



# By

# Mark McGee



# Chapters

Introduction	6
The Story of Reality	8
The City of God	17
Understanding Postmodernism	25
Lost Sermons of C.H. Spurgeon	35
New Dictionary of Theology	42
The Extent of the Atonement	49
Biblical Theology	59
Christianity At The Crossroads	71
Death and the Afterlife	81
What Is Man?	87
Archaeology Study Bible	96

Approaching Philosophy of Religion	105
The Myth of the Non-Christian	112
Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics	123
Pocket Handbook of Apologetics	128
Grandparenting: Loving Our Children's Children	132
Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church	139
God and the Problem of Evil	149



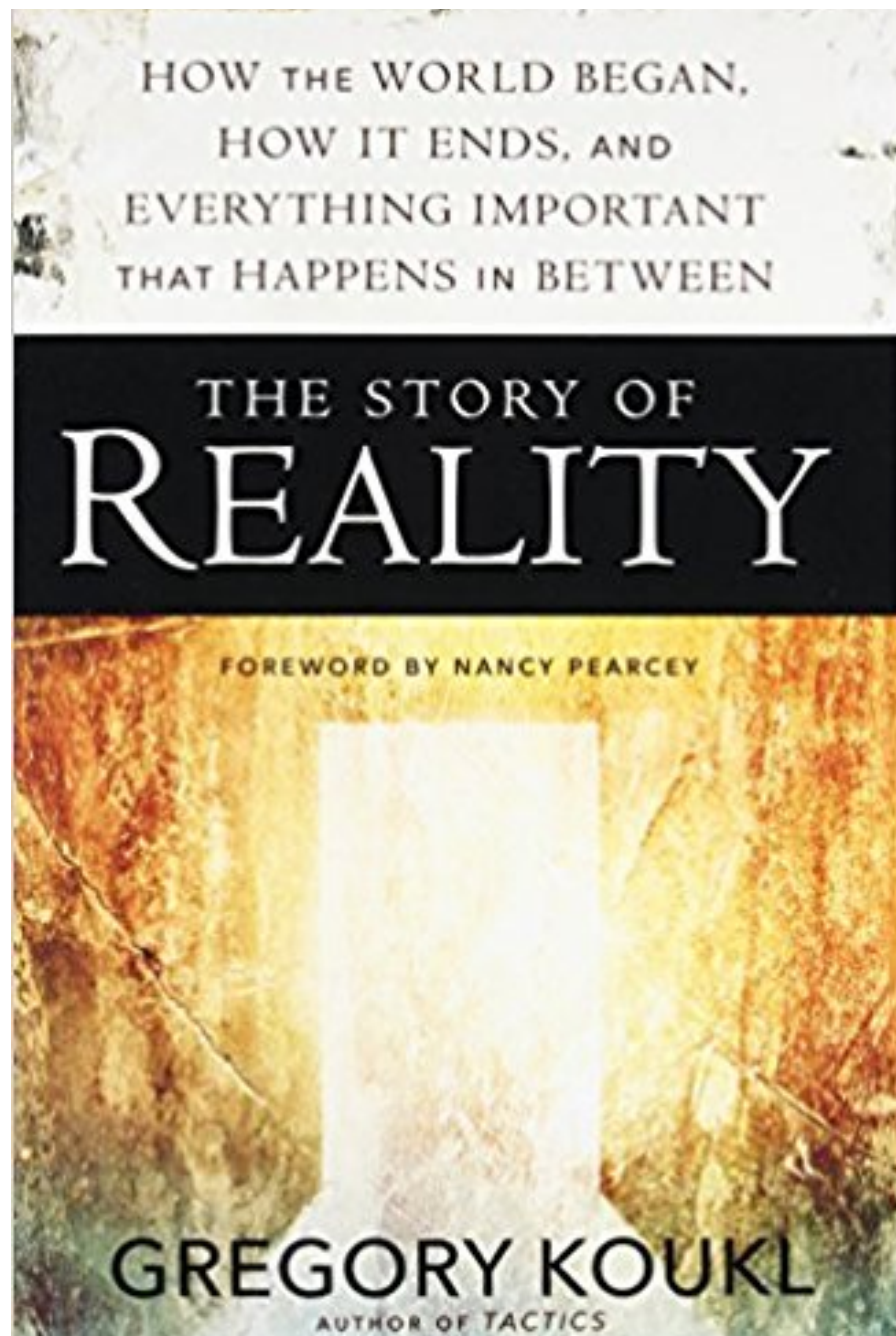
# Introduction

I began recommending Christian books to students decades ago for the purpose of helping them know about some of the better resources available to them. Many of the books were about Bible study, theology, discipleship, Church history and apologetics. The response was almost always positive, so I decided to review books online to help even more students know about books that would both inform and challenge. Most of the books I review are new or of recent origin.

*Book Review Volume IV* is the fourth in a series about books on the primary subject of “Apologetics” on [FaithandSelfDefense.com](http://FaithandSelfDefense.com). Another series you may find helpful is *A Reading Plan For Christian Apologists*, also on [FaithandSelfDefense.com](http://FaithandSelfDefense.com).

Our hope is that you will find books you can add to your Christian library — books that will become your friends and allies as you grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.







I love the title!

*The Story of Reality: How the World Began, How It Ends, and Everything Important that Happens in Between* (Zondervan, 2017).

Greg Koukl is already well known for writing *Relativism: Feet Firmly Planted In Mid-Air* (with Francis Beckwith – Baker Books, 1998) and *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* (Zondervan, 2009), speaking on scores of university campuses, hosting a radio show for almost 30 years, serving as an adjunct professor of Christian apologetics at Biola University, and being Founder/President of Stand to Reason. So, why a book about reality and why now?

