THIS CHRISTMAS, USE PROMO CODE 582137WM TO RECEIVE

Free Shipping
WITH YOUR ORDER OF $35 OR MORE

With the Web’s largest selection of Christian books, Bibles, gifts, and music, Christianbook has great ideas for everyone on your list—always at the very best value. And this season the savings are even sweeter, with free shipping on orders over $35. We’re your go-to destination for everything Christmas!

OFFER EXPIRES 12/24/19

Christianbook.com
1-800-CHRISTIAN
Everything Christian for less!

TERMS AND CONDITIONS: Free offer is limited to standard shipping within the continental U.S. This coupon is not redeemable for cash and cannot be used on orders already placed, including backorders. Coupon cannot be combined with any other offer.
FEATURES

34 Walking a tightrope
After decades of success in helping drug addicts kick their habits and find Jesus, some Adult & Teen Challenge centers are opening the door for state regulation—and payments

40 Pages of providence
Forty new history books worth reading—and 10 (from among thousands) to skip

44 Evo ever after?
As a new election approaches, Bolivia's Morales may be seeking to become another South American president for life

48 An app in exile
WeDevote is China's most popular Bible app, but Communist officials keep trying to shut it out of the country

ON THE COVER: Illustration by Krieg Barrie
Notes from the CEO

We had a break-in at our office last week. The perpetrators—assuming more than one person was involved—didn’t end up with much, but we can’t help thinking they could have done more damage had they been a little more thorough.

First, I should say that it appears I was the weak link in our security. The thieves came in through the window in my office. It probably was unlocked, embarrassingly, because they didn’t have to break anything to open it. They just slid it open.

I paid the steepest price for my carelessness: They trashed my office (my wife asked, “How could you tell?”), they took a backpack and an old briefcase, and they tracked in dirt and mulch from the flower bed they sneaked through to get in.

When we first arrived the morning after the break-in, we noticed at least two laptops missing. That would have hurt—laptops are relatively expensive assets in our office, and the hassle for the employees involved would have resulted in frustrating days of lost productivity.

But apparently the thieves did not want the laptops. Once they found the petty cash box, with just over $100 in it, they left the much more valuable laptop bags behind and took the cash. For some reason, they didn’t ditch my backpack. I guess it was more useful and harder to identify than a laptop.

By the end of that day, we thought we had gotten off easy, until as some of us were leaving the office we noticed that our little Ford Fiesta was missing. To save on rental cars and Ubers, we keep the car for our frequently visiting tops behind and took the cash. For some reason, they didn’t ditch my backpack. I guess it was more useful and harder to identify than a laptop.

The Asheville police found the car a few days later, at the McDonald’s a block from our office. Apparently, the thieves were hungry and didn’t want to walk.

All in all, it wasn’t a bad way for us—and by us, I mean me—to learn to lock up before we leave the office.

Kevin Martin
kevin@wng.org
I've been watching, from an appropriate distance, the collapse of still another marriage. Neither the husband nor the wife thinks there's any future. They've tried hard, they say, and they've listened to all sorts of counsel from pastors, therapists, friends, and family. But their motivation has vanished.

So is it really true that 50 percent of all marriages in the United States—including those of self-professing Christians—end in divorce? That's what we've been told by the social scientists and statisticians. Other professionals say the actual record's not quite that bad, but "only" a third instead of half.

By anyone's standards, but especially from the perspective of the children hammered by such breakups, it's way too many.

How can it be that something most of us once thought of as permanent ("till death do us part") has become so fragile? Why have our expectations been so radically lowered that we're scared, when we meet someone we haven't seen for 10 years, to ask how the family is doing?

As I first noted in this column some 25 years ago, my own earliest serious thoughts about marriage came in the late 1950s. In spite of the fact that in my parents I witnessed a marriage that was both solid and romantic, I recall getting strangely discomfiting messages from other sources during my adolescence and young adult years. "Marriage is OK," I heard them say. "But don't expect too much." Why have our expectations been so radically lowered that we're scared, when we meet someone we haven't seen for 10 years, to ask how the family is doing?

As I first noted in this column some 25 years ago, my own earliest serious thoughts about marriage came in the late 1950s. In spite of the fact that in my parents I witnessed a marriage that was both solid and romantic, I recall getting strangely discomfiting messages from other sources during my adolescence and young adult years. "Marriage is OK," I heard them say. "But don't expect too much." Why have our expectations been so radically lowered that we're scared, when we meet someone we haven't seen for 10 years, to ask how the family is doing?

When a young couple gets close to the excitement of a good marriage, Satan goes all out to spoil the fun.

So I didn't. And that was a poisonous concession. Satan has wicked tricks to play—especially on those people who get close to God's good blessings. And when a young couple gets close to the excitement of a good marriage, Satan goes all out to spoil the fun. He takes advantage of the low spots, taunting the unwary with half-truths. "Did you really think you deserved anything better than this? Remember what you're like deep down? And you think God owes you perfection?"

Because all those accusations are partly true, we tend to fall for Satan's bigger and terribly destructive lie. That lie says simply, "This is as good as it ever gets." In falling for that blunting of God's good promise, we swallow the seeds that lead first to skepticism, then to distant coldness, then to alienation, then to separation, and too often to divorce itself. For it's not a very big jump from "What did you expect?" to "What's the use?" Condemning ourselves—and too often seeing very few good marriages around us to cheer us on—we settle back in resignation, numbed with the discouraging recollection, "So this is what they meant!"

The problem with a lowered "realistic" standard or picture of marriage is that pretty soon people buy into it. The lowered standard becomes what everyone is shooting for, and then they start missing even that.

But that's not what God had in mind when He designed marriage. Hope rises against all that gloom because as Christians we know that God did intend marriage to send His people into orbit. He specifically meant it to provide a taste of heaven on earth. Marriage, after all, is His own carefully drawn picture of the relationship He wants to have with us.

If that discovery comes a little late for some of us laggards, we ought to work hard to make sure it comes early for our children. We need to stress to them that God means marriage to be the most elegant and satisfying expression of all possible relationships between people—and that if they expect less than that in marriage, at least in some measure, they have diminished God's glory and shortchanged their own pleasure and delight. "Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" (Ephesians 5:25).

Hard work? Yes, indeed. And worth absolutely every bit of it. ☺
I had spent 8 years traveling the world filming Ark Hunter, a documentary on my search for Noah’s Ark, when I decided to put it on the shelf and shift my attention to porn. Yes, porn.

I was at church one Sunday morning when my pastor quoted a study that nearly 70% of Christian men are hooked on porn. I leaned over to my wife and said, “This is serious! We’ve got to do something about this.”

Over the next two years, my wife, Tiana, and I worked tirelessly on creating the Conquer Series - a cinematic small group study that we hoped would help men find freedom from pornography.

As I was filming the Conquer Series, I didn’t think men would watch it. Why would guys join a group in their church to talk about their porn problem? I was wrong.

Today, the Conquer Series is helping more than one million men in over 80 countries find freedom from pornography.

I recently met one of these men, Bryan, at a conference for Conquer Series Leaders. Less than two years ago his story was bleak. His struggle with pornography was about to end his marriage. Bryan explains,

“I tell people that when I was in my addiction, it was like I was drowning in a pool surrounded by my friends and no one even knew. I was helpless and hopeless.”

Thankfully God intervened,

“But God, in His mercy, let everything come to the surface so we could see how He could work a series of miracles.”

Bryan told me the transformation that they had seen in their marriage,

“I am now over 20 months 100% clean of porn, sexual addiction and lust in general. God rescued and redeemed me in November of 2017 but not until I had utterly destroyed my wife and our life. He miraculously turned me around and she saw what He has genuinely done and then He turned her heart.”

Bryan handed me this card his wife, Celia, had given him as he left for the conference. I took a photo of it while standing in the lobby.

Bryan’s testimony is why my team and I come to work every day. We want to see that transformation throughout the Church! The exciting thing is, that once these men find freedom, they don’t stop there. Bryan now leads 15+ men through the Conquer Series every Thursday evening.

He explains, “Some of these guys are fresh out of prison, some are in different levels of leadership, and both groups are really authentic and transparent. It is amazing!”

If you’re currently in the fight for your relationship, know that God wants to do something amazing in your marriage, like he has done for Bryan and Celia: “We now live the BEST LIFE we have had in ALL my life and the 19 years we’ve been married. God is SOOO gracious and it’s time I turn this back on the devil in a BIG WAY.”

While I was traveling the world in search of a big wooden boat, God had other plans. He wanted me to go on a quest deep inside the human soul, starting in my very own heart.

“For it is God’s will that you should be sanctified.” - 1 Thessalonians 4:3

If you long for healing in your relationship or want to help couples struggling with pornography then I hope you’ll get the Conquer Series. Use it in your men’s group. If you decide not to use it, return the DVDs within 14 days and you’ll get your money back. There’s no risk. Doing nothing is a far greater risk.

New edition of the Conquer Series now available!

ORDER TODAY AT CONQUERSERIES.COM
CALL (561) 681-9990

Receive 15% off your DVD set.
Use coupon code: OCT2019
Expires: Dec 31, 2019
Space invaders
Alien look-alikes pose with an apparently unconcerned canine at a UFO festival in Rachel, Nev., on Sept. 20. The festival was a spinoff from “Storm Area 51,” an event in which participants said they planned to descend on the secretive Area 51 military base and search for evidence of extraterrestrials. Organizers of Storm Area 51 ultimately canceled the event, but alternative meet-ups occurred in two nearby towns.

MARIO TAM/AUTGETTY IMAGES
The news about news continues to dominate headlines, and on Sept. 14, The New York Times demonstrated again why readers have legitimate reasons to question media giants: A Times story reported an accusation that Supreme Court Justice Brett Kavanaugh was involved in a lewd and sexually aggressive encounter against a female student in college.

Several Democratic presidential candidates immediately called for Kavanaugh’s impeachment.

The next day, the Times appended an extraordinary “editors’ note” to the story: They had failed to mention that the purported victim refused to speak with their reporters—and that her friends told them she doesn’t remember the purported encounter with Kavanaugh.

Telling the truth demands reporting such details, whatever the rest of the story includes. (The Times reporters said their editors excised the details.)

That didn’t stop Sen. Kamala Harris, D-Calif., from sending an email to supporters of her presidential campaign after the clarification, deriding Kavanaugh’s “illegitimate nomination” and asking for campaign contributions.

Why keep targeting Kavanaugh?

Peggy Noonan of The Wall Street Journal offered several possibilities, including this one: “Because the authority and legitimacy of future rulings that are not pleasing to progressives (most prominently, perhaps, on Roe v. Wade) can be undermined through footnotes that say ‘the 5-4 decision was joined by a justice credibly accused of sexual assault.’”

Meanwhile, 3,000 miles away, a remarkable scene of truth-telling about abortion was unfolding in a California courtroom.

Pro-life advocates David Daleiden and Sandra Merritt are fighting 14 felony counts related to their secret recordings of Planned Parenthood workers describing how they procure and sell unborn baby body parts. A preliminary hearing on Sept. 18 included testimony from Forrest Smith, an abortionist who estimates he’s conducted some 50,000 abortions.

The abortionist testified on behalf of the pro-life advocates.

After listening to Planned Parenthood workers in the undercover videos, Smith said he believed it was clear they weren’t following the protocol expected of most abortionists.

Smith said the Planned Parenthood workers described a type of “tumultuous labor” that would cause the baby to come out without the assistance of an abortionist.

“There’s no question in my mind that some of these fetuses were live births,” Smith said. “No question it’s alive.”

Though Smith was a paid witness for the defense, his candor was stunning, according to a report by LifeSite News: “You can kill a human being, which I admit abortion is—but you have to do it in certain ways.”

There’s no right way to kill a baby, and Illinois police confronted that grisly truth as they reported a harrow-
ing discovery in the home of a deceased abortionist: 2,246 medically preserved remains of unborn children.

The family of abortionist Ulrich Klopfer reported the find to police after Klopfer’s death in early September. Authorities said the human remains were stored in small, sealed plastic bags placed in cardboard boxes in his garage.

With such a horrifying discovery, pro-lifers likely were relieved to hear better news: In 2017, the number of babies who died by abortion hit its lowest mark since Roe v. Wade in 1973. But even that’s tempered with sadness: The total number of abortions still reached more than 860,000.

Democratic presidential candidates aren’t giving up their advocacy for abortion, but they talked about plenty of other issues in their televised debate on Sept. 12. Entrepreneur Andrew Yang announced he would give $1,000 a month to 10 American families over the next year, a mini-experiment in his proposal for the federal government to give every American adult $1,000 a month.

The expensive proposition came during the same week the Treasury Department reported eye-popping figures: The U.S. budget gap had widened to $1 trillion in the first 11 months of the fiscal year.

As the Treasury Department confessed the country’s debt, students from Union Seminary confessed their ecological sins—to potted plants. A photo on Twitter included an explanation: “Today in chapel, we confessed to plants... to the beings who sustain us but whose gift we often fail to honor.” The tweet was low-hanging fruit, and plenty of Christians pointed out we should pray to the Creator, not the creation.

A day later, a potential cinematic sin grabbed attention on Twitter: A report from Variety magazine suggested that movie moguls were considering a remake of the classic film The Princess Bride.

Even in a highly partisan country, the truth about the beloved fairy tale seemed clear to fans across the spectrum: Tinkering with the movie is inconceivable. ☯

---

**BY THE NUMBERS**

81%

The share of Americans who say they believe members of Congress behave unethically either “some of the time” or “all or most of the time,” according to Pew Research Center.

1 million

The number of active cases backlogged in U.S. immigration courts at the end of August.

775,000

The number of U.S. military personnel deployed to Afghanistan at least once since 2001, when the United States began fighting terrorists there following the 9/11 attacks.

1 in 16

The share of American women ages 18 to 44 who say their first experience of sexual intercourse was forced or coerced, according to a study in JAMA Internal Medicine.

$13,440

The projected amount of government education spending per student enrolled in U.S. public schools this year.

Ministry begins now. At Southwestern Seminary, ministry doesn't wait until graduation; it starts on day one. Weekly evangelism teams led by professors. Monthly gatherings focused on church planting, missions, and revitalization. Annual mission trips to unreached, unengaged people groups in hard-to-access places. Thousands of churches in the Fort Worth-Dallas metroplex. A community of God-called men and women. These things make up the place we call home on Seminary Hill.

Our training ground isn't confined to the classroom; ministry begins now.
At Southwestern Seminary, ministry doesn’t wait until graduation; it starts on day one. Weekly evangelism teams led by professors. Monthly gatherings focused on church planting, missions, and revitalization. Annual mission trips to unreached, unengaged people groups in hard-to-access places. Thousands of churches in the Fort Worth-Dallas metroplex. A community of God-called men and women. These things make up the place we call home on Seminary Hill.

Our training ground isn’t confined to the classroom; ministry begins now.
In 2016 Joe Biden threatened to withdraw aid. He didn’t threaten good to Ukraine,” been very very United States has While Trump said Hunter, in Ukraine. Biden’s son, presidential candidate Joe Vice President and current business dealings of former Zelensky to investigate the call, in which he urged releasing a transcript of the Trump responded by a “breach of national security” during a July phone response to what she called a “breach of national security” during a July phone call between Trump and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky. Trump responded by releasing a transcript of the call, in which he urged Zelensky to investigate the business dealings of former Vice President and current presidential candidate Joe Biden’s son, Hunter, in Ukraine. While Trump said in the call that “the United States has been very very good to Ukraine,” he didn’t threaten withdrawal of aid. In 2016 Joe Biden urged the Ukrainian government to fire a prosecutor who was investigating a Ukrainian gas company that had Hunter Biden on its board of directors. Joe Biden denies he acted to shield his son.

**Died**

Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali, the former autocratic president of Tunisia, died at age 83 after being hospitalized for prostate cancer. Ben Ali began his political career in top security positions during the 1970s and was appointed interior minister after crushing a series of bread riots. In 1987 he became prime minister and had a team of doctors surrounding him. The security forces under his command also began to systematically violate human rights. In 2002, massive anti-government protests that led to Ben Ali’s 2011 ouster and exile. Ben Ali spent the rest of his life in Saudi Arabia.

**Warned**

Health officials in six states have warned Americans of an increase in cases of a rare, mosquito-borne disease. Eastern equine encephalitis has a fatality rate of 33 percent and no vaccine, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. However, the study did point out that some bird populations, such as geese and swans, have rebounded after conservation efforts, suggesting hope for the future.

**Ruled**

A California appellate court has renewed a transgender person’s suit against a Catholic hospital after a lower court dismissed it. The hospital, Dignity Health, had blocked a doctor from performing a hysterectomy as treatment for the woman’s gender dysphoria. Hospital officials denied the operation because of the Catholic principle against destroying healthy organs unless it is to save the patient’s life. The trial court said Dignity Health was acting within its legal rights as a religious institution. However, the appellate judge ruled that the hospital had illegally discriminated based on the patient’s gender identity and the suit would continue.
God’s Hostage is the incredible true story of missionary and pastor Andrew Brunson and his imprisonment, his brokenness, and his eventual freedom. Anyone with a heart for missions will love this tension-laden and faith-laced book.

Andrew Brunson is an American pastor. He holds a PhD in New Testament from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland. Andrew and his wife, Norine, were involved in starting churches, training believers, aiding refugees, and hosting a house of prayer in Turkey for twenty-three years until being falsely accused of terrorism in October 2016. Following this, Andrew was held for two years in Turkish prisons. Due to a worldwide prayer movement and significant political pressure from the US government, he was finally sentenced to time served and dramatically released in October 2018.
The guarantees of free speech and freedom of religion are not only for those who are deemed sufficiently enlightened, advanced, or progressive. They are for everyone.

Arizona Supreme Court Justice ANDREW GOULD, in a ruling that the owners of Brush and Nib Studio in Phoenix have the right to decline to create custom invitations for same-sex weddings.

“This week, dumpsters were filled with books that should have left decades ago @TWPSchools and replaced with engaging, relevant, culturally diverse literature.”

