

CULTURE COMMENT

Overcoming  
loneliness P.6

FEATURE

WHEN GOD ISN'T SILENT P.12

EXPLORING WORLDVIEWS

What is wokeness?  
P.16

# BARNABAS

BIBLICAL ENCOURAGEMENT >> NEWS >> CULTURE >> MEDIA

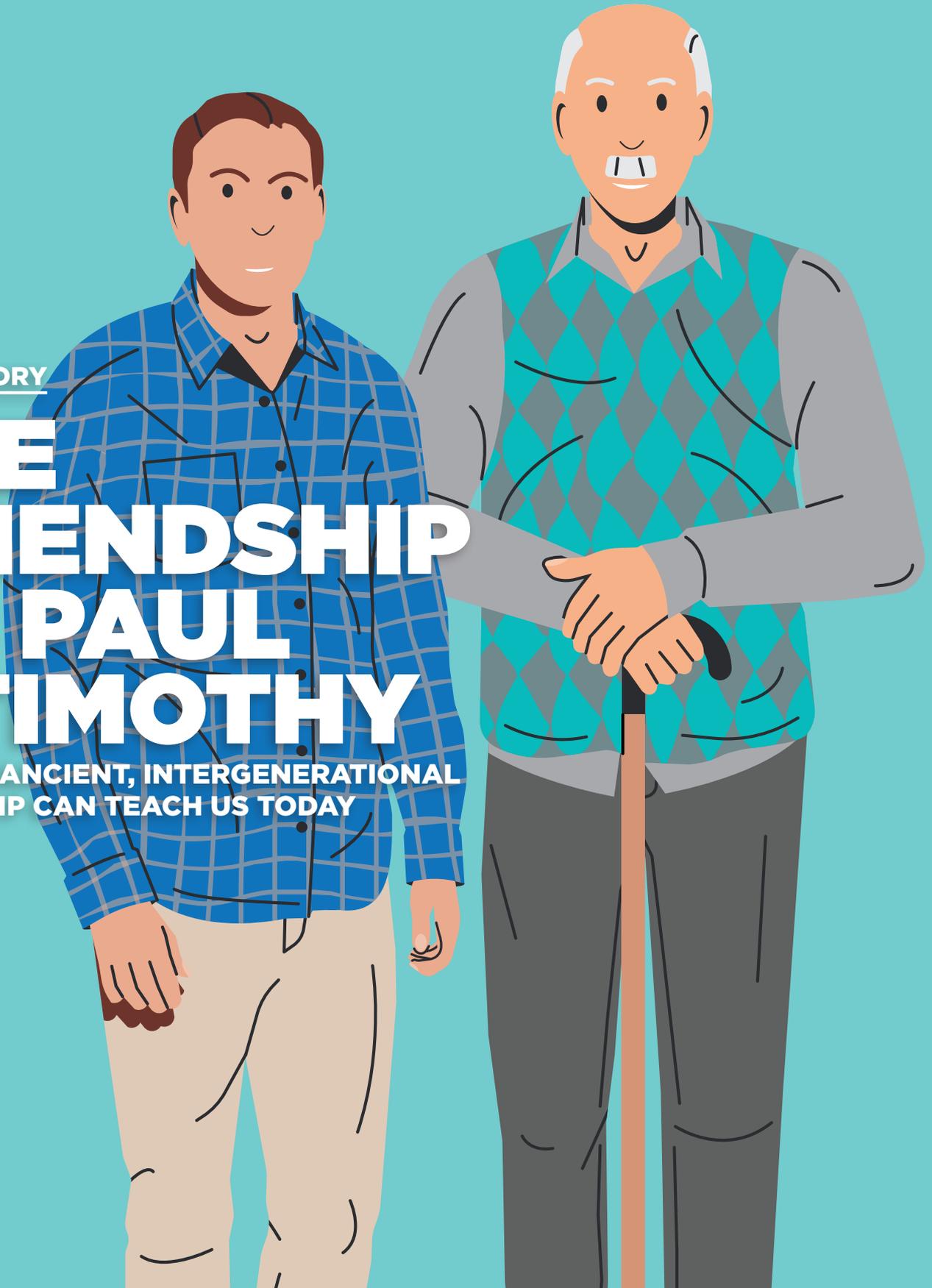
WINTER / SPRING 2022

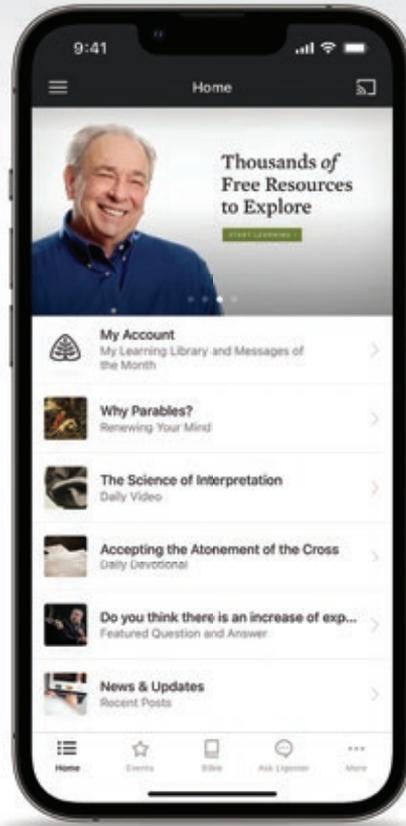
KIDS  
PAGE  
P.21

COVER STORY

## THE FRIENDSHIP OF PAUL & TIMOTHY

WHAT AN ANCIENT, INTERGENERATIONAL  
FRIENDSHIP CAN TEACH US TODAY  
PAGE 8





# THOUSANDS OF FREE RESOURCES ARE JUST A CLICK AWAY

With the free Ligonier app, trustworthy teaching is always within reach. Whether you're at home or on the go, you'll have immediate access to thousands of discipleship resources, including daily devotionals, video teaching series, our biblical and theological chat service, and much more. It's like carrying a theological library with you at no cost, and every day, there's something new to study. Just search for "Ligonier" in your app store to get started.

DOWNLOAD THE FREE LIGONIER APP TODAY.



Ligonier.org/app



## FEATURES

### COVER STORY

## 8 The friendship of Paul & Timothy

Lessons from an ancient, intergenerational friendship

BY MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN

## 12 When God isn't silent

The travails of Habakkuk

BY NATHANAEL REED

## 14 Challenging cholera

Charles H. Spurgeon and Dr. John Snow in Victorian England

BY DAVID HERBERT

### COLUMNS

- 6 Culture comment**  
Overcoming loneliness
- 7 Spotlight**  
Great faith
- 16 Exploring worldviews**  
What is wokeness? (Part 1)
- 17 Word matters**  
Redeeming marriage
- 20 Rewind**  
Eleanor Coade and her stone
- 22 The arts**  
David: The poet after God's own heart

### DEPARTMENTS

- 4 News & events**  
Newsbytes, reports and upcoming events
- 18 Off the shelf**  
Books worth reading
- 21 The kids page**  
Living and dying for Jesus
- 23 Mixed media**  
New music

ISSN 1918-9826

© 2022 Barnabas. The contents may not be reproduced, either in whole or in part, without written permission of the publisher.



FSC LOGO  
HERE



Printed in Canada on 70lb Rolland Enviro Satin Text by Britannia Printers.

**EDITOR & ART DIRECTOR** Janice Van Eck  
**SGF COORDINATOR** Benno Kurvits  
**EDITORIAL ADVISORY TEAM** Dale R. Cogswell, Daniel Morden  
**CONTRIBUTORS** Danielle Gignac, Roger Fellows, Michael A.G. Haykin, David Herbert, Jeremy Johnston, Carl Muller, Dale Nevilizer, Owen Pikkert, Nathanael Reed, Don Theobald, Rachel Thibault  
**PROOFREADER** Karen van Zanden  
**LETTERS TO THE EDITOR** We welcome your feedback. Send your letters, comments or suggestions to [janicevaneck@rogers.com](mailto:janicevaneck@rogers.com).

**TO SUBSCRIBE...** Canadian/US/Foreign **\$15/year**. Make cheques payable to "SGF Canada" and send with name and mailing address to: **SGF, c/o Benno Kurvits, 193 Queen Victoria Dr, Hamilton, ON L8W 1W6**  
**For bulk/church subscriptions:** 10 copies per issue, \$75/year. (Send request to address above.)

**BARNABAS** is the quarterly magazine of the Sovereign Grace Fellowship of Canada. [www.sgfcana.com](http://www.sgfcana.com)

## NEWSBYTES

### + Pilgrim Baptist Fellowship, Hamilton, ON

It is with sadness that Pilgrim Baptist Fellowship in Hamilton reports the resignation of its lead pastor, Hagop Tchobanian, as of February 6, 2022. Hagop has served at Pilgrim for just over four years and has had a significant impact on our church life during that time in terms of our growth both numerically and spiritually. Benno Kurvits continues now as the remaining elder. Please pray for the church and the Tchobanians, as both seek to move forward in the will of God.—*Benno Kurvits*

### + Trinity Baptist Church, Burlington, ON

After a very difficult 2021, God's persistent faithfulness and goodness to Trinity Baptist Church has brought healing to our hurting souls. In the previous two months we were encouraged by nine baptisms and the testimonies of 20 brothers and sisters who became members. The preaching and teaching ministries are being blessed, prayer meeting participation has increased and warm fellowship enjoyed each week as the body of Christ meets. Once again, this year we are planning a week of prayer and fasting in March to implore our gracious heavenly Father to bring revival to the church and awakening to our land.—*Harry Droogendyk*

### + Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Oromocto, NB

Pastor Perry Edwards finished his ministry with us on November 30, 2021, and on December 1, he responded to a call of the congregation and began ministry at Living Way Baptist Fellowship in Chipman, New Brunswick, which is an hour east of Oromocto. The church there, a long-standing work begun in the 1950s as Chipman Fundamental, has been without a pastor nearly eight of the ten years since Bert Kuehner retired. Elder Dale Cogswell and Pastor Edwards did some interim preaching to help out, and then the Lord laid it

on Perry's heart to take up the work at Chipman full-time. There were no underlying currents or problems which would have caused the move, indeed, we were not glad to see him leave but submissive to the Lord, knowing that the Church is his and he places whom he wants where he wants. Elder Neal Whitman has taken up the work here, having been with us as assistant pastor for two years since his retirement from the Canadian Forces, but with us as an elder several years prior. We all need to pray that the Lord would not render judgement in our land by empty pulpits and closed doors.—*Dale Cogswell*

### + 2022 SGF Ladies' Retreat

The SGF Ladies' Retreat Committee is planning to have a one-day ladies' retreat this year! Please save the date for Saturday, May 14, 9:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m. We will be meeting at Trinity Baptist Church, Burlington, ON. Our speaker is Andrea Thom, and she will be speaking on the theme, "To live is Christ," from Philippians. Email [sgfladiesretreat@gmail.com](mailto:sgfladiesretreat@gmail.com) to be added to the email list.—*Sonja Tomlinson*

### + Sovereign Grace Family Church, Belleville, ON

We have reached the capacity of our location. Please pray with Sovereign Grace Family Church in Belleville that God will increase our numbers so that we can afford a new place to worship.—*Cliff Linnard*

### + Redeemer Bible Church, Kitchener, ON

It is with profound sadness that we announce that Redeemer Bible Church, the church plant of Grace Bible Church, has ceased operating. Despite our prayers to find a pastor in 2021, we were unable to do so. We thank the Lord for the many men who came to preach over the past year—we have appreciated your ministry.—*JPV*

## Founding of Providence Baptist Church, Burlington, ON

How does a local church begin? Surely, we may point to any number of factors, but at the end of the day, if it is a true Christian local church, it begins because of the work of God. God establishes local churches. Our church began according to the plan and purpose of God.

Having together come through a furnace of affliction which need not be described, a number of us met together for worship on the morning of Sunday, June 27, 2021. We met at Hidden Valley Park in Burlington, and that service would prove to be the first of several during which we were favoured with beautiful weather and blessed fellowship in the presence of God. In time, the kindness of the saints at the Ebenezer Canadian Reformed Church was extended

to us, and we began meeting at their facility on Sunday, July 18.

We who had been meeting believed that the Lord's will for us was that we should seek to establish a new local church. Seeking the face of God in prayer and seeking the counsel of others in conversation, we set about the task God had set before us. The providence of God encouraged us in our endeavour through the support of any number of loving Christians, directed us to believers whose generosity would expedite the process whereby we become a legally recognized church and upheld us through the wise and prayerful counsel of believers, with the result that it is no wonder that we should call ourselves "Providence" Baptist Church. The truth of

God's wonderful providence pervades the early days of our existence.

We chose as our motto text Ephesians 3:8, where Paul says he has been called to preach to the world "the unsearchable riches of Christ." We believe that to be our privileged calling and responsibility. On January 26, 2022, we had our first annual business meeting. At that meeting I was taken on as pastor of the church.

We can say with the saints of old, "till now, the Lord has helped us" (1 Samuel 7:12), and we have no doubt he will continue to do so through all the days of our pilgrimage as a congregation. Visit us [www.providenceburlington.ca](http://www.providenceburlington.ca), and at 607 Dynes Road, Burlington, ON L7N 2V4, where our services are held.—*Carl Muller*

# REPORT ON THE 2021 SGF ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As in 2020, which was our first year of COVID-19, we were able in 2021 to hold the SGF Annual Assembly. It took place at Bath Road Baptist Church in Kingston, Ontario, on November 19–20. About forty people registered for the event, among whom were twenty-eight church delegates. There was a great spirit during our time together, where fourteen of our fifteen churches were represented.

Pastor Peter Ryttersgaard of Bath Road Baptist welcomed everyone and lead the way in providing clear and gracious direction with regard to the use of their facility. His wife, Melanie, was a huge help with regard to audiovisual services, photocopying, etc. And folks, young and old, from our sister church in Belleville, oversaw the registration table.

Benno Kurvits, our SGF coordinator, began the reports by providing his own. During the last year, he worked with the board of directors consisting of Dale Nevelizer, Neal Whitman, Stephen Kring, Marino Vereecke and Carl Muller, with Carl stepping down during the summer. In addition to our usual three annual board meetings (all conducted online), special circumstances precipitated the need for additional meetings. One of these dealt with *Barnabas* magazine and another with the updating of the SGF Constitution. But the most challenging one dealt with our deliberations over how to respond to the internal divisions taking place at one of our member churches. It is safe to say the board dealt with greater challenges this last year than in the previous few years. With the ongoing uncertainties that arose over COVID-19, Benno did not get to visit as many member churches as he would have liked to. But he did get to visit Grimsby, London, Delhi and Tilbury. The online weekly prayer meeting for pastors initiated by Peter Ryttersgaard in January 2021 has been a blessing, and it continues strong.

A few of our SGF ministries were again cancelled during 2021 due to COVID-19, namely our Ladies' Retreat and our Pastors' Conference. Hopefully, both of these ministries will resume in 2022. However, thanks to the labours of Harry and Trudy Droogendyk, our beloved Carey Conference was able to take place in August. After thirteen years serving the SGF community organizing this conference, Harry and Trudy stepped down and their replacements have yet to be found. Please pray about this need.

Our monthly Grace Pastors Fellowship meetings were at least able to meet four times (instead of the usual eight). There was again no Youth Retreat in 2021.

Janice Van Eck, editor of *Barnabas* magazine, kindly provided everyone with a videoed report of her work. She's been providing this service for us for 14 plus years now. Thanks, Janice.

Next, every church had an opportunity to give their expected report. This was a sweet time of thanksgiving and encouragement as we heard about what God was doing among us. After each report was given, a different pastor stood up to pray for that particular church.

On Friday evening, we enjoyed a fellowship dinner hosted by Bath Road Baptist, followed by a worship service. It was an uplifting time. The sermon preached by our brother Neal Whitman on Psalm 22 was particularly gripping. Thanks, Neal.

Before we entered the business part of our Assembly mid-morning on Saturday, we heard from some ministries outside our

own Fellowship. Benno read a brief report from Pastor Steve Eusebio of Midland Park Baptist in Scarborough, Gang Wang presented a report on Toronto Baptist Seminary and Vaclav Vasil used a video to introduce us to his work in a church plant in Mabou, Nova Scotia.

During the remainder of our time, Benno lead the Assembly in its deliberation on items of business. He read the entire recommended update to our Constitution and Parts IV–VI were voted on and approved. Parts I–III, consisting mainly of our articles of faith, must wait until our next Assembly for approval. Jim Sisco was re-elected for another two-year term as our treasurer and two new directors were voted onto our board: Cliff Linnard and Mathieu Brideau. A special thank you was expressed for the presence and voices of the members and delegates from Trinity Baptist Church in Burlington. They have had a very difficult year, and we pray they will be able to turn a corner and move forward in their church life.—Benno Kurvits

## CONFERENCE COORDINATOR NEEDED

The SGF is looking for new leadership to organize the annual Carey Conference. Please contact the SGF coordinator, Benno Kurvits, if you know of anyone willing and capable to take this on. Please email Benno at: [sgf.canada.coordinator@gmail.com](mailto:sgf.canada.coordinator@gmail.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### APRIL 4, 2022 GRACE PASTORS FELLOWSHIP

Speaker: Reid Ferguson

Theme: TBD

Time: 10 a.m.

Wives are invited—lunch at a local restaurant following the meeting.

*Held at Thistleton Baptist Church, Etobicoke, ON*  
[www.gracepastorsfellowship.com](http://www.gracepastorsfellowship.com)

### MAY 14, 2022 SGF LADIES' RETREAT DAY

Speaker: Andrea Thom

Theme: Philippians - "To live is Christ"

Time: 9:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

Join other ladies from SGF

churches and beyond for a day of study in the Word, fellowship, prayer and worship.

*Held at Trinity Baptist Church, Burlington, ON*  
[www.sgfcanada.com](http://www.sgfcanada.com)

### AUGUST 20–26, 2022 CANADIAN CAREY FAMILY CONFERENCE

Be sure to mark your calendars and set aside the dates of our 2022 conference. You'll want to make this week part of your family's plans in 2022!

*Held at Braeside Camp, Paris, ON.*

[www.careyconference.net](http://www.careyconference.net)

**PLANNING OR HOSTING AN EVENT? LET BARNABAS KNOW.  
EMAIL [JANICEVANECK@ROGERS.COM](mailto:JANICEVANECK@ROGERS.COM)**

# OVERCOMING LONELINESS



BY DANIELLE GIGNAC >>

It is no surprise that people need social interactions to have fulfilling lives. To be excluded or forgotten can make us feel hurt and unvalued. Those who live alone know how meaningful it is when someone calls or visits. Sometimes simply looking at a photograph, reading an old letter or hearing the voice of a loved one who is far away can be a strong enough reminder of the relationship to lift the feeling of loneliness for a time. God created us to be in relationship with himself and with other people, so it is natural we should feel a sense of loss when we can't have the interactions we would like. We know God is with us always, and that is a great comfort, but there can be very real isolation from other people which is hard to bear.

While mandated isolation has drawn attention to problems of loneliness over the past couple of years, our culture has been moving toward this in more subtle ways for a long time. It's easier than ever for people to live in self-sufficient bubbles. Many are choosing to live alone, with one-person households on the rise. Purchases can be made online at the touch of a button and delivered to our doors without us ever having to speak to or see another person. Virtual meetings and classes are filled with attendees who never show their faces, let alone participate actively. We detach ourselves in so many ways and then wonder why we feel empty and isolated. Simply "showing up" isn't sufficient to feel the personal connections we desire. We need to have other people *involved* in our lives.

Yet the mere presence of other people often doesn't satisfy, either. Who hasn't known the feeling of being alone in a crowd? Proximity doesn't guarantee connection. It's the *quality* of relationship we are looking for. We want to be understood and loved. Unity requires mutual acceptance and harmony. For various reasons, not all marriages turn out to provide the hoped-for companionship. In families, there may be relational fissures. Even when we have good friends, they can't be with us all the time to share experiences, answer questions or help us make decisions. It is hard to avoid loneliness in this world,



**We need to actively push against the isolationist tendencies of our culture and embrace the unity we have in Christ.**

and it is rare to find a relationship that is all we long for it to be.

It can be tempting to escape the pain by filling time with activities, shutting out the world or denying one's feelings. Yet none of these things will bring peace. They don't address the core problem of loneliness, which is: we were made to be in relationship and sin has separated us from God and each other.

Even if we don't try to fill the void with vanities, distractions and selfish pursuits, we may still slip into the sins of self-pity or pride. We want to control our circumstances. The world tells us that we are on our own and we have to live on our own terms. Yet, this takes us further from the connection we desire with others. It's only when we set aside our own agenda that we can be open to God's intercession—we need a heart empty of self and filled with the uniting love of God.

We should never take for granted that we have the gift of the Holy Spirit with us always, and a Father in heaven who always hears us and knows how we suffer. Jesus himself understands our most painful experiences: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). Loneliness should drive us to God in prayer.

Instead of searching for distractions, we would do better to focus on drawing closer to the One who loves us beyond comprehension—the only One who can remove our loneliness completely. It may not happen fully in this world, but as it's his plan for us to be brought into union with him for eternity, he will give us what we need for the moment.

One way God provides for us is through the fellowship of believers. We need to actively push against the isolationist tendencies of our culture and embrace the unity we have in Christ as his body, the church, with him as our Head. If we really take this analogy to heart, the church actually has the opportunity to create the sort of community where isolation doesn't exist. Through the relation of the parts to one another and to the whole, the church can live out its role of being "the fullness of him who fills everything in every way" (Ephesians 1:23). Even if we are merely an ear, we are important. If it weren't for the ear, the finger wouldn't know that it was properly placed on the violin string and the music wouldn't be produced. As the church, we need to love one another deeply, and seek to draw each other out of isolation by properly valuing each part's role. As a whole, we can gain perspective and hope in a bleak world. We belong to Christ who has adopted us into his family. We are not alone.

As a body, we can then go out into the world and share the love of Christ that binds us together. We are part of a long line of believers past, present and future who are doing our part to further the kingdom of God. As Elisabeth Elliot wrote,

Do we want to be servants to one another? Let God turn even our loneliness into power to serve. Let Him free us from ourselves in order that we may become the servants of others. As the basis of our union with Christ is His sacrificial love for us, so the basis of our union with others is that same sort of love—the love that forgets itself and its own troubles and lays itself down (*The Path of Loneliness*, 2007). 

 Danielle Gignac is an architect living in Guelph, ON. She attends Crestwicke Baptist Church.

# GREAT FAITH

*A mother's persistence for her daughter's healing.* BY ROGER FELLOWS

Read Matthew 15:21–28

**T**his incident, recorded by both Matthew and Mark, is a wonderful example of a mother pleading for her daughter and refusing to take “no” for an answer.

Let's note:

## 1. Her concern.

She knew that her daughter was possessed by a demon. We are given no details, no symptoms. Clearly in Jesus' time it was not unusual. Not all cases were like the Gadarene demoniac. Some demon-possessed people were sick or deformed. We must not assume most cases involved mental disorder. All unconverted people are under the influence of the devil, but not many are demon-possessed. It seems to occur more in areas that are unevangelized. This woman was deeply concerned for her daughter, and she was willing to go to any length to get help. What could she do? She knew that her daughter was in the grip of a demon, but she also knew of someone who could help. She must have heard of Jesus, and discovered he was in the area. Jesus was in Gentile territory where he rarely went.

Well, the woman was determined to find Jesus and ask him to heal her daughter. What can parents do for their children? There are many material things they can do, but nothing better than to go to Jesus on their behalf.

