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DEFY "THEISTIC EVOLUTION"

ANN VOSKAMP

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UNWHOLESALE READING

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Holding Appropriately to the Past, I’m discovering, is a hard assignment.

Last year, it was my mother’s household items after she died at the age of 91. This summer, my wife and I are helping her parents sort out and distribute the furniture and artifacts they’ve assembled over 64 years in the same home. And at the very same time, WORLD magazine is moving its offices just a couple of miles to a new location—after having spent the last 34 years at just one site. What to keep? What to throw away? What to pass on to someone else?

It’s a hard enough assignment with the little things—like tea cups with a special history, or needlepoint done in the 1800s by a barely known grandmother, or handwritten notes from half a century ago. But some assignments are bigger and bulkier. I have a friend, for example, who last year inherited two antique Jaguar automobiles when a friend of his died. Both were in disrepair, but both were also too old and too valuable to discard. Where do you put them while thinking it all through?

My toughest challenge this summer is a small printing museum I assembled about a dozen years ago. I’ve mentioned it here before, but always with optimism. Now I panic a bit. How can I take historical relics, weigh them out for scrap metal at 18 cents a pound, and say goodbye?

And especially so with my Model 14 Linotype machine (shown above). So remarkable is this 2,000-pound marvel that I simply must describe it for you again. Its inventor, Ottmar Mergenthaler, was a German watchmaker who at the age of 13 repaired the broken-down clock in his village Lutheran church. Emigrating to Baltimore, Mergenthaler became intrigued with the fact that for 400 years, no one had improved much on the moveable type developed by his fellow countryman, Johannes Gutenberg. So he set a tough goal for himself: He would design a typesetting machine so brilliant in concept that it would never be improved upon, and built so sturdily that it would never wear out. History says he came remarkably close on both fronts, although in the process wore himself to such a frazzle that he spent his last days mentally incapacitated.

The machine Mergenthaler unveiled in 1886 overtook the publishing world. Thomas Edison called it the “Eighth Wonder of the World.” Prior to the Linotype, composing the words for just one page of a daily newspaper required 25 to 35 man-hours of painstaking labor. The Linotype reduced that to three. Before Mergenthaler, even big newspapers consisted of just eight pages. According to one historian, fewer than 300 personal libraries in the United States had as many as 1,000 books. Because of the remarkable leverage the Linotype brought to the spread of information, it might well be seen as the capstone of the industrial revolution. Certainly, it was a forerunner to the generation of computers that came a century later.

Such a historical item sits right now on the loading dock behind and below our WORLD offices. First given to us in 1998 by WORLD subscriber and supporter David Bell, who is publisher of the Vandalia, Ill., Leader-Union, this marvelous witness to human ingenuity taunts me. Is it part of the past to wave goodbye to, like a sort of cultural threshing machine, to be preserved only in the mind’s eye? Or is it a literal part of history that needs to be maintained, even at a modest cost—so that at least for another generation or two, youngsters who think that everything just falls out of a laptop or a smart phone might be linked thoughtfully to the past?

Both at my mother’s home last year, at the home of my parents-in-law this summer, and on the WORLD loading dock, I think: Most things that used to be valuable in time can be set aside. With some things, though, I wonder: What if this particular item is an irretrievable link to the past? And just exactly how is a layman like me supposed to know the difference?

Joel Belz

Email: jbelz@worldmag.com
RUMORS OF GOD
“Faith in Action”
by Darren Whitehead and Jon Tyson
Foreword by Bill Hybels
Available June 2011
From C.S. Lewis’ classic work Mere Christianity: “This world is a great sculptor’s shop and we are the statues. But there is a rumor going round the shop that some of us are some day going to come to life.” In Rumors of God, Jon Tyson and Darren Whitehead share with readers how the rumors are true and will call Christians to a life that transcends the shallowness of our culture.

WITH
“Connection with God”
by Skye Jethani
Available July 2011
Instead of a life over, under, from, or even for God, what leads us into freedom and restoration is life with God. Written by Skye Jethani, managing editor of Leadership Journal and author of the award winning blog Skyebox (SkyeJethani.com), With identifies the need many Christians feel for a deeper experience of God in everyday life.

MORE LOST THAN FOUND
“Finding God”
by Jared Herd
Available Late August 2011
In More Lost Than Found, youth expert Jared Herd comes alongside anyone who has drifted from faith to reengage them with the truth they long to hear. In this refreshing, true-to-life message, readers find a companion for their faith journey, rediscover the truth they grew up believing, and are invigorated to lay hold of it once again.

CLOSE ENOUGH TO HEAR GOD BREATHE
“Intimacy with God”
by Greg Paul
Available Late August 2011
Does the idea of intimacy with God seem far-fetched and irrelevant to your real, daily life? In Greg Paul’s Close Enough to Hear God Breathe, readers discover a rich message recounting the story of a God who has been inviting all of humanity, and each individual, into His tender embrace since time began.

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One nation under fire

ON JULY 9 the Republic of South Sudan is set to become the newest nation in the world. But rather than capping a six-year peace process, the landmark is mired in renewed fighting.

Attacks launched by the government in Khartoum began last month in the contested border area of Abyei but have grown increasingly aggressive, including aerial assaults by the North and house-to-house killings. That plus the growing influence of Islamic hardliners in the Khartoum lineup speak less to the new day promised by the South’s independence and more to a return to the past: June 30 marked the 22nd anniversary of the coup that brought to power the National Islamic Front of President Omar al-Bashir that has led to the deaths of as many as 3 million Sudanese, in the South as well as in Darfur.

The Sudanese Armed Forces (SAF) launched attacks in mid-June in the Nuba Mountain area of central Sudan, known as South Kordofan state. In Kadugli, the state capital, eyewitnesses reported two churches burned, the Church of Christ and the Cathedral of the Episcopal Church of Sudan. At the Episcopal church, according to a witness, a guard stationed inside the church was dragged outside and murdered. SAF soldiers also went door to door in search of suspected members and supporters of the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM), which fought the North for over 20 years, and reportedly executed them. Meanwhile aerial assaults by MiG jet fighters and Antonov bombers have left mud and grass homes burned to the ground and villages destroyed. One eyewitness estimated to me that over 1,000 had been killed in only a few days of attacks.

At the same time, northern forces also conducted air strikes in nearby Unity State, an area with numerous oil as well as military installations.

The assault on the Nuba Mountains region is reminiscent of attacks by northern forces...
10-20 years ago and food blockades that starved the population—reducing it from over 1 million to less than 400,000 by 1998.

Aid officials who have long worked in Nuba fear a return to those conditions. “This is a catastrophic event,” said Ken Isaacs, vice president of Samaritan’s Purse. “All development aid and humanitarian assistance that was going in is halted, and we fear for the Sudanese a return to the thread-like life waiting to get essential materials.”

With less than three weeks to go before a formal handover in the South to a new government, the renewed military hostility along the border by the North should act as “huge flashing red lights,” said former State Department Special Representative on Sudan Roger Winter. “They are signaling that over the next few weeks, and during the post-independence period, relations between Khartoum and the South will likely be poisonous at best,” he told the House Committee on Foreign Affairs at a hearing on June 16.

The Obama administration dispatched deputy national security adviser John Brennan to Sudan in June, and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also addressed the crisis during her visit to an African Union meeting in Ethiopia last week. But many are critical of the administration’s soft approach to Khartoum, which has so far meant diplomatic statements about the fighting without specifically blaming Khartoum.

Following her speech in Addis Ababa, Clinton met with Sudan’s recently promoted presidential advisor Nafi Ali Nafi. “Nafi is viewed by many as one of the most influential and brutal security officials in Sudan,” says Africa analyst Ted Dagne. Nafi was Sudan’s security chief when it granted safe haven to Osama bin Laden in the 1990s and reportedly maintained close ties with al-Qaeda, in addition to planning the genocide that took place in Darfur over the last 10 years. Members of Congress have urged Obama to include him on the U.S. list of wanted terrorists—not negotiate with him.

—For full testimony by Winter, including background on the contested areas, go to worldmag.com

Dispatches

Thatcher sell-off
Auction house Christie’s will sell off an important symbol of Great Britain’s Iron Lady when it places Margaret Thatcher’s famous handbag up for auction on June 27. The former British prime minister, who famously carried the bag to meetings with Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev, donated the bag to charity. Christie’s says it could fetch as much as $164,000.

LOOKING AHEAD

Final shuttle mission
Thirty years after the first space shuttle mission in 1981, NASA plans to launch a space shuttle on July 8 for the final time when Atlantis blasts off from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Unless Congress reverses course on the shuttle program, the United States will depend on Russia for transport to and from the International Space Station at a cost of $51 million per seat.

IMF decision
The executive board of the International Monetary Fund has a June 30 deadline to choose either French Finance Minister Christine Lagarde or Mexico’s Central Bank Governor Agustín Carstens as the new IMF managing director. The former leader of the IMF, France’s Dominique Strauss-Kahn, resigned on May 18 and faces charges in New York of sexual assault.

Tour de France begins
Just like in 1999, this year’s Tour de France could be defined by a treacherous section in eastern France. In 1999, it was the second stage of the Tour de France that raced across the Passage du Gois, a slippery passageway near Beauvoir-sur-Mer that is submerged twice daily at high tide. A crash split up the lead peloton, ruining the hopes of a few lead contenders. This year’s tour begins at Passage du Gois on July 2.

German draft ends
Beginning July 1, young German men will no longer be subject to the nation’s forced conscription. The law was changed in March, so conscripts will no longer be forced to spend six months in the German military or in alternatives such as civil protection or civil service.
ALEX AND BRETT HARRIS

are best-selling authors of Do Hard Things and Start Here and founders of TheRebelution.com. They are the sons of home school pioneer, Gregg Harris, and the younger brothers of best-selling author, Joshua Harris ("I Kissed Dating Goodbye").

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Albert Mohler

President, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

Randy Alcorn

best-selling author, Eternal Perspective Ministries

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Dispatches＞News

Blue dog blues

Since its founding in 1995, the so-called conservative wing of U.S. House Democrats, the Blue Dogs, has enjoyed growing influence on Capitol Hill with 54 members by 2008. But two years later the Blue Dog pack is down to less than two dozen after Oklahoma Rep. Dan Boren announced June 7 that he would not seek a fifth term. He is the second departing Blue Dog this year, highlighting the difficulty moderate lawmakers face to survive in a Democratic Party that is increasingly liberal, particularly in its leadership ranks. Boren’s retirement, at 37, will likely lead to a Republican pickup: Boren was the only Democrat in his state’s congressional delegation. Others may fall victim to the ongoing redistricting process.

Rising waters

A cool, wet spring has led to threats of flooding this summer in Mountain and Midwest states. In Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, and other prairie states, memories of massive flooding in 1993 had residents of towns along the Missouri River rushing to strengthen levees and build sandbag barriers as waters rose in June. The problem is May rains—Montana, Wyoming, and the Dakotas had between 8 and 16 inches. But another problem is the massive snowpack that heavy snowfalls built in the Rocky Mountains over the winter. As it melts, runoff threatens to flood mountain states and states downstream along the Missouri. Cooler-than-normal temperatures have slowed the melt—so far. “But if at any point, we flip that summer switch [to 90-degree days], it could melt 3 to 4 inches a day,” Scott Baird, flood engineer for Salt Lake County, Utah, told The Salt Lake Tribune. “That’s the equivalent of raining 3 to 4 inches a day for an extended period.”

Crowded field

Former House Speaker Newt Gingrich prefers American Idol to Dancing With the Stars, and former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty prefers Coke to Pepsi. These were some of the revelations from an otherwise staid first debate involving Republican presidential candidates in New Hampshire on June 13. Less clear: How the GOP candidates differed from each other, and how they plan to set themselves apart in a field that’s drawn a lackluster response from Republican voters. Seven Republicans declared presidential runs by mid-June: Gingrich, Pawlenty, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum, Texas Rep. Ron Paul, former Godfather’s Pizza CEO Herman Cain, and Minnesota Rep. Michele Bachmann. Former Utah Gov. Jon Huntsman planned to announce his bid for the White House on June 21. Romney, who lost a bid for the GOP nomination in 2008, snagged an early lead among Republican candidates, with former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin polling second place. Though Palin didn’t participate in the debate, Pawlenty may have encouraged competition by declaring that Palin is qualified for the presidency.

Quits

Newt Gingrich’s already flailing presidential campaign all but collapsed mid-June when his senior campaign staff resigned en masse. The 16 who quit included longtime staffers like spokesman Rick Tyler, who explained, “There was a path to victory. Newt had a different path.” The senior staff had privately objected to Gingrich’s decision to go on a cruise in the Greek Isles with his wife Callista just as the campaign was starting—and speculation ran that some might be jumping ship to a possible presidential run by Texas Gov. Rick Perry. Gingrich has vowed to continue his campaign and kept to plans to headline summer Republican gatherings.
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Fighting back
Catholic adoption agency charges religious discrimination  BY EMILY BELZ

Catholic Charities from three Illinois dioceses have sued the state for violating their religious freedom after the state said the groups were breaking Illinois law by discriminating against unmarried couples (whether same-sex or not) in their adoption and foster care services. A new law legalizing same-sex civil unions in the state went into effect June 1.

Catholic Charities, which handle 20 percent of the state’s adoption and foster care cases, says it is in full compliance with Illinois law because the dioceses are protected by specific exemptions for religious adoption agencies. But the Illinois attorney general’s office in a letter said the organization “discriminates against Illinois citizens based on race, marital status and sexual orientation in its provision of adoption and foster care services” (the agencies’ lawyers are baffled as to the basis of allegations that the organization is racially discrimin-ating) and demanded documents from the organization going back to 2006. Catholic Charities is seeking an injunction to prevent the expected government lawsuit. The state’s family services agency also reportedly in May wrote the Evangelical Child & Family Services in Wheaton, Ill., saying the organization would have to provide civil union adoptions if it plans to continue contracts with the state.

The Illinois agencies’ decision to fight the state contrasts with approaches elsewhere: Catholic Charities ended its contracts in Boston in 2006 and then with the District of Columbia in 2009 after same-sex civil union and marriage laws passed. But the Massachusetts and D.C. bills offered little protection for religious organizations. “The Catholic Church in Illinois has decided to take a proactive stance so that the children have no disruption in their lives,” said Peter Breen, one of the lawyers for the Illinois Catholic Charities with the Thomas More Society. But the three dioceses—Springfield, Joliet, and Peoria—have temporarily suspended issuing new licenses for foster care and adoptive parents as the suit moves forward.

Opting out

ObamaCare does not fully begin until 2014, but already there are signs that the law may turn employee-provided health insurance plans into an endangered species. A recent study reveals that 30 percent of employers say they are likely to quit offering health insurance to their workers once the new federal requirements kick in. The McKinsey & Co. findings confirm fears that nationalized healthcare will force many employees off of corporate insurance and onto government-sponsored plans, drastically altering the healthcare landscape. Currently more than 1,300 companies have been granted one-year exemptions from early elements of the federal law that forces companies to expand their benefits. But such waivers may end in 2014. So companies are hinting that they will choose to pay a federal fine for not offering insurance rather than try to comply with the more costly requirements under government-approved insurance plans. The study also concluded that the likelihood an employer will stop offering healthcare benefits increases the more that employer learns about details of the new law.

OUT WITH THE NEW In its final report on the 2011 New International Version (NIV), the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (CBMW) said it is not a “sufficiently reliable English translation.” The CBMW noted its improvements over Today’s New International Version (2002, 2005) and said the translation process showed “transparency and openness.” But “the 2011 NIV retains 2,756 (or 75 percent) of the TNIV’s problematic gender-related translations that led CBMW, and eventually the larger evangelical world, to reject the TNIV.” The CBMW concluded, “Unless Zondervan changes its mind and keeps the current edition of the 1984 NIV in print, the 2011 NIV will soon be the only edition of the NIV that is available. Therefore, unless Zondervan changes its mind, we cannot recommend the NIV itself.” Southern Baptists, meeting in Phoenix for their annual convention, also passed a resolution saying they could not recommend the 2011 NIV.
Most dangerous man

The Somali soldiers working a checkpoint in Mogadishu did not realize who they had killed. Fazul Abdullah Mohammed and another man arrived at the checkpoint in a luxury car, and when one pulled a pistol the soldiers fired on them. Sophisticated weapons, maps, other materials, plus tens of thousands of dollars found in the car—along with later DNA testing—confirmed that one of the men killed was Mohammed, a lead al-Qaeda operative. The Somalian had topped the FBI’s most-wanted list for 13 years and had a $5 million bounty on his head for planning the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings that killed 224 in Kenya and Tanzania. It was the third major strike in six weeks against al-Qaeda: Following Osama bin Laden’s May killing, a U.S. drone strike in Pakistan killed Ilyas Kashmiri, wanted in connection with the 2008 terror attack in Mumbai. Mohammed, according to Bill Roggio, managing editor of The Long War Journal, “is considered by U.S. intelligence officials to be al-Qaeda’s most dangerous operative in Africa.”

Syria’s crackdown

Thousands of pro-government demonstrators hoisted a mile-long Syrian flag in downtown Damascus on June 15 in a rare show of public support for Syrian President Bashar Assad. But elsewhere in the country anti-government protesters entered their third month of open agitation against Assad’s regime, despite military crackdowns and a growing refugee crisis. Syrian security forces shot dead at least 34 demonstrators in the town of Hama on June 10, with snipers firing into crowds coming and going to Friday prayers. Elsewhere security forces have deployed tanks to surround towns and cut off internet and cell phone service. Human-rights groups say that Syrian security forces have killed more than 1,300 civilians since Syrians first began their own wave of “Arab spring” protests against Assad’s longstanding, repressive regime. And across the border, Turkish authorities reported over 8,000 Syrians have turned up in camps as refugees.

Syria: Farah Abdi Warsa Meh/AP • Kunonga: Tsvangira Mtswangwa/The New York Times/Redux • Turkey: Xaiver Galian/AP

INTERFERENCE

Ahead of elections in Zimbabwe—announced for this year but as yet unscheduled—President Robert Mugabe has launched a crackdown on political opponents, including churches. Four Anglican priests and 11 church wardens were arrested June 1 for interfering when a Mugabe ally tried to take over the home of the rector of St. Mary’s Church in Harare. Mugabe has clashed with Anglican leaders in Africa since they excommunicated his longtime ally, Nolbert Kunonga, as bishop of Harare in 2008. In April a truckload of riot police fired tear gas and stormed a Nazarene church sanctuary in Harare where about 500 Christians from area churches had gathered for a prayer service on behalf of the country. One participant was shot dead by police and about 100 arrested. Mugabe and his party’s Zanu-PF forces have stepped up pressure against churches for their failure to support his regime—in a country where nearly 80 percent of the population are Christians—even as he seems unable to pull off elections slated for 2011. Some congregations report that church leaders have been pressed to sign petitions opposing international economic sanctions against Mugabe. And the 87-year-old president, who himself was Jesuit-educated, has turned from his own Catholic church and increasingly aligned himself with renegade figures like Kunonga or the growing vapostori, a cult-like movement.

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SYRIA’S CRACKDOWN

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No worship allowed

Appellate court bars renting public-school space to church for “religious worship services”

BY EMILY BELZ

The 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in June that a public school could bar a church from renting its space after hours, while other groups could rent the space if they weren’t using it for worship. The court said the school wasn’t discriminating against “religious points of view” but simply banning a “type of activity—religious worship services.”

“The Establishment Clause is being misunderstood to mean that you cannot accommodate religious private speech as opposed to other private speech,” said Jordan Lorence of the Alliance Defense Fund, one of the lawyers for the Bronx, N.Y., church that sought to rent from a local middle school. “They have their dance recitals, Boy Scout meetings, union meetings, worship services. Nothing is transformed. The meeting doesn’t work some architectural alchemy on the building.”

Lorence said the decision could be overturned by the full circuit court (this ruling was from a three-member panel) or go to the Supreme Court.

Also in the courts:

i The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a judge’s ruling that banned prayer at a Texas public-school graduation ceremony—including a ban on the words prayer, invocation, benediction, join in prayer, bow your heads, and amen. Medina Valley High School valedictorian Angela Hildenbrand prayed her prayer and ended it with, “And it’s in Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.”

i The Wisconsin Supreme Court, whose conservatives hold a one-justice majority, ruled in a 4-3 decision that the state’s new law that curtails public unions’ bargaining power could be put into effect, overturning a lower court judge’s injunction against the law. The state Supreme Court said the lower judge had “usurped the legislative power which the Wisconsin Constitution grants exclusively to the legislature.” The court also said that the legislature hadn’t violated procedures in passing the law.

i The 11th Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals heard arguments from 26 states in a lawsuit filed by Florida’s attorney general challenging the 2010 healthcare law. Law experts believe it may be the most serious legal challenge to the controversial legislation.

Flood season

The first week of Atlantic hurricane season brought heavy rain, mudslides, flooding, and death to quake-ravaged Haiti. Officials reported at least 28 people died in storms that flooded towns and destroyed homes. Residents in Port-au-Prince reported floodwaters reaching 4 feet high in parts of the capital, and aid groups scrambled to evacuate vulnerable earthquake victims from low-lying tent cities. Some 680,000 Haitians remain in tents more than 18 months after its devastating earthquake, and newly elected President Michel Martelly faces urgent pressure to form plans for long-term recovery, including sustainable housing. Aid groups reported also a spike in cholera. Officials from Doctors Without Borders said the group treated more than 2,500 cholera patients in Port-au-Prince during the first week of June—an increase from around 300 cases a week in April. Aid workers distributed hygiene kits, but more rain could worsen the spread of the waterborne disease that has killed more than 5,400 people—and sickened over 330,000—since October.

FIRE AND SNOW

An abandoned campfire may have started the largest wildfire in Arizona history. Flames have burned more than 747 square miles since Memorial Day weekend, destroying 32 homes and four rental cabins. As it spread across state lines to northwestern New Mexico, authorities evacuated 200 residents from the town of Luna. Scant winter precipitation in Arizona, New Mexico, west Texas, and southern Colorado is blamed on La Niña, a climate phenomenon where cooler waters in the equatorial Pacific Ocean keep the jet stream from dipping down and bringing storms to the region. Instead, rain and snow further north have left record snowpack in the Sierra Nevada range in California and in the Rockies.
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RELEASED

Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, D-Ariz., was released from a Houston hospital five months after she was shot by a gunman in Tucson, who killed six and wounded 13 others in the outdoor shooting spree. Giffords, 41, will continue to undergo daily rehab for severe injuries to the left side of her brain, which controls speech and communication.

INDICTED

Former Sen. John Edwards, D-N.C., rejected a plea deal and pleaded not guilty June 3 after the Justice Department indicted him on charges of violating campaign finance laws while trying to hide an affair. Under scrutiny are hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations that were allegedly used to support campaign videographer Rielle Hunter, with whom Edwards, 57, fathered a child. Edwards is also the subject of a lawsuit by Hunter.

RESIGNED

Pressured by his own party and the White House to step down, Rep. Anthony Weiner, D-N.Y., resigned June 16 after ongoing revelations in a sexting scandal dashed Democratic hopes of a promising career, even a New York mayoral run. Weiner, 46, at first denied but later admitted that he sent photos as well as interacted with women online in “inappropriate” ways, including since he married Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s deputy chief of staff, Huma Abedin, last summer.

DIED

Jack Kevorkian, who campaigned for the legalization of euthanasia and was dubbed “Dr. Death” for his role in the assisted suicides of some 130 people from 1990 to 1999, died June 3 at the age of 83. Although Kevorkian escaped prosecution four times, he eventually served eight years in prison on second-degree murder charges after appearing in 1966 and introduced amateur sleuth Jim Qwilleran and his sidekick Siamese cat KoKo.

DIED

Mystery novelist Lilian Jackson Braun, whose popular The Cat Who .. series spanned 29 volumes and four decades, died June 4 at the age of 97. The Cat Who Could Read Backwards appeared in 1966 and introduced amateur sleuth Jim Qwilleran and his sidekick Siamese cat KoKo.

HOSPITALIZED

California radio preacher Harold Camping, 89, was hospitalized following a stroke June 9 at his Alameda home. Camping’s Family Radio Network spent more than $100 million publicizing Camping’s prediction that the world would end on May 21, a prediction Camping amended to Oct. 21 after the May date passed.

COMMENCED

Producer Mark Burnett, best known for reality shows like Survivor and The Apprentice, has begun work on a 10-hour miniseries featuring stories from the Bible. The docudrama, a joint collaboration between Burnett and his wife, Touched By an Angel actress Roma Downey, is due to air on the History Channel in spring 2013.
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“What we’re about to do is redefine what the American family is. And that’s a good thing.”

New York state Sen. CARL KRUGER, D-Brooklyn, on his new position in support of same-sex marriage. Two years ago he helped stop a bill to legalize gay marriage in the state, but on June 13 he was one of three state senators to switch their support for a gay marriage bill. The bill passed the Democratic-dominated Assembly June 15 and awaits action in the Republican-controlled state Senate.

“It doesn’t pass the straight face test in my opinion.”

U.S. House Speaker JOHN BOEHNER, R-Ohio, responding to a 32-page White House review of U.S. military actions in Libya submitted to Congress to demonstrate compliance with the War Powers Act. “The White House says there are no hostilities taking place, yet we’ve got drone attacks underway, we’re spending $10 million a day as part of an effort to drop bombs on Qaddafi’s compounds,” he said.

“We own the economy.”

U.S. Rep. DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee, responding to a question about when Democrats and the president would take responsibility for the state of the economy.

“We’re all against the dictionary, we’re not against each other.”

Eighth-grader SUKANYA ROY, who won the 2011 Scripps National Spelling Bee when she correctly spelled the words *periscili* and *cymotrichous*. Roy is the fourth American of Indian descent in a row to win the bee.
 Dispatches  
Quick Takes

APPLE OF THEIR EYES
Forget Times Square or the Empire State Building—according to one researcher, the most photographed object in Manhattan is the Fifth Avenue Apple Store. Digital cartographer and researcher Eric Fischer used mapping software to analyze pictures taken by New York City tourists to discover what most captured out-of-towners during their stays in the Big Apple. More popular than familiar icons, the transparent façade of Manhattan’s Apple Store turned out to be the most photographed landmark on the island.

SOUR KRAUTS
According to a survey of 30,000 users of the multilingual social networking website Badoo, the Germans have a lot to learn about making people laugh. Renowned for engineering, Germany was ranked last in a funniest country survey by the social networking website. “Germans are brilliant at so many things, including making cars and beating us at football. Unfortunately, telling jokes isn’t always one of them,” said a UK spokesman for Badoo.

THE 5 LEAST FUNNY NATIONS
(as rated by Badoo.com users)
1. Germany
2. Russia
3. Turkey
4. United Kingdom
5. United States

UDDER MADNESS
Possibly coming soon to Chinese grocery stores: human breast milk—produced by cows. Chinese scientists from Agricultural University in Beijing are close to marketing milk from genetically modified cows that is identical to human breast milk. To make the milk, researchers inserted human genes into cloned cow embryos that were then implanted into surrogate cows for birth. According to Sky News, the transgenic herd now numbers 300 and the milk produced by it is still undergoing safety testing.

TRUMP CARD
Donald Trump may be making waves in the United States for his foray into presidential politics or for eating pizza with a fork, but across the pond in Scotland, the flashy New York tycoon is known as something else—a bad neighbor. The U.S. real estate magnate has been waging turf war against an Aberdeenshire man whose property lies adjacent to Trump’s newest project, a championship-level golf course in Balmedie. But in seeking more land for the sprawling project, Trump has attempted to buy out neighbors, including the 20-year home of David Milne, who has refused to sell.

In response, Trump has criticized Milne’s home as an eyesore. And then, in May, contractors for Trump built a fence and planted trees around Milne’s property to remove it from sight. Soon after, Milne received a $4,600 bill from Trump’s organization—half the cost of the fence and tree project. But Milne told reporters that he’s not budging. “There is no way I’m going to pay it,” Milne (below) told a Scottish tabloid, The Daily Record. “As far as I’m concerned it’s just another attempt to intimidate and bully me. But it’s not going to work. I’m not paying any attention to it at all.”

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EAT FREAKS

It was the unstoppable force versus the immovable object: a Denny’s restaurant’s steadfast promise to keep the flapjacks coming during its $5 all-you-can-eat pancake promotion versus the insatiable stomachs—and patience—of seven teenage boys from Orange County, Calif. The friends marched into the local Denny’s and each ordered the all-you-can-eat pancake special, then attempted to defeat the promotion by spending the next 24 hours eating pancakes.

Orange County Reporter journalist Greg Hardesty, father of one of the boys, posted on his Facebook page: “They ate 301, averaging more than 14,000 calories per person—all for $5 each. They are establishing a new category for the Guinness Book of World Records.” Each boy ate an average of 43 pancakes, and Hardesty later reported that one of the teen gluttons nearly fell asleep in the restaurant bathroom. Denny’s employees, despite running out of pancake batter and having to make a run to the store to buy more, held true to the promise and managed to feed the teens into quitting after the day-long contest.

ALL THAT YOU CAN’T LEAVE BEHIND

Law enforcement authorities will tell you that picking up hitchhikers is dangerous. But Edmonton Oilers center Gilbert Brule (left) is probably happy he didn’t take that advice. The 24-year-old professional hockey player was driving with his girlfriend, Kelsey Nichols, to take his dog to a local park near Vancouver on May 31 when the pair drove past two hitchhikers. From the passenger seat, Brule thought he recognized one of the hitchhikers as international rocker Bono from U2.

After convincing his girlfriend to turn the car around, Brule’s suspicions were confirmed: The U2 frontman was trying to thumb a ride with his assistant in West Vancouver. Bono explained that he and his friend had been out for a walk and then it began raining. He asked Brule and Nichols if they could drive him to Horseshoe Bay in West Vancouver. “The pair instantly obliged and spent the car ride fielding questions from Bono about Brule’s hockey career. In appreciation, the U2 frontman rewarded Brule and Nichols with three tickets and backstage passes to U2’s concert in Edmonton days later.

HAPPY TALK

Perhaps trying to deflect accusations of bias by placing their own nation atop their “Global Happiness Index,” North Korean researchers commissioned by a state television network released a report that concluded that China, with a perfect score of 100, was the happiest place on earth. According to the researchers’ undisclosed scoring method, North Korea finished second with 98 points. The researchers also claimed that the United States (referred to as “The American Empire”) finished dead last with just two points. The report made news on Chinese Internet forums like Mop where, according to MSNBC, one commenter said, “Please send me to the U.S. so I can suffer too.”

GLOBAL HAPPINESS INDEX

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‘WE LOVE RED’

Rather than sell naming rights to a corporate sponsor, or give them to a large donor, tiny Lincoln Elementary School in Spring Valley, Ill., decided to name its gymnasium after someone who really mattered to the community: the janitor. Students voted to honor 88-year-old Red Nestler, who had been Lincoln School’s janitor for 17 years. Chanting “We love Red” during an assembly in the gym, which doubles as the school’s lunch room, the students greeted Nestler at an appreciation lunch in his honor on June 1 to announce the gym’s naming.

“He did everything,” said principal Kim Lisany-Barber. “If he thinks the weather’s bad, he’ll come over here and check the thermometer in the incubator.” Nestler planned to retire at the end of June.

JULY 2, 2011 WORLD 23
BECOMING READERS

In the rush of new reading technologies, don’t forget that the text should be the main thing

REMEMBER THE MOMENT when I became a reader. I always liked to read, but that’s not the same thing. What made a reader of me was a novel I received through a children’s book club.

It was the story of a journey from Poland to Switzerland by four children in search of their parents immediately following World War II—so far removed from my experience it was a little hard to get into, but by 30 pages in, the story had hooked me. In chapter 12, it changed me.

The journey has just begun: Two sisters and an orphan boy who’s attached himself arrive at a refugee camp in search of their brother Edek, captured two years earlier and sent to Germany. But it appears he’s run away. The three join a soup line, where in the process of getting served someone trips and spills his food. The hungry children dive for it. Ruth, the oldest sister, plunges into the melee to shield some of the little ones. In the confusion she catches hold of a hand: “For some reason or other she clung on to the hand, and when everyone about her had got up and her hair was free she had not let go. Then she looked to see whose hand it was, and it was Edek’s” (Ian Serraillier, The Silver Sword).

It’s hard to communicate the effect without the emotional investment of earlier chapters. But the best way I can describe it is that the story itself had reached out and grabbed my hand.

How mysterious is that? Words arranged in sentences, built into a narrative, made me bigger. It’s a bit like creation itself: light spoken into being, coalescing into atoms, combining into molecules, becoming elements. Writing imitates creation by “speaking” ideas into being.

But reading can be creative as well. When readers read at this level, they interact with the book in a conversation that alters perception, expands sympathy, provokes anger, or refines argument.

Not everybody is a reader, in this sense. C.S. Lewis, in An Experiment in Criticism, made the claim that even in a highly literate society, readers (those who get something from books that they get nowhere else) are the minority. Most people read for two reasons: entertainment and information. Both needs are legitimate, but can be met in other ways, especially today. The third reason I would call enlightenment—letting the ideas created by written language challenge or change us.

Literature courses were originally intended to develop this kind of reader, and if “literature” seems increasingly irrelevant today, it’s partly because too many college professors have used it as a tool. They’ve been busy, as historian Victor Davis Hanson puts it, “defining the study of literature and history as a melodrama of race, class, and gender oppression.” Students learn to tell the text what it says, rather than letting the text speak to them. That reduces its relevance and flattens its meaning.

But technology can do its own kind of flattening. The introduction of the Kindle raised concerns about “the future of the book” which turned out to be ill-founded. Reading on a Kindle or Nook is still reading, whether for entertainment, information, or enlightenment. E-books are still books; they can even be highlighted or annotated. But a book on an iPad is both more and less—it’s an app, and apps are “enhanced.” The text is not the main thing, but shares prominence with animations, photos, and video and audio files.

This is fine for shorter forms (check out the new world app!) but probably not the best way to understand literature. By poking, swiping, and touching, the reader is not just reading, but also manipulating. He may be telling the text what he thinks, rather than letting it speak to him. This can even be true, or especially true, of Bible apps. They’re wonderful tools, but be careful: If you’re too busy poking and swiping, the text may not be able to reach out and take your hand.
How to Make Your Point

Reasoning, tested by doubt, is argumentation. We do it, hear it, and judge it every day. We do it in our own minds, and we do it with others. What is effective reasoning? And how can it be done persuasively? These questions have been asked for thousands of years—yet some of the best thinking on reasoning and argumentation is very new and represents a break from the past.

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Summer heart

MOVIE: Super 8 does something popcorn movies used to do—tell a good story

BY MEGAN BASHAM

Given that it’s the brainchild of venerated super-director Steven Spielberg and rising star J.J. Abrams (best known for the most recent Star Trek and Cloverfield, as well as creating the groundbreaking television show, Lost), Super 8 isn’t as innovative as you would expect. Except for a phenomenal train-wreck sequence that blows any 3-D special effects you’re likely to see this summer out of the water, it’s not innovative at all. And that is clearly just how Spielberg and Abrams want it.

Though the actual germination of Super 8 was no doubt far more corporate and calculating, I like to imagine it started with the pair casually bumping into each other at some Hollywood soirée. They start to bemoan the current state of popcorn movies. It’s all giant robots (or billionaire playboys in giant robot suits) smashing things while dashing off witty one-liners. The dialogue may be clever, the leading men quirky, and the action spectacular, but they’ve got no heart.

Remembering the great, good-time summer films of the past—many of them Spielberg’s own—the two pledge to make a movie together that will recapture that spirit of wonder, exuberance, and feeling lacking in today’s blockbusters.
Reviews › Movies & TV

And so, with Spielberg producing and Abrams writing and directing, we’ve got a movie where small-town characters and their small-town connections take center stage, while the scary things that happen to them are the icing on the cake.

In 1979, struggling to overcome the loss of his mother in a mill accident, 13-year-old Joe (Joel Courtney) finds solace making a zombie movie with his friends to submit to a local film festival. The earnestness and enthusiasm with which the boys approach the project will have many a middle-aged longing for his middle-school days. “We have to give colliding with a pickup truck, as well as something else that may put them and their families in jeopardy.

After the train wreck, mysteries unfold at an exhilarating pace. What are the strange white cubes littered all around the crash site? Why are the dogs and home appliances disappearing? Why has the army suddenly descended on their sleepy Ohio town? There’s no question Abrams has a knack for layering intrigue. Unfortunately, as fans of Lost discovered, his ability to pay off on the towers of mystery he builds isn’t quite as high, but by the time we get to the predictable revelations, we care enough about the characters that we’re happy to follow them down a well-trod path.

The biggest mystery, however, is why Abrams chooses to include so much profanity. A movie about a group of kids stumbling upon a terrifying secret should be an ideal draw for tweens and teens. But the pervasive language, which, along with a couple of jokes about marijuana, earns the movie a PG-13 rating, does nothing to add to the authenticity of the characters, and will keep many family audiences away.

That irritating drawback aside, it’s impossible not to get caught up in Abrams’ nostalgia for summer days at the Cineplex gone by. Though he doesn’t quite match his mentor Spielberg’s excellence in movies like E.T. and Close Encounters of the Third Kind, he still gives his generation of filmmakers a worthy reminder that popcorn movies need more than great spectacle. They need great storytelling.