MELISSA BARNETT, a supervisor of English Language Arts in the Washington Township School District in New Jersey, in a tweet showing a photo of books thrown away in dumpsters. The books reportedly included Dante’s Inferno, Night by Elie Wiesel, Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen, and The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck.

“It is not up to nine people to tell 330 million Americans how to live.”

U.S. Supreme Court Justice NEIL GORSUCH on the importance of justices not substituting their personal opinions for the text of the Constitution in their rulings.

“This can’t continue.”

Former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and former governor of South Carolina NIKKI HALEY on the 2019 fiscal year’s budget deficit surpassing $1 trillion in only 11 months.

“You may be very sympathetic to terrorists. That’s very disconcerting.”

U.S. Magistrate Judge CHRIS M. MCALEXEY at a hearing for Abdul-Majeed Marouf Ahmed Alani, a mechanic for American Airlines who reportedly admitted to authorities he tampered with the Boeing 737-800 at Miami International Airport in July. Prosecutors say Alani had videos of ISIS terrorist activity on his cell phone.

U.S. Supreme Court Justice NEIL GORSUCH on the importance of justices not substituting their personal opinions for the text of the Constitution in their rulings.

Former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and former governor of South Carolina NIKKI HALEY on the 2019 fiscal year’s budget deficit surpassing $1 trillion in only 11 months.

“You may be very sympathetic to terrorists. That’s very disconcerting.”

U.S. Magistrate Judge CHRIS M. MCALEXEY at a hearing for Abdul-Majeed Marouf Ahmed Alani, a mechanic for American Airlines who reportedly admitted to authorities he tampered with the Boeing 737-800 at Miami International Airport in July. Prosecutors say Alani had videos of ISIS terrorist activity on his cell phone.

The guarantees of free speech and freedom of religion are not only for those who are deemed sufficiently enlightened, advanced, or progressive. They are for everyone.

Arizona Supreme Court Justice ANDREW GOULD, in a ruling that the owners of Brush and Nib Studio in Phoenix have the right to decline to create custom invitations for same-sex weddings.

“This week, dumpsters were filled with books that should have left decades ago @TWPSchools and replaced with engaging, relevant, culturally diverse literature.”

MELISSA BARNETT, a supervisor of English Language Arts in the Washington Township School District in New Jersey, in a tweet showing a photo of books thrown away in dumpsters. The books reportedly included Dante’s Inferno, Night by Elie Wiesel, Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen, and The Grapes of Wrath by John Steinbeck.

“It is not up to nine people to tell 330 million Americans how to live.”

U.S. Supreme Court Justice NEIL GORSUCH on the importance of justices not substituting their personal opinions for the text of the Constitution in their rulings.

“This can’t continue.”

Former U.S. ambassador to the United Nations and former governor of South Carolina NIKKI HALEY on the 2019 fiscal year’s budget deficit surpassing $1 trillion in only 11 months.

“You may be very sympathetic to terrorists. That’s very disconcerting.”

U.S. Magistrate Judge CHRIS M. MCALEXEY at a hearing for Abdul-Majeed Marouf Ahmed Alani, a mechanic for American Airlines who reportedly admitted to authorities he tampered with the Boeing 737-800 at Miami International Airport in July. Prosecutors say Alani had videos of ISIS terrorist activity on his cell phone.
A Ruiz by any other name
What’s the best way to defeat a popular incumbent U.S. congressman? Running a candidate with the same name doesn’t seem like a bad idea. The last time Republicans challenged incumbent Rep. Raul Ruiz, the California Democrat took 59 percent of the vote against a Republican challenger who had previously been a soap opera star. Next year, Republican Raul Matthew Ruiz said he plans to challenge the sitting congressman. The Republican Ruiz, a 57-year-old carpenter from Perris, Calif., is nearly a political neophyte, having briefly run for a City Council district in his hometown.

Musical motivation
The classy music piped out of speakers at 7-Eleven convenience stores isn’t just for the customers. A number of Los Angeles 7-Elevens have started blaring classical music at night as a way to keep homeless people from loitering in front of their stores. A company official revealed to The Modesto Bee last year that they planned on testing music outside of stores to enhance customer experience. The Los Angeles Times reports a number of franchise owners in Los Angeles say the loop of classical music is designed to help curb the growing loitering problem that leaves customers feeling uneasy.

Getting their A’s straight
Albanian soccer players looked confused prior to a European Championship qualifier match against France on Sept. 7 when French officials played the Andorran national anthem instead of their own. Albanian fans who had traveled to the Stade de France for the game gesticulated wildly, while the players’ confusion turned to anger. In response to the faux pas, Albanian players refused to take the field until their national anthem was played. A stadium announcer trying to help made things worse when he apologized to “Armenia’s fans” and begged home fans to respect the “Armenia national anthem.” France eventually won the match 4-1.

Toxic taters
More than 40,000 pounds of potatoes needed a police and ambulance escort to a landfill in Chester, Va., Sept. 5. Police in Richmond, Va., say someone had abandoned the trailer filled with potatoes in their city sometime in August. Waste disposal experts warned Virginia officials that the vegetables, after weeks of rotting in the trailer, were likely emitting a toxic gas and were not safe to handle. That meant the abandoned trailer had to be repaired before it could be hauled away. And when it was, Chester, Va., police accompanied the trailer as it was driven between 5 and 10 mph all the way to the landfill.
No open-door policy

Passengers on the Hayabusa No. 46 train on their way to Tokyo got more than a breath of fresh air on Aug. 21. That's because the Hayabusa No. 46 is a bullet train that travels 174 miles per hour, and for a full minute on Aug. 21 it ran with one of its doors completely open. A company spokesman told the AFP news service that a janitor had mistakenly left the door unlocked. None of the 340 passengers on board was injured.

Barbecue battle

Australian vegan Cilla Carden wasn't blowing smoke when she told her neighbors to cease common outdoor activities. Claiming that barbecue smoke from next door has ruined her quality of life, the Perth-area native has been fighting a two-year legal battle against her neighbors. “All I can smell is fish,” the vegan told Nine News. “I can’t enjoy my backyard. I can’t go out there.” Carden also complains about cigarette smoke from next door and the sound of children playing nearby. In February a lower court dismissed her request for an injunction against her neighbors’ barbecues. And in July, an appellate court directed Carden and her neighbors to work out their problems on their own. Her neighbors have organized an Oct. 19 cookout next door to Carden.

An existential crisis

Clerks at the Texas Department of Public Safety had issued a challenge to 95-year-old Albert Bigler of Ennis, Texas, before they would renew his driver’s license: He had to prove he was born. Bigler said he couldn’t produce a birth certificate for the state because he’s never had one. His mother gave birth to him at home in 1924 in a rural area west of Fort Worth, rather than in a hospital. After being rejected by the DPS in July, the World War II veteran and a few friends traveled to the state capital to seek records, but officials there told them he doesn’t exist in the state database. Paperwork from a local Social Security office finally yielded Bigler a license on Sept. 11, and Bigler was able to drive legally to his job as a volunteer lawn mower at his local Lutheran church.

Beyond snail mail

Neither snow nor rain nor heat will stop letter carriers, but the unofficial United States Postal Service motto says nothing about snakes. According to The Caswell Messenger, the post office in Milton, N.C., has been closed due to a snake infestation. The USPS closed the post office in August, saying the small building needed maintenance. Residents of the small, 148-person town on the Virginia border were told they could get their mail in Semora, N.C., 5 miles away. In a statement, a spokesman for the USPS said they had been in touch with the property’s landlord and were hoping to resolve the problem soon.

Pecks on the cheek?

A new warning from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has urged Americans to stop kissing chickens. In a notice posted Aug. 30, the CDC claimed 235 Americans had been infected with salmonella due to interactions with backyard chickens since mid-July. In all, the agency reported the current outbreak had infected more than 1,000 people. Responding to the outbreak, the CDC warned chicken owners to wash their hands after handling and not to “kiss backyard poultry or snuggle them.”
Cloudy picture

IS TECHNOLOGY CHANGING THE WAY WE LOOK AT THE PAST?

The accumulation of 20-plus years in the same house can be intimidating—not so much from the plastic bins stacked on garage shelves but from the little stuff, the mementos that weep when you think about pitching them. Do you have boxes of old photographs under the bed or in the closet? Vacation pics from the Grand Canyon or that collection passed down from Great-Aunt Susan that never got labeled (who are these people)? As I was sorting through my last box of photos, and categorizing them to put in another box, it struck me that none of them were more recent than 2008. In fact, the ones that seemed most “recent” were from the ’90s.

I’ll bet most of us could say the same. It’s not that we haven’t been taking pictures. We’re taking more than ever, but they don’t end up in boxes or albums.

Where they are relates to the steep drop in camera sales. It’s not just Eastman Kodak in trouble; it’s Canon, Nikon, Fuji, even Leica. Ten years ago, when I bought my last camera, those giants of the industry appeared to have successfully weathered the digital revolution. But worldwide sales since 2008 have fallen off a cliff: from 110 million units to 20 million. The steepest drop is in pocket-sized snapshot models, the kind of academic livestreaming with the ability to revise continually. This may make sense for the evolving sciences. But historian Wilfred McClay sees trouble for his discipline: “Students will eventually be required to use—and institutions will be required to offer—the constantly updated texts, tethering students and schools exclusively to the publisher’s digital platform. George Orwell, please call the Ministry of Truth.”

History has been subject to revision ever since there was such a thing as history, and that’s not necessarily bad. New research can call old facts into question. Even new technology can supply valuable perspective, like the colorized and re-digitized World War I footage in Peter Jackson’s documentary They Shall Not Grow Old. What McClay fears is not revisionism, but (quoting John Dos Passos) the “idiot delusion of the exceptional Now that blocks good thinking.” Organizing photos in an album requires time and thought; likewise organizing events in a pattern, or insights into a coherent philosophy or a reasoned argument. Technology that leaptfrogs both time and thought can easily succumb to the latest wokeness.

We’ll keep taking pictures, storing them on your phone are more like ongoing commentary. They are postcards sent from our daily travels, whether to Italy or to Starbucks. Though it’s cheap and easy to print them, we seldom do. They remain in the cloud, a monologue too crowded for reflection. Nothing is history; all is data.

A change in one area of common culture often reflects changes in another. To take just one example, Pearson Education, one of the world’s largest textbook publishers, recently announced its plans to digitize all its 1,500 titles and go digital-first with new titles. That doesn’t mean the end of hardcover texts (though that end may be in view), but a kind of academic livestreaming with the ability to revise continually. This may make sense for the evolving sciences. But historian
Uncover your faith heritage one story at a time.

Know your story, embrace the journey.

Please enjoy a FREE Subscription!
Mention source code WM1019

For more than thirty years, Christian History magazine has been telling the story of the Church to help guide each of us on our journey. Christian History is a donor-supported magazine.

ChristianHistoryMagazine.org
1-800-468-0458
IS THERE SUCH A THING AS “CHRISTIAN” JOURNALISM?

In this era of “fake news,” Marvin Olasky shows us how to become citizen-reporters and discerning consumers of media.

“In our culture desperately needs true stories, so if you want to understand why the news media are collapsing and how to tell stories that help people see the world clearly, buy this book.”

LES SILLARS, Professor of Journalism, Patrick Henry College

“With hundreds of examples from the United States and China, Marvin Olasky shows how a new world of twenty-first-century journalism is arising from Christian journalists practicing what he calls biblical objectivity.”

TONY CARNES, Editor and Publisher, A Journey through NYC Religions

NOW AVAILABLE AT
Amazon, Christianbook, Westminster Bookstore, and wherever Christian books are sold

1 (800) 631-0094
www.prpbooks.com
If you never watched *Downton Abbey*, the new movie is not the place to start. Those who skipped PBS’ historical drama on television will have a hard time understanding why their fellow moviegoers are so entertained by two elderly ladies bickering during a garden stroll. They’ll be utterly baffled by the eruption of cheers when a retired old butler ceases puttering in his vegetable patch and marches off to polish silver for the lady of the manor.

Likewise, if you failed to fall under the show’s spell when it aired from 2011 to 2016, don’t expect the feature-length film to change your opinion. Because this *Downton* makes little effort to bring along novices or convince skeptics. It’s content to be exactly what the series was—a high-style period piece so proudly focused on the intricacies and mannerisms of the British class system, Jane Austen herself might consider it a little over the top.

The plot centers on the kind of low stakes Anglophiles will adore even if they’re not exactly clutching their seat cushions in anxiety. Lord Grantham receives a note from Buckingham palace that the king and queen will be spending a night at Downton during their tour of Yorkshire. In the flurry of preparation that follows, the royal staff arrives early, immediately causing conflict with Downton’s faithful staff. Can you believe it—the liveried blackguards try to usurp the authority of our beloved Mr. Carson, Bates, Anna, and Mrs. Hughes! Even communist kitchen maid Daisy takes umbrage at their majesty’s hoity-toity French chef thinking he can pull rank over Downton cook Mrs. Patmore.

*Downton* creator Julian Fellowes pulls a few other minor twists from his
sleeve. The dowager countess—as always, mistress supreme of the arch one-liner—tries to convince a cousin to leave her estate to Lord Grantham. Former chauffeur and Irish Republican sympathizer Tom gets mixed up with a bit of political intrigue. But none of it does much to threaten the peace of the bucolic English countryside or the harmony of the bustling village streets.

Taken together with the luxurious art deco sets and costumes and the stunning aerial scenery, is it all mere fantasy of the past? A bit of tea-and-crumpets comfort food? Of course. But, sometimes, isn’t that exactly what you want from an evening at the movies?

Christian viewers will be less comforted by a same-sex romance that sees Thomas visiting a gay jazz club with a royal footman, and that takes the film beyond the PG rating. Otherwise, Julian Fellowes’ script is so mild and lovely, you might not notice that it settles, once and for all, the political intrigue. But none gets mixed up with a bit of countercultural as to suggest members of the servant role as does the aristocratic Grantham family. To take liberties with the Apostle Paul, can the upstairs say to the downstairs I have no need of you? So long as servants and lords have equal concern for each other, all can rejoice in the honor of the estate.

The story is even so countercultural as to suggest members of the servant class should take as much pride, if not more, in their roles as does the aristocratic Grantham family. To take liberties with the Apostle Paul, can the upstairs say to the downstairs I have no need of you? So long as servants and lords have equal concern for each other, all can rejoice in the honor of the estate.

While meritocracy can be a wonderful thing, Downton Abbey shows us it goes too far when it assumes that merit is found only in those who rise to grand stations. What it celebrates is a world of order where people are free to pursue dreams and move up in rank provided their methods are honorable and their motivation isn’t resentment.

No one spells this thesis out more explicitly than lady’s maid Anna. First, she scolds the queen’s dresser, asking, Because we cannot all inhabit a lofty place, does it mean no one should? Later, she encourages Lady Mary to weather the difficulties and headaches of running a massive enterprise like Downton because of the livelihoods it provides.

The hero in Ad Astra never goes “to the stars,” as the new film’s title is translated, but stays relatively close to home. Me, I was all suited up for another Brad Pitt sci-fi thriller like 12 Monkeys or World War Z. I was unprepared to explore inner space—a man’s feelings. Abort mission! Knowing the flight path prior to launch, however, perhaps you’ll enjoy the journey more than I did.

Astronaut Roy McBride (Pitt) is the son of a famed space explorer (Tommy Lee Jones) who disappeared decades earlier. High-energy rays originating from the elder McBride’s last known whereabouts near Neptune are wreaking havoc on Earth. Space Command tasks Roy with sending a message to his father, who went into space (dad astra?) searching for signs of extraterrestrial life. Roy wants to go to Neptune personally (Brad astra?) to get some answers. Is his father alive? Is he responsible for the destructive rays? Why did he abandon his wife and son?

BOX OFFICE TOP 10 FOR THE WEEKEND OF SEPT. 20-22 according to Box Office Mojo

CAUTIONS: Quantity of sexual (S), violent (V), and foul-language (L) content on a 0-10 scale, with 10 high, from kids-in-mind.com

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Studio</th>
<th>S</th>
<th>V</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Downton Abbey*</td>
<td>PG</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Ad Astra*</td>
<td>PG-13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rambo: Last Blood</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>It: Chapter Two</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Hustlers</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Lion King*</td>
<td>PG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Good Boys</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Angel Has Fallen</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Overcomer*</td>
<td>PG</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Fast &amp; Furious Presents:</td>
<td>PG-13</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Reviewed by WORLD

—by BOB BROWN
**The Mayo Clinic**

What do you get when an agnostic physician meets a Franciscan nun? No joke—the Mayo Clinic. The unlikely partnership between W.W. Mayo and Mother Mary Alfred Moes launched what now ranks as the best medical center in the country.

Inimitable filmmaker Ken Burns tells Mayo Clinic’s story in the documentary *The Mayo Clinic*, available on Netflix (rated TV-14 for some medically graphic content).

This “miracle in the cornfield” began in 1883 after a devastating tornado tore through Rochester, Minn., 90 miles southeast of Minneapolis, underscoring the need for a local hospital. Mother Alfred challenged W.W., as he was known, to run one if she could raise enough money to build it. In 1889, the hospital opened.

What transpired over the next 130 years became a model for medical centers worldwide. The concept of teamwork—physicians collaborating to diagnose and solve patient problems—made Mayo the paradigm for patient care. Today Mayo treats 14,000 patients.

Weaving archival footage with interviews, Burns recounts many medical firsts at Mayo, illustrating what can happen when faith and science unite, when patient welfare rises above material gain, and when doctors join forces in research and medical practice.

W.W.’s physician sons, Will and Charlie, carried on their father’s legacy of putting patients first.

Today Mayo doctors are salaried to safeguard against medical decisions based on monetary gain.

Sadly, however, Mayo Clinic has strayed from its Catholic influence and the sisters’ motto “to treat every patient like Jesus Christ,” although Franciscan sisters still work there. Today Mayo offers both abortions and sex-change therapy and surgery. Mother Alfred would weep.

Burns doesn’t address those philosophical changes, but one segment of the film alerts viewers to them: A Mayo doctor advises a pregnant melanoma patient that her life might be at risk without an “elective termination.”