“The first question any of us learns to ask about anything—and we usually learn to ask it quite early in life—is ‘Why?’ ... There are answers to life’s most basic questions, though, and in this book I want to give them to you. I know the answers not because I am especially clever and figured them out on my own. Of course, some things you can safely conclude if you think carefully about the cause ... But the best way to get accurate insight into any story is to let the author tell you himself. Yes, life is a kind of story and this Story has an Author. This is one thing that’s fairly easy to figure out from the clues. In this book I want to tell you that story—the Story of reality—and help you see your place in it.”

Preface, p 17-18

I enjoy reading something written from a logical perspective. That's what Greg Koukl does in *The Story of Reality*. He begins with a perspective of reality, then moves logically through what people need to know to *know* reality: God, Man, Jesus, Cross, Resurrection. Nancy Pearcey wrote this in the Foreword to *The Story of Reality* –

“As you read this book by Greg Koukl, you will find your perspective gently being reoriented. He helps you to put first things first, enabling you to perceive how reasonable and cogently everything fits together and falls into place. The Christian worldview is logically coherent. Each principle follows the one that went before, like an expertly composed symphony or a carefully crafted storyline.”

Why this book now? Because the concept of reality has undergone an amazing change and not for the good. Many people are confused about reality. Is anything real or do we just create our own reality? Can many different realities all be real at the same time? Koukl addresses those issues well in the introductory section of his book.

I believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the “story of reality,” so I highly recommend *The Story of Reality* for every Christian who wants to better understand how to present the Gospel to their non-believing family members and friends. It would also be an excellent tool for Christians to use to read through the book with family and friends and discuss each aspect of the Gospel. You might also consider it for a Bible study group. Whatever your purpose, please make this book part of your ministry this year.

## From the Publisher

Biblical Christianity is more than just another private religious view. It's more than just a personal relationship with God or a source of moral teaching.

Christianity is a picture of reality.

It explains why the world is the way it is. When the pieces of this puzzle are properly assembled, we see the big picture clearly. Christianity is a true story of how the world began, why the world is the way it is, what role humans play in the drama, and how all the plotlines of the story are resolved in the end.

