the Itutang church was taught the books of Romans, Ephesians, 1 Corinthians, 1 Timothy, and Titus. The church is now studying the books of 1-2 Thessalonians and Revelation before going back to review the gospel. Next, the church will study the remainder of the New Testament epistles.

TRANSLATING THE SCRIPTURES AND DISCIPLING BELIEVERS

Since the first presentation of the gospel, three new village churches have been planted from our Itutang home church and there are two new outreaches planned for this coming year. We are also planning on crossing the language barrier of the neighboring language group called Tanguat in the next year. Some from the Itutang church will go and live among the Tanguat people. They invited another western missionary family to come and join them and assist them in the area of translation. The Lanier family has now moved into the village and they are in the midst of learning the language and culture of the Tanguat people, working underneath the Itutang church to help reach this new language group. The Itutang church is growing and has been blessed with the good gifts that God promises to every body of believers. The Lord has given us village literacy advisors who plan and oversee the literacy programs in six different village schools. He has given us village

AT THE CLIMAX OF OUR GOSPEL PRESENTATION WE WITNESSED GOD TRANSFER ITUTANG SOULS FROM THE KINGDOM OF DARKNESS TO THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT. THE ITUTANG CHURCH WAS BORN!

translation editors who can spot spelling and grammar mistakes and can touch-type and track changes for us as they edit. He has given us capable Bible teachers who teach in the power of his Spirit. He has given us wise men who are leaders in the community, settling village disagreements according to the biblical standards of his Word. He has even given us women who lead other women. He has also given us men and women who are eager to learn. Some are enrolled in the touch-typing course here at the village Resource Center. Some teach the basics of women's health issues. Some buy and sell goods to the community. Some organize groups to cut gardens for teachers. These ministries have developed over the years as we sit and learn together what it really means to live as a community under the Word of God. The school for this learning has been community disagreements, family struggles, and outside harassment from other villages. All of these challenges are the things that drive us as a body to the Word for answers. He is teaching us, as a community, how live day by day in submission to his Word. He is teaching us to live among each other as he lived among us as God incarnate. And, we still have a long way to go.

We know one thing clearly: doing this work is no sacrifice and there are no regrets. Would one regret giving up a large bag of sand in return for a small bag of gold dust? No, this job is a privilege. We are just as sure as Mordecai was when he spoke to Esther, saying, "If you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance *will* arise for the Jews from another place." There was no doubt in his mind that deliverance *was coming*, it was only a matter of "through whom." Who would be his conduit? Would Esther embrace the task and get to play a part? God is sov-

ereign and he is the eternal God. He offers his children, you and I, the privilege of working hand-in-hand with him in completing his plan which he set in place before the beginning of time. His Son, Christ Jesus, will build his Church. He will have his own children from every tongue, tribe, and nation just as he has written. He will bring us into eternity with great rejoicing. It is our belief that he has planned it and that he will do it—that he is doing it right now. It is that belief which opens the door to a correct view of missions. A sovereign and perfect God has graciously chosen to use imperfect and needy

conduits to pass his saving message on from one generation to the next and bring his children home as worshippers. It is a gracious privilege and it is there waiting to be embraced every day by every saint. He is not served by human hands, as though he needed anything. Embrace the task today and live radically for Christ!

Ngote sugum mpega anin pam ambui pu, anin ande ge ze be apesin.

(By God's Grace and For His Glory)

Bill, Kelley, Madison, and Sabra Housley





Mission Impossible:

My Five-Year Reunion with
Missional and Emerging

By Ted Kluck

CAVEAT/ INTRO/APOLOGY

It occurred to me when I sat down today to write this piece that it's been five years since Kevin DeYoung and I wrote *Why We're Not Emergent: By Two Guys Who Should Be*. Since then I've been, for the most part, blissfully unaware of who's doing what to whom (and writing what about whom) in the Emergent/Emerging/Missional camp. I'm viewing this article as a sort of five-year reunion. Imagine myself, Kevin, Don Carson, Brian McLaren, Doug Pagitt, Phyllis Tickle, Tony Jones and others all standing around awkwardly in a high school gymnasium with mixed drinks and nametags that read, "Hi, My Name Is: Brian McLaren" and saying things like, "So, what have you been up to since our particular brands publicly clashed and sold us both a lot of books a few years ago?" Rob Bell would be on the roster but will have missed the reunion in favor of giving a talk in a major sports arena or launching a television network.

Recently, by the grace of God, I've been made aware of some long-un-dealt-with areas of sin in my own life including (but definitely not limited to) arrogance, pride, cynicism and a kind of pervasive lack of humility. Not the kind of pervasive lack of humility which wears sunglasses in the building, demands the best of everything, and routinely big-times people. Not that kind at all – in fact, I was the antithesis of that – a real people pleaser. Rather, I was the kind of un-humble person who *lived* for the praise of others (and therefore used people *for* praise), and who would quietly seethe when I felt others were receiving credit or success that I thought I deserved more. In America we sometimes call that competitiveness, but in reality it's just sin (jealousy, envy) and it makes a person (read: me) the worst kind of jerk at times. Slowly realizing that has been like having my skin scraped away with sandpaper. It's been painful and humbling. I think previously I had confused failure with humility – that is, when something would go wrong, as it often did, I would confuse that with "becoming more humble." I apologize for that, and I particularly apolo-

gize for how that attitude/cynicism found its way into some of my writing.

So all of that to say this essay probably won't be the zinger-filled ha-ha fest that some of my past emergent/emergent/missional-related writings has been.

NOBODY KNOWS WHAT MISSIONAL IS BUT WE ALL AGREE IT WAS EXCITING

My wife and I were driving through an uncool (pole barns as opposed to exposed brick) semi-industrial section of South Lansing recently when we passed by a print shop that doubled, for a while and maybe still, as an emergent church called "Barefoot." The building looked, by all appearances, to be a pretty nondescript print shop – the kind of place where you get letterhead, flyers, and business forms produced – but it was accompanied by a tired-looking vinyl banner that said something like, "Where church feels different!" This, in addition to sort of making us sad, made us wonder about the state of the union vis the emergent/emergent/missional brand.

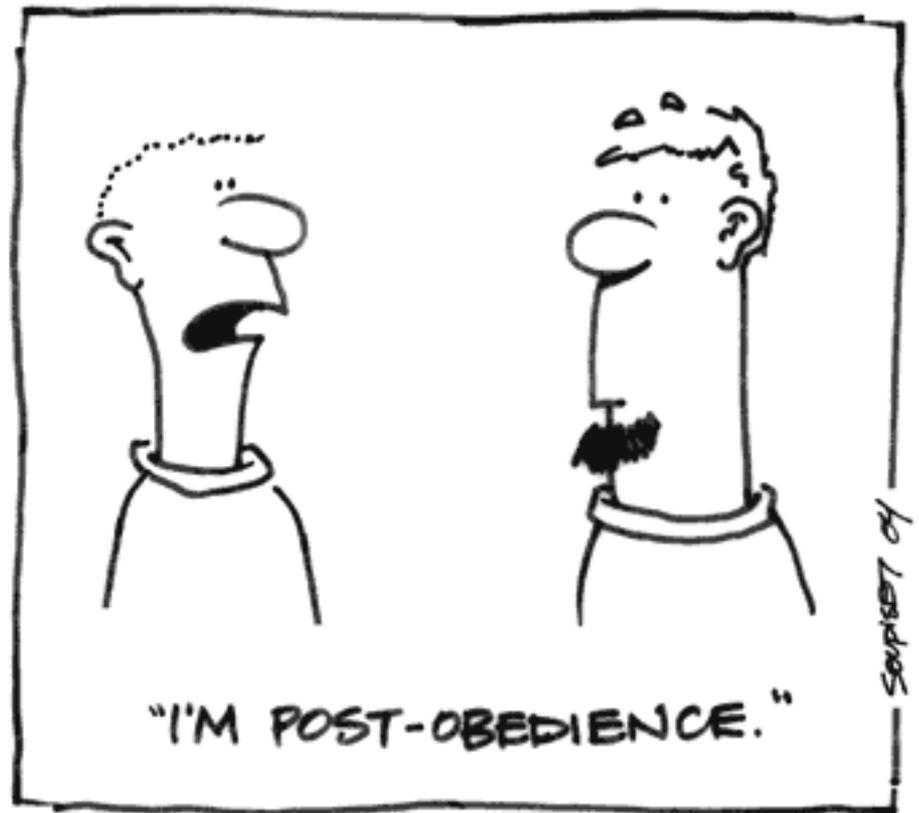
As you read this, you may be the kind of person who sees "missional" and immediately thinks "socialist." Or you may be the kind of person who sees "missional" and immediately thinks of crawling out of a drainage ditch in your (insert Christian College) t-shirt and bandana in Africa where you just solved groundwater problems for an entire village. This means you're probably either a college student or the editor of a Christian College alumni magazine. Or you may be a publishing executive, thinking that putting together the right combination of young author-plus-faux-distressed-cover (remember the faux-duct-tape craze in Christian publishing, circa 2008?)-bearing-the-word-"missional" will equal booming sales. All of that to say that it may not matter a whole lot what the word means, as much as it matters who is benefiting from the word and how they are benefiting.

The squiggly red line appearing under the word “missional” in Microsoft Word is proof that it’s not yet a real word as much as it’s more of a brand name, like Kleenex, that has sort of become a real word in the vernacular of evangelicals. In this way even the super-nebulous emergent/emerging moniker is further along. At least it’s linguistically possible to emerge from something or to be in the process of emerging from something.

And I think what we’ve found, as far as categories go, is that one can be conservative/reformed and still be “missional” if we loosely define missional as being someone who outwardly cares about any combination of the following: the poor, the city, the arts, outreach in general, impoverished peoples worldwide. If that’s our working definition, we should probably *all* be missional in some way, shape or form. For that matter, nobody would really say they *aren’t* missional, while there are many who would say they’re *not* emergent (and even write books by that title). So missional is sort of a catch-all that can encompass people from both groups. If we were to Venn-diagram the whole thing, “missional” would be the overlapping part in the middle with emergent/ing representing a big circle on the left, and reformed/conservative in a big circle on the right.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM MOTLEY CRUE AND NIRVANA

In the early 1990s, alternative/grunge music was emerging from the ridiculous abyss of hairspray, spandex, and androgyny that was 80s hair metal. Bands like Nirvana and Jane’s Addiction emerged with new sounds and for a short time the grunge “brand” was really strong. But it didn’t take long for big labels to sign a bunch of mopey kids in flannels, call it grunge, and try to sell records on the backs of the reputation that real bands like Nirvana had forged. The moment you could walk into JC Penney’s and pick up a “grunge outfit” was roughly the moment that the whole thing became patently uncool. We have this phenomenon to thank for



forgettable acts like Candlebox (“Baby, I didn’t mean to treat you oh so bad, but I did it anyway.”).

For a short time, the same thing happened with emerging/ent/missional. Even though, to some degree, it was just “liberalism reloaded,” it looked and felt fresh. There were new voices (like Rob Bell), new literary genres being explored (like Don Miller and creative nonfiction), and guys like Brian McLaren to speak to the disgruntled older liberal evangelical crowd. There were lots of people who felt like they were changing the world and the church, and people who think they are changing the world are generally exciting/interesting people to be around. Not to mention the fact that a book that says, “You’ve been doing it all wrong” is much easier to sell than a book that says, “You’re going to do some things wrong because you’re a sinner but you’re also doing a lot of things right.”

The other thing that was exciting about all of this (emerging/ent/missional) when it hit a few years ago was the idea that for a brief moment, there were people on both sides of the aisle (conservative/liberal) reading outside of their particular camps. Academics have always done this, but for a year or two regular people (of which



I'm one) did it too. There were Bell and McLaren books being passed around in conservative churches because, quite frankly, nobody really knew any better and people were understandably curious about books with titles like "Blue Like Jazz" and "Velvet Elvis" rather than "A Commentary on Philippians." Trusted Christian publishers put these books out so they must be okay, right? Big para-church organizations latched on to these books because they supposedly appealed to "young people."

