



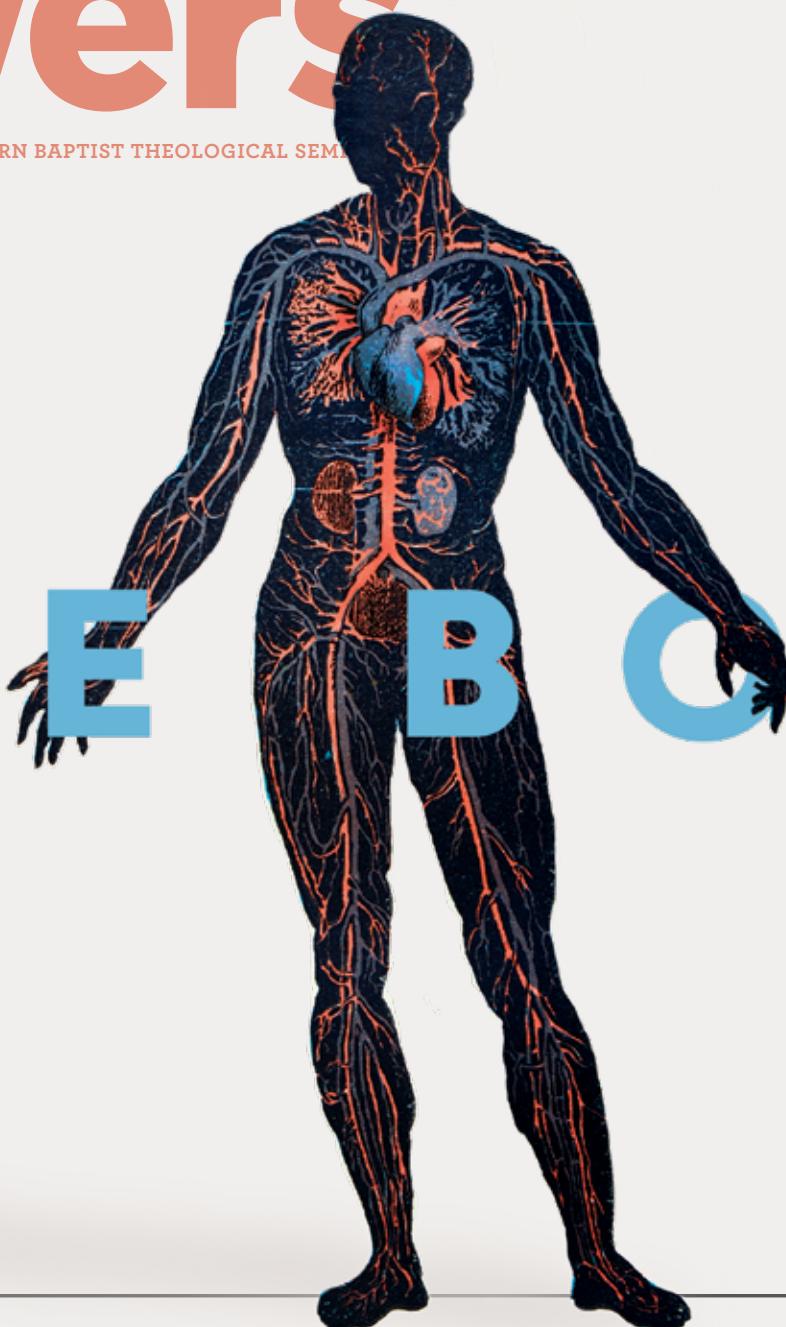
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VOLUME 16  
DEC-JAN  
2018

# Towers

A NEWS PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## THE BODY



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WHY YOUR PHYSICAL  
BODY MATTERS  
TO GOD

9 WAYS  
TO GET FIT  
IN 2018

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THEIR FAVORITE  
CHRISTMAS CAROLS

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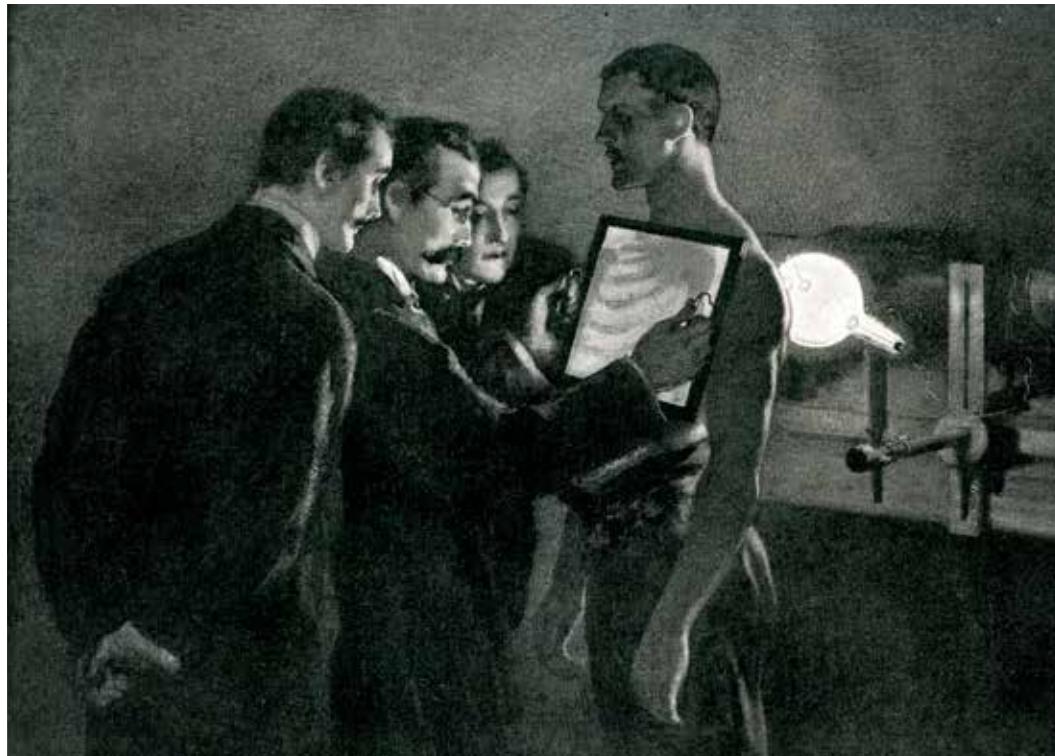
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### The Body: Why your soul is not enough

Gregg R. Allison, professor of Christian theology, invites you to understand God's plan for your life ... and it goes beyond prayer and Bible reading.

**FROM THE EDITOR**

Each new year, millions of Americans resolve to improve themselves. They decide to read more, take a cooking class, or go to church more often. The most common resolution,

though, is to get fit. For the first three weeks every January, the gym is filled with people making a renewed commitment to improving their bodies.

While there is certainly a deformed cultural motivation behind the most common New Year's resolution — we all see and often envy the beautiful, fit, and strong bodies on Instagram or along the checkout line at the grocery store — there's something deeper. Christianity tells us we are not simply conscious physical beings who cease to exist when we die. We have eternal souls. But we can

easily tilt too far in the other direction and forget that God made us with bodies, declared it "good," and promises to restore those bodies in the resurrection to come.

When we decide to get a stronger or fitter body, we intuitively affirm our bodies matter. It's a theological statement: God cares how we eat, why we exercise, and what we do with our bodies. I hope this issue of *Towers* informs your resolutions for 2018, and inspires you to value more than just your mind and soul in the coming year.

**04**

### Here We Stand conference: The Reformation at 500

Evangelical pastors and scholars mark the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, Oct. 31-Nov. 2.

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### The contextualized church

Allison discusses his new book on multisite and multichurch models.

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### How to make good on that New Year's resolution

Make this the year you actually get bigger, faster, stronger. Or at least one of those.

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### Sing We Now of Christmas

Southern Seminary and Boyce faculty share their favorite Christmas melodies.

**Our mission is to use our time, resources, and talents to tell the Southern story in an accurate, timely, and creative manner to the glory of God.**

# Newslog



## Here We Stand conference gathered pastors and theologians to celebrate the Reformation

By SBTS Communications

"Where this gospel is not preached there is no church," said R. Albert Mohler Jr. But, "where this gospel is preached there is a church."

Preaching on the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's nailing of his famous 95 Theses to the castle church door, Mohler addressed a full Alumni Chapel for Southern Seminary's Here We Stand conference, Oct. 31. The conference, a joint effort of the seminary, Reformed Theological Seminary and Ligonier Ministries, gathered theologians and pastors to celebrate and reflect on the quincentennial of the Protestant Reformation. The event spanned three days and included pastors and scholars from across Reformation traditions.

In his talk, Mohler laid out the significance of the Reformation and answered criticisms that the Reformation split the church. He argued that the gospel of Jesus Christ is what the reformers meant to reclaim in churches. Not, according to Mohler, that the reformers meant to divide the church, *per se*, rather they "sought to find and to establish and to form the church for whom Christ had died."

Gregg R. Allison, professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary, encouraged Here We Stand attendees to celebrate the commonalities between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, while acknowledging the vast differences that separate the two belief systems.

The gospel of Jesus Christ is the good news for Catholics and Protestants, Muslims and Hindus, Buddhists and agnostics and atheists — to the glory of God and the glory of God alone."

Mark Dever, senior pastor of Capitol Hill Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., and president of 9Marks, explored the doctrine of justification — the central theological legacy of the Reformation and the one that continues to set apart the Protestant church from the Catholic Church.

While the Catholic Church believed in the doctrine of "impartation" (or, God making sinners just), the Protestant church teaches that justification is a legal acquitting of the unrighteous (or, declaring sinners just).

"Justification is the judicial act of God in which, primarily, God declares on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ that all the claims of the law are satisfied with respect to the sinner," said Dever, who is also a graduate of Southern Seminary and a former chairman of its Board of Trustees. "Secondarily, justification includes the adoption [of believers] as children of God with the right to eternal life. It includes forgiveness and restoration. The forgiveness that says you may go and the adoption that says you may come — that is all entailed in Christian justification."



## 44 scholars from Southern presented at the 2017 meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society

By SBTS Communications

At the 2017 meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, scholars from Southern Seminary far outnumbered the representatives from any other institution. In all, 44 faculty members, alumni, and doctoral students presented papers or participated in panels at the annual academic conference.

Presenters at the conference — this year themed around the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation — included seminary president R. Albert Mohler Jr. and senior administrators Gregory A. Wills and Adam W. Greenway. Mohler, who is also Joseph Emerson Brown Professor of Christian Theology, participated on a panel about the Reformation heritage of Baptists in the United States. Dean of the seminary's School of Theology, Wills, presented a paper about medieval baptismal influences on Protestantism. And Greenway, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry, presented about Reformation themes in the preaching of 19th century evangelist R.A. Torrey.

A full list of the presenters and their presentation topics is available at [ets.edu/ets](http://ets.edu/ets).

# Greenway to KBC: Southern Seminary is committed to the 'ism of Jesus'

By SBTS Communications

Southern Seminary is about the “-ism” of Jesus, Adam W. Greenway told a recent gathering of pastors of Kentucky churches. He addressed what he said are some misconceptions about Southern in the state.

“There are some strange ideas out there about what Southern Seminary is committed to, this -ism or that -ism,” said Greenway, who is dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Ministry. “Make no mistake, the one -ism that we are committed to is the -ism of Jesus: That is evangelism.”

He spoke at an annual luncheon hosted by Southern Seminary during the Kentucky Baptist Convention. The Graham School’s ensemble, Doxology, sang during the luncheon, too. At the November 14 event, Greenway stressed how the mission of Southern Seminary — the “-ism” of Jesus, evangelism — intersects with the needs of Kentucky Baptist churches.

“Our first assignment is to prepare pastors for Kentucky Baptist churches and Southern Baptist churches,” he said. “Out of that strength, we do lots of other things. But we do nothing less than train those who will be pastors of your children, your grandchildren and your great-grandchildren.”

Greenway said this is possible because of the seminary’s focus on training pastors “in the context of a vibrant, learning, teaching, worshiping community.”

He also updated attendees about goings-on around the seminary, including enrollment numbers, faculty hires, and campus developments.



## The spiritual health of elders affects the spiritual health of the church, said Ziafat

By RuthAnne Irvin

Ministers of the gospel must prepare their own souls for the good of their congregations, Afshin Ziafat said Nov. 14 in Southern Seminary’s chapel service. The goal of an elder is to preach God’s Word, encouraging believers to follow Christ in all things, he said.

“What is truly profitable is to teach the whole counsel of God’s Word,” said Ziafat, lead pastor of Providence Church in Frisco, Texas. “My aim isn’t to get people to follow me, but to follow the Word of God.”

Ziafat, who grew up in a Muslim home in the United States, became a Christian in high school, preached from Acts 20 on the role of elders in the local church, prioritizing the character of an elder as they lead the people of God.

“The church doesn’t belong to me. The church belongs to God — it’s his church. It’s precious to him, he obtained it with his own blood. What’s precious to God must be precious to me.”

Ziafat also reminded students that as elders teach the Word of God, they should lead by example, showing their congregation how to follow the Lord, regardless of their circumstances. He also discussed the importance of personal soul care, especially during difficult seasons of life. Elders lead best, he said, when they continue to follow Christ and trust him during hard times.

“You’re going to become the greatest example for your flock and for anyone who is watching not when things are going great and you’re following God, but when things are going horrible for you and you keep following God,” he said. “You become an example when life is bearing down and hardship is coming and you keep following Christ.”

Audio and video from Southern Seminary chapel is available at [sbts.edu/students/chapel](http://sbts.edu/students/chapel).

## Bill Mounce joined panel discussion about the importance of Bible translation

By Mackenzie Miller

On its 500th anniversary, the Reformation serves as a reminder that Bible translation is embedded in the history of Christianity and the heritage of Protestantism. Hosted by the 1892 Club, Bill Mounce, Greek scholar and president and founder of BiblicalTraining.org, along with panel members, Brian J. Vickers, Jonathan T. Pennington, and Peter J. Gentry discussed the hard work of Bible translation with students, faculty, and staff at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky on October 24.

“Christianity regularly and beautifully regulates itself, not in the qualification of its truth, but in its cultural adaptation,” said Pennington, the associate professor of New Testament interpretation and the director of research doctoral studies at Southern Seminary. “It truly is a religion for all nations and reaches people in their own cultural situations. Bible translation is a huge part of that. We believe, and Christians have always believed, that the Bible should be translated into the language of the people to whom the gospel is going forth.”

Mounce urged listeners to understand that as future ministers of the Word, picking a Bible is an important decision and making such a choice should evoke immense thankfulness for the work translation committees have done. Pastors will have to decide whether they desire a Bible that aligns more closely with the source language or English.





## **Bevin Center partnered with NAMB for relief work in Houston**

**By Grant Mitchell**

The Bevin Center for Missions Mobilization commissioned a team of 12 Boyce College students to help with relief from Hurricane Harvey in Houston, Texas, October 2-6. During the trip, the students helped Houston natives recover from the damage sustained during the hurricane.

The team partnered with the North American Mission Board (NAMB) for the trip. Not only was NAMB looking out for the comfort of those affected by Harvey, but they were seeking to serve those who came to do relief work. They provided cots, showers, and meals to those serving in Houston. They also facilitated nightly devotions.

Working with Boyce students proved helpful for the leaders of the team. There were logistical hiccups, and their plan changed every day. A lot of times they wouldn't have the right tools and would need to go to the store.

The trip was student-organized and prompted. All the Bevin Center had to do was find leaders for the trip that were old enough to drive the van. They met a week before to organize the trip, and then they went.

"They sent us out every day about 8 o'clock in the morning, we would work from about 8-5 every day at different locations around the city basically helping anyone that needed help," said Justin Fountain, M.Div. student at Southern Seminary and a Houston native, who also led the trip. "The homes there were completely destroyed ...The students did outstanding work, really good attitudes, very open to helping and doing what was necessary."



## **Juan Sanchez elected president of Texas Southern Baptist convention**

**By Andrew J.W. Smith**

Juan R. Sanchez, assistant professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary and three-time graduate of the school, was appointed president of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention, Nov. 14.

Sanchez, who since 2005 has served as senior pastor at High Pointe Baptist Church in Austin, Texas, says he has been encouraged by the growth of the Southern Baptists of Texas Convention during the time he has been in the state, particularly its swift and loving response to times of crisis like Hurricane Harvey and the massacre at First Baptist Church in Sutherland Hills.

"I am humbled by the honor to have been elected president of this great state convention. I hope to continue encouraging the great work of our convention and building on the strong leadership of our past presidents," Sanchez said. "As we celebrate our 20th anniversary in 2018, I pray that I may be able to prepare the groundwork for an even greater diversified unity as a state convention in the years ahead."

Sanchez is also a council member of The Gospel Coalition and co-founder and president of Coalición por el Evangelio. He previously served as recording secretary for The Southern Baptists of Texas Convention in 2016.



## **SBTS graduate elected as the first vice president of the Kentucky Baptist Convention**

**By RuthAnne Irvin**

The Kentucky Baptist Convention recently elected Southern Seminary graduate Nate Bishop as the first vice president, Nov. 14. Bishop, who graduated from Southern in 2014 with an M.Div. in Church Ministry, is the convention's second African American first vice president.

In addition to his new role at the KBC, Bishop serves as the senior pastor of Forest Hills Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, where he began serving last year.

The KBC collaborates with Kentucky churches to promote unity and service throughout the state. Bishop believes the KBC "has modeled what cooperation between churches and the executive committee should look like as they seek to glorify God in making disciples for Christ."

"My prayer is that the Lord would continue to use my life and experiences to bring the same perspective in my work with the KBC Mission Board," Bishop stated. "If we believe the body of Christ functions in unity through diversity, then we will see individuals genuinely working together across ethnic, gender, and socioeconomic lines with determination and intentionality."

## **SBTS/Boyce students produce new Christmas EP**

**By RuthAnne Irvin**

A group of Southern Seminary and Boyce College students recently collaborated to create a collection of well-known Christmas carols, which will release between the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays through social media.

Students from Norton Hall Band, Lexington Road, Doxology, Cannons Lane, and the Boyce Vocal Band arranged the ensembles, recorded and edited them independently just in time for the holiday season.

The EP will include What Child is This (members of Doxology), Mary Did You Know and Carol of the Bells (Doxology guitar ensemble), O Come All Ye Faithful (Norton Hall Band), O Come, O Come Emmanuel (Cannons Lane), Come Thou Long Expected Jesus (Lexington Road Band) and Hark the Herald Angels Sing (Boyce Vocal Band).

The EP will release on iTunes for purchase, and the videos will release on social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

## **Operation Christmas Child**

More than 80 Southern Seminary and Boyce College students gathered to fill Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, Nov. 11, at an event hosted by the Billy Graham School's Department of Biblical Worship. Students filled almost 100 boxes, which Samaritan's Purse will distribute to children around the world this holiday season.



## **Night of Valor hosts WWII veteran Edgar Harrell**

**By Grant Mitchell**

Retired Marine, Edgar Harrell, addressed a gathering of students preparing to serve the United States as military chaplains, November 13 at Southern Seminary. At the event, hosted by the Bevin Center for Missions Mobilization, Harrell told the group about his experience surviving on the USS Indianapolis and the miraculous grace he experienced.

"As they are equipped in the classroom, events like Night of Valor exist to encourage and honor both the student and soldiers and their families," Bevin Center director, Jim Stitzinger, said about the event.

Harrell discussed his experience aboard

the USS Indianapolis, a ship that sunk after a Japanese missile struck it. Only 317 people survived, and Harrell was one of them. The rest of the crew went down with the ship, died of saltwater poisoning, or were eaten by sharks. Harrell spoke of being sustained by the Lord's grace, and how they were saved after four days when a pilot saw the reflection of one of their mirrors.

Harrell wrote a book about his experience, *Out of the Depths: An Unforgettable WWII Story of Survival, Courage, and the Sinking of the U.S.S. Indianapolis*.

More information about the Bevin Center is available at [missions.sbts.edu](http://missions.sbts.edu).

# Reviews



(Crossway 2017, \$17.99)

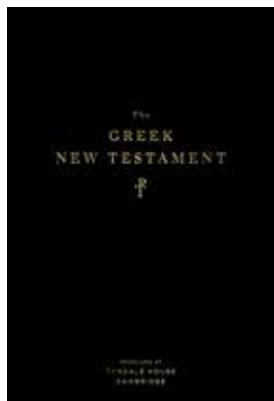
## *Come Let Us Adore Him: A Daily Advent Devotional*

**Paul David Tripp** Review by Caleb T. Shaw

I have been singing along to Andy Williams' "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" for about a month now, and I submitted Christmas lists to both sides of my family long before Thanksgiving. It's safe to say I am overjoyed that Christmas is right around the corner. But in the middle of the decorating, shopping, and baking, I often neglect remembering the true hope of this joyful season. Pastor and author Paul David Tripp recognized this same sinful tendency in all believers and wrote *Come Let Us Adore Him* to remind us about God's redemptive plan in the birth of Jesus Christ.

"I wrote this devotional with the prayer that God would use it to recapture your attention," Tripp says. "I am going to ask you to come with me, kneel down, and look into that manger."

This Advent devotional provides a three-to-five page entry for every day of the month of December. Each day starts with a short, tweetable thought followed by a gospel-focused devotion, a biblical reference for further study, and a helpful idea for presenting that truth to your children.



(Crossway 2017, \$39.99)

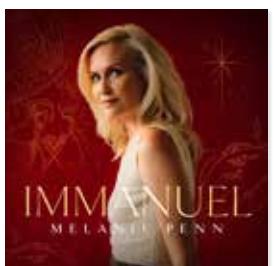
## *The Greek New Testament*

**Dirk Jongkind and Peter J. Williams, eds.** Review by Andrew J.W. Smith

Within seconds of cracking it open, the first thing that stands out to the reader of Crossway's new Greek New Testament, produced at Tyndale House, Cambridge, is probably the typeface and text layout. For readers familiar with the United Bible Society's fourth edition of the Greek New Testament, the easy-to-read font is a significant improvement of the italicized text in UBS4. For readers familiar with the Nestle Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece*, either in its 27th or 28th editions, the stripped-down critical apparatus of the new Tyndale House Greek New Testament will also be easier on the eyes. More importantly, that change also reflects a philosophical decision the editors made: to emphasize the text found in the earliest New Testament manuscripts.

Using a 19th century edition of the Greek text by Samuel Prideaux Tegelles as its starting point, the editors of the Tyndale House Greek New Testament required that their text be attested by at least two different manuscripts — with one of those dating to the fifth century or earlier. What was originally intended to be a revision of the Tegelles text eventually became its own, brand-new edition.

The other major difference for the average reader will probably be the order of the books. Rather than following the traditional order (Gospels, Acts, the Pauline epistles, the catholic epistles, Revelation), the Tyndale House Greek New Testament lists the catholic epistles first to reflect the most common ordering among the earliest full manuscripts, according to the introduction.



(Equally Well Music 2017, \$11.99 on iTunes)

## *Immanuel*

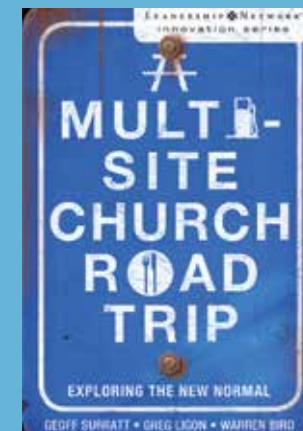
**Melanie Penn** Review by Matt Damico

Melanie Penn covers a lot of ground on her new Christmas album. Nine of the 10 tracks come from the perspective of different characters in the Christmas tale, from the Magi to the Innkeeper to the angel Gabriel.

What ties the project together is Penn's clear and honest voice, accompanied by clean, undistracting instrumentation and production on each song.

Strong tracks include "Great Things," a stirring recasting of Mary's Magnificat, and her simple arrangement of "Joy to the World," the one cover and the sole exception to the first-person theme. Some of the most creative songwriting comes in "Light the Way," written from the perspective of the star of Bethlehem.

# FACULTY RECOMMENDATION



## *The Multi-Site Church Road Trip: Exploring the New Normal*

(Zondervan, 2009)

Geoff Surratt, Greg Ligon,  
and Warren Bird

"This book recounts various experiences of multisite churches with multiplying campuses, technology, mergers, leadership and organizational challenges, and more."



**GREGG R. ALLISON**  
Professor of Christian Theology

A Survival Guide for a World at Odds



### *How to Think: A Survival Guide for a World at Odds*

**Alan Jacobs**

Review by Aaron Cline Hanbury

You get more from this book's subtitle than its big, red words. It tells you right off that author Alan Jacobs writes about a world "at odds." Crack open the book and you'll see a very specific world, one filled with the day-to-day anxieties of Westerners active on Twitter. This could tempt you to read Jacobs's book as "a survival guide for a world on social media." But that's a shallow reading.

Yes, the setting of *How to Think* looks familiar to anyone with a smartphone. Another world exists on social media — a world dominated by outrage where the only recognizable requirement for citizenship is a strong opinion about whatever. In this world, you're either far

right or far left, a friend or an enemy, right or wrong. If you've been there, you've felt it. Look a little closer, though, and you'll see not an alternative reality, but a microcosm of a tribalism that extends much farther than a social feed.

Thus, *How to Think* is a book about identity politics writ large. At least as Jacobs see it, a lack of (clear) thinking plagues our culture — a manifestation of which we see in online streams of outrage. In the book, Jacobs, a professor at Baylor University, describes "attractions" and "repulsions," the unspoken, visceral community guidelines we use either to accept or reject any particular point of view. Basically, our tendency is to virtue signal rather than navigate the complex world of ideas and convictions and opinions and preferences. Jacobs teaches us to think better.

*How to Think* is a logic textbook, blended with a book about manners, presented like a fast-paced — if long — essay. At the end,

Jacobs includes a 12-point afterword he calls, "A Thinking Person's Checklist." In it, he offers tips like, "try to describe others' positions in the language that they use, without indulging in in-other-wordings." This idea — in-other-wordings — he uses to explain the way people often discredit opponents' arguments or ideas. You've heard it, something like, "Ellen isn't an amillennialist. In other words, she just doesn't understand the Bible." In this case, Jacobs might say, we're ignoring the substance of Ellen's criticism and writing her off with a caricature-ish paraphrase. Of course, most real instances of in-other-wordings aren't as gentle.

You can be forgiven for thinking the book is about social media, at least at the beginning. But pretty quick you'll see it's about much more. Jacobs, or some editor somewhere, is right about the title.

(Currency, 2017, \$23)

### *MultiChurch: Exploring the Future of Multisite*

**Gregg R. Allison and Brad House**

Review by RuthAnne Irvin

Multisite churches — often like the ones you see on Sunday morning television — include multiple locations with individual worship teams, leadership, and frameworks for ministry, including somewhat of a "brand" for their church. While this model of church growth is common as churches expand beyond their facilities, it often promotes individuality and autonomy instead of collaboration and community among the different campuses.

In their new book, *MultiChurch: Exploring the Future of Multisite*, Southern Seminary professor Gregg R. Allison and Brad House, executive pastor of ministry at Sojourn Community Church, discuss the differences and benefits of a multichurch model for today's growing congregations.

Multichurch, as opposed to multisite, is defined by Allison and House as "one church made up of multiple independent churches," and "a local community of Christians that matures and multiplies its influence through

launching, developing, and resourcing multiple congregations to reach its city with the gospel of Jesus Christ." These independent churches work toward one common goal, while collaborating with each other for the good of their communities.

Allison and House discuss several models of churches, including the pillar model, the gallery model, franchise model, cooperative, collective, and network models. The authors explore each model in light of biblical prescriptions, examining both the strengths and weaknesses of each church model. They believe church leaders can learn from different models, appreciating aspects of each as expressions of the creativity of God in humanity.

"When we see the creative character of God in the innovative impulse to advance his kingdom, we become encouragers and counselors rather than critics," they write. And "by regarding the creativity of others as imaging our creative God, we are free to appreciate, evaluate, and even learn from different models."

In addition to using an individual's gifts for the good of the church, presence is an essential — and specific — aspect of the multichurch model, avoiding video simulcasts and encouraging churches and their

leadership to meet together regularly.

"Unlike multisite, multichurch is more than a church growth strategy. Multichurch encourages, with intentionality, the multi-gifted members of the church to develop into the vibrant, mature, and multiplying body God calls them to be," they write.

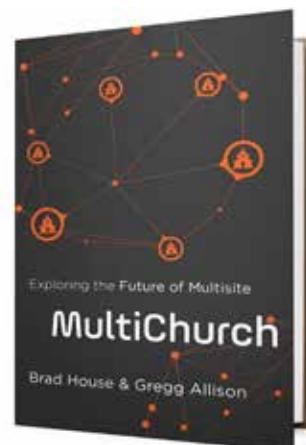
Not only does a multichurch model encourage multiplication for the flourishing of communities, it promotes unity through diversity, encouraging all members to use their gifts and abilities for the growth of the church. It provides opportunities for service in unique ways: from teaching and discipleship opportunities to missions, evangelism, and programs such as ESL training. The whole point of multichurch, Allison and House write, is to promote interdependent churches for multiplication, maturity, and building the kingdom of God through contextualized church bodies.

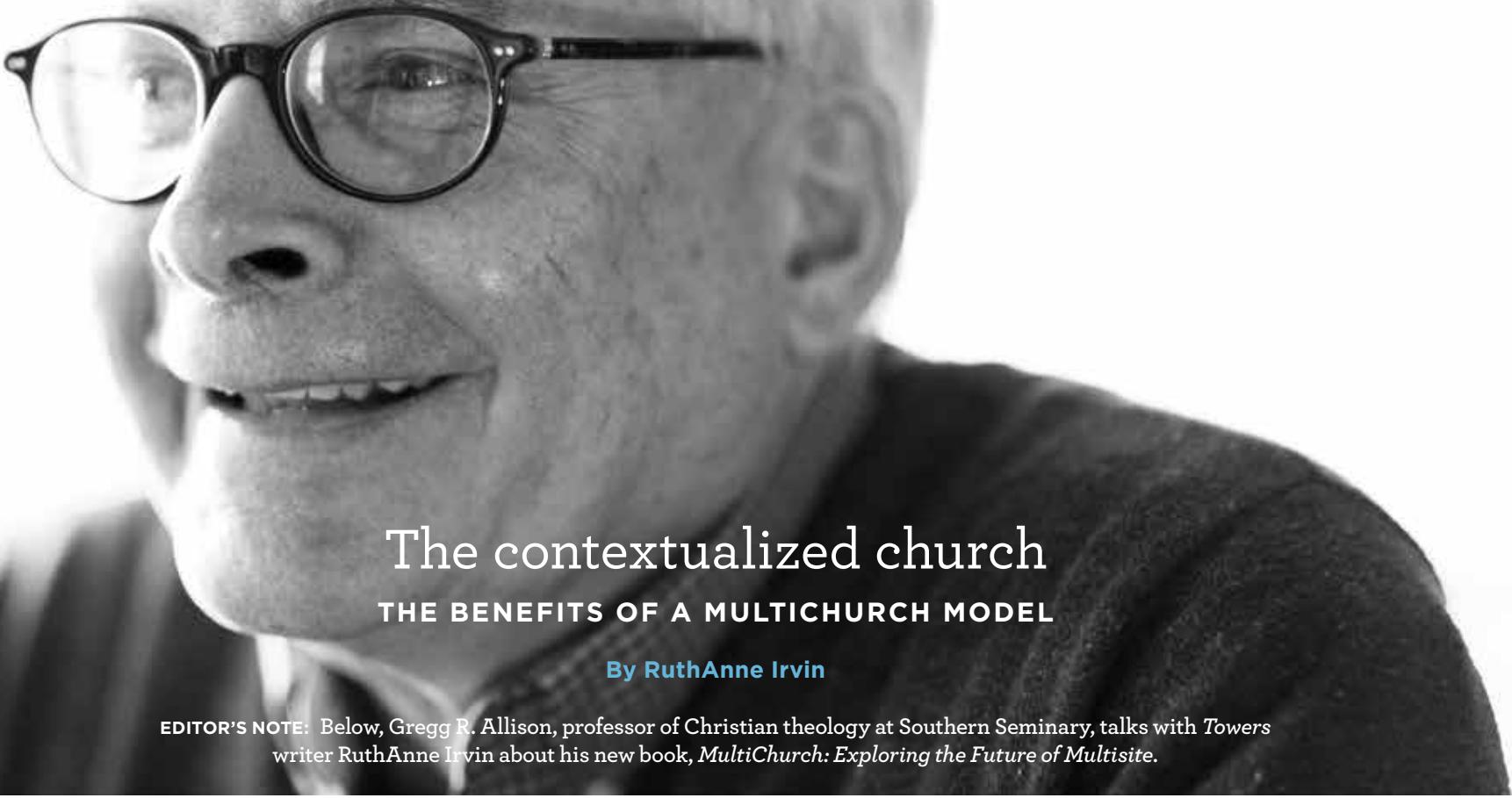
From how to organize church polity to money to membership and ministries, Allison and House provide a thorough history of multisite churches and where they believe multisite needs to go in order for healthy, interdependent congregations to thrive for the good of both the members and the cities they minister to. While the multichurch

model is not for every church, this book provides a helpful guide for any pastor or leadership team thinking through multichurch options as their church grows.

"A multichurch believes the gospel changes everything: individuals, marriages, families, neighborhoods, educational/social/economic/political structures, working conditions, and systemic sins like racism, sexism, and abortion," they write. "A multichurch fosters a climate where leaders do life and ministry together. It nurtures service where members are equipped to exercise their spiritual gifts and are challenged to develop as leaders."

(Zondervan 2017, \$17.99)





## The contextualized church

### THE BENEFITS OF A MULTICHURCH MODEL

By RuthAnne Irvin

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Below, Gregg R. Allison, professor of Christian theology at Southern Seminary, talks with *Towers* writer RuthAnne Irvin about his new book, *MultiChurch: Exploring the Future of Multisite*.

**RAI: For those who haven't picked up the book yet, can you explain the difference between multisite and multichurch, or if you use those terms interchangeably?**

**GA:** They have different meanings. Multisite is the structure most people are familiar with in terms of video venue or high centralized control, with little decision-making happening at the local campuses. It's all run by the central, main structure. Wherever you go, no matter what campus you go to, it looks pretty much the same. Multichurch insists on more autonomy for the local congregations, more decision-making, live preaching, local elder teams or pastoral teams, and contextualization. Multichurch consists of independent churches that become interdependent through collaborative or collective efforts.

**RAI: Why did you and Brad House decide to write this book?**

**GA:** In 2006, Zondervan published a book called *The Multi-Site Church Revolution*, and that was the first book-length treatment of this phenomenon called multisite. A couple years ago, after 10 years of that

book's existence, Brad and I had a conversation about a second-generation, more mature reflection on the multisite phenomenon. The evolution at Sojourn was going on, so we'd moved from what we'd call a multisite church to what we call multi-church. So we wanted to tell our story, provide language for people in the multisite movement, and talk about how to move and have different expressions of multisite.

**RAI: Why should Christians care about this and how can we do a better job when thinking through starting a church or planting a church, and incorporating creativity and a theology of beauty?**

**GA:** God himself is glorious and beautiful. He's created a world and assessed it as very good. The Garden of Eden contained plants with food that were not only good for eating and nutrition, but also satisfying to the sight; they were beautiful. The church historically has emphasized structure that highlights the transcendence of God or the presence of God, through things like stained glass windows where light shines through, or three windows emphasizing

the Trinity. With church planting or any existing church, we try to go beyond mere utilitarianism, beyond pragmatics and function, and ask what can we do — even simply — to communicate and portray the beauty of God through our buildings, through our structures. What's wrong with having a polity, church government, programs, and structures that are beautiful and not just utilitarian?

**RAI: In your "Landmarks" chapter, you write that "When we see the creative character of God in the innovative impulse to advance his kingdom, we become encouragers and counselors rather than critics." Can you explore why that's important when thinking about multi-churches?**

**GA:** In many of our circles, novelty and innovation are bad words. I understand why. There's bad novelty. There's novelty for the sake of novelty's sake. There's innovation just to be different. But if you take novelty and innovation in terms of creativity, we're saying not to be different just to be different but are there ways for the church to be and to act in this world that reflect

the character of God, disciple the church's people, and engage with non-believers in a way that's refreshing, still biblical, contextual, still gospel-centered. We see multichurch as a creative way of being the church and being missional by saying rather than come to a central big building, what if we take the church and plant different congregations to reach a city? Each congregation looks different, feels different, has a different sense because it's contextualized. As we lead people to the Lord and begin to disciple them, we're not asking to leave their neighborhood, drive 25 miles or 15 minutes, but we have a congregation close to them. So those are the kind of creative things that we're looking at.

**RAI: Did you write the book as a response to certain problems you see with multisite? What were some other issues you wanted to address?**

**GA:** Probably the number one criticism of multisite is the use of video. The vast majority of multisite churches use video to one degree or another. Video delivers a virtual presence. The virtual is important. Presence is important. The presence of the pastor preaching the Word, celebrating baptism and the Lord's Supper. Also seeing the fall of high-profile, multisite pastors reminded us that any leader can fall, so it's not just multisite that prompts people to fall. A pastor in a church of 35 people can fall for many different reasons, so it's not the structure itself. But we wondered if there something in the structure that contributes to propping up a pastor, filling his head with pride. What if we had a structure where you've got three, four, five congregational pastors who meet regularly, love one another, pray for one another, hold one another accountable, really mix it up when there's problems — what about a creative solution like that? Hence, multichurch.

**RAI: How do you engage with people who disagree with you on your view of multichurch?**

**GA:** The notion that the church has to be one service where all the people are able to gather together is based on a faulty understanding of the Greek word *ekklesia*. The church in Jerusalem was a multichurch. All the people, or as many as could, gathered in the temple for worship, for hearing the Apostles' teaching, for prayer, for giving, and evangelism, but they also gathered in the homes of Christians, which weren't small groups of the church in Jerusalem. They were

**"With church planting or any existing church, we try to go beyond mere utilitarianism, beyond pragmatics and function, and ask what can we do — even simply — to communicate and portray the beauty of God through our buildings, through our structures."**

the church of Jerusalem, and what was going on in the temple was going on in these congregations. I think we have a biblical precedent, and that this was true in the early church: There was a church in Corinth, a church in Philippi, a church in Thessalonica, a church in Rome, and each were spread out into these various Christians' homes, which made the congregations of the church. So we have a basic disagreement on the approach to determining what a church should be.

**RAI: Are there any misconceptions about a multi-church model that you like to teach about or tell people about when they come to you to ask you questions? Misconceptions that you often hear or that you have to wrestle with and deal with?**

**GA:** Misconceptions: it's the sexy thing to do, it's novel, it's creative. It's not sexy; it's a mess. It's really hard. I think we help people have realistic expectations. Other misconceptions: it's promoting a brand or building a platform. I know the four congregational pastors at Sojourn regularly talk about not being a brand and not developing something that could be taken on the road as a national phenomenon. Another misconception is that we're saying this is for every

church; it's not. We would not counsel the vast majority of churches to go this direction. There has to be the proper context.

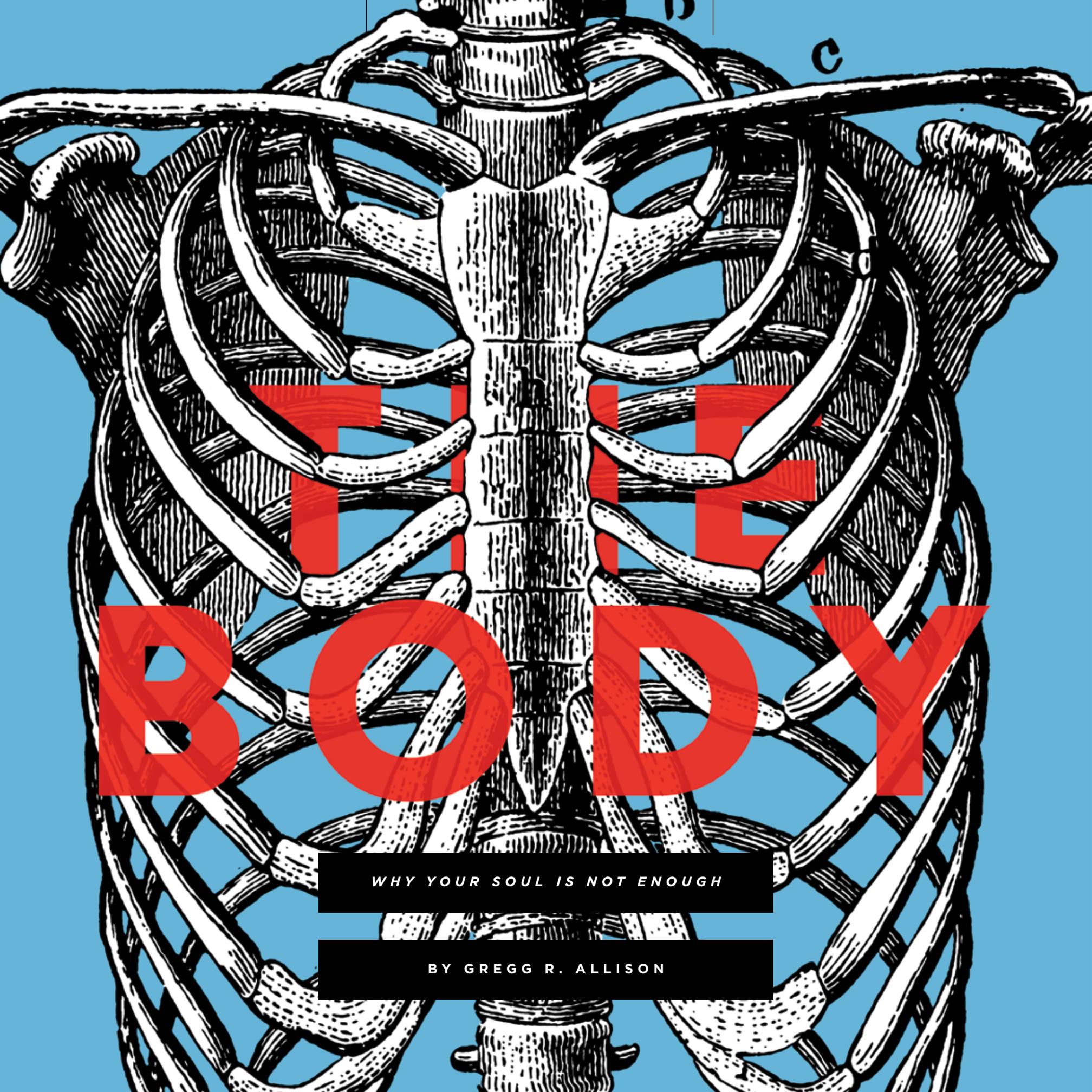
**RAI: How would a small church move in their mindset toward multichurch, or partner with other churches in order to reach their neighbors better?**

**GA:** Partner with other churches. For impacting the city and the region and the world, small churches collaborating with other small churches can do a whole lot of evangelism and missions. It's really hard to do it alone. Our Lone Ranger-syndrome, our extreme autonomy, our rejection of authority and accountability, make a recipe for disaster. I think that's what we're seeing in a lot of small churches. They refuse interaction with anybody else, any other churches. Brad and I think that a very high, biblical value is interdependence, not independence. It's hard to find autonomy and independence in the Bible. But interdependence definitely is emphasized. Small autonomous, independent churches can connect together and covenant together to be interdependent to reach a city, a region, part of the world.

**RAI: How do you counsel pastors and churches that want to move — if they have a pillar church model — to multichurch, or if they're multisite and want to move to multichurch?**

**GA:** Talk with Brad and me. Expect it to be extremely hard to do, and it's messy. You really need to think carefully about it. A lot of churches go to multisite just for pragmatic purposes when they run out of space. It's often just the need to expand because of growth. Growth is a great thing. We would encourage them not to do it for pragmatic purposes, but think biblically and theologically about it and have theological and biblical convictions about it.





# BODY

*WHY YOUR SOUL IS NOT ENOUGH*

BY GREGG R. ALLISON

**YOU ALWAYS HEAR ABOUT 'NEW YEAR, NEW YOU.' BUT HAVE YOU STOPPED TO THINK ABOUT THE THEOLOGICAL REASON HEALTH AND FITNESS MATTERS?**



Early in my career of teaching systematic theology, a student arranged an appointment with me in my office. After the customary small talk, he cut to the quick: He was experiencing multiple physical problems, plagued by insomnia, digestive and excretory problems, blood in his urine, lethargy, and attention deficit. He wondered what spiritual causes could lie at the heart of these physical symptoms, and he wanted my advice about how to become well again. I hardly needed to probe much, but my questions caught him off guard because they focused on physical matters: What are you eating? His answer: "junk food." Are you scheduling rest periods? "Too busy for relaxation." How are you exercising? "No need for that."

Becoming irritated with my line of questioning, he said that because his body was going to be sloughed off at death anyway, he did not need to be concerned about eating well, resting well, and exercising well. I countered with an observation: His body was (literally) breaking down before his eyes, and he would soon be no good for himself, his family, and the church ministry for which he was preparing through his seminary studies. And, I added, I thought the problem was a physical one, not a spiritual one. But that was not the answer a "spiritually minded" evangelical like him was accustomed to hearing. Besides, this student had come to me with an expectation that I would share something with him from the Word of God. But I was not prepared to do so.

This encounter plunged me into a crisis: As a professor of theology at an evangelical seminary, I wondered what I should have shared with this student from Scripture that would have helped him with his physical problems. If you found yourself in a similar situation, what would you communicate?

At best, evangelicals express an ambivalence toward the human body, and at worst manifest a contempt for it. Many abhor their body – often because of tragic experiences with it (like physical



or sexual abuse). Other Christians, due to either poor or non-existent teaching on human embodiment, consider their body to be a hindrance to spiritual maturity, or even inherently evil.

However, in my study of Scripture, I have discovered a remarkable perspective toward the body, one which affects how we live out our existence as created beings, how we view and experience our salvation, and how we trust and obey God as maturing believers in Jesus Christ.

The human body is an essential aspect of human beings during their earthly existence and, following Christ's return and the resurrection of their body, in the age to come. Specifically, the body is the material component of human nature distinct from – but intimately linked with – the immaterial component, commonly called the soul (or spirit). Only between physical death and the return of Christ will human existence be a disembodied one. The soul (or spirit) will survive death and continue to exist while the body is sloughed off, but this is an abnormal condition (2 Cor 5:1-10). Embodiment, therefore, is the state of human existence between conception and death, and again after the resurrection of the body and for all eternity. The normal state of human existence is an embodied existence.

### THE CREATED BODY

Human beings are this way because God designed them so. This was true of the first man, the first woman, and it is true of each and every human being since the original creation, as God is intimately involved in fashioning human life from the moment of conception. As David extols God in a psalm, "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.... My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth" (Ps 139:13, 15).

Embodiment is God's creative design for



human beings, who should be grateful for their physical existence. Moreover, the church is called to minister to people as holistic human beings created in the image of God. This worldview entails treating all people – both Christians and non-Christians alike – with respect for their inherent dignity. Furthermore, the church should be engaged in helping the poor and marginalized through deeds of mercy, communicating the gospel of Jesus Christ to everyone, and discipling Christians by addressing their many needs – intellectual, emotional, volitional, physical, educational, and socio-economic.

### THE GENDERED BODY

As embodied creatures, human beings are either male or female (Gen 1:26-27); indeed, gender is a fundamental reality of human existence. Unlike secondary characteristics such as hair and eye color, height, and body type, gender is a primary characteristic. God does not create a generic human being and then add on gender; rather, he creates a human being either as a male person or as a female person. Human genderedness means that a man is conscious of and knows himself as a man, he relates to other human beings as a man, and as a man he relates to God. Similarly, it means that a woman is conscious of and knows herself as a woman, she relates to other human beings as a woman, and as a woman she relates to God. Try as I might, even urged on by my wife, I cannot see life from her – a woman's – perspective. Human beings are perspectively gendered – as designed by God. Accordingly, men and women should be thankful for the gender with which God created them, and any sense of superiority or inferiority because they are male or they are female is wrong and dangerous. Gender differences should be celebrated, and men and women should learn to enjoy personal, pure relationships with the other gender.



### THE SEXUAL BODY

An important aspect of gender, and hence of human embodiment, is sexuality. Indeed, God created human beings as both male and female so that they could fulfill the cultural mandate to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth” (Gen 1:28). This universal command means that the majority of human beings will be married, and the general portrait that arises from Scripture is that marriage is between a man and a woman who commit themselves to living in a monogamous relationship. Sexual intercourse is to be enjoyed within the bounds of this covenantal framework and is designed for several purposes, including pleasure, procreation, and unity. Tragically, the fall into sin wreaks havoc with human sexuality, and Scripture presents instructions intended to help people overcome temptation and failure in this area. In

no uncertain terms, Paul warns against sexual immorality, placing it into a category by itself by explaining that “every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body” (v. 18). This heinous sin wrenches away one’s body from its rightful membership and unites it in membership with the body of someone other than one’s spouse.

Anyone reading this article is certainly aware of the many troubles the church encounters in this area of human sexuality: rampant sexual immorality, adultery, homosexuality, sexual abuse of children and women, pornography, “sexting,” prostitution, and other problems. Cognizant of these many challenges, we should never lose sight of the fact that human sexuality, and sexual intercourse between married couples, are wonderful gifts from God for his embodied creatures — gifts that should be celebrated and enjoyed.

### THE DISCIPLINED BODY

Paul’s reminder to Christians “that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit” (1 Cor 6:19), while specifically directed at the problem of sexual immorality, has a broader application: Human beings are to respect and care for their body, and such attention requires physical discipline. Elsewhere, the apostle gives instruction to Timothy: “train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come” (1 Tim 4:8). Using the metaphor of athletic preparation for the Isthmian games, Paul urges his disciple to focus on training in godliness, which would include study of Scripture, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines.

**EMBODIMENT IS THE STATE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE BETWEEN CONCEPTION AND DEATH, AND AGAIN AFTER THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY AND FOR ALL ETERNITY. THE NORMAL STATE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE IS AN EMBODIED EXISTENCE.**

Bodily discipline includes regular exercise, good nutrition, proper rest and sleep, and avoidance of body-harming substances. Insights from exercise physiology and nutrition can be helpful in this regard. It would be embarrassing to ask when was the last time you heard a sermon on physical discipline or participated in a Sunday school class about diet and exercise. While it is not my purpose to minimize the importance of practicing spiritual disciplines, a proper theology of human embodiment corrects a much-overlooked aspect of Christian living and church education: physical discipline in regard to eating, exercising, resting, and avoiding harmful substances is an important component of life in the human body. When spiritual disciplines call for accompanying physical activities like fasting, solitude, temporary celibacy, and the foregoing of other legitimate bodily pleasures, the goal should always be increased spiritual vitality and never the punishment of the body as an opponent or enemy of spiritual maturity.

## THE BODY AND THE WORSHIP OF GOD

When most Christians think of worshipping God, they imagine singing songs of praise and thanksgiving, listening to the Word of God read and preached, praying corporately, and the like. Few would consider the role of their body in worship. In a popular definition, Archbishop William Temple described worship as involving a person's conscience, mind, imagination, heart, and will — with no mention of the human body! Scripture, however, presents an active, physical involvement in worship: the raising of hands, indicative of both blessing God (Ps 134:1) and pleading for his help and mercy (Ps 28:1-2; 88:8-10); kneeling, bowing, and falling down, exhibiting humility and abject shame before the Lord (Rev 4:9-11; 5:8-14; Ezra 9:5-6; 2 Chron 6:12-14; Ps 35:13-14; Neh 8:5-6); dancing or leaping, manifesting intense joy (Ps 149:3-4; Ex 15:20-21; 2 Sam 6:14-17); and clapping and shouting praise to God (Ps 47:1-2; 66:1). Certainly, many cultural realities must be considered in this discussion, but embodied human beings qualified to worship God "in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24) are to engage in this activity with the entirety of their being — and that includes their body.

Worship, then, involves bodily participation as Christians physically express their praise, confess their sins, plead for divine mercy, and exalt in God's blessings, which are also tangibly exhibited by the tangible rites of baptism and the Lord's Supper. Unsurprisingly, then, Paul urges Christians "by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship" (Rom 12:1).

## THE FUTURE OF THE BODY

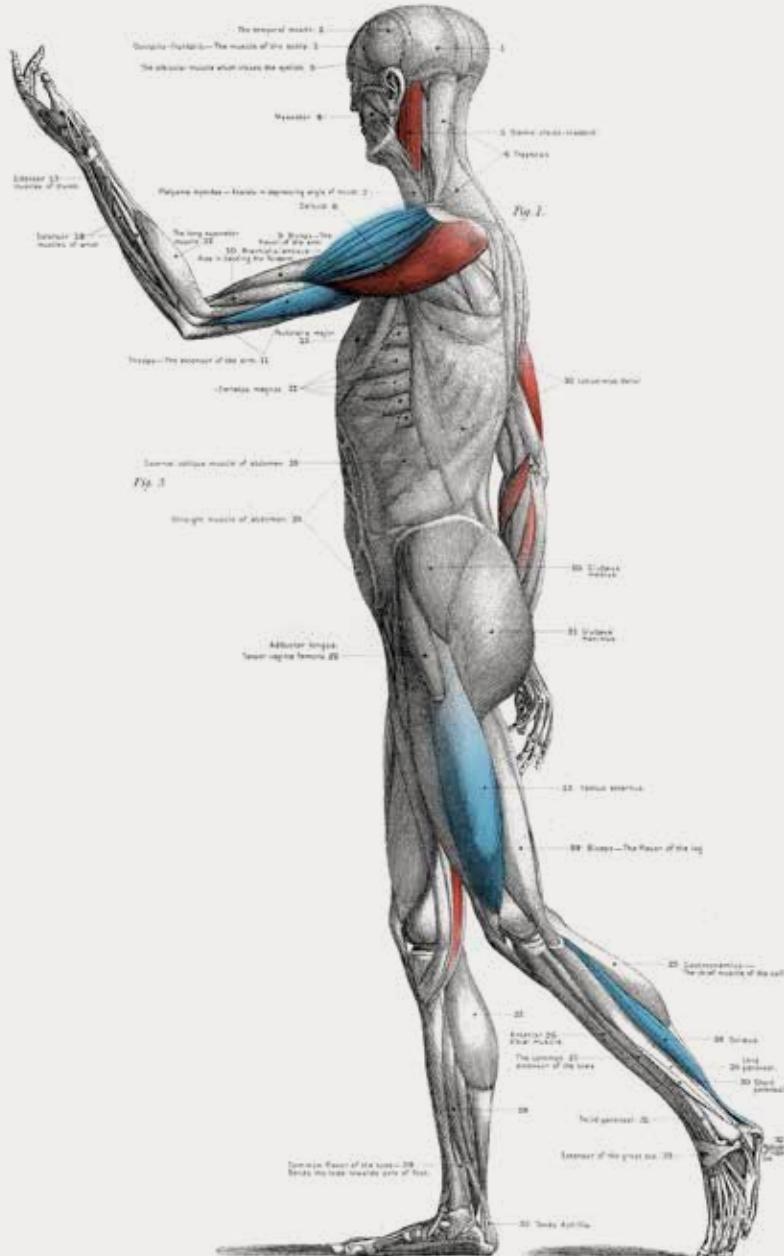
Finally, for those who have died as Christ-followers, who exist as disembodied beings in heaven with the Lord (2 Cor 5:1-9), the return of Christ will result in the resurrection of their bodies. They will be brought back to life with glorious, renewed bodies. For those who are still alive at the second advent, the return of Christ will result in their bodies being instantaneously changed into glorified bodies. In both cases, these resurrected and glorified bodies will be imperishable, glorious, powerful, and dominated by the Spirit (1 Cor 15:42-44; Phil 3:20-21; Rom 8:11).

Embodiment is the future hope and blessing for human beings. Thus, as fallen and sinful human beings are called to salvation through Christ, and they are not just "souls to be saved," but the human body is included in this divine work. Indeed, against the prevailing view held by many Christians, death resulting in disembodied existence in the presence of the Lord is not

their ultimate hope. Rather, the resurrection and glorification of the body at his second advent, leading to embodied existence in the new heavens and the new earth, is their ultimate hope.

As divine image bearers created for embodied existence both now and in eternity, we do well to live our human embodiment cognizant of the rich instruction given in Scripture and here developed in a brief article. Whether we are confronting questions from people experiencing physical problems, addressing the uniqueness of human genderedness and sexuality, struggling personally with gluttony or sloth, selecting clothes to wear, expressing our worship through physical acts, praying for the sick, or pondering the mystery of the life to come, Scripture provides abundant teaching that corrects wrongful attitudes toward the body and underscores the wonderful reality of human embodiment.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: THIS ARTICLE IS REVISED AND ADAPTED FROM GREGG R. ALLISON'S 2009 PAPER TOWARD A THEOLOGY OF HUMAN EMBODIMENT, PUBLISHED IN *THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST JOURNAL OF THEOLOGY*. USED WITH PERMISSION.**



## 9 WAYS TO MAKE GOOD ON THAT NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

BY ANDREW J.W. SMITH



### THIS TIME OF YEAR, IT SEEMS LIKE EVERYONE WANTS TO BE FITTER, STRONGER, OR FASTER.

Almost everyone commits to finally getting serious about that at the start of a new year. Lainey Greer is the group fitness coordinator at the Health and Recreation Center at Southern Seminary and Ph.D. student in systematic theology, and she has 15 years of experience working as a physical trainer and personal nutritionist. In an interview with *Towers*, she suggested a few ways you can get serious about your fitness level. If you want to follow through on your resolution in 2018, these nine tips are a great place to start.

#### DON'T LOOK FOR A QUICK FIX

You won't solve all your eating habits or body composition overnight, Greer says. Commit to a lifestyle of healthy eating and a balanced, consistent workout regimen to get the results you want. "We don't grow in spiritual discipline overnight. It's the same thing with physical discipline," she says.

#### FIND A PROGRAM THAT FITS YOUR GOALS

Greer recommends three to four days of cardio training and two to three days of strength training as a simple, general program for those starting out. Make slight changes from that based on your goals. For cardio, interval training (interspersing your workout with brief rest or recovery periods throughout) gets the best results. For lifting, focus on whole-body movements.

## BE BALANCED

Dudes: You have legs too. Don't just train your chest and biceps. Ladies: "spot reduction" is not a thing. You can't do 100 crunches and get six-pack abs — diet and nutrition does that.

## WATCH YOUR FORM

Squatting and deadlifting is great, Greer says, but make sure you're doing it right. "Right" means proper depth on the squat (no deeper than at or just below parallel) and a flat back and firm gut on the deadlift. Don't heel-strike or run on your toes. Stop hyperextending (a reverse arch in your spine...think about it like lifting your sacrum to the back of your head) on the back extension machine — especially with weights in your arms.

## DON'T OVERDO IT

Overtraining is a real problem, and one that only keeps you from progress. Greer recommends having friends hold you accountable in your life balance. Here's a hint: If you feel the overwhelming need to exercise every time you eat something "bad," Greer says you might be idolizing your fitness.

## STICK WITH IT

Changing programs every other week is a great way to not make progress. The most basic regimen followed precisely is far superior to a more complex method you follow inconsistently. Don't miss workouts, improve a little bit every time, and save the complicated stuff for next year.

## PICK A CLASS

You don't have to go it alone. Southern Seminary's Health and Rec Center offers several free group fitness classes, from pilates and Zumba to kickboxing and jiu-jitsu. Busy moms can try out Momma Fit, a class designed specifically for them. You can also push yourself in SBTS Crossfit for a monthly fee. Greer also provides free nutrition assessments (reach her at [lgreer@sbts.edu](mailto:lgreer@sbts.edu)).

## VII

### EAT PROTEIN, LIMIT SUGAR

Greer suggests some basic standards for good nutrition: Drink an ounce of water for every half-pound of bodyweight (so, if you weigh 160 pounds, drink 80 ounces of water), eat colorful vegetables, eat less than 30 grams of sugar, eat whole grains, don't eat a bunch of processed foods, don't drink your calories. Girls especially need to eat more protein, Greer says (fish, chicken, eggs, nuts, lentils). It won't hurt for very active people to aim for one gram of protein per pound of bodyweight each day.

## FIGHT FOR AN ACCURATE IMAGE OF YOURSELF

Body image problems are systemic in American culture and common to both genders. For the most part, women feel pressure to be thin while men want to be "swole." In both cases, their standard of attractiveness comes more from Instagram than Scripture, according to Greer. "There are different body types — be okay with how the Lord made you. Don't have unrealistic expectations," she says. Seek to honor the Lord with how you use your body (1 Cor 9:24-27) and eat food (1 Cor 10:31).

# FAVORITE CHRISTMAS CAROLS



## Thomas R. Schreiner

JAMES BUCHANAN HARRISON  
PROFESSOR OF NEW TESTAMENT

I would choose *Hark the Herald Angels Sing*. The carol bursts with joy, which is fitting at our Savior's birth. We also see why Jesus came: "God and sinners reconciled." The truth of the incarnation is wonderfully communicated.

## Hershael W. York

VICTOR AND LOUISE LESTER  
PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN PREACHING

However commercial the Christmas season grows, whatever waves of cultural ignorance or resentment threaten to overwhelm and flood its historical and theological moorings, I always count on *Hark the Herald Angels Sing* as an anchor of biblical and beautiful truth. In a department store or a mall, in a restaurant or a party, when I hear Mendelssohn's tune or Charles Wesley's lyrics, I thank God that he gets the praise due him even from some who do not know him. The first verse begins innocuously enough with angels singing—who could possibly object to singing angels?—but immediately dives into the deepest truths of the incarnation and its divine purpose. The preincarnate Christ willingly lays aside his glory so that God might reconcile sinners to himself! The truth that enraged a paranoid Herod, that the baby of Bethlehem is born King of the Jews, is now sung by school choirs, at office parties, and in the perennial "A Charlie Brown Christmas." What a glorious reminder of the gospel, that the newborn King, offspring of a Virgin's womb, was born that man no more may die.



## Matthew J. Hall

DEAN OF BOYCE COLLEGE

I don't have a singular favorite, but one I do particularly love is *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*. Every advent season, it aids me in recapturing the wonder of Christian anticipation. It reminds me of the glorious good news that in Christ, God has made his dwelling among men. What grace to know and see what Old Testament saints for centuries anticipated and awaited. And yet, the hymn reminds us that the Christian is still someone who awaits and longs for a future coming of the King and his eternal city.





### Tyler Flatt

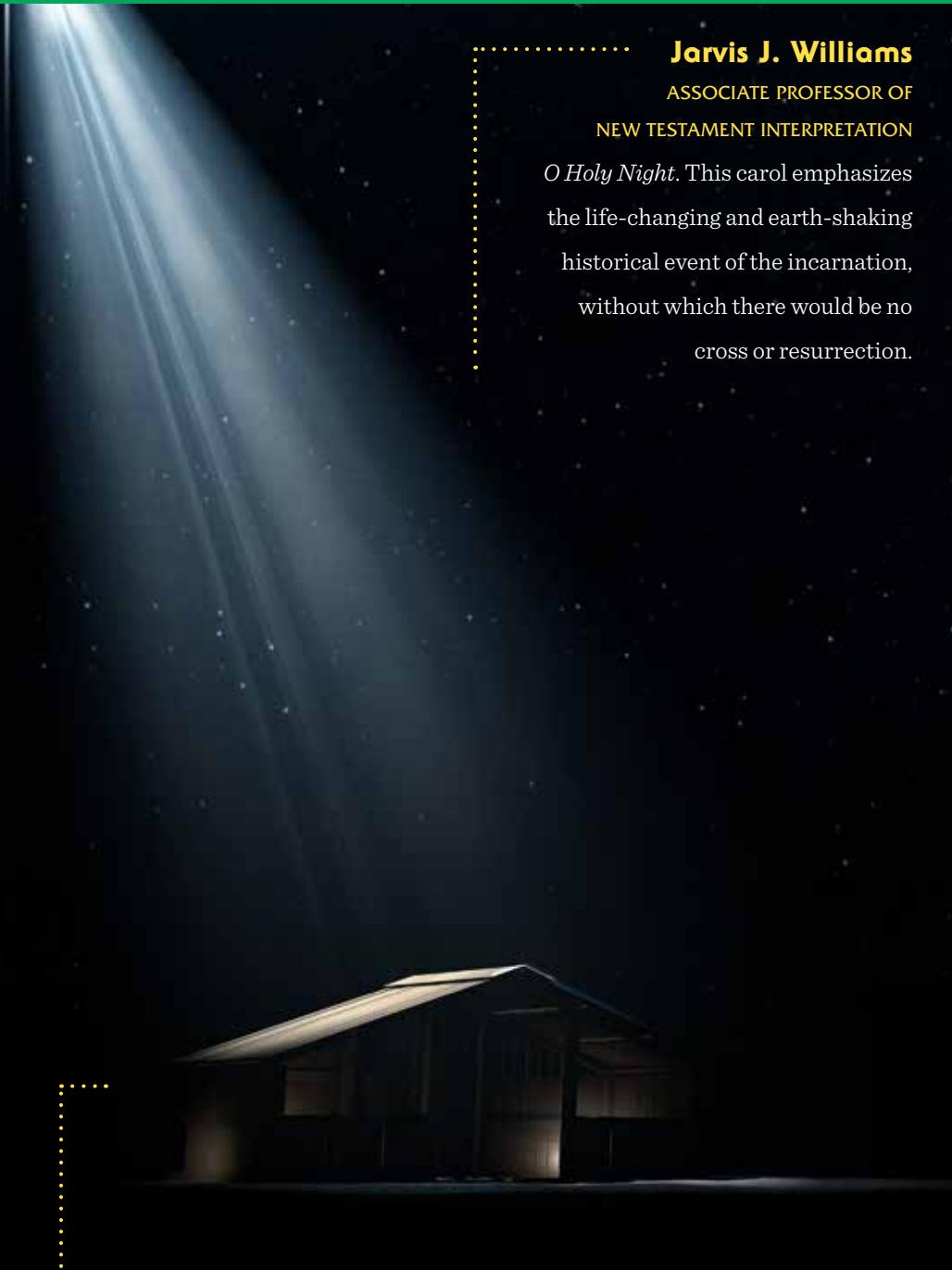
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF  
HUMANITIES AT BOYCE COLLEGE

My favorite carol is *In Dulci Jubilo*, composed probably in the 14th century. It was originally written in alternating lines of Latin and German, but Robert Pearsall's English translation of the German lines has proved the most popular version since the 19th century. It is widely believed — though no one is sure — that the third verse was added by Martin Luther in the 1530s. The tune, which was later used for *Good Christian Men Rejoice*, is at least as old as the original words, and perhaps older. For me, the carol's antiquity, melodic beauty, and verbal simplicity make it uniquely precious. It brings to my mind's eye snow falling in a medieval churchyard. I hear the bells of heaven (mentioned in the fourth verse) ringing in joy and triumph, no longer marking the dreary passing of the hours but heralding the One who makes all things new. It helps me feel connected to the love, hope, and faith of countless generations of believers who have trusted in Christ before me, and that is no small thing in this 21st century.

### Jarvis J. Williams

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF  
NEW TESTAMENT INTERPRETATION

*O Holy Night.* This carol emphasizes the life-changing and earth-shaking historical event of the incarnation, without which there would be no cross or resurrection.



### Melissa Tucker

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF TEACHER ED; CHAIR, DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

*Silent Night* is my favorite Christmas Hymn. During the holidays, as I was growing up my mom and dad would sing that song as we put up the tree or worked around the house. One day a long time ago, I heard my dad speak on this hymn in church and he reminded us that he loves this hymn because it reminds us to keep silent and allow the Lord to talk to us and work through us.

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## HISTORY HIGHLIGHT

# Hold the Chicken, Hit the Gym

By Adam Winters

**S**outhern Seminary founder John A. Broadus was a vocal proponent of bodily health and discipline within the seminary community, even recommending muscular exercise to preachers in his influential book *The Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (1870).<sup>1</sup> During his tenure as seminary president, Broadus believed so strongly in the value of physical exercise for ministers that he designated two students to lead daily instructions in gymnastics throughout the year.<sup>2</sup>

The seminary's first serialized magazine periodically featured articles mindful of a student's physical fitness. Thomas W. Young, a student, wrote a satirical piece for an 1889 issue titled "Students Should Not Take Exercise." Taking aim at what he perceived as a trend of overzealousness toward academic study at the expense of physical health, Young mused "too close confection to the study may cause you to become pale and amaciated (*sic.*) and troubled, doubtless, with dyspepsia, but these are no hindrances to your usefulness, besides they are indications of being a hard student."<sup>3</sup>

*The Seminary Magazine* gave occasional consideration to good diet as well as exercise. Dudley S. Reynolds, M.D., penned a more sober-minded article for an 1892 issue, recommending dietary prudence.<sup>4</sup> He warned against the ill-effects to the liver and kidneys due to consumption of "insoluble foods" such as the skins of potatoes, apples, and other yeast-abundant fruits.

In 1903, the *Magazine* ran a more jovial editorial on the subject entitled "Gastronomics," courtesy of student John Roach Straton, who later became famous nationally as a preacher and moral crusader. The future evangelist asserted that "many a poor sermon is the net result of too much fried chicken



and too large slices of ham for breakfast!" Turning his attention to the seminary's dining hall, Straton continued:

Brethren, is not the manner of our eating in the Hall entirely too gay? This is a fast age, but the age would have to quicken its pace to catch up with the clipper gait at which we dispose a meal in the Hall.... The manner in which we bolt a half-hour meal in ten minutes is likely to cause dyspeptic preachers, which in turn is calculated to cause dyspeptic preaching, which is in turn is very bad—is awful!<sup>5</sup>

In 1897, the seminary dedicated its Levering Gymnasium at the downtown

campus at the intersection of Fifth and Broadway, an occasion that would have surely delighted Broadus had he lived to witness it. Funding for the gymnasium came primarily through a \$10,000 gift of trustee board president Joshua Levering. As 19th century Americans became more urbanized, city-dwellers increasingly recognized the importance of gymnasiums to promote a culture of bodily health. Publications from that era provided instructions on stretch drills and moderate weight lifting, but the instructions on using apparatus such as balance bars, suspended rings, and vaulting bars might be considered too specialized for the average contemporary workout.<sup>6</sup> A

marvelous photograph dated around 1912 evidences the fact that Southern Seminary students were sufficiently able-bodied to implement handstands and precise balancing drills into their gymnasium routines.

The seminary built a second Levering Gymnasium for the current campus in 1929, and for many decades the gym served as the go-to-place for the seminary's physical fitness conditioning and extracurricular activities. After the construction of the Honeycutt Campus Center in the 1990s, the Levering Gym remained accessible but as a supplement to the Health and Recreation Center. Levering's legacy will continue to endure through a planned refitting of the gymnasium to host the SBTS CrossFit program.

More resources on SBTS history can be accessed through the Archives and Special Collections in the James P. Boyce Centennial Library.

#### FOOTNOTES

<sup>1</sup>John A. Broadus, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons* (New York: A. C. Armstrong, 1894), 452-58.

<sup>2</sup>Catalogue of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1891-92 (Louisville: Baptist Book Concern, 1892), 2.

<sup>3</sup>Thos. W. Young, "Students Should Not Take Exercise," *The Seminary Magazine*, March 1889, 83.

<sup>4</sup>Dudley S. Reynolds, "Disturbances -Physical and Mental Development," *The Seminary Magazine*, February 1892, 250.

<sup>5</sup>John Roach Straton, "Gastronomics," *The Seminary Magazine*, March 1903, 248.

<sup>6</sup>Classified Gymnasium Exercises of System of R. J. Roberts with Notes (Springfield, MA: W. F. Adams, 1890). James Madison Watson, *Hand-book of Calisthenics and Gymnastics: A Complete Drill-Book for Schools, Families, and Gymnasiums* (New York: Schermerhorn, Bancroft, and Co., 1864).



## Seeking God's kingdom

**FORMER MODEL AMRIT AHLUWALIA'S JOURNEY TO SOUTHERN SEMINARY**

By Myriah Snyder

**A**t the peak of her modeling career, Amrit Ahluwalia was making \$20,000 for a day's work. She was the highest-paid model in North India, where she'd risen to stardom. She appeared in a chart-topping music video in her country, received multiple offers to act in movies, often acted on TV, and felt like she was in complete control of her career.

She started modeling after winning Miss Teen 2009 for North India, and she spent her last year of high school playing soccer with a national-level team before winning Miss Chandigarh in 2013. Chandigarh is the capital city of Punjab, a state in North India.

When she wasn't playing soccer or modeling, Ahluwalia studied at Punjab University, one of India's top universities, where she worked on a diploma in fashion design and a bachelor's degree in psychology. She speaks fluent English, Punjabi, Hindi, and French, and did well in her studies.

Although Ahluwalia's focus was to honor her

parents' wishes for her to complete college, she put all movie offers on hold, but fully intended to sign onto

**"Even though she grew up  
in an affluent part of India,  
Ahluwalia's childhood was  
riddled with struggles."**

them as soon as she completed her degree program.

When she received results from her final year of college, which determined whether or not she would graduate, she realized she had failed a basic subject, and according to the Indian education system, would need to retake her final year. Her

ego was smarting, and she was about to give up on her education and start her acting career.

But that night, God unexpectedly gripped Ahluwalia's heart.

Until she was about 16, the only "god" Ahluwalia knew was that of the Sikh religion. Sikhism is a relatively new religion (circa. 18th century), and the eighth-largest religion in the world. Followers claim their religion is monotheistic, but they also worship 10 "gurus," or spiritual messengers, who lead to god, Ahluwalia explained. As a child, she was forced to attend worship in the Sikh temple and pray to their gods. She described her Sikh family at the time as pharisaical.