## 2. Her persistence.

This is an amazing account—not exactly a seeker-friendly situation! Note the steps:

(a) She finds him—in a house according to Mark's account. She cries out for help, but Jesus ignores her.

(b) Then the disciples try to get rid of her (verse 23). What they are most likely saying is: “Give her what she wants so she won't keep bothering us.” Clearly, she was not welcome.

(c) Jesus says, “I was only sent to the Jews” (verse 24). That was his main ministry. In his brief time on earth, it was not physically possible for him to cover much Gentile territory.

This sounds like bad news for her, but there is worse to come. She makes one



more plea in verse 25, “Lord, help me.”

(d) Note the Lord's reply (verse 26). He calls her a Gentile dog. That was a familiar view of the Gentiles by the Jews. Under the law, they were commanded to keep separate from the Gentiles, not intermarrying or learning their ways. However, they did get involved with the Gentiles and were led into idolatry. This eventually led to the Babylonian captivity. After the return from exile, they went to the other extreme, hating and despising the Gentiles. They forgot it was always the Lord's intention to bring the gospel to Gentiles as well as Jews (eg. Genesis 22:18), but at this point Jesus is reflecting the general view of the Jews regarding Gentiles.

Put yourself in this woman's place. She was ignored, discouraged by the disciples, told that Jesus was only sent to the Jews and then called a Gentile dog. How do we explain Jesus' behaviour? It seems so out of character. There can only be one answer—he was testing her faith. He had the best of intentions. As Matthew Henry says of this passage: “There may be love in Christ's heart, when there are frowns on his face.” He was testing the woman to see if she meant business.

## 3. Her faith rewarded.

In the final snub she sees a ray of hope, “Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table” (verse 27). She doesn't deny that she is a Gentile dog. She doesn't deny her unworthiness. However, where there is bread, there are crumbs, and even the dogs can eat the crumbs.

(a) This was *great* faith. Jesus commends her for that faith. There are degrees of faith. Sometimes the Lord rebuked his disciples for little faith. Her faith was amazing, despite the discouragements.

(b) It was an *enlightened* faith. She calls him the Son of David, the Messiah. She also calls him Lord three times. These things were revealed to her. She knew who Jesus was, and that he could do what she wanted.

(c) It was a *humble* faith. How would we react if someone ignored us, refused us, insulted us? She accepts it. “Blessed are the poor in spirit” (Matthew 5:3). Humility is one of the chief marks of grace.

(d) It was a *rewarded* faith. As she persists, her prayers are answered: her expectations are fulfilled. Her daughter was healed. What a beautiful conclusion to the encounter!

## 4. There are lessons here for all of us.

(a) *For believers.* Do we expect our prayers to be answered? We certainly need to develop our faith. We must lay hold of God's promises. When we have no specific promises, we need to pray, “If it is your will.” We must certainly believe in Jesus' power to answer our prayers.

One thing we can emulate here is her persistence. She wouldn't be put off. Even when she was called a Gentile dog, she pleads her right to get at least a few crumbs. The Lord delights to hear the prayers and arguments of his children.

(b) *For parents.* This woman is a wonderful example of parental love. She knew her daughter was in a desperate state, and she cried out to the Lord. How urgent are your prayers for your children? If they are unsaved, they too are in a desperate state. Only the Lord can help.

(c) *For unbelievers.* You may have been taught God is sovereign and saves whom he wills. That may be true, but we must never use that line of reasoning to justify inaction. There are many promises regarding salvation, for example, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved” (Acts 16:31). Bring such promises before the Lord. Fill your mouth with arguments (Job 23:4), pester God, use some holy violence (Matthew 11:12).

How much do you want to be saved? Do you believe the Bible? Do you believe in hell? If you did, you would not delay another day. Call upon the Lord. Ask him to forgive you for Jesus' sake. Come to him now. **B**

Roger Fellows is a retired pastor and continues to minister at churches throughout Ontario. He is an elder at Providence Baptist Church, Burlington, ON.

# THE FRIENDSHIP OF PAUL & TIMOTHY

## WHAT CAN AN ANCIENT, INTERGENERATIONAL FRIENDSHIP TEACH US TODAY?

BY MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN

**O**ur culture is not one that provides great encouragement for the nurture and development of deep, long-lasting, satisfying friendships. Such friendships take time and sacrifice, and twenty-first century Western culture is a busy, busy world that as a rule is far more interested in receiving and possessing than sacrificing and giving.

What is especially disturbing about this fact is that Western Christianity is little different from its culture. The writer C.S. Lewis has an ingenious little book called *The Screwtape Letters*, a remarkable commentary on spiritual warfare from the point of view of our Enemy. In it there is one letter from the senior devil, Screwtape, to his nephew Wormwood in which Screwtape rejoices over the fact that “in modern Christian writings” there is to be found “few of the old warnings about Worldly Vanities, the Choice of Friends, and the Value of Time.” Now, whether or not Lewis is right with regard to a scarcity of twentieth-century Christian literature

about “Worldly Vanities” and “the Value of Time,” he is undoubtedly correct when it comes to the topic of friendship.

How different in this respect is our world from that of the ancients. Let’s look at what the Bible has to say about friendship.

### THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF FRIENDSHIP

While we do not find an extended discussion of the concept of friendship in the Scriptures, in the Old Testament we do come across:

- reflections on friendship in Ecclesiastes 4:7–12
- marvellous illustrations of what friendship should be like in the examples of Ruth and Naomi (Ruth 1) and David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 20; 2 Samuel 1:25–27)
- nuggets of advice about having friends and keeping them in the Old Testament’s compendium of wisdom, Proverbs. For example, see Proverbs 17:17, “a friend loves at all times” or Proverbs 18:24, “there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.”

These texts leave the impression that God regards friendship as a very important part of life. The Bible uses two consistent images in its representation of friendship.

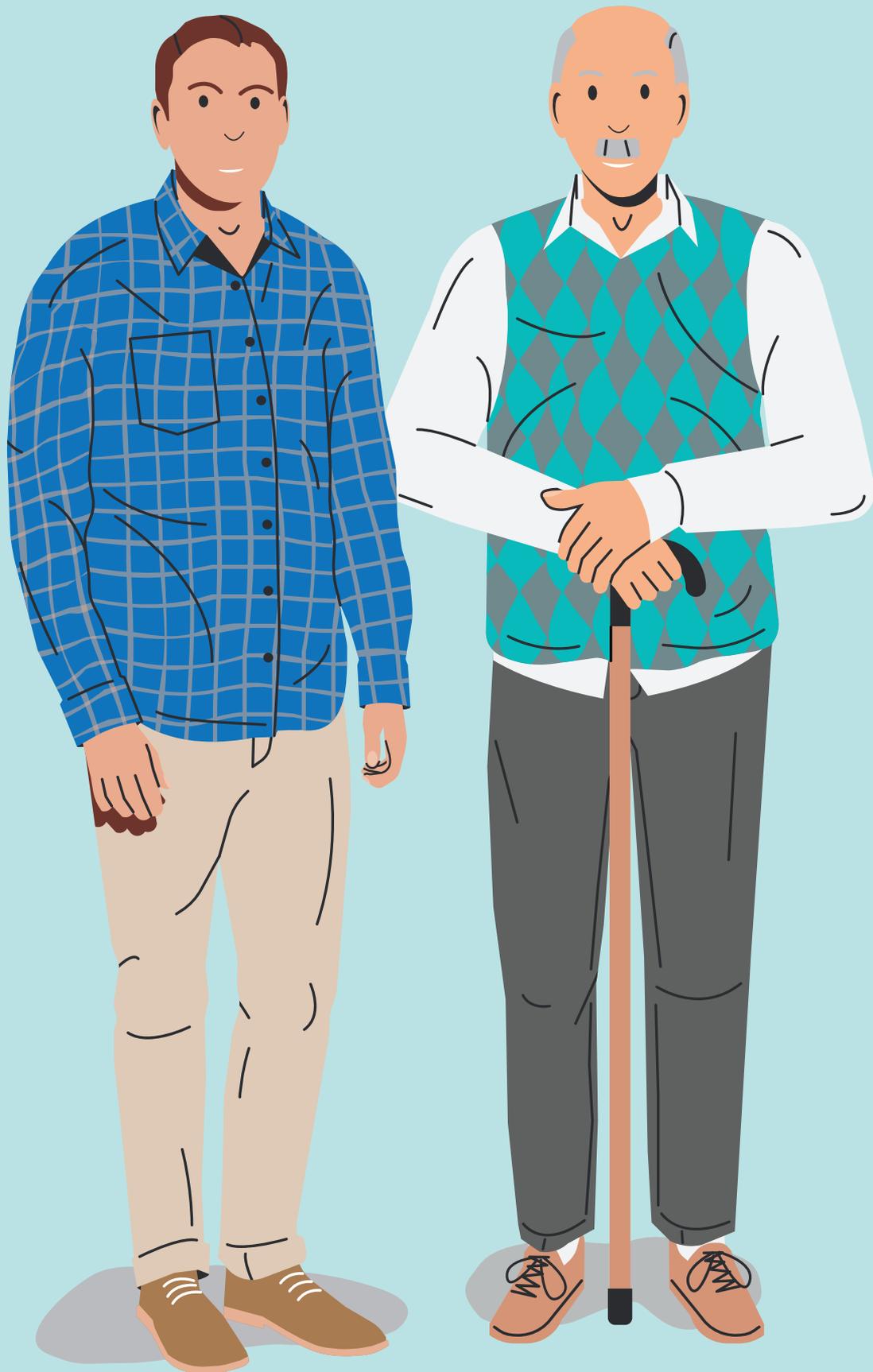
### 1. The knitting of souls

The first is the knitting of souls. Deuteronomy provides the earliest mention of “a friend who is as your own soul” (Deuteronomy 13:6), that is, a companion of one’s innermost thoughts and feelings—the concept of deep intimacy. It is well illustrated by Jonathan and David’s friendship in 1 Samuel 18:1,3–4:

After David had finished talking with Saul, Jonathan became one in spirit with David, and he loved him as himself.

And Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself. Jonathan took off the robe he was wearing and gave it to David, along with his tunic, and even his sword, his bow and his belt.

Here we see ideas of strong emotional attachment and loyalty. In fact, “friend”



naturally became another name for believers or brothers and sisters in the Lord, as we read in 3 John 1:5:

Dear friend, you are faithful in what you are doing for the brothers and sisters, even though they are strangers to you.

The privileges and responsibilities of a biblical soulmate, then, involve intimacy, loyalty and strong emotional attachment.

## 2. The face-to-face encounter

The second image the Bible uses to represent friendship is the face-to-face encounter. This is literally the image used for Moses' relationship to God. In the tabernacle, God spoke to Moses "face to face, as a man speaks to his friend" (Exodus 33:11; see also Numbers 12:8). The face-to-face image implies a conversation, a sharing of confidences and consequently a meeting of minds, goals and direction.

One of the benefits of face-to-face encounters between friends is the heightened insight such encounters produce. A proverb that highlights this idea is the famous one in Proverbs 27:17: "Iron sharpens iron, and one friend sharpens another."

## THE FRIENDSHIP OF PAUL AND TIMOTHY

There is a common stereotype about Paul, that he was a sort of "Lone Ranger" evangelist, one who preferred to work by himself. In fact, Paul was rarely found without companions. Samuel Johnson, the eighteenth-century author and lexicographer, once said about Sir John Hawkins that he was "a most unclubbable man." Such a remark could not be said of Paul. He was a gregarious man, who "delighted in the company of his fellows," as E.E. Ellis writes.

And of Paul's companions, the dearest would have to be Timothy. Though he was probably twenty or so years Paul's junior, Timothy became the apostle's closest friend. In the words of F.F. Bruce,

[Timothy] readily surrendered whatever personal ambitions he might have cherished in order to play the part of a son to Paul and help him in his missionary activity, showing a selfless concern for others that matched

the apostle's own eagerness to spend and be spent for them.

Timothy joined the apostle Paul's ministry team early around A.D. 48/49, in what is termed Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 16:1–3). Timothy had grown up with a Christian mother and grandmother and had himself embraced faith in Christ (2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14–15). As Timothy travelled with Paul, he saw firsthand what Paul later called his "doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions" (2 Timothy 3:10–11).

(a) *Doctrine*: Timothy grew to know the details of Paul's theology and doctrinal convictions. He learned that at the heart of all genuinely Christian theology is God: the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. He came to be grounded in the fact that the gospel is centred on the death and resurrection of Christ, the only way men and women can come into a relationship with this God, the one true and living God.

(b) *Manner of life*: Timothy also saw the way Paul lived, how he made decisions and how he determined the best use of his time.

(c) *Purpose*: Timothy saw that how Paul lived dovetailed with his purpose for living, namely, the glorification of God and of his Son, Christ Jesus.

(d) *Faith, longsuffering, love*: Timothy observed Paul's love for the church and his compassion for those who were held in the darkness of sin.

(e) *Perseverance, persecutions, afflictions*: Timothy saw the way Paul responded with patience and perseverance to difficulties and the fact that the apostle did not waver in his commitment to Christ despite persecution and affliction.

### Ministry together

As Paul and Timothy spent a large amount of time together, Timothy's soul began to mirror Paul's, and his own mind became increasingly attuned to the wavelengths of the apostle's thinking. Timothy's friendship with Paul became one of the means God used to sanctify the younger man, giving him an ever-increasing richness of thought about God and the gospel, and an ever-growing desire for holiness and conformity to Christ.

Paul and Timothy's co-labouring can be seen over time in the New Testament:

- A.D. 49/51—"Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace and peace to you" (1 Thessalonians 1:1).
- A.D. 49/51—"Paul, Silas and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thessalonians 1:1).
- A.D. 53/55—"When Timothy comes, see to it that he has nothing to fear while he is with you, for he is carrying on the work of the Lord, just as I am. No one, then, should treat him with contempt. Send him on his way in peace so that he may return to me. I am expecting him along with the brothers" (1 Corinthians 16:10–11).
- A.D. 53/55—Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, To the church of God in Corinth, together with all his holy people throughout Achaia" (2 Corinthians 1:1).
- A.D. 60/62—"Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons" (Philippians 1:1).
- A.D. 60/62—"Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Timothy our brother" (Colossians 1:1).
- A.D. 60/62—"Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother, To Philemon our dear friend and fellow worker" (Philemon 1).

In 1 Corinthians 15:33, Paul urges the Corinthians to recognize that "evil company corrupts good habits." Intimate friendships with evil people will invariably have a negative effect on our lives. Likewise, one can say "good company promotes good habits." This was the effect Paul had on Timothy.

And this was the effect that friendship with the eighteenth-century Baptist Samuel Pearce (1766–1799), a man of great personal holiness, had on the Congregationalist William Jay (1769–1853). Jay said this about the last time that he saw Pearce alive: "What a savour does communion with such a man leave upon the spirit." As Maurice Roberts, former editor of *The Banner of Truth* magazine, puts it: "Our best friends are those whose company most makes us afraid to sin."

**There is a common stereotype about Paul, that he was a sort of "Lone Ranger" evangelist . . . in fact, Paul was rarely found without companions.**

## Timothy did not serve [Paul], but together—as equals before God—they served the Lord of the gospel, Christ.

### Christlikeness

Probably the clearest text in which the dearness of Paul's friendship with Timothy comes out is Philippians 2:19–22, which Paul wrote from Rome, around A.D. 60–62, when he was under house arrest. Paul begins by urging the Philippians to be “likeminded” (see also Philippians 4:2), “having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind,” looking out for not only their own interests but also those of others (Philippians 2:2–4).

To illustrate this admonition and drive it home, Paul encourages the Philippians to meditate on the example of Christ, whose mind and heart were not focused on his own personal interests but on those of fallen humanity. Jesus was so taken with the lot of sinners that although he was fully God he “made himself of no reputation.” He became incarnate, and willingly and humbly, he took upon himself the burden of human sin, and was “obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:6–8).

After Paul outlines the work and motivation of Christ, he gives a second example of being likeminded and having the interests of others at heart. This time he turns to his dear friend Timothy:

I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one likeminded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel (Philippians 2:19–22).

From the words and phrases Paul uses here, it is clear he is recommending Timothy as an example of Christlikeness. Unlike others Paul knew, Timothy sincerely cares for the state of the Philippian church. He is genuinely concerned about the needs of other believers and is not solely seeking to promote his own interests, and as such, he displays the mind of Christ. Paul describes Timothy in verse 20 as “likeminded.” Because of his desire to be like Christ, Timothy is one who fully shares Paul's heart and mind and is a completely trustworthy companion and friend of Paul.

Due to their age difference, Paul naturally speaks of Timothy as his son. He says Timothy has proven his worth during his ministry with Paul “as a son with his father” (cf. 1 Timothy 1:2). But Paul quickly adds that Timothy has not been serving him but rather the gospel. Paul is always very careful to avoid giving the impression he is lord and master over the faith of others. Timothy did not serve him, but together—as equals before God—they served the Lord of the gospel, Christ.

In this text from Philippians, we clearly see how Paul prizes his friendship with Timothy, and that their friendship is based on a harmony of heart and mind. Without such harmony there can be no intimate friendship.

### Parting words

The final scriptural record of this very blessed intergenerational friendship is found in 2 Timothy. This letter to Timothy was written weeks, perhaps a few months, before Paul's death by a Roman executioner. As he wrote, Paul was in a cell in an obscure prison in Rome while Timothy was in Ephesus, on the coast of what is modern-day Turkey. Paul opens the letter by describing Timothy as a “beloved son” whom he regularly remembers in prayer and eagerly desires to see. As he thinks of Timothy, he especially recalls the last time the two were together, when Timothy broke down and wept,

To Timothy, my dear son: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy (2 Timothy 1:2–4).

This occasion may well have been when Paul was arrested.

After encouraging Timothy to hold fast to the gospel, to pursue godliness and to fulfil his ministry, Paul tells his friend of his impending death. Paul is facing this prospect of death with confidence, aware he is saved and stands in a right relationship with “the righteous judge” (2 Timothy 4:6–8; 1:9). But so strong is his friendship with Timothy that no sooner has he mentioned

### THINK ABOUT YOUR FRIENDSHIPS...

1. Do you have any friends with whom you share your faith and purpose, and with whom you have a “knitting of souls”?
2. What do you think are some obstacles to this kind of friendship?
3. Do you make a conscious effort to BE the kind of friend the Bible describes?
4. Are intergenerational friendships more difficult to make for you? How might you pursue these?

his looming death, than he urges Timothy to be “diligent to come to me quickly” (2 Timothy 4:9). In fact, as Paul draws his letter to a close, he again urges his friend, “Do your utmost to come before winter” (2 Timothy 4:21), since during the winter months (November to March) it was dangerous to sail the Mediterranean. Aware of this and conscious that his death was close, Paul urges Timothy to sail from Ephesus for Rome before winter. If he did not leave soon, he would have to travel overland, which would take considerably longer (and he might not arrive in Rome before Paul's death).

Paul's longing to see his friend should not be taken to mean he feared that somehow his friendship with Timothy would not be renewed in heaven. Rather, Paul would certainly have agreed with an observation made by Esther Edwards Burr (1732–1758):

Nothing is more refreshing to the soul (except communication with God himself), than the company and society of a friend. **B**

### Postscript

Did Timothy make the trip to see Paul? I believe so. Look at Hebrews 13:23.

 Michael A.G. Haykin is chair and professor of church history at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky, and director of The Andrew Fuller Center for Baptist Studies. He is also professor of church history at Heritage Theological Seminary in Cambridge, Ontario. He is married to Alison and attends West Highland Church, Hamilton, Ontario.



# WHEN GOD ISN'T SILENT

THE TRAVAILS OF HABAKKUK  
BY NATHANAEL REED

## Where does one turn

when life's shadows deepen and all help fails? Despairing people can be found throughout the pages of Scripture: men and women who endured soul-crushing experiences, turned their eyes to the heavens and cried for help. During such times, many, like King David, pleaded earnestly that the Almighty might not be silent during such times of distress:

To you, O LORD, I call; my rock, be not deaf to me, lest, if you be silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit (Psalm 28:1, ESV).

Yet God's voice is not always silent. At times he quietly whispers to our spirit through his Word, and at other times he moves in more overt ways. Abraham, Moses, Job, Sampson's mother, Elijah and Hannah were only a few characters of Scripture who reached out to God with astonishing results. The prophet, Habakkuk, also got more than he bargained for when he turned his face skyward.

Habakkuk's tiny, three-chapter book features a terribly disappointed man who had reached his wit's end. Judah's corrupt king and the nation's rulers had forsaken God for idols and had rendered destitute the poor people of the land. Habakkuk's frustration is almost palpable in the book's opening verses:

O Jehovah, how long shall I cry, and thou wilt not hear? I cry out unto thee of violence, and thou wilt not save (1:2, ASV)

Then, lest God had not fully grasped that Habakkuk was accusing him of falling down on the job, the prophet throws in a caustic jab at God's very character:

Why do you make me see iniquity, and why do you idly look at wrong? (1:3, ESV)

Here the prophet boldly suggests that God was either too lazy or too disconnected to come to the assistance of his

distraught people. Habakkuk continues by itemizing each of the issues facing his downtrodden countrymen:

- destruction
- violence
- strife and contention
- the law is paralyzed
- justice never goes forth, or goes forth perverted
- the wicked surround the righteous (1:3–4)

The prophet then takes a deep breath and waits fearfully for God's reply. Much to his surprise, however, God does not rebuke him for his impetuousness or impertinence but goes straight to the heart of the matter. He begins by assuring Habakkuk that he is well aware of the nation's apostasy and violence, and informs his servant that he will not only do something about it, but he will accomplish it during Habakkuk's own lifetime.

At these words, Habakkuk's heart probably soared. At long last, God was going to step in and bring the nation's corrupt king and his minions to account. But as the Lord continued, the prophet's joy turned to dismay when he discovered how these plans would be fulfilled: *God would be using the ungodly Chaldeans to discipline the people of Judah.*

Although Habakkuk is utterly appalled at the wisdom of God's pronouncement, it is interesting to note that he begins his response by acknowledging that surely the decisions of Almighty God are righteous and perfect—although certainly not in *this* particular matter.

...why do you idly look at traitors and remain silent when the wicked swallows up the man more righteous than he? (1:13, ESV)

In other words, *How on earth can you use the wicked Chaldeans to discipline Judah? The Chaldeans are far more evil than the people*

## **Although we may not know the mind of God during times of distress, we can be confident in his love and patience, even when our souls urge us to doubt his love.**

*of Judah will ever be.*

Once again, Habakkuk braces himself for the Lord's response, but God continues to surprise. Instead of bringing the frustrated, faltering prophet to task, the Lord assures him that even though the evil Chaldeans will be used to discipline Judah, they too will be judged for their wickedness.

God's compassion and wisdom prove equal to his patience as he couches his message with two declarations of personal relevance to the prophet.

First, God assigns a specific task to his befuddled servant, telling Habakkuk to transcribe their conversation and make it known to the people of Judah:

Write the vision; make it plain on tablets, so he may run who reads it (2:2, ESV).

Not only did God want to involve Habakkuk directly in the cleansing of his people but he also wanted this historic dialogue to be made public so faithful Israelites might flee before the arrival of the Chaldean army. Also, by recording this exchange, Habakkuk was making it available to future generations, future generations who would learn how God typically responds to one of his discouraged children—with love, understanding and patience.

Secondly, in seven little words, God assures Habakkuk he can trust his promises in all things:

...the righteous shall live by his faith (2:4b, ESV).

This stands as one of the most momentous verses in all of Scripture—one that is quoted

three times in the New Testament. God explains that if you really want to live as fearlessly as possible, you need to have faith that God is with you every step of your journey and he has your very best interests at heart in all things. God can be trusted not only during the rise and fall of historical events but through the joys and sorrows of life as well.

When the trials of life are overwhelming and God seems to be silent, it can be tremendously difficult for Christians, but it can also serve as an opportunity for spiritual growth, as Habakkuk's experience proved.

In C.S. Lewis's fantasy *The Screwtape Letters*, the devil, Screwtape, advises his followers:

Our cause is never more in danger than when a human, no longer desiring, but still intending, to do our Enemy's [God's] will, looks round a universe from which every trace of Him seems to have vanished, and asks why he has been forsaken, and still obeys.

The concluding verses of Habakkuk harbour one of the most dynamic statements of faith in all of Scripture. Here the author expresses in no uncertain terms his newfound confidence in the God of creation:

Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD: I will

take joy in the God of my salvation (3:17–18, ESV).

Like Job, he could say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him" (Job 13:15, KJV).

Even though God did not explain to Habakkuk the reasons for his *peculiar* decisions, the prophet now has faith to know that although it may be impossible to understand the Lord's reasonings in such matters, he will soldier on, knowing that the outcome will be for the ultimate good of the people of Judah and for himself.

The message of Habakkuk is one of encouragement and comfort. Although we may not know the mind of God during times of distress, we can be confident in his love and patience, even when our souls urge us to doubt his love. Like Habakkuk, we can know that God is always working things out for the eternal good of those who love him. And, during our darkest hours, like Habakkuk, we can look to the heavens and say with him, "the Lord is my strength" (3:19, ESV). He will surely see me through. **B**

Faith isn't the ability to believe long and far into the misty future. It's simply taking God at his Word and taking the next step.

—Joni Erickson Tada

**B** Nathanael and Joyce Reed attend Southdale Bible Chapel in London, Ontario, where they are active in the seniors' ministry. The Reeds have four grown sons and nine grandchildren. Nathanael has had five books published: *Thunderbird Gold* (JourneyForth Books), *Goodbyes Along the Way* (Penumbra Press), *Visions of Eternity* with his son Joel Reed (Gospel Folio Press), *Mystery at Red Marsh Lake* (Marshall Cavendish) and *God of the Trees* (Everyday Publications). Nathanael has also been published in such magazines as *Faith Today*, *The Bible Advocate*, *Canadian Aviator*, *Cornerstone* and *Our Canada*.

# CHALLENGING CHOLERA

PASTOR CHARLES H. SPURGEON AND MEDICAL DOCTOR JOHN SNOW LABOURED IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND. BY DAVID HERBERT

**V**ictorian England, between 1831 and 1866, experienced four waves of a worldwide cholera pandemic. It has been estimated that 250,000 died during these three horrid decades. When the cholera bacterium (*vibrio cholerae*) appeared in 1831, its symptoms—diarrhea, nausea and vomiting which resulted in dehydration along with the skin having a bluish tinge—brought terror upon the British populace.

The second wave of cholera struck London in the fall of 1854. In April of that same year, a nineteen-year old Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892) was called to shepherd New Park Street Church in London, its dwindling congregation unable to pay his regular salary. In his autobiography, this fledgling pastor gave a heart-rending description of how the epidemic impacted him personally:

Family after family summoned me to the bedside of the smitten, and almost every day I was called to visit the grave. At first, I gave myself up with youthful ardor to the visitation of the sick, and was sent for from all corners of the district by persons of all ranks and religion (*Autobiography*, 1:272).

Conducting numerous funerals for both his dearly beloved parishioners and also non-parishioners began to weigh heavily on the heart of this youthful pastor. His emotional strain was near a breaking point! But on returning home from yet another tearful and heart-wrenching funeral, he experienced God's ever-present compassion for him when he noticed a sign, quoting Psalm 91:9–10 in the local shoemaker's window:

Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling (*Autobiography*, 1:272, italics added).

The impact of these verses was immediate.

"I felt secure, refreshed, girt with immortality. I went on with my visitation of the dying, in a calm and peaceful spirit; I felt no fear of evil, I suffered no harm" (*Autobiography*, 1:272). Committed to his congregation, Spurgeon cancelled his many preaching engagements and focused his attention on his needy flock.

Early one Monday morning at 3 a.m., he was awakened to attend a dying man's request for a pastoral visit. On arriving, he was informed the man had just died.

**"I never saw more conspicuously in my life, than I did that morning, the difference there is between one who feared God and one who feared Him not."**

Spurgeon recognized this man as one who had viciously harassed him on numerous occasions—he had even called Spurgeon a hypocrite!

Unable to share with him the message of spiritual life, Spurgeon knew the man's fate had been sealed to a Christless eternity.

Shortly after returning home, he was again called to render his services to one dying with cholera. On this occasion, he came to the side of a young lady who was singing praises to God. She was encouraging those gathered about her to seek God's forgiveness so that she could spend eternity with them.

Later, musing over these two visits, Spurgeon thought: "I never saw more conspicuously in my life, than I did that morning, the difference there is between one who feared God and one who feared Him not" (*Autobiography*, 1:274).

As Spurgeon was tending to the spiritual needs of the ill, Dr. John Snow (1813–1858), a family doctor, was conducting ground-breaking research on the causal factors concerning the cholera epidemic. He doubted the prevailing theory called "miasma" which was believed to be

air-borne as a result of toxic gases that came from sewers, cesspools and other fetid sites. Frank Snowden, author of *Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present* (Yale 2019), made this comment: "Cholera was an irredeemably filthy, foreign and lower-class disease."

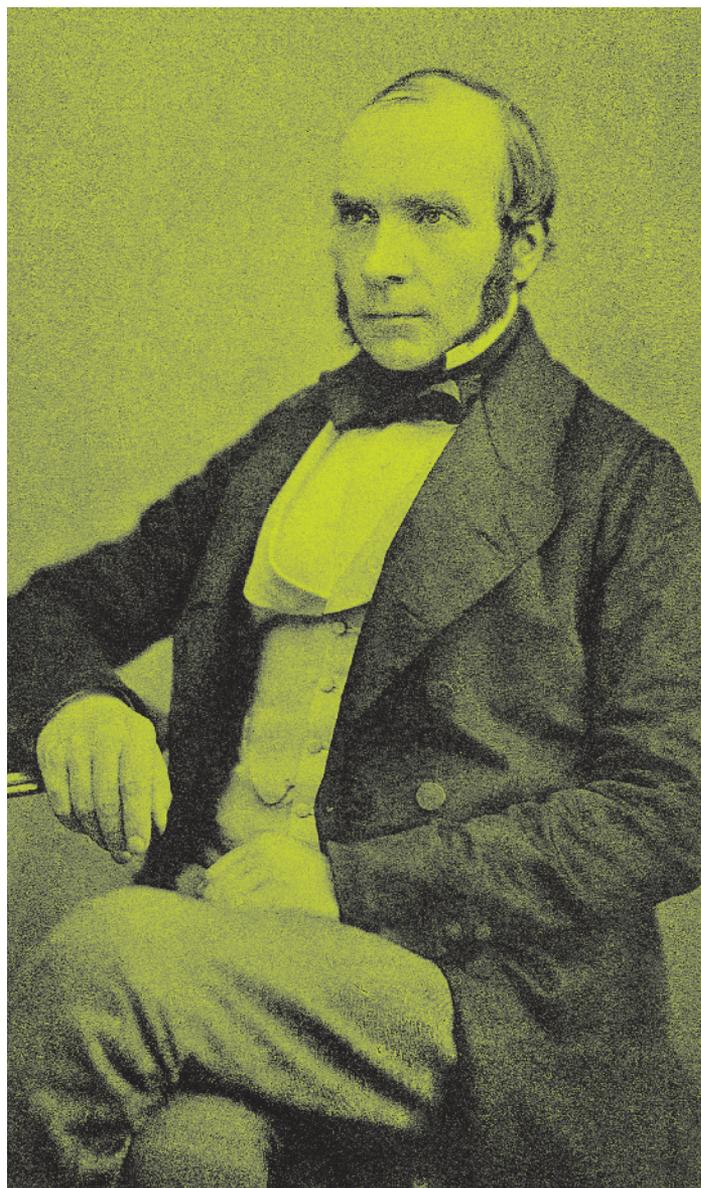
When an outbreak occurred in the Broad Street area of London, Dr. Snow witnessed firsthand the devastating effects of the epidemic. He began tracking the deaths of some 600 people within a two-week period in September 1854. He came to the conclusion that all these people were drawing their water from the same pump. Dr. Snow later discovered that the workers at nearby Broad Street brewery never contracted cholera. Given a daily allowance of beer, they never consumed the polluted well-water.

He reported his findings to the local health authorities who removed the pump handle. The number of deaths dropped dramatically. Dr. Snow was convinced that the "miasma" theory had no basis. Further confirmation came when it was discovered that the drinking water had been contaminated by a sewer drain which was near the wall of the well. As expected, the majority of physicians and the health officials still remained convinced that the "miasma" theory was the best explanation for the cholera outbreaks.

Dr. Snow's scientific approach to understanding the cause of this human menace has immortalized him as the "Father of Epidemiology." It would take another twenty years before Louis Pasteur (1822–1895) would advance the "germ" theory which had eluded Dr. Snow, who died four years after the water-pump incident.

Spurgeon had seen that the fear of death brought a greater sensitivity to the gospel. On February 15, 1855, Spurgeon brought this encouragement:

The cholera may come next summer—I pray God it may not; but if it does, it matters not to me: I will toil and visit the sick by night and day until I drop; and if it takes me, sudden death is glory . . . What is death? It is



From left: Pastor C.H. Spurgeon and Dr. John Snow laboured in Victorian London during the waves of cholera that plagued the city.

a low porch through which you stoop to enter heaven (*The New Street Pulpit*, 1:66).

During the summer of 1866, the fourth wave reared its ugly head in London. In a short period of time, nearly 6,000 people perished in England's capital. In response to this prevailing disaster, Spurgeon preached his memorable sermon, "The Voices of Cholera," based on Amos 3:3–6. He began by expressing his grief over the death of his fellow Londoners. But he noted that Christianity was not opposed to better cleanliness, better housing for the poorer segment of society and most definitely a cleaner water supply.

He drew his listeners' attention to the moral decadence and the theological apostasy of the Church of England. Using

**"What is death? It is a low porch through which you stoop to enter heaven."**

the prophet Amos' trumpet analogy, Spurgeon warned of impending divine judgement:

Disease, however, is a trumpet which must be heard! Its echoes reach the miserable . . . In the darkest cellar in the most crowded haunt of vice—yes, and in the palaces of kings, in the halls of the rich and great—the sound finds an entrance and the cry is raised, "The death plague is come! The cholera is among us!" All men are compelled to

hear the trumpet! . . . Would to God all of us were aroused to a searching of heart, and, above all, led to fly to Christ Jesus, the great Sacrifice for sin, and to find in Him a rescue from the greater plague—the wrath to come ("The Voice of Cholera").

The challenge against cholera was indeed a two-pronged approach: spiritually with Charles Haddon Spurgeon and medically with Dr. John Snow! **B**

David Herbert, a retired elementary and secondary history teacher, has authored a number of books. He attends Southdale Bible Chapel in London, ON.

# WHAT IS WOKENESS? (PART 1)



**BY OWEN PIKKERT** >> During the past decade or so, a noticeable shift has taken place in public discourse. Many people now openly valorize diversity, condemn free speech, exhibit cynicism toward their country's history, focus on their privilege (or lack thereof), advocate reparations, make

land acknowledgments, write diversity statements, call out micro-aggressions and exhibit a general suspicion toward capitalism. For better or for worse, these ideas and their proponents are often clumped together as “woke.” My goal in this and subsequent articles is to offer a Christian response to wokeness. In this article I will briefly explain what wokeness is and why many find it so appealing. As was true of the men of Issachar, it is desirable to understand the times, so that we may know what to do (1 Chronicles 12:32). In subsequent articles I will examine the degree to which wokeness is compatible with Christianity, as well as strategies for witnessing to the woke. After all, the woke are our neighbours, and they are here to stay.

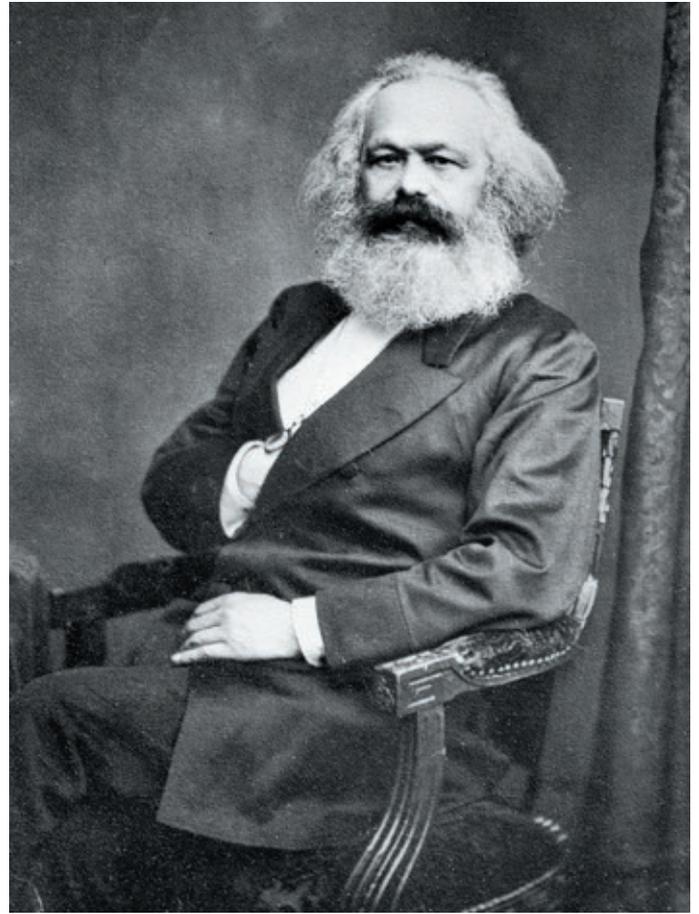
To understand wokeness, we must first understand Marxism. Many are familiar with the image of Karl Marx toiling away at his desk, producing the intimidating *Das Kapital*, and, along with Friedrich Engels, the rather less intimidating *Communist Manifesto*. Fewer are familiar with what these works actually contain. Focusing on the latter, and simplifying greatly, we may discern the following five ideas: (1) people can be divided into two groups, namely oppressors and oppressed; (2) the oppressors have brainwashed most of the oppressed into an ignorant and servile complacency; (3) such brainwashing must be resisted by making the oppressed more aware of their oppression; (4) having been made thus aware, the oppressed must revolt against their oppressors (though Marx advocated a comparatively peaceful revolution); (5) the oppressors and the oppressed are determined by class: the oppressors are those who live primarily off the accumulation of capital, whereas the oppressed serve their oppressors on subsistence wages.

Now it is difficult to find a theory that has failed more spectacularly than classical Marxism. It failed predictively: the prediction

**One might think that, with such a list of failures, those sympathetic to Marxism in the West—primarily academics in humanities departments—would have given it all up.**

was that revolutions would occur primarily in industrialized societies, when in fact they occurred primarily in agrarian lands. It failed economically: far from a great redistribution of wealth and a higher overall standard of living, communist societies were dominated by a wealthy elite while the masses suffered chronic shortages. And it failed morally: to pull off the putative redistribution of wealth, the state had to become so large that its opponents soon found themselves in gulags and reeducation centres.

One might think that, with such a list of failures, those sympathetic to Marxism in the West—primarily academics in humanities departments—would have given it all up. But they did not. Instead, when the failures of Marxism became apparent for all to see, they simply rebranded. What these western Marxists did was



**Karl Marx (1818–1883): Wokeness is a rebranding and expansion of Marxism by academics in the West.**

to keep the first four Marxist ideas described above, and modify the fifth. That is, rather than categorizing the oppressed simply according to class, they expanded the category to include women, ethnic minorities, sexual minorities, the colonized, the physically disabled, those with mental health issues, and so on. The oppressors were now straight, white, abled men who had managed to brainwash most of the newly defined oppressed into complacency. Of course, the former Marxists—now the woke—saw through these lies, pointing them out to anyone who would listen. And, as in the past, they split over how the revolution should proceed. The majority preferred a peaceful approach. A minority preferred a violent approach, advocating the destruction of private property, the tearing down of statues and the like. These divisions are now a matter of public record.

I have so far described wokeness as a rebranding and expansion of Marxism. But I also indicated that western Marxists consisted largely of academics in humanities departments. How did such a small group of professors manage to make so many converts? While the answer is undoubtedly complex, we may at least discern a few precipitating factors.

## 1. A hard truth

The first is simply that wokeness puts its finger on a hard truth: there have been many straight, white, abled men who have exploited people in unspeakable ways. Should anyone doubt

# REDEEMING MARRIAGE



**BY DALE NEVELIZER** >> Storybooks often begin with “Once upon a time” and end with “And they lived happily ever after.” Unfortunately, fiction seldom conforms to reality. In a fallen world, marriages far too often end with broken hearts and lives. *How can marriages be redeemed to last a lifetime to the glory of God?*

Paul’s desire when writing to the Colossian Christians was for them to know that neither legalism nor mysticism could empower them to live the Christian life, but that Christ is all, and all that we need. The Christian life is lived by setting our hearts and minds on things above and not on earthly things. This leads us to put to death the things of the flesh and to clothe ourselves with the things of Christ. This taking off and putting on applies to the marriage relationship as Paul addresses married couples in Colossians 3:18–19, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as it is fitting in the

Lord. Husbands love your wives and do not be harsh with them.”

Colossians is the abbreviated marriage manual from Ephesians 5:22–33 where Paul instructs wives to submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ and husbands to love their wives as Christ loved the church. When Paul calls on wives to submit to their husbands, he is not teaching that women are inferior to men but he is simply referring to their distinct roles.



**Marital problems are not due to toxic masculinity but to our toxic sinful nature.**

Nor is he implying that all women are to be submissive to all men, but only in the areas of male leadership in the church and in the home. Far from oppressing women, Christianity elevated women who were treated as slaves or sex objects to being equal in Christ. While praised for the virtues of being a wife and mother, the Proverbs 31 woman was also a successful entrepreneur. Submission does not condone abuse of any kind and is always voluntary. Submission simply means that a wife’s actions and attitudes toward her husband are fitting according to the role that God has given her from creation and redemption.

And rather than treating our wives as slaves, husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church. *Are we committed to our wife till death do us part, as Christ committed himself in covenant relationship with the church? Do we have eyes only for our wife as Christ set his electing love exclusively on the church? And are we servant leaders to our wife as Christ came not to be served but to serve by sacrificially giving His life for the church?*

Marital problems are not due to toxic masculinity but to our toxic sinful nature. Nor is a woman’s greatest need for a man. But men and women’s greatest need is for the God-Man Jesus Christ. Only then can husbands love their wives as Christ loved the church and wives submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ and live to God’s glory. **B**

this, they should familiarize themselves with the depravities sanctioned by the Belgian King Leopold II in Congo. It will quickly make one’s blood run cold. It will also provide emotional confirmation that wokeness is not entirely false.

## 2. Changes in higher education

A second reason for the spread of wokeness concerns changes in higher education. Starting in the 1960s, humanities departments greatly increased the number of degrees on offer and the number of students enrolled. No longer was our professor divining Milton to a handful of eager pupils; he now found himself describing the sufferings of the oppressed to thousands of nameless faces. As it turned out, however, these faces did have names, and these names were not confined to the lapels of local baristas. They also began to appear at the end of journalists’ reports, in movie credits, and on voting cards. Having been firmly impressed by wokeness at an impressionable age, many of these graduates went on to occupy positions of influence. There are now a huge number of young people graduating with essentially woke degrees.

## 3. Death of the American Dream

Still, one should not underestimate the number of graduates who remain at the local coffee shop. And this leads to the third reason wokeness has spread so widely. After the Second World War, there was a comparatively long period of economic prosperity in North America, whereby the overall standard of living generally increased. Despite periodic setbacks, it was widely thought possible for a hardworking young person to eventually achieve the American dream of a suburban home with a nice garage. Since the financial crisis of 2008, however, many young people see the American Dream as the American Fantasy. The price of a suburban home with a nice garage is now so high that one can sympathize with even the most hardworking young person, whose job may consist more of Skip the Dishes gigs than a unionized factory career. It is thus unsurprising that many young people are looking for an explanation and a remedy for their current economic woes. This they find in wokeness, with its ready list of oppressors, and its call for substantive change.

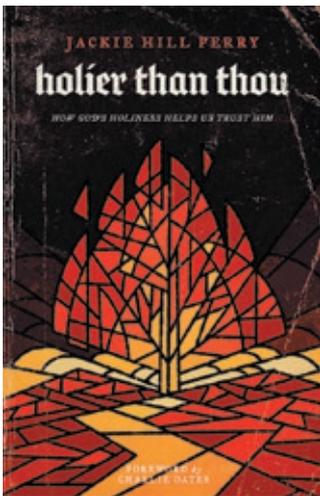
## 4. Pride

There is a fourth, more cynical reason for the spread of wokeness. It is that wokeness appeals to the most prevalent of human vices, namely that of pride. It tickles one’s pride that one can observe forces of oppression where others cannot. It tickles one’s pride that one can describe these observations using trendy woke words when others cannot. And it tickles one’s pride to reconceive one’s personal failures as wounds inflicted by evil oppressors. The tickling of pride is so appealing that it is little wonder that people choose wokeness over traditional Christianity, with its heavy emphasis on personal sin. Why choose a religion that says you are ignorant and depraved, when you can choose one that says you are insightful and good? Such competition may indeed be discouraging. But it also provides unique opportunities for Christian witness. In subsequent articles, I will further compare wokeness with Christianity, and provide some suggestions for witnessing. **B**

➤ Owen Pikkert teaches philosophy at the University of Toronto. He is a member of Philpott Church in Hamilton, ON.

➤ Dale Nevelizer is pastor of Tilbury Regular Baptist Church, Tilbury, ON.

Reviews OF NEW & RECENT books

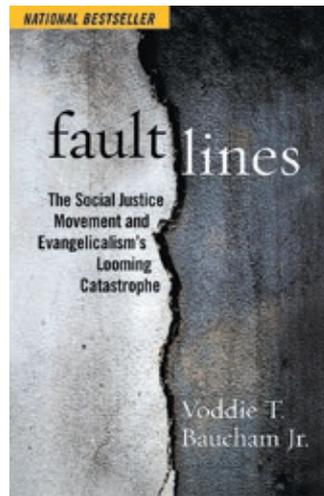


**HOLIER THAN THOU**  
*How God's Holiness Helps Us Trust Him*  
**BY JACKIE HILL PERRY**  
B&H Publishing (2021); 192 pgs  
ISBN 978-1535975711

Is there anything more important than our walk with God? Should we be satisfied to let our sin darken his revealed glory? In the face of God, every believer must answer, “No.” Read this book and discover God’s holy nature; you will benefit greatly.

Author Jackie Hill Perry anchors her writing in Scripture but presents and phrases theology in a way that stirs reflection. She ranges through Scripture pointing to familiar people and incidents but gives us fresh eyes to see. She helps us understand what it means when God says he is holy, how it is that his holiness is not just one attribute among many but his nature through and through. Perry delves into the moral perfection of God, how it is he cannot sin and why that matters. She juxtaposes God’s transcendence, justice and mercy, with our sin and idolatry—and we are undone.

This is no book of theory, for throughout and especially in the latter chapters, she gives excellent direction as to how a believer can know God, draw near to him and be like God as his holy image-bearer and as a Spirit-created likeness of Jesus Christ.—DALE COGSWELL

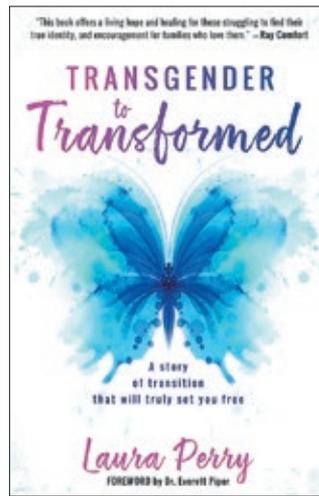


**FAULT LINES**  
*The Social Justice Movement and Evangelicalism's Looming Catastrophe*  
**BY VODDIE T. BAUCHAM JR.**  
Salem Books (2021); 270 pgs  
ISBN 978-1684511808

Racial tensions in the United States, and to a lesser extent in Canada, have fermented powerful social movements that have caused concern and raised serious questions for evangelicals. How do concepts such as critical race theory, the social justice movement and Black Lives Matter mesh with orthodox, evangelical Christianity? It is very difficult for the concerned and caring Christian to know how to navigate the maze of these ideologies and teachings of the Bible. I believe *Fault Lines* is an excellent help for God’s people.

Voddie Baucham is an African-American pastor who is dean of the School of Divinity at African Christian University in Zambia. As he deals with these vital issues, there is a weaving together of biography, clear analysis, concise biblical theology and cogent argumentation. Baucham has a good grasp of the issues of the day. He is alert to the dangers and difficulties for the evangelical church if she caves into the social pressures of the times.

It will take prayer and wisdom to work through this book, but it is a very helpful read.—DON THEOBALD

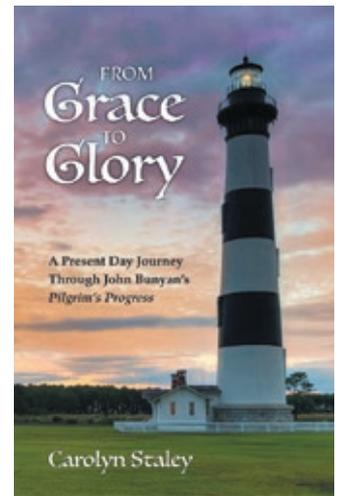


**TRANSGENER TO TRANSFORMED**  
*A Story of Transition That Will Truly Set You Free*  
**BY LAURA PERRY**  
Genesis Publishing (2019); 191 pgs  
ISBN 978-1933591308

Laura Perry grew up in a Christian home, not a perfect home. She heard the gospel and even made professions of salvation. Yet her life was a vicious descent into rebellion, sexual promiscuity and ultimately transgenering into a male named Jake.

God patiently bore with Laura and began to irresistibly draw her to himself. Not only did the Lord Jesus save her, but he showed her the lies and deceptions of the transgendered lifestyle and brought her back to her true identity as a woman.

This is a gritty, well-written account of what God’s grace can do in a messed-up sinner’s life. The author is brutally honest, open and very insightful. The book is grace-centred and God-glorifying. You must read this with your mind and heart. You cannot help being deeply grieved by the utter cruelty of sin and Satan, but then elated by the persistence and persuasive power of God’s grace. The book ends with a moving invitation to those struggling with LGBT lifestyle issues and encouragement to parents of those who have identified themselves as transgender. A great read!—DON THEOBALD



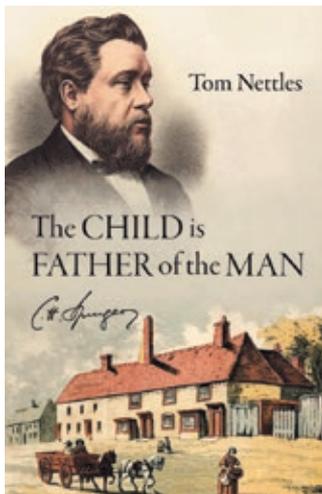
**FROM GRACE TO GLORY**  
*A Present Day Journey Through John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress*  
**BY CAROLYN STALEY**  
Solid Ground (2019); 676 pgs  
ISBN 978-1599253992

For fifty years, next to the Bible, *Pilgrim's Progress* has been my most favourite and profitable Christian book. I have never read through Bunyan’s classic without learning new truths and relearning old truths.

While browsing in a Christian bookstore last December, I came across *From Grace to Glory*, written by Carolyn Staley, a pastor’s wife for almost fifty years. As the sub-title says, it is a present day journey through *Pilgrim's Progress*. I cannot recommend this book too highly. It is an excellent, commentary-like aid that takes the reader on Christian’s journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City.

Staley’s book consists of 54 chapters, each theologically sound with many practical and personal insights. Chapters conclude with study questions to help the reader to review the salient truths of the section and also to apply these truths to one’s life.

*From Grace to Glory* is not to be rushed through. Time is needed to take in the wonderful truths and spiritual insight. This is a great book to supplement your personal devotions. Two thumbs up!—DON THEOBALD



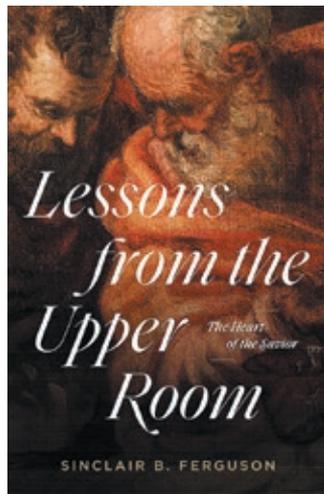
**THE CHILD IS FATHER OF THE MAN: C.H. SPURGEON BY TOM NETTLES**

Christian Focus (2021); 224 pgs  
ISBN 978-1527106482

The great British Baptist pastor and preacher Charles Haddon Spurgeon was born on June 19, 1834. He was born again on January 6, 1850 (age 15). Spurgeon died on January 31, 1892 (age 58). His was an amazing life and gospel ministry. For 43 years his ministry was characterized by ten governing principles that first began to appear in the early years of his life. To these principles, Spurgeon remained true until the end of his earthly life.

Author Tom Nettles is senior professor of historical theology at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and he has previously written a magisterial biography on Spurgeon called *Living by Revealed Truth*.

Not wanting to spoil your reading of this book, I will mention only a few of those governing truths that permeated Spurgeon's ministry. His own conversion experience had a profound impact on his evangelistic preaching and dealing with the souls of men and women. Although raised in a paedobaptist home, Spurgeon was baptized as a believer. He had an unshaken faith in the infallibility of Scripture and the doctrines of grace. A wonderful, edifying read.—DON THEOBALD



**LESSONS FROM THE UPPER ROOM**

*The Heart of the Savior*  
BY SINCLAIR B. FERGUSON  
Ligonier Ministries (2021); 241 pgs  
ISBN 978-1642893199

This is a book for any believer seeking to draw close to Jesus.

Sinclair Ferguson takes us through Jesus' final hours in John 13-17 with insightful comments and analysis, and as he does, he himself fades into the background. Yet, Ferguson helps us pick up on the atmosphere, moods, contexts and surroundings of the events described. Because these chapters are set just hours before the crucifixion, Jesus' discussions with and instructions to the disciples (*sans Judas*) are poignant. Jesus teaches them (and us) very deep things about the Father, the Spirit and himself. Jesus opens his heart and the glory is blinding! Especially in chapter 17 where John emphasizes the Father's love and Jesus' concern for us—those who will believe because of the apostles' witness.

This passage is what Puritan Thomas Goodwin called "a window into Christ's heart." Ferguson opens that window wider to our view and understanding in *Lessons from the Upper Room* as he hews very close to the line of God-breathed Scripture. May the Spirit use it to deepen our love and worship of God.—DALE COGSWELL

**Have you been missing Barnabas? Want to send a friend an encouraging gift?**

**Subscribe today!**

- \$30 for a 2 year subscription (3 issues/year)
- \$15 for a 1 year subscription
- \$75 for a 1 year church/bulk subscription (10 copies per issue)

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

PROV \_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

IF A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION, WHO FROM? \_\_\_\_\_

Make cheques payable to "SGF Canada" and send to:  
SGF, c/o Benno Kurvits, 193 Queen Victoria Drive,  
Hamilton, ON L8W 1W6

# ELEANOR COADE AND HER STONE



BY MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN

>> The name of the stone merchant Eleanor Coade (1733–1821) is known today to few beyond the circle of architectural historians.

But in her day, hers was a name that bespoke excellence. Eleanor owned a highly successful, artificial stone factory in Lambeth, London, which bore her name.

## Getting into the stone business

Eleanor was born on June 3, 1733, in Exeter, Devon, to George Coade, a wealthy merchant, and his wife, also named Eleanor. However, the wool trade that employed George went into decline, and in 1759, the family was forced to relocate to London due to bankruptcy. George went bankrupt a second time in 1769, and it may have been this second bankruptcy that prompted Eleanor to set up her own business, hoping to shore up the family fortunes.

That same year Eleanor took over a stone business, for which she seemed to possess an innate business sense. She became known as “Mrs. Coade” (businesses were almost never run by single women), and, after a somewhat tenuous beginning for the business, Eleanor became a highly successful stone merchant.

## Coade’s factory

The industrial revolution was in full swing, and it was an ideal time to launch such a business. By 1771, she had brought on a sculptor named John Bacon—“the first great British sculptor of the Industrial Revolution”—to produce and execute designs, and she exhibited works in what was now called “Coade stone” at the Society of Artists of Great Britain seven times between 1773 and 1780.

Although Eleanor employed a range of designers, craftsmen, mechanics and managers at her firm, there is clear evidence she herself was personally proficient in the manufacturing process and occasionally participated in the physical production of Coade stone. To advertise her products, Eleanor issued catalogues and established an exhibition gallery and later a showroom.

## Making Coade stone

The precise formula for her stone was never patented or recorded. Most probably it consisted of different measures of clay—



Coade stone at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, England, commemorating Admiral Horatio Nelson’s death and the victory at the Battle of Trafalgar.

which had already been fired and ground into a powder—flint, fine sand, glass and bits of pre-fired material known as “grog.”

The particular type of white clay used was sourced from Cornwall, Devon and Dorset, where Eleanor’s family came from. The addition of glass gave the stone its weatherproof quality, and it was this that made Coade stone so popular, especially for outdoor decoration.

## A “ransomed sinner”

What is not known even to architectural historians, though, is that Eleanor was a firm Evangelical. This is seen clearly in her will, where she stated, “through the aboundings of his [that is God’s] Grace in Christ he has enabled me as a chief sinner to hope” for a place in Christ’s kingdom.

She went on to specify that she was leaving various monies to various Evangelical churches and charities. She asked her relatives to understand her distribution of her wealth:

I entreat those of my relatives who will share less than others not to impute the difference to want of affection but to their own different situations and other existing circumstances

which give some of them a claim to more special notice and as none of them do rank with the absolutely poor of the land. The Lord’s poor and the spread of his Gospel will be allowed by those who know the worth of it so have a powerful demand on the heart of a ransomed sinner.

Numerous eighteenth-century Evangelicals, from Jonathan Edwards to Andrew Fuller, regarded such care for the poor as a mark of true faith.

## Coade stone

Eleanor’s stone designs were always stamped with “COADE” and English Heritage has been able to identify over 650 surviving Coade stone examples around the world. But the words cited from her will speak of an even more permanent memorial and treasure. **B**

➤ Michael A.G. Haykin is an historian, author, & professor of church history at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He is also on the core faculty of Heritage Seminary in Cambridge, Ontario, where he teaches church history. He and his wife Alison attend West Highland Baptist Church, Hamilton, ON.

# LIVING AND DYING FOR JESUS



**BY RACHEL THIBAUT >>**

Come with me on a ride back in history.

We are travelling to a time 170 years after the resurrection of Jesus. John the apostle, who was the oldest living apostle, has now been dead for 103 years. He died in A.D. 100.

The year is A.D. 203 (A.D. stands for the Latin *Anno Domini*, “in the year of the Lord”). These are very dark days to live in for a Christian. Roman persecution had been happening since the rule of Nero in A.D. 64. All people are expected to pay respect to the gods of Rome, which include laying incense at the altars of these gods.

Let us continue on our travels to North Africa, to a place which was once called Carthage (modern day Tunis, in Tunisia). Christianity is alive in this place. People are seeking Jesus and wanting to live for him.

The main characters I want you to see on our journey are two young women from Carthage. Vibia Perpetua is a twenty-two-year-old noblewoman with an infant son. Her servant girl, Felicitas, is eight months pregnant. Both women are new Christians, and are partaking in baptism classes, along with two other new converts to Christianity. Their Bible teacher is Saturus.

Lucius Septimius Severus is the current ruler of the Roman Empire. He is Rome’s first African emperor. Wanting to destroy Christianity throughout his territory, Emperor Septimius Severus sets his eyes, first, on the members of the baptism class. Saturus, Perpetua, Felicitas and two other men are arrested and thrown into prison.

Perpetua’s father comes quickly to the prison to convince his daughter to denounce or deny being a Christian and give the sacrifice to the Roman gods.

“Father, do you see this vase here?” Perpetua replied. “Could it be called by any other name than what it is?”

“No,” he replied.

“Well, neither can I be called anything other than what I am, a Christian.”

“In this trial, what God determines will take place. We are not in our own keeping, but in God’s,” she continues. At this, her father leaves weeping.

In prison, Perpetua is allowed to breastfeed her baby boy. Her father visits again, pleading with her to change her mind. The prisoners eventually come before the governor. Perpetua’s friends are all questioned first and each person remains faithful to Jesus. Perpetua’s father, with her infant son in his arms,



An artist's depiction of the martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas in a Roman arena in A.D. 203.

cries out to Perpetua as she goes on trial.

“Have pity on your father’s grey head! Have pity on your infant son! Offer the sacrifice for the welfare of the emperor.”

Perpetua replied, “I will not.”

“Are you a Christian then?” asked the governor.

“Yes, I am,” Perpetua replied.

Felicitas, Perpetua’s servant, knows she will not be executed if she is pregnant, as Roman laws prohibited a pregnant woman from this type of death. She could have the opportunity to escape death for this reason, but instead, she prays for the delivery of her child. Her prayers are answered, and soon, a baby girl is delivered.

The five Christians are baptized, and then, led into the arena to face their death. The male prisoners go in first to be mauled by wild animals—a bear, a leopard and a boar. Stopping at the gate, Saturus, the Bible class leader, shares his testimony with the prison governor, Pudens, who later becomes a Christian martyr himself.

When Perpetua and Felicitas are brought in before the crowds, they are stripped of their garments. A wild bull is released to attack them. Soon the crowds stop cheering, and begin to cry out, “Enough!” They are becoming impatient, and want to see the Christians die. The two women are lined up and killed by the sword. The executioner is not successful at his first attempt at killing Perpetua, and with the final blow, she places her hands on the sword to help the executioner. **B**

## QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT

This is a sobering story. Perpetua and Felicitas died for their faith in Jesus. Are you ready to be bold for the gospel of Jesus? Are you ready to stand for Jesus? Are you ready to die for Jesus?

**>** Rachel Thibault is a wife, mother, homeschool teacher and nurse (when she can fit that in). She loves playing piano and singing. She joyfully serves the church in music ministry.

# DAVID (PART 1): A POET AFTER GOD'S OWN HEART



**BY JEREMY JOHNSTON** >> The Scriptures tell us that David was a giant-killer, an outlaw and a warrior king. But David was also an artist—a poet, a musician, a composer, an architect and a dancer (of sorts). As an artist, David was a man who understood the value of beauty: he delighted in

the beauty of creation and the beauty of the Lord (Psalm 8; 19; 24:7; 90:17). He longed to make beautiful things, like poetry, a palace and a place of worship (2 Samuel 5:9–12; 7:1–2). As an artist, David also understood the importance of the heart. He was a man of great passion, exhibiting a range of emotions throughout his tumultuous life. At times, he demonstrated a heartfelt zeal for righteousness as well as a great love for friends, family and God. At other times, he was led astray by his passions: David was sometimes weighed down by deep despair, he exhibited moments of unchecked anger, he had a proclivity for excessive and indulgent love for his children, and he was guilty of submitting to illicit passion through his adultery with a beautiful woman. David's life shows us both the virtues and vices of beauty and emotions. David's life also teaches us, however, how various kinds of art can direct us back to God, the source of all that is beautiful, good and true.

David's most celebrated and lasting contribution to the world of art was his poetry found in the Psalms. David wrote poems, read poems, meditated on poems and prayed poems back to God. David used the art of poetry not only to express his emotions but also to come to understand his emotions in light of the power and providence of God. The range of feelings

**The range of feelings that David explores with his poetry is astonishing.**

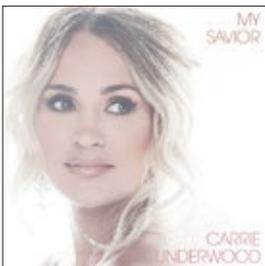
that David explores with his poetry is astonishing. We read psalms of delight in the Lord, psalms of thankfulness for God's provision and care, psalms of hopelessness and confusion and psalms of contrition and confession. When David was an outcast fleeing from Saul and hiding in the Cave of Adullam, he wrote poetry (eg. Psalm 57; 142). When David sought healing and forgiveness for his sin with Bathsheba, he wrote poetry (eg. Psalm 32; 51). When David was granted victory over his enemies, he wrote poetry (eg. Psalm 18; 21). When David felt angry, hopeless and downtrodden, he wrote poetry (eg. Psalm 69; 109). David used his gifts as a word-smith to express his delight and manage his despair, ultimately directing his focus away from himself and toward his good and glorious God.

The Scriptures contain many forms of writing, but roughly a third of the Bible is poetry, with all of its raw emotion, poetic devices and artistic language. We serve a God who abounds in love and who delights in beauty. No wonder the Bible describes David, the poet, as a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22). Let us, like David, direct our hearts back to God through the beauty and passion of poetry. Meditate on a psalm or sing a hymn. Read a poem, write a poem, pray a poem and seek after God's own heart. Feel his goodness, see his beauty and know his love. With poetic beauty and emotional force, poetry can help direct our hearts in moments of happiness as well as seasons of hopelessness, helping us find encouragement and soul-satisfying delight in the ways of God and the beauty of the Lord. **B**

➤ Jeremy W. Johnston holds many hats—husband, father, professor, teacher, author and poet. He has also written *Barnabas* magazine's arts column since the magazine's founding. He attends Pilgrim Baptist Fellowship, Hamilton, ON.

## | mixed MEDIA

### CHRISTIAN musical notes



**MY SAVIOR**  
**CARRIE UNDERWOOD**  
Capitol Records (2021)

This is an album of traditional hymns—from “Nothing but the Blood” to “How Great Thou Art,” “O How I Love Jesus” and “Amazing Grace”—in a country-crossover style. Underwood's

vocals and the light instrumental tracks mean you can really sing along as the rich words are clear and strong. On “Great Is Thy Faithfulness” her vocals combine with that of CeCe Winans for a lovely duet. This is Underwood's first gospel album, and it has been a go-to album for me the last few months as it combines deep truths and centres on worship of the Saviour. Twelve hymns and one opening instrumental track—worth a listen!—**JANICE VAN ECK**



**HEALER**  
**CASTING CROWNS**  
Provident/Sony (2022)

It's been a four-year wait for a new album from Casting Crowns. In *Healer* Mark Hall's narrative songwriting combines with biblical truths and draws the listener through the tracks.

Themes from heaven (“Scars in Heaven”) to witnessing (“Anything but Easy”) to the authority of Scripture (“2nd Opinions”) are all covered. He's always direct, whether challenging people's world-views or pointing out how love means saying the hard things even when that's not what people want to hear. “Scars in Heaven” is undoubtedly the stand-out track on this album, reminding us that the only scars in heaven will be those on Jesus' body.—**JANICE VAN ECK**



# BE

*The Reformation Study Bible*

*Student Edition*

# TRANSFORMED

**NEW**

**GOD'S WORD,  
CLEARLY AND  
PRACTICALLY  
EXPLAINED  
FOR THE NEXT  
GENERATION.**



English Standard  
Version

LEATHER-LIKE  
Red

*Order yours today.*

**ReformationStudyBible.com/student | 800-733-0408**

# The Key to Understanding Origins

**“As a man thinks so is he.”**

*Proverbs 23:7*

I still remember the grand paradigm shift I experienced as an engineering graduate student in 2018 when David Herbert introduced me to the idea of understanding the questions of origins through examining the underlying assumptions. After reading Dr. Herbert’s books on this topic, I came to realize that both creationism and evolutionism were trying to answer these fundamental questions: “How did life begin?” and “What is the meaning of life?” It became very obvious to me that the issue of origins is deeply religious, not scientific.

My greatest revelation came when I realized that the underlying assumptions of these two religious systems were fundamentally different, for each interprets the same data, but subsequently, brings forth differing resolutions and implications.

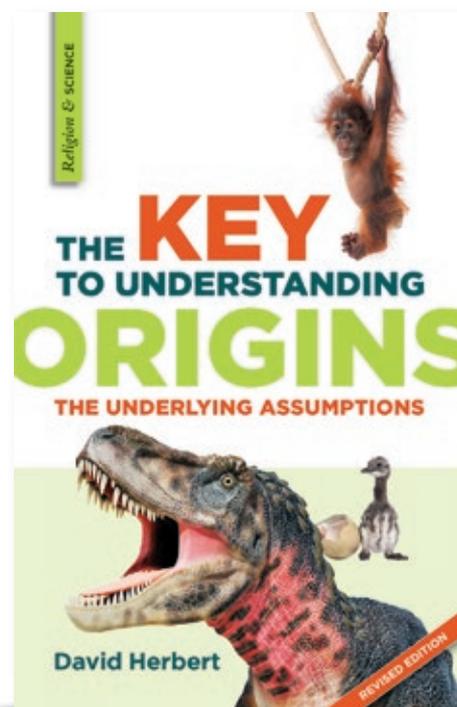
It is my pleasure to recommend this book, especially for students and parents who are confronted with the important subject of origins.

“Ideas have consequences!” said American philosopher Richard M. Weaver.

—Timothy Cai, M.Eng. Sc.

## **About the author...**

David Herbert is a retired elementary and secondary history teacher. He received his B.A. from the University of Western Ontario, M.A. from Wheaton College (USA), M.Div. from Heritage Theological Seminary (Canada) and M.Ed. and Ed.D. from the University of Toronto. Dr. Herbert has written a number of books, including *Charles Darwin’s Religious Views* (2009), *Becoming God: Transhumanism and the Quest for Cybernetic Immortality* (2014) and *Defending Jesus’ Crucifixion against Islamic Revision of Christian History* (2020).



## **The Key to Understanding Origins: The Underlying Assumptions**

BY DAVID HERBERT

104 pages

ISBN 978-1894400534

**T**he issue of origins is one of timeless inquiry—and the importance of understanding the underlying assumptions in unraveling the issue of origins remains the same. Beginning with the religious nature of man, Dr. Herbert shows how a belief in either naturalism or supernaturalism, determines what your position will be. His emphasis on the “faith” nature of each system, is helpful in decoding the quagmire surrounding this issue.

So, whether one approaches origins from a creationist or an evolutionist perspective, each will come with some basic tenets. This book examines the assumptions of each view (and their variations) and opens the subject up for investigation and dialogue—with the assumptions clearly before the reader.