One outcome that we can be thankful for in all of this is that I think, in general, it made Christian readers more discerning. No longer did we just thoughtlessly trust the name on the publisher's spine. This isn't exactly an indictment of publishers. It was a heady time in which a nebulous title, a hipstery author and some zany ideas could move a lot of product in an industry that's still relatively young.

But if hair metal and grunge taught us anything, it's that a small percentage of a given audience is loyal to its brand – to wit, there are still guys named Brett driving Grand Am's around, sporting mullets, and blasting Motley Crue – but by and large the general buying public is fickle and tends to go along with shifts in the marketplace. That's why you don't see shelves-full of "revolutionary" books on "how to change church!" like you saw in 2004.

LIBERAL MADE THE CONSERVATIVE STAR

Another outcome we can be thankful for is that to a large degree emergent/ing/missional's meteoric rise precipitated the subsequent meteoric rise of the young reformed movement which we probably have to thank for this magazine (among many other

MY MISSION, AS I SEE IT, IS TO ABIDE IN HIM DAY BY DAY, GOING TO HIM FOR FORGIVENESS OF MY MANY SINS, AND SHARING THE HOPE OF SALVATION WITH OTHERS.

quality publications). The bold, brand-defining move that was “emergent” led to a similar move among young conservatives, and as such many of the authors in both genres have returned “home” so to speak – emergent/ing/missional authors are once again writing for more liberal audiences, while conservative/reformed types are writing to their own growing audience. Gone is the Venn-diagram overlap that made the mid-2000s such an interesting time.

It’s not earth shattering that in the pre-Internet past there existed pastors who were good enough to be writing books and articles but because of a lack of opportunities they weren’t able to do so. Because of sites like The Gospel Coalition, Credo Magazine, and many others, now there exists a greater opportunity for gifted writers to write. So in a weird way, the emergent brand probably *made* the reformed brand what it is.

As a reading audience, we can thank God for the availability of resources at our disposal. But we can also pray for the purity of the message, pray that the gospel is proclaimed, and pray for the hearts of the men who are doing the writing/proclaiming. We live in a fame-saturated and fame-obsessed culture, and those of us who make our living in Christian writing and entertainment are no less susceptible to sins of the heart/ego.

THE THING ABOUT SIN, THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH, AND THE GOSPEL

Remember up in the intro, when I talked about sin? Over the course of the last few weeks, as I’ve wrestled with these sin areas in my life, I haven’t been

able to think much about “mission,” wrapped up as I’ve been in the comforts of Scripture and the truths of the gospel – which I’m seeing, praise God, through new eyes. There is truly nothing on earth that can touch the magnitude of the freedom that comes from redemption and forgiveness in Christ. *My mission, as I see it, is to abide in him day by day, going to him for forgiveness of my many sins, and sharing the hope of salvation with others.*

I’m helped by a church that encourages me in the following areas:

Bold, consistent, expositional preaching of the Word of God – the kind of preaching that often convicts its hearers of sin and leads to repentance.

Encouragement to repent and turn away from any known sins.

An equally-consistent message that my only hope in this life or the next is my trust in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

A commitment to giving thanks and praise to a God that forgives us of our sins.

Don’t get me wrong, our church does more than that – we support missionaries (who it occurs to me may be a little bummed by their occupational word being co-opted by stateside marketers), we do outreach activities like *Christianity Explored*, and we support people in need both inside our congregation and outside. But at its essence, I think our church’s “mission” (if you will) is represented in the above four points. For a more detailed account of all that, you can (and should!) read the excellent new book on the mission of the church by my pastor, Kevin DeYoung, and Greg Gilbert.

If there’s any encouragement in this reunion, it’s that speakers, authors, stars, catchphrases, and movements come and go, but the word of God and the gospel remain – solid and steady, a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

Ted Kluck is the award-winning author of several books on topics ranging from Mike Tyson to the church. Visit him online at www.tedkluck.com

AMBITION OVERTHROWN:

THE CONVERSION, CONSECRATION, AND COMMISSION OF ADONIRAM JUDSON, 1788-1812

By Jason G. Duesing



Resting 165 feet above Plymouth Rock is a forgotten cemetery. By the end of the nineteenth century, a memorial slab placed in Burial Hill commemorated one of Plymouth's notable families. Surrounded by a small white fence and elevated on short pillars, the six-foot stone lists the names of the Judsons. Among the inscriptions one finds:

ADONIRAM JUDSON.D.D.
Missionary of the American Baptist
Missionary Union to the Burman
Empire, who died at Sea
April 12, 1850, Æ. 62 years.

Though by the end of his life he gained the type of national notoriety generally reserved for public officials

and dignitaries, Judson would not have wanted even this obscure and hidden tribute. However, this selflessness did not always characterize Judson. During his formative years, he sought fame and the praise of men. How was this ambition overthrown and redirected?

CONVERSION

The story of Adoniram Judson's formative years is the story of the work of the Spirit of God on a man's life by the sharp instrument of the Word of God. The eldest son of a Congregationalist pastor, Judson was born August 9, 1788, in Malden, Massachusetts. In his early years, he showed remarkable intellectual ability, learning to read by the age of three. The Judson family relocated to Wenham in January, 1793, where they remained until Adoniram was 11. From science experiments to advanced arithmetic to nautical navigation, Judson excelled, and his ambition drove him to make a significant impression on many outside his own family.

At the age of 14, after his family's move to Plymouth, Judson contracted a debilitating illness that effectively suspended his life for an entire year. During that time, he realized that his well conceived plans for personal greatness as an orator, poet, or statesman were in danger of failing. And he began to think that the attainment of all his worldly goals might not satisfy him in the end.

After recovering from the illness, Judson enrolled at what is now Brown University in August 1804. At the time the 16 year old Judson went to Brown, skeptical philosophy was not only readily available, but was seen as intellectually superior and sought by those with "ambitious minds." Judson befriended Jacob Eames. Eames, a year older, embodied the attributes to which Judson aspired, including the rejection of Christianity in favor of deism. The two became close friends and encouraged one another in their pursuit of greatness. The friendship stoked Judson's ego and consequently, his rejection of Christianity. Judson met every challenge his worldly ambition set for him at Brown. Fearful of a health-related setback, he never took a break from his studies, pushing

himself to excel through academic rivalries.

After graduating at age 19, Judson returned home to Plymouth to operate a private academy. However, his newfound philosophy did not fit with the Congregationalist commitments of his family. In August, 1808, Judson closed his academy, and much like the Prodigal Son, left town on an undisciplined tour of the surrounding states. His father provided him with a horse, and after spending time with an uncle in Connecticut, Judson went to New York, traveling down the Hudson River on a steamer. Embracing the anonymity of the journey, he referred to himself as Mr. Johnson, and upon arrival in New York, he sought to become a playwright. Following his New York experience, Judson returned to his uncle's house to retrieve his horse before heading west in search of further adventure.

THE STORY OF ADONIRAM JUDSON'S FORMATIVE YEARS IS THE STORY OF THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT OF GOD ON A MAN'S LIFE BY THE SHARP INSTRUMENT OF THE WORD OF GOD.

The next evening, Judson found lodging at a small inn. The caretaker explained that he had to place Judson in a room next to a young man who was very ill and possibly dying. Sounds of visitors and the groans of the ill man continued unabated and led to a sleepless night. However, the prospect that a man in an adjacent room might die disturbed the prodigal wanderer more than the noise. Was Judson ready to die? His philosophy could not calm his fears or answer his questions. Embarrassed over his weak moment, he considered how Jacob Eames surely would chide him in that hour. Yet, the thoughts of his and the neighboring man's eternal state would not leave him.

When the morning arrived, Judson dismissed his nightmares with the light of dawn and asked the caretaker about the ill man. Judson's future son and biographer

records the encounter:

“He is dead,” came the reply.

“Dead!”

“Yes, he is gone, poor fellow! The doctor said he would probably not survive the night.”

“Do you know who he was?”

“O, yes; it was a young man from [Brown]—a very fine fellow; his name was Eames.”

Judson was completely stunned. After hours had passed, he knew not how, he attempted to pursue his journey. But one single thought occupied his mind, and the words, Dead! lost! lost! were continually ringing in his ears. He knew the religion of the Bible to be true; he felt its truth; and he was in despair.

For the first time, Judson suspended his ambition in the face of a growing conviction from the Spirit and the Word of God. He discarded his plans to travel west and in September, 1808, headed toward Plymouth. Yet, upon returning home to his parents, Judson still could not find spiritual relief. Two professors from the new Andover Theological Seminary, after visiting with Judson’s father, suggested that Judson should enter the seminary to aid in his search for truth.

Since Judson was not a Christian, he entered Andover Theological Seminary as a special student. In the years ahead, Judson stated that he knew at the time of his admittance that he was still “a wretched infidel,” and one of his professors observed that he “was naturally the subject of manifest pride and ambition.” Still only 20 years of age, Judson’s self-reliance and ambition prevented him from turning to Christ. In November, Judson recorded that he began “to entertain hope of having received the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit.” This admission, though subtle and without fanfare, represented the beginning of the destruction of his self-fashioned idols of ambition and autonomy. Judson confessed that all he had obtained in life and much of what he had regarded as truth was without value. The Spirit of God, through

the Word of God, had worked to overcome his ambition.

CONSECRATION

In the years that followed, God harnessed Judson’s ambition for His glory. At the start of his second year at Andover, Judson began to “reflect on the personal duty of devoting his life to the cause of missions.” The idea of consecrating his life to go to the ends of the earth, though perhaps an abrupt concept for his family, was not a novel development in 1809 New England. Jonathan Edwards’ *Diary and Journal of David Brainerd* appeared on the reading list for all students. Edwards’ work told the story of the sacrificial life of the young New England minister, David Brainerd, spent reaching Native Americans with the gospel. As one historian relates, “To get through Andover without reading Brainerd was virtually unthinkable.”

Also in New England, especially among evangelicals, there existed a wide following of William Carey. Motivated by the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, Carey, with the publication of his *Enquiry* in 1792, led British Baptists to support an effort to take the gospel to “those who have no Bibles, no preachers, nor many other common advantages which are taken for granted at home.” By the early nineteenth-century, many in America sought to support Carey’s work.

Judson’s reading of Brainerd and awareness of Carey prepared him to respond to a sermon he read in September 1809 on Matthew 2:2, “For we have seen His Star in the East, and are come to worship Him.” Claudius Buchanan, an Anglican priest and chaplain in the East India Company, took the account of Jesus’ birth and emphasized the uniqueness of the Gentile visitors, the wise men following a star, as “representatives of the whole heathen world.” Judson said that the reading of Buchanan’s sermon had two effects on him. First, in February, 1810, while walking alone, he arrived at a moment of decision: “The command of Christ, ‘Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature,’ was presented to my mind with such clearness and power, that I came to a full

decision, and though great difficulties appeared in my way, resolved to obey the command at all events.” Thus, at age 21, the Word of God, brought to his mind by the Spirit, solidified his future course.

Second, Buchanan’s sermon focused Judson’s gaze on the East. Judson began to read all that he could regarding countries in the East. He soon discovered Michael Symes’s, *An Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava*, and within its pages found his future home. Symes, a British army officer, was sent to Burma in 1795, and in the two-volume work detailed his experiences in that land. As Courtney Anderson concludes, a civilized society in the East that was completely pagan and without the Word of God held forth a great opportunity in the mind of Judson.

With newfound clarity regarding his life and ministry, Judson searched for likeminded compatriots among the students and professors at Andover. He soon found friends among the members of a student missionary society. The Brethren had first formed at Williams College after committing to the missionary task while meeting in a field under a haystack during a storm. Led by Samuel Mills, these “Haystack Prayer Meeting” Brethren, were joined by Judson and through his influence came to share his sanctified ambition for the East. Without an organization to send them, the Brethren agreed to contact England and the London Missionary Society. While they waited for a response, they also made their desires known to the representative body for Congregationalist churches, the General Association.



The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions commissioned the Board’s first missionaries and set sail for re-Calcutta, India, February, 1812.

sponse to the request from Judson and the Brethren, the General Association voted to form an American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) “for the purpose of devising ways and means, and adopting and prosecuting measures, for promoting the spread of the Gospel in heathen lands.” They counseled Judson and the others to pursue prayer and continued studies until such openings presented themselves. They responded that they considered themselves “devoted to this work for life, whenever God, in His providence, shall open the way.”