DOCUMETARY

Rejoice & Shout

by Alisa Harris

ReJOICE & SHOUT BEGINS with a voice belting “Amazing Grace,” with the purity of a child and the depth of a seasoned performer. The voice belongs to a little girl sitting in a church pew surrounded by her family, carrying on a musical tradition centuries old. As one of the girl’s gospel music forebears says, “Gospel music is what kept us going, gave us strength.”

Rejoice & Shout tells the jubilant history of black gospel music, from the slaves who adapted the hymns they heard in church, to the freedom singers in the 1960s and the hip-hop singers of today. It interlaces historical analysis with interviews from the greats—Smokie Robinson, Mavis Staple, Ira Tucker, and Marie Knight. The Ward Singers croon a version of “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” that swings from yearning to rejoicing, Claude Jeter’s clear falsetto pipes silky harmonies with the Swan Silvertones.

The film escapes hagiography by peopling the history with real people, not cardboard cutouts of haloed saints. There is a stage mother who sabotages her daughter’s pop ambitions, a savvy musician who writes racy songs for nightclub and gospel songs for church, and a singer who makes women swoon from a feeling less pure than when they’re slain by the Holy Ghost.

The documentary provokes thought about the nature of Christian art’s relationship to the world, as it tells the story of a Christian musical genre that drew from but also shaped the popular music of its time. The artists nurtured a genre unique and faith-filled, rooted in an ethnic subculture but crossing over in a way that transcended race and even religion.

The lead singer of the Blind Boys of Mississippi said if you ask him how he is this day—not this week or year but this day—he replies, “I’m leaning on Jesus.” The gospel songs began with the slaves singing to lighten their everyday load, just as modern gospel writer Andraé Crouch does when says his songs come not from a heavenly voice but “normal living”: “He just wants to be part of it.”

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8 IS ENOUGH: Writer/director Abrams.

[the protagonist] a wife,” explains teenage auteur Charles (Riley Griffiths), “so people will know they love each other and care about what happens to him.” It’s an elementary lesson in storytelling many studio execs would do well to learn.

When the boys recruit a pretty, older girl (Elle Fanning) from their school to fill the part and sneak off at midnight to film at the train station where they hope the rumbling and whistling will boost their “production value,” their plans for the summer take an abrupt turn. Instead of capturing an amateur movie scene with their Super 8 camera, they capture a train
MOVIE

Judy Moody and the Not Bummer Summer

by Michael Leaser

PRE-TEEN JUDY MOODY (Jordan Beatty) has it rough. Her best friends are traveling to exotic places like Borneo and circus camp for the summer, and she has to stay at home in Virginia with her eccentric aunt and her younger brother, nicknamed “Stink,” while her parents tend to her ailing grandfather in California. To keep herself from suffering endless boredom, she plays a game with her vacationing friends, in which each participant earns thrill points for completing tasks like crossing a river on a tightrope, watching scary movies, or random, on-the-spot activities like catching Big Foot.

As the first summer film for the pre-teen ADD set, Judy Moody and the Not Bummer Summer (rated PG) may depart before the Fourth of July. It’s a garish, manic, incoherent waste of celluloid.

A frenetic, haphazard rhythm dominates this film. The rules and activities for Judy’s game are arbitrary and nonsensical, even from a young adolescent’s perspective. The film also has an annoying habit of visually spelling out random, spoken words in loud, colorful, block letters.

Perhaps the most absurd element of the film is the idea that Judy’s parents, who appear to be otherwise quite reasonable and responsible, would choose to leave their children in the care of a house-trashing, car-wrecking woman-child Aunt Opal (Heather Graham), the “cool aunt.” Open up your local white pages to any page, pick the first house-trashing, car-wrecking woman-child Aunt Opal you see, and you would likely feel more comfortable with that person than Opal.

If the film’s psychedelic color palette and tone were not bad enough, the writers seem to take perverse pleasure in subjecting the viewer to vomit-inducing club names, such as the “Toad Pee Club” (it’s “toadally” cool) and the “I Ate Something Gross Club.” None of them, however, could possibly match the “I Saw the Judy Moody Movie Club.”

MOVIE

Mr. Popper’s Penguins

by Rebecca Cusey

GOOD NEWS FOR DADS saddened by divorce and subsequent estrangement from their children: Reconciliation is just a half-dozen penguins away. At least, that’s the premise of Mr. Popper’s Penguins, a family film whose plot has little to do with the beloved children’s classic of the same name.

Jim Carrey plays Mr. Popper, not a house painter as in the book who spends evenings with his family, but a New York real estate tycoon whose children visit every other weekend. His ex-wife Amanda (Carla Gugino) has started to date again, and his teen daughter Janie (Madeline Carroll) and tween son Billy (Maxwell Perry Cotton) would rather not spend alternate weekends with their dad. It all traces back to Mr. Popper’s youth, when his own explorer father abandoned him to travel the globe. Although Mr. Popper adores his children and still loves Amanda, he cannot find the key to reconciling with them.

All that changes when, in his last earthly act, Mr. Popper’s father sends his son a live penguin. The waddling bird is soon followed by five others. At first exasperated, Mr. Popper finds the birds a potential bridge back to his family.

The movie starts strong, with Carrey lending his one-of-a-kind talents to a witty and amusing Mr. Popper. But once the penguins arrive, it devolves into penguin poop jokes and predictable plot turns. Parents will find the film overstretches belief. Aside from a disapproving neighbor, no one finds it odd that a New York apartment is transformed into an icy winter wonderland or that Mr. Popper learns to care about parenting from his feathered guests. It’s supposed to be magical, but adults can’t help but fret about water damage.

That said, children at the screening I attended shrieked in delight, and one fine young man declared it his favorite film. Rated PG, the film is clean except for the penguin muck. Apparently enjoyable for children, it looks to be one of those movies parents take for the team. It’s what the penguins would want.
Leaving

From Ivy League grad to copy boy to influential editor, ADAM BELLOW has gained success as a conservative in the New York publishing industry

BY MARVIN OLASKY
the liberal cocoon

THE OFFICES OF MAJOR
New York book
publishers are havens of liberalism—and there’s Adam Bellow. He was an editor at Doubleday and now has a senior position at HarperCollins, with success in both places pushing further down in stories about him the description that was once a lead: son of Nobel Prize–winning author Saul Bellow.

What was it like to graduate from Princeton in 1980 and go to work at the very blue-collar New York Daily News? It was the right thing to do, to start in the classic copy boy role and work my way up. My job was to be a gofer, to do whatever anybody needed to be done, from photocopying articles to carrying a 25-pound turkey for five or six blocks, moving it from one car to another.

You weren’t too proud, as an Ivy League graduate, to be photocopying? I thought it was a privilege.

What did you learn there? My time at the News got me out of my liberal cocoon. I grew up going to school with the New York City elite. Everyone had the same political opinions: anti-war movement, hatred of Nixon. At Princeton, I was among people of the same background. It wasn’t until I went to the News that I met people outside of my background. A lot of these guys had never gone to college, and in many cases, their fathers had worked at the paper as well, and their sons worked there. I saw a strong core of decency, of patriotism, of willingness to go out of their way for someone who was considered part of the family. Once I had gone through the hazing, I was embraced.

When you went to graduate school at the University of Chicago and Columbia, which professor most influenced you? I studied with Alan Bloom before he wrote his best-selling book, The Closing of the American Mind, a book of inestimable value. The next blow to my liberalism was that liberal intellectuals were too dishonest to read the book, and instead joined the chorus of Orwellian hate for having brached a wall they had thought unbroachable. They merely branded him a thought criminal. This offended me personally and I got into a number of discussions and debates about the book with people. I would ask people if they had read the book, and if they said no, I told them that I didn’t think that they should have an opinion on the book until they had read it. It took my opinion of the Columbia faculty down several notches.

How did you gain success as a conservative within the liberal publishing industry? I kept my head down. Working in publishing, living at their sufferance, I had to humanize myself, to those who had never actually met a conservative. I had to go out of my way to bring myself into the family. I still take people to lunch, I tell my story. A powerful device is to appeal to them as liberals, to be open-minded and tolerant.

While liberalism is still dominant in academia and media, don’t we now have a conservative media establishment? What do you think of it? It’s possible now to make known books by conservatives without the help of the liberals. In my humble opinion, the Becks, the Hannitys, and the O’Reillys are all a bunch of inflated egos, like balloons at the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade, bumping into each other. I shouldn’t be saying this, but part of what you’re thinking as an editor is “How can I make this more interesting to Glenn Beck?” You really don’t want to be doing that, but it’s like in the solar system, certain planets affect the gravitational fields.

Many publications in the late 19th and early 20th centuries began by being sensational, as Glenn Beck tends to be. Then, to become more respectable, they became serious. Eventually they became solemn, and then lost the fun of it and became a snooze. That lost them their audience, and the cycle would begin again, with people who were having fun as they published. Having fun in business is important. When you’re watching TV, you can tell when the actors are having fun. When I was young and Saturday Night Live debuted, it was clear that they were having a blast. It’s clear that they’re having a blast at 30 Rock, at the Daily Show, and at Glenn Beck, whereas at 60 Minutes, I don’t think they’re having fun. I think part of why they’re not having as much fun is that they’re realized that they don’t have as much clout as they once did. At one time, they sat at the top of the media pyramid, and now that’s not the case, and I think it takes away from some of the enjoyment of what they do.

Has publishing conservative books been fun? In the early days it was tremendous fun. You’d publish a book and make people scream, it was like the music of the spheres. I still enjoy that. Getting a manuscript is like getting a gift. There is a danger that as we become the establishment, we’ll lose the fun. There’s something about being a part of counter-cultural movement.

What can keep things fun? The advent and democratic challenge of new media and new groups. People in the Tea Party are having a tremendously amount of fun. No one has figured out how to make out of the Tea Party movement a Tea Party market. Just as the Republican political movement is being shaken in Washington, I think it will shake the conservative intellectual movement. There are very serious people down at think tanks like AEI, Heritage, and Cato who are having their lunch eaten by a new wave of constitutionalist conservatives.

The left seems to be having less fun . . . A lot of people have asked why there isn’t any socialism in America, and I think the answer quite simply is that this is America. I’ve seen, in my lifetime, the Democratic Party go from the New Deal coalition, with many working-class people, to being a party of the upper middle class, the people with money who promote fashionable causes.
“DO YOU WANT A MAN OF STEEL?” sang Peter Case in the opening track of his eponymous solo debut 25 years ago. “Or do you want a man that’s real?”

There are few singer-songwriters more “real” than Case, at least if by real one means “difficult to pigeonhole” and “unconcerned with being so.” While much of the music on his dozen albums is clearly rooted in the blues, he began his career in the late 1970s at the crossroads of power pop and New Wave in the bands the Nerves and the Plimsouls. And at 57 he still occasionally performs their songs. “They’re super into the Nerves in Spain,” Case told WORLD shortly after returning from a month-long foreign tour that found him in Madrid at the height of its recent headline-making street protests. “We were playing 50 yards from the ground zero of that protest. So it was packed with the people.”

Politics plays a recurring role on Case’s latest album, The Case Files (Alive). Although its 12 tracks are culled from nearly a quarter century’s worth of previously unreleased recordings, songs such as “Kokomo Prayer Vigil” (in which Case rips the stuffing out of a fundamentalist-preacher straw man) and “Ballad of the Minimum Wage” (ditto Walmart employees and shoppers) sound as fresh as the perennially controversial sociopolitical circumstances that they address.

And “Let’s Turn This Thing Around,” which Case actually wrote during the George W. Bush–John Kerry election cycle of 2004, could pass for a Barack Obama campaign song.

Obviously, as Case himself is quick to point out, he is “not a Right-winger.” Neither, he insists, is he a “theologian.” But he has been known to write, and to write passionately, about a subject that in contemporary American politics often has right-wing and theological connotations: Jesus.

There is, for instance, “I Still Belong to Jesus,” one of several songs that Case contributed to Robert Randolph & the Family Band’s 2010 album We Walk This Road. And The Case Files includes two songs that not only mention Jesus but that also do so with the exact same quatrain: “Democracy is our ideal. Without the truth, it’s all unreal. / Jesus Christ, he said it plain, / you can’t serve God on a golden chain.”

“That line might even be in another song too,” Case admits, chuckling. He also admits being unsure of whether his individualistic take on the faith that he first embraced in 1984 would stand him in good stead with the average Christian these days. But he remembers his conversion well. “I had become convinced of my own powerlessness,” he says. “And what other life has ever had as much power as Jesus?”

Perhaps the most surprising Jesus song at the moment is “Christmas for the Free,” a song made all the more surprising because it appears on a new album by a group that last hit the charts over four decades ago with “Time of the Season”: the Zombies.

Breathe Out, Breathe In (Red House) finds the founding members Colin Blunstone and Rod Argent taking the Zombies’ trademark ethereal pop and deftly incorporating elements of the music for which they went on to become known after the group broke up in 1968 (Argent with the group Argent and Blunstone as an occasional vocalist for the Alan Parsons Project).

The most gorgeous passage, however, occurs in “Let It Go,” when Argent incorporates a Bach-based organ melody not unlike the one on which another ’60s band, Procol Harum, based “A Whiter Shade of Pale” and thereby links the Zombies to a long and noble chain.
NOTABLE CDs

Five new pop-rock releases reviewed by ARSENIOR ORTEZA

**Born This Way** Lady Gaga
Forget the former Stefani Germanotta’s PR-generating antics if you can. What she’s really about is harnessing the noise zeitgeist and maximizing its woofer-working potential. In other words, despite her knack for provocative titles (“Government Hooker,” “Judas,” “Black Jesus + Amen Fashion”), she’s nobody’s go-to girl for deep thought. And, as only one of her latest album’s five producers, she might not even be the main reason millions of people are currently going to her for music guaranteed to turn even the most domestically tranquil setting into a rave.

**How To Compose Popular Songs That Will Sell** Bob Geldof
Geldof hasn’t composed any popular songs that have sold since “Do They Know It’s Christmas?” in 1984. And these new ones probably won’t sell either. But they should. Each sounds like a tribute to an entirely different pop genre—and better with each listen. “How I Roll” could be Mark Knopfler honoring the Lovin’ Spoonful, “Here’s to You” George Harrison bidding farewell to his fans. Appropriate to Geldof’s age (he turns 60 in October), introspective mellowness predominates. Appropriate to his Irishness, he goes out on a drinking song.

**John Wesley Harding** Thea Gilmore
It’s no surprise that the months surrounding Bob Dylan’s 70th birthday should yield a bumper crop of covers (the most obscure so far: Vinicio Capossela’s Italian-language “When the Ship Comes In”), but so far only Thea Gilmore has had the nerve to cover an entire album. Fortunately, she also has the talent. Subtly punching up the drums and the electricity, she doesn’t so much bring Dylan’s 1968 classic up to date as catch up with it. Which, frankly, is more than many Dylan fans can say for themselves.

**Cottonwood Farm & the Webb Brothers**
The media hook behind this project is that Jimmy Webb is now old enough to record with his sons, one of whom, Christiaan, was the titular subject of a Webb song 34 years ago. And, yes, the trading of lead vocals lends variety. But the best reason to listen, even more so than the welcome revisiting of “Where the Universes Are,” is the 12-minute title track, in which Webb, his sons, and his 86-year-old Baptist-minister father survey the family farm and movingly reap what they’ve sown.

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THE STILL POINT OF A TURNING WORLD

Books slow the perpetual mental locomotion

Carr in his 2010 book, The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains, draws on a wide body of research to argue that while the boons of the internet—from research to email, banking, real-time news, inventorying, or plotting a war zone—are real, “they come at a price.” The more time we spend on the web to get our jobs, our shopping, our bill-paying, our very lives done, the more incapable we become at concentrating. We may grow better at multitasking, but we become less creative. We can become instant experts, but that knowledge is momentary. “Once I was a scuba diver in a sea of words,” writes Carr. “Now I zip along the surface like a guy on a Jet Ski.”

Books remain a solid way to slow what Carr calls the “perpetual mental locomotion” that is the internet. Or as T.S. Eliot might say, to rediscover that still point of a turning world.

Distractions, or bashing the latest technology, isn’t new. “The only book possible from today is a newspaper,” lamented French poet Alphonse de Lamartine in 1831. And if it wasn’t the new broadsheets, it was the phonograph, or the television, or the World Wide Web conspiring to dumb us down. At the same time there’s always been someone ready to argue that literature and books are on the verge of extinction, that deep reading and concentrated study were overrated. Yet even as books no longer require paper and binding, they assuredly remain.

So read one, start to finish. Christians especially as “People of the Book” have more reasons than ever to recultivate the habit. Read to be able “to comfort those who are in any affliction,” with the comfort you may receive by growing in your knowledge of an otherwise foreign topic. Read to deepen your understanding, not simply improve your velocity of thought. Read to resist temptation and avoid sin. I mean this seriously, as both thoughtful content and the act of book-length reading can forestall a lot of mischief. I wonder how many books Anthony Weiner has read lately. And finally, read as Jonathan Edwards did, as “a miser who critically appraised his treasure.” There may be a place for jumping hyperlink to hyperlink, but there’s also a time for reading with intent and focus. You don’t have to have a stack; only two books will do. ☺

Mindy Belz
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TWO NEW BOOKS ARE IMPORTANT RESPONSES TO THE RAPIDLY GROWING PROMOTION OF THEISTIC—
OR, MORE PROPERLY, DEISTIC—EVOLUTION

WORLD has chosen a Daniel of the Year since 1998 and a Book of the Year since 2008. Since the variety of candidates is enormous, sometimes we look at where the battle is hottest and pick someone who stands firm in Christian witness when it would be easier to duck. For example, in 2007 we chose Wanda Cohn, director of a Florida pregnancy care center, both for her own work and as a representative of the thousands who offer counsel to abortion-prone young women. Several times we’ve chosen Christians who persevere against Islamic aggression.

It’s also hard to choose a Book of the Year, so here as well we tend to see what’s under assault. In 2008 and 2009 the “new atheism” of Christopher Hitchens and Richard Dawkins was picking up speed, so we chose Tim Keller’s The Reason for

BY MARVIN OLASKY

photograph by James Allen Walker
God; in 2009, the ESV Study Bible. Last year, following passage of “ObamaCare,” the drive to expand Washington’s power had still not suffered a major setback, so Arthur Brooks’ The Battle, which described federal governmental expansion and proposed ways to stop it, was our Book of the Year.

This year we’re looking at neither the depths of Scripture, nor the surface of politics and economics, but the middle ground: ideas about the nature of man and the world.

Think about the three main intellectual influencers of the 20th century: Karl Marx, Sigmund Freud, and Charles Darwin.

Two of the three—Freud and Marx—have lost most of their influence. The exception is Darwin. Two years ago his millions of fans celebrated the bicentennial of his birth, which was also the 150th anniversary of his famous book On the Origins of Species.