In ***The Story of Reality***, best-selling author and host of Stand to Reason, Gregory Koukl, explains the five words that form the narrative backbone of the Christian story. He identifies the most important things that happen in the story in the order they take place:

- God
- Man
- Jesus
- Cross
- Resurrection

If you are already a Christian, do you know and understand the biblical story? And for those still seeking answers to the questions of life, this is an invitation to hear a story that explains the world in a way nothing else will. This story can change your life forever.

## Endorsements

“My friend Greg Koukl is known as a man whose ambition is to be pleasing to God—and his newest work, *The Story of Reality*, certainly is ambitious. How can one cover “the reason for everything” in a single manuscript? Well, Greg tackles the challenge valiantly and courageously, addressing the heartfelt plea of every person who asks, “Why am I here? What is so important about life?” Thoughtful, provocative, and intellectually stimulating, Greg walks the reader through the big issues of life, giving answers that are truly worthy of consideration by the toughest skeptic. I highly recommend this stirring book by a most remarkable apologist!” — Joni Eareckson Tada, Joni and Friends International Disability Center

“I have known Greg Koukl for a quarter of a century as a smart, well-educated man of integrity with a tender heart for God. I’ve enjoyed his previous writings, but *The Story of Reality* is clearly his best and most important book to date. I couldn’t put it down. Koukl carries on a conversation with the reader, presenting the big elements of the Christian Story, providing reasons for believing the Story, and contrasting it, when appropriate, with alternative narratives. The book has a wonderful feel of authenticity. I highly recommend it for believers

who want to be encouraged and instructed, and it's an excellent giveaway for an open unbeliever." — J. P. Moreland, Distinguished Professor of Philosophy, Talbot School of Theology, Biola University

"Greg Koukl is a master communicator! *The Story of Reality* is a beautifully crafted description of the Christian worldview, written in an accessible, winsome, and well-reasoned manner. If you're curious about why Christians see the world the way we do, or you're a believer who simply wants to communicate Christianity in an articulate way to others, this book is for you!" — Lee Strobel, bestselling author of *The Case for Christ* and *The Case for Grace*

"We're not likely to glean the point of our existence from CNN. It takes the greatest story ever told—and a great storyteller—to steal us away from our dead-end plots and to display the richness of reality as Greg Koukl does here. These are the big questions, and *The Story of Reality* answers them in a sharp, winsome, and accessible way. Read it, and then give it to a friend!" — Michael Horton, J. Gresham Machen Professor of Theology, Westminster Seminary California; author of *Pilgrim Theology*

"*The Story of Reality* is a delightful and bold book. Greg Koukl has masterfully captured the heart of the Christian story in a way that is clarifying and insightful for believers but also eye-opening and thought-provoking for nonbelievers. *The Story of Reality* is a book worth reading carefully, discussing with friends, and ultimately passing on to others." —

Sean McDowell, professor at Biola University; author of more than fifteen books, including *A New Kind of Apologist*

“When I looked into Koukl’s *Story of Reality*, I thought, “This is not how I would say this.” I would have used more technical terms, added quite a bit of history, expanded it by a couple of hundred pages, and put in about a thousand footnotes. So readers can rejoice that, instead, Greg Koukl is the right man to tell the story in such a clear, concise, and conversational way. This book explains the central ideas of Christianity and answers questions people are really asking.” — Fred Sanders, Torrey Honors Institute, Biola University; author of *The Deep Things of God*

“When I first read *The Story of Reality*, I knew I was reading a modern classic. Like C. S. Lewis before him, Greg Koukl has written a masterful, measured, intelligent, and insightful book—a must-read for anyone who wants to understand Christianity and its unique ability to explain the way the world really is. Greg will enlighten and inspire you, just as he’s inspired me as my mentor for many years. *The Story of Reality* is a book you’ll read more than once. It will take its rightful place alongside other Christian classics on your bookshelf.” — J. Warner Wallace, author of *Cold-Case Christianity*, *God’s Crime Scene*, and *Forensic Faith*

“Not since *Mere Christianity* has a book so wonderfully told the *Story of Reality*. The *Greatest Story Ever Told* is true, and Greg Koukl tells it in such a compelling way that I’m recommending you not only experience it but give a copy to everyone you care about. Why? Because *The Story of*

Reality is not just the Christian Story—it is your Story whether you believe it or not.” — Frank Turek, author of *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*

“This primer on a Christian outlook on life by Greg Koukl covers an incredibly large number of the pithiest issues in an amazingly small number of pages. Time and again I wondered, “Now how is Greg going to work his way through this question quickly and nontechnically?” But the thoughtful, succinct, and quick-moving answer that followed never disappointed and was handled amazingly. It is not an exaggeration to call this treatment C. S. Lewis–like in a number of ways. Those who pay attention to the fast pace will later be astonished at how far they have come. I recommend it highly.” — Gary R. Habermas, Distinguished Research Professor and Chair, Dept. of Philosophy, Liberty University

“Greg Koukl thinks you deserve answers to your “why” questions about reality, and he offers them with wit and compassion. The Story of Reality brings the greatest story ever told to life in all its brilliant simplicity.” — Jeff Myers, President, Summit Ministries

*The Story of Reality: How the World Began, How It Ends, and Everything Important that Happens in Between* (Zondervan, 2017, 208 pages)







# THE CITY OF GOD

*The City of God and the Goal of Creation* (Crossway, 2018) by T. Desmond Alexander is part of a series of books about biblical theology. The editors of the series explained both the purpose and challenge –

“... one of the great advances in evangelical biblical scholarship over the past few generations has been the recovery of biblical theology—that is, a renewed appreciation for the Bible as a theologically unified, historically rooted, progressively unfolding, and ultimately Christ-centered narrative of God’s covenantal work in our world to redeem sinful humanity. This renaissance of biblical theology is a blessing, yet little of it has been made available to the general Christian population. The purpose of Short Studies in Biblical Theology is to connect the resurgence of biblical theology at the academic level with everyday believers. Each volume is written by a capable scholar or churchman who is consciously writing in a way that requires no prerequisite theological training of the reader. Instead, any thoughtful Christian disciple can track with and benefit from these books.” Series Preface, Dane C. Ortlund and Miles V. Van Pelt, p 11

T. Desmond Alexander is a Senior Lecturer in Biblical Studies at Union Theological College in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Prior to that appointment he was Director of Christian Training for the Presbyterian Church in Ireland and lectured for 18 years in Semitic Studies at the Queen’s University in Belfast. He has held the position of Chairman of the Tyndale Fellowship for Biblical and Theological Research since 2009.

Dr. Alexander wrote this about his purpose for writing *The City of God* –

“This book is designed to provide a succinct overview of the biblical teaching on the concept of the city of God. The subject spans both Testaments and intersects with a significant number of other important topics, beginning with the garden of Eden in Genesis and coming to ultimate fulfillment in New Jerusalem.” Preface, p 13

He begins with an insightful view of the similarities between the Garden of Eden and later Israelite sanctuaries (tabernacle and temple) and the protective roles of Adam in the Garden and Levites in the holy sanctuaries. He also points to the importance of the Tree of Life that appear in both the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem.

“These parallels between the garden of Eden and later Israelite sanctuaries are hardly coincidental. Two possible interpretations may explain this. Either Eden is a protosanctuary, and other sanctuaries are modeled upon it, or each later sanctuary is a restored garden of Eden. If this latter option is adopted, the question arises, why replicate the garden of Eden? The most likely answer is that Eden recalls a time when humanity enjoyed an especially close relationship with God in an idyllic environment. Later sanctuaries replicate something of this experience as people come to the place where God dwells on earth. As a divine residence, the sanctuary enables God to live in close proximity to people.” Introduction, p 19