The woman declines.

After more Mayo medical intervention, she regains her health and gives birth to a beautiful baby.

—by SHARON DIERBERGER

**Evelyn**

Director Orlando von Einsiedel lost his brother Evelyn to suicide 15 years ago, and he and his family find it too painful to talk about their loss. Determined to change this, Orlando, sister Gwen, and youngest brother Robin set off to reminisce by repeating a series of hikes in Scotland they had traveled with their brother.

Viewers might wonder if having a camera crew record your every breath, word, and stride would inhibit real conversation and emotion. This does not seem to be the case for the siblings, who share fond memories along with the tears and struggles that they’ve put aside for many years.

They travel through beautiful hills, valleys, and moors, re-creating photos they took with Evelyn in picturesque locations.

Their mother Harriet joins them for the first few days. She raised the family mostly on her own after a divorce. Mom recalls her son Evelyn’s many wonderful traits, but also the dark periods when his schizophrenia began and deepened.

When Dad (Andreas) joins a few days later, tension crackles. Some of the recorded conversations in *Evelyn* (rated TV-MA on Netflix) are raw, with coarse and profane language.

Two of Evelyn’s friends join the three siblings on the trails. Gradually, the hikers reveal that they all blame themselves for Evelyn’s death: They didn’t see the danger signs, didn’t answer the phone on time, didn’t get the right medical treatments.

Director Orlando confesses the trip is harder than he expected: “I’m struggling just to hold it together.”

Gwen complains through tears: “All this is doing is bringing a lot of painful and traumatic things back, and I can’t now make them go away … stuff I’ve had to spend a long time trying to forget.”

Only someone with a heart of stone could watch this documentary without a box of Kleenex nearby. A Christian who loses a loved one to suicide may feel terrible sorrow and guilt, but he has the comfort of a loving Father’s promises of forgiveness and rest. What about those without such hope?

—by MARTY VANDRIEL
Ignoring God

ANYTHING BUT THE BLOOD OF JESUS? by Marvin Olasky

Deborah Rhode, in Character: What It Means and Why It Matters (Oxford, 2019), details the lack of character in many recent presidents and other leaders. She wants adults to “model and reward fairness, honesty, empathy, and mutual respect.” She wants each school to “have a plan for character education that stakeholders can help shape, support, and assess.” Rhode, though, ignores the most important factor of all—belief in God.

Thomas Abt’s Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence—and a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets (Basic, 2019) is better. Abt’s chapter on “Redemption and Recovery” includes a profile of Raymond Solórzano, who served six years in prison for carjacking, got out, and was on his way to crimes carrying a life sentence until he “checked himself into a Christian halfway and drug recovery home, where he found God and stayed for over three years.” Abt profiles Anthony Blockmon, who was in prison for selling crack cocaine and tried many ways to go straight, but “none of that helped until I talked to the Lord, then everything turned around for me.”

Abt also profiles Eddie Bocanegra, in prison for 14 years and “now a committed Christian” who helps others and says, “For a lot of people like me, we do this work to repent... Everything I do, it’s just my way of... paying back God.” Abt concludes, “For many I spoke with... their faith in God was instrumental to their recovery... Some sort of spiritual conversion is common among those who were once serious criminals.” That’s valuable information, but Abt later retreats to conventional public policy abstraction: “Would-be and someday shooters must be identified, engaged, stabilized, treated, and then offered opportunities to better themselves and their communities.”

I hoped for more from Campus Life: In Search of Community, edited by Drew Moser and Todd Ream (IVP, 2019): This examination of Christian colleges by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching includes essays by college administrators who I thought might defend Biblical orthodoxy. Some, though, play it both ways. For example, Messiah College Provost Randall Basinger and Vice Provost/Dean of Students Kris Hansen-Kieffer say an “orthodox Christian college could have a core belief about the authority and trustworthiness of Scripture” while preferring to hire professors who “recognize creation with evolutionary science” and do not “affirm inerrancy.” They say each orthodox college can have “its particular faith/learning narrative.”

Hmm: How well has that worked out for the hundreds of formerly Christian colleges that followed such a strategy? Robert Lowry provided a better response in his 1876 hymn that begins with a question: “What can wash away my sin?” The answer: “Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”
Novels from Christian publishers
reviewed by Sandy Barwick

STATE OF LIES  *Siri Mitchell*
After her government-employed husband dies in a hit-and-run accident, Georgie Brennan begins noticing small clues—a missing pocketknife, hidden cryptic notes, fake repairmen showing up at her house—that make her question the circumstances surrounding his death. Georgie soon discovers her husband held secrets powerful politicians wanted buried. But the more she digs, the more people die, and she puts herself and her child in danger. Whom can she trust to help her? Readers will be listening for strange noises late into the night while reading this fast-paced political thriller.

NO OCEAN TOO WIDE  *Carrie Turansky*
Inspired by true events, No Ocean Too Wide features a little-known early 20th-century British government program that sent poor or orphaned children to Canada, most often to live as indentured servants or farmhands. When their mother falls ill, the McAlister youngsters are placed in a children’s home. Older sister Laura returns to London to reclaim her siblings, only to find they’ve been shipped to Canada. With help from a benevolent lawyer, Laura travels overseas to find them. The children endure harsh conditions, but faith and family ties provide hope. Loose ends guarantee a follow-up book.

THE WORDS BETWEEN US  *Erin Bartels*
Bookstore owner Robin Windsor leads a reclusive life, avoiding unwanted media attention since her high-profile parents went to prison. Characters in her beloved books and an ornery old parrot remain her constant companions. Flashbacks to the year she went to live with her grandmother, where she forged a friendship with a boy named Peter, explain how she became the person she is as an adult. Time and maturity help her gain a better understanding of her parents and Peter, and she realizes she was wrong about many things. A bittersweet story with a hopeful ending.

THE GRYPHON HEIST  *James R. Hannibal*
CIA agent Talia Inger travels to Moldova to assess the security of U.S. interests in an aerospace technology company. She uncovers a plot to steal plans for an advanced weapons system stored in a vault in the mesosphere. Teamed with a former assassin—whose conversion experience resembles that of Paul of Tarsus—they search the dark web to assemble a group of unsavory characters with special skills to help stop the theft. Heart-pounding action and snappy dialogue move the story at a swift pace, but the specialized terminology presents speed bumps for non-techno geeks unfamiliar with the jargon.

AFTERWORD
Finding Lady Enderly (Revell, 2019) by Joanna Davidson Politano contains a mystery, a love story, and a dash of inspiration. In Victorian England, a mysterious man hires a rag lady to play the role of a countess, fooling hundreds. As the ruse becomes more complicated—and deadly—the imposter realizes pleasing God matters most, regardless of consequences.

German Pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer also sought to please God, no matter the consequences. In My Dearest Dietrich (Kregel, 2019), Amanda Barratt spins a fictionalized tale of the tragic romance between Bonhoeffer and Maria von Wedemeyer. Much of it is inspired by letters exchanged between the two while Bonhoeffer was in prison for his part in a conspiracy to subvert Hitler and the Nazi regime. The story humanizes the famous theologian, showing his devotion to one woman, his fellow man, and above all, his God. —S.B.
CULTURE/ CHILDREN’S BOOKS

Read and discuss
FOUR BOOKS FROM CHRISTIAN AUTHORS
reviewed by Mary Jackson

SOPHIE AND THE HEIDELBERG CAT
Andrew Wilson

Sophie has a spat with her sister and explodes at her parents, but she never expects her neighbor’s white cat to confront her. They take a rooftop walk, and Sophie expresses guilt and frustration: “It’s so hard to be good all the time.” The cat helps Sophie see that no one, not even her parents, teacher, pastor, or Bible heroes, is without sin—only Christ is. Wilson puts the Heidelberg Catechism’s first question and answer into a simple story that kids can grasp. “Hope doesn’t come from the good things we do,” the cat says. “It comes as a gift, from what Jesus has done.” (Ages 4-8)

WHY DO WE SAY GOOD NIGHT?
Champ Thornton

Children who fear the dark will find reassuring truths in this book to prepare them when the lights go out. Written as a bedside conversation between a mother and daughter, the book’s simple prose enlightens a common childhood question: How can the night and darkness possibly be good? The girl’s mother speaks soothing words about God as an illuminating Good Shepherd who is near, watching over and protecting His children. He “made nighttime good and right,” the mother tells her daughter. “You need not fear.” Illustrator Rommel Ruiz adds vibrant pictures that capture both the scariness and the wonder of a darkened bedroom. (Ages 3-6)

LOOK! I WROTE A BOOK! (AND YOU CAN TOO!)
Sally Lloyd-Jones

Lloyd-Jones wants children to know that anyone can write a book, and she prods with simple pointers that will help them start. With humor and whimsical illustrations, the book gives a step-by-step guide to the writing process, from choosing an idea and considering the audience to covering the necessary story elements and capturing the reader’s attention. It includes plenty of tongue-in-cheek commentary, common writing mishaps, and witty tricks and tips to demystify the task. From the best-selling author of The Jesus Storybook Bible, this book will inspire both budding and reluctant writers, and perhaps even their parents. (Ages 4-8)

GOD MADE BOYS AND GIRLS
Marty Machowski

Children naturally have questions and sometimes confusion about gender, especially in a culture that tells them they can choose whether to be a boy or a girl. This book helps parents introduce young children to a Biblical perspective on gender differences that “celebrates God’s good gift of creating each of us either male or female.” The book avoids stereotypes and emphasizes that what girls or boys do, like, or think does not decide their gender. Machowski delicately ties in the gospel, reminding children “people get mixed up” because of sin and brokenness and only Christ can free them. (Ages 4-8)

AFTERWORD

With eight adopted children at home ranging in age from 3 to 19, former NFL football coach Tony Dungy and his wife Lauren have their own focus group to test their recent children’s books.

In Maria Finds Courage, Maria overcomes her fear of a new sport. In Carson Chooses Forgiveness, Carson and his teammates reconcile with the star player who wouldn’t pass the ball. In Austin Plays Fair, Austin learns that playing by the rules is more important than winning. In We Chose You, Calvin learns how special he is to God and his adoptive parents. All four books, which Harvest House released this year and last, display racial and ethnic diversity and sensitivity to issues of adoption and foster care.

Although themes of forgiveness and adoption can be theologically deep, the Dungys keep their stories simple with 6- to 9-year-olds in mind. “If you get their attention early, that’s much better than waiting until they are 10 or 11 years old,” Tony said.

—Russ Pulliam
A brand new podcast from WORLD Radio is here. It's called The Olasky Interview. WORLD has given us the privilege of sitting in, and I am very grateful. These interviews are well worth your time.”—iTunes reviewer

There’s always been more to the interviews you’ve read in the magazine and heard on The World and Everything in It. Now, you have full access. The new podcast is in. Season 1 guests include Charles Murray, Ron Sider, Lauren Green, Bill Bennett, and others.

Listen anywhere you typically enjoy podcasts.
Stephanos Bibas is a U.S. Court of Appeals judge for the 3rd Circuit, which has jurisdiction over cases in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. Born in New York City, he graduated from high school at 15 and from Columbia University at 19 with a Bachelor of Arts in political theory, summa cum laude.

Bibas then studied at Oxford, won a first-place award in the world debate championships, and graduated from Yale Law School in 1994. He clerked for Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy and became an assistant U.S. attorney, then a professor at the University of Pennsylvania Law School from 2006 to 2017.

Which is harder—being a judge on the 3rd Circuit, or arbitrating arguments among your four children? Definitely being a dad of multiple kids: The appearance of the slightest bit of unfairness about bedtimes or dividing Tater Tots can backfire. Once I can satisfy all of them, dealing with lawyers is a piece of cake.

You’re a brown belt in taekwondo. How does that help you now as a judge? Discipline. Much of martial arts is mental. It’s about learning from people who know more than you do, and disciplining your body, mind, breathing, attention, and focus. Those traits stand you in good stead whatever professional road you take.

In the first 11 pages of your recent book, The Machinery of Criminal Justice, you use the words moral or morality or amorality 28 times. Those words are rare in discussions of criminal justice these days where it’s much more “put people in the slammer” or “reduce the number of years.” Why do you emphasize questions of morality? How you think about the point of criminal justice is important. For centuries, ordinary people have understood that criminal justice is figuring out who did it, blaming people appropriately, punishing them with appropriate consequences, then healing the wrong or the wound. People have a misunderstanding about the past. Only a small sliver of people wound up getting executed or exiled or branded. Most people had a short-term punishment, and often they would admit or confess what the crime was. “I stole the pig,” or sometimes they say, “No, that was my pig, I just lent it to you.” Nowadays we talk about controlling crime, public safety, processing cases.

What’s the problem with that? It misses the way nonlawyers understand the point, and the way we talk about justice with our own kids when we discipline them. Are we doing it merely to stop the naughty behavior? No, we’re doing it to teach lessons. We’re doing it to vindicate the injured sibling. We’re doing it to restore order in the family. I don’t mean to say we can just reduce the polity to a family model, but there is something deeply intuitive about justice dealing with right and wrong.

Judges are supposed to be teachers. Sometimes the judge, pronouncing a sentence, talks about what the victim endured. The defendant may sob, or apologize. The defendant’s family may be there. Sometimes that’s done in a way that is cathartic and vindicating. Sometimes it’s done in a very mathematical, bureaucratic way that gets the case off the table without any moral judgment.

TV dramas or movies have dramatic moments of revelation. That’s not the way it is in 90-plus percent of cases, right? Right. If you just watch crime dramas, you might think the name of the game is about the victim and the defendant, or in a civil case, the plaintiff and the defendant, coming into court, telling their stories, pointing the finger. My students came into law school thinking that. Then they start thinking...
it’s really about the prosecutor and the defense lawyer standing up, showing off their rhetoric, making their legal points, dueling. Then, if they become a prosecutor or public defender, they discover it’s not dueling at trial: The reality is 95 percent of criminal defendants plead guilty.

Too much plea bargaining? The plea bargains are hurried conversations in a hallway or a conference call. The judge is absent, the victim is absent, the defendant is usually absent. It's horse-trading then presented to the judge as a fait accompli. That bypasses the central morality play understanding of the trial as vindicating, as catharsis, as healing.

Let's go back a couple of centuries. How did the morality play typically work in courtrooms? In a routine criminal case, victims would prosecute their own cases, with no lawyer on the defense side. Defendants would stand up and argue their cases. Almost no rules of evidence or procedure. The parties would shout it out, 20 minutes, 30 minutes. Jury members would huddle in the jury box. They wouldn’t have fancy legal instructions. They would decide who was right, who was wrong. Most punishments were temporary affairs: Pay back the money, fix up the bar you vandalized, or be shamed in the public square.

As in The Scarlet Letter? Readers focus on how judgmental and humiliating it is—but Hester Prynne goes back to living in her community. A whole genre of sermons at public events emphasized “but for the grace of God you could do the same thing as this person did by getting drunk.” There wasn’t this us-versus-them mentality. Onlookers were to think, “I do things like this too. I may not have cheated on my wife, but I’ve lusted in my heart.” It was an occasion for all of us to examine our consciences.

Our tendency now is to look back at those old times and say we are much more sophisticated and thorough. You have a different vantage point. Public prosecutors and defense lawyers increasingly look over a large share of the cases, with rules of evidence and procedure. They slowed things down. Jury trials started taking longer. That may have increased the fairness of some proceedings, but there’s a cost. The jury trial takes longer, so the judge and the prosecutor want to get the case over with. They short-circuit the jury trials and they plea-bargain, which from the point of view of lawyers makes sense: Defendant gets a lower punishment, prosecutor gets to prosecute more cases.

But the downside is... You don’t get your day in court. You don’t see justice done. So, you get a series of victims saying, “Hey, what happened to my case?” You get defendants who say, “But I wanted to explain.” Usually the case just goes away. The public doesn’t see justice done and wonders what these lawyers are doing: Bargaining? Sweetheart deals? Whether the system is fair or unfair as it operates, it certainly isn’t seen as fair and accountable, the way it should be in a democracy.

How bad is plea bargaining? When we pressure people and say, “If you go to trial, maybe you’ll have a 10-year sentence or a 20-year sentence, but we can give you half that or less than that if you take this plea,” the pressures are such that sometimes even people who might not be guilty can be tempted sometimes to take the plea, especially if they’re mentally ill or juveniles or don’t speak English well. There are some
especially vulnerable populations we ought to be worrying more about.

I’ve seen how bad the public defender system, for the most part, is. Right. I’m not accusing public defenders of ill will, but with 200, maybe 400 cases at a time, maybe the first time you meet your client is in a holding cell at the courthouse. You say, “Hi, I’m your lawyer, the prosecution has made this offer, I recommend that you take it.” That’s called “meet them and plead them lawyering.” It’s very common. Imagine what your relationship with your lawyer will be if the first time you meet him, he’s trying to pressure you to plead guilty.

And lots of lawyers—like lots of social workers with huge caseloads, and doctors who can spend only a few minutes with patients—are frustrated. We measure quantity, so we rush through cases—including cases where the accused may have been innocent.

Is it more humane to put a person in stocks for several hours or to lock up a person in prison for several years? In Philadelphia, I live a few blocks from the Eastern State Penitentiary that opened around 1830. The idea, very idealistic, was if you lock someone in solitude with a Bible, his conscience will convict him. You pulled him out of his bad environment, he’ll turn his life around. The reality is out of sight, out of mind. We don’t see the suffering of the people in prison, but we’ve torn them away from their families, jobs, homes, communities. We’ve deprived people of husbands and fathers and created a semi-permanent underclass of ex-cons. They’ve spent time in prison networking with other criminals. It may look like it’s humane because we don’t see the suffering that’s in prison, but it devastates people’s lives in lots of ways. Prison life is TV punctuated by stabbings and rapes.

What other type of biting punishment could there be besides long prison sentences? Having to face someone in front of your community and apologize can be embarrassing: In a very low-level crime, that itself can be enough. Shame sometimes can be constructive. We need to experiment with other punishments used in the Colonial era: not flogging or stocks or indiscriminate use of the death penalty, but we ought to think more about what feeds the needs of the victims.