COMMISSION

One chronicler of Judson’s life compared Judson’s willingness to go, regardless of cost or circumstances, to Abraham who “obeyed when he

WITH HIS ZEAL OVERHAULED AND HARNESSSED, JUDSON PURSUED A LIFE CONSECRATED TO GOD THAT CULMINATED IN HIS PIONEERING ROLE AT THE START OF THE AMERICAN MISSIONARY MOVEMENT AND SAW THE GOSPEL GO FORTH TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.

was called out to go to a place.... And he went out, not knowing where he was going” (Heb 11:8). Judson’s ambition, now sanctified, led him to obey the Spirit of God and the Word of God.

The ABCFM held its first meeting on September 5, 1810, and adopted rules for proceeding. A Prudential Committee was appointed to obtain “the best information in their power respecting the state of unevangelized nations on the western and eastern continents.” The board grew concerned that the churches in America might not be up to supporting missionaries financially, so it made an official inquiry to the London Missionary Society. The Prudential Committee selected Judson as its representative and sent him to London in January, 1811.

However, Judson did not arrive in England until May. On the way, his ship was captured by the French. First he was arrested and detained in Spain for some time, then transferred to France, and eventually to England. Judson stayed in London for six weeks visiting London Missionary Society personnel. The LMS gave him its support and said it would appoint Judson and the four others. He returned to America in August 1811 in time for the second annual meeting of the ABCFM in September.

At the annual meeting, the ABCFM received Judson’s report but determined to support the missionaries itself rather than depend on England. On September 19, 1811, the board voted to appoint Judson, Samuel Nott, Samuel Newell, and Gordon Hall as missionaries “to labor under the direction of this Board in Asia, either in the Burman

Empire, or in Surat, or in the Prince of Wales Island or elsewhere, as in the view of the Prudential Committee, Providence shall open the most favorable door.”

According to Stacy Warburton, “The days of 1812 were great days—full of achievement, full of daring, full of imagination, full of high purpose. The time was ripe for a challenging enterprise.” The advent of the year in which Judson turned 24 brought a flurry of events. On February 3, he bid farewell to his parents in Plymouth. On February 5, he and Ann Hasseltine, a woman of comparable zeal for the missionary task, were wed. On February 6, he was ordained in Salem, along with Nott, Newell, Hall, and Luther Rice. Their professor from Andover preached their ordination sermon from Psalm 67, a prayer to God that “Thy way may be known upon the earth, thy saving health among all nations.” On February 19, 1812, two hundred years ago, Adoniram and Ann Judson departed for the East.

CONCLUSION

While a granite slab still rests on top of Burial Hill in Plymouth, Massachusetts as a memorial to the life and sacrifice of Adoniram Judson, the real testimony of Judson’s life is the fruit of his transformed heart for the proclamation and advancement of the Christian gospel. The prideful ambition that first opposed God’s work met His Spirit and Word and was overthrown in Judson’s conversion. With his zeal overhauled and harnessed, Judson pursued a life consecrated to God that culminated in his pioneering role at the start of the American missionary movement and saw the gospel go forth to the ends of the earth.

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Adoniram Judson

Pioneer Missionary to Burma

By Nathan Finn

Adoniram and Ann Judson embarked from Salem, Massachusetts for India on February 19, 1812. The young couple had been married only two weeks earlier, the day before Adoniram's ordination to the gospel ministry. The previous fall, Adoniram had been appointed by the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM). After a brief delay, the day had finally arrived for the Judsons and their friends Samuel and Harriett Newell to board the *Caravan* and depart for Calcutta. Their fellow missionaries Luther Rice, Gordon Hall, and Samuel and Roxanna Nott set sail from Philadelphia a few days later on board the *Harmony*. These two ships carried the first formally commissioned foreign missionaries in American history.

The Judsons and their colleagues were Congregationalists, but Adoniram knew that upon arriving in India they would meet William Carey, the famed Baptist missionary. Carey, who has sometimes been called the father of the modern missions movement, had been in India for almost two decades. During their voyage, the Judsons made a Scripture study of the topic, eventually coming to Baptist convictions. Upon their arrival in Calcutta, they received believer's baptism by immersion from one of Carey's colleagues and resigned their appointment with the ABCFM; they were now without financial sponsorship. Luther Rice, who had also become a Baptist during this period, returned to America on behalf of the freshly minted Baptist missionaries. Rice proved instrumental in the formation of the so-called Triennial Convention, which subsequently adopted the Judson mission.

TAKING THE GOSPEL TO BURMA

Shortly after arriving in Calcutta, Adoniram decided to relocate his family to Burma, the modern day nation of Myanmar. The Judsons immediately began learning the Burmese language and culture, believing both were necessary for effective gospel proclamation. Though it was a difficult transition, Adoniram became a gifted linguist while Ann excelled at conversational Burmese. Bible translation became a key plank in the Judson mission, with work being done in both Burmese and Pali; the latter was an older language preferred by cultural elites. By the end of his life, Adoniram had translated the Bible into Burmese, edited several dictionaries and lexical tools for Burmese Christians, and authored or translated numerous tracts on a variety of theological and devotional topics. Arguably, Adoniram's pioneering translation work remains his most lasting legacy.

The Judsons began their mission in Rangoon, a major port city. Adoniram adopted a contextual approach to evangelism by dressing and acting like the Buddhist teachers in Rangoon. Following the latter's habit, Adoni-

ram erected a *zayat*—a small, open air awning built upon four posts. Like the Buddhist teachers, he would sit on the front porch of the *zayat* and call out, “Ho! Everyone that thirsteth for knowledge!” He would then talk about the Christian faith with any interested seekers. For her part, Ann concentrated on private conversations with Burmese women, a weekly prayer meeting with interested women, and eventually operating a school for children. This became the paradigm for many missionary wives during the nineteenth century.

Everyone knew why the Judsons were in Burma, so it was important for Adoniram to gain the approval of the ruling authorities. The viceroy in Rangoon was known to be a harsh man who severely punished thieves and troublemakers. Early efforts to win his favor were unsuccessful. But once the Judsons discovered that the viceroy's wife was fascinated by Ann, the latter spent a great deal of time cultivating a relationship between the two women. Ann often presented her new friend with gifts, which she hoped would help gain her approval. The viceroy's wife became an advocate of the Judsons, which likely played a role in their ability to minister early on without much interference from the viceroy himself.

Evangelistic fruit was slow in coming, but after six years in Burma, Adoniram finally baptized his first convert. Maung Nau was a common laborer who visited Adoniram's *zayat*. The missionary sensed immediately that his new friend was a sincere spiritual seeker. Maung subsequently moved in with the Judsons, in part so he could assist them with household tasks, but more importantly so Adoniram could continue to instruct him about Christianity. In 1819, Maung was baptized as a follower of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, the baptism caused the Buddhist teachers to persuade the viceroy to actively hinder Adoniram's outreach efforts. This left Adoniram with no choice but to visit the capitol city of Ava and plead with the emperor to allow the missionaries freedom to preach the gospel. The emperor denied their request.

Fortunes changed in 1822 when a new missionary named Jonathan Price joined the Judsons; Price was

a physician with expertise in cataract surgery. The emperor was impressed with this medical skill, so he commanded Price to relocate to Ava. Adoniram accompanied Price, leading to a second audience with the emperor. This time, Adoniram received a somewhat better reception. While the emperor forbade Burmese conversions to Christianity, he granted Adoniram permission to share his religious beliefs with other foreigners. He also decided to leave any persecution of Burmese believers in the hands of local officials. Though this by no means constituted imperial endorsement, Adoniram still believed it was beneficial to the mission. The Judsons relocated to Ava, entrusting missionary colleagues with shepherding the small church of eighteen baptized believers in Rangoon.

MANY TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS

The Judsons were frequently acquainted with sickness, suffering, and death. Their first child was stillborn just days before the missionaries arrived in Rangoon. Their son Roger Williams Judson was born in 1815, but died eighteen months later. In 1821, Ann became gravely ill, resulting in her returning to America to convalesce. The Judsons were separated for two and a half years, during which time Ann became a celebrity in America and worked tirelessly to promote the Judson mission everywhere she traveled. She wrote a bestselling account of

the Judson mission and became a role model to evangelical women all over the English-speaking world. She returned to Burma in 1823, just prior to the beginning of the First Anglo-Burmese War.

In July 1824, the emperor had virtually all Western men imprisoned as presumed spies for the British government. Adoniram spent the next nineteen months



imprisoned. At first, he was taken to a Burmese “death prison” and crammed into a dark room with around one hundred other prisoners. Each of them were placed in fetters. At night, a bamboo pole was used to raise up the prisoners by their chains so that only their heads and shoulders were in a resting position. The camp’s guards were called “Spotted Faces”—convicted murderers who were spared the death sentence by agreeing to serve as jailers. Under the brutal treatment of the Spotted Faces, many of the prisoners died. Adoniram came close to death on several occasions, sometimes by fever and other

times via possible execution. Only the devotion of Ann prevented Adoniram from dying during his months of confinement.

Ann became a constant advocate for Adoniram and the other Western prisoners. She regularly petitioned the authorities to release her husband. When those requests were denied, she requested his accommodations be improved; her success in these requests varied. Ann provided food for Adoniram, often after bribing gov-

HE SPENT FORTY DAYS AT THE HERMITAGE, EATING LITTLE BESIDES MINIMAL RICE RATIONS. HE DUG HIS OWN GRAVE AND SPENT MANY HOURS CONTEMPLATING DEATH.

ernment and prison officials. She also managed to give Adoniram his personal pillow, into which was sewn his translation of the Burmese Bible. During this time, Ann was also nursing an infant, Maria, and was caring for two orphaned Burmese girls.

In the spring of 1825, all Western prisoners were forced to march to a new prison at Oung-pen-la. The march was so grueling that one of the prisoners died of exhaustion. Adoniram was very sick at the time and would have perhaps also died during the march if one of the other prisoner's servants had not had compassion on him, wrapped the missionary's wounded feet, and assisted him in walking. Fortunately, the prisoners were allowed to ride in the back of a cart for the final few miles of the trek.

The new prison camp was more spacious than the death prison. Furthermore, the prisoners were granted a bit more freedom to walk around the camp during daylight hours. Ann relocated to Oung-pen-la and rented a room from one of the jailers. By this time, her own health had deteriorated to such a degree that she could no longer nurse Maria. She was able to bribe the jailers into allowing Adoniram to be released from the prison each day to take Maria to the village and beg nursing mothers to share some of their milk with the infant.

In November 1825, Adoniram was suddenly released from prison and summoned to Ava. The emperor needed the missionary to act as a translator in his negotiations with the advancing British. By early February 1826, the British army was closing in on Ava. The Burmese emperor entered into treaty talks with the British. Adoniram worked hard to fairly represent the Burmese government. The war officially ended on February 24. All of the prisoners of war were released, including the missionaries. The Judsons resumed their mission work,

but tragedy soon struck. Ann became ill and died on October 24, 1826; unfortunately, Adoniram was away at the time. Six months later, two-year-old Maria Judson also died.

Adoniram's grief led him to eventually retreat into seclusion. After Ann's death, he relocated to Moulmein, a city where George and Sarah Boardman were working as missionaries to the Karen people. After a season of growing increasingly reclusive, Adoniram built a hut in the jungle bordering Moulmein. He named his hut the "Hermitage" and moved into it on October 24, 1828—the second anniversary of Ann's death. He spent forty days at the Hermitage, eating little besides minimal rice rations. He dug his own grave and spent many hours contemplated death. The jungle was tiger-infested, and many feared Adoniram would be eaten. When he returned safely from his self-exile, everyone was surprised he had survived. Over the course of 1830, he increasingly emerged from his spiritual darkness with new resolve to reach the Burmese for Christ.

MOVING FORWARD

Adoniram did not remain a permanent widower. In February 1834, Sarah Hall Boardman wrote a letter to Adoniram commending him for his Burmese translation of the Bible. Three years earlier, Sarah's husband George had died. The Boardmans had come to Burma in 1827 and soon began working among the Karen people, an ethnic minority in South Burma. The missionaries decided to divide their work among the Burmese and Karens, with the Boardmans focusing their ministry among the latter. In light of their friendship and the scarcity of potential spouses, it is not surprising Adoniram and Sarah decided to get married on April 10, 1834. In their eleven years of marriage, they were blessed with a close relationship and significant ministry success. Sarah gave birth to eight children, five of whom lived beyond childhood.

After the birth of a son named Henry Hall Judson in 1842, Sarah's health began to steadily decline. By late

1844, she was seriously ill. After a short sea voyage failed to improve her health, Adoniram made a decision he had previously resolved to never make—he asked the Triennial Convention for a furlough. Plans were laid for Adoniram, Sarah, and their three oldest children to return to America. The intention was for Sarah to recover her health and for the children to be left in America under the care of relatives. On April 26, 1845, the Judsons set sail for their homeland. Though Sarah’s health initially improved, within a few weeks she began to decline again. Sarah died on September 1, 1845, as the ship was making its way around the Cape of Good Hope off the coast of South Africa.

After a six-week voyage, Adoniram and his children landed in Boston Harbor on October 15, 1845. It was his intention to stay in America just long enough to visit his sister Abigail, his only surviving sibling, and to help his children get settled. What he did not account for was his fame. Almost as soon as he landed, Adoniram was virtually forced to begin a goodwill tour of churches, colleges, and civic groups in the Northeast. Despite persistent throat problems that caused him to frequently speak in a whisper, he drew large crowds wherever he went. Because of his place in American missions history, Baptists and even the Congregationalists were eager to claim Adoniram as their own.

Though it was not his plan, Adoniram also found another wife in America. Emily Chubbock was a famous novelist who wrote under the pen name Fanny Forrester. Adoniram was impressed with her writing, and once he discovered Emily was a Baptist, he asked to meet her. Adoniram asked Emily to write a biography of his late wife Sarah, which Emily readily agreed to do. The two struck up a friendship as Adoniram tried to provide Emily with the information she needed to write the biography. Very quickly, Adoniram was smitten. Less than a month after their first meeting, Adoniram proposed to Emily. After wrestling with whether or not she could be a missionary (a vocation she had contemplated as a young girl), Emily accepted Adoniram’s proposal; they were married in June 1846 and had returned to Burma by November of that year.

FINAL YEARS AND LEGACY

Adoniram’s twilight years were spent trying to further gospel advance in Burma. Unfortunately, most of his work was carried on in secret due to government pressure. Family life was much happier. Emily doted on her new stepchildren and gave birth to Adoniram’s final surviving child in December 1847. In the fall of 1849, Adoniram became very sick and it was decided that a sea voyage was his best hope for recovery. Unfortunately, the ocean air had little effect and the famed missionary died on April 12, 1850; he was buried at sea. Four months later, Emily learned of her husband’s death. She remained in Burma for six more months before returning to New England. Emily joined her husband in the next life three and a half years later, in June 1854.

Adoniram Judson and his remarkable wives hold a pre-eminent place in the history of American missions. His resignation from the ABCFM due to baptismal differences highlights the importance of doctrinal and personal integrity. His endurance through trial after trial reminds us of the way God often uses suffering to advance the gospel. His raw grief over the loss of his beloved Ann serves as an important reminder that missionaries are real people with real needs, struggles, and aspirations. Adoniram’s commitment to intentional evangelism continues to inspire, as does his belief in the importance of contextualization. His translation work, arguably his most important legacy, continues to reap gospel fruit in Myanmar and serve as an example for countless missionaries the world over. May God raise up a new generation of Judsons to make disciples of all peoples—here, there, and everywhere.

[This article is adapted from the chapter “‘Until All Burma Worships the Eternal God’: Adoniram Judson the Missionary, 1812–1850,” in *Adoniram Judson: A Bicentennial Appreciation of the Pioneer American Missionary*, edited by Jason G. Duesing and forthcoming from B&H Academic.]

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THE GREAT COMMISSION STORY

As Christians we tend to think of “missions” as one of the things we do, or at least one of the things some Christians—specifically those who take the gospel overseas—are called to do. Of course missions is an activity, it is something we “do,” but if we only think of it as one of many Christian activities then we haven’t understood fully what the Bible has to say about it. We might also think of missions as a command we have from Jesus, and it certainly is that. But like thinking of missions as simply one Christian activity, thinking of it only as a command doesn’t do justice to the witness of Scripture. The Bible has a much larger view of missions and what it means for us.

It may sound trendy to put it this way, but missions is part of the great story of the Bible. The reason I say this is because the Bible is God’s revelation of himself and his “mission.” It is the story of the God who created the world, and created human beings who rebelled against him attempting to become the one thing they could never be, that is, creators rather than creatures. It is the story of God carrying out his eternal plan to redeem fallen men and women through his son Jesus Christ. It is the story of how, in Christ, God creates a people who will worship him and make his good news of life in Christ known to a world in rebellion. Finally, it is the story of how God will establish his eternal Kingdom made up of every nation, tongue, and tribe in a new heaven and new earth, with Christ the King reigning forever.

I’m not saying that missions is the only theme in the Bible or that it’s the whole story, but it does run through

By Brian Vickers

the length and breadth of the entire Bible. If we want to understand missions the key is to get a sense of how it fits in the whole Bible. The important thing to grasp is that we are not meant to view the Bible story of missions from a distance—we are meant to see God’s story of missions as *our* story, a story in which God calls us

to take part, to live-out, and to share with others so that they can take part in that great story.

THE GREAT COMMISSION PROMISE

If you ask Christians where we get our idea of missions most would say, I hope, “from the Bible.” But how would we answer if asked a follow up question: “Where in the Bible?” My guess is that most of us would quote or mention one text above all others—what we usually call “The Great Commission” in Matthew 28:18-20:

Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore

go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

The Great Commission is usually thought to be *the* missions text in the Bible, but in truth this text is really the tip of the iceberg when it comes to missions in the Bible. The Great Commission is Jesus’ command and invitation to take part in an ancient promise about the blessing of the nations.

The beginning of the Great Commission came at a bleak time in the history of world. From the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden the human race went from bad to worse. Even after God saved Noah and his family from judgment in the flood it is immediately clear that people are not going to improve on their own. Then in Genesis 11 we find a genealogy through which God will work to bring about the accomplishment of his gracious plan to redeem his people. This genealogy, however, doesn’t hold out much hope:

This is the account of Terah. Terah became the father of Abram, Nahor and Haran. And Haran became the father of Lot. While his father Terah was still alive, Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans, in the land of his birth. Abram and Nahor both married. The name of Abram’s wife was Sarai....Now Sarai was barren; she had no children (Gen 11:27-30).

Who’s Abram? What’s special about him? Nothing in particular, except that he is a descendent of Noah’s son Shem who is singled out for blessing in Genesis (9:26-27). What sets Abram apart is that God chooses him. But at this point in the Bible there is no future for Abram until God comes on the scene:

The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you

I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you (Gen 12:1-3).

This is one of the pivotal moments in Scripture and it’s even more astonishing if we begin reading before chapter 12. After all, what do you need to become a great nation? You need children. How can Abraham become a great nation if his wife can’t have children? With a background of a hopeless future, the stage is set for God to act.

It takes many years for Abram (who will be renamed Abraham, which means “exalted father” [Gen 17:5]) to receive the fulfillment of the promise, but over the years God repeats his promise: Abram’s descendents will be greater than stars in the sky (Gen 15:5). Finally, Isaac is born to Abraham and Sarah (Gen 21) and the great promise of God starts to unfold.

If we fast-forward in Scripture we find a nation trapped in slavery, and that nation springs from Abraham. When God meets Moses in the burning bush, he comes naming himself as the “God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” Then he says he’s heard their suffering and he’s going to act on their behalf – remember this is God keeping his promise to Abraham. And so in the narrative of Scripture we have moved from the single man Abraham, to the people of Israel.

This nation began with a man in the desert, then a son, then his grand-son Jacob and his 12 sons, until they are a nation enslaved in Egypt. And what does God do? He takes them out of Egypt and establishes them in their own land. Before they get to that land, they have grown into quite a nation. The book of Numbers begins with a section we might be tempted to skip or skim over quickly. In chapters 1 and 2 the tribes of Israel are spelled out in detail as they are given their places in order around the tabernacle. One of the most significant things here is the testimony to God keeping his word: the nation that began with 1 man and his barren wife now number more than 600,000! This is already a great nation.

A NATION OF PROMISE AND A LIGHT TO THE NATIONS

When Israel finally gets to the promised land – their journey being one filled with rebellion and tragedy – they are to be a light, a signpost if you will, that points the surrounding nations to their God. They are the nation among the nations. But did Israel have a “mission” in the way we use the word? In a word, no. They didn’t have a mission in the sense in which we use the word. There is no Old Testament version of the “Great Commission.” Missions in the Bible await a specific message. In the meantime, Israel is to live in the land, faithfully worship God and keep his Law, and stand as a testimony to God in the midst of the surrounding nations, but they don’t have a mandate to go out and make disciples:

See, I have taught you decrees and laws as the LORD my God commanded me, so that you may follow them in the land you are entering to take possession of it. Observe them carefully, for this will show your wisdom and understanding to the nations (Deut. 4:5-6).

So, there is a sense in which we could say Israel had a “mission” in a general way, but not in the way we speak of “missions.” Israel’s mission was more to “be” but not “go.” The only time Israel went to the nations was in punishment for being faithless and disobedient to God and for giving God a bad name among the nations (Ezek. 36:19-21).

Nevertheless there are hints here and there about the

promise to the nations through Israel. There is Tamar the Canaanite involved in the incident with her father-in-law Judah, the third son of Jacob, in Genesis 38. Tamar’s descendent (Salmon) married Rahab the prostitute in Jericho who helped Israel. She was the mother of Boaz who was the husband of Ruth the Moabite. She was the mother of Obed, the father of Jesse, who was the father of David, who is the ancestor of Jesus. God’s promise to bless the nations is unfolding through the blood-line of the baby who will be born to Mary and Joseph centuries later.

Particular individuals from the nations receive special attention at times as well: Naaman the Syrian, whom



Rembrandt. Simeon with the Christ Child in the Temple. c. 1666-69.

Elisha instructed to cleanse himself in the river to be healed of his leprosy (2 Kings 5). The Shunammite woman in 2 Kings 4 whom Elisha tells that she will have a son in spite of her husband’s advanced age. The tragic figure of Uriah the Hittite, wife of Bathsheba, whom David sent to the front lines to be killed in battle (Bathsheba, by the way, is in the same genealogy that contains Tamar and Ruth). There are others we could name, but there’s a good reason why we can name them – because they stand out as exceptions in the narrative.

Besides David’s line and the handful of prominent Gentiles in the Old Testament there are also texts that remember and

look forward to God’s promise to the nations. Here are just four examples:

All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, O Lord; they will bring glory to your name (Ps 86:9).

In that day you will say: “Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted (Isa 12:4).

I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who survive to the nations—to Tarshish, to the Libyans and Lydians (famous as archers), to Tubal and Greece, and to the distant islands that have not heard of my fame or seen my glory. They will proclaim my glory among the nations (Isa 66:19).

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea (Hab 2:14).

One of the things these texts have in common is that they look forward to a time when God’s promise to the nations will be fulfilled, but the fulfillment awaits the message of good news—it awaits the gospel.

COMMISSIONED TO ANNOUNCE FULFILLMENT

Space does not allow us to consider all the ways the Gospel writers begin their narratives with words of fulfillment of God’s promise in Jesus Christ, but one text in Luke will help tie the Old Testament expectation to the goal in the New Testament. Early in Luke’s Gospel Mary and Joseph bring their baby to the temple in observance to the Law. There in the temple is an old man who spent his life watching and waiting for God to act and fulfill his promise. The nation of Israel is back from exile but they’ve suffered centuries of occupation and war since returning from Babylon and now Rome rules the land. The old man, named Simeon, sets his eyes on the baby, takes him in his hands, and says the most remarkable thing (try to imagine being the parents):

For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him (Luke 2:29-32).

This is what the Old Testament was straining toward. The time of blessing to Israel and the fulfillment of the promise to bless the nations is revealed in the Christ-child held in Simeon’s hands. With the incarnation of Christ, and his death, burial, and resurrection there is now Good News to proclaim among the nations. Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham, as Paul says in Galatians 3:16, “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed.’ He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is, Christ.” All of this—Old Testament background and New Testament fulfillment—helps us to see the Great Commission as more than a proof-text to motivate us for missions. It is Jesus’ directive to go out and proclaim that God has kept his promise.

What this means is that as those who have received God’s grace through faith in the Gospel, the story of the Great Commission is our story—God has made us part of that story and calls us to take part in it. Doing missions isn’t just one of the things we “do” as Christians but is part and parcel of what we are if we claim to believe in the One in whom all the promises are fulfilled. At the same time, missions isn’t something done only in particular areas, by particular people who travel over-seas to remote places that lack Gospel witness. Where are the nations? We live in them. And what’s more, for those of us living in America the “nations” (people/language groups) have quite literally come to us. This doesn’t mean that we can’t speak or think of career-missions, or that over-seas missions is a thing of the past—God forbid, as Paul might say—but we must also start to see our lost family members, neighbors, and others with whom God connects us as being part of the nations that need to hear the Gospel. The “nations” are right outside, sometimes inside, our doors. If you believe in Jesus, that means God kept his promise to Abraham and included you in it. You were among the number God was talking about when he told Abraham to try and count the stars. It means that the big story of God’s mission in the Bible is your story, and that’s what Jesus calls you and me to go share with people, to go make disciples of all nations.

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The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited

By Scot McKnight.
Zondervan, 2011. 184 pp.

Little could be more important to Christianity than knowing what the gospel is. Thus one would expect a book claiming to redefine what is ordinarily meant by “the gospel” to be provocative and potentially revolutionary for the identity of the church. Scot McKnight clearly wishes nothing less from his efforts in this new volume.

To grasp the burden of McKnight’s argument it is important to understand his intended audience and the problem he believes it has. The audience is the contemporary evangelicalism in which he and most of his students were raised. Its problem is that it understands the “gospel” primarily in terms of sin, Jesus’ death, making a decision for Jesus, and going to heaven. In so doing, evangelicals have “hijacked” the word “gospel” to mean personal salvation, which was not what Jesus or the apostles meant by it. McKnight often emphasizes that he agrees with what evangelicals say about personal salvation, as far as it goes, but that the original understanding of the gospel must be recovered. Such a recovery would help Christians become genuine disciples of Jesus and not simply those who have made a decision for him.

McKnight distinguishes four big categories: the Story of Israel, the Story of Jesus, the Plan of Salvation, and the Method of Persuasion. The “gospel,” he says, pertains only to the second. Specifically, the gospel is the Story of Jesus as the completion of the Story of Israel. His argument in support begins with 1 Corinthians 15, where Paul identifies what the “gospel” is and points particularly to events in Jesus’ life, including his ascension, his second coming, and the consummation. In following chapters he argues that the same gospel is highlighted in

the great creeds of the church, in the four Gospels (the Gospels, he says, are the gospel), in Jesus’ preaching (because Jesus preached himself as the completion of Israel’s story), and in the preaching of Peter and Paul in Acts.

How and when did this understanding of the gospel get lost? McKnight sees the Reformation as the great turning point. He insists that the Reformation was a good thing, and that the shift from a “gospel culture” to a “salvation culture” did not happen during the Reformation itself. But in light of its emphasis upon the need for personal salvation, this shift transpired in its wake. To recover a gospel culture today, he says, our gospel preaching must be framed by Israel’s story, center on the lordship of Jesus, and summon people to respond. This preaching will save and redeem (as it proclaims forgiveness, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and justification).

To the extent that the gospel and its proclamation are reduced to the crucifixion, making a decision for Christ, and going to heaven (and I have no doubt they often are), McKnight’s work offers a very helpful corrective in many respects. His call for attention to the whole story of Scripture—from creation to Abraham, Israel, David, Jesus, and the consummation—is most welcome. His observation that many evangelicals do not know the Old Testament because it is not necessary for their gospel is undoubtedly true—and tragic. McKnight is also on good ground in emphasizing that Jesus’ work is much more than the crucifixion taken as a solitary event—it is about the completion of the Old Testament story and includes his resurrection, ascension, and second coming no less than his crucifixion. The biblical evidence for this is indeed overwhelming.

Yet McKnight’s work also raises some serious concerns. For one thing, McKnight frequently reassures readers that, though he believes the “plan of salvation” is not “the gospel,” he agrees with the truth of the plan of salvation that most people identify with the gospel. But does he? It is at least not clear that he holds the same plan of salvation that the Reformation proclaimed. When describing the plan of salvation McKnight affirms the forgiveness of sins but never affirms the imputation of the active

obedience of Christ. He speaks of justification and the necessity of faith, but never speaks of justification by faith alone. He speaks (accurately) of the multiplicity of images Scripture uses to explain the meaning of Christ's death, but jumps from this fact to the claim that we should not privilege one theory of the atonement over another (51-52)—as if different atonement theories are simply ways of emphasizing equally valid biblical images (when in fact many historic atonement theories contradict one another). He also defines justification as leading “to a declaration by God that we are in the right, that we are in the people of God” (40).

In the end neither the reductionistic gospel against which McKnight polemicizes nor McKnight's alternative is satisfying. For readers who recognize the indispensability of both the Reformation (biblical) plan of salvation and the full story of Scripture from creation to consummation (centered on Christ's work in its entirety), I cannot help but recommend confessional Reformed Christianity, which McKnight never considers. Understanding salvation in covenantal context would also clarify some ambiguous and problematic statements by McKnight claiming that God gave Christians the assignment he originally gave to Adam and Eve (141, 152). Jesus is the Last Adam, and the priestly rule we will share with him in the new creation (which is the point of Revelation 5:9-10 and 20:6, which McKnight quotes) should not be confused with taking up again Adam's task in the present world. I would also note that confessional Reformed Christianity, in emphasizing careful catechetical training, morning and evening worship on the Lord's Day, and family worship, has embraced the idea of discipleship, another concern McKnight highlights.

McKnight is right to want it all: both the biblical plan of salvation and the full biblical story from creation to consummation, centered in Jesus Christ. He has much to say about the latter that is helpful and inspiring, but I fear he has not done sufficient justice to former.

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Republocrat: Confessions of a Liberal Conservative.

By Carl R. Trueman.

P&R Publishing, 2010. 128pp.

When Carl Trueman is at a baseball game, does he mouth “God Save the Queen” as the crowd bellows out the American national anthem? Whatever the answer may be to such a querulous question, we must be thankful that Trueman has some concern for the state of the States, because it has produced a thoughtful pamphlet that should help American Christians rightly appropriate their political commitment. Trueman writes as one who would agree with these words by George Orwell: “When you come back to England from any foreign country, you have immediately the sensation of breathing a different air.” Surely for him the U.S. is such a foreign country, no matter how long he has lived there to teach church history at Westminster Theological Seminary (PA), and the air he now breathes must be to him a little arid. As a foreigner, though, he has not taken the stance of a Graham Greene towards his current place of residence, though he likely shares some sympathies. Rather, as Trueman is wont to encourage others, he takes a stance of critical appreciation to things American, and writes towards helping American evangelicals in their quest for ecclesially-based faithfulness to God. Hence the writing of *Republocrat*; the author wants to make sure that his American brethren maintain a proper theological triage when it comes to politics, keeping their sensibilities—right or left—to levels of tertiary importance.

Republocrat is written in a vein similar to other works of Anglo-American politics. Trueman cites Orwell, a Brit through and through, as a guide. But along with the dystopic mastermind, he also admits to having Thomas Paine, Arthur Koestler, Christopher Hitchens, and Edward Said as mentors to his political thought process (the latter was Palestinian-American, but educated along British lines). Indeed, his contribution sits well in this

list of radical authors, who, while maintaining loyalty to a political perspective, are often hard to define in categories of either right or left. This is what makes them so useful, and why Trueman's book serves as a unique contribution to intramural discussions of politics in the church. Like these thinkers before him, all of them now dead, readers will not agree with Trueman at every point; a thought that delights him to no end (xix). They will, however, be pressed to think through his arguments, and will either experience a change or a sharpening of perspective. With provocative language, readers are introduced to the history of conservative and liberal politics, and given reasons why aspects of each are both helpful and harmful. His basic purpose is to show that "conservative Christianity does not require conservative politics or conservative cultural agendas" (xix), or as he says later in the book, "The politics of nations and the destiny of God's people, the church, must never be identified" (35).

As an historian, Trueman is most useful in his surveys of different political histories. As the book is directed at an American audience, the chapter dealing with recent British politics serves as a good introduction to what may be a foreign subject, pardon the pun. He is also helpful at highlighting the often-unseen—for instance, Rupert Murdoch's hypocrisy when it came to supporting or not supporting Communist regimes, based on whether it will help or harm his material ambitions. Trueman is also good at correlating political tendencies between Christians across the pond; what is considered standard fair in England is seen as socialist in the U.S. This relativizing is good, because it shows that "Christian politics" is not a monolith, and therefore American Christians who vote based on social concerns should not feel like they are inconsistent with their profession of faith. He also does a good job at showing the changes in political posture through recent decades—whereas the early left were concerned with genuine social issues like providing good working conditions, or helping the poor; today New Labour or Democratic Party-types are concerned with that nebulous and malleable phrase "oppression." Like Orwell before him, we are reminded that language

can lose meaning if abused, and the ones who are hurt by the equivocating use of "oppress" are, not surprisingly, those who are genuinely oppressed; the door opens for everyone to become a victim (17).

Though a very clear writer, there are some areas of imprecision in the book. For instance, terms like socialism and capitalism are not clearly defined. While he is right that such terms should not be absolutized, it is hard to know how to avoid this without a proper understanding of what each means. When it comes to capitalism, Trueman seems to think that one of the causes of the 2008 housing bubble and resultant collapse was due to the capitalist system. However, as economists have pointed out, this is exactly the opposite of the case. The government manipulations of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac with artificially low interest rates and bad mortgage policies were key factors in bursting the bubble. If anything, the collapse was a good example of how markets will correct themselves, in spite of regulation—something akin to Adam Smith's invisible hand. Were the American economy a true example of a free market, such a collapse would not have happened. It may be better to understand Trueman's concern under the category of "crony capitalism," something vastly different than a true free market.

Another area where Trueman might be misreading capitalist economies is the example he gives of the opening of Chinese markets. He cites the oft-used argument that capitalism and liberty go hand-in-hand, and sees the totalitarianism of China and their softening to capitalism as a counter-example (70-71). While China may be relaxing their regulations, it is a far cry to say that they have embraced capitalism as a system. As historian Niall Ferguson has argued, the fast-growing Chinese economy is not as stable as we would think, is largely dependent on the success of the American economy, and has few internal mechanisms that keep it from collapse; this lack of internal mechanism is rooted in its totalitarianism, and its ruse-capitalism. Ferguson compares China's growth to that of Germany under Wilhelm II. While each demonstrate(d) a desire for progress and growth, they also maintain(ed) a grip on the old orders of a po-

litical system from forty years previous. The dangers facing China are similar to those of early twentieth-century Germany, and that does not bode well for them. Only a principle of providing greater liberty through decentralizing government—thus a truly free market—will prevent this from happening.

But with such quibbles aside, Trueman's book is necessary reading for those who make politics a secondary issue in the church. Good Christians from most political parties should be able to worship side-by-side on a

Lord's Day morning. While they may have some fun batting each other around (jovially) on Twitter, political persuasions must not be a test-case for orthodoxy. You may not switch your party, something Trueman is not asking for, but you may be challenged as you read *Republocrat*—at the very worst, you'll think Trueman a Commie-Pinko; viva la revolucion!

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What is the Mission of the Church?

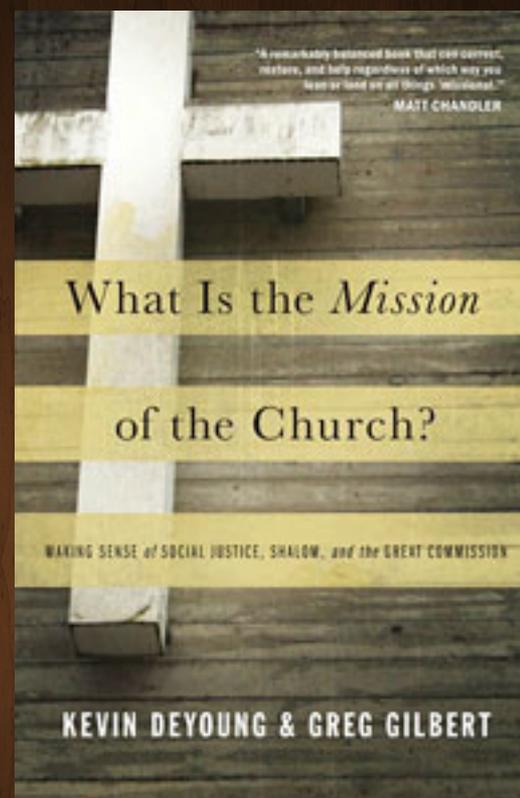
By Kevin DeYoung and Greg Gilbert

This book faithfully deals with Scripture's main texts relevant to social justice issues. One has to respect the authors' careful exegesis for the question of how the mission of the church and social concerns intersect. They interact with other significant authors like T. Keller, C. Wright, J. Stott, and R. Stearns, just to name a few. The overall message from DeYoung and Gilbert is that as Christians we can do many good things, but as the gathered church we must not get distracted from the main task. "The mission of the church is to go into the world and make disciples by declaring the gospel of Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit and gathering these disciples into churches, that they might worship the Lord and obey his commands now and in eternity to the glory of God the Father" (62). In other words, mercy ministries are not equal partners with evangelism and disciple making.

While a local church may do other things along the way, for instance open a soup kitchen, it needs to lean towards the kinds of activities that accomplish its purpose—discipleship. Let us not confuse the church gathered and the church scattered. DeYoung and Gilbert make a helpful distinction that others have made between the organic and institutional church (232). The church should not confuse what we may do as Christians with what we must do as a church.

The two chapters that expound and apply major passages related to social justice are worth the price of the book. Also, the epilogue nicely brings together an imagined young pastor with an older, wiser pastor. His advice to the younger man helps the reader apply much of the book's concern. Several times DeYoung and Gilbert stress that they are not de-emphasizing compassion. Their churches practice certain kinds of mercy ministries. But they want these ministries to have their proper place in the life of the local church. To them, mercy ministries are important, very important, but not the utmost of importance to the purpose of the institutional church. To elaborate, marriage is really important too, but not utmost in the church (230). A church cannot do everything and, thus, must stay decidedly focused on what is truly central in Scripture.

—Kevin Howard, www.neednotfret.com



Parade of Faith: A Biographical History of the Christian Church.

By Ruth A. Tucker.
Zondervan, 2011. 512pp.

Just go to your nearest bookstore—if there are, in fact, any standing shops near you—and you will quickly discover that history is not dead. Popular readers are fascinated with the past. The problem with history today is not a lack of interest.

The problem is an inability to separate what is trivial from what is significant. During a recent trip to my local bookstore, I was pleased to see that the children's section had a display devoted to biography. My pleasure evaporated when I saw that a biography for Thomas Jefferson was forced to stand next to a pictorial biography of Justin Bieber.

Ruth A. Tucker wants the next generation to love church history. Thus she wrote *Parade of Faith: A Biographical History of the Christian Church*. Everyone loves a good story, and Tucker provides 495 pages worth.

There is nothing novel in the organization of her work. She divides church history into two parts: first, The Early Church through the Magisterial Reformation and, second, Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism to the Twenty-first Century. She begins in Acts and concludes with Billy Graham. Ending with Billy Graham is a surprise given the fact that Tucker wrote, *Left Behind in a Mega Church World* (Baker, 2006). I wondered why Tucker chose to ignore the founders of the mega church movement who undoubtedly shaped twenty-first century Christianity, both in America and beyond.

Tucker has given the reader much to appreciate. She gives attention to figures usually ignored. For example, Marcella grew up with elite standing in fourth-century

Rome only to adopt a vow of poverty and form “the brown dress society.” Marcella is an important representative of the many women who became involved in the ascetic movement. Furthermore, Tucker gave detailed attention to Richard Allen, the important founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church.

It should be no surprise that *Parade of Faith* has an encyclopedic feel. Chapters are divided into biographical sketches. Tucker is aware that not every figure carries the same historical weight. Thus, she gives more attention to Martin Luther than Richard Baxter. In short, a student who reads this textbook will walk away with a sense of church history's main players.

Tucker's work does have several flaws, which must not be overlooked.

First, Tucker rarely explains the significance of the individuals she uncovers. She describes the Desert Fathers as “a strange lot,” and strange they may have been. She notes how “they were sincerely striving for a deeper spiritual path.” But why, what drove them? What explanations did they give in their writings for their motives? Even a biographical historian must give time to interpreting the lives addressed.

Second, Tucker is dismissive of theology. For example, she takes the fall of Rome as an opportunity to criticize those who try “to make sense of the catastrophic events from a sociological and theological and historical perspective” (99). And yet it was Augustine's willingness to reflect upon the fall of Rome, from a biblical perspective, that made him such a compelling and enduring theologian.

Does this unwillingness to address theological matters betray a lack of interest or simply disagreement. One wonders given how Tucker speaks appreciatively of Albert Schweitzer and relays the fact that some described Paul Tillich as “America's leading theologian” without any real explanation of his attempt to undo orthodoxy.

Third, there is no unifying theme to hold this history together. I cannot help but think that this is intentional.

Lives are different and messy and complex, and we should all know that oversimplification is one of the great difficulties of church history. Nonetheless, it is the attempt to find a storyline, as complicated as the task may be, that makes history an art form. Furthermore, it is Tucker's lack of attention to theology that makes a unifying theme nearly impossible to find.

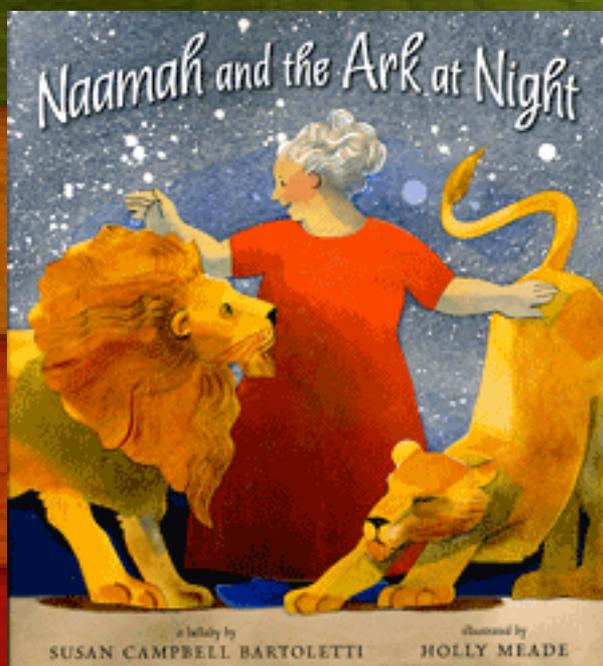
Fourth, history is too often sacrificed at the altar of a good story. She concedes early on in her study of Patrick "that hagiography and biography are often blended" (114). Perhaps this explains why she ends her treatment of the Desert Fathers with "Mary of Egypt: Sex Addict and Saint." I read with bemusement Tucker's recounting of Pope Joan or Pappess Joanna. She began by noting

"That a woman would sit in the papal throne is not so inconceivable in light of the fact that some popes in this era were unordained teenagers" (147). But she ends her four-paragraph treatment by admitting it didn't happen, "it is generally considered to be no more than a fascinating, albeit false, story" (148). It is not appropriate to devote precious space in a history textbook to mythology.

Sadly, Tucker has fallen into the trap of allowing Justin Bieber to stand next to Thomas Jefferson on the bookshelf.

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Naamah and the Ark at Night

By Susan Campbell Bartoletti

Illustrated by Holly Meade

Naamah and the Ark at Night (Candlewick Press, 2011) is a beautifully illustrated poetic book that is a "historical fiction" take on Noah's ark. The story is written in the style of a ghazal- a very old arabic style of poem that requires each couplet to end in the same word; "As restless animals prowl at night, As they pace and roar and growl at night." The story follows Naamah, Noah's wife, as she walks around the ark "at night" and sings to all the animals "at night." In the authors note at the end of the book Bartoletti says that she received the inspiration for Naamah from rabbinical traditions.

Some rabbinical legends tell us that Noah's wife was called Naamah because her deeds were pleasant. These legends also tell of another Naamah whose name meant "great singer"... I like these interpretations of her name. They help me imagine how she inspired and comforted Noah and their three sons and their wives, as well as all the animals. Perhaps Naamah sang.

This ghazal style of Naamah and the Ark at Night makes for a very calm and soothing read. We too enjoy how the book leads our imagination to ponder how Noah and his wife spent those long months wandering the ark.

—Reviewed by Elizabeth Barrett

God With Us: Divine Condescension and the Attributes of God.

By K. Scott Oliphint.
Crossway, 2011. 302pp.

To help understand the issue K. Scott Oliphint seeks to address in his new book, *God With Us: Divine Condescension and the Attributes of God*, imagine two parallel lines. The top line represents God as he is in himself (God *a se*). The bottom line symbolizes God in relationship with creation (God *a re*). Historically, there has always been a vast divide between these two aspects of God's nature. In other words, God's essential nature—that of his independence—has been held distinct from God's covenantal nature, or the nature revealed in his free decision to draw near to his people. As a consequence, Christians have constantly struggled with how to answer the question, “How do we, biblically, organize our thinking about God and his character, given the reality (1) of his independence and (2) of those texts in Scripture that indicate his dependence on creation?” (29)

In *God With Us*, Oliphint rethinks the whole structure of the argument. Instead of accepting the division between the two parallel lines—one line representing God's essential properties and the other representing his covenant properties (what he also terms *eimi/eikon*)—Oliphint argues that these outwardly contradictory properties actually intersect in the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ. In his own words, “the properties of [the covenantal and essential] aspects of God's character are properly attributed to his person, and that person is the Son of God, the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ” (221). So, according to Oliphint, we find in Christ's incarnation a model and, even more, a means by which God can have both essential properties (those related to his own deity) and assume covenantal properties (those related to his relationship with creation) in himself.

To say the least, this is a fascinating thesis and so too is his approach. *God With Us* contains six major movements, beginning with an introduction and advancing through five very careful and thorough chapters. To begin, Oliphint clears the way for his central argument by using his introduction to define his hermeneutical approach, discuss the relationship of systematics and biblical studies, and make clear distinctions between antinomies and paradoxes.

With this groundwork laid, Oliphint turns his attention in chapter 1 to the nature of God as he is in himself. In a wise move, he highlights the divine names, specifically the name *Yahweh*, a name he argues points to God's independence. The discussion then turns to God's simplicity, infinity (eternity and immensity), immutability, and impassibility, all of which develop what it means for God to be independent. At chapter's end, Oliphint ties these introductory matters to his overriding thesis, arguing that in order to understand the essential attributes of God, we must understand these attributes both “from the perspective of the character of God as God” and also from the “context of the person and work of Christ himself” (88).

In chapter 2, the focus shifts from a discussion of God as he is in himself in his independence to a discussion of the Lord's voluntary covenantal condescension—meaning, God's free decision to draw near to his people. Like chapter 1, this section concludes with Oliphint's hinting at his thesis. Here he claims that the climatic, quintessential revelation of God's condescension is found in Jesus Christ, whose very nature is the key to comprehending the relationship between God's essential properties (the subject matter of chapter 1) and covenant properties (the subject matter of chapter 2).

To build his argument, Chapter 3 details the very nature of God in Christ and, more explicitly, how Christ is God's supreme act of revelation. As one might imagine, this chapter's theological content becomes quite rigorous as Oliphint moves his readers through such critical topics as the Chalcedonian definition of the hypostatic union, Nestorianism, Eutychianism, *unio personalis*, the

reduplicative theory, a lengthy discussion of the *communicatio idiomatum*, and the *extra calvinisticum*. And though the technical elements of this chapter will no doubt cost Oliphint some readers along the way, the payoff is worth it if we keep the “big picture” of his thesis in mind. Remember that the purpose of *God With Us* is to show how Christ reveals God’s character and how God, in his independence, still relates to his creation in a way we can understand. The theological precision of chapter 3 is necessary because it forms a tight and meticulous argument to explain that “in [Christ], we have the perfect union of God and creation in the uniting of the two natures in the one person” (156) that he becomes “our guide as we attempt to understand and interpret God’s interaction with, and relation to, creation (172).”

With his christological argument in place, Oliphint’s begins his methodological assessment of how Christ actually helps us “organize and understand why Scripture attributes properties to God throughout covenant history that are difficult to reconcile with his obvious and essential character as a *se*” (220). In chapter 4 the thesis of *God With Us* comes alive because it is here that Oliphint argues that Christ is our “hermeneutic” for God. In other words, Christology should instruct theology proper. To justify this claim, he applies all that we learned christologically in Chapter 3 to our understanding of God and his relation to creation. Oliphint argues that the deity and humanity of Christ forms a type of analogy or model for understanding the relationship between God’s aseity and covenantal relationships. More specifically, he applies the christological properties of the *communicatio idiomatum*, *extra calvinisticum*, reduplicative theory, and the Chalcedonian classification of Christ’s two natures (Christ without confusion, change, division, or separation) to God himself. He believes that making this connection between these christological properties allows us to better understand why Scripture appears to ascribe apparent conflicting attributes to God. Oliphint, however, understands Christology to be more than just a paradigm for theology proper. As he explains later, he sees “all of God’s dealings with creation as necessarily entailing that God has assumed properties not essential

to him” (221). For Oliphint, then, both the essential (God as he is himself) and covenantal (God as he relates to his creation) properties apply to God through the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God. Chapter 4 is what all of *God With Us* leads up to; it is the heart of his proposal. And though it takes a while to get to there, the challenge to the standard conceptions of God’s properties and our understanding of his relation to creation is worth the journey.

Finally in his last chapter, Oliphint takes time to apply his thesis to a few central areas of debate concerning the intersection of God’s independent and relational attributes. *God With Us* concludes by showing us how Christ interprets God, and, more specifically, how the Lord takes on “covenantal properties” and yet does not “confuse, change, divide, or separate his essential properties from those which he has freely chosen to take” (222).

In *God With Us*, Oliphint has done the church a great service. Here, you have an orthodox and reformed theologian working at the very crux of theology in an innovative, insightful and, even more, a christocentric way. Oliphint’s predominantly philosophical and theological approach (he leans heavily, at times too heavily, on Muller, Calvin, Van Til, and other reformed thinkers) demands a lot of his readers which I am sure will limit his audience. However, for those willing to work through the material there is much good to take from his proposal. He calls us to see the tension between God’s transcendence and immanence and helps “restart” the discussion on God’s independent and covenant properties in a way that is orthodox and biblical and also creative and adept. His application of Christology to theology proper is very promising and prepares the way for Oliphint and perhaps others to develop this thesis further.

Still, *God With Us* leaves us with a few questions. First, is Christ the only hermeneutic by which we understand God’s relationship to the world? Such an emphasis, at times, feels as if other avenues of revelation concerning God’s nature are overlooked. Specifically, does the emphasis on Christ’s revelation of God down play the

importance of God's revelation of himself in the rest of redemptive history and Scripture as a whole?

Similarly, though I think Oliphint is correct in seeing theology proper through the lens of christology, do we not also need to see christology through the lens of theology proper? This balance is worth emphasizing as it protects collapsing the Father into the Son and vice versa. There are distinctions between the three persons of the Godhead and applying the relationship of Christ's divinity and humanity to God's essential and covenantal properties needs to be cast in the light of these distinctions as well. I think Oliphint does this in his discussion of the reduplicative theory, the communicatio idiomatum, and the extra calvinisticum but some further barriers would benefit his thesis and audience.

Yet these issues are minimal compared to the good that will come from *God With Us*. It is a work that forces us to think hard about the Lord and his relationship to the world and reminds us of the importance of seeing God in light of Christ. Overall, Oliphint provides us with an exciting proposal for theology proper and a responsible call to engage this theological conundrum in an original and God-honoring way. In the end, *God With Us* is an insightful perspective demonstrating philosophically, biblically, and theologically how the seemingly parallel lines of God's independent and covenant attributes intersect in the quintessential revelation of God, Jesus Christ.

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10-21-2011

I PRONOUNCE YOU MAN AND WIFE ... YOU MAY
NOW UPDATE YOUR FACEBOOK STATUS

Ephesians

By Frank Thielman.

Baker Academic, 2010. 544pp.

Ephesians by Frank Thielman is a commentary worth owning for those who desire to study or teach *Ephesians*. It is a technical commentary that exemplifies solid, evangelical scholarship, and it has many more strengths than weaknesses.

First, beginning with the strengths, Thielman rightly recognizes the significance of the OT background in understanding *Ephesians*. For instance, he shows that God's election of believers in 1:4 echoes God's election of Israel in the OT (cf. Deut. 7:8; 14:2; Isa. 44:2). The same is true in 1:18, where God's rich inheritance alludes to the inheritance of his people in the OT (LXX, Deut. 32:9; 1 Sam. 10:1; 26:19; et al.). Further, God's love, rich kindness, and grace in 2:4-9 echo the language of texts like Exodus 34:6-7 and Psalm 25:6-7. The kindness and compassion believers should show towards one another (4:32) are the same actions that God himself has done for his people (cf. Pss. 34:8; 52:9; 69:16; 100:5; et al.). The call to imitate God in 4:32-5:2 is the call that God himself issued in Leviticus 11:45, "You shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." Finally, the spiritual warfare passage in *Ephesians* 6:10-20 resembles the Messiah who fights with righteousness and truth (Isa. 11:5) and Israel's God who clothes himself with a breastplate of righteousness and a helmet of salvation for his people (Isa. 59:17; cf. 424-28). Thielman's recognition of this OT background provides insight into the meaning of the text. And, although I will argue below that he could have discussed the OT influence in *Ephesians* to a greater degree, by and large this aspect of the commentary is a real strength.

Second, Thielman pays close attention to the text itself. Instead of conforming the text to his own presuppositions, Thielman seems to listen to the voice of *Ephesians*. For instance, he rightly pays attention to the syntax of 4:12 (278-80), which is a verse much debated concerning the roles of church leaders and church members.

Some commentators have argued that the three prepositional phrases in v. 12 are coordinate and therefore describe the responsibility of the church leaders Christ has given in v. 11. But against this, Thielman notes that the noun *katartismos* (“equipping”) is a verbal noun and can therefore be modified by a prepositional phrase to indicate the purpose of its inherent verbal action. He also notes that the preposition *pros* (“for”) is followed by two *eis* (“for”) prepositional phrases, suggesting that the phrases are not coordinate. Rather, the latter are parallel phrases indicating the purpose of the former. In other words, 4:12 could be translated, “for [*pros*] the equipping [*katartismos*] of the saints, for the purpose of [*eis*] the work of ministry, for the purpose of [*eis*] building up the body of Christ.” This may seem only a technicality, but the difference is significant. If Thielman is right, then the responsibility for the work of ministry in the church falls primarily on every church member, and church leaders are then responsible fundamentally to equip church members to do their work of ministry.

Another example of his close attention to the text is in his discussion of slavery in 6:5-9 (404-10). Again, some commentators have argued from this passage that Paul supported or was neutral towards slavery, for he does not condemn the institution outright. But Thielman rightly notes the radical soundings against slavery in Paul’s words. For instance, in 6:5 Paul calls the slave masters “earthly” (*kata sarka*), which subtly indicates there is a greater master in heaven. In 6:8-9, Paul makes this very point explicit when he affirms that, whether slave or free, a person’s good work will be rewarded by the master in heaven, who is no respecter of persons. Finally, when Paul in v. 9 prohibited slave masters from making threats, he removed their power, without which the institution of slavery cannot long abide. This proves Paul ultimately saw no difference between slave and master in God’s eyes, and thus he subtly undermined the institution of slavery. These two are but small examples among many that show the close attention Thielman pays to the text.

Third, he rightly emphasizes the substitutionary death of Christ and the necessity of faith for salvation. On 1:7,

Thielman rightly argues that Jesus’ blood was the price paid to procure forgiveness of sins, and that his death was the means by which God redeemed and rescued his people from their slavery to sin (59-60). On 2:13-18, the plight of the Gentiles was dramatically solved “in Christ” and “by his blood” (158). The actions of Christ are highlighted in 2:13-18. On 6:15, the “gospel of peace” is central for the believer’s reconciliation with God and others (426; cf. his discussion on 5:2, 25-27). Further, faith is necessary for salvation in Ephesians. It is only when one believes in the gospel that one receives the Holy Spirit (1:13-14) and finds present salvation (2:8-9). Also, the phrase *en pasin* (“in all circumstances”) in 6:16 sets apart the shield of faith from all the other pieces of armor (426-27). In short, one gets the sense that Thielman is a man who cherishes the gospel of God in Christ, and who wants to see that gospel appropriated by the church and spread to the nations.

A few other strengths could be mentioned here. Thielman rightly believes that 1) Paul is the author of Ephesians (1-11); 2) *kephalē* (“head”) in context indicates authority (cf. 1:23; 5:23); 3) the unique realized eschatology of Ephesians does not contradict its future dimensions (cf. 2:5, 8; 5:6); 4) the Mosaic law is abolished in Christ but still finds usefulness for new covenant believers in the gospel (169-70; cf. Eph. 2:15; 6:2-3); 5) the mystery in Ephesians is that the Gentiles now have equal status with the Jews before God (204-05); 6) 5:8-14 is a call for believers to expose the sin of unbelievers and share the gospel with them, and is not an admonition to encourage other believers to stop sinning (326); and 7) marriage was instituted to be a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church (389).

Although Thielman’s commentary has many more strengths than weaknesses, here are a few of its weaknesses. First, although he rightly emphasizes the OT background to Ephesians, he could have emphasized it even more. For instance, in 4:24 Thielman rightly notes the allusion to Genesis 1:26 (306) but does not develop the significance of this. The “righteousness and holiness” (*dikaiosynē kai hosotēti*) in v. 24 is not simply referring to “virtuous living as a whole” (307), but is a way of sum-

ming up the way Adam was to have lived toward God and others in Eden. It is a way of describing the total devotion of humanity to God and the love of humans for others in the context of a covenantal relationship (cf. Luke 1:75). And it is only in the “one new man,” Christ himself, that humans experience this Edenic condition.

A similar weakness is found in the next verse (4:25), where Thielman rightly notes that Paul is quoting from Zechariah 8:16 but then cautions against appropriating the near context of Zechariah for help in interpreting Ephesians. There is certainly a level of sobriety in this caution, but it is likely in 4:25 that Paul was thinking of Zechariah’s context. In Zechariah 8:8, for instance, there is the covenantal formula, “They shall be my people, and I will be their God.” Flowing from this formula comes a description of the new temple to be built (Zech. 8:9-13) and what should be the actions of the people of God (8:16-19). Ephesians highlights not only these themes (new covenant, new temple) but also the way in which they are presented (indicative, imperative; cf. 2:11-22; 4:1ff). Again, caution is needed here, but it is more likely than not that Paul was thinking of the covenantal context of Zechariah, and such should inform our interpretation of Ephesians 4:25.

Again, Thielman rightly notes that Paul used Isaiah 11 and 59 in writing Ephesians 6:10-17. But then he argues the differences between Isaiah and Ephesians (e.g., in Isaiah the armor is for offensive, not defensive purposes, and God is the one who wears it, not his people) are such that we must conclude Paul was not reflecting on the broader context of Isaiah but was developing Isaiah’s imagery in his own way (425). But the broader context of Isaiah actually shows the similarities between Isaiah and Ephesians. For instance, Isaiah 61:10, which is proximate to the text Paul quotes (59:17), Isaiah rejoices in the Lord, “for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.” Even in Isaiah, then, the righteousness and salvation God wears in 59:17 is given to his people to wear by his grace, and this armor is beautiful. More likely,

then, Paul is thinking along similar lines when he argues that God in Christ fights for his people and makes them beautiful in righteousness by grace through faith (cf. 2:8-9; 4:24; 5:26-27; 6:10-17). In short, Paul is not developing imagery in his own way so much as explaining how the imagery in Isaiah is realized for believers in the gospel of Christ.