God's desire to live "with" His people will be ultimately realized in the New Jerusalem –

"And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever." Revelation 22:1-5

As Dr. Alexander pointed out in his book, there is another way to look at this connection –

"The relationship between the garden of Eden and later sanctuaries may be approached from another direction. The Israelite tabernacle, and later the Jerusalem temple, was considered to be a microcosm or model of the earth. In this capacity it provided a visual illustration, anticipating God's glorious presence filling the whole world. This expectation comes to fulfillment in New Jerusalem. As Revelation 21 reveals, New Jerusalem has no temple building, 'for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb' (Rev. 21:22). Viewed from the perspective of God's presence filling the whole earth, the garden of Eden represents the first stage toward the creation of New Jerusalem." Introduction, p 20

Dr. Alexander moves masterfully through the story of God and His people as Adam and Eve disobey Him and their descendant becomes the builder of the first of many cities that glorify humanity rather than the God who created them.

The first chapter of *The City of God* looks at the idea of these godless cities, beginning with Babel.

“This brief episode describes how humans set about building a city with a tower that will reach up to the heavens. They do this intentionally so that they will not be dispersed throughout the whole earth. It reverses the divine plan, for God is interested in making the whole earth his residence by filling it with holy people. In marked contrast, the people of Babel attempt to access heaven and avoid populating the earth. Babel epitomizes the antithesis of what God desires ... At the outset, Babel has to be viewed as the prototypical Godless city. In Babel we see people uniting as one to make a name for themselves by building a tower that reaches up to heaven itself. Their ambition is clearly motivated by pride in their ability to achieve great things. While in Genesis 3 Adam and Eve aspired to become like God, the inhabitants of Babel now seek to establish themselves as supreme not only on earth but in heaven as well. With incredible arrogance they attempt to build a tower that will enable them to take control of heaven itself. The building of Babel typifies two different characteristics of humanity: (a) the capacity of people to achieve great things; (b) the arrogance of those who have turned away from God.” Chapter One, p 25

*The City of God* is an extraordinary read that would be helpful for every Christian to consider. Dr. Alexander tells the story of God and His people in a wonderfully engaging manner that makes for easy reading and great insight. I highly recommend the book.

## Contents

Series Preface

Preface

Introduction

Chapter 1 – The Godless City

Chapter 2 – The Temple-City

Chapter 3 – The Holy Mountain City

Chapter 4 – The Royal City

Chapter 5 – Envisaging a Transformed Jerusalem

Chapter 6 – Hope for Jerusalem beyond Divine Judgment

Chapter 7 – Seeking the City That Is to Come

Chapter 8 – Anticipating New Jerusalem

For Further Reading

General Index

Scripture Index

## Publisher's Description

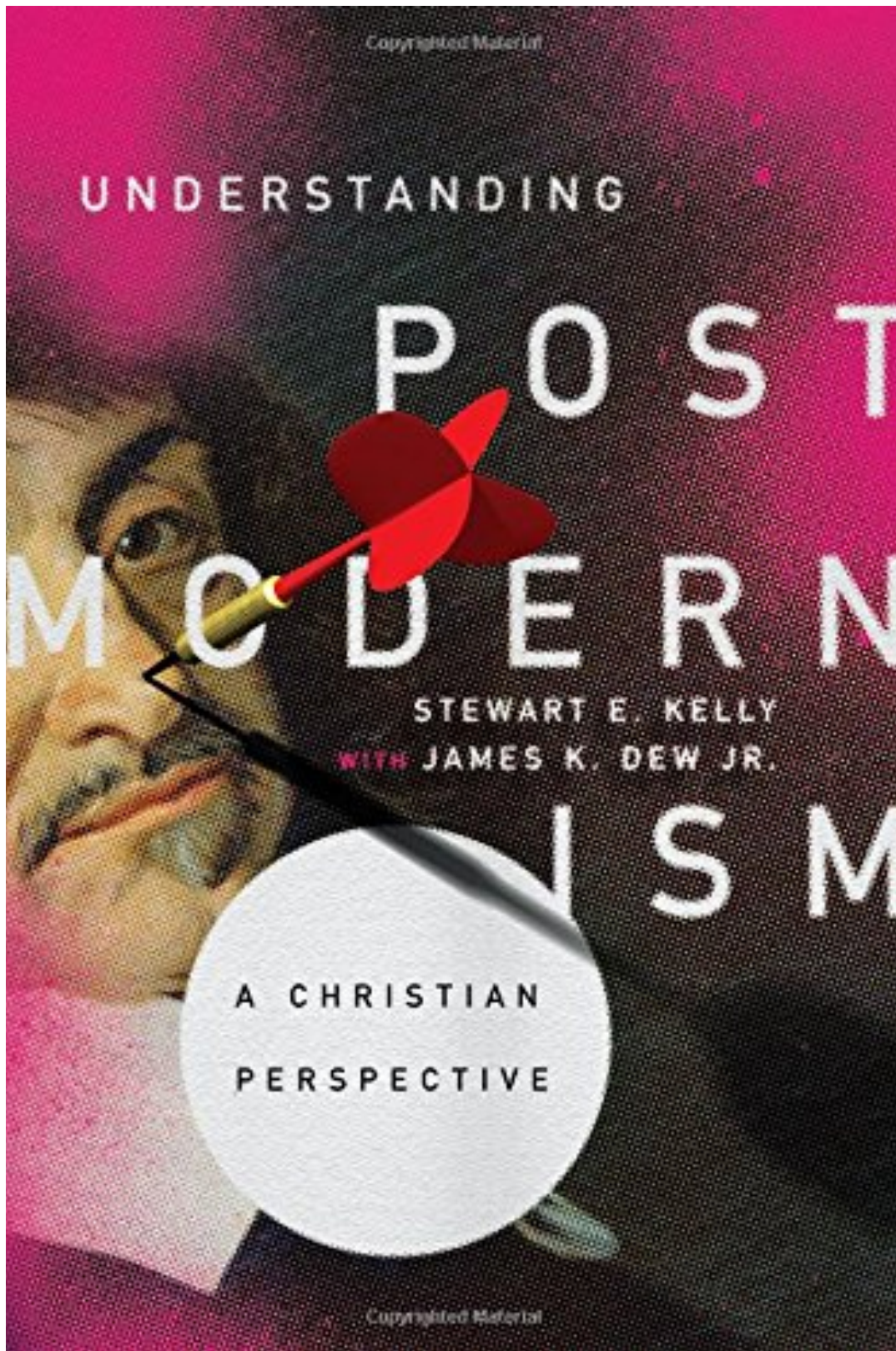
“At the very heart of God’s plan for the world stands an extraordinary city. Beginning with the garden of Eden in Genesis and ending with the New Jerusalem in Revelation, the biblical story reveals how God has been working throughout history to establish a city filled with his glorious presence. Tracing the development of the theme of city in both testaments, T. Desmond Alexander draws on his experience as a biblical scholar to show us God’s purpose throughout Scripture to dwell with his redeemed people in a future extraordinary city on a transformed earth.”

*The City of God and the Goal of Creation* (Crossway, 2018, 192 pages)

[We received an electronic review copy from Crossway]







We hear a lot about Postmodernism, but what is it? How does it work? How did we get *here* from *there*?

The new book *Understanding Postmodernism: A Christian Perspective* (IVP Academic, 2017) is a wonderful look into how societies have moved from premodernism to modernism to postmodernism through many centuries. The IVP web page lists the following categories for the book: Cultural Analysis, Ethics, Philosophy, Postmodernism, Worldview. Any or all of those work well for this excellent guide.

Stewart E. Kelly (PhD, Notre Dame) is professor of philosophy at Minot State University. He is also the author of *Truth Considered and Applied* and *Thinking Well: An Introduction to Critