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BARNABAS

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WINTER 2011

SPECIAL FEATURE

THE IMPECCABILITY OF CHRIST

A WINTER'S MEDITATION ON THE MYSTERY
OF THE HUMANITY AND THE DIVINITY OF
THE PERFECT LAMB OF GOD

By Michael A.G. Haykin

“If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task” — 1 Timothy 3:1



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I recently took a long road trip with a friend, and one of the highlights was memorizing Ephesians 3:14–21 along the way. As we were memorizing and meditating on the words, we were struck, at one point, with Paul’s use of the word “power.” He uses it three times in his prayer for the Ephesians: first, that they would be strengthened with power through the Spirit; second, that they would have power to grasp the depths of Christ’s love; and third, reminding them that God’s power is at work in them for his glory. It struck me that a church needed to be reminded of the power of a triune God.

Consider where Paul was writing this letter. He was in prison. Under the “power,” it would seem, of the Roman state. Yet Paul’s full allegiance was to God. He says in verse 14: “I kneel before the Father” and make these requests for the saints in Ephesus. This was a man, though in shackles, who knew, personally, the King of kings and Lord of lords. There was no doubt in his mind that all authority and power in the universe was in the hand of his great God. And it was this God who was able to powerfully equip and strengthen his people.

There are many people who are powerful in our day: Barack Obama, Stephen Harper, bankers, government officials, business leaders, corporate giants, terrorist groups and world leaders. But, compared to the power of God, they are nothing. The kind of power God has formed the earth from nothing, calmed stormy seas with mere words, raised Christ from the dead—and there are countless, daily examples.

There are also many unseen powers: Satan and his servants are powerful foes. But they don’t compare to Christ. The salvation work Christ did on the cross has crushed Satan’s head, and he is a defeated foe. As Romans tells us, because of Christ we have the power to live a godly life; Satan’s hold has been loosed.

Why all this talk about power? Well, I often hear the phrase, “the halls of power,” and I can be impressed. I see the pomp and pageantry of world leaders at a G8, and I think, “Wow, all these powerful people in one room. Amazing!” But what is Paul’s prayer? That these humble saints in Ephesus would realize that God’s power is at work and on display in their lives. He works in simple, ordinary believers to reveal his power, his glory, his love, his greatness, for all the world to see. What a tremendous thought! And, in light of how power-less they and we so often feel, what a comfort to know that the three persons of the Godhead are all powerfully active in our lives.

And, as the Ephesians did, so do we today. We need strength in our inner being. We need Christ to be present in our hearts. We need our faith sure. We need to be rooted and established in love. We need, united and in fellowship with other believers, to grasp and comprehend—to really know—the extent of Christ’s love. We need to be filled with his fullness. We need to have courage and know that, despite how things appear, God is “able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine” (Ephesians 3:20). We need to realize that God is pursuing his own glory in the church and in Christ Jesus. We need to know that now, through all time and in eternity, all glory goes to him. He is the supreme, pre-eminent One who, with limitless power and abundance, can give his people all they need. I pray that this magazine, *Barnabas*, will be one small tool in God’s mighty hand to display his greatness and power in your heart and life over the coming months.

Janice Van Eck, Managing editor



CHANGES: Matthew and Andrea Richards with their new son Robbie will be serving at Jerseyville Baptist Church in 2011.

NEWS

NEW PASTORATE

MATTHEW RICHARDS ACCEPTS CALL TO JERSEYVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH, ONTARIO

After years of prayer and preparation, I have accepted the call to be the interim pastor at Jerseyville Baptist Church (located between Ancaster and Brantford along Highway 403). My wife, Andrea, and I are very much looking forward to this new chapter of our lives. The interim period is a six-month time frame. Due to the size of the congregation, the position is part-time, but with the Lord’s blessing it will grow to a full-time position.

I cannot think of any better preparation for pastoral ministry than what I have received studying at Toronto Baptist Seminary, as a board member at Trinity Baptist Church for the past ten years and by sitting under the faithful preaching of Pastor Carl Muller.

The church was formed in 1824 under the name “The Regular Baptist Church of Ancaster.” Throughout this long history, many distinguished men have served as pastor, including Brian Robinson.

The congregation is small at the present time but has a passion for the Lord, for service and for reaching out into the community. We ask you to pray with us that the Lord would keep me faithful in ministry, specifically by preaching the Word without compromise and loving the people unconditionally. We also ask you to pray for the church that they would grow numerically and spiritually so that Jerseyville Baptist Church would be a beacon of light in the community for the glory and praise of God.—Matthew Richards

'JEHOVAH JIRAH' — THE LORD PROVIDES

GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH OF OTTAWA FINDS A HOME

After six years of meeting in the ballroom of a seniors residence (The Palisades), and praying, planning and training, the Lord has provided a permanent place of worship for the congregation of Grace Baptist Church of Ottawa. On December 1, we took possession of a building near Stittsville, west of Ottawa (2470 Huntley Road). On December 5, we held our first worship service, followed by a dinner and time of celebration and praise, with guest Rev. Jim Clemens of Marmora giving a challenge to the congregation.

Formerly occupied by another congregation, the building sits on five acres of land—providing plenty of parking and room for future expansion. Thanks to the co-operation of the previous occupant, we were also able to purchase all the furnishings—including a complete sound system with overhead projection, pulpit, chairs, keyboard and piano, fully-equipped kitchen, nursery, boardroom and office



furniture and lawn equipment. The main room seats about 100. There are three classrooms, a kitchen, office and boardroom.

After many unsuccessful bids on properties around Ottawa, we recognize the hand of God in training us to be ready to recognize the building he had prepared for us and to act quickly to get congregational approval and submit an offer. Within three days of hearing about the building we arranged for the congregation to visit the building, held a meeting to approve an offer and submitted a bid. We later learned that there were several others who had also submitted bids or were looking at the building, but the Lord has graciously seen fit to give it to Grace Baptist Church.

Our time of meeting at The Palisades was not in vain. Although we did not see much interest from the residents, we grew close as a congregation, were able to participate actively in the Lord's work throughout the city and support our chosen missions. In addition, we were able to set aside a building fund and, with the support of a few interest-free loans, purchased our new building debt free.

Please come by for a visit whenever you are in Ottawa!
—Ken Anderson (www.gracebaptistottawa.com)

TRANSITION AT BINBROOK BAPTIST CHURCH

Ian Vaillancourt resigned from the pastorate at Binbrook Baptist Church on November 21, 2010. He and his wife Natalie have been faithfully serving there for six years. He is looking to take some down time and then perhaps pursue some other ministry opportunities.

Remember the Binbrook Baptist Church family as they go through this challenging time. Pray that God would lead them, encourage their hearts during this transition and provide a suitable new pastor for them.—JPV

PHOTO: NEW TKHERIOUS

UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 24, 2011

TORONTO PASTORS' FELLOWSHIP

Theme: Prayer

Panel: Ken Davis, Tim Kerr and Charles Price
10 a.m. @ Richview Baptist Church, 1548 Kipling Ave., Toronto, ON

www.torontopastors.org

FEBRUARY 5, 2011

DAVID BRAINERD COLLEGE & CAREER RETREAT

Speaker: David Robinson

Theme: Relationships

Time: 9 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Cost: \$20 (includes meals)

Ministry, sports and fellowship for young adults.
Held at Grace Bible Church, Cambridge, ON.

janicevaneck@rogers.com

FEBRUARY 17, 2011

INSIGHT FOR LIFE SEMINAR

Speaker: Stephen Swallow

Theme: Above the fray:

dealing with difficult people

Time: 7:30 – 9 p.m. at the

Burlington Central Library

Hosted by Trinity Baptist Church, Burlington, ON.

www.trinity-baptist-church.com

MARCH 8-9, 2011

"A TASTE OF TBS"

Open house at TBS: find out what seminary/bible college is all about. Enjoy a special lecture on archaeology with Brian Janeway on March 9 @ 7 – 8:30 p.m. Toronto Baptist Seminary

www.tbs.edu

MARCH 28, 2011

TORONTO PASTORS' FELLOWSHIP

10 a.m. @ Richview Baptist Church, 1548 Kipling Ave., Toronto, ON

www.torontopastors.org

APRIL 9-10, 2011

TBC MISSIONS WEEKEND

Speakers and details to be announced.

Hosted by Trinity Baptist Church, Burlington, ON.

www.trinity-baptist-church.com

APRIL 29, 2011

TBS GRADUATION

Grad banquet: 5:30 p.m.

(tickets required)

Graduation: 8 p.m.

Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto, ON

www.tbs.edu

MAY 12, 2011

INSIGHT FOR LIFE SEMINAR

Speaker: Jonathan Wellum

Theme: Investing wisely in

a debt-crazed world

Time: 7:30 – 9 p.m. at the

Burlington Central Library

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MAY 13-14, 2011

SGF LADIES' RETREAT

Speaker: Susan Seiler

Plan to take in this annual

women's fellowship at

Redeemer University

College, Ancaster, ON.

www.sgfcanada.com

JUNE 2011

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AUGUST 20-26, 2011

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Glendon Thompson (JSBC)

will be the speaker.

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ASSEMBLY UPDATE

THE SGF ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY was hosted this past November by Grace Baptist Church, Ottawa, and all those in attendance were blessed and encouraged by the generous and ministering spirit of our hosts. For the first time in a number of years we heard reports from our various ministries: the Canadian Carey Family Conference, the Toronto Pastors' Fellowship and Conference, the Ladies' Retreat, the Youth Retreat and the David Brainerd College and Career Conferences. The Lord has been working through each of these areas, and we pray for noticeable fruit from these ministries. We heard church updates from New City Baptist (Toronto) and Sovereign Grace Family Church (Belleville) and then from Grimsby Bible Church who were applying for membership in the SGF. Pastor David Ens spoke with excitement about how the Lord is working in and through their body of believers and that they look forward to officially being part of the larger SGF community. Professor Pierre Constant from Toronto Baptist Seminary preached in the evening session.

In the business section of the weekend a number of issues were passed. An amended constitution was accepted, Grimsby Bible Church became the thirteenth member of the SGF, Nick Dunne was returned as treasurer, Pastor Glenn Tomlinson (SGCC, Sarnia) stepped down as a director after four years on the board, Gerry Theoret was returned for a second two-year term on the board and Pastor Stephen Kring (Bethesda, Delhi) and Pastor Paul McCallum (Pilgrim, Ancaster) were added to the board for two-year terms. Mark Hudson also returns for a second three-year appointment as co-ordinator.

Please continue to pray for the board of the Sovereign Grace Fellowship as it seeks to give leadership and direction over the coming year.—*Mark Hudson*

'IN COUNTRY' TEACHING

This spring, various SGF pastors are involved in overseas teaching trips with Carey Outreach Ministries. Please pray for their preparations and then as they train pastors and leaders in these countries.

Feb • Dr. Bob Penhearow (Grace Trinity Community Church, Guelph, ON) will be going to Madagascar for a conference.

May 16–27 • Rev. David Robinson (Grace Bible Church, Cambridge, ON) will be going to the Far East to teach Biblical Counselling and the Pastoral Epistles.

May 23–27 • Rev. Carl Muller (Trinity Baptist Church, Burlington, ON) will be going to the Philippines to teach Homiletics. Carl will also be preaching at a family conference for Reformed Baptist churches in Malaysia from May 31–June 3.

May 23–June 3 • Dr. Bob Penhearow (Grace Trinity Community Church, Guelph, ON) will be going to the Far East to teach Systematics and Biblical Theology.

GUEST COLUMN

THE REMEDY TO A BITTER SPIRIT

BY EMILY ENS // Have you ever wondered why it is so much easier to put on bitterness than to put on joy, or love? If we aren't careful, bitterness can rapidly take root and harden our hearts before we know it. Just how do we deal with it?

Being a woman, I know that God designed us differently than men and we can often take things more personally. And, when it comes to bitterness, I think we are under attack all the more.

Recently, I was at our church's ladies' prayer meeting and I was gently reminded of a biblical situation that could have ended very differently. Lives could easily have been destroyed if bitterness had taken hold.

Joseph was a seventeen-year-old boy, the second youngest of twelve sons, and highly favoured by his father Jacob. Though I have read Genesis 37 and 39–50 many times before, the narrative seemed to shout out at me as I realized Joseph's response to his awful situation. He went through thirteen years during which he was sold

[Joseph] showed them a kind of love that is unimaginable—the same kind of love that Christ showed us...

into slavery, wrongly accused and imprisoned, then forgotten. He had a good long time to devise plans of revenge, to let bitterness and anger take over his life.

At times, when I feel wronged or I feel someone has wronged my husband or family, I can easily give over to feelings of self-pity, anger and revenge and play the "blame game." If I don't have a right relationship with God and am not in his Word, those feelings take over and my heart attitude becomes infected. Satan has an incredible way of using our thoughts against us and feeding us lies. We need to be constantly speaking truths to ourselves. I believe that's what Joseph must have done. Scripture doesn't say how he was feeling, or the prayers that he prayed while in prison, but it does say that he was comforted: "the Lord was with Joseph and showed him steadfast love" (Genesis 39:21).

How we forget that through our trials and battles God is with us and he does show us his steadfast love. It may not be in a way that we want or expect, but he is there. He does not abandon us or leave us to our own devices. He has equipped us with his Word, which is full of truths and comfort.

Amazingly, Joseph did not only show himself to his brothers, but he forgave them for what they had done and he extended generosity toward them through a long famine and for the rest of their lives. He showed them a kind of love that is, to me, unimaginable—the same kind of love that Christ showed us, that we are to exemplify.

Joseph went on to tell his brothers that, "it was not you who sent me here, but God" (Genesis 45:8). He gave God the glory and made everyone aware that it was God who had directed his life. Through slavery and imprisonment, God had his hand on Joseph. Do we recognize God's hand through our hardships? Do we recognize that God sends us through challenging situations for our own good, for him to work it out for the best? I know that I don't. Most times I want to turn to everything else but God. But God is our refuge and ever-present help in trouble. He is the *only* way through trials.

Next time you are tempted to give way to thoughts of bitterness, remember that God is with you; whatever he is doing, he is working it out for the best: "you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good" (Genesis 50:20). **B**

OUR WHOLE DUTY?

Every Christian is called to a Christ-like life **BY ROGER FELLOWS**

“Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

How often do we read familiar passages from the Bible without much thought? Ecclesiastes is a difficult book. It seems to flip-flop between the outlook of a believer and that of skeptic. Probably Solomon is sometimes reflecting on his life when he was close to the Lord and sometimes expressing views he espoused when backslidden. Thankfully though, his conclusion is sound: “Fear God and keep his commandments.” And, he adds, “for this is the whole duty of man.” That last statement is a phrase we need to stop and consider. If you were given a sheet of paper with the words: “Our whole duty is...” and told to complete the sentence, what would you write? I suspect that most Bible-believing Christians would say something like, “Our whole duty is to repent, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and follow him.” But Solomon says our whole duty is to fear God and keep his commandments.

This sounds rather like salvation by works, doesn't it? There are some who teach that although salvation is now by grace through faith, under the Old Covenant it was by works. However the Bible is clear that salvation in any era was by faith and faith alone. Habakkuk's words, “The righteous shall live by his faith” (Habakkuk 2:4) are quoted several times in the New Testament and in Romans 4 both Abraham and David are said to be justified by faith. The only basis of salvation is faith in the finished work of Christ at Calvary. Old Testament believers looked forward to that day, while we look back to it. What are we to make of this verse in Ecclesiastes then? We should note that it does not say that salvation was earned by fearing God and keeping his commandments, rather it is our duty. In fact, the duty of people in all ages has been to fear God and obey him.

What is the ultimate thing that God wants from us? Is it that we should have faith? No, faith is a means to an end. Each year my wife and I fly to Britain to see family and friends. For that we need an air-

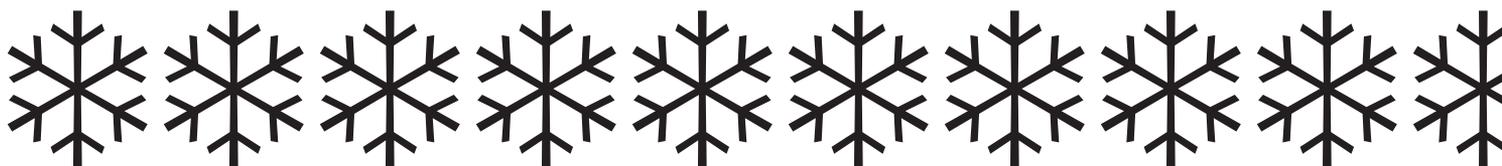


line ticket. But is that what our visit is all about? Do we frame the ticket and constantly study the details on it? Of course not! The ticket is just the means of getting there. The important thing is spending time with our loved ones. So, faith is a means to an end. And what is the end? To be like Christ. God predestined us “to be conformed to the likeness of his Son” (Romans 8:29). He chose us “to be holy and blameless in his sight” (Ephesians 1:4). That is the great end of salvation—to be like Jesus. And how will that come about? By just loving him? Some treat the idea of keeping commandments with disdain. They tell us that that is sheer legalism, and if we love the Lord we will do what is right. We don't need anyone to tell us what to do. That sounds fine, but how will we know what is right? If we truly love the Lord, we will want to do what is pleasing to him, and for that we need to keep his commandments. John tells us: “This is love: that we walk in obedience to his commands” (2 John 6).

Let's consider for a moment the fear of God that Solomon also includes as our whole duty. Again, some teach that the God of the Old Testament was to be feared, but the God of the New Testament, our loving heavenly Father, is to be loved not feared. But has God changed? Surely he is the same forever. There are plenty of commands to fear God in the Old Testament, but they are not lacking in the New. In Acts 9:31, we are told that the believers lived “in the fear of the Lord.” Peter likewise tells the believers to “fear God” (1 Peter 2:17). The writer to the Hebrews said that we should “worship God acceptably with reverence

and awe, for our ‘God is a consuming fire’” (Hebrews 12:28–29). While we have great joy and boldness in approaching God, this must be balanced with reverence and awe. God has not changed. We are to fear him and, if we do that, we will want to obey him. Of course, as true believers, we are also motivated by love. We want to obey the One who has loved us and redeemed us by his blood. We cannot avoid the conclusion that, as the redeemed of the Lord, we must and should want to obey his commandments.

We might ask another question: which commands should we obey? Think for a moment of what God requires of us: we have seen that he wants us to be like Christ, or simply put, he wants us to be like himself: “Be perfect...as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48); “Be holy, because I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16). That being so, what God requires of us does not essentially change, because *he* does not change. We understand that there are some of God's commands that pertain to specific covenantal periods—such as circumcision and sacrifices, but what God wants of us morally does not change. We are to be conformed to his likeness as seen in Christ. To attain to that, it is better that we look to Christ rather than to Moses. Paul makes an important distinction in 1 Corinthians 9. In verse 21 he speaks of winning those without the law—the Gentiles. To do this he becomes as one without the law, but adds, “I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law.” Our “whole duty” then is lovingly to keep Christ's commands and seek increasingly to become more like him. May God enable us to do this! **B**



Let earth and heaven combine,
 Angels and men agree,
 To praise in songs divine
 The incarnate Deity,
 Our God contracted to a span,
 Incomprehensibly made Man.

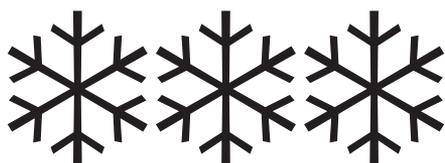
He laid his glory by,
 He wrapped him in our clay;
 Unmarked by human eye,
 The latent Godhead lay;
 Infant of days he here became,
 And bore the mild Immanuel's name.

See in that infant's face
 The depths of deity,
 And labour while ye gaze
 To sound the mystery
 In vain; ye angels gaze no more,
 But fall, and silently adore.

Unsearchable the love
 That hath the Saviour brought;
 The grace is far above
 Or man or angels' thought:
 Suffice for us that God, we know,
 Our God, is manifest below.

He deigns in flesh t'appear,
 Widest extremes to join;
 To bring our vileness near,
 And make us all divine:
 And we the life of God shall know,
 For God is manifest below.

Made perfect first in love,
 And sanctified by grace,
 We shall from earth remove,
 And see his glorious face:
 His love shall then be fully showed,
 And man shall all be lost in God.
 —Charles Wesley



A winter's meditati IMPECCAB OF CHR

The reality of the divinity and humanity of Christ
 for worship and for living each day for the sup

By Michael A.G. Haykin

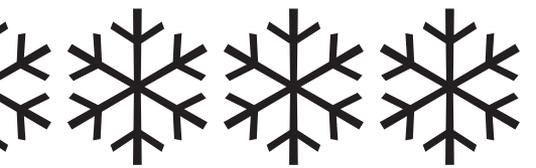
Charles Wesley has been well described by J.I. Packer as “the supreme poet of love to Jesus in a revival context,” the revival in this case being the Great Awakening of the eighteenth century. A good example of his hymns of love to Christ is “Let earth and heaven combine,” first published in 1745 in *Hymns for the Nativity of our Lord*. Throughout the hymn, praise is offered to “the Incarnate Deity,” God “incomprehensibly made man,” who joins together the “widest extremes” so that sinners can ultimately stand in his presence and “see his glorious face.” Typical of a Wesley hymn is the interaction with a core doctrine of the Christian faith, in this case, the mystery and marvel of the incarnation. Wesley is right to emphasize that the incarnation is ultim-

ately incomprehensible to the mind of finite man. Nonetheless, this hymn is a powerful reminder of the fact that this vital truth is to be proclaimed and celebrated, and that it has two sides to it: Jesus Christ is fully God and Jesus Christ is fully man.

The incarnation is central to Christian theology, for if Jesus Christ be not fully God, we are not saved—only God can save his creatures from their sin. And if he be not man, again we are not saved, for we need a man like the first Adam to rectify the consequences of the first Adam's fall, yet without Adam's sinfulness. What a dilemma if left to us mortals—but the Immortal One has solved it by embracing our mortality, and as such, he is worthy of our endless worship. The incarnation, thus, has implications for both theology and worship.

JESUS CHRIST—FULLY GOD

The evidence for the full deity of the Lord Jesus is manifest throughout the span of the New Testament. There are a number of texts like Titus 2:13, where Jesus Christ is explicitly described as “our great God and Saviour.” The fullness of the Godhead is said to indwell him (Colossians 1:19; 2:9). He bears titles and names given to Yahweh in the Old Testament (Isaiah 44:6 and Revelation 1:17). He is set forth as the object of human and angelic worship (Philippians 2:9–11; Hebrews 1:6) and is addressed in prayer (Acts 7:59–60; 1 Corinthians 1:2). He does what only God can do, such things as the creation of the universe (Isaiah 44:24; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16), the forgiveness of sins (Mark 2:5–10; Colossians 3:13), and the judgement of all humanity on the final



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ist has deep implications
eme glory of God.

day (John 5:22; Acts 10:42; 2 Thessalonians 1:7–9). He is the co-author of divine blessings such as grace and peace (Revelation 1:4–5). He possesses divine attributes, such as omnipresence (Hebrews 1:3), omniscience (Revelation 2:23), omnipotence (Matthew 28:18) and unchangeability (Hebrews 13:8). He can even describe the angels as his own (Matthew 13:41).

In the words of Benjamin B. Warfield, the early twentieth-century Presbyterian scholar and theologian: “The deity of Christ is in solution in every page of the New Testament. Every word that is spoken of Him, every word which He is reported to have spoken of Himself, is spoken on the assumption that He is God.”

JESUS CHRIST—FLAWLESSLY HUMAN

The New Testament also bears witness to the other side of Christ: his complete humanity. As the apostle Paul puts it in 1 Timothy 2:5, he is “the *Man* Christ Jesus” (italics added). His humanity is evident throughout the Gospel records. He experienced the pangs of hunger (Matthew 4:2); he knew weariness and thirst (John 4:6–7); he wept genuine tears of sorrow (John 11:35); he went through human weakness and

agony (Luke 22:43–44); he bled and died (John 19:34). Yet, while his humanness was so like ours, there is one way in which it was totally unlike that of any other man or woman: it was sinless.

This affirmation first of all means that Christ never *actually* committed a sin. In the plain witness of 1 Peter 2:22, Christ “committed no sin.” Written by the apostle Peter who had walked with Jesus and had seen him under all sorts of conditions, this is an amazing statement. Peter was steeped in Jewish thinking and would thus have taken for granted the Old Testament witness about the ubiquity of sin (Psalm 14:3). Yet, as we look at Christ’s life as it is recorded in the four Gospels, there is not one incident to which we can point and say, “Look, a sin.”

The Scottish theologian James Orr once noted, Jesus “confesses no sin, seeks no forgiveness, knows no repentance.” In fact, Jesus pointedly asked, “Which one of you convicts me of sin?” (John 8:46, *esv*). In other words, Jesus is bluntly demanding his opponents to provide proof that he ever sinned. As the Australian biblical scholar Leon Morris has observed, this question “betokens a clear and serene conscience” that was in unbroken fellowship with God the Father. During the moments leading up to his passion, Christ makes a similar declaration when he states that “the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me” (John 14:30, *nkjv*). The devil has no claim upon Christ, for Christ has never sinned.

THE WITNESS OF ENEMIES AND FRIENDS

The witness of some of his enemies against him is also instructive. In Matthew 27:4, his betrayer Judas cries out in despair, “I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.” Pontius Pilate, a vital player in Jesus’ condemnation, nevertheless recognized the latter’s innocence when he asked, “What evil has he done?” (Matthew 27:23) and asserted that Christ had done “nothing deserving of death” (Luke 23:15). When Pilate later sought to downplay his role in Christ’s death, he made a similar affirmation. “I am innocent,” he said, “of the blood of this just Person” (Matthew 27:24). And when the eyes of one of the two criminals who died alongside Christ were opened, he recognized that he was receiving the just penalty for his crimes, but Christ had “done nothing wrong”—he was completely innocent (Luke 23:39–41).

In 2 Corinthians 5:21, Paul, the divinely commissioned representative of the Lord Jesus—a man who had once been his enemy, but who, by grace, became a totally devoted

follower—bears his own witness to the sinlessness of Jesus when he states that Christ “knew (*gnonta*) no sin.” In both classical and *koiné* Greek (the language of the New Testament), there are two verbs that can be translated “to know.” The one, *oida*, generally means to have possession of knowledge and is used to describe complete and full knowledge; the other, *ginōskō*, usually depicts the acquisition of knowledge and represents that knowledge as incomplete and in the process of development. While the apostle Paul does not always make a definite distinction between these two verbs, of the 103 times where he employs *oida*, 90 are used with the above distinction in mind. And of the 50 occurrences of *ginōskō*, 32 are used with the distinct meaning of this verb. In 2 Corinthians 5:21 Paul appears to be using this latter verb with its distinctive meaning. In other words, Christ did not gain or acquire knowledge of human sinfulness by overt acts of sin. Sin was something completely foreign to his life and heart.

HE COULD NOT SIN

But we must go farther and affirm that the sinlessness of Jesus also means that Christ did not possess a nature bent and warped by the presence of sin. He was not able to sin (in theological language, Christ *non posse peccare*)—in Christ there was “no *inherent* sin.” 1 Peter 1:19 affirms that he was “without blemish and without spot,” that is, blameless and free from vice. 1 John 3:5 further asserts that “in him there is no sin.” And, Hebrews 7:26 describes him as one “who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners.” In other words, Christ had no inner compulsion or desire to engage in sin. There was never a moment when his delight in the will of God and in holiness flagged. As he said in John 4:34, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to finish his work.” And later in the same gospel, Jesus declared, “I always do those things that please him,” that is, God the Father (8:29).

These two statements from the Gospel of John clearly reveal Jesus’ undeviating obedience to his Father. If one were to define sin as the turning away from the will of God in pursuit of one’s own desires, it is obvious from these statements in John—statements that are representative of a number—that Christ could not have sinned. It was impossible for him to live out his life in any other way than that of utter and total commitment to the will of God.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells us that “the pure in heart . . . shall see God” (Matthew 5:8). But he is the one who has an

unclouded vision of God, even as John 1:18 affirms: “No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him.” The Son is able to speak fully and clearly about the Father because he has an unswerving sight of the Father. As one reads the New Testament, it is unthinkable to suppose that Jesus’ vision of God was ever dim or cloudy. Otherwise how could he have ever responded to Philip’s desire for the vision of God with this remarkable statement: “He who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9)? Jesus can give the vision of God to sinners because he alone has a completely unobstructed view of God and his glory.

The Scriptures, therefore, deny not only the presence of sinful thinking and acts in the incarnate Christ, but also “any ultimate roots and sources of sin, of any propensities or inclinations, however latent and rudimentary, towards sin,” writes H.P. Liddon. The words of James 1:14–15, indicating that every man and woman is tempted to sin by an inner inclination toward sin, do not apply to Christ. It is our lusts that “suggest, motivate and propel” us into sin, writes the Scottish theologian Donald MacLeod. But Christ knows nothing of this. To say that Christ had sinful inclinations is to assert nothing less than that Christ himself was in need of a Saviour! Therefore, we must affirm Christ *could* not sin.

THE TEMPTATIONS OF JESUS—WERE THEY REAL?

What then of the temptations that came Jesus’ way, were they real? We read of them, of course, in the Gospel accounts and in a passage like Hebrews 4:15: “We do not

have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” Christ knows our frame intimately, for he has stood where we stand, yet “without sin.” As Donald MacLeod has rightly stated:

[I]t is completely misguided to imagine that the agony of temptation overcome is less than the agony of temptation yielded to. On the contrary, to yield to temptation is to escape its full ferocity. The Devil never has to do his utmost to secure *our* fall. A little of his power and cunning will suffice. But Christ did not yield and this made it necessary for the Tempter to increase the pressure. ...Far from being the One who escapes temptation because He is sinless He is the One who, precisely because He is sinless, alone experiences temptation in its full intensity. He alone took all the Devil could throw at Him.

And as Wayne Grudem has noted, just as “a champion weightlifter who successfully lifts and holds over head the heaviest weight in the contest feels the force of it more fully than one who attempts to lift it and drops it,” so it was with Christ’s experience of temptation. He faced every temptation to the very end and triumphed over them all. He felt the force and fury of them in a way that the rest of humanity, who regularly fall in the face of temptation, have not.

A WINTER’S MEDITATION

I am writing these words as the season of winter is once again shaping the landscape

of Ontario. While winter no doubt has its own beauty, it also bespeaks decay and decline and death, all products of sin. How cheering then to the heart, in the depth of this season, these thoughts of the Saviour, whose impeccable life is of rich benefit to the sinner, a holy shelter for the wintry storms to come. **B**

Further reading

If the reader wishes to follow up on further resources that helped me to write this meditation, I would recommend the following (arranged from older to newer): J.C. Philpot, *Meditations on the Sacred Humanity of the Blessed Redeemer* (Repr. Harpenden, Hertfordshire: Gospel Standard Baptist Trust, 1978), 13–14; H.P. Liddon, *The Divinity of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ* (11th ed.; London: Rivingtons, 1885), 522–527; James Orr, *The Virgin Birth of Christ* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1907), 190–207; Donald MacLeod, “Did Christ Have a Fallen Human Nature?”, *Reformation Today*, 80 (July-August 1984), 3–8; Thomas C. Oden, *The Word of Life* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984), 254–260; Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology. An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press/Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 535–539; and Gabriel Fackre, *The Christian Story: A Narrative Interpretation of Basic Christian Doctrine* (3rd ed.; Grand Rapids/Cambridge, U.K.: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1996), 1:111–115.

I am amazed, though, that I could not really find a recent monograph or book-length study on this vital area of our Lord’s life—surely a worthy study for a budding Bible scholar!

mixed MEDIA

Things audible: two new CDs worth a listen

CHRIS TOMLIN AND IF OUR GOD IS FOR US

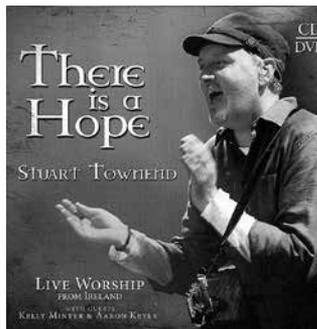
Sparrow (2010); 5099990914126



Eleven new tracks, four acoustic bonus songs—and, Chris Tomlin doesn’t disappoint! His lyrics continue to be a nourishment to personal faith and having great views of God. The title track declares the greatness of God with such energy and simplicity, it will have you quickly singing along. I was struck by his explorations of the worthiness and majesty of God and how he encourages a deeper, fuller love for Jesus. Musically rich!—JPV

STUART TOWNEND THERE IS A HOPE

Kingsway (2010); 5019282308723



This new live worship mix from Stuart Townend is a good intro to his work. There are no post-2007 songs on this album but “Behold the Lamb” and “In Christ alone” are beautiful tracks and show their singability for corporate worship. Many have already incorporated these into their services. “Will you hide me” (Healing streams) is probably the loveliest track on the album and features singer/songwriter Kelly Minter.—JPV

DOING GOOD FOR GOOD CAUSES



BY MARK HUDSON // It is not uncommon for Christians to pour the majority of their time, energy and resources into projects initiated by, or supported *through*, their local church. In this way we encourage efforts that have, at their heart, the spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the ministering of aid to his people throughout the world. How far should you go, however, as a Christian young person, when it comes to supporting events, programs and causes that are *not* primarily Christian in nature? At schools and in our communities there are numerous fundraising and awareness-raising events that support programs such as finding cures for diseases, dealing with world hunger, helping settle new immigrants, supporting education in poorer countries, even the removal of land mines in far off communities suffering after years of civil war. Should these kinds of ventures have any claim on a Christian's time, energy and possessions, or do we just do our church stuff and let the world look after everything else?

Scripture has a lot to tell us about our responsibilities to those who are in need, those who are often described as the *poor*. "So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:10). There are two doors opened to us here. The priority is certainly that of caring for other believers, but the exhortation by Paul gives scope for a wider ministry of help to those in need, to those who are beyond our usual church networks. To those who are outside, we are taught to have generous hearts, to be cheerful givers and that to give is still better than to receive.

Kids at the school where I teach raise money to dig wells for clean water in Zambia, reducing the amount of child blindness by phenomenal rates. Some travel in groups to the Dominican Republic to build schools and run camps. Others jump rope, ride bikes, climb the CN Tower stairs, run, walk, grow some nasty facial hair, go silent, buy toys, bring in food, donate cash, sell chocolate, collect school supplies, donate used and new winter clothing, all in an effort to alleviate the needs experienced by many, locally and around the world. I am sure many of you have done similar things, and I want to encourage you to keep at it—to be a doer of good works and not just a talker!

We can also be a good witness by taking part in some non-Christian programs, by living out two basic biblical concepts. First, "let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). Look for a way to let people know that anything you have done is by the enabling grace of God the Father. Second, by displaying a true Christian love for those in need. "If I give away all I have, . . . but have not love, I gain nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:3). A sincere love for the needy is foundational to a proper attitude of service and sacrifice. The Lord is never pleased with a gift that comes with strings attached or an expectation of something in return! **B**

How far should you go, however, as a Christian young person, when it comes to supporting events, programs and causes that are not primarily Christian in nature?

REFLECTING AN ARTISTIC GOD



BY JEREMY JOHNSTON // Bezalel and Oholiab are little known Bible characters, and yet they are significant. They are significant because they are the first people in the recorded biblical narrative to be inspired by the Holy Spirit. They are also significant because they are artists. God called and enabled these two men to craft the various artwork and decorations for worship in the tabernacle (Exodus 31:1–11). Although this was a unique and specific call for these artists, there is much we can learn from their example.

God inspired Bezalel and Oholiab to create works of art to aid in worship. Many of the objects had divinely articulated specifications. But God also gave Bezalel artistic ability in order to "devise artistic designs" (Exodus 31:4). God gave Bezalel room for creativity. Artists are called to take old truths and present them in new, fresh and engaging ways. Sometimes people become complacent with truth. Art should awaken viewers, listeners and readers anew to the realities of ancient truth. *Creativity matters.*

God, the supreme artist, bestows artistic skills, talents and vision to human beings. Ultimately, the glory and praise should always go to him. However, what an artist does with his or her talents is also important. The Bible states that Bezalel's and Oholiab's artistic abilities were gifts from God, but it also states that they were "able men"—men who had honed and practiced their skills. God uses skilled and practiced artists for his purposes. *Proficiency and practice matter.*

God manifested himself and his truth through the representational art created by Bezalel and Oholiab. But not everything in art is necessarily symbolic, nor does it need to be. The priests' garments, for example, were decorated with blue pomegranates (Exodus 28:33). Why pomegranates and why blue? There may be a theological purpose which a keen scholar may someday discern, but sometimes the purpose of art is to simply delight. As we delight in beauty, our attention is drawn to God, who is, according to Wayne Grudem, "the sum of all desirable qualities." Beauty exists only because God exists as the Beautiful One. And, beauty's fundamental function is to delight. *Beauty matters.*

Why does God use art at all? The answer to that question is also the answer to why we use art in worship today. Instead of reciting the *1689 Baptist Confession of Faith* or reading portions from Grudem's *Systematic Theology* (as excellent as these resources are), we sing hymns, psalms and poems, often set to beautiful and stirring music. Art speaks to our emotions as well as our minds; it moves us holistically. Art makes truth accessible to us. Like the artisans who built the tabernacle, individuals were inspired by God to pen the Bible, in literary form, using artful and poetic devices. The bulk of the Scriptures take the form of artistic storytelling or poetry. God intentionally uses art to communicate his truth to his people. *Art matters.*

God gave Bezalel ability and skill in "every craft" (Exodus 31:5). God is interested in all kinds of art. Whether you are an artist who paints, composes, sculpts, designs, writes or sings, God has given you your ability; God can use your art for his glory and his purposes. Pray that he will grant you the wisdom to use it well. "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). **B**

“Though dead, they speak”—A series on EARLY CANADIAN BAPTISTS

THOMAS OF TORONTO: THE IMPACT OF A WELSH BAPTIST



BY MICHAEL A.G. HAYKIN // One of the great boasts of contemporary Canadian thinking is that present-day Canada is a mosaic of many peoples. Pluralism is very much in vogue in Canadian reflection on our identity. And as the son of an Iraqi Kurdish father and Irish mother, I suppose I exemplify that mosaic well. My birth in the United Kingdom, though, reflects another reality: namely, that three peoples primarily form the base of this nation, the First Peoples, the French and the British. And, when it comes to our nation’s Baptist heritage—while we are now unashamedly from a multitude of nations—a significant number of our forebears were from the British Isles.

The nineteenth century was an era of great emigration from Britain and Ireland. Of the English, Scottish, Irish and Welsh, the Welsh were the least represented. One reason was the development of South Wales into one of the world’s leading industrial centres. One Welshman who did emigrate, though, was Benjamin Daniel Thomas (1843–1917), who left Wales in the autumn of 1868.

Benjamin Thomas and the growth of Jarvis Street Baptist Church
The son of a Baptist minister, Thomas and his family initially moved to Pittston, Pennsylvania. He pastored the Baptist church there from 1868 to 1871 and then moved to Fifth Baptist Church, Philadelphia, where he served for eleven years. It was in 1882, though, that he accepted the call of Jarvis Street Baptist Church in Toronto.

By the time that Jarvis Street called Thomas, the church met in an impressive building on the corner of Jarvis and Gerrard Streets. The building was designed in the popular Neo-Gothic style by Henry Langley (d.1907), the leading church architect in late nineteenth-century Ontario. The main auditorium and its gallery could seat up to 1,300. If extra chairs were added, another 700 could fit. During Thomas’ pastorate, the average Sunday morning attendance was around 900, with 1,200 to 1,500 in the evening.

When Thomas arrived, he soon realized that the membership roll, which stood at 718, was inflated. Through careful revision, a number of 612 was reached. Over the next ten years, 950 were received into the church, 727 either left or died, giving a net gain of 223. During his second decade of ministry, another 695 joined the church. When Thomas resigned his charge in 1903, the membership stood at 896. During his pastorate the attendance at the mid-

week prayer meeting averaged between 400 and 500—something that was considered remarkable even in that day!

All of this growth came at a time when people were beginning to move out of the inner city to the suburbs. And, although Thomas himself distrusted statistics—the “summing up of the results of spiritual activity by an imposing array of figures has always appeared to me,” he said on one occasion, “a vain-glorious exhibition”—these figures do indicate that his ministry was powerfully owned by God for the conversion and blessing of many.

Thomas the preacher

By the time Benjamin Thomas came to Toronto he was at the height of his powers as a preacher. One of those who heard him likened him to a prophet, a man “with a message” and noted that “to listen to Dr. Thomas is to be reminded of the orthodoxy of thirty or forty years ago,” that is, the 1840s, before the rise of liberal theology brought many to doubt the veracity of God’s Word. Another called him a “most powerful and eloquent preacher.”

In contrast to other popular preachers of the Victorian era, Thomas was not considered an orator, for his preaching style was free from the sort of linguistic ornamentation favoured by many. After his death, it was noted that he was not fond of controversy, yet, there is good evidence that Thomas did not hesitate to proclaim all of God’s truth. In Thomas’ opinion, it was vital for Christians to be deeply committed to the Scriptures, for they were living in a day

when nothing appears to be established, when transitions and transformations, the most rapid and amazing, are taking place around us. The swirling waters of intellectual speculation are casting up the deposits of centuries. The very foundations of belief are undermined... There are those who assure us that we have been deluded; that the citadel of our faith is a poor, tawdry fabric, reared by superstition and ignorance; that the highest truths in which we have sought comfort and inspiration are without foundation; that is, nothing is absolutely certain that is not open to scientific or mathematical demonstration.

For Thomas, there was only one resting place: “the bulwark of our strength is the word of God.” It is noteworthy that in this regard, nothing has changed between Thomas’ day and ours! **B**

| **BOTTOM** *shelf*

Children’s BOOKS: two new titles for early readers

**THE BIG RED TRACTOR
AND THE LITTLE VILLAGE**
ISBN 978-0781404198

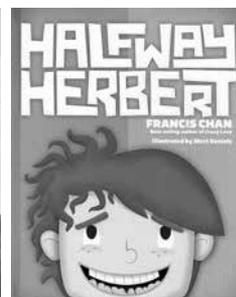
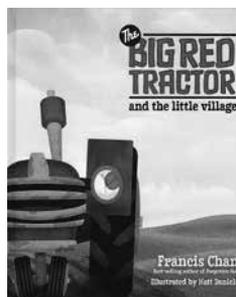
HALFWAY HERBERT
ISBN 978-0781404181

BY FRANCIS CHAN

Illustrated by Matt Daniels

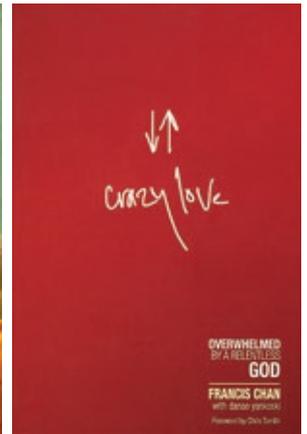
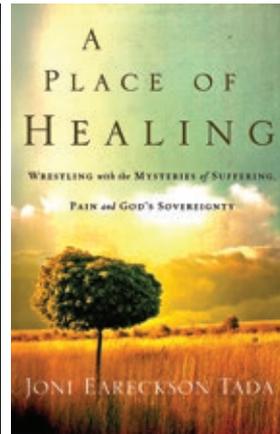
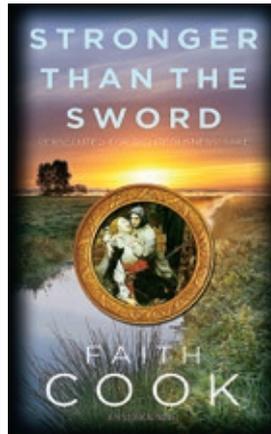
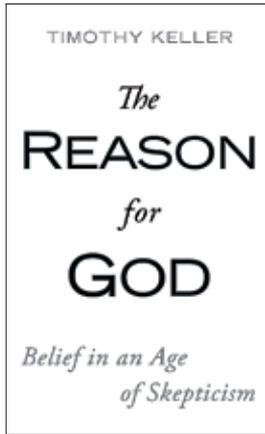
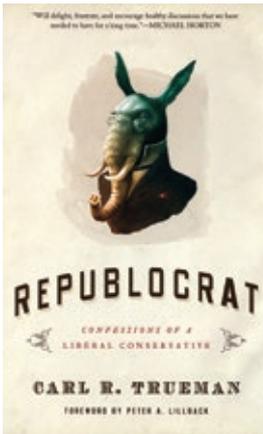
David C. Cook (2010), 36 pgs; ages 4–8, hardcover

These two books, wonderfully illustrated by Matt Daniels and brought to life by



the compelling stories of Francis Chan, teach deep truths. In *The big red tractor* we learn how important the owner’s manual is and how it transforms the villager’s lives—this is compared with God’s Word and its power in our lives. In *Halfway Herbert* we learn how the Holy Spirit can help us follow and love God—a complex truth masterfully and simply explained. Solid and fun books!—*Janice Van Eck*

A QUARTERLY review OF NEW & RECENT books



REPUBLICRAT

Confessions of a liberal conservative

BY CARL R. TRUEMAN

P&R (2010), 110 pgs
ISBN 978-1596381834

In *Republicrat* Carl R. Trueman, Professor of Historical Theology and Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, and transplant from Britain, lays out his “outsider” criticism of American evangelicals in relation to American politics. His criticism can be reduced to four key points. First, evangelicals have provided strong and unwavering allegiance to the Republican Party with little to show for it. Second, they lack thoughtful policy initiatives that are consistently Christian. Third, they are too enamored with *Fox News* and other “conservative” media personalities who have their own agenda. Lastly, the secularization of the church has taken evangelicals away from trusting in God and his Word and focused their time on political policies, patriotism and consumerism.