Today, the overwhelming majority of American kids receive a Darwinian or neo-Darwinian education. They learn at schools and then colleges that they are just matter, the result of occasional mutations and survival of the fittest.

Christians over the decades have debated whether the earth’s history should be measured in thousands or billions of years, but—until recently—almost all stuck by the biblical account of God creating every kind of plant and animal in six days (perhaps longer than 24 hours). Almost all believed that God created Adam from dust, and Eve from Adam.

FOR DECADES an attempt to make Darwinism acceptable to Christians, “theistic evolution” (TE), lurked in the background but made almost no inroads among Bible believers. A December 1997 article in the Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society—“Theistic Evolution: Deism Revisited”—began by observing that TE “has not proven to be the mediating position once hoped for.” Taylor University professor Michael A. Harbin noted that Bible scholars criticized TE for being un biblical and “more deistic than theistic.”

TE did not make much readily visible progress over the next six years. In 2008 TE proponent and blogger Steve Martin (not the comedian) rhetorically asked how many TE books at a popular reading level were published in North America prior to 2003? His answer: “None. A big fat zero. Zilch.”

Then came the deluge. Martin listed 10 popular books published between 2004 and 2008 by authors like Darrel Falk, Owen Gingerich, Karl Giberson, and—most notably—Francis Collins.

The Language of God, by genome pioneer Collins, became a bestseller. Collins himself became director of the National Institutes of Health. As Martin put it, “very few evangelicals have the time, energy, and focus to 1) thoroughly investigate the evidence from biology, geology, genetics, paleontology, anthropology and related scientific disciplines and 2) navigate the maze of Ancient Near East cultural history, ancient Hebrew faith”—has been TE’s leading promoter. Its well-designed BioLogos Forum, funded by the John Templeton Foundation, has been the leading TE website for TE speculation.

Templeton has made multimillion-dollar grants to BioLogos and a host of other TE proponents: Those who read pro-evolution essays often see the tagline, “supported by a grant from the John Templeton Foundation.” Money has helped to fuel TE’s recent advance (see sidebar), but so has backing from many members of the American Scientific Affiliation, an organization of professing Christians, and from some biology departments within historically Christian colleges.

TE proponents say its popularity in those precincts is because their theory is true. Opponents note that it is extraordinarily hard and painful for scientists who are Christian to stand up against the conventional wisdom. “Publish or perish” is still the rule at many academic institutions, and Christians who oppose TE increasingly have to search for publishing venues. In February, InterVarsity Press put out the first of a planned series of TE books with Francis Collins as co-author.

The problem, though, is that many theistic evolutionists should rightly be called deistic evolutionists, since they believe that God created the first life-form and then left the rest to standard Darwinian processes. Theoretically a theistic evolutionist could also believe in God’s creation of each of the trillions and quadrillions of mutations that led to today’s world, but that would also be rewriting the Bible—and we’re still left with the issue of Adam and Eve’s direct creation. In any event, mathematician Bill Dembski sums up well the standard TE position: “Theistic evolution takes the

“Theistic evolution takes the Darwinian picture of the biological world and baptizes it.” —BILL DEMBSKI
Darwinian picture of the biological world and baptizes it.”

**AND SO WE COME** to our co-Books of the Year—one American, one British, because the push for Darwin is strong on both sides of the Atlantic. (Britain’s Bible Society distributed copies of the 20,000 church leaders, and the Anglican Church published an official apology to Darwin for challenging his theory 150 years ago.)

*Should Christians Embrace Evolution?* (published first in England, republished in the United States by P&R in May, and edited by British medical geneticist Norman Nevin) contains excellent theological essays—but given the influence of Francis Collins, the more influential essays may be those that undermine the contention that genome mapping shows irrefutably that man and great apes had common ancestors.

In one of the essays, scientist Geoff Barnard notes, “the wide variety of chromosomal variations that clearly exist between the human and chimpanzee, dictate against the thesis that these species have common ancestry.” In another, Nevin and Phil Hills show that “the fused chromosome is unique to the human and is not found in the great apes . . . the numerous chromosomal variations between the human and chimpanzee suggest that these species do not have common ancestry.”

Barnard takes on what theistic evolutionists like to claim as evidence of evolution, “junk DNA.” He notes, “It is becoming increasingly apparent that non-protein coding DNA, including the pseudogenes, may perform important biological roles.” Nevin emphasizes from the fossil record what theistic evolutionists tend to skip by, the Cambrian explosion: That’s when “many animal forms and body plans (representing new phyla, subphyla and classes) arose in a brief geological period. The evidence points to the appearance of many new animal forms and body plans . . . with no fossil evidence that they branched off from common ancestors.”

![Image](171x248 to 391x576)

**Facing the pressure**

The billion-dollar Templeton Foundation (see “Honoring his father,” Dec. 4) is a positive force in many of its core areas, including Freedom and Free Enterprise—but its grants in religion reflect the theology of its founder, John Templeton, who tried to meld aspects of Christianity with Eastern religions.

When Templeton offers dollars, grant-seekers jump. According to an Investigative Fund report on “God, Science and Philanthropy” published last year, the Templeton Foundation’s early-1990s financing of research on the effects of religious faith on health led to a jump in the number of medical schools with courses on religion: a handful pre-Templeton, and now three-fourths of all medical schools.

Author Nathan Schneider also learned that when Templeton later in the 1990s started funding research on the power of forgiveness, the number of psychology journal articles on the subject soared from fewer than 50 per year to nearly 250 in 2008. Many academics are trend-followers: As Christian Smith wrote in *The Secular Revolution* (2004), “Intellectuals are not any more ‘above’ the pursuit of status, power, and wealth than others.”

A crucial Templeton turn came after 1996 when ardent evolutionist Charles Harper became executive director of the foundation. In 2007 Templeton’s vice president for communications, Pamela Thompson, crowed to the *Los Angeles Times,* “The foundation has provided tens of millions of dollars in support of research academics who are critical of the anti-evolution intelligent design position.”

Templeton has tried to make friends and influence journalists by bringing them to theistic evolution seminars. *New Scientist,* the world’s most linked-to science publication, headlined one article last year, “Templeton prize is bad news for religion, not science.”

Seminar attendee Michael Brooks wrote, “I learned from Templeton-endorsed scientists and theologians that the way to establish a peaceful coexistence of science and religion was to make no religious claims at all. They say that creationism is out, as is intelligent design . . . There was no physical resurrection of Jesus. None of the miracles actually happened . . . This is the Templeton version of religion. A stripped-down, vague and woolly notion that there is something ‘other’ out there.”

It’s odd, given all this, that the Templeton influence may soon be coming to a church near you. According to the Foundation, its “Science for Ministry Initiative invites organizations to develop programs that will help ministers and the congregations they serve to move away from simplistic ‘solutions’ to the tensions between science and faith . . . These simplistic solutions and polarizing stereotypes fail to appreciate the interest and potential among people of faith for the cultivation of a more nuanced and integrated understanding of science and religious convictions.”

The Foundation does not state exactly what the simplistic and polarizing views are—reading chapter 2 of Genesis as if it is real history? seeing man as fallen and in need of redemption?—but it does note that “at the heart of the Science for Ministry program is the conviction that pastors, in the course of their preaching, teaching, writing, and care, are key catalysts in developing a more fruitful integration of science and faith among their parishioners.” Templeton aims to bolster the “motivation, imagination, and capacity” of pastors who want to influence their congregations to accept evolution.

Harper left his post last year, but with Templeton, still faithful to its founder, pushing academics, journalists, and pastors to move away from biblical Christianity, it takes courage for authors to say, “Here I stand.” —M.O.
Our two books of the year have many fine chapters, but the most important one in Should Christians Embrace Evolution? is probably chapter 3, “Adam and Eve,” written by Michael Reeves, theological head of Britain’s Universities and Colleges Christian Fellowship.

That’s because most theistic evolutionists have no room in their Darwinist theory for the special creation of Adam and Eve. They say either that Adam and Eve had “souls” inserted into their bodies while they were part of a herd of hominids, or that—as a BioLogos website article theorized—they were not individual historical characters, but represented a larger population of first humans who bore the image of God.

And yet, as Reeves shows, “far from being a peripheral matter for fussy literalists, it is biblically and theologically necessary for Christians to believe in Adam as first, a historical person who second, fathered the entire human race.” One reason such belief is essential stems from the New Testament affirmations of the early chapters of Genesis, and their centrality to our understanding of Christ’s sacrifice:

In Matthew 19:4-6 and Mark 10:6, Jesus refers to the creation of Adam and Eve as if they were real historical events.

In chapter 3 of his Gospel, Luke’s genealogy assigns a father to everyone except Adam, whom Luke calls “the son of God.”

In Acts 17:26, speaking before a very tough crowd, the Athenian Areopagus, Paul says, “From one man He made all the nations.”

In Romans 5:12-21 Paul refers to the sin of “the one man, Adam” and the sinlessness of the one man, Christ. Paul cites Adam in the same way he refers to Christ. (Pundits ridiculed Dan Quayle during the 1992 campaign when they said he spoke of the television character Murphy Brown as if she were a real person.)

In 1 Corinthians 11:8-9 Paul refers to Eve’s special creation: “For Adam was formed first, then Eve.”

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In 1 Corinthians 11:8-9 Paul refers to Eve’s special creation: “For Adam was formed first, then Eve.”

And yet, as Reeves shows, “far from being a peripheral matter for fussy literalists, it is biblically and theologically necessary for Christians to believe in Adam as first, a historical person who second, fathered the entire human race.” One reason such belief is essential stems from the New Testament affirmations of the early chapters of Genesis, and their centrality to our understanding of Christ’s sacrifice:

In Matthew 19:4-6 and Mark 10:6, Jesus refers to the creation of Adam and Eve as if they were real historical events.

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A bridge too far

In June, after WORLD’s articles on books were written and in production, the debate about theistic evolution, and particularly the existence of a literal Adam and Eve, hit the cover of Christianity Today (ct) and the internet home page of The Gospel Coalition.

The CT cover story asserted, “The center of the evolution debate has shifted from asking whether we came from earlier animals to whether we could have come from one man and one woman.” The article quoted critics of the revisionist view but gave more room to the contentions of those such as TE proponent Karl Giberson, who “downplays the potentially vanishing Adam and Eve as ‘a secondary or peripheral disagreement that . . . will percolate along as an issue and more of the evangelical church will become fine with it, despite Main Street objections.’”

The CT editorial noted that “the entire story of salvation hinges on the obedience of the Second Adam” but concluded, “At this juncture, we counsel patience. We don’t need another fundamentalist reaction against science. We need instead a positive interdisciplinary engagement that recognizes the good will of all involved and that creative thinking takes time. In the long run, it may be the humility of our scholars as much as their technical expertise that will bring us to deeper knowledge of the truth.”

The Gospel Coalition’s headline read, “Sinned in a Literal Adam, Raised in a Literal Christ.” Author and pastor Tim Keller wrote, “If you don’t believe Adam and Eve were literal but realize the author of Genesis was probably trying to teach us that they were real people who sinned—Paul certainly was—then you have to face the implications for how you read Scripture. . . . I don’t think the author of Genesis wants us to take the ‘days’ literally, but it is clear that Paul definitely does want readers to take Adam and Eve literally. When you refuse to take a biblical author literally when he clearly wants you to do so, you have moved away from the traditional understanding of biblical authority.”

That’s also what’s at stake in the debate about theistic evolution. Young earth advocates argue that old earthers, by saying the “days” of Genesis 1 could be billions of years, have moved away from biblical authority. Old earth advocates reply that they are respecting the authority of all of Scripture, but have legitimate exegetical disagreements with their young earth brethren. But Christians who disagree with Paul about the historicity of Adam and Eve have crossed a bridge too far for those who are biblically orthodox in their reading of Genesis.

In God and Evolution John West points out that without the first chapters of Genesis “the rest of the Christian story makes very little sense.” He quotes Wisconsin historian of science Ron Numbers, a believer in Christianity until he became a Darwinist: “With evolution, you don’t start out with anything perfect. . . . There’s no perfect state from which to fall. This makes the whole plan of salvation silly because there never was a fall.” —M.O.
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No controversy? Dream on

ANN VOSKAMP GAINS BOTH FANS AND DETRACTORS FOR HER POETIC PRAISES TO GOD

After writing about the contentious creation-evolution debate, it’s a pleasure to turn to a remarkably gifted writer who poetically describes God’s grace in big things and small. Ann Voskamp is a farmer’s wife, homeschooling mother to six, and author of a book published in January—One Thousand Gifts: A Dare to Live Fully Right Where You Are (Zondervan)—that’s become a surprise hit.

Voskamp summarizes her faith on the home page of her website, aholyexperience.com: “I believe in Jehovah God who created the whirling galaxies, the birds soaring in the sky overhead, the endless crashing waves and all that dances within them. I believe in Father of all who knits together life, made in His very own image, in the secret quiet of our beings.

“I believe in Jesus Christ, the One with no earthly Father, with the dust of this earth between His toes, and with our names etched onto the palm of His hands, right beneath the nail scars . . . I believe in the Cross as our only Hope, our only Claim, and our only Foundation. I believe that in the pounding surf of life we have only one thing to cling to: the feet of our Lord, hanging on that tree, His lifeblood flowing down, washing us whiter than snow.

“I believe in the Holy Spirit, moving, whispering, indwelling our very skin . . .

I believe in the infallibility of the Bible, God’s Word—a sure Word, a pure Word, the only secure Word. I believe the words on those pages are breathed from the very throne room of heaven, are the love letter penned from the heart of the Lover of our souls; a beacon of light for stumbling feet to find sure footing on a dark path.”

A poet who praises Jesus Christ? What’s not to like? But in this fallen world, nothing is without controversy. Several bloggers have taken exception to the final chapter of One Thousand Gifts, which states, “God lays down all his fullness into all the emptiness. I am in Him. He is in me . . . Anywhere—in the kitchen scrubbing potatoes, in the arching cathedrals, in the spin of laundry and kids and washing toilets—anywhere I can have intimate communion with the Maker of heaven and earth . . . The intercourse of soul with God is the very climax of joy.”

One post critical of Voskamp, titled “Intercourse with God,” quoted those passages and concluded, “This is what garners five stars from Christian women at amazon.com?” To which another blogger responded, “If you’re really able to extrapolate some kind of offensive message from Ann’s book, you are entirely missing the point. Ann uses lots of figurative, metaphorical language. This is What She Does Best. It’s called a literary device.”

Well, read for yourself. I asked Voskamp to write a column for WORLD. Here it is.

BY MARVIN OLASKY
“If God really works in everything—then why don’t we thank Him for everything?” She asks me this straight out.

My daughter and I, we sit in the truck on the field’s hem, waiting to give my husband his lunch. My farmer husband’s planting bean seeds into earth’s dark bed. The sky’s rising darker in the west. He races rain.

“For every drop of rain You keep from falling—thank you, Lord . . .” I’d murmured the prayer, water splatting hard against the windshield of the pickup. We need at least one more day of dry weather to plant a year’s worth of beans, our livelihood.

“And for every drop of rain that You do let fall—thank you, Lord . . .” My daughter, Hope, whispers her strange echo.

Really? I turn, searching her face. She looks me right in the eye.

“If God really works in everything, why don’t we thank Him for everything? Why do we accept good from His hand—and not bad?”

This is hard. Maybe the hardest of all. She is young. She has much to come.

I have held dying babies. Eaten with those who live on the town garbage heap. Wept with women who’ve been violated, with the bankrupt, the heart crushed, the terminal. And this never stops being true: Neglecting to give thanks only deepens the wound of the world. Doesn’t God call His people to a non-discriminating response in all circumstances? “[G]iv[e] thanks always and for everything” (Ephesians 5:20).

If I only thank Him when the fig tree buds—is this “selective faith”? Practical atheism? What of faith in a God who wastes nothing? Who makes all into grace?

And yet—is thanking God for everything . . . thanking Him for evil?

Rivulets run down glass, blurring my husband and all our seeded prayers. What do I accurately see and know?

When we bought the enemy’s lie in the beginning and ate from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, Satan hissed then that we’d really see and know what is good and evil. But the father of lies, he’d duped us in the whole nine yards. Though we ate of that tree we did not become like God, and we have no knowledge of good and evil apart from God; my seeing, it is not omniscient. Can I really see if a death, disaster, dilemma, is actually evil? Mine is only to see His Word faithfully and wholly obey Him in this. Therein is the tree of life.

Is this why He commands “giv[e] thanks always and for everything”? Because to thank God in all is to refuse Satan’s relentless lure to be god-like in all; to thank God in all is to bend the knee in allegiance to God Who alone knows all; to thank God in all is to give God glory in all. Is this not our chief end? When I only give thanks for some things, aren’t I likely to miss giving God glory in most things?

Murmuring thanks isn’t to deny that an event isn’t a tragedy and neither does it deny that there’s a cracking fissure straight across the heart. Giving thanks is only this: making the canyon of pain into a megaphone to proclaim the ultimate goodness of God.

Our thanks to God is our witness to the goodness of God when Satan and all the world would sneer at us to recant.

I lay my hand on the rain-filmed windowpane and I see clearer. But this is not easy: That which I refuse to thank Christ for, I refuse to believe Christ can redeem.

His perfect love casts out all fears and leaves only thanks and I listen to her sing it, like a chorus with the rain:

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, Lord.

Like a song from the belly of the fish, like a Jonah refrain echoing off the walls of the whale: “But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you . . .” (Jonah 2:9).

Like a haunting, holy answer to what she asks, the song of the saints, thanksgiving—practicing here the lone song that will be sung at the last, “Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving . . . to our God” (Revelation 7:12).

Thank you, Lord. I lift it soft with her, faith’s brazen song facing storms, the rain falling now hard.
OK, enough controversy. Dewey Huston, a retired Assemblies of God missionary, wrote me recently from Springfield, Mo. He started by describing how he reads every issue of WORLD and puts some on a table at his church. Then he came out with italics blazing: “My reason again for writing . . . ” He sweetly implied that he wished we didn’t review some books that aren’t “wholesome.” He asked for a list of books with good values and without descriptions of sex, violence, or how to talk dirty.

Dewey, this article is for you. I’ll start with fiction, and four books for young children that are perfect for bedtime reading. In Margaret Wise Brown’s The Runaway Bunny, the persistent bunny mother acts as does God in Psalm 139. (Brown’s Goodnight Moon is also great.)

William Steig’s Yellow & Pink provides a clever argument for creation, as two marionettes ponder how they came to be. Dr. Seuss’ Horton Hatches the Egg is a terrific pro-life book, and Sylvia Plath’s The Bed Book is a whirlwind poem for kids tired of their “nice little, tucked in tight little, turn-out the light little beds.”

Next, for bedtime reading to children getting older, come two famous book series, C.S. Lewis’ The Chronicles of Narnia and J.R.R. Tolkien’s The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings. Lewis is perfect word-for-word reading, and parents should make sure that children have heard them at least once before they start watching the movies or videos. The stories are theologically pointed and usefully didactic.

Tolkien is more of a challenge—I abridged a few sections when a Wholesome reading

GOOD BOOKS WITH GOOD VALUES ARE NOT HARD TO FIND

BY MARVIN OLASKY

Unwholesome reading

ANDREW KLAVAN’S EMPIRE OF LIES RAISES IMPORTANT QUESTIONS ABOUT DEPICTIONS OF SIN AND REDEMPTION IN FICTION

Another subscriber (not Dewey Huston) recently took me to task for making in 2008 some positive remarks about Andrew Klavan’s novel Empire of Lies. I had warned readers in my review that the novel includes “descriptions of godless man’s depravity . . . bad language and recaps of [the main character’s] pre-conversion adultery”—but given three explicit passages the subscriber quoted to me, I should have had a stronger warning.

So, my error, but also my education, for the novel raises important questions about whether authors should show gross pre-conversion behavior that shows our desperate need for Christ. Klavan gives us almost a step-by-step guide to repentance. First comes a sense of disgust: After
child’s attention lagged—yet more of a reward in some ways, as it excites adventurous imaginations.

My four children went high over Tolkien’s misty mountains and down into dungeons deep and caverns old. They sped on Shadowfax and developed the determination to trudge through Mordor. My fond remembrance of reading The Lord of the Rings to them eight times—twice per child—doesn’t mean that the trilogy is not adult reading: It is, and is probably the paramount example of what I’ve called romantic realism.

(Definition: Writing based on the realization that we live in a fallen, often grubby world but one suffused by the romance of Christ’s love for all He came to save.)

Many of the English classics show romantic realism: Dewey could read Milton, Chaucer, Walter Scott, Dickens, and Jane Austen. Shakespeare’s tragic protagonists sometimes Wade in blood, but exalted language covers over a multitude of spills. Those who know Spanish can read Cervantes in the original and my favorite 20th-century novel, Jose Gironella’s The Cypresses Believe in God; they are also available in translation, of course. I’ve enjoyed Russian authors Pushkin and Turgenev, and the two greats: Fyodor Dostoevsky’s work is often holy in theme and wholly good in style, but works like Crime and Punishment might not be considered wholesome. Leo Tolstoy’s novels are great and his short stories—this is a minority opinion—even better: “What Men Live By” is superb.

Among the 19th-century American novelists worth reading are Nathaniel Hawthorne (although he did have an anti-Puritan bias), James Fenimore Cooper (although Mark Twain wrote a hilarious critique of his prose), and William Dean Howells. From the works of my favorite 20th-century American novelist, Walker Percy, I’d particularly recommend Love in the Ruins (1971) and The Thanatos Syndrome (1987)—no bad language but, since Percy was describing a sickness in the modern soul, some might not consider them entirely wholesome.

I believe Jan Karon’s Mitford books and John Grisham’s legal thrillers are clean, although I’ve only sampled parts—and I have to admit to not reading much current fiction. So, turning to nonfiction, I think of some oldies but goodies: The Bible, of course, plus Augustine’s Confessions, John Foxe’s

one adulterous interlude, his first-person narrator explains, “When it was over—never mind the morning after, I mean the second it was over—I felt my spirit—the spirit I did not believe existed—floated over—I felt my spirit—the spirit I did not believe existed—flooded

The second step is concern about consequences: Klavan’s narrator says, “I cracked. It was the disgust, you know, the moral disgust. And yet, I had worked so hard at hiding it from myself that it could only reveal itself to me in other forms and symptoms. So I would wake up in the predawn dark or just go still, staring at my desk in daylight. My skin would suddenly turn clammy, my heart suddenly flutter and race. . . . Then other fears came, too, small emberlike worries that had been smoldering in me a long time but now suddenly burst into large flame. What if I got sick? Having sex with so many strangers, careless because of the drugs. What if I had syphilis and didn’t know? What if I had AIDS? . . . I grew sick with fear. I grew small and hunched and sallow, worrying. There were days when I thought about it every hour, hours when I thought about it every minute.”

The third step is going past symptoms to the mistaken ideas that fueled risky action: “My own voice was whispering: ‘Look at you! Sniveling, fearful, sweating in the dark. Where’re your theories now, Philosopher Boy? Where’s the great enlightenment, the freedom and liberation you promised? . . . It was no good denying it, though all my radical friends made haste to: They had been right, those conservatives—they had been right and we had been wrong. The truths we’d held to be self-evident were nothing more than a comfortable climate of opinion, self-congratulatory certainties that made me feel righteous and progressive and bold and yet had nothing to do with facts. This, too, I understood now. We had been wrong, I had been wrong, I had been wrong about everything. What an awful thing to discover. My whole sense of myself was shattered. I felt as if I were falling apart, I had to do something.”

Guess what happens next to this self-described atheist? Here’s the fourth step: “I don’t know why I went to the Church of the
Incarnation….I didn’t know what I was supposed to say….I buried my face in my hands and started weeping. I said to [Christ], ‘Help me! Forgive me! Forgive me, help me, help me.’… I was hoping for an enlightening interior blast of some kind. Some hallelujah conversion maybe. But there was nothing.”

Last comes the slow awareness that change has occurred, through God’s grace: He resolves to “dump the ugly sex that made me feel good in the moment and lousy ever afterward…try to be kinder to people…start everything over from scratch….Over time I realized what should have been obvious to me right away: that my prayer in the chapel that afternoon had been answered, after all. The celestial cavalry had, in fact, charged over the hill at the first sound of my cry for help. I didn’t see it at first because there was no magic to it. It was just real—as real as real. My prayer had been answered almost in the saying of it.”

That’s not the end of the story. Temptations come. The main character occasionally has pre-conversion thoughts of sex and violence. As the apostle Paul writes in chapter 7 of Romans, “I delight in the law of God in my inner being, but I see in my members another law waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”

What price vividness? Klavan might reach people who have not opened the Bible, or a theology text. My advice to him would be: Show the steps of revulsion and repentance and leave out passages like the three gross ones in Empire of Lies. And yet, novelists sometimes have to go where their characters lead them. Having reread Klavan’s controversial book, would I recommend it again? It has redeeming social value, but I’d provide a much stronger warning, and a suggestion that those who want to get Klavan’s passionate critique of secular liberalism, but without raunchy flashbacks, should watch his biweekly “Klavan on the Culture” videos at pjtv.com. —M.O.
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MOMENTUM FOR LIFE

FROM CARING PROFESSORS TO ENCOURAGING FRIENDS, my life at Trinity is shaping me to be a blessing to those around me.”

Jill Hop ’14
Criminal Justice and Psychology
“Library science” researchers have shown that most of us are browsers. We go to a library or bookstore to find an interesting book to read. We scan the shelves until we find it. Occasionally we go with a book in mind, or search the card catalog, or look for something else by an author we’ve enjoyed—but most of the time we browse.

Browsers face a problem, though. Too many books fill the shelves. They overwhelm us. So librarians learned to shelve fiction in categories: mysteries or romance, horror or science fiction. We are like children who know we want chocolate before we go into Baskin-Robbins, so don’t distract us with all those other flavors.

We’ve organized the following pages for browsers. We asked _WORLD_ writers and some talented freelancers to pick a nonfiction category or a fiction genre they like, and to recommend a handful of recent books. We’ve used Dewey classifications to divide our nonfiction recommendations: books on the 2008 financial crisis, poverty-fighting, sports, humor, biographies, and history. In fiction, we have “inspirational fiction” (that’s how novels published by Christian houses are labeled), speculative fiction (science fiction and fantasy), and young-adult fantasy, followed by a look at P.G. Wodehouse and American Southern Literature. The section concludes with a look at books that make good gifts on some special occasions.
Victors get to write the history books, but the 2008 financial crisis did not leave many people able to claim the title. Besides the Great Depression, the events of 2008 were the most dramatic economic events in the last 100 years. As the markets began to stabilize in 2009, many authors began seeking to explain the causes of the crisis, or remedies to prevent another one. After reading and reviewing most of the credible books on this subject, I think five warrant special consideration:

Greg Farrell’s masterful Crash of the Titans (Crown Business), which reads more like a thriller than a financial tale, is a wonderful place to start. Farrell’s book focuses specifically on the downfall of Wall Street titan, Merrill Lynch, and is not meant to be a broad synopsis of the entire financial crisis—but understanding the pathologies of the main characters is key to understanding the entire story.

All the Devils Are Here (Portfolio Hardcover) by Bethany McLean, a former Fortune magazine writer, exposes the multiple causes of the crisis, rather than citing just one. She excellently intersects these various causes—government housing policy, an unchecked Fannie Mae/Freddie Mac, the low interest rate policy of the Federal Reserve, Wall Street securitization abuses, etc.—and demonstrates how they built on each other so the mess became inevitable.

Roger Lowenstein’s The End of Wall Street (Penguin) is not particularly ideological, which is actually refreshing since the majority of the ideological books out there basically get it all wrong by asserting that the entire crisis came down to the greed of a few Wall Street companies and the willingness of the government not to regulate them. Lowenstein, as he does often in insightful books and articles, gives readers a compelling play-by-play, but without a political agenda that destroys his credibility.

Andrew Ross Sorkin’s Too Big to Fail (Penguin) is one of the longest books about the crisis and understandably one of the most widely read. (It recently premiered a feature film of the same title based on Sorkin’s book.) For anyone wanting “inside analysis” of key 2008 events including the bailout of AIG, the non-bailout of Lehman Brothers, the passage of TARP, and the massive changes that took place on Wall Street, Too Big to Fail is fascinating, compelling, and educational.

The Housing Boom and Bust (Basic Books) by Thomas Sowell is of a very different nature than the others in this list: He argues that there would have been no bust had there never been a boom, and that this boom was a direct result of terrible government policy. Sowell masterfully analyzes the foolish attempt by several administrations, Democratic and Republican, to implement a social agenda via a national housing policy. Readers may not get the same degree of drama or intrigue that some of the other books offer, but they will get a brilliant treatment of the subject at the very heart of the financial crisis: the government was an accomplice in putting people in homes they did not belong in.

—David Bahnsen is a senior vice president at a leading financial firm
Heart, head, hands
THE BEST BOOKS ON FIGHTING POVERTY FOCUS ON HOLISTIC SOCIAL ACTION

BY AMY L. SHERMAN

FROM A BIBLICAL STANDPOINT, A STELLAR book on poverty fighting will contain wise, practical counsel at the level of heart, head, and hands. It will confront us with God’s unstinting passion for the poor and oppressed and urge us to rend our hearts and get personally engaged (heart). It will eschew simplistic policy prescriptions, stretching us to think hard about macro- and micro-economics, history, international relations, cultural and worldview issues, and the appropriate role of government (head). And it will reveal effective, practical action steps that individuals, congregations, businesses, and nonprofits can take that produce genuine, lasting transformation (hands).

Alas, no such perfect book exists. In the past five years, the hands-down winner that comes closest is When Helping Hurts (Moody, 2009) by Brian Fikkert and Steve Corbett. It offers a careful, accessible theology of holistic social action, crisp analysis of the multiple factors contributing to persistent poverty, and “how-to” strategies based on rich, on-the-ground experience in addressing both domestic and international poverty. This book teaches churches how to move from relief-oriented and often paternalistic responses to more relational, long-term, development-oriented initiatives conducted not for the poor but with them. If you’ve only time to read one book on the topic, this is it.

Zealous Love: A Practical Guide to Social Justice by Mike and Danae Yankoski (Zondervan, 2009) does a decent job of offering insights at the heart, head, and hands levels. This book focuses on hunger, AIDS, human trafficking, and environmental degradation as well as poverty. Profiles of effective Christian ministries vary in quality, but several offer glimpses of effective, grassroots initiatives making a calculable difference. The book includes some statistics, brief research findings, and “Now What?” sections that propose questions for individual reflection and offers recommendations for doable, personal responses.

Mae Elise Cannon’s Social Justice Handbook (IVP, 2009) has a similar feel. Like Zealous Love, it covers a range of topics, offering brief analysis, profiles of Christian ministries, and suggestions for actions by individuals and congregations.

No Christian house has recently published a strong policy-oriented book on poverty, so believers seeking “head” understanding can turn to William Easterly’s The White Man’s Burden (Penguin, 2006) and Paul Collier’s The Bottom Billion (Oxford, 2007). Both offer clear-minded analysis of the problems of corruption, civil war, and bad governance in the developing world, as well as of the failures of large-scale, top-down foreign aid programs.

These scholars reveal the wisdom and power of bottom-up, less grandiose, more contextualized programs—the very sorts of localized, piecemeal initiatives celebrated by the Yankoskis and by Peter Greer and Phil Smith in The Poor Will Be Glad: Joining the Revolution to Lift the World Out of Poverty (Zondervan, 2009). Among recent publications, the Greer and Smith volume is the one heaviest on the “hands” side. It’s a photo- and story-rich celebration of the effectiveness of microfinance and “business as mission” strategies in the fight against global poverty.

Other offerings from Christian publishers weigh more heavily on the heart side. The two best here are The Dangerous Act of Loving Your Neighbor by Mark Labberton (IVP, 2010) and Making Poverty Personal by Ash Barker (Baker, 2009). Both are theologically serious yet accessible. They lend themselves well to individual or small group Bible study aimed at deepening our imitation of God’s heart for the poor. Both tell moving stories and both critique American consumerism—but they manage to do so in ways that are genuinely helpful and not merely guilt-inducing.

These authors provide guidance to help readers engage in exercises of the imagination that enable us to better comprehend Scripture and to better see and name the poor. For readers willing to go through them slowly, thoughtfully, and prayerfully, they can deepen our willingness to take responsibility for others’ pain and follow Jesus in sacrificial service.

—Amy Sherman is a senior fellow at the Sagamore Institute for Policy Research
The best sports stories are like Muhammad Ali’s left jabs: powerful and precise, they straighten you up and open your eyes. As they describe athletes’ lives and performance, great journalists show us what human beings can be and how failure and sin plague us all. Here are six worthwhile books from the past year (warning—the first three include some locker-room profanity): In Born to Run (Vintage) Christopher McDougall sets out to answer a simple but persistent question: Why does my foot hurt? Nearly 80 percent of runners are injured every year, regardless of ability, weight, age, or any other factor. This is not despite the development of high-tech running shoes, he argues, but because of it. McDougall then searches for the secrets of the Tarahumara, a reclusive tribe of Mexican Indians who can run and run, gliding like ghosts through desert canyons in blistering heat shod in sandals cut from old tires. McDougall credits their endurance to evolution, but as the story climaxes in a private 50-mile race between the world’s best ultrarunner and a handful of Tarahumara, it’s clear that we were not just born to run, we were designed for it. No one is designed for the abuse some teens suffer from greedy and ambitious youth basketball coaches and parents. Play Their Hearts Out (Ballantine) is George Dohrmann’s compelling account of how Joe Keller recruits and promotes the next LeBron on his elite summer team—and how Demetrius Walker had no chance to live up to the hype. In a moment of candor, Keller admits that if Demetrius, who regarded him as father, mentor, and coach, did not make the NBA, “then all this would have been a waste of time. Demetrius would have been a bad investment.” Except for two Christian coaches and some parents, almost everybody in the book uses basketball to chase what they really want. Whatever Mickey Mantle wanted in life, The Last Boy (HarperCollins) shows how hard he tried to find it. Jane Leavy traces The Mick from his Oklahoma upbringing through his alcohol-soaked glory days as a Yankees outfielder to his inglorious career as a philandering peddler of his own memorabilia. Leavy describes Mantle’s extraordinary talent and cultural impact, and also shows how a superstar’s lifestyle allowed Mantle to avoid growing up. Many sportswriters ignore religious questions, but Leavy describes how a former Yankees teammate and his wife, Bobby and Betsy Richardson, led Mantle to Christ days before he died of cancer in August 1995. Mantle finally realized, said Betsy, “that he doesn’t have to perform to be loved.” Scorecasting (Crown) analyzes some of sport’s most interesting questions and unchallenged assumptions. Economist Tobias Moskowitz and journalist L. Jon Wertheim provide fascinating explanations for home field advantage, why football coaches should almost never punt, and why Chicago Cubs fans should blame themselves for the curse. Scorecasting never mentions faith, but many of its observations illuminate biblical truths about human nature. NASCAR star Michael Waltrip comes up short in a superficial memoir of how he ended his O-fer streak—462 starts, zero wins—in the same race in which his friend, racing legend Dale Earnhardt, died in an accident at the 2001 Daytona 500. Fans will enjoy In the Blink of an Eye’s (Hyperion) insider details, but Waltrip’s good of Southern boy persona wears thin. His occasional professions of Christianity contrast with lines like: “There was only one person capable of...
Laugh tracts

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE BOOKSTORE

BY ALBIN SADAR

HUMOR BOOKS WRITTEN BY COMEDIANS OF TELEVISION
fame spill from the bookstore racks these days and
provide not only laughs but different takes on what
Americans believe—or perhaps, more accurately, on what
Americans are encouraged to believe. Let’s look at five of
the books, starting with two emerging from the troupe
of court jesters known as Saturday Night Live (SNL).

Newly released Bossypants is SNL veteran Tina
Fey’s take on balancing home-family life with
show-business-family life. Bossypants refers
to the role Fey performs as creator, head
writer, and star of NBC’s 30 Rock, a role
she takes seriously, noting that her
performance affects the work lives of
200 people associated with the
show.

Fey’s stories about her dad, Don,
whom she greatly admires, are
delightful: She describes him as a
Goldwater Republican who looks like
Clint Eastwood, and she amusingly tells
how Don confronted a rented carpet-cleaning
machine that was acting up. Fey also writes of
her mixed feelings about Sarah Palin, whom she
famously portrayed during the 2008 presidential
campaign: As moms, the two connect, but politi-
cally they are as far apart as, well, New York and
Alaska.

As an inside-television tale Bossypants makes
interesting reading, but Fey punctuates it with jolts of
crude language and a few intimate personal revela-
tions. She also offers Christians her view of “a pretty
successful implementation of Christianity” on issues
such as gay relationships: Keep your views to yourself.

A different perspective on the tell-all television
world comes to us from another SNL graduate, Jim
Breuer, perhaps best known for his offbeat Goat Boy
creation and for his spot-on impersonation of Joe Pesci. In
I’m Not High (But I’ve Got a Lot of Crazy Stories about Life as
a Goat Boy, a Dad, and a Spiritual Warrior), Breuer unabash-
edly points to moments throughout both his personal and
professional life where God was guiding his steps. For
example, in a “Saving Steve-O” chapter, Breuer discloses
how he and his wife took in a troubled nephew and set
his life on a course away from crime and self-destruction—an
excellent illustration of James 5:16 (“Whoever turns a
sinner from the error of his way will save him from death
and cover over a multitude of sins”).
Breuer also describes his wife Dee’s conversion to Christianity, which came during a critical, teeter-tottering time in their marriage. If you’re looking for a reflective and informative inside-television journey through the eyes of a seeker of God’s truth, I’m Not High will not disappoint.

While politically Fey’s book leans far-left and Breuer’s stands in the middle, comic-pundit Greg Gutfeld’s The Bible of Unspeakable Truths tilts unquestionably right. Gutfeld hosts Fox News Channel’s Red Eye program and clearly disdains liberals. His book includes sections such as “Antiwar Activists Love War More Than the People Who Fight Them,” “Gender Studies Are Ignored If They Tell the Truth,” and an especially effective and comical couple of pages dedicated to “People Who Accuse You of Racism Are Usually Racist.” Warning: the humorous and flippan language and observations may seem unduly harsh.

Michael Showalter (Mr. Funny Pants) and Demetri Martin (This Is a Book by Demetri Martin) are young, hip, first-time authors who have had some success as stand-up comedians and have created shows for Comedy Central. Both authors structured their books similarly, with drawings, short stories (some quasi-autobiographical, some total fabrication), and one-line observations. Similarities end, however, when considering the laugh factor. Rarely does Mr. Funny Pants make you snicker, let alone snort. Showalter’s chapters on streaking and holiday recipes for guys qualify for the snicker category, and “How to Write and Sell a Hollywood Screenplay—Chapter Four” might get you close to a snort. But, overall, Mr. Funny Pants could have been helped by a brutal editor cutting the book by half.

This Is a Book by Demetri Martin, on the other hand, delivers the laughs. Clever and unusual, it peaks a few times at eye-wateringly funny. Witty, imaginative short pieces with surprise endings—such as “Fruit Stand Diary Excerpts” (cars chased by the police keep slamming into the fruit stand), “Sheila” (dating a ghost), and a whimsical eulogy for an obnoxious bully—all call to mind a collection like Woody Allen’s Without Feathers. Quick bursts—“The shepherd fell asleep again. But who could blame him? He had been counting sheep all day”—also make This Is a Book by Demetri Martin your best bet for hearty laughs. But again, typical of the times in which we live, a warning about offensive language applies.
Better than bullets

BIOGRAPHERS TELL THE AMAZING STORIES OF TWO PIVOTAL PRESIDENTS  BY EDWARD LEE PITTS

Comic book and movie super heroes are often bulletproof, and two excellent, 700-plus-page biographies of two former presidents hint that they were as well.

Ron Chernow’s George Washington: A Life (Penguin Press), winner of the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for biography, tells the familiar but good story of 23-year-old George Washington surviving a 1755 French and Indian War battle despite having two horses shot out from under him and four bullet holes through his hat and uniform. “I cannot but hope Providence has hitherto preserved (Washington) in so signal a manner for some important service to his country,” said a Presbyterian minister at the time.

Edmund Morris’ Colonel Roosevelt (Random House) is the final volume of the historian’s Theodore Roosevelt trilogy: Modern Library listed the first in its top 100 nonfiction books of the 20th century. Colonel Roosevelt chronicles TR’s post–White House decade, including the time in 1912 he was on his way to give a speech in Milwaukee and a gunman fired a bullet from point-blank range into his right breast.

Roosevelt’s 50-page speech (folded in half) and his bloodied shirt, and speak for 80 minutes, then he headed to the hospital.

Chernow calls Washington “a remote, enigmatic personage more revered than truly loved” and sets out to humanize him. Washington did not chop down a cherry tree when young or wear wooden teeth when old. He did love dancing and musical theater and he liked to leave his carriage on the outskirts of a town and ride in on a white horse. He struggled with debt and was a demanding perfectionist, issuing orders for the exact height of his personal guard.

Chernow also presents an inner Washington who endured an overbearing mother, struggled with a temper that lurked behind his marble façade, and believed that Providence “directed my steps and shielded me in various changes and chances through which I have passed.” An active member of two churches, Washington’s placid outward demeanor kept him from using his faith as a spectacle, Chernow argues. He depicts Washington as having a simple faith, and quotes numerous contemporaries who saw Washington engaged in regular private prayer and devotions.

Theodore Roosevelt also prayed to a great God and played on a large stage. He once boasted that he had “lived and enjoyed as much of life as any nine other men I know,” and it’s hard to argue his
Fighting cancers

HISTORY WRITERS DOCUMENT DISEASES OF THE BODY AND OF THE SOUL BY EMILY BELZ

The most impressive history book I’ve read this year is The Emperor of All Maladies by Siddhartha Mukherjee, an oncologist who is also a lyrical writer. Winner of the 2011 Pulitzer Prize for general nonfiction, Mukherjee’s work unites a 4,000-year history of cancer with stories of the patients he has treated. Mukherjee captures the curse behind cancer: How cruel it is for the very thing a human body does best, growing billions of new cells every day, to become the body’s own murderer.

Researchers even into the modern era had hoped cancer originated from a virus—somewhere outside ourselves. But they discovered instead that “cancer genes came from within the human genome,” Mukherjee writes: “We were destined to carry this fatal burden in our genes.” The question that lingers at the close of the book: If the disease is within us all, can we be saved from ourselves?

The other new history I esteem is Erik Larson’s In the Garden of Beasts (Crown, 2011), a fast-paced nonfiction account of American ambassador William Dodd and his family in Adolf Hitler’s Berlin before the war. Larson says he sought to address one question through this American family’s story: “Why did it take so long to recognize the real danger posed by Hitler and his regime?” Dodd, a former history professor, slowly realizes the danger, but his higher-ups at the State Department tell him to keep his criticisms to himself.

Meanwhile, Dodd’s daughter Martha flings herself into an affair with almost every available member of the intellectual or political elite she finds in Berlin, even the original head of the Gestapo: She has such a grand time that when she sees atrocities she dismisses them as “isolated cases.” One of her political connections even tries to convince her to be Hitler’s mistress, because he believes that romance would have a calming effect on Hitler and “change the whole destiny of Europe.”

If you read In the Garden of Beasts, read as well Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Prophet, Martyr, Spy, by Eric Metaxas. The biography was World Book of the Year runner-up last year. Dietrich Bonhoeffer had the ability to see the Hitler regime’s evil while others were minimizing the problem. •
Getting better

SIX NEW NOVELS SHOW HOW CHRISTIAN FICTION HAS MATURBED IN RECENT YEARS *BY SUSAN OLASKY*

INSPIRATIONAL FICTION IS THE NAME given to the broad category of books published by evangelical publishers. It encompasses everything from Amish “bonnet” fiction to modern romance and thrillers. Some of the books include explicit Christian messages and others don’t. Over the past decade Christian fiction has matured, with better-written books less likely to be merely vehicles for a heavy-handed message. The following half-dozen recent novels will give you a sense of the variety of books included in this genre.

*His Other Wife* by Deborah Bedford (FaitdWords) is a modern family drama that begins when a husband declares to his wife that he’s fallen in love with another woman and wants a divorce. He goes on to remarry and build a new life, while his wife and their son put their lives back together. Things seem fine, but the son is angry at his father and feels responsible to make his mother happy. When the two families come together at the son’s high-school graduation, jealousies, unmet expectations, and suppressed frustrations explode with tragic consequences. The book deals honestly with human frailty, different forms of idolatry, and the need to trust God.

*The Sweetest Thing* by Elizabeth Musser (Bethany House) centers on two teenage girls from different backgrounds who become friends in Atlanta during the Great Depression. Their lives intersect when Dobbs, a strange girl from Chicago whose father is a revival preacher, comes to live with her wealthy aunt and uncle. When Perri’s banker father commits suicide, Dobbs knows instinctively how to comfort her. She regales her friends at their exclusive girls school with stories of the things she’s seen at her father’s revival meetings, and they respond. Meanwhile her own faith is tested. Musser’s endearing coming-of-age story shows how God does provide, although not always in the ways we want or expect.

In *Promises to Keep* by Ann Tatlock (Bethany House), 11-year-old Roz remembers her father’s drunken rages but dreams that he’ll keep his promise to change and be able to return to his family. When she sees him lurking around the new town to which they’ve fled, she’s afraid to tell her mother or brother, or even Tillie, the eccentric old woman who moved in with them. She confides only in her friend...
Mara, who has father dreams of her own. Tatlock’s sensitive family story captures Roz’s longing for her world to be set right and shows the unexpected way in which that hope becomes true.

False Witness by Randy Singer (Tyndale House) is a complicated crime thriller that pits a bounty hunter and his wife against members of the Chinese Triad crime syndicate who ruthlessly pursue an algorithm that would destroy internet encryption. The story involves law students, the FBI, a U.S. attorney, the federal witness protection program, and Christian Dalits (“untouchables”) in India. Singer’s legal background shows in this fast-moving legal thriller that children from age 6 through age 18 attend school. Five Amish fathers refuse to comply: Police arrest the fathers and take the children from their homes until the fathers promise to obey the law. Instead of obeying, Caleb Bender moves his family to Paradise Valley in the Sierra Madre mountains of Mexico. They struggle to build a new farm, ward off bandits from the remains of Pancho Villa’s army, and reconcile their faith with the customs of a new land. Using historical events as a base, Cramer has written an engaging story of love and conviction.

Lee Strobel’s The Ambition (Zondervan) focuses on a megachurch pastor who thinks God is calling him to a bigger stage than the pulpit at his church. When an Illinois senator has to resign in disgrace, the minister is on the short list of possible replacements, and an investigative reporter tries to sniff out a scandal. Strobel shows the subtle ways ambition blurs vision and how sin starts small and grows until it completely ensnares. Strobel’s first novel is fast-paced and thought-provoking: Fans of his apologetics work will find some of those arguments woven into the plot.

Speculative Fiction, the voice of the Harry Potter generation, is difficult to define. It includes science fiction but can encompass vampires as well. SF includes the high fantasy of J.R.R. Tolkien, the far future civilizations of Isaac Asimov, the apocalyptic fiction of Cormac McCarthy, the horror of Stephen King, and the fractured fairy tales of Gregory Maguire. As Ender’s Game author Orson Scott Card puts it, the genre’s “stories take place in worlds that have never existed or are not yet known.”

An sf book can arise by adding zombies and ninjas to a Georgian romance (Pride and Prejudice and Zombies) or by inventing a world and a vast cast of characters (George R.R. Martin’s A Game of Thrones). SF can look back on the past with nostalgia, see science creating utopias or dystopias, spin tales of Conan the Barbarian or superheroes, or intrigue with mysteries wrapped in the cityscapes of urban fantasy.

Here are six volumes from the past year that are a good starting point for someone new to this vast category of fiction.

Shades of Milk and Honey by Mary Robinette Kowal is the story of poor plain Jane, the daughter of a country
gentleman of Georgian England, a spinster-to-be who has little to recommend her to eligible men except high intelligence and talent at creating magical glories (illusions used to add motion to paintings or visuals to music). Jane also has an unrequited love for her younger sister Melody’s beau. But when Melody transfers her affections to a rake and scoundrel, Jane’s tidy little country family is torn apart by jealousy. Professional puppeteer and award-winning short story writer Koval’s first novel is an homage to the work of Jane Austen with a subtle fantasy twist.

Echo by Jack McDevitt is set in the far future. While trolling the eBay analogue of that time, Alex Benedict discovers a mysteriously marked stone. Never one to let a mystery die, Alex and his female assistant Chase Kolpath must discover the stone’s true source and its connection to the World’s End touring company. The answer might just reveal whether mankind is truly alone in the universe. For all its galaxy-spanning locale, Echo is about decisions that have far-reaching consequences, and the dogged search for the truth no matter what that truth may reveal.

In The Black Prism by Brent Weeks, Kip is an overweight, snarky-mouthed village boy thrust into a world he doesn’t understand. Gavin is the magic-using ruler of Chromeria. Liv is ostracized in the court for her nationality and appearance. In this literary descendent of Tolkien, all three carry secrets that could tip the balance of power in the Chromerian empire. This epic fantasy has not only clashing swords, magic, and armies on the battlefield—that means violence—but enthralling personal tales and a Cain and Abel metaphor.

The Ale Boy’s Feast by Jeffrey Overstreet is a mystical allegory of depth and vivid imagery that celebrates art through prose impressionism. The world is dying. The Seers of Bel Amica are poisoning the world with their moon-worship, addictive potions, and the land-consuming Deathweed. A fire-walking ale boy must lead the remnant of House Abascar upstream through dangers and dark to find a way to deliverance. Christian readers of this Christian author will note many allegorical elements in the tale—like the communion sacrament of the titular feast.

Recovering Apollo 8 and Other Stories by Kristine Kathryn Rusch contains superbly written highlights such as: alternate history in “Recovering Apollo 8” and “G-Men”; clever urban fantasy filled with wizards and magic in the short but poignant “Taste of Miracles,” and the technological warning tale of “Craters.”

In The Skin Map, Christian author Stephen R. Lawhead writes a simple but adventurous tale about parallel universes. Kit is a modern-day Londoner, living a fruitless life. On a difficult public transit day, Kit makes the long slog to his girlfriend’s flat on foot along Stane Way, an ancient track of old London. This choice leads Kit to meet his great-grandfather, lose his girlfriend in 17th-century Prague, and hop around history in a race to find the Skin Map, the key to traversing the universes and opening the Well of Souls. Wholesome themes of friendship, trust, calling, and faith pervade a novel that is an excellent introduction to alternate world stories.

—John Ottinger III edits graspingforthewind.com

“The Strangeness of the Day” and “Substitutions”; a racially charged tale of lost aliens in “The End of the World”; space-faring archeologists and treasure hunters in “Diving into the Wreck.” Other stories include the hauntingly sad “June Sixteenth at Anna’s,”
Enchanted woods

SIX GOOD FANTASY NOVELS FROM THE PAST YEAR  BY MEGAN BASHAM

Should children read fantasy books? C.S. Lewis wrote, “Fairy land arouses a longing for [the child] knows not what. It stirs and troubles him with the dim sense of something beyond his reach and, far from dulling or emptying the actual world, gives it a new dimension of depth. He does not despise real woods because he has read of enchanted woods—the reading makes all real woods a little enchanted.”

Here are six good fantasy novels from the past year:

- *Scumble* (Dial, Middle Grade)—Ingrid Law’s follow-up to her Newbery Award winner *Savvy* is less a sequel than a companion story, but every bit as fun. Like his cousin Mibs before him, Ledger Kale must learn to manage his “savvy” (a supernatural ability that develops in everyone in his family at age 13), which means figuring out how breaking things with his mind can ever be of any use to anybody. Law’s own savvy with language makes her a joy to read, but her clear affection for down-home Americana will thrill kids while delighting parents weary of veiled political messaging.

- *Reckless* (Little, Brown, Young Adult)—Cornelia Funke has proved over the years that engaging fantasy need not consist of solely string-together battle scenes. With this tale of the Reckless brothers’ adventures in Mirrorworld—a dangerous land of dwarves, shapeshifters, and malevolent fairies—she indulges her action side but still shows her flair for creative characters.

- *The Emerald Atlas* (Knopf, Middle Grade)—A glance at the children’s best-seller lists over the last year shows that high-action, low-skill tales of magic of the Percy Jackson variety still reign supreme. While John Stephens’ story of three orphans who must travel through time to harness the power of a magical atlas and defeat an evil countess appeals to the same demographic, he’s far more clever in his use of fantasy tropes. His intelligent plotting and hilariously Dickensian characterizations demand more from a child’s imagination than certain mediocre adventures in Greek myth.

- *I Shall Wear Midnight* (Harper Collins, Young Adult)—Terry Pratchett, Britain’s second-best-fantasyist Lloyd Alexander once said that fantasy is a way of understanding reality. That is certainly true with Melina Marchetta’s medieval-esque story of Tiffany Aching, apprentice witch, this final book involves magic of the broomstick-flying and monster-battling variety. Pratchett brings to the genre not only scathing wit and screwball humor but an appreciation for real-world values. Tiffany is not important because she possesses amazing abilities but because she serves others, acting as midwife, nurse, and advocate for the sick, old, and poor. In Pratchett’s world, good, old-fashioned hard work is always more honorable (and useful) than flashy action with a wand. Unlike his fellow British atheist Philip Pullman, Pratchett writes to entertain teenage readers, not indoctrinate them.

- *Finnikin of the Rock* (Candlewick, Young Adult)—The great children’s fantasist Lloyd Alexander once said that fantasy is a way of understanding reality. That is certainly true with Melina Marchetta’s medieval-esque story of...
F-Young Adult

**Darker times**

**FANTASY NOVELS ABOUT BLEAK FUTURES ARE THE RAGE AMONG TEENAGE READERS** BY JANIE CHEANEY

How’s this for a scenario: In the future, the USA has been divided into 13 districts, and the strongest dominates all the others. One form of domination is the annual televised exhibition in which two teens from each district compete for the prize of being allowed to live. Katniss Everdeen, a 16-year-old poacher from District Twelve, volunteers to replace her younger sister who was chosen by lot to be one of the district competitors. Katniss and her fellow competitor Peeta are transported to the capital city, where they will compete to be the last teen standing in a glitzy, media-frantic, widely anticipated, hotly contested, brutal and bloody fight to the death (*The Hunger Games*, Suzanne Collins).

Or this: In the future, environmental degradation and war have so devastated the planet that nations have broken down and order is imposed by corporations. Nailer, age 15, works as a drudge on the Gulf Coast salvaging metal from the rusting hulks of stranded oil tankers—also dodging the punches of his semi-savage, drug-addled father. After a hurricane, Nailer finds a wrecked “clipper” ship whose sole survivor is Nita, a swank (rich girl). In what passes for ethics at the time, he would have been justified in slitting her throat and selling her body for parts. But he decides to let her live, plunging both of them into an odyssey of harrowing escapes and...
bloody confrontations (Shipbreaker, by Paolo Bacigalupi).

Or finally, this: In the future, humanity has devised a solution to perpetual warfare: the designation of Factions, in which every individual chooses to align with a group named for its most prominent virtue. Thus society is divided into Amity, Candor, Erudite, Dauntless, and Abnegation, all of whom are supposed to balance and contribute to each other. Beatrice Prior, 16, and her brother Caleb have grown up in Abnegation, but when assessment time comes, Beatrice’s results are “inconclusive” — meaning she falls under the dreaded non-category of Divergent. Hoping to keep this designation secret, she joins the Dauntless faction while her brother goes with Erudite. But the sides are beginning to take sides and may be headed for (what else?) bloody confrontation (Divergent, by Veronica Roth).

Student magicians and vampire lovers have had their day; what rules the young-adult publishing world now is dystopian fantasy. Though classic examples like Brave New World have made the genre a respectable sub-category for years, The Hunger Games broke it wide open in 2008. Since then, knockoffs and fresh imaginings have stampeded out of every major publishing house. The buzz book this spring is Divergent, whose author is notable for two things: her youth (22) and her faith.

Veronica Roth, a professing Christian, sees her “faction” system as an imaginative twist on categorizing: “I think we all secretly love and hate categories—love to get a firm hold on our identity but hate to be confined—and I never loved or hated them more than when I was a teenager.” Each faction in Divergent has its strength but also its fatal weakness, demonstrating “that we can make even something as well-intentioned as virtue into an idol, or an evil thing.”

Whether the rage for dystopia is a novelty or an indicator of deep-seated pessimism among the young remains to be seen. Clearly, the grim choices and high stakes inherent in the genre resonate at a time of life when every slight can be a game-changer and self-knowledge is elusive. Young heroes like Katniss Everdeen and Beatrice Prior can no longer rely on parents or peers to tell them who they are: They have to figure it out for themselves. That’s every teen’s challenge, a challenge dystopian literature reflects in the starkest terms. 

—Janie Cheaney blogs about children’s literature at redeemedreader.com

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Bygone Britain

P.G. WODEHOUSE TAKES READERS ON AN ENJOYABLE TRIP TO THE WORLD BEFORE WORLD WAR I

BY KENAN MINKOFF

The publishing career of English author P.G. Wodehouse lasted 73 years, from 1902 until his death in 1975. During that enormous span he wrote almost entirely in one genre (the light comic novel) and dealt with one subject (the peculiarities, pleasures, and peccadilloes of the British upper class). He developed a series of recurring and often interrelated characters who lived in a pre—World War I world that after 1914 was mostly fantasy.

The best-known of his stories involve Jeeves (an ever-loyal, hyper-intelligent, and erudite valet) and Bertram “Bertie” Wooster, a lovable and daft upper-class British gentleman. Wooster does not work and gets into bizarre comic entanglements from which Jeeves disentangles him. Lest anyone think that the disparity...
between social status and intelligence is Wodehouse’s radical commentary on the class struggle in Britain, it should be noted that it is Jeeves—not Wooster—who staunchly defends the social status quo.

As ridiculous as this seems in our casual era, Jeeves as valet does not see clothing as mere ornament or vanity. He rescues Wooster from wearing unacceptable costuming (a white mess jacket, garish spats, a pair of purple socks, an alpine hat) and assuming unwanted marital engagements (to the same woman in 1934, 1938, 1949, and 1971). Because World War I destroyed the Britain of which Wodehouse had been writing, he stopped time within his fictional reality.

Many of the people who had the manners that Wodehouse wrote about died in the war, and in the people who did survive, the manners didn’t. But it is a pleasure to slip into a simple age that has gone by or probably never existed. You can have your Middle Earth and speak Elvish. I want to live at Brinkley Court and speak British.

—Kenan Minkoff teaches writing and drama at The King’s College

Nothing is quite like a “hidden jewel,” the washboard-gravel-road place you come upon by happenstance. Inches within the front door: the light, the aroma, perhaps the gentle hum of hushed voices. They all create anticipation that this just might be one of those “finds,” something far beyond advertisement or even hope.

In April the Tivoli Theatre in downtown Chattanooga, a hidden jewel in its own right, served as a small velvety box for a Hope Diamond. The enclosed jewel was “The Conference on Southern Literature,” 22 years old and this year hosting Wendell Berry, Roy Blount Jr., Natasha Trethewey, Ernest Gaines, Elizabeth Spencer, Jill McCorkle, Ann Patchett, John Shelton Reed, Allan Gurganus, Andrew Hudgins, Clyde Edgerton, and many more who together have won nearly every significant award and fellowship—from Pulitzer to Guggenheim—that can be bestowed on a “person of letters.”

All conference attendees sit together and follow the same itinerary. The famous writers are present, just like anyone else. The person sitting next to you might have been on the previous panel or received an award two years ago—or two hours ago. I almost got used to the fact that Wendell Berry was sitting across the aisle from me, and standing around telling jokes with his friends, and that he didn’t mind my stepping into the circle and laughing along.

Nonagenarian Elizabeth Spencer (of Light in the Piazza fame) offered her umbrella as we strolled arm-in-arm toward the front entrance.

CROWN JEWELS: Elizabeth Spencer (left) and Wendell Berry.
during a rainstorm—this hours after the debut of the documentary *Landscapes of the Heart: The Elizabeth Spencer Story*.

Whether an award presentation, panel discussion, tribute, or onstage interview, the focus remains the same: writers reflecting upon and reading from their own works. So conversational was the setting that I was able to get multiple comments from authors regarding the question, “What is the relationship between the church and the world of contemporary literature?” I asked her, “Do you think Christians would do well to read good stories in order to think about doctrine and life; in order to better appreciate and handle words?”

Andrew Hudgins, hearing my question, laughed aloud and called over friend and poet Rodney Jones, “Rodney, you need to hear this... This guy wants to know what you think about Jesus.”

But as time moved on, it became clear that Hudgins was interested in the question—and in the topic in general. In fact, with Flannery O’Connor still featuring prominently—quoted by multiple panelists and speakers—her own words seem still to fit the literary landscape at hand. She referred to the South as not so much “Christian” as “Christ-haunted.”

One perhaps Christ-haunted, certainly poignant answer to my question about the relationship of church and literature came from Dorothy Allison, a victim of sexual abuse by her stepfather. She said, “Oh wow... it is a very broken relationship.” I asked her, “Do you think Christians would do well to read good stories in order to think about doctrine and life; in order to better appreciate and handle words?” She chimed, “Absolutely. After all, it was the word that became flesh.”

The conference website (southernlitconference.org) provides plenty of information on this year’s events and authors, and can easily function as a bibliography for interested readers. –William Boyd is a pastor and writer

**Gifts for readers**

**FOUR BOOKS TO GIVE ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

**BY SUSAN OLSKAY**

*How to Get a Job by Me the Boss* (Random House) is the latest effort by Sally Lloyd-Jones (*WORLD*, Nov. 1, 2008, and July 4, 2009). In it a precocious narrator explains secrets of work such as, “If you are a Doctor, you need to get a White Coat and some Patients,” and “Here’s what isn’t a job: Sitting in your chair eating cookies.” Playful illustrations accompany sage advice in what is a picture book for children but also one that recent graduates could enjoy and learn from: “A good job to get is something you love... But it must be something you’re good at or no one will want you to do it for them.”

*At Your Baptism* (Eerdmans), by Carrie Steenwyk and John D. Witvliet, is a board book that includes, along the tops of its pages, words from the French Reformed liturgy of baptism: “At your baptism, God tells you that... For you Jesus Christ came into the world. For you he lived and showed God’s love. For you he suffered the darkness of Calvary and cried at the last, ’It is finished...’” Along the bottoms of pages is a brief explanation of those words. Bold Modigliani-styled drawings illustrate the text.

*Morning Song: Poems for New Parents* (St. Martin’s), edited by Susan Todd and Carol Purington, includes poems from all over that “speak to the inner life of mothers and fathers.” The poems give us new language and new ways to think about the common human experiences of pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, parenting, and raising children. Some are funny. I love the beginning of “In the Realm of the Mothers” by Kate Barnes: “When I was twenty-three, I got up in the morning peculiarly dizzy, and thought, ‘I can’t be pregnant, I’m not educated, I’ve never even learned German!’”

Children will be fascinated by *Dragons: Legends & Lore of Dinosaurs* (Master Books). The book, written from a creationist perspective, is filled with maps, flaps that open, and envelopes with treasures. It tracks down dragon myths, seeks to sort the true from the fanciful, and examines familiar dragon tales, including Beowulf, St. George, Leviathan, and the Loch Ness Monster, as well as obscure ones. ✝
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Long’s story

EIGHT MONTHS AGO, New Birth Missionary Baptist Church of Lithonia, Ga., was one of the largest and most dynamic megachurches in the nation. The church and its multiple ministries provided the local poor with food, shelter, transportation, and financial assistance. It delivered munificence and missionaries around the world. In 2010 alone, the church claims that its worldwide mission support reached 172 countries. And the church was most renowned for its unique and charismatic pastor, Bishop Eddie Long, who wrote best-selling books on everything from relationships and biblical manhood to sanctification and self-help. His television program on the Trinity Broadcast Network was said to reach 270 million people worldwide.

Yes, many called him a peddler of the prosperity gospel, a false shepherd seeking only to fleece the flock. Yes, it took some explaining why Long wore muscle-shirts in the pulpit, or outfits that looked like Star Trek uniforms, as well as why he drove a Bentley and lived in a mansion on 20 acres of land. Eyebrows were raised when Long received, as the Atlanta Journal-Constitution reported, millions of dollars in salary in 1997-2000 from the nonprofits under the umbrella of the church. And Long hardly sounded humble when he told a pesky reporter, “I’m not going to apologize for anything. We are not just a church, we’re an international corporation. . . . I deal with the White House. I deal with Tony Blair. I deal with presidents around this world. I pastor
a multimillion-dollar congregation.”

Yet none of these things substantially harmed church attendance. What finally slowed down the New Birth dynamo were allegations, first aired in September 2010, that Bishop Long took young men on his various travels and sought to coerce them into sexual acts. The four young plaintiffs claimed that Long bought them cars, paid them salaries, and flew them around the world, explaining how the Bible justified their activities. Since Long was known for his vigorous opposition to gay marriage, the charges of hypocrisy came swift and strong. Long told his congregation days later, “I am not a perfect man, but this thing, I’m going to fight.”

The public allegations came to an end on May 27 as Long settled the cases out of court. Although the terms of the settlement were not disclosed, one term was clear: Neither the young men nor their attorney could ever talk about the lawsuits again. There was no confession of guilt, and Long’s spokesman explained that Long settled merely in order to “bring closure” and “move forward with the plans God has for this ministry.”

Damage, however, is already done. New Birth’s attendance has fallen steeply, its vast parking lot only half-filled on Sundays. The church laid off staff members and cut Long’s salary. The settlement stunned many in the congregation. As Shayne Lee, a sociologist who specializes in televangelists, told CNN, settling outside of court implies some measure of guilt. Against such serious charges, “You can’t settle outside of court. You have to . . . roll up your sleeves, be defiant and fight it.”

We may never know for certain whether Eddie Long was guilty of these charges. Yet the perception of guilt will remain, in part because Long stands in the tradition of prosperity gospel televangelists who grew massive ministries, lavishly indulged themselves, and began to think they could justify anything to their followers. The same qualities that make for successful pastors or politicians—personal magnetism, powers of empathy, and ego—can lead them into temptation and scandals, often with initially small steps.

Observers, victims, and church authorities have argued for years whether the Roman Catholic clergy abuse crisis grew out of pervasive homosexuality in the priesthood, the vow of chastity, or an insular and oppressive environment within the Catholic Church. The correct answer, claims a new report, is none of the above.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops hired the John Jay College of Criminal Justice to conduct an independent inquiry into the abuse crisis. The first report from the John Jay team, in 2004, detailed the frequency of abuse, the characteristics of abusive priests, and the history of responses from 1950 through 2002.

The second report, now public, finds no single cause of priests’ sexual abuse of children. The investigators did not find a significant link between abuse and pedophilia (fewer than 5 percent of alleged abusers fantasized about prepubescent children, and most also had sexual relations with adults), abuse and homosexuality (gay priests were becoming more common, they say, as the incidence of abuse was dropping, though Christians may wonder whether the research team was ever willing to implicate homosexuality in the first place), or abuse and chastity (the vow of chastity has remained constant even as abuse rates have risen and fallen).

What the report does implicate is the social and moral disintegration of the “sexual revolution” in the 1960s and 1970s. Priests, like everyone else, are susceptible to temptation and shaped by their surroundings. When the culture around them promoted experimentation and promiscuity, priests found it easier to disregard their internal inhibitions. The study is critical of Catholic leadership, but it also finds that a slow, uneven, but eventually effective response within the Catholic Church itself led to a steep decline in abuse. —T.D.
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CHM was recently featured on former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee’s Fox News Channel’s show “Huckabee.” Visit www.chministries.org to see Gov. Huckabee’s interview with CHM Executive Director Rev. Howard Russell and members Jason and Tori Benham of Concord, N.C.

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iPod navigators

FAA considers allowing airlines to use tablet computers in place of paper charts in the air

By Alissa Wilkinson

Tablet computers—like the iPad and the Galaxy Tab—have been popping up everywhere: homes, boardroom meetings, even classrooms. The next destination? Airplane cockpits. Alaska Airlines recently moved to stop using traditional flight manuals, replacing the books with the iPad. Private airline Executive Jet has already replaced paper navigation charts by putting the same information on the device. And the Federal Aviation Administration—which hasn’t revised its rules about “electronic flight bags and computing devices” since 2003 (years before even the iPhone was released)—is trying to keep up with the times: A draft proposal, recently circulated by the FAA for comment, would let pilots use the iPad as a primary source of information in the cockpit.

One of the FAA’s key concerns is not surprising: Some fear that using these devices in the cockpit will lead to distracted pilots and put passengers in danger (for instance, two Northwest Airlines pilots recently overshot their destination because they were fiddling with a laptop). And device failure is a concern as well, so the FAA’s proposal disallows use of the iPad below 10,000 feet and requires pilots to carry paper copies of charts as backup. But the iPad also allows pilots to carry extra information and manuals they might not typically carry without taking up more space or bringing extra weight on board. Through using the device, Alaska Airlines hopes to eventually eliminate more than 2.4 million pieces of paper from its daily operations.

Path finders

Vacationing in a big city this summer? While one of the advantages of urban life is the ability to get around without a car, navigating public transportation can be daunting and sometimes difficult. Google Maps (and mobile apps that use Google Maps, including the iPhone/iPad, Blackberry, and Android apps) provides not just driving directions, but also maps for walking and riding public transportation. Another useful site is Hopstop.com and its apps: Enter your start and end location (address, intersection, or landmark) and the time you’d like to leave, and it will provide maps to and from the transit location, as well as instructions for riding the train or bus. Hopstop’s list of locations is expanding rapidly and includes dozens of major cities in the United States and Canada—from Raleigh/Durham to Boston to Vancouver—as well as London and Paris. Wondering how far you can travel in a limited amount of time? A new site called Magnificent (magnificent.net) can help: Select your starting point and the time you’d like to travel, and the map shows the area which you can cover on public transportation. —A.W.
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German health officials scurried in early June to contain an *Escherichia coli* epidemic that sickened more than 3,000 Europeans in six weeks. Over 30 people had died from the bacterial infections, often by kidney failure, making it the deadliest *E. coli* outbreak on record.

By June 10 investigators had traced the bacteria to vegetable sprouts from a small organic produce farm in northern Germany, 35 miles southeast of Hamburg, the city at the epicenter of the illnesses. Although initial tests couldn’t confirm that the farm’s sprouts contained the specific *E. coli* strain causing the infections, experts said it was possible that the bacterium had been in seed stockpiles the sprouts had grown from and was no longer detectable.

Earlier in the outbreak, German officials mistakenly pinned blame on imported Spanish cucumbers and warned consumers against eating cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce, or sprouts. The ensuing drop in vegetable sales (50 percent or more for some Hamburg grocers) and a Russian ban on European vegetable imports hit farmers at a time when many products were ripe for market: In some areas 80 percent of vegetables were destroyed as they began to rot, causing losses of up to $611 million a week for farmers across the European Union. The EU farm chief offered compensation for a fraction of the losses.

Most infections occurred in the northern half of Germany, but about 100 people in neighboring countries reported infections marked by cramping and diarrhea, along with at least four people in the United States who had traveled in Germany before becoming ill. A handful of people in Tennessee and Virginia were found to be infected with *E. coli*—including a 2-year-old girl who died—but not with the German strain.

Epidemiologists disagreed about whether the German bacterium should be called “new”: Very similar strains were reported in Münster, Germany in 2001 and in the Republic of Georgia in 2009, but the 2011 version had some unique genetic traits, including resistance to eight classes of antibiotics.

Only a few types of *E. coli* are harmful, and the non-harmful types normally aid humans and animals in digestion. Data from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, incidentally released during the German outbreak, suggest that foodborne infections in the United States have declined overall in the past 15 years, with the most dangerous type of *E. coli* cut in half, perhaps due to stricter meat safety practices. However, some other strains of *E. coli*, *Salmonella*, and *Vibrio* (transmitted through undercooked shellfish) have increased.

**DEEP DISCOVERY**

For the first time, scientists have discovered a multicellular creature living at extreme depths—2.2 miles—beneath the earth’s surface. Inside the South African Beatrix gold mine, researchers filtered microbes from hot water drawn out of boreholes and found several specimens of an undiscovered, half-a-millimeter-long species of nematode (*shown enlarged 10,000 times at right*).

Although single-celled organisms were known to live in such places, it was previously thought that the high pressures and temperatures of the deep earth would make life for multicellular animals unbearable. The researchers, who reported their discovery in *Nature*, said it was “like finding a whale in Lake Ontario.” —D.J.D.
A woman prays at the only Coptic church in Misrata, Libya. Many Copts have fled the region because of heavy shelling by government forces.
KING NO MORE

LEBRON JAMES has earned his role as NBA villain  

IN THE WAKE OF THE MIAMI HEAT’S LOSS in the NBA Finals, the mounting pressure of criticism on superstar LeBron James finally triggered a backlash. The league’s most physically gifted player, who had underperformed in critical moments of the championship series, appeared to play schoolyard bully as he sought emotional solace in the denigration of others: “All the people that was rooting on me to fail, at the end of the day they have to wake up tomorrow and have the same life that they had before they woke up today. They have the same personal problems they had today. I’m going to continue to live the way I want to live and continue to do the things that I want to do with me and my family and be happy with that. They can get a few days or a few months or whatever the case may be on being happy about not only myself, but the Miami Heat not accomplishing their goal, but they have to get back to the real world at some point.”

James later clarified his comments, claiming he was simply calling for everyone, including himself, to move on: “It wasn’t saying I’m superior or better than anyone else, any man or woman on this planet, I’m not. I would never ever look at myself bigger than anyone who watched our game.” Nevertheless, the damage was done. James all but sealed his public persona as NBA villain, an image that first garnered widespread traction a year ago with the overhyped pageant-style announcement to leave his hometown team in Cleveland for Miami. James seemed bewildered by the anger following that decision and just as flummoxed by the hostility directed his way throughout this year’s season. Why do so many basketball fans want to see him fail?

In fact, the rancor is not so difficult to understand. James helped lay the groundwork for unpopularity long before his departure from Cleveland. The genesis of his public-relations doldrums dates to his high-school days when an unrelenting media hype machine cast the Akron, Ohio, youngster as the greatest ever before he had played a single professional game. James happily followed the script, dubbing himself “King James,” tattooing “Chosen 1” in 72-point font across his upper back, and taking on a string of endorsement contracts that had him play the role of Greek god.

Now, eight seasons into his professional career, James has yet to win an NBA title and has proved far less than great in critical, late-game moments. During the NBA Finals, he failed to score a single point in the last five minutes of close games. The disparity between his promise and his delivery has produced a predictable result: buyers’ remorse. James was simply oversold.
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Down and out
Housing and jobs numbers highlight a renewed sense of economic unease  

BY JOSEPH SLIFE

Newly released figures showed that home prices continued to plummet in the first three months of the year—down 4.2 percent, following a 3.6 percent drop in the final three months of 2010. Data from the S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Index also revealed that housing prices in 20 U.S. cities dropped in March to their lowest levels since 2003. The data served as a “confirmation of a double-dip in home prices across much of the nation,” S&P economist David Blitzer said. A slight price rebound last year “was largely due to the first-time homebuyers tax credit,” Blitzer noted. “Excluding the results of that policy, there has been no recovery or even stabilization in home prices.”

Days after the housing report, new unemployment figures from the Labor Department showed virtually no job growth in May. The jobless rate ticked up to 9.1 percent—a 2011 high—and the number of long-term unemployed (out of work 27 weeks of longer) rose by 361,000 to 6.2 million.

In a June 7 speech to bankers, Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke conceded that early 2011 economic growth “looks to have been somewhat slower than expected.” While predicting the economy would gain steam in the second half of the year, Bernanke acknowledged that the pace of recovery is “frustratingly slow from the perspective of millions of unemployed and underemployed workers.”

Let’s get small

Walmart, pioneer of the 180,000-square-foot superstore, opened two tiny-by-comparison grocery stores in early June, not far from its Bentonville, Ark., headquarters. The two stores are the first of a scheduled 15 prototype Walmart Express locations to be test marketed in the coming months. The stores have about 15,000 square feet of space and fewer than 50 parking spaces. In addition to groceries, some locations will feature a pharmacy and sell office supplies.

Walmart’s small-store strategy is a partial reaction to the success of “dollar stores”—such as Family Dollar and Dollar General—that have siphoned off some of Walmart’s business. One reason for their success: The average round trip to a dollar store is six miles, compared to 30 miles for a typical Walmart trip, according to Credit Suisse analyst Michael Exstein.

One of Walmart’s top rivals, Target, is also planning to test market smaller stores in urban markets. —J.S.

Joseph Slife is the assistant editor of SoundMindInvesting.com

CRAZY AID

Five nations that are large creditors of the United States are also getting tens of millions of dollars in financial assistance from Washington, according to a report issued by the Congressional Research Service at the request of Sen. Tom Coburn, R-Okla. China, Brazil, Russia, Mexico, and India—all of which hold many billions in U.S. debt—receive U.S. financial assistance in areas ranging from combating HIV to addressing environmental concerns.

“If countries can afford to buy our debt perhaps they can afford to fund assistance programs on their own,” Sen. Coburn said in a statement.

The CRS report showed that China, America’s top creditor with holdings of more than $1 trillion in U.S. Treasury obligations, received $27.2 million in U.S.-provided assistance last year. Russia, which holds $127.8 billion in U.S. debt, received $71.5 million in aid from Washington. Overall, foreign governments that hold U.S. debt received more than $1 billion in financial assistance from the United States in fiscal year 2010. —J.S.
More Than Dreams

For decades, a phenomenon has been recurring in the Muslim world. Men and women, without any knowledge of the Gospel and without any contact with Christians, have been forever transformed after experiencing dreams and visions of Jesus Christ. Here are five stories of former Muslims who now know Jesus as their Savior, recreated in docu-drama format and produced in their original languages with English subtitles.

Meet Khalil, a radical Egyptian terrorist who was transformed when Jesus appeared to him; Mohammed, a herdsman in Nigeria who found the deep love of Christ; Dini, an Indonesian teenager who became a Christian on a night that Muslims individualize their prayers to Allah; Khosrow, a young Iranian man who was depressed and without hope; and Ali, a Turkish man in bondage to alcohol. 187 minutes total.

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The Fanny Crosby Story

This is the amazing biography of the blind hymn writer, Fanny Crosby. As the writer of more than 10,000 hymns, all penned after the age of 40, she is credited with authoring more verse than any human in history. The tragic mistreatment by a charlatan masquerading as a doctor blinded Fanny shortly after birth. Nevertheless, she learned to function as a sighted person except for her inability to read. Fulfilling the roles of wife, mother, friend, teacher, nurse to the sick, the poor and disenfranchised, and friend of presidents — Fanny Crosby was an exceptional woman by any standard. Her legacy lives on through the thousands of hymns that are still sung today. 46 minutes.

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Robber of the Cruel Streets: George Müller

George Müller (1805-1898) was a German playboy who found Christ and gave his life to serve Christ unreservedly. His mission was to rescue orphans from the wretched street life that enslaved so many children in England during the time of Charles Dickens and Oliver Twist. Müller did rescue, care for, feed, and educate such children by the thousands. The costs were enormous for such a great work. Yet, amazingly, he never asked anyone for money. Instead he prayed, and his children never missed a meal. This docu-drama presents his life story and shows how God answered prayer and met their needs. It is a story that raises foundational questions regarding faith and finances. Also included are two special documentaries on Müller and some of the lives affected by his work. 59 minutes plus 30-minute documentary.

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The Reckoning

In September 1939, war erupted in Europe as Germany invaded Poland. Eight months later, Hitler publicly broadcasted that he would not invade Holland due to their neutrality during World War I. Within hours, this promise became a treacherous lie that engulfed the small country in World War II. Prejudice and persecution spread. The preservation of human life became a life-and-death mission for a small minority of ordinary Dutch citizens. The Reckoning: Remembering the Dutch Resistance is the international award-winning documentary that captures the compelling story and eyewitness account of six survivors in wartorn Netherlands during World War II. With the revelation of Hitler’s “Final Solution” and the uncertainty of liberation, it reveals the intensely human aspect of the Dutch struggle against Nazi tyranny. 96 minutes plus extras.

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“Static on the airwaves” (MAY 21)
The greater problem with Harold Camping is that, in falsely claiming that his statements are Bible-based, he has held the Bible up to ridicule and turned attention away from the real tragedies all around us, in Haiti and elsewhere. Media outlets are eager to comply, given a perfect negative stereotype of a misguided national evangelical leader. In effect he encouraged people to ignore biblical warnings about the last days and to mock the Scriptures.

CHRIS WHITE, New York, N.Y.

When my wife asked if I had read the WORLD article about camping, I was really excited because I thought that after all these years she was finally interested in going camping. What a disappointment.

WAYNE HERMAN
Gladstone, Iowa

“Mystery + objectivity” (MAY 21)
Having read his book, How to Write a Sentence, I was interested to read the interview with Stanley Fish. His responses about the presuppositions that structure our consciousness were very intriguing, and his perspective and honesty are refreshing in this age of hardened secularism.

JOHN RUSH
Cosby, Tenn.

Fish is right in believing that truth is knowable but that we cannot necessarily persuade others to believe in it. This is the truth of faith and it is no mystery. We must accept the Truth in order to believe.

DAVID MASSEE
Germantown, Tenn.

“Thor’s day” (MAY 21)
My two sons took me to Thor on Mother’s Day. Partway through, one son, who’s a bit of a movie snob, commented that he was surprised at how good it was. It was a great movie with few of the typical Hollywood trappings.

MELISSA HOLMAN
San Antonio, Texas

Your review on Thor was right on target. An interesting side story is that the hero swords for Heimdall, the Gatekeeper, were produced by two young Christian artists.

ROB DAVIS
New Castle, Ind.

“Wars worth fighting” (MAY 21)
Your review of Shelby Foote’s classic history of the Civil War should motivate many to read it. I met him in 1991. He gave the distinct impression that he had been at most of the great Civil War battles because his descriptions had such color and detail that it took your breath away. His three-volume work captures how he talked, how he told stories, and how the Civil War was fought—by common men in a most uncommon manner.

JACK D. WALKER
Brea, Calif.

“A great debt” (MAY 21)
As a veteran from the Vietnam era, I believe we’ve unfairly shamed our soldiers who served in that war. Aside from the incredibly brutal conditions, many were spat upon, berated, and

Iquitos, Peru / SUBMITTED BY TERI FERRO

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ignored upon their return. Thank you for your recognition.

DAVE TROUP
Lee's Summit, Mo.

“Some people” (May 21)
Thank you for speaking clearly and truthfully. How quickly I forget that I am most certainly not, as Isaiah wrote, the “Just Judge of all the Earth.”

KURT A. MICHAELIS
Dothan, Ala.

Quotables (May 7)
In response to Charles Murray’s comment that the new upper and middle classes are getting married and working hard but “they will not preach what they practice”: Some of us are preaching—to our children. That’s why there still is a middle class. We are accused of being intolerant, racist, sexist, and a host of other names when we suggest that marriage is a good thing, single-parent families end up in poverty, school is essential to success, and our spiritual beliefs guide our decision making.

AMY PAULEY
Charleston, W.Va.

“See Jane pray” (May 7)
Not having read Jane Russell’s autobiography, I want to proceed very carefully in taking issue with Andrée Seu, whom I typically find very agreeable. Somehow, all that Seu says about Russell’s faith has to be balanced with the fact that Russell was also a leading sex symbol.

GARY ROSEBOOM
East Peoria, Ill.

“Inside out” (May 7)
Thank you to Emily Belz for a compelling and insightful analysis of the Insider Movement. I have often wondered by what authority we can make so many accommodations to any people group, hoping that somehow the gospel will be made acceptable to them. This robs them of experiencing the sufficiency of Christ in all of life.

EDWIN LAVELY
Eugene, Ore.

“Paycheck program” (May 7)
I disagree that “many conservatives” agree with the Earned Income Tax Credit. If our government would genuinely foster (or quit hindering) values and programs that help intact families, most of our “problems” would be addressed. EITC isn’t the answer.

W.L. JENNINGS
Grand Blanc, Mich.

“Tick, tick, tick . . .” (May 7)
Bob Packwood is right about Congress not being ready to address the federal debt, and it won’t get ready until its members see the walls of their temple coming down. We need to use the arts to reach people with the story of the legacy we’re creating for our kids. We need our people to look at themselves and ask: What does one generation owe the next?

FORREST PARKER
Jamaica Beach, Texas

“A nation of Terrys” (May 7)
I couldn’t agree more, and it’s gotten worse in the small-town high school I’ve taught at for 23 years. The young seem to feel entitled to passing grades, pencils, paper, rides to school, breakfast, lunch, cell phones, mp3 players, and to say anything they wish. As the state does more and more for students, they do less and less for themselves. Who needs church and family when the government at every level serves as the institutional replacement?

LOUISE PARZIALE
Alexandria, Va.

“Tick, tick, tick . . .” (May 7)
I doubt anyone begins his Christian walk as thankful for the bad He allows into our lives as much as the good. We seem to
need some history of exercising our little faith in His great faithfulness before fully embracing Romans 8:28, and agreeing with the hymnodist to “know no loss or gain.”

CRAIG LA CHANCE  
Keaau, Hawaii

Isn’t it nice to be released from the little nagging buzz of discontent and self absorption by the simple process of grateful expressions to Christ? Thank you for helping me keep the “fleas” in perspective!

JENNIFER CHARPENTIER  
Moses Lake, Wash.

“What the veil reveals” (APRIL 23)  
I hold in high honor Mindy Belz for her great moral courage, shown once again in this column. The threats and intimidations of Islam, far more advanced in Europe, go unreported by our own country’s news media. How Muslims treat women is only a small tip of the iceberg.

KIRBY J. KILLMAN  
Pasco, Wash.

“Trillions for tunes” (APRIL 23)  
Lime Wire is finally being sued for pirating music online. I think that the recording companies might be going a little over the top in asking for $75 trillion. Nonetheless, they have lost excessive amounts of money and they should receive enough to cover those losses.

LINDSEY SODERBERG, 16  
Scottsdale, Ariz.

“Complicated truth” (APRIL 23)  
I read Olasky’s column in the midst of mulling over the mysteriousness of our God. What he wrote was right on. God is not a predictable system or a tame lion. But as Narnia’s Mr. Beaver said, “He’s good. He’s the King, I tell you.”

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Jesus called us to be free: “For freedom Christ has set us free.” From Paul’s writing in Romans 7 I see that the freedom Jesus means is freedom in the mind—where the real battle is. Francis Schaeffer wrote, “This is where true spirituality in the Christian life rests: in the realm of my thought life” (True Spirituality).

What a favor we can render a brother in Christ when we know this freedom firsthand, and exactly how to walk in it! The knitted brows in the pews are not generally over globalization or polar ice melt. Someone around you is quietly sinking in addiction or despair. If there is a way to fight the demons in his head (James 3:15; Galatians 5:17; 1 Peter 5:9; 1 John 2:14), he needs equipping. He needs to bridge the gap between theology and reality.

Most of us are “good” on the positional gifts in Christ: imputed righteousness, forgiveness, adoption by His perfect Atonement. Is there any concrete help for the time between conversion and rapture? Our conversion was an important date but now it’s over. “Let us . . . go on to maturity” (Hebrews 6:1). What is that “fullness” of which the Word says we have all received, the “grace upon grace” (John 1:16)?

Is it not the potential to be free in our minds? Potential, because not all Christians are free. As Schaeffer put it: “A man may lack in sanctification all that God means him to have in the present life because even though Christ has purchased it for him upon the cross he fails to believe God at this place and raise the empty hands of faith moment by moment.”

My friend Leslie, extremely devout, said she wanted to hear from God, and refused to budge from her sundeck all day (except to go to the bathroom) until she got a message: “You don’t believe me.” Leslie later told me: “It was the Lord, so I had to receive it.” The Spirit instructed her to start reading at Matthew chapter 1, and to stop when she got to a verse she didn’t believe. She was distressed by how soon she had to stop.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil (1 John 3:8), and it is a progressive dismantling that begins now. In heaven we will not have the chance to put Satan to rout by faith; all that will be finished. Christ gave us the means of conquest in Ephesians 6 and elsewhere, so that we could take back our minds.

Once we believe, the sky is the limit. The confidence that we can get out of the darkest pit, and the vise grip of emotional bondage, is key. The means are there (prayer, the Word, the Spirit). All that’s needed is a shift in our spirits to believe that overcomings are possible—that ours is not only the hope of heaven but the riches of His glorious inheritance, and the immeasurable greatness of His power toward us who believe (Ephesians 1:18–19).

I was in the attic sorting clothes, and suddenly letters beckoned to me from a box I was storing for someone. I got the idea that I would like to read those letters; no one would be the wiser. It didn’t feel right, but an oily, unctuous voice said it was of no consequence, and that the Lord would forgive me because He knows I’m just a sinner. (The 19th-century poet Heinrich Heine said, “Dieu me pardonnera; c’est son métier”: God will forgive me; it’s His job.)

It seemed like a mild desire until I decided to put up slight resistance. Even with the weapons of prayer and stern reasoning with myself from the Word, it was all I could do to get out of the attic intact.

But you are never the same person after you say no to the devil. It is hard to describe, but you are stronger. And you have something else too—a testimony. Some person you know who has normally rolled over to every suggestion dropped into his brain from the Enemy will be encouraged. People want to be free. They just need to hear it can be done.
DARWIN MATTERS

The influence of evolutionary thinking reaches far beyond biology

Our Books of the Year story on page 36 assumes that teaching about creation or evolution is important—but is it? After all, we are entering a campaign season in which the debate will focus on healthcare, government spending, and other hot issues. We don’t have time to discuss theories, do we?

We should make time for one big reason: If Darwin was right the Bible is wrong, and we are foolish to follow it. But evolutionary thought that ignores God also has other effects of which we may be unaware. (Ask a fish about water and he’s likely to reply, “What’s water?”—if he’s sufficiently evolved to be a talking fish.) The theological objections to macroevolution are literally crucial because they tell us whether the Cross was necessary, but some secondary issues are also worth pondering.

Politics. Woodrow Wilson started federal government expansion in 1912 by opposing the “Newtonian” view that the government should have an unchanging constitutional foundation, somewhat like “the law of gravitation.” He argued that government should be “accountable to Darwin, not to Newton. It is modified by its environment, necessitated by its tasks, shaped to its functions by the sheer pressure of life. . . . Living political constitutions must be Darwinian in structure and in practice.” Wilson was the president who started the modern pattern of disregarding the Constitution, and in the 2012 election we will either start a second century of governmental expansion or yell, “Stop!”

Economics. Evolutionary thinking influenced not only Social Darwinists but socialists like H.G. Wells who thought it was time to advance beyond competitive enterprise. (Karl Marx in *Das Kapital* called Darwin’s theory “epoch making” and told Friedrich Engels that *On the Origin of Species* “contains the basis in natural history for our view.”) Many books and articles have linked Darwin’s thought to Lenin, Stalin, Mao Tse-Tung, and Hitler: Darwin is obviously not responsible for the atrocities committed in his name, but evolutionary theory plus his musings about superior and inferior races provided a logical justification for anti-Semitism and racists.

Sex. The mid-20th century’s most influential academic was probably Alfred Kinsey, whose high-school classmates half-jokingly called him the “Second Darwin.” Kinsey’s 1948 and 1953 books on sexuality contended that adultery is normal and homosexual experiences not uncommon, for “the mammalian backgrounds of human behavior [made it] difficult to explain why each and every individual is not involved in every type of sexual history.”

(Later, researchers found that Kinsey’s stats were cooked, but in the meantime the American Law Institute’s *Model Penal Code*, published in 1955, had a major effect in eliminating or reducing penalties for sex crimes: “Almost a Kinsey document,” one biographer called the Code. More recently, John West’s *Darwin Day in America* cites textbook claims that casual sex is an evolutionary adaptation that gives “obvious reproductive advantages”—and we should not raise our standards because “we cannot escape our animal origins.”)

Abortion. Evolution proponents contributed mightily to its legalization, and in a way more direct than the general teaching that human life has no intrinsic value. Robert Williams, president of the Association of American Physicians, said in 1969 that “the fetus has not been shown to be nearer to the human being than is the unborn infant.” He talked of “the recapitulation of phylogeny by ontogeny”—the mistaken theory that an unborn child’s development mimics purported evolutionary progress. The most influential pro-abortion legal expert during the 1960s, Cyril Means, argued that babies are sub-human—and the Supreme Court’s 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision played off his mean-hearted briefs.

Infanticide. I debated Princeton’s Peter Singer in 2004 and had several conversations with him about his defense of infanticide. That year he said, “All we are doing is catching up with Darwin. He showed in the 19th century that we are simply animals. Humans had imagined we were a separate part of Creation, that there was some magical line between Us and Them. Darwin’s theory undermined the foundations of that entire Western way of thinking about the place of our species in the universe.”

We could run through many more areas. Daniel Dennett in *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea* hit it right: Darwin created a “universal acid” that eats through any “meaning coming from on high.”

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