Let’s say someone has stolen several thousand dollars’ worth of electronic equipment from a victim’s home. What would be an appropriate punishment? We have become enamored with rules, but we ought to think about trusting a sentencing jury to make more individualized determinations. The jury gets to hear the story of how the crime happened, how has this person suffered, how dangerous is this defendant, how much do we worry about this person. With some defendants, we’re scared enough that we need to send them away for a while. Others we need to send away but also make sure they get drug or alcohol treatment or take their mental illness medications. As we’re doing out prison labor because it undercut free labor. Prisoners might make license plates or work in the cafeteria, but very few have the opportunity to earn any money, learn any marketable skills, or do anything they’ll be able to do when they get back on the outside.

We’re hearing a lot now about “restorative justice.” That’s the idea that we bring offenders and victims together in a conference: People tell their stories, the offenders apologize, and that’s that. Restorative justice makes sense, but as a substitute for unequivocal condemnation and some kind of biting punishment, it goes off the rails.

What about the victims’ rights movement? Victims do deserve to be heard, but sometimes that movement demands the maximum possible sentences. Victims are often satisfied with less than the maximum, especially if they hear, “This person isn’t stalking me anymore, I was just an accidental target of opportunity.”

Victims want some punishment, an apology, and maybe some restitution to pay their medical bills. Restorative justice is often on the left, victims’ rights on the right: Maybe we can fit together some of these insights in a way that’s nonideological and cross-partisan.

What’s the top priority in trying to transform the justice system? The system is deaf. Opening up the process, and letting the victims and the defendants and the juries see more of it, will force the lawyers to listen to the nonlawyers more. As a Christian I know that all these parties are made in the image and likeness of God. That’s what motivates me. I can treat even the most depraved, heinous murderer as having that image and likeness of God inside him. Some people will never turn their lives around, but others will respond.
Men Sizes 7.5-15 M/W/XW
- Gray  TB9024MGS
- Blue/Black  TB9024MLU
- Black  TB9024MBL

Women Sizes 6-11 M/W/XW
- Gray  TB9024FGS
- Salmon/Gray  TB9024FGP
- Purple/Black  TB9024FLP

I’ve had lower back pain for years. Walking in these shoes was life changing for me. I feel like I’m walking on air.

– Bill F.

Enjoy the benefits of exercise with proven pain relief.

- Ultimate Comfort
- Renewed Energy
- Maximum Protection
- Improve Posture

G-DEFY MIGHTY WALK  $155

Promo Code ME7KLL2

www.gravitydefyer.com

Expires January 31, 2020

Free Exchanges • Free Returns
100% Satisfaction Guaranteed

Call 1(800) 429-0039

Gravity Defyer Corp.
10643 Glenoaks Blvd. Pacoima, CA 91331

VersoShock® US Patent #US8,555,526 B2. May be eligible for Medicare reimbursement. This product is not intended to treat, cure or prevent any disease. $30 off applies to orders of $100 or more for a limited time. Cannot be combined with other offers. 9% CA sales tax applies to orders in California. Shoes must be returned within 30 days in like-new condition for full refund or exchange. Credit card authorization required. See website for complete details.
During a Tonight Show monologue in the run-up to the 2004 presidential election, Jay Leno told a joke based on one of Teresa Heinz Kerry’s saltier hot-mic gaffes. The punch line? “When asked for his opinion, former President Bill Clinton said, ‘I love it when girls talk dirty!’”

Something similar is afoot regarding reactions to the new album by Lana Del Rey.

As of this writing, the album, which for purposes of propriety will be referred to for the rest of this piece as NFR!, sits at No. 3 on the Billboard Top 200. If its popularity endures, Grammy nominations will likely ensue, compelling presenters to pronounce its title in full and thereby to violate one of network television’s few remaining taboos.

The N, by the way, stands for “Norman,” the R for “Rockwell.”

The F, if you haven’t guessed by now, is not short for “family.”

What it is short for is the favorite shorthand of the verbally lazy and the morally benumbed, and it recurs frequently throughout NFR!’s 14 selections, undercutting their value as elegies for rock ‘n’ roll and as expressions of the disillusionment awaiting those duped by the music’s hollow promises.

NFR!, in other words, had a chance at being the masterpiece that many insist that it is.

The hazy, floating music, for instance, reinforces Del Rey’s commitment to emoting like a patient being etherized upon a table. (Fans of “Burnt Norton” on Del Rey’s 2015 album Honeymoon will understand the reference.) And the cleverly repurposed quotations from classic rock and pop (the Mamas and the Papas, Led Zeppelin, CSNY, the Beach Boys, David Bowie, Joni Mitchell, Cyndi Lauper, Tommy James and the Shondells, even George Gershwin) give the lyrics an authoritative “meta” quality.

The most telling allusions, however, occur in the final track, “Hope Is a Dangerous Thing for a Woman Like Me to Have—but I Have It,” and they’re not musical but literary: the writings of the jet-set photographer Slim Aarons and of the suicidal poet Sylvia Plath. As symbols of the glamour and the neuroses that Del Rey mourns and celebrates, Aarons and Plath are hard to beat. But even this song contains enough profanity to make skeptics wonder whether Del Rey’s admirers like the cut for what’s good about it.

And therein lies the connection to Jay Leno’s 15-year-old joke. Just like the men who used to buy Playboy “for the articles,” fans of NFR! get to indulge their taste for titillation while claiming the intellectual high ground.

This much seems certain: Were NFR! purged of its anti-virtue-signaling coarseness, there’d be a lot less fetishizing of Del Rey as a 21st-century siren providing lullabies to cushion the shipwreck inevitable in a thoroughly unmoored culture.
New or recent albums
reviewed by Arsenio Orteza

LIVE FROM NEWPORT JAZZ
James Carter Organ Trio
The melody of “Mélodie au Crépuscule”—a Django Reinhardt composition, like most of these workouts—remains crepuscular, but the melody isn’t why the audience cheers as the “Vitamin B3” organist Gerard Gibbs vamps his way through the intro. The audience cheers because Gibbs’ riff sounds a lot like Raymond Jackson’s in Bill Withers’ “Use Me.” Elsewhere, the skronks and squeals emerging from Carter’s saxophone and the short but explosive solos emerging from Alex White’s drums elicit similar responses. Quite impressive as self-contained battles of the bands go.

OFFICE POLITICS The Divine Comedy
Office Politics may not be Neil Hannon’s strongest or most consistent effort, but it’s easily his funniest. Stab it almost anywhere and it bleeds one-liners. But the humor isn’t limited to the lyrics any more than the lyrics are limited to the album’s pettiness-of-corporate-cubicle-culture concept. Exhibit A: “Philip and Steve’s Furniture Removal Company,” a theme for an imaginary sitcom based on the dues-paying, blue-collar adventures of the pre-success minimalists Glass and Reich. The faux Depeche Mode is pretty funny too.

MELODIC ORNETTE COLEMAN Joachim Kühn
As Ornette Coleman never recorded the majority of these compositions, one has to infer from Kühn’s solo-piano mutations what Coleman had in mind when he envisioned them as avatars of harmolodic sax appeal. The exception is “Lonely Woman,” the cries and whispers of which in Coleman’s version have been foreshadowing the shape of jazz to come for 60 years. Kühn plays it twice, once at the outset and once near the end, making it a key for deciphering the rest. Several listens in, you won’t need it.

THE SINGLES COLLECTION 1947-62
Percy Mayfield
These 54 exemplars of pre–rock ‘n’ roll blues at its most engagingly urbane have been repackaged before, and, copyright-expiration laws being what they are, they’ll probably be repackaged again. But why wait to make Mayfield’s acquaintance? There’s as much to savor in the run-down elegance of his Louisiana-inflected delivery and in his oneness with the nightclub orchestra that nudges him toward resignation as there is in his lyrics. Speaking of which, Specialty didn’t title its 1992 Mayfield compilation Poet of the Blues for nothing.

ENCORE
In 1986, the Warner Bros. executive Tommy LiPuma talked Miles Davis out of releasing the Randy Hall/Zaner Giles–produced Rubberband and into releasing the Tommy LiPuma/Marcus Miller–produced Tutu instead. Davis insiders have debated the wisdom of the decision ever since. Now that Rubberband has finally been released (thanks to Rhino Records and post-production courtesy of Hall, Giles, and Vince Wilburn Jr.), even hoi polloi can weigh in.
And appropriately so, as Rubberband’s splashy, wriggling ‘80s funk, best exemplified by the red-hot “This Is It,” seems to have been crafted with an ear toward snagging the common-man audiences of Michael Jackson and Prince. Yet from Davis’ trumpet—fluttery here, beaconlike there—to his raspy-voiced song intros, nothing panders, not even the love ballads. “So Emotional” may have been intended for Chaka Khan and “I Love What We Make Together” for Al Jarreau, but Lalah Hathaway and Randy Hall bring them off just fine. —A.O.
New CCM releases
reviewed by Jeff Koch

SPARKLE. POP. RAMPAGE.
Rend Collective/Rend Co. Kids
If some kids' albums make parents want to run screaming from the room, Sparkle. Pop. Rampage. will have parents running back to bop along with their kids. Free-range vocals and guitar fire the imagination to far-off places and distant calls in the mission-minded “Go Anywhere.” Even staying home carries mystery and meaning when “You are the adventure of a lifetime, Jesus / ... Your grace has no horizon line.” “God of Science” celebrates God—inventor of armadillos and quantum physics—as the best scientist ever and “Our Great God of all things wild and free, free / Thank you, God, for making me.”

NOTHING BUT GOOD Chris Quilala
It's not Chris Quilala's voice that clinches his latest single “Nothing but Good,” though his voice is pleasantly well balanced. It's not the lyrics either, though they ably express timeless Christian themes. What brings it together into something special is tasteful production and arrangement: a warm bass punctuated by tight, well-rounded drum tracks while gently dreamy keyboards warble along happily until snapping to attention with dramatic walls of sound. The combined synergy turns familiar sentiments (“You've been nothing but good to me”) into a lush, technopop garden of praise.

WHEN THE LIGHT COMES Big Daddy Weave
Journeymen in the craft of Christian rock, Big Daddy Weave nails another sturdy set that includes a few pop trimmings to keep pace with today's ear. As any casual listener of the band suspects (and as any concertgoer learns for certain), sincerity swallows all. In the end, it's hard to argue with expertly crafted bass lines and heart-pounding drums driving Great Commission choruses like “This is what we live for / To go where you say go / To let the whole world know / You're the Light in the darkness.”

NOT BY CHANCE Aaron Cole
Cole's blunt-talking, hip-hop storytelling lends him the quality of a street-level correspondent, reporting the jarring juxtaposition of life's positives and negatives in “Love Don't Cost a Thing”: “My sister sleeping on a air mattress my song number one though / ... That goes to show you when life is good it's still cutthroat.” A robust rhythm section thumps urgency into headlines both sobering and hopeful: “If I touch one soul that's all I need / ... To tell the world 'bout your love that's why I breathe.”

ENCORE
Josh Garrels has been beguiling fans for over a decade now with ruminative vocals and a bubbling brew of spacey folk-rock, hip-hop, and soul. The latest installment, Chrysaline, does not disappoint: Prophecy- and Scripture-stuffed, it is Garrels' most devotional and liturgical yet. “Invocation” is a lovely Indian-influenced jazz exploration with trippy violins in the vein of Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band and modal vocal runs all placed in the service of simple Christian prayers. “Consecration” reimagines the hymn “Take My Life and Let It Be” into a work of compelling art. But the beating heart of this album is “Butterfly,” a piece of R&B perfection with choice organ, horns, and sultry backing vocals that unlock Garrels' hidden geysers as he sings, “Unfold the mystery / To rise up from the earth into the sky / On resurrected wings / Chrysaline / All things are made new.” —J.K.
A neighbor, leaning over my fence while our dogs played, said: “The world as we know it could not exist without insects, but the world without humans? It would be better, infinitely better, than the world as we know it.”

He’s well read and well traveled, but in my heart I know he’s wrong. God pronounced creation “good,” that is, until He made man. On that day, He surveyed a world where men and women were fruitful and multiplying and having dominion over “every living thing”—and for the first time He pronounced the world “very good.”

But, whew, what a wreck we make, right? I walked from the fence past the plants dying of neglect on my porch, into my messy kitchen, before confronting the laundry and unpaid bills. My neighbor’s words played against images of San Francisco’s broken streets and too many homeless. There my husband and I recently were robbed two times in 14 hours (with no lasting damage, thank you). Most of us don’t have to look far for man-made ruin, starting at our own doorstep.

Too easily we put man and the material world at the center, rather than God, and then our focus goes haywire. Christians led early scientific gains that today’s New Atheists use to stake their belief in no God.

In her excellent 2019 book, Confronting Christianity, Rebecca McLaughlin unmasks the limitations behind such efforts to divorce science from God. “The measurable script and the meaning script do not jostle for position. Both are needed,” she writes.

In Genesis God was fully capable of giving a scientific description of creation, but He chose instead to give a detailed account of who we are and why our lives matter in relationship to Him. Those who take the observable world as the measure of all things are left without anchors when it comes to drawing moral imperatives. Writes McLaughlin: “Using evolution to blast theism leaves the secular humanist stunned by the kickback.”

Despair is what results, and it’s what I heard beneath my neighbor’s lament. Such despair and empty moral imperatives also are on display in global protests over climate change.

Yes, our planet appears to be in a period of warming. But why have the children been dismissed from school with homemade posters to go “on strike” “in protest” over it? Why are students sent into city streets to “raise awareness” on a topic any child already knows?

Because politics and grievance are the cheap substitutes for cultivating young minds when meaning and theology have left the building. Activism replaces wonder and God-centered inquiry.

In September the Finnish secretary-general of the World Meteorological Organization, Petteri Taalas, said climate change “is not going to be the end of the world.” The expert criticized “doomsters and extremists” for making its real challenges harder with radical calls for zero emissions and zero childbirths.

Force-fed doomsterism, students carry posters like “You’ll die of old age, we’ll die of climate change.” News media make an icon of 16-year-old Swedish activist Greta Thunberg, who at age 11 dropped out of school and stopped eating and talking, she says, over her fear of climate change.

We have a God who ordered a universe to generate life—a starting point that makes global warming more complex and more hopeful. Bill Gates, who calls nuclear energy the “ideal” way to address climate change, runs into obstacles left and right with his potentially promising “traveling wave reactor.” We can model wonder and hope for the next generation.

In Oakland, Calif., I saw a young woman be baptized. The pastor asked, “Do you acknowledge your need of the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ, and the renewing grace of the Holy Spirit?” Before he finished the question, she raised her arms and shouted, “I do!”

The counterpoint to the world’s despair can’t be found in a world focused on the world. It’s in saying “I do!” to the life-giving word of God, the work of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit living in God’s people. It’s not the insects or man who make the world great. It’s God who makes the world great. It’s the world without Him that cannot survive.
In 1959, on the top floor of a Brooklyn apartment building, Don Wilkerson, 19, stood next to his brother David, 28, watching a heroin addict named Shorty and two others prepare to shoot up. David steadied a 16 mm camera. They planned to film the gritty reality of heroin addiction and take the footage around the country to raise awareness and support for their new ministry to addicts. Shorty poked a needle into his arm, hit a vein, and pulled up on the syringe. It filled with his blood. At the sight, David fainted. Don grabbed the camera and continued filming as Shorty mixed heroin with his own blood and pushed the cocktail back into his body. Shorty’s friends did the same. Then Don picked up his brother. “The blood, the blood,” David said.

David and Don Wilkerson had spent months walking the streets of New York, teaching gang members they could be saved only by the blood of Jesus. David’s 1963 book, The Cross and the Switchblade, became a bestseller and led to a 1970 movie version starring Pat Boone as David Wilkerson. But in the meantime, the Wilkersons had seen the ravages of addiction and heard social workers tell them, “Forget the drug addicts. Once you’re an addict, you’re always an addict.” They didn’t believe that. In an age before institutionalized clinical and drug rehabilitation centers, the Wilkersons and others developed Teen Challenge, a long-term discipleship and evangelization program for addicts, now known as Adult & Teen Challenge (ATC). After founding the first Teen Challenge center in Brooklyn, where Don still serves as president, the ministry spread. Now, more than 200 ATC centers dot the United States, and more than 100 other countries have ATC centers.

The main thrust for all ATC centers was a yearlong residential program where drug and alcohol addicts learn that the gospel can free them of their addictions. Mentors—many of them
ATC graduates themselves—disciple them through the process, using curriculum written and developed by ATC leaders. They’ve been successful: Studies through the years have shown more ATC graduates kick their habits and turn their lives around than students in other programs.

David Wilkerson continued his work with ATC and other ministries for the rest of his life and eventually founded Times Square Church in New York City. He died in 2011 in a car crash. But Don, now 80, worries that some ATC centers—which are independent and autonomous—are drifting far afield from the core of ATC’s mission: to help adult and teen addicts with Christ-centered solutions. Some ATC centers are trying to walk a dangerous tightrope. They’ve instituted short-term, state-licensed programs, which usually come with more funding. But state-attached strings can make that programming look more like clinical rehab plans instead of the Christ-centered message ATC has always brought to its students.

In July 1995, hundreds gathered outside the Alamo in San Antonio, Texas, to protest the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse’s moves against Teen Challenge of South Texas. Texas officials demanded that Teen Challenge counselors sit through classroom instruction in secular ways of handling addiction. The counselors, former addicts who knew every trick of the trade, refused. Their protest, covered by WORLD editor in chief Marvin Olasky, got the attention of then-Texas Gov. George W. Bush. He called off the bureaucracy and began advocating faith-based initiatives, a major component of what came to be known as “compassionate conservatism.”

But one ATC center’s push against state licensure almost 25 years ago has mutated into an embrace of state licensing requirements by other ATC centers. Earlier this year, the national ATC board approved a resolution that affirms each ATC center’s ability to implement what it calls “Continuum of Care” programs: medical or clinical programs that include detoxification and both short-term inpatient and outpatient programs. State licensure for ATC centers usually opens the door for them to take in private insurance pay-
ments, Medicaid payments, and other fees for service from state and local governments.

Leaders at many ATC centers—including Don Wilkerson, who’s been the most vocal—criticized that resolution. They said the secular clinical teaching—addiction is a disease for which there is no permanent cure—runs counter to the historical ATC teaching that addiction is rooted in a faulty relationship with God, and God can free addicts. “They need to be surrounded 24/7 in a spiritual atmosphere that addresses those issues,” Wilkerson said.

The pushback, national ATC President and CEO Gary Blackard told me, led to an amendment of the resolution. The new order: Beginning Jan. 1, 2020, any ATC center seeking to implement state-licensed programming can’t do so under the ATC name. Instead, those centers must form separate 501(c)(3)s, with totally separate boards of directors. Those ATC centers’ traditional faith-based yearlong programs—required of all ATC centers—can remain under the ATC organization.

An important caveat: Ten ATC centers around the country that offer government-licensed programming can continue to do so. Blackard says those centers had either begun such programming or were too far into the 18- to 24-month implementation process to pull back.

Blackard chaired the national board of directors before becoming president and CEO in January of this year. He said it had been considering the “Continuum of Care” action for more than a year because more and more ATC centers were considering state-licensed programming. Several had already begun. The national board accredits each long-term program, but the already-state-licensed programs went unaccredited by the national ATC board, according to Blackard: “This has been the elephant in the room for decades.”

Additionally, the national ATC will be announcing more stringent requirements for all ATC centers on Jan. 1, Blackard said. For example: If a licensing agency forces any “adverse” action on an ATC center—such as stopping all faith-based programming as a condition of licensure—the ATC center must inform the national ATC board and either end its licensure or split into another 501(c)(3).

Other requirements: ATCs with state licensure should aim for 30 percent of short-term residential students transferring to the traditional long-term program. Short-term licensed programs must also provide some form of chapel or church service as an option for students. If a state won’t allow that, the ATC will have to split off a separate organization to run the licensed program. Medication-assisted treatment, such as methadone, must be outsourced to another provider or spun off into another 501(c)(3).

Blackard also thinks it’s time for ATC to look at other programming options besides the long-term residency programs: “Right now we’re losing the battle for addicts.” ATC centers across the United States have about 7,400 beds available in long-term residency programs, but no more than 5,000 are filled. According to Blackard, 8 out of every 10 people who call ATC centers don’t enroll in ATC. Others leave the long-term program early. “We’ve got to go after those eight who are not coming originally, and we’ve got to keep the ones who are leaving early,” Blackard said: “So how do we do that?”

More ATC centers are also looking at offering faith-based, short-term programs as a way to bring in people who won’t commit long-term. Another new initiative ATC will begin in 2020 is called “Project Reach,” which Blackard described as a way to set a national evangelization strategy.

But Blackard does defend the clinical-based programming some ATC centers are now using. He referred to a statistic cited by Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge, the first ATC center to run state-licensed programming: Forty-five to 50 percent of short-term program graduates enroll in the traditional long-term ATC program. He also claimed as many people are becoming clean in the clinical programs as in the long-term ones.

When I asked for statistics, Blackard referred me to Minnesota ATC, which has 11 campuses and was the first to have “Continuum of Care” programming, starting in 2003. Minnesota ATC President Eric Vagle initially turned down an interview request with me but provided written answers to questions about specific results. He said Minnesota ATC’s research shows 67 percent...
of those who graduated from short-term programs and responded to an interview request reported no substance abuse in the previous six months. (The research only includes a portion of total graduates, since researchers could not track all: Those who slide back into addiction are often hard to find.)

Other ATC boards have followed Minnesota’s lead. Pennsylvania Adult & Teen Challenge in the last two years has opened detox programs for men and women and also offers a 30-day clinical inpatient program. Teen Challenge New England & New Jersey operates a new venture, Teen Challenge Clinical Group, that offers short-term inpatient and outpatient programming, plus detox.

Regulations vary from state to state. While centers in many states can’t mandate their licensed programs be faith-based, ATC Ohio Valley offers only a faith-based short-term licensed program. As required by ATC bylaws, state and local groups also offer the traditional long-term program.

What concerns Don Wilkerson and others about these programs is that by accepting state licensing, most ATC centers won’t be free to present the gospel to all addicts. In Minnesota, Vagle said, students in the state-licensed program can participate in faith-based activities. Minnesota ATC also offers students the Alpha program, an evangelistic, ecumenical series of courses introducing the basics of Christian doctrine: “We always offer a voluntary faith-based track that allows clients to attend chapels, participate in Bible studies, attend church, and meet with chaplains.” The majority do. But he added, “We do not believe in forcing people to engage in religious activities to get our help.”

Wilkerson doesn’t believe in expanding non-faith-based programming for the sake of boosting numbers: “[Having] empty beds doesn’t bother me. It’s empty hearts that bother me.”

Aaron Plumley runs Northern Appalachian Teen Challenge in Clarksburg, W.Va. He went through ATC as a student seven years ago after trying and leaving several short-term, clinical programs: “I’ve watched those other programs fail time and time again.”

Plumley sees the need for ATC centers to begin developing short-term programming for those who can’t or initially won’t commit to a yearlong program. His center has begun allowing some students to leave the program after 90 days. But those students aren’t considered graduates, and ATC staff members encourage their involvement in a local church or in “Living Free,” an ATC-developed support group system. Backing off the gospel in the program isn’t an option: “I’d rather have five students in our program who really want to serve God as 20 who are just trying to beat time or take the easy option out.”

Sal DiBianca runs the ATC center in Sandhills, N.C. He graduated from a Southern California Teen Challenge center in 1980 and has been on staff with the organization since 1987. His center in North Carolina offers only the traditional long-term program: “The DNA of the program is evangelism and discipleship. So we’re just trying to stay true to that course.”

Drug addiction looks different now than it did when David and Don Wilkerson watched heroin addicts shoot up atop a Brooklyn building 60 years ago. With the availability of prescriptions, anyone can become a drug addict—including breadwinners and parents who can’t easily enter a yearlong treatment program. So short-term programs make sense to DiBianca: “As soon as you talk a time frame that’s beyond 28, 30 days, some of those people just check out.” But he won’t support programs that don’t focus on the gospel: “The main thing is the main thing, and that’s that faith in Jesus Christ gives people an opportunity to be free.”

Don Wilkerson told me he would like to see more short-term programs develop too—as long as they’re true to ATC’s historical commitment to Christ-centered treatment. He also thinks any short-term programming should connect graduates with groups like Living Free once they leave.

In July 2018 Adult & Teen Challenge celebrated the 60th anniversary of David Wilkerson embarking on the ministry. More than 500 people showed up to a special conference at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center in Alexandria, Va. Among the special
speakers—including Don Wilkerson—was Peter Greer, president and CEO of Hope International and author of the book *Mission Drift*.

In both the book and his talk, Greer showed how organizations that aren’t intentional, focused on handing down their mission to the next generation of leaders, drift further and further from their core vision. At the ATC conference, Greer had the crowd singing the lyrics to the *VeggieTales* theme song before sharing how the Bible-themed children’s TV show lost its way. He pointed out Harvard and Yale universities both began as Christian institutions.

At one point he asked the crowd three times, “Can you take Jesus away from Teen Challenge?” Greer warned: “The world is going to look at the progress that you’re making and is going to say, ‘We love what you do. We love the impact that we see. We love the impact of men, women, children, and adolescents. Just tone down the Jesus stuff.’”

Dave Batty, who for 20 years worked as the national curriculum coordinator for Teen Challenge, developed the curriculum ATC students studied in their yearlong programs. Batty says what has come to be known as the “Jesus Factor” is critical to ATC’s ministry. He now trains ATC staff in the United States and around the world: “Another real concern of mine is that we identify and pass on the DNA of Teen Challenge to really keep the core principles clear in the minds of new staff. In other words, to train them on who we are and this is what drives our values.”

Batty thinks the national ATC board’s policy change this year “in many respects formalized what was already being done.” He says short-term, licensed programs are meeting a need. He’s seen as many as 60 percent of students in a short-term program enroll in ATC’s long-term program: “You could describe this short-term program as a pre-evangelism phase.” He says some students, because of withdrawal effects, should enter a detoxification program—such as the one run by Pennsylvania ATC—before beginning any other ATC treatment: ATC detox centers could funnel more people into the long-term program.

But Batty warned of the danger in walking such a tightrope: “The issue of funding—of relying on government funding—has major potential for concern because it can easily become the single source of funding.”

In Minnesota, revenue generated through the licensed programs has soared. In fiscal year 2005 Minnesota ATC had $9 million in revenue, including $3 million in government fees and contracts and $4 million in long-term program revenue (insurance payments and room and board fees). In 2017—the latest year for which tax returns are available—Minnesota ATC had $41 million in revenue: $7 million from its long-term program (with $13 million in expenses) and $19 million from its short-term one (with $12 million in expenses).

A Minnesota Management and Budget agency database shows $7 million in government fees paid to Minnesota ATC in 2017—but in fiscal year 2019, Minnesota ATC received $12 million in state payments, nearly all of which came from Minnesota’s Department of Human Resources. Vagle said Minnesota ATC leaders aren’t concerned about state fees growing too much: “The revenue from our licensed programs allows us to continue to expand.”

Batty wouldn’t offer an assessment on whether ATCs like Minnesota or Pennsylvania are drifting in their mission or relying too much on the revenue that the short-term, licensed programs provide. But he sees why people like Don Wilkerson are sounding alarms, and that’s why he’s still working to help leaders avoid mission drift: “I think there is a danger here of the short-term and secular components taking over and becoming the primary focus of the program.”

---

HAVING EMPTY BEDS DOESN’T BOTHER ME. IT’S EMPTY HEARTS THAT BOTHER ME. —DON WILKERSON

Men worship God in chapel at Brooklyn Teen Challenge.
PAGES OF PROVIDENCE

Forty new history books worth reading—and 10 (from among thousands) to skip  

BY MARVIN OLASKY
Based on 27 years of letters from WORLD readers, history books are our favorite genre—so this year’s fall reading list highlights recent history books aimed at general readers and students. I’ll start with good news about overall American history books and follow that with a look at books about specific historical periods from conservative, liberal, academic, and Christian publishers.

Good news this year is that readers searching for an overall nonleftist American history book now have three good choices. Along with my old suggestion, Larry Schweikart and Michael Allen’s A Patriot’s History of the United States (Sentinel, 2004), I can now recommend Wilfred McClay’s Land of Hope: An Invitation to the Great American Story (Encounter, 2019). McClay offers a coherent narrative that neither minimizes American accomplishments nor chops up the story with bows to every liberal pressure group.

Still, my overall favorite for smart high-school-age students or college survey courses is Thomas Kidd’s American History (two volumes, B&H Academic, 2019). Baylor history professor Kidd, who was WORLD’s religion correspondent from 2012 to 2014, recognizes the diverse parts of the American mosaic but doesn’t pander to some and put down others. He recognizes the Christian base of the American experience but doesn’t pretend to more knowledge than we have about God’s providential action.

In publishing, as in politics, sometimes it’s OK to go negative. The subtitle of Mary Grabar’s Debunking Howard Zinn: Exposing the Fake History That Turned a Generation Against America (Regnery History, 2019) justifies its tough tone: Zinn’s screed has sold more than 2.5 million copies thanks to prompting by Hollywood celebrities and left-wing professors. Graber shows that Christopher Columbus was not a genocidal maniac, Native Americans did not have a utopian community, the United States was not a conspiracy to rob the poor and protect the rich, and the Viet Cong and Black Panthers were not community and civil rights leaders merely desiring local self-rule.

Another useful newcomer is Steven Waldman’s Sacred Liberty (HarperOne, 2019), an overview of religious liberty and prejudice in American history. For example, antagonism toward Catholics was so oppressive in the 1840s that the Saint Patrick’s Battalion, a group of Irish Catholic soldiers, deserted during the Mexican-American War and fought alongside the Mexicans: Twenty-seven were hanged. Also sad: During the 1860s a Christian congressman, John Bingham, fought hard for passage of the 14th Amendment, saying the civil rights it created represented “the spirit of Christianity”—and the Supreme Court used that amendment in 1973 to create a right to abortion.

Now let’s jump to readable books that focus on specific historical episodes while avoiding pedantry. Publishing houses, like other media outlets, have dueling worldviews. Regnery, the Fox News of publishing, has a conservative perspective. Some of its books, like Dean Reuter’s The Hidden Nazi (2019), are poorly written, but others, like After the Fall: The Remarkable Comeback of Richard Nixon by Kasey Pipes (2019), move well.

Regnery, like Fox, relishes stories with a sexual background like Star Spangled Scandal: Sex, Murder, and the Trial That Changed America (2019). Author Chris DeRose focuses on the trial of Congressman Dan Sickles, who found his wife committing adultery with the son of national anthem writer Francis Scott Key. Regnery is willing to poke at the pantheon of liberal presidents: Lew Paper’s In the Cauldron: Terror, Tension, and the American Ambassador’s Struggle to Avoid Pearl Harbor, scheduled for Nov. 5 publication, contends that war with Japan was not necessary.

Regnery rightly honors the largely forgotten: Clint Johnson’s Tin Cans & Greyhounds (2019) tells how sailors on the fast escort and attack ships known as destroyers risked death by water and fire—cannons, bombs, torpedoes—as they took on giant battleships during World Wars I and II. John M. Pafford’s The Accidental President (2019) tells more about Chester Arthur than most readers would find interesting—but Arthur did show courage in vetoing the racist Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

Regnery books are often action-oriented, and Ships of Oak, Guns of Iron: The War of 1812 and the Forging of the American Navy (2012) is an excellent example of the genre. Author Ronald Utt narrates heroic action without covering up mistakes and sins. He points out the incompetence of President James Madison that led to the British army’s capture of Washington and its burning of the Capitol and other public buildings.

Books from Encounter, the publisher of McClay’s Land of Hope, tend to emphasize ideas over action. Greg Weiner’s Old Whigs: Burke, Lincoln & the Politics of Prudence (2019) shows that “prudence” is not timid or fearful: It represents “a moral commitment to the limits of individual reason.” Edmund Burke and Abraham Lincoln both had the good judgment to distinguish between ordinary moments and genuine crises: The former demands patience and flexibility, the latter “bold action and unbending tenacity.”
Sentinel, the publisher of *A Patriot’s History*, also put out Utah Sen. Mike Lee’s *Our Lost Declaration* (2019), another lively answer to Howard Zinn. Lee obviously loves the Declaration of Independence but does not pretend that all its signers, including its primary author, were saints. Although Thomas Jefferson’s rhetorical opposition to slavery did not survive the editing process, Lee is still depressed that “Jefferson could write about the equal rights of man while his fellow human beings—wholly owned by himself and his family—worked without pay back at Monticello. Think what a shining example Jefferson might have set had he freed his slaves.”

Now let’s move to the liberal (and much bigger) publishing world. Basic Books publishes some good books, such as its recent looks at two chief justices. Richard Brookhiser’s *John Marshall* (2018) shows how the Supreme Court went from a backwater to a raging torrent, and Joan Biskupic’s *The Chief* (2019) illuminates John Roberts’ desire to depoliticize the court and have the Supreme Court sing more melodically. Douglas Egerton’s *Heirs of an Honored Name* (2019) shows what happened to the descendants of John and John Quincy Adams. But Basic puts out many books like Darren Dochuk’s *Anointed With Oil: How Christianity and Crude Made Modern America* (2019), a 672-page critique of fundamentalists and Big Oil that could be supplementary reading in a Zinn course.

St. Martin’s Press, part of Macmillan, also leans leftward. Jack Kelly’s *The Edge of Anarchy* (2019), a liberal history of the 1894 Pullman strike and its aftermath, may gain some readers—but they won’t learn much. Bradley Hart’s *Hitler’s American Friends* (2018) is better, showing how some senators, business executives, and others shamefully worked alongside the Bund and the Silver Legion. The MSNBC of publishing is Bold Type Books: That’s the new name for Nation Books. Recent titles include *The Case Against Free Speech, War Against All Puerto Ricans*, and *Ask Me About My Uterus*, but I couldn’t find Bold Type history books worth recommending.

University presses often try to be as trendy as their commercial counterparts. For example, the Oxford University Press has recently published Felipe Fernández-Armesto’s *The Oxford Illustrated History of the World* (2019), a pretty book with large color pictures. It’s the first big history I’ve seen organized along climate determinist lines, complete with sections and chapters titled “Children of the Ice,” “Into a Warming World,” “The Climatic Reversal,” and “Accelerating Change in a Warming World.”

Some Oxford publications reflect the liberal tendency to minimize or mock the Christian base of the United States and honor atheists. Christopher Grasso’s *Skepticism and American Faith: From the Revolution to the Civil War* (2018) shows that five “freethought” newspapers in 1834 had circulation in the thousands, and the number of “skeptics” evidently surged during the next two decades. Kate Bowler’s *Blessed* (2018 paperback) is a history of Christians who have gone shallower by adopting a prosperity gospel.

But Christianity has survived, and *Fundamentalist U* by Adam Laats (2018) gives a critical but useful account of six mainstays of Christian higher education: Biola, Bob Jones, Gordon, Liberty, Moody, and Wheaton. Elizabeth Varon’s *Armies of Deliverance* (2019) fluently shows how the United States survived as Union leaders turned the Civil War into “a crusade to deliver the Southern masses from slaveholder domination.”

Oxford makes its major contribution with European history. Tobias Straumann takes us into *1931: Debt, Crisis, and the Rise of Hitler* (2019). Philip Morgan’s *Hitler’s Collaborators* (2018) examines the way officials in France made their peace with the initially triumphant Nazis, although it meant enabling mass murder. Helen Berry’s *Orphans of Empire: The Fate of London’s Foundlings* (2019) is a well-written history of the London Foundling Hospital, established in 1741 as a way to save the lives of infants born after crisis pregnancies. Two-thirds of them died anyway. Many were victims of that era’s lack of antibiotics.

Some books from Ivy League university presses are readable and reasonable. Heather Curtis’ *Holy Humanitarians: American Evangelicals and Global Aid* (Harvard, 2018) spotlights the *Christian Herald*, a weekly newspaper that peaked with a circulation of more than 200,000 in 1910. Its longtime head, Louis Klopsch, emphasized colorful news coverage and adventure stories rather than doctrinal disputes. Curtis emphasizes Klopsch’s “heartrending narratives and images to evoke sympathy for distant sufferers,” which led subscribers to donate millions of dollars for overseas relief. The *Herald* also ran the Bowery Mission in New York City.

Helena Rosenblatt’s *The Lost History of Liberalism: From Ancient Rome to the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton, 2018) quotes early 19th-century British writers complaining that liberalism—proud, selfish, licentious, favoring “unbounded gratification of their passions”—was the opposite of liberality. By the late 19th century, the widely used term liberal could mean tolerant, theologically Unitarian or freethinking, or politically secularist: One publication in 1883, the *Kansas Liberal*, thought the word liberal was overused and changed its name to *Lucifer, the Light Bearer*. In the 20th century, liberals maintained their emphasis on individual rights but often sought government support in their drive to curtail the influence of churches and corporations.
Some traditional Christian publishers don’t do much in history. After years of reading overstatements from both left and right concerning America’s founding, I enjoyed the calm and thorough analysis of Mark David Hall’s Did America Have a Christian Founding? (Thomas Nelson, 2019). Those who read minds and extrapolate diaries may still fight over questions of sincerity and personal faithfulness, but Hall clearly shows what’s most important: that Christian ideas profoundly influenced the Founders, and through them all of us.

Jeremiah Johnston’s Unimaginable: What Our World Would Be Like Without Christianity (Bethany House, 2017) shows how polytheism was a corruption of original monotheism, and Christianity righted understanding for a while. Johnston points out the racism of philosophers Hume, Voltaire, and Kant and charts the path through Darwin and Nietzsche that led to “Hitler’s Hell on Earth” and other evils.

Eerdmans put out Elisabeth Braw’s God’s Spies: The Stasi’s Cold War Espionage Campaign Inside the Church (2019), which shows how East Germany recruited a huge stable of clergy spies. Baker Academic published W. Brian Shelton’s scholarly Quest for the Historical Apostles (2018), which examines what happened to Jesus’ key followers.

A new kid on the block, Lexham Press, has impressed me. Timothy Padgett’s Swords & Plowshares: American Evangelicals on War, 1937-1973 (2018) readable tracks twists and turns: In crisis after crisis, end-times prophets appeared with explanations of how “the Rapture of the Church Must Be Very Near” or “Swastika Marches Over Europe... When Will Ezek. 38-39 be fulfilled?” Others asked, “When England and France sign a pact with Mussolini, will the Ten Kingdom Federation be complete?” and “Does Mussolini’s declared purpose to revive the Roman Empire fulfill Daniel’s prophecy?”

European Christians often saw liberalism fostering Unbelief and Revolution, as the title of Dutch Christian Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer’s main work (Lexham Classics, 2018, trans. Harry Van Dyke) informs us in no uncertain terms. Van Prinsterer (1801-1876) rightly criticized the Howard Zinns of his day, describing how for them “history became a false witness [that] became yet another powerful means of pressing public opinion into the harness of the revolutionary school. History became a pantheon lined with revolutionary paragons, an arsenal filled with revolutionary weapons for murdering the truth.”

Van Prinsterer saw that we, fallen humans, start with murdering the truth: Then we murder each other. What happened to Holland? During World War II the French populace generally protected Jews more than the Dutch did. Lipika Pelham’s Jerusalem on the Amstel (Hurst, 2019) notes, “The Anne Frank story has somehow helped to counteract the fact that the Netherlands had the highest percentage of Jews deported and killed in western Europe”: Seventy-eight percent of Dutch Jews ended up in the death camps, compared with 25 percent of French Jews.

That was a sad ending to what began in the 1500s as Jews of Portuguese and Spanish ancestry, kicked out of those countries, made their way to Amsterdam: There, in safety, they enriched the Netherlands and themselves. By the 20th century Jews were integrated into Dutch society, only to be betrayed and murdered. But betrayal is an equal opportunity employer around the world: Helen Zia’s Last Boat Out of Shanghai (Ballantine, 2019) accurately shows what happened as Communists in 1949 won the Chinese civil war.

David Roll’s George Marshall (Dutton Caliber, 2019) is a long but readable biography of Washington’s most valuable player during the 1940s. Rafael Medoff’s The Jews Should Keep Quiet (University of Nebraska, 2019) explains why anti-immigration bias allowed Adolf Hitler to kill 6 million rather than 5 million. Alex Kershaw’s Avenue of Spies (Broadway, 2015) tells of an American doctor who stayed in Paris during WWII and joined the resistance to Hitler. Paul Janeczko’s Secret Soldiers: How the U.S. Twenty-Third Special Troops Fooled the Nazis (Candlewick, 2019) shows how the Army tricked Hitler into expecting D-Day not where it happened, and later fooled German generals by using sonic deceptions and other devices.

Crusaders: The Epic History of the Wars for the Holy Lands by Dan Jones (Viking, 2019) is a smooth read. David Hall’s The Puritans (Princeton, due out in November) is dense but worthwhile. So is Christopher Clark’s Time and Power (Princeton, 2019), which examines how visions of history influenced German politics for three centuries, from the Thirty Years’ War to the formation of the Third Reich that was to last for 1,000 years but ended up in rubble after only 12.

That’s history: Man proposes, God disposes.
As a new election approaches, Bolivia's Morales may be seeking to become another South American president for life

by JAMIE DEAN
Each morning in the Bolivian city of La Paz, thousands of young men pull ski masks over their faces and baseball caps over their heads, as they wait for scores of pedestrians to spill into the bustling streets.

The sight might be startling outside of La Paz, but in the South American city perched high in the Andes Mountains, it’s a normal part of the morning commute: The masked men aren’t waiting to rob pedestrians; they’re waiting to shine their shoes.

Shoe-shining is a common profession, but in La Paz it carries a shameful stigma. Even in a region with one of the highest poverty rates in South America, the lustrabotas in La Paz say they’re often disdained for what others consider a low profession.

Randy Davis, an SIM missionary working with the shoe shiner community in La Paz, has experienced the disdain firsthand. When he hails a taxi on a normal day, drivers flock to pick him up. After a day in a mask accompanying his friends to their jobs, he says, “I can’t get anyone to stop for me.”

Many want to remain hidden. A husband might moonlight in a mask before he tells his family he can’t make ends meet. A college student from a poor neighborhood might don a mask to supplement tuition outside the school he attends.

Others shine shoes in 12-hour shifts as their sole source of income. Shiners might earn $3 to $15 a day. (Davis says $15 would be “a golden day.”) If business is good, they’re likely able to feed their families a couple of meals each day. If it rains, Davis says, “they’re sunk.”

Davis tells his friends there’s no shame in their hard work. And while he says some do give in to drugs and theft, that stigma often isn’t true either: “A lot of them are very interested in making their lives better.”

How to make life better is a hot topic in Bolivia.

The country faces an election on Oct. 20 that will decide whether President Evo Morales—just past his 13th year on the job—will stay in office. Despite real economic gains under Morales’ leadership, poverty persists, and some wonder how long the gains will last.

Other Bolivians wonder if another Morales term could morph into a lifetime post for the socialist leader with an authoritarian streak. Is short-term economic gain worth an unknown future with a leader cozy with countries like Venezuela and Cuba?

The dilemma is a microcosm of a scenario unfolding all over South America. While some Latin American countries have strained left in recent years, others have pulled right. The results have been mixed (and sometimes disastrous), but they’ve left the continent in an ideological tug-of-war, with some countries switching sides midway through the struggle.

The toggling has also produced another dilemma: A growing number of evangelical Christians are musing over which way to pull.

When it comes to tugging the political rope in Bolivia, evangelicals typically haven’t had the strongest pull.

For more than a century, Roman Catholicism was the official state religion, and evangelical growth remained small. But as evangelicalism boomed in other Latin American nations in the 1980s, particularly among Pentecostals, it mushroomed in Bolivia too: Protestants grew from less than 8 percent of the population in 1985 to an estimated 17 percent today.

Still, growth didn’t equal recognition. Three years after Morales won his first election and took office in 2006, he successfully pushed for a new constitution declaring Bolivia a secular state. That sounded like good
news to some evangelicals, but in 2013 another law required churches to reregister with the state and report information like membership rolls and financial details.

It also required religious organizations to promote “living well”—a concept in the indigenous Aymaran religion. (Morales is an ethnic Aymaran, but he also claims Catholicism.) Evangelical churches protested the law, and tensions with Morales grew.

Last year, those tensions deepened as a new law threatened imprisonment for anyone who “recruits” another person to participate in an armed conflict—or a religious organization. For Christians, that sounded like criminalizing evangelism. This time, an outcry from evangelicals bore fruit, and tensions with Morales grew.

Earlier this year, Morales pushed through another measure that officially recognized the legality of evangelical churches. The president said the new law puts all churches and religious groups on equal ground. Many evangelicals were pleased with the new legislation. But given the history, some remain wary of what Morales might do in the future.

One of the evangelicals most wary of Morales has become one of his most unlikely opponents in the upcoming contest: Chi Hyun Chung—a Korean Bolivian and medical doctor who has never run for a political office.

Chi moved to Bolivia with his family when he was 12 years old. (His parents were missionaries from the Presbyterian Church of Korea.) He finished medical school in Bolivia, became a surgeon, and helps with the work at the Christian University of Bolivia—a school his family founded. He also serves as chairman for the Presbyterian Church in Bolivia, a network of 70 churches in the country.

During a late-night phone call after a long day on the campaign trail, Chi explained why he decided to run for president when the candidate from his political party withdrew from the race in June: As he contemplated Morales approaching a fourth term, “I had to do something about it.”

Voters had already tried to do something about it.

In a 2016 referendum, a majority of voters said Morales should not be able to seek a fourth term: The constitution limits office-holders to two consecutive terms. Morales argued that it violated his human rights to deny him another run for office. A constitutional court—packed by his appointees—agreed. They scrapped the term limits.

That might be enough to alarm South Americans living in a region where dictators have sought to hold on to power for life, but Morales has also offered something Bolivians have embraced: economic growth. While
the country still has a high rate of poverty, the number has decreased in recent years. (Indeed, some of the shoe shiners have gone on to find better jobs in La Paz.)

Still, Chi thinks the growth will stagnate without a more robust commitment to free markets, and he worries Morales is moving the nation toward communism. Though Morales has allowed more freedom in markets than the failed state of Venezuela, he’s often made his sympathies bracingly clear. When Pope Francis visited Bolivia in 2015, Morales presented the pontiff with an unusual gift: a crucifix mounted on a hammer and sickle.

That wasn’t comforting to some religious Bolivians, and Chi worries that evangelicals could face more scrutiny from the government in the years ahead, particularly on social issues.

Chi, a latecomer to the contest, is near the bottom of the polls, but a recent poll showed even Morales’ nearest opponent, Carlos Mesa, trailing him. If that’s accurate, it’s possible Morales could win the October contest outright, without being forced into a second round of voting, and continue to pull the rope leftward—perhaps indefinitely.

But while voters are eyeing the political scene, many are also focused on making a simple living. Randy Davis, the SIM missionary in La Paz, is working to help start a church among the shoe shiners he knows in the city. He’s cultivated relationships with many of them over the years, sometimes packing 30 people into a small house to study the Scriptures. He’s now partnering with the Christian group City to City to begin training a small team for a church planting effort.

Whatever the political landscape, the need for good churches in a culture of syncretism will continue. And while politicians scramble for high positions, Davis says his dream isn’t to spearhead a new church himself—he wants humble leaders from the shoe shine communities to do it: “My real desire is for them to have the vision.”

Venezuela is showing what could be in store for a Bolivia that moves to the far left.

At least 4 million people have fled Venezuela since the socialist nation began collapsing in 2014. That number could exceed 8 million by the end of next year, according to the Brookings Institution. That would represent a quarter of the population of a nation once the richest country in Latin America.

While Venezuela remains in a political stalemate between President Juan Guaidó and dictator Nicolás Maduro, the country continues to hemorrhage citizens from every class, including professionals whom the country could desperately need in the future. Some three-fifths of the students who took Chile’s medical board exams in July were Venezuelan doctors relocating to the country.

In a less extreme shift, Argentina looks poised to tilt back to the left in its own October elections. Mauricio Macri was elected in 2015, as voters seeking a new direction chose a candidate from the center-right who vowed to open up markets and improve the economy.

Four years later, Macri badly trails his leftist opponent.

Ryan Berg, a Latin American analyst at the American Enterprise Institute (AEI), says Macri faced an uphill battle trying to overcome problems like a soaring inflation rate and high public debt—both remain massive problems.

Berg also noted that there’s a difference between the public liking the idea of free markets and being willing to live under the conditions necessary to promote them.

“I think in general Argentines like the idea of a free economy,” Berg said on a recent AEI podcast. “But they’ve gotten quite used to a lot of subsidies, a lot of market intervention, a lot of programs that in the long run the government can’t afford, but that they don’t want to give up in the short run.”

Meanwhile, other South American nations also show how pulling to the right isn’t always easy.

Voters in Colombia chose Iván Duque as their president in 2018. The return to a right-leaning leader came after many Colombians were displeased with a peace deal between the former government and the leaders of the FARC guerrilla movement.

Duque didn’t like the agreement either, but he promised to carry it out as president. Now that deal is facing an implosion, as two FARC leaders have called for guerrillas to reenter their decades-long battle against the government of Colombia.

Duque is in the unenviable position of trying to placate a group over a peace deal he and others didn’t fully support. He’s also in the difficult position of trying to improve his country’s economy while continuing to open its borders to over 1 million Venezuelans fleeing their nation’s collapse.

Brazil’s hard turn to the right last fall has also faced hard moments, but the conservative President Jair Bolsonaro has seen some successes early in his presidency. The government is privatizing a number of companies and federal enterprises, including the postal service. He’s made progress in confronting the country’s huge pension crisis, though the deal isn’t yet done.

One of the dynamics perhaps most challenging Bolsonaro is also one of the things he’s least likely to give up: his blustery style that earned him the nickname “Trump of the Tropics.” —J.D.
In July, a 6-year-old Chinese Bible app called WeDevote marked a major milestone: 10 million installations. With its slick design, respect for copyrights, and curated Bible reading plans and devotionals, WeDevote stands apart from other Bible applications for smartphones and tablets available in China.

The app is a much-needed resource for Chinese Christians. Nearly all of WeDevote’s users are from mainland China, where government officials recently made it more difficult to purchase physical copies of the Bible. Officially, the Bible in China may be sold only at government-sanctioned Three-Self churches.

But while WeDevote co-founder Levi Fan may have been proud of the 10 millionth download on July 6, the celebration was short-lived. Within a week, Communist censors had blocked Chinese access to WeDevote’s website and scrubbed the app from most domestic app stores.

It wasn’t the first time they had gone after China’s most popular Bible app. Since Fan and two others launched WeDevote from Beijing in 2013, Chinese officials have monitored its growth, intimidated Fan,
WeDevote co-founder
Levi Fan
and tried to shut the app down. It’s likely the pressure will continue.

Yet Fan believes God is on his team’s side. “Under China’s tightening environment, outsiders thought there was no way we can create this app and survive,” he told me in September. “But we were able to do it.”

Since China’s Communist government enacted new religious regulations early last year, authorities have increasingly cracked down on religious activities. For years, the rules on print Bible sales went unenforced, and Chinese Christians could find Bibles on e-commerce websites or at Christian bookstores. But the government has started enforcing the law, and in March online retailers including Taobao and JD.com stopped selling Bibles.

Authorities have closed Christian bookstores, and Christian publishers are having difficulty publishing Christian books in the mainland. Fan noted that although believers can still purchase Bibles at Three-Self churches, many Christians live far from these churches, which often don’t carry many different Bible versions.

Online Christian media have also felt the noose tighten. In the past, as long as Christian content did not touch on politics, censors would leave it untouched. But now, following its release last year of a draft law regulating unregistered religious information online, the government is closing Christian channels on WeChat and other social networking apps and websites.

WeDevote is among the latest to get the ax.

Fan and two other Christians in Beijing came up with the idea for WeDevote in 2010 as they saw the need for Bible apps in China. At the time, Chinese users who downloaded YouVersion—a popular Bible app created by an Oklahoma church—found the program crashing due to the Chinese government blocking the app’s server.

Other Bible apps based in the Chinese mainland were poorly designed. They also used content taken from other sources without permission and lacked quality control. “As a user, you didn’t know which material was theologically right or wrong,” Fan said.

At first Fan and his partners tried to outsource the creation of their app, but they were unsatisfied with the results. In 2012, as Fan quit his job at a tech startup to attend seminary, a friend asked him to consider serving God by leading a team to develop the Bible app. Fan agreed, delaying seminary for two years to work on WeDevote.

He wanted the app design to be aesthetically pleasing so that people would want to open it and read the Bible. His team partnered with various Bible publishers to include multiple translations of the Bible in Chinese and English, respecting copyright laws and paying royalties. To ensure the app could weather the unpredictable Chinese internet service, the designers made the features downloadable so the app could function offline.

The first Android version of WeDevote came out in June 2013, and the iPhone version came out that July. The same month, the Xiaomi app store listed WeDevote as one of its “Recommended Apps” on the store’s homepage.

Suddenly Fan’s team was seeing more than 8,000 downloads a day.

That boost opened Fan’s eyes to another reality: Making an app could be a form of evangelism. “On the Chinese internet, there are so many people who are downloading apps, yet very few religion apps exist,” he said. “When we were on the homepage, it was an opportunity for many people to learn about the gospel.”

By the end of the year, WeDevote had become the top Bible app in China. The developers continued to expand the app, adding devotionals, Bible reading plans, and commentary to help Chinese Christians better understand the Bible and how it relates to everyday life. They asked pastors and theologians to assess the theological soundness of the app’s content. To fund the app, team members took on side projects and collected donations from Christian-owned businesses in China.

Trouble began in 2015. Beijing’s Public Security Bureau invited Fan in for a chat and asked him about the company and where its funding came from. A police officer politely told Fan that officials were monitoring everything about him: They knew about the articles his wife had written on a Christian WeChat account and about the new house they had purchased. Fan felt afraid, and at night he had nightmares about being thrown into prison.

“It was uncomfortable knowing that they knew everything, but because the Chinese house church has faced this persecution in the past, it wasn’t foreign to me,” Fan said.
Every morning the WeDevote team members prayed and read a psalm together. Every Tuesday they held a two-hour prayer meeting. “It helped me grow closer to God. I realized that I couldn’t do this on my own and I needed to pray more.”

Authorities told Fan to shut down WeDevote or else they would charge the company with creating an illegal app because it didn’t have a registration number. Most Chinese apps aren’t registered, but Fan knew WeDevote was likely being pressured because of its Christian content. So his team decided to shut down the app and close the Beijing company.

But they were prepared for this situation: Several months earlier, they had set up another company in Hong Kong. They were able to transfer WeDevote ownership to the Hong Kong company and put the app back online.

WeDevote didn’t face any further problems until this July, when authorities cut off access to its website and scrubbed it from all domestic Android stores. While the app is still available on Apple’s App Store outside China, most Chinese citizens use domestic, Android-based smartphones like Huawei, Oppo, Vivo, and Xiaomi.

No one informed Fan why the app was removed from the app stores. He suspects the government took action because of WeDevote’s growing influence and popularity.

Today when you type “Bible” into the Xiaomi app store, seven Chinese Bible apps appear, along with a handful of apps for hymnbooks, Christian music, and Christian videos. Look up the same term on Apple’s App Store outside China, and you’ll find an endless scroll of options, from study Bibles to children’s Bibles to Biblical maps and dictionaries in Chinese.

Without WeDevote’s platform on the domestic app stores, it’s difficult for the app to find new users and provide current users with updates. Fan’s team is considering ways to get the app back on the stores (he is reluctant to share details publicly). One workaround is to use the app’s share feature: By sharing WeDevote’s content with friends, users can invite them to download the app through a link instead of relying on the app store.

Caleb Jin, a Christian from Shanghai who now lives in Los Angeles, said WeDevote has helped him develop a habit of Bible reading. He found it convenient that he could read the Bible anytime and anywhere, as his phone was always by his side. He spends about 20 to 30 minutes on WeDevote every day, sometimes listening to the audio Bible as he drives or cleans his house, sometimes going through a Bible reading plan. At his church in Shanghai, he said, congregants used WeDevote to read a daily devotional together, encouraging discussion and accountability.

Fan also now lives in Los Angeles. As he looks back at how WeDevote has accomplished the seemingly impossible through God’s power, he remains hopeful about the future.

Last year, he returned to Beijing and heard the testimony of a church that could no longer meet together for Sunday worship due to government pressure. So instead, the congregants met in 23 separate small groups. But the persecution ultimately grew their numbers: Now they have 48 groups.

“It’s hard to imagine, you look at the environment and it feels like you can’t do anything, but actually there are great opportunities,” Fan said. “I believe the internet is like this as well.”
It’s about time the whole family had access to news from a biblical perspective.

We all need to stay informed and educated, but it’s often overwhelming to even try. WORLD produces facts-based, biblically objective journalism. Because truth-seeking resources must reference the ultimate authority on truth.

With annual memberships covering every life stage, your family can remain in the world but not of the world.

Get the right WORLD for everyone at gwnews.com.
For the first time in nine years, the Minnesota Twins are hosting playoff games. Exciting news for players and fans, but also for employees of the Twins’ home, Target Field. I went to a recent Twins game to find out what a home game is like for Target Field’s meteorologist, head groundskeeper, and organist.

It’s sunny and 75, and Mace Michaels gets to relax. He’s the meteorologist for the Minnesota Twins, responsible for advising teams and umpires about upcoming weather.

Tonight holds clear blue skies, but the radar shows a chance of rain for the following night. Michaels will keep an eye on the front for the next 24 hours.

If Michaels predicts a rain delay, he needs to tell the pitchers before they warm up. Starting pitchers are like racehorses, he says: “You don’t want to get them heated up and then sit them down.”

Ten years ago the Twins didn’t need a meteorologist; they played indoors at the Metrodome where it was “72 and cloudy all the time.” The Twins moved outdoors in 2010 to the new Target Field in downtown Minneapolis, three blocks from the headquarters of retail giant Target, which bought naming rights.

According to Forbes, the Twins are valued at $1.2 billion, which ranks...
them 23rd out of 30 teams for net worth. It might seem odd that this relatively small-budget team is the only major league team to have its own meteorologist on staff. But the extremes of Minnesota weather make it understandable.

Michaels’ weather predictions help head groundskeeper Larry DiVito know how much to water the field. Both men work from a tiny concrete-walled office below the third base dugout, jokingly referred to as the “weather closet.”

DiVito oversees a team of about 15 workers to prepare the field for game day. They mow and water the grass, roll up the infield tarps, rake the dirt, prep the mound, and paint the foul lines and batter’s box. Seven work year-round, while others just come on game days.

Beneath the field is a system of drain pipes for when it rains and heating pipes for when it snows in the early part of the season. The most challenging task for the grounds crew isn’t baseball but the concerts and occasional college football games Target Field hosts. The carefully groomed grass can take a beating.

Tonight, the grass is green, the mowing lines are straight, and the weather is perfect for a night of baseball. The Twins are hosting the Nationals at Target Field. Washington’s leadoff hitter grounds out. Sue Nelson plops her hands on the organ keys and plays a ditty for the first out of the game.

Nelson has been the Twins organist since 1999. She began by filling in for the previous organist and took over when he retired. In the early days she played from the outfield press box at the old indoor stadium. When the Twins moved to Target Field in 2010, Nelson was elated she would be playing from “the best seat in the house”. She and her organ are perched in the upper deck behind home plate with a full view of the field.

Now in her mid-70s, Nelson wears a blue polo with a Twins logo and a black headset to communicate with the game producer. She plays a 1977 Yamaha model provided by a local family business, Bodine’s—the same instrument she used at the Metrodome 20 years ago. The back of the organ displays artwork from young fans and a photo of Nelson with her all-time favorite player, Twins Hall of Famer Harmon Killebrew.

Nelson’s husband doesn’t come to many games because he plays travel softball. Her son, daughter-in-law, and grandkids come and sit with her sometimes. She sits on a small platform inside a ballpark pub, looks out over the field through open windows, and welcomes fans who come to talk with her.

She reminisces about Twins greats—past and present. Sometimes her conversations with fans are a little too distracting. In a game against the Indians, Nelson started playing while Cleveland slugger Yasiel Puig was at the plate. When she realized her mistake, she was horrified: “I almost cried.”

Nelson’s big moments come right before the fifth inning and during the seventh-inning stretch—the only times she plays through an entire song. Nelson welcomes the fifth inning with a peppy version of George Michael’s “Faith.” Shouts from fans of “Ya gotta have faith!” punctuate the fast organ chords. Nelson beams with a full smile.

During the seventh inning she plays “Take Me Out to the Ball Game.” The smell of brats, beer, and body odor swells as fans crowd around her to belt out the baseball classic.

Nelson tells fans she’s more of a cheerleader than a musician: “It’s got to be the funnest job—especially when we win!”

The Twins homer at the bottom of the seventh to put two runs on the board. “Wow! Wow! Wow!” cheers Nelson as she pumps her arms in the air. Minnesota scores three more runs in the eighth inning for a 5-0 victory.

She’ll be back at the keys the next night. And the night after that. In the past 10 seasons, she’s missed just five games (for appendix surgery). She broke her arm two weeks before Target Field hosted the 2014 All-Star Game, but she played anyway. She had her doctor put on a cast that left her fingers free. Nelson played with her healthy right hand and her left hand fingers poking out from the cast.

Manage your membership: wng.org/membership
It’s a warm morning in early autumn at the Michigan-Ontario border. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Officers Ken Hammond and Greg Calhoun stand in a closed lane at the Port Huron primary inspection booths in their dark blue uniforms. It’s overcast, but both men wear sunglasses. Behind them, cars, RVs, and semitrucks split into their assigned lanes as they approach the booths from the Blue Water Bridge. The bridge, which connects the United States and Canada over the St. Clair River, quivers under the weight of the hundreds of vehicles, some from as far away as Arizona or Florida.

This wind-swept bridge, sandwiched between Michigan’s Port Huron on one side and Ontario’s Sarnia on the other, is one of the four most heavily traveled border crossings between the United States and Canada. In 2018, more than 1.5 million personal vehicles and 800,000 trucks entered the United States through the port. As Officer Calhoun points out, that’s a big number for a small Michigan city with a population of less than 30,000.

But the typical 15- to 30-minute wait here at Port Huron is negligible compared with the hours travelers spend at the Texas-Mexico border crossings in El Paso, where almost 12.4 million personal vehicles entered the United States last year. That’s why this summer, as the influx of migrants at the southern border intensified, CBP moved some of the officers at the northern border south to help keep operations moving at the Mexico border.

In June, the U.S. Government Accountability Office reported that the CBP priority of securing the U.S.-Mexico border was preventing CBP offices at the U.S.-Canada border from fixing “staffing and resource challenges.” But the report said those shortages mainly impair the effectiveness of the divisions of CBP responsible for monitoring the border between legal ports of entry. For the Office of Field Operations, the division responsible for the legal ports of entry like the Blue Water Bridge, the main consequence is longer wait times for travelers.

While that impact may be minimal for travelers, it’s a burden for officers. According to Officer Jonathan Larson, the Blue Water Bridge CBP Office of Field Operations had about 10 percent of its workforce at the southern border at all times from April until mid-September, when the operation ended due to the decreasing number of migrants. That’s about 20 officers at once.

If not enough officers volunteered, the port director assigned the rest. This summer, Larson volunteered to work at a migrant camp in El Paso to avoid being assigned at a later time. Since he volunteered, he had two weeks’ notice. Not everyone had that convenience, though: A fellow officer was sent down for two months with only four days’ notice. “It’s...
difficult,” says Larson. “Nobody likes getting that short of notice to leave.”

Larson recognizes the need for more officers on the Mexico border. He’s worked the bridges in El Paso before, and he says travelers at those border crossings are similar to Blue Water Bridge migrants, traveling mainly for work, school, shopping, or sometimes visiting family. But the differences between Port Huron and El Paso are stark. At the Blue Water Bridge, the influx of vacationers in the summer can increase wait time to an hour. Meanwhile, it’s busy year-round at the Mexico border, and Larson says the lines in El Paso can take two to three hours to get through. He remembers how the 110-degree desert heat produced the forceful smell of hot rubber, hot metal, and sweaty people during those long hours.

On top of that, officers at the southern border deal with more illegal activity. While a day at the Blue Water Bridge is more likely to involve catching paperwork problems or agricultural pests, fraud and illegal drugs are daily finds in El Paso. A hundred pounds of narcotics isn’t an uncommon discovery down there. “Every day, you know you’re likely to have drugs coming through your lane. ... You’re a little bit more on your toes there,” says Larson. “Here, it’s not so bad.”

Back on the bridge, Officer Hammond stands with his back toward the United States customs booths. Behind him, a handful of cars and CBP vehicles sit parked under the rusty brown overhang outside of a gray cement building, where the officers in the booths send select travelers for further questioning. An occasional semitruck slowly rolls past on its way to the exit ramp. Even in calm Port Huron, Hammond says, CBP officers regularly face unknown dangers and hard decisions. But he recognizes that those unknowns are nothing like what they face at the southern border: “It’s night and day from what goes on down there.”

### Politics

#### Decades of fighting

**AN 80-YEAR-OLD DEMOCRACY ACTIVIST SEES A NEW GENERATION TAKE UP HIS CAUSE by June Cheng**

Week after week, black-clad protesters face off with riot police in Hong Kong’s neighborhoods and business districts. Tear gas haze, laser pointers, blockade fires, and mall sing-alongs of the newly minted anthem “Glory to Hong Kong” have become common occurrences in Hong Kong’s summer of discontent.

Protests that began as a pushback against a now-withdrawn extradition bill have transformed into a social movement urging greater democracy and denouncing the Beijing-backed government leaders in the city of 7.4 million.

One of the protesters may not look the part: 80-year-old Pastor Kwok Nai-wang. But Kwok has been active in the fight for Hong Kong democracy since the 1980s, and now he’s watching as another generation takes up that cause.

Born in Hong Kong, Kwok grew up in a Christian home and studied philosophy at the prestigious Hong Kong University before attending Yale Divinity School and becoming an ordained minister. He returned to Hong Kong in 1966, where he became a pastor in Shek Kip Mei.

Shek Kip Mei Estate is the first public housing in Hong Kong built after a fire in 1953 burned down wooden shanties and left 53,000 people homeless. Most were refugees from mainland China who couldn’t afford Hong Kong’s housing.

Gambling, prostitution, and drug use were common in Shek Kip Mei, and Kwok began to see reaching out to the community as part of his role.

Kwok’s church met with the residents, listened to their needs, and worked to help the poor and marginalized. The church put together community events, published community newspapers, and started a kindergarten. Kwok mentored young people in the church: In the 11 years he pastored the church, 13 parishioners decided to go to seminary, and half of them now pastor local churches in Hong Kong.

In 1977, Kwok became the general secretary of Hong Kong Christian Council, the ecumenical Protestant body in Hong Kong and the second-largest social service provider in the city. The more Kwok spent time helping the poor, the more he saw problems stemming from a “highly unjust society.”

He viewed democracy as the best way to allow Hong Kong residents to participate in government, and he says the current unrest is “because [citizens] don’t have a say in electing the chief executive, who is not responding in any way to the demands of the people.”

Even though the Chinese Communist Party tried to curry his favor with invitations to mainland China, Kwok remained active within the democracy movement, according to Hong Kong’s Apple Daily. Some
pastors in the council disagreed with his social activism, claiming that the Church shouldn’t be involved in politics. Others thought that by drawing closer to China, Hong Kong churches would gain access to evangelize inside mainland China. Yet Kwok believed that Christians needed to pursue justice in society, and in 1988 he left to form the Hong Kong Christian Institute (HKCI), a pro-democracy Christian think tank.

HKCI and other pro-democracy groups started pushing for direct elections in 1988, and the colonial government introduced the first direct elections in 1991, with residents choosing a third of the seats in the Legislative Council. Buoyed by the win, the groups continued to push for greater democracy, but the movement stalled after the British handed Hong Kong back to China in 1997.

Before the handover, Kwok wrote The Edge of Recolonization, a book claiming that even though Hong Kong was no longer a British colony, it would become a colony to Beijing: Human rights would diminish, freedom of press and speech would disappear, and rule of law would erode.

People dismissed him at the time, holding on to hopes that the Sino-British Joint Declaration and Basic Law would allow Hong Kong to maintain its freedoms through a high level of autonomy. But Kwok says he’s been proven right.

“When are protesters waving the British flag?” Kwok asked. “Because the message is clear: The British treated Hong Kong a lot nicer than the Chinese government. Why? Because China is a police state, and unfortunately this is coming to Hong Kong because the chief executive invited them.”

Since Kwok retired from HKCI at age 60, he’s stayed busy teaching at Lutheran Theological Seminary, pastoring at different churches, and training pastors. In 2014 he became one of the 10 original members of Occupy Central with Love and Peace, which initiated what became the Umbrella Movement protests calling for universal suffrage during the 2017 election for chief executive. Afterward he held monthly prayer meetings for the city. In 2015, doctors diagnosed Kwok with lymphoma.

Kwok believes that the Hong Kong government can end the protests if Chief Executive Carrie Lam steps down and the government allows an independent investigation into police conduct during the protests. Many Hong Kongers are upset that police used excessive force on protesters while allowing pro-Beijing triad members to go scot-free. So far, police have arrested 1,474 people between the ages of 12 and 83 since the protests began in June.

The Independent Police Complaints Council (IPCC) is investigating the protester-police clashes, yet critics complain that it lacks impartiality, as it is composed of pro-government members. The group also has limited powers, as it cannot summon witnesses. On the other hand, if Lam launched an independent inquiry, a judge would lead an investigation that could call witnesses and examine the Hong Kong Police Force’s overall planning and behavior.

Yet Kwok also favors reconciliation in Hong Kong and says it could only come if the government provided amnesty to both the police and the protesters. He points to the amnesty provided by former colonial Gov. Murray MacLehose in 1977: At the time, bribery and corruption were common within the police force, and in order to rectify the situation, the government created the Independent Commission Against Corruption to clean up the department.

Police, civil servants, and civilians hated the commission because it took away extra income from payoffs, and police officers stormed the office. So MacLehose decided to pardon cases of corruption before 1977 through a partial amnesty. This allowed the commission to pursue very serious cases, while giving police an opportunity to start over clean, according to the South China Morning Post.

As for Chinese President Xi Jinping, Kwok doesn’t think he would militarily crack down on Hong Kong, as it would make him lose face (or lose respect) as China celebrates the 70th anniversary of the founding of the People’s Republic of China on Oct. 1.

He believes the international focus on Hong Kong has also stayed the mainland’s hand: “Face is important for China’s top leaders, so the more international attention on Hong Kong, the more carefully they would handle Hong Kong. If there was little attention today, I think the [People’s Liberation Army] would already have come into Hong Kong.”
Nigeria’s Cross River state is one of the country’s prime tourist destinations, with its lush green trees, dew-covered hills, and cool tropical climate.

Located on Nigeria’s southern coast, Cross River is home to multiple resorts and attractions. In Calabar, the state capital, a bronze statue of a fisherman with his hook in the mouth of a fish symbolizes the vibrancy of the port city.

But the waterways also speak to a dark history. The Calabar River served as a transit point during the transatlantic slave trade that began early in the 15th century.

The riverfront is now occupied by a resort, with attractions like a cinema and waterside bar. Near the mouth of the river, the Slave History Museum stands in a rectangular building.

The museum once served as a barra-coon, or holding cell, for captured slaves. According to a tour guide, traders held slaves for days without food so they could fit into the slave boat.

The transatlantic slave trade involved European merchants who sailed into the region with gifts of gin bottles, guns, and wooden mirrors for the local leaders. In exchange, the leaders provided the slave buyers with access to their people.

Sellers offered slaves at markets like one in the nearby town of Akpabuyo. Today, people still gather there every Saturday to barter goods as a symbol of remembrance.

One of the museum’s first displays is a replica of a slave boat. The lowest two levels include life-size models of captured slaves lying like sardines in narrow shelves, their hands and feet shackled.

The top deck of a slave ship might have held barrels of palm oil and boxes of garlic and other spices. The items offset the financial losses from slaves who either fell sick or were cast into the sea when the ship faced rough weather.

It’s a 30-minute boat ride down the Calabar River to the Atlantic Ocean. The slave buyers sailed for four to six months to transport their human cargo to the Americas.

Once sold, the slaves went on to work indoors or in fields of tobacco, sugarcane, and cotton. The European merchants concluded the final step in the slave trade cycle, carrying the agricultural products from the Americas back to Europe.

According to historians David Eltis and David Richardson, from 1662 to 1863 nearly 200,000 Africans were sold as slaves from Calabar, the second-busiest slave-trading port in the Bight of Biafra.

A short drive from the slave museum is Government Hill, where the governor and senior state officials live. There, a two-story European building now serves as a National Museum. The “Old Residency” building was prefabricated in Britain and served as headquarters for the British colonial leaders in 1884, when Calabar was the capital of the southern protectorate. Today, its historical exhibits testify to the slave trade and to major exports such as palm oil.

On the second floor, one of the colonial master’s offices remains intact, with a white-and-black linoleum floor covering, a metal water dispenser, and an old winding telephone on the desk. The dining hall has candles on the table and a large gramophone in a corner.

The building also had an attached prison beneath what formerly served as the kitchen. The prison once held Ovonramwen of Benin, a local African leader who resisted the British takeover of his kingdom.

After Nigerian independence came in 1960, officials focused on setting up a government and, in the subsequent years, creating local states. Each state also adopted a slogan to represent the state spirit. Cross River’s slogan is “The People’s Paradise.”

The slogan fits the region’s image of a happy tourist destination. It has also helped Nigerians turn a page on a not-so-happy history.
Learning dependence

HEALTH PROBLEMS TAUGHT DAVID AND RUTH DAUMER TO RELY ON EACH OTHER by Charissa Koh

David and Ruth Daumer celebrated their 40th anniversary this year on Jan. 6. They almost didn’t make it: David had a heart attack in 1996 at their older daughter’s 7th birthday party. She and her 1-year-old sister had to say goodbye to their dad in case he didn’t make it home from the hospital.

David and Ruth met when they were children in Hammond, Ind. They lost track of each other during high school but reconnected at a singles event during college. Their first date was a trip to the circus (“a good metaphor for our marriage,” said Ruth). Five months later they were engaged.

In 1980, married for a year, they moved so David could attend Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Ind. He worked part time, and Ruth worked full time as an ICU nurse at a local hospital, occasionally taking classes toward her next nursing degree. A few years into David’s first pastorate, they wanted children. After two miscarriages and fruitless medical exams, they began to wonder if God wanted them to focus on careers instead of a family.

Later, they had the opportunity to adopt and picked up their first daughter with only 24 hours’ notice. Ruth recalls, “We drove to Sears that morning, walked into the baby department, and said, ‘We’re picking up a baby in an hour: What do we need?’” They eventually adopted a second daughter.

David also became pastor of a church in Orange City, Iowa, in 1989. Things were going well until his sudden heart attack. Ruth knew that “40-year-old men who have heart attacks have very low survival rates.” As a nurse, she was used to having control over her patients, but David felt normal and wanted to resume mowing the lawn, driving, and preaching before Ruth thought it wise.

After he began rehab, Ruth told David she would never leave him home alone with the girls again: “I couldn’t trust that he would be OK. I wanted to be here to protect David and be a first responder.”

The doctors were not able to pinpoint what caused David’s heart attack. For the next 26 years he took medicine and tried to build healthier habits to prevent future problems. Once again, the couple worked together. They rearranged their schedules to exercise together. They found ways to include their girls, like walking on a track at a local college.

Then the situation switched: About four years ago Ruth started having chronic pain and mobility problems. She was not able to work. Some days she could not even get out of a chair without help. For someone who previously worked 50 hours a week, the new limits were “humiliating.” David worked to support her: He anticipated and did housework instead of waiting for her to ask. He worked on being a good listener instead of a problem solver. He avoided asking, “Are you sure you should be doing that?” He encouraged her to pursue jobs within her abilities.

Ruth says, “He learned from my bad example.”

Visit WORLD Digital: wng.org
EXPLORE GOD’S WORLD & INSPIRE LEARNING

Preschool Curriculum For 2s, 3s, and 4s

- For Home, Daycare or Preschool
- Step-by-Step Instructions
- 60 Minutes Daily
- Hands-On Activities

Our complete preschool curriculum is a fun and easy-to-teach Bible-based learning experience for you and your child. Learn more: mfwbooks.com/wng Contact us: (573) 202-2016
 Any program that limits the curriculum or requires submission of student work is something other than home-schooling. That’s not always a bad thing, but it should have its own designation.

—JOELLYN CLARK on wng.org

This country should have universal education savings accounts so parents have full control over how their money is used to educate their own children. If they choose the local public school, fine, the money can go there.

—RICHARD SIEK on wng.org

Drowning in red
[Aug. 31, p. 42] What a fine piece! The treatment was thorough, fair, and informative. Pat and I are both alumni of Nyack College and I am also a former professor, so we could relate well.

—ROBERT F. DAVIS / Ringwood, N.J.

Nyack’s situation appears discouraging, but I hope that it can rejuvenate itself by returning to its roots of urban ministry.

—BEN UNSETH / Audubon, Iowa

Labor days
[Aug. 31, p. 64] It is unreal how much pressure and expectation my oldest son faced to go to college. He is working full time and learning a trade, but so many people think that without college he will never truly be successful. Young people should have the freedom and support to thrive in whatever calling God has for them.

—NATALIE WEBER on wng.org

Offering ‘the love of Jesus’
[Aug. 31, p. 32] Thank you to Sophia Lee for the tender portrayal of the refugee families showing up on our southern border, many full of “a faith that many Americans have lost.” May they be a missionary force in our nation.

—CHERYL IRISH / Bastrop, Texas

There are both thugs who have been coached by lawyers on sob stories, as Trump put it, and vulnerable families. Even if most families don’t have lawyers, many might still have been coached. And I’m sure some are Christians, but to describe these people as a coming “missionary force” is thinly veiled advocacy.

—BRANDON WINDHAM / McDonald, Tenn.

Much of the news about the crisis at the southern border provokes despair, but this article highlights how the church is showing up where it is needed most desperately. It was immensely encouraging.

—JOSH LEVIN / Minneapolis, Minn.

Those binding up the wounds of these people ought to encourage them to return home and take the gospel with them. The Holy Spirit can change those countries from places that people flee to places where people want to live.

—DAN SYME / Wilmington, Del.

That’s good news about churches assisting migrants at the border, but the comments about the president were unnecessary. It is our government’s duty to protect our country and its people.

—MIKE KELLY / Fishersville, Va.

Regaining a lost love
[Aug. 31, p. 59] My parents were in ministry and, like the Loomans, had a beautiful rekindling of their love in their later years after God spoke to them. It gave them strength to stay and serve each other when significant health challenges arose in their final years. It truly blessed us as their children.

—AMY GREEN on Facebook

We didn’t need to regain lost love, but we discovered new depths in our marriage when we began reading Scripture, singing hymns, and praying together every evening after supper. We only wish we had begun sooner.

—MARVIN & NANCY RICHTER / Early, Texas

This is a hopeful story. Marriages restored and those that don’t need restoration are great things, and they have this in common: commitment.

—GREG MANGRUM on wng.org

A higher purpose
[Aug. 31, p. 26] Adrian Zenz’s comments about reeducation camps in China reminded me of a Jacksonville, Fla., school district. In August a math teacher refused to use a transgender student’s preferred pronoun, so the district is making all of its teachers receive additional sensitivity training.

How far are we from China?

—JAMES D. MARSHALL / Concord, N.C.

Liberty at risk
By whose standard? Amish children get a better education than many who go through public school and college, judging by their successful businesses, the demand for their labor, and their financial self-sufficiency.

—BARBARA ORSAG / Quarryville, Pa.

Deporting to death

[Aug. 31, p. 30] Mindy Belz’s reporting is always excellent and full of mercy, but I suspect that immigration officials are so overwhelmed it’s next to impossible to do the right thing in all situations. Meanwhile, our legislative leaders have refused for decades to deal with the problems.

—SAM LOCHINGER on wng.org

Life after chess

[Aug. 31, p. 50] I truly enjoyed this article, but you don’t need to be a checkers champion to see that comparing the number of neurosurgeons to the number of grandmasters says nothing about which is more difficult to achieve. What about funding, access to chess boards, or the global demand for brain surgery?

—STEPHEN P. LEWIS on wng.org

Blaine, Blaine, short-sighted briber from the state of Maine

[Aug. 31, p. 46] Great article. It is always good to review the history of things to remember the reasons, good or bad, for laws. Christians feeling anti-Christian bias in education should remember that there is nothing new under the sun. Or maybe, “What goes around, comes around.”

—JANET BELL on wng.org

Corrections

ELWA Hospital opened the first Ebola treatment unit in Monrovia (“Five years after Ebola,” Sept. 28, p. 50).

The secret letter was not from the man Kathi Higley dated while Hal was in Greenland, but from a subsequent lover. The Higleys began attending church again about four years after reconciling (“Two mended hearts,” Sept. 28, p. 59).


Clarification


LETTERS and COMMENTS
Email mailbag@wng.org
Mail WORLD Mailbag, PO Box 20002, Asheville, NC 28802-9998
Facebook facebook.com/WORLD.magazine

Generational Impact

High Academic Rigor
Fidelity to the Spirit of the American Founding
Unwavering Biblical Worldview

In the late 1990s, Michael Farris and other HSLDA leaders correctly determined that any strategy for generational impact must include an elite higher education for bright, Christian scholars with the potential to lead the nation and shape the culture—an education as deep and rich as the one that formed the thinking of our Founding Fathers.

Patrick Henry College
for Christ and for Liberty

Patrick Henry College, at 10 Patrick Henry Circle, Purcellville, VA 20132 is certified to operate by the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.
The other side of Everest

THE LAST YEARS OF LIFE ARE NO TIME FOR A DEADLY RESIGNATION

I went to my 50-year high-school reunion, the one we all thought would be forever from now. Well, forever just showed up. Walked through the door cocky as you please and said, “Remember me? The future?”

Fiftieth high-school reunions—and I suppose to a lesser extent 40th, and even 30th reunions—are retrospective. They have glimpsed the limits of human achievement and are in varying degrees of coming to terms with it. (My cousin once said to me about her young adult children’s prospects, “I keep lowering my expectations.”)

I do not say the same of fifth or 10th reunions. I am sure that five and 10 years after graduating, people are still gazing up at their Mt. Everests, and not down at the sloped descent.

Hard to tell where the exact point comes that the truth finally dawns. But it dawns. And then, what should have been learned from generations immemorial hits like a brand-new discovery—that even among the most accomplished, once their lives are done they can be summarized on a 3-by-5 index card: married; had three children; ran a Fortune 500 company; “passed away after a heroic battle with cancer.”

(Aaron Sorkin commencement address joke: “Two newborn babies are lying side-by-side in a hospital nursery and they glance at each other. Ninety years later, through a remarkable coincidence, the two are lying side-by-side in the same hospital room. They look at each other and one of them says, ‘So whatja think?’”)

Someone suggested we all go around the room and tell what we’ve been up to for 50 years (there were 19 women, so it was doable). This kind of instantaneous triage of experience calls for wisdom only God and angels have—to sift through decades and select what was important. Dictates of convention make it easier: list spouses, kids, and job history.

And then, the most remarkable thing happened, the thing I had been hoping and praying for since the reunion invitation came in the mail in June. It so happened that the very first person selected to speak used her time to say how God had met her on Dec. 13, 1981, in a deadly industrial accident that took her to the very portals of heaven and hell and back, for a life-transforming encounter with “the Lord.” Where I grew up, God was not known as “the Lord.” From across the room I clapped and said, “Amen,” excited in my spirit.

Thereupon followed the more predictable litanies: marriages; children; divorces; careers stumbled into accidentally; the pleasures of retirement. Some ran long, so when it came to my turn I said only that “I was lost and God found me and pulled me out of a pit, turned me from darkness to light. He is the living God.”

“Do you have any kids?” someone called out, feeling slighted of the essential bio. “Four, and two grandchildren,” I complied, somewhat deflated.

I have mixed feelings about Shel Silverstein’s The Giving Tree. Is the ending for “the boy” a welcome rest from labor, or is it the last temptation? What a cruel soothing delusion the devil whispers to the disappointed lifelong chaser of fantasies: “I don’t need very much now, just a quiet place to sit and rest. I am very tired.”

Oh, but you do need something! The thing you needed all along! Don’t go gentle into that good night, for you may find it not so good. Shake off a deadly resignation and choose Christ!

There are lots of ways to be lost and only one way to be saved. You can be lost by living for pleasure (“She who is truly a widow...has set her hope on God...but she who is self-indulgent is dead even while she lives” —1 Timothy 5:5-6). You can be lost by living for your grandchildren’s holiday visits (“men of the world whose portion is in this life... They are satisfied with children” —Psalm 17:14).

Today is the day of salvation (Hebrews 3:7-8). You haven’t missed the boat; it’s boarding now. All pasts may be redeemed by this day’s final choice, and “better is the end of a thing than its beginning” (Ecclesiastes 7:8).
“Biblically objective journalism that informs, educates, and inspires.”

WORLD’s mission statement near the top of page 2 of this and every issue sometimes confuses readers, because it uses the word objective in an old-fashioned way.

Today we often think of an “objective” perspective as one not voicing a strong opinion—neutral.

The older understanding, though, equated objectivity and reality. Reporters who accurately described reality were objective despite being opinionated, if they were exceptionally well-grounded and well-informed. Key questions to a reporter: How do you become well-grounded? Have you seen close-up what you describe, or are you peering from a distance?

Our statement about “Biblically objective journalism” on page 2 follows Psalm 24:1—“The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; the world and those who dwell therein.” God made everything and everyone, so He knows every atom in the universe and in us. The builder of my house in Austin, Texas, left me the blueprints. The Builder of our world left us the Bible, so when we want to know the objective nature of our world, we study His blueprint.

But that sounds abstract, so let me give you two instances from a fairly typical day—Friday, Sept. 6—of how I try to be Biblically objective on controversial stories by emphasizing street-level reporting combined with a perspective formed by God’s inerrant teaching.

First, I responded to several letters objecting to WORLD’s reporting on immigration. We’ve tried to sympathize both with refugees desperate to enter the U.S. and readers who insist on the rule of law. To see the crisis up close, our reporters have spent many days on the U.S.-Mexico border. Last year our July 21 issue included Jamie Dean’s story on “Bloody Honduras,” the Central American country from which many recent would-be immigrants are fleeing.

The letters made me think about both past and future. Since Congress passed immigration quotas in 1924, Americans have disagreed about the number of immigrants the U.S. should admit, and which should receive priority. Throughout our history, though, we have usually accepted refugees whose lives were in danger. When we haven’t—the U.S. turned away Jews escaping from Hitler, many of whom later died in concentration camps—many Christians have later regretted that denial.

So here’s a key question concerning those fleeing Honduras: Is its level of crime and violence so high that the U.S. will be enabling murder if we just say no? While driving through Central America five years ago, I saw guards with automatic weapons stationed in front of convenience stores in Honduras, but I really don’t know how hard life there has become. So Jamie early in October is heading to Honduras for a warmhearted but tough-minded look at reality. Please pray for safety.

Second, on Sept. 6 I spent a delightful hour with Rice University professor Jim Tour, one of the world’s most-published chemists. He explained why polls purportedly showing “97 percent of scientists” supporting macroevolution (new body plans at the phylum level) merely document ignorance under social pressure: “The concerted requirement of multiple changes all at the same place and at the same time is impossible to fathom chemically.”

Tour explained that he has often said to proponents of macroevolution, in essence, “show me the chemistry”—and they have not been able to do so. Tour’s stories remind me of the academic solution to getting out of a pit with tall, sleek walls impossible to climb: “assume a ladder.” But if we assume that life just emerged without showing how that could work chemically, we are substituting faith in evolution for Biblical objectivity, which has a logical explanation: God created life.

I urge our reporters to work at “street level, not suite level,” but macroevolutionists are in the suites, generalizing grandly about processes taking hundreds of millions of years—yet unable to show how the requisite molecules (lipids, proteins, nucleic acids, carbohydrates) occurred in the states and quantities necessary for life to begin, or how the necessary DNA and RNA codes emerged.

If you want to understand more about Biblical objectivity, you might enjoy a book of mine just published by P&R, Reforming Journalism. Our Saturday Series, at wng.org/saturday-series, is publishing on Sept. 28 and Nov. 2 excerpts from Chapters 3 and 4.
Jesus loves me, this I know.
A Biblical solution to health care

For the last twenty-five years, Samaritan Ministries members have been sharing medical costs while praying for and encouraging one another — all without health insurance. Faithful. Affordable. Biblical.

Monthly costs
Ranges based on age, household size, and membership level

<p>| | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>$100–$227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Person</td>
<td>$200–$454</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3+ People</td>
<td>$250–$555</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

samaritanministries.org/world · (877) 578-6787

This is a ministry that is trying to actually do some good out there for the Lord when it comes to health care.
— Cameron & Roanna, members since 2017