Finally, there were a few other problematic interpretations. 1) It is questionable to render the word *peripoiēsis* in 1:14 as “remnant” (84-86). Thielman’s is a possible rendering, but the word is more likely an allusion to Malachi 3:17, which itself alludes to Exodus 19:5, and means “treasured possession” (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9). 2) Thielman argues that the “shepherds and teachers” Christ gives in 4:11 are distinct offices (275). But the syntax suggests otherwise, for the first four offices are distinguished by men...*tous de* (“and [he gave] others”), whereas the last category, “shepherds and teachers,” are connected with a *kai* (“and”). The *kai* links the two gifts of shepherding and teaching, suggesting that both shepherds and teachers are the same people in the church with two functions. 3) Thielman thinks the long life promised to obedient children in 6:3 refers to physical life, and that this promise is generally true, although not without exception (400-01). But more likely it refers to eternal life, for the land promise in the OT points forward to the rest found in the new creation, a theme explicated by Jesus himself (cf. Matt. 5:5). Believing children (6:1, “in the Lord”) who persevere in faith by obeying and honoring their parents will receive final salvation and rest in the new creation.

This commentary has many more strengths than weaknesses. It will be especially useful for those familiar with Greek, although knowledge of Greek is not necessary to use it. In keeping with its series, this commentary does not emphasize application but analyzes the grammatical, historical, and theological aspects of the text. In short, this is a solid, evangelical commentary and exemplifies good scholarship. It should find its place among the best commentaries on Ephesians.

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Charles Hodge: *The Pride of Princeton*

by W. Andrew Hoffercker.

P&R Publishing, 2011. 460 pp.

No figure was more important to 19th century American Presbyterianism than the erudite and venerable Charles Hodge. Yet until recently, the details of his life and ministry were all but unknown except to the scholar who cared to ferret out the information. With the publication of Andrew Hoffercker's new biography at the end of last year and the earlier publication of Paul Gutjahr's *Charles Hodge: Guardian of American Orthodoxy* (see *Credo*, October 2011), Hodge's life and thought are now readily accessible. Hoffercker's work focuses on Hodge the man—pious churchman, educator, denominational statesman, editor, writer, controversialist and champion of orthodoxy. In the life of Hodge, the contemporary minister finds a model and inspiration for defending all things orthodox and of living a life of personal piety in service to God. Charles Hodge labored tirelessly to advance the causes he held dear—chief among them Old School Presbyterianism.

Not that Hoffercker's work is mere hagiography. He critically yet sympathetically recounts a life well-lived in service to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Presbyterian Church at a time when the church itself was severely tested by issues as diverse as revivalism and slavery. Hoffercker reveals Hodge's deep devotion to the work of the ministry and the preparation of the next generation of Presbyterian clergyman. His commitment to personal piety, learned from his family upbringing, is a major theme of the book. That piety was further shaped in Hodge's life by those under whose care he studied, first at young Princeton, Archibald Alexander, whom Charles would honor by naming a son after him, and Samuel Miller. Later, Hodge was also mentored by other pious and conservative men while studying in Germany, a period of time that tested his commitments to his orthodox

foundations.

It is this emphasis on piety that is a strength of Hoffercker's work. He repeatedly reviews Hodge's commitment to piety as he traverses the various stages of Hodge's life and ministry. For example, piety is a theme of the second chapter on Hodge's "Early Religious Experiences." "Hodge had internalized an appreciation of what constituted New Side piety as a way of life—the value of prayer as conversing with God, articulating a sense of dependence of God as a matter of daily experience and a moral consciousness sensitive to the presence of sin" (38). Hodge's piety carried him through his entire life including his life of scholarship. Would scholarship hinder piety? "Surely not," says Hodge. Summarizing Hodge, Hoffercker states that "if students approached their studies with the conviction of the Bible's truthfulness and inherent authority, no intellectual study would threaten their piety" (72). Hodge's personal piety was a hallmark of his life and a model for others to follow.

But Hodge was also a devoted churchman who championed "Calvinistic confessionalism." He labored long to defend and strengthen Presbyterianism against the various modern challenges including the New School's Finneyite tendencies. That defense often came from Hodge by the skillful use of his pen, either through his editorship of *The Princeton Review* (et al) which included many of Hodge's personal essays on diverse subjects or his more lengthy treatises, including his magnum opus, the three-volume *Systematic Theology*, the capstone of a very significant writing career. It is in this way that Hoffercker draws another important insight from Hodge's life—he was a contender for truth without being contentious. Hodge was quick to champion the issues he felt important, but in doing so, he tried to never leave his opponents feeling personally assaulted. In one such incident, Hodge challenged the views of William Nevin, his former student. Nevin had begun to advocate what became known as the "Mercersberg Theology." Nevin argued that contemporary Presbyterianism had moved away from the historic Reformation view of the mystical presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Hodge's response to Nevin in the second volume of his *Systematic Theol-*

ogy elicited a scathing letter from Nevin. Nevin felt he had been personally misrepresented. Hodge did what he could to extend “an olive branch” by inserting a footnote in the final volume of the *Theology* that clarified his comments without retracting his criticism. He wanted to stand for the truth as he saw it, but in doing so, he wanted to defend it with Christian charity. This is a model worth considering when handling controversy among professing believers.

In reading this delightful account of the life of arguably

the most important American theologian of the 19th century, one is gratified at a life well lived and a battle honorably fought. Charles Hodge is a model for contemporary ministers to follow at many levels. He was a man moved by a deep personal commitment to God and a man who even in conflict, wanted to represent Christ as charitably as he could. Hoffecker is to be thanked for his efforts at telling Hodge’s story.

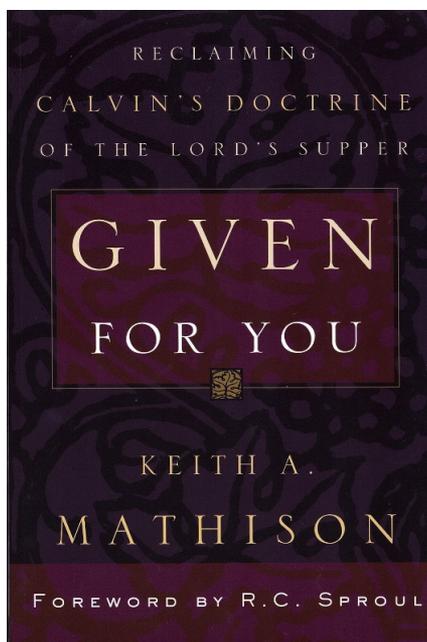
*Jeff Straub, Professor of Historical Theology
Central Baptist Theological Seminary*



the Lord’s Supper

What four books do you recommend?

—Michael A. G. Haykin

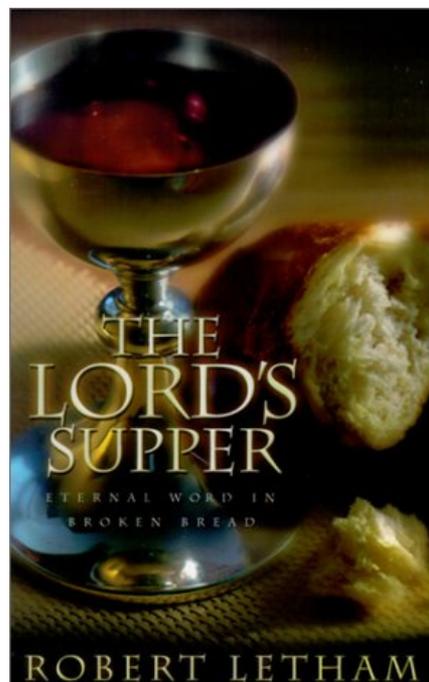


• ***Given for You: Reclaiming Calvin’s Doctrine of the Lord’s Supper.*** By Keith Mathison (P&R, 2002).

This book is the best study of Calvin’s vital thought on the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper.

• ***Thoughts on the Lord’s Supper, Relating to the Nature, Subjects, and right Partaking of this Solemn Ordinance.*** By Anne Dutton (London: J. Hart, 1748).

Dutton’s work is a classic Baptist reflection.



• ***The Lord’s Supper.*** By Ernest Kevan (Welwyn, Hertfordshire: Evangelical Press, 1966).

• ***The Lord’s Supper: Eternal Word in Broken Bread.*** By Robert Letham (P&R Publishing, 2001).

These are two contemporary studies—each small, but both powerful.

Missions in light of the **Resurrection** of Christ

by Matthew Barrett

Would missions change if the resurrection of Christ never happened? Would how we share the gospel with an unbeliever look any different if the resurrection of Christ never took place? I fear that many Christians share the gospel in such a way that it would not make a difference whether or not Christ rose from the dead. Worse still, many Christians are uncertain how the resurrection of Christ actually makes a difference in our salvation and in our witness to a lost world.

For the apostle Paul, however, the resurrection was absolutely central to both our salvation and our witness to unbelievers. Notice what Paul, in 1 Corinthians 15, says are the consequences if Christ has not been raised: our preaching is in vain, our faith is futile, we are still in our sins, we are misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ from the dead, those who have died as believers have perished, and we are pathetic, to be pitied for believing and placing all our hope in a lie. In short, we have no message of salvation to offer to unbelievers dead in their trespasses and sins.

Consider briefly how the resurrection impacts our salvation. First, if Christ has not risen from the dead then there is no hope that unbelievers will be born again. According to Peter, God has “caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead” (1 Pet 1:3; cf. Eph 2:5-6; Col 3:1). The

same God who raised Christ from the grave has also raised us from spiritual death to spiritual life.

Second, our justification is grounded in Christ’s resurrection. Christ paid the penalty for our sin on the cross and therefore the Father found him not guilty but righteous in his sight, a declaration that applies to us when we trust in Christ for salvation. As Wayne Grudem explains,

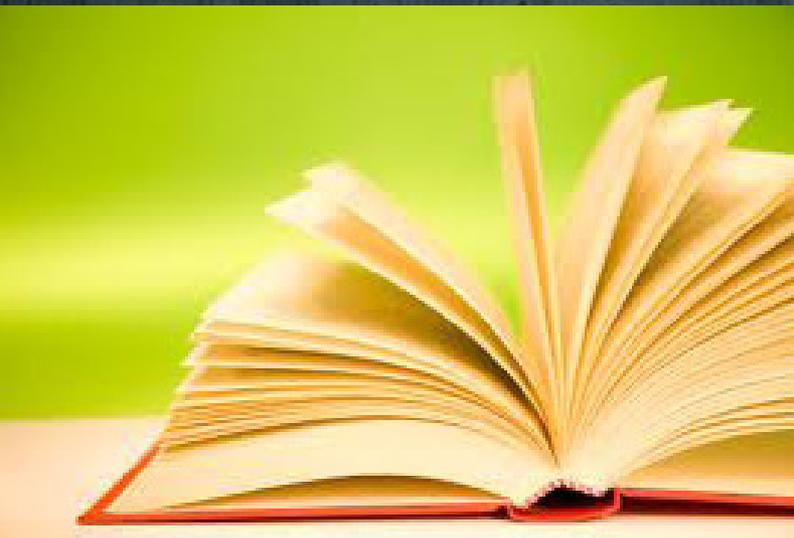


Christ’s resurrection was the final verification that he had earned our justification. Therefore, Paul can say Jesus was “delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification” (Rom 5:25; cf. Phil 2:8-9).

Third, Paul is clear that the reason we can “walk in newness of life” is because Christ was raised from the dead (Rom 6:4). And not only our sanctification, but our future, bodily resurrection is grounded in Christ’s resurrection. Christ is the firstfruits so that at his second coming those who belong to Christ will rise (1 Cor 15:20; 6:14).

In the early church, confessing the resurrection of Christ for many was a death sentence. Christians were persecuted and martyred because they believed Jesus to be the risen King of kings and Lord of lords. How might our testimony to a lost world look different if the resurrection of Christ became central in our Christian testimony?

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