While there is much to agree with, especially theologically, I find his “solutions” dangerous. The elephant in the room he never deals with is the utter bankruptcy of the Western world, both spiritually and financially. Bashing the free market system and *Fox News* while promoting deeper government bureaucracy is no answer. Does Trueman live in the real world? Using the government to steal from our neighbour and the

next generation to pay for a multitude of social services we simply cannot afford is not biblical. I recommend he sticks with theology, shorts fiat currencies, goes long gold and stays in shape, since even Trueman is going to find out that health care is anything but free!

—Jonathan Wellum

THE REASON FOR GOD

Belief in an age of skepticism

BY TIMOTHY KELLER

Dutton (2009), 336 pgs
ISBN 978-1594483493

“Believe what’s good for you...” seems like a valid saying in the twenty-first century, but Dr. Keller gives the Christian, the agnostic and the atheist, no room to sit tight with this conclusion. He concisely walks with the skeptic through their philosophy and theology, revealing the thin ice on which they so proudly stand. He sums up the thoughts of this generation and how Christ’s message is not only *exclusive*, it’s *offensive*. Wrestling with the issues of evolution, pluralism, suffering and faith, Keller brings a firm defence of Christianity. His conclusive truth is that humanity first offended God and our only solution is to submit to the offended, wrath-taking, sinner-saving Lord Jesus. A page-turner reminiscent of C.S. Lewis’ *Mere Christianity*, *The Reason for God* will answer the questions your friends have been, and will be, asking you. Highly-recommended.—Scott D. McKenzie

STRONGER THAN THE SWORD

Persecuted for righteousness' sake

BY FAITH COOK

Evangelical Press (2010), 190 pgs
ISBN 978-0852347287

This is the third of Faith Cook’s historical novels, and is set in England during the period of the Civil War, Protectorate and Restoration (1645–1688). The author tells a fast-moving and easy-to-read story, which vividly depicts the cost of following Christ during times of religious intolerance and persecution. It is spiritually energizing to read of believers living in terrifying and hostile circumstances and yet experiencing the love and care of God. Alongside the fictional characters, Cook weaves in important historical figures (the Puritan preacher Joseph Alleine and the Baptist leader Hansard Knollys) and the storyline takes in the events following the Restoration of Charles II, the Great Plague and the Fire of London. This book is a good intro to this significant period and could be enjoyed by teens and adults alike.—Sharon James

A PLACE OF HEALING

Wrestling with the mysteries of suffering, pain, and God's sovereignty

BY JONI EARECKSON TADA

David C. Cook (2010), 224 pgs
ISBN 978-1434765321

If you have enjoyed previous books by Joni Eareckson Tada, this one will not disappoint you. After more than forty years in a wheelchair, Joni has learned

much about suffering, sharing insights on tough questions regarding healing. She writes this book while still living in the crucible of severe pain—the book was released just as Joni was diagnosed with breast cancer.

As we follow her deeply personal journey, (“How can I go on like this?” “How can I bring God glory?” and “How do I regain perspective?”) she encourages us to learn through suffering; to know healing, no matter our circumstances; to live for God’s glory; and to hope, looking forward to the ultimate joy of heaven. A wonderful book.

—Hilary Bugden

CRAZY LOVE

Overwhelmed by a relentless God

BY FRANCIS CHAN

David C. Cook (2010), 205 pgs
ISBN 978-1434768513

Obsession with Christ. A focused passion on serving God. A deep-rooted, no-holds-barred love for people. These are the points that Francis Chan emphasizes, in both this book and his life. The obsession Chan has with Christ resonates throughout the book, and he uses basic, biblical reasoning to encourage Christians to follow Christ harder, in love and service. Nothing in this book is new, but there is something about the presentation—honest, simple and with sincere, firm love—that promises to leave the reader motivated to surrender more to Christ and inspired in how to better serve others.—Jodi Dam

HEINZ DSCHANKILIC, executive director of *Sola Scriptura Ministries International (SSMI)*, talks to JANICE VAN ECK about ministry life, knowing and holding on to truth, Joshua Press...and time with his kids.

Q

Heinz, many of our readers will know you from your book tables at Carey Conference and the yearly conferences that *Sola Scriptura* puts on. What excites you about being a part of a ministry like *Sola Scriptura*?

A. I have always had a passion and burden for theological education. I am convinced more than ever that many of the pastoral counselling issues that occur as part of church life could be ameliorated if folks knew their Bibles better and applied sound doctrine to their personal situations. We are commanded to grow in maturity, and biblically that equates to growing in our understanding of the Bible. At SSMI, I get to read, distribute and publish solid Christian literature. I also help stage conferences throughout Canada that deal with relevant doctrines, encouraging believers to press on in truth and holiness.

Q. You have the opportunity to meet believers across the country, what are some areas in which you have seen the church in Canada grow and mature in the past few years?

A. Probably the most stunning thing I have witnessed is the resurgence of Reformed theology and a wider acceptance of the doctrines of grace. There is also a healthy ecumenicity among the varied strands of Reformed thought. One finds such expressions in conferences such as Together for the Gospel and The Gospel Coalition. The cross-pollination of American/Canadian culture and the intersection of Baptist/Presbyterian/Dutch Reformed/CRC and URC groups has been largely positive.

Q. What are some real needs you see?

A. The biggest problem I see is the age-old question that Satan first posed to Eve, "Has God really said?" Many Christians do not take their Bibles seriously and are influ-



enced more by Oprah and Dr. Phil than the authority of God's Word. Even among so-called conservatives, we are seeing a wholesale assault on truth. Salvation for some has become simply being part of a loving community with no appreciation for the depths of depravity that constitute our nature. God does not need to forgive me as long as I can forgive myself. This is rubbish!

Q. Joshua Press is also a part of SSMI now and continues to develop and publish new Christian books. Can you tell me a little bit about this relationship to your mission?

A. We acquired Joshua Press several years ago and, with that, the services of Dr. Michael Haykin. This has helped open the door for us to form relationships with a variety of authors and organizations. Our focus allows us to bring to market edifying books that otherwise would not see the light of day through mainstream Christian publishers.

Q. How many staff do you have and what are some ways that people can support *Sola*?

A. Our actual staff consists of two full-time employees, myself and Richard Lambert. We also have a part-time shipper/administrator in Matthew Richards as well as an accountant, Randy Moore, under contract.

We always need help. If there are folks nearby who want to drop in to stuff envelopes and handle odd jobs around the office, it would certainly be appreciated. Financial support through conference attendance, donations to offset our fixed overhead and book sales would also be extremely helpful.

Q. You are also a dad, and some of your children are quite young. What are some ways that you've been able to carve out family time?

A. Unlike local church ministry, I find that I am away from home many weekends of every year. This does not pose a huge strain on family time since we are dedicated homeschoolers. What does is the fact that

as a small ministry, I have to multi-task perhaps more than is healthy. This means longer work days that often spill over into working weekends.

Carving out restful time with family has been a challenge with the birth of our son Michael in 2001. He has been diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, a neurological disorder on the autism spectrum. Having young children is challenging enough. The strain on family time and resources grows exponentially with a child who is autistic. We are still trying to figure out how to have a meaningful family vacation.

Both boys enjoy walks with their dad, baseball and soccer. The three of us, and now Lydia as well, have discovered the fun of paintballing in the backyard. We regularly have target shooting drills in the backyard and look forward to our first woodland excursion. We all love antiques and enjoy visiting a local indoor antiques mall. Michael calls it his "inside treasure hunt place."

Q. If you could recommend one book for someone to read in 2011, what would it be?

A. One book, huh? Unquestionably, if you only had time to read one, it should be *A call to spiritual reformation* by D.A. Carson. This book is an analysis of Paul's prayers and the things Paul thought were of first importance in his prayer life. Sadly, we often view God as the great "sugar daddy" in the sky. Like spoiled children, we approach God with an entitlement mentality demanding that he fix our ills and pay our bills; and then have the unmitigated gall to call this exercising our spiritual muscles. But what captivated Paul's heart and prayers was the proclamation of the gospel, growth in holiness, unity and maintaining a steadfast dedication to Christ in the face of opposition. If your view of prayer is to see God as a pizza delivery service, then Dr. Carson's work will certainly rid you of such notions.

Q. What passage have you studied recently that has strengthened your faith or helped you in your walk with God?

A. This past May, I taught a series on the Lord's prayer. As a conference speaker and itinerant preacher, most of my talks are topically focused, so it was a personal feast to spend an extended period in a small and concentrated portion of Scripture. **B**

To find out more about Heinz and *Sola Scriptura*, visit www.sola-scriptura.ca

5 THINGS ABOUT HEINZ

- 1 Heinz is married to Cynthia and they have three children, Lydia, Michael and Jonathan
- 2 Collects vintage and modern fountain pens and stylographic ephemera
- 3 First purchased car was a 1973 Ford Maverick
- 4 Favourite food—anything but sushi (fishbait)
- 5 Decided to marry Cynthia when she flashed her Rolls-Royce key fob



LITTLE PILLOWS

Adapted from Frances Ridley Havergal

The red hand

“I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions...” (Isaiah 43:25).

There was once a deaf mute named John. Though he never heard any other voice, he heard the voice of Jesus, knew it, loved it and followed it.

One day he told the lady who had taught him, partly on his fingers and partly by signs, that he had had a wonderful dream. God had shown him a great black book, and all John’s sins were written in it, so many, so black! And God had shown him hell, all open and fiery, waiting for him, because of all these sins. But Jesus Christ had come and put his *red hand*, red with the blood of his cross, all over the page, and the red hand, the *dear* red hand, had blotted all John’s sins out, and when God held up the book to the light, he could not see one left!

Now God’s sweet word to you tonight is, “I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions.” Will you believe it? Only believe, and “according to your faith will it be done to you” (Matthew 9:29). It is not simply a feeling, but God’s truth, that Jesus Christ’s blood has been shed—nothing can change that—and his precious blood blots out our sins. As Paul says, “having canceled the written code...that was against us” (Colossians 2:14).

And, how much there is to blot out! Sins that you have forgotten and sins that you did not think were sins at all, besides those you know of—today, yesterday and all the past days of your little life. And all these written in his book!

Do you want to have them blotted out forever? Do you pray, “Blot out my sins”? Do you want to know that they are blotted out? Then take God’s word about it, and just believe that it is true, and true for you—“I have swept away [or blotted out] your offences like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you” (Isaiah 44:22).

BIBLE FOCUS

Philip preaches the good news

BY JANICE VAN ECK // Read Acts 8:26–40. This is an exciting story! Philip is travelling from Jerusalem to Gaza and meets an important government official from Ethiopia. Amazingly, when Philip comes across him, he is reading from the book of Isaiah, and he asks Philip if he can explain it to him. Philip gladly shares the good news of Jesus’ coming and the Ethiopian man responds. Answer these questions, and then complete the word search.

1. What makes Philip travel down the road from Jerusalem to Gaza?
2. Did the Ethiopian man believe what Philip told him about Jesus?
3. What happened when the Ethiopian saw water along the side of the road?
4. What did the Ethiopian do after Philip was taken away by the Spirit of the Lord?

Word search

- angel
- baptized
- Candace
- chariot
- Ethiopian
- eunuch
- Gaza
- horse
- Isaiah
- Jerusalem
- lamb
- life
- official
- preaching
- read
- Scripture
- sheep
- Spirit
- suddenly
- travelled
- understand
- water

J	E	R	U	S	A	L	E	M	L	S	P
E	S	R	O	H	A	Z	E	O	C	K	R
V	P	E	P	M	F	I	F	R	A	N	E
E	E	L	B	R	S	O	I	A	N	O	A
C	E	Q	X	A	Y	P	L	I	D	F	C
I	H	O	I	F	T	M	Z	E	A	F	H
R	S	A	E	U	N	U	C	H	C	I	I
Y	H	M	R	E	A	D	O	I	E	C	N
L	O	E	T	I	R	I	P	S	T	I	G
N	P	P	W	R	O	V	N	M	A	A	A
E	S	Y	O	W	A	T	E	R	F	L	Z
D	N	A	T	S	R	E	D	N	U	E	A
D	E	L	L	E	V	A	R	T	M	G	E
U	B	E	T	H	I	O	P	I	A	N	R
S	R	O	C	D	E	Z	I	T	P	A	B

DID YOU KNOW?

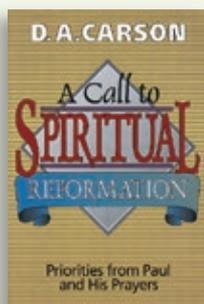
Today, Ethiopia has a POPULATION of 85 million, of whom 20% are evangelical Christians. Ethiopia is one of the world’s poorest countries. The average income is only US\$280 per year.

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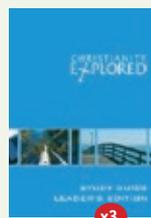
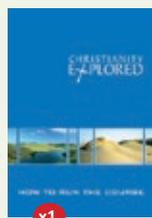
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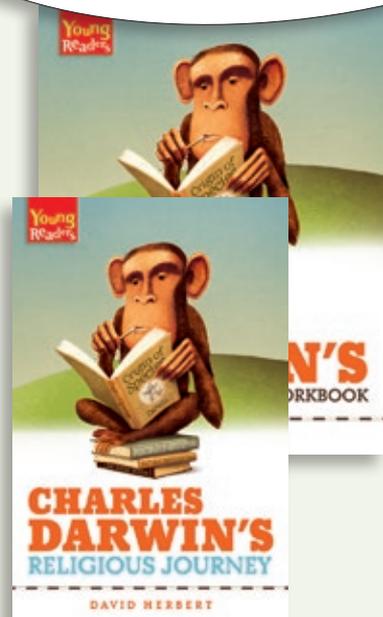


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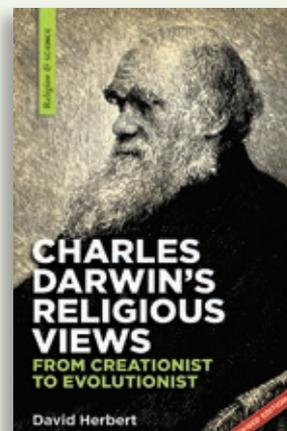
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