Even though she grew up in an affluent part of India, Ahluwalia's childhood was riddled with struggles. She worshipped Sikh gurus, seeking answers to her difficult life from them.

"I had bowed down in front of so many gods. I had asked them, 'please take away our troubles. Please, why do we suffer so much?' I would have so many

questions, and I never felt like they answered me."

One day, at the invitation of some friends, her mother attended a prayer meeting. As a devout Sikh, she had never heard the gospel. Yet during the meeting, she felt compelled to pray. "I want to know who the true God is," she prayed, receiving a vision of Jesus and feeling a profound sense of peace come over her. She believed the gospel.

At the time, Ahluwalia's father lived and worked in another part of the country. Their marriage had crumbled. After Ahluwalia's mother became a Christian, she picked up the phone and called her husband.

He had been set up to take the fall for his boss' embezzlement of company funds, and he was at the end of his rope, not knowing where to turn next. "You should pray to Jesus," Ahluwalia's formerly Sikh mother said to her Sikh father. Later that night, he was awoken by an unexpected phone call around 4 a.m., the time Sikhs traditionally recite their chants and prayers. Recalling what his wife had said to him, he prayed to Jesus Christ instead.

"He said, 'Jesus, if you're there, you know I'm stuck and I'm going to jail. I don't know what will happen to my kids. Please help me if you can,'" said Ahluwalia.

Soon after, his boss called and told him that something was compelling him to let Ahluwalia's father go, and that he would take full responsibility for his own embezzlement. Soon after, her father converted to Christianity.

"You know how in the Bible we see God changes the hearts of people?" Ahluwalia said. "I have seen the Bible lived out. I'm still seeing it today. It's amazing. It's so real to me."

After witnessing her parents' conversion, their restored marriage, and experiencing God's work in her family, Ahluwalia wanted to follow Christ too. She began to read the Bible and understood God's character as a God who keeps his promises. She forsook the other gods, and like her parents, chose to follow the true God of the Bible.

During her modeling career, Ahluwalia refused to participate in the typical modeling lifestyle, avoiding situations that made her uncomfortable, choosing what she wore for photo shoots, and declining anything that compromised her conscience. Her faith was important to her.

Then, she received that failing grade report at the end of what she thought would be her last year of college. She was confused. She was disappointed. She was ready to give up on her college degree and — her parents' wishes notwithstanding — start acting in all the movies she had put off. Then, she heard a voice.

"The only thing he said was 'Leave modeling and pursue my kingdom,'" she recounted. She looked



**"Studying biblical  
counseling under  
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over the world."**

around the room, wondering where the authoritative, loving, fatherly voice came from. She knew it was God. She began to experience the depths of her sinfulness over the next several days, even seeing what she identified as a video reel of her sins replaying in her mind. She knew there were critical steps she had to take in order to be faithful to the Lord.

"I knew he died for our sins, but you know, it never made sense to me — my depravity," she said. "That was the day it was so clear to me and that was when I realized I need Jesus so badly. More than anything else."

Although she knew she could use her modeling career as a platform for the gospel, God began revealing to her ways that she was making herself and her career an idol.

She broke contracts, had to fire people, and saw her kingdom as a movie and modeling icon crumble. She spent the next year finishing her psychology degree, learning to live with less money than she ever had to in her adult life, and seeking the Lord's will for what was next.

She continued attending a house church with her parents, and waited for the Lord's direction. "During that time I found a lot of comfort from the Bible," she said.

"I didn't know what God was calling me to do. What does pursuing his kingdom mean?" Ahluwalia asked herself. She determined during that season that faithfulness meant attending church, helping those around her, and using her psychology degree to counsel.

After coming to the United States for a time, and through the patient counsel of people in her Washington D.C. church, she felt led to "seek God's kingdom" by moving to Southern Seminary to study counseling.

Since joining Southern, Ahluwalia has developed a mentoring relationship with several professors, especially Gregg R. Allison and Eric Johnson. They have helped her become a better counselor and minister effectively, she said. Michael and Cynthia Smith have served as her American parents during her nearly three years, and Ahluwalia credits them with helping her difficult transition to American culture.

This month, Ahluwalia will graduate with a master's degree in biblical counseling from Southern and will start working as a pastoral care resident in the faith and missions area at Norton Healthcare. She hopes to leave behind an awareness of Sikhism, and the idea that each person is unique and must use their gifts to serve him.

"Studying biblical counseling under Southern professors has really helped me with counseling people not only at my church, but from all over the world," she said. "My time here has given me more than I expected."

## Photos of Fall

BY EMIL HANDKE





# December - January 2018

## SEMINARY CLINIC HOURS

Staff, students, and their immediate family members are provided a health maintenance program through the clinic, located on the second floor of the campus center, Honeycutt 213.

*Monday-Friday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.*

More information and price listings are on the clinic website, [sbts.edu/clinic](http://sbts.edu/clinic).

## MORNING CHILDCARE

Parents can drop off their children at the Health and Rec Center (second floor of Honeycutt) for morning childcare up to three days per week, 9 a.m. – noon, per federal law. The cost is \$10 per child, ages 6 weeks – 10 years.

## SBTS LIST

SBTS Student Life, Campus Technology, and Communications are excited to bring you SBTS List, which allows students and student spouses within the seminary community to market items and services in a safe environment. Think Craigslist, but exclusive to the SBTS community. You must have either a student or faculty/staff email address or be the spouse of a student in order to create a profile and buy/sell items on SBTS List. Register at [sbtslist.com](http://sbtslist.com).

## SEWING CLASS

A sewing class led by Barbara Gentry is open for anyone connected to the seminary. The class meets in Fuller 34 every Monday from 6 – 7:30 p.m.

## DECEMBER

01

**FRIDAY**

**A SOUTHERN CHRISTMAS**

**6:30-8:30 P.M.**

**DUKE K. MCCALL PAVILION**

08

**SBTS GRADUATION**

**10 A.M.**

**ALUMNI MEMORIAL CHAPEL**

11

**WINTER COURSES BEGIN**

23

**CAMPUS CLOSES FOR**

**CHRISTMAS**

## JANUARY

02

**CAMPUS REOPENS AFTER  
CHRISTMAS**

12

**BOYCE NEW STUDENT  
ORIENTATION**

16

**BOYCE COLLEGE FIRST DAY  
OF CLASSES**

15

**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY**

19

**SBTS NEW STUDENT  
ORIENTATION  
WINTER COURSES END**

22

**JAN. 22 SBTS FIRST DAY  
OF CLASSES**

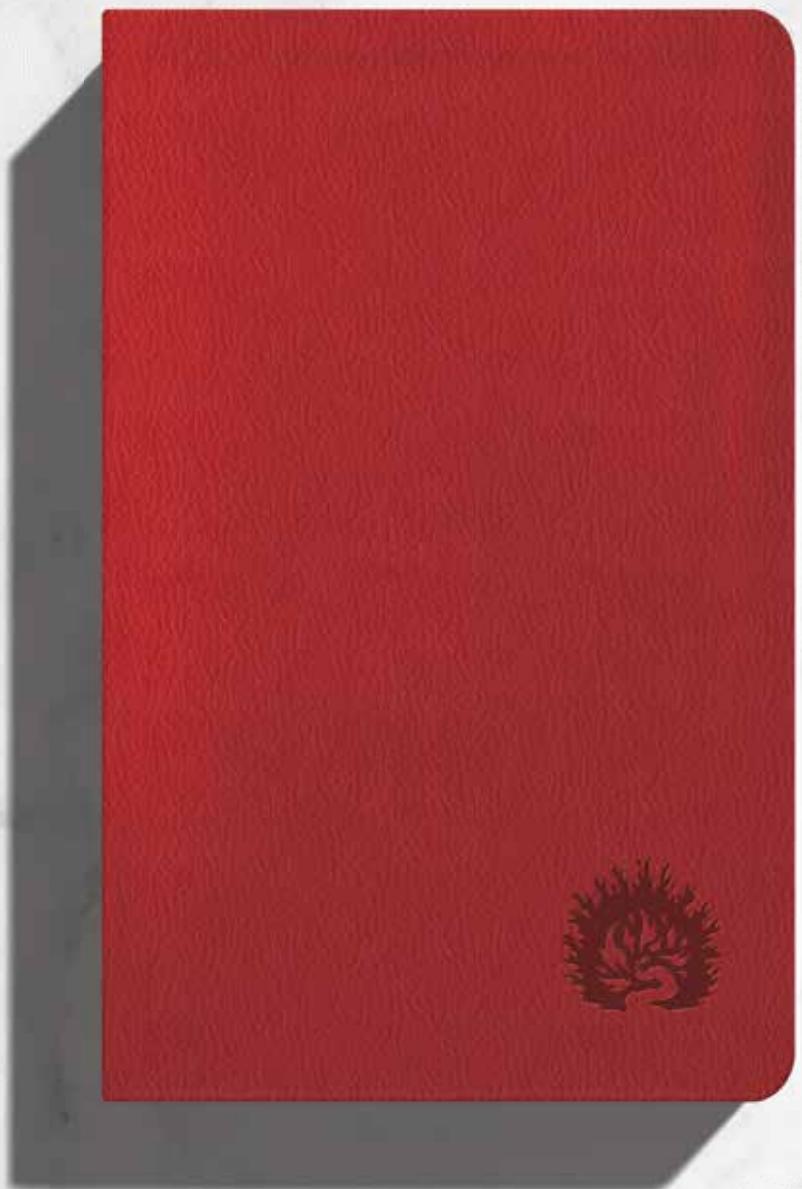


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## 3 Questions

— with —



MIKE COSPER  
Executive director of  
Harbor Media

1

### How can the church create a more conducive environment for serious artists, musicians, and writers?

The church should take its own aesthetics more seriously. Invest budget dollars into your music ministry and the aesthetics of the church. Celebrate those who serve. And guard the platform. By that I mean that we should have the same desire for excellence in music that we have for preaching.

2

### What should seminary students do in order to become more conversant in the arts?

We can learn about the arts the same way we learn anything. We need to begin with a basic vocabulary – get to know the classics in whatever particular genre or medium you’re interested. Then understand the history of how that medium evolved up until now. Read good critics. A.O. Scott’s book *Better Living Through Criticism* is a great place to start. Think in the arts more than thinking about “art.” In doing so, you’ll learn how to think about creativity in a broad way, and you’ll be much more conversant about the arts in general. Don’t just read about the arts and beauty generally; study the artifacts themselves.

3

### With the upcoming addition to the saga, what’s your favorite Star Wars movie?

*The Empire Strikes Back.* It’s the least predictable, the characters have far more at stake than in the others, and they develop in meaningful ways. It also has the most distinctive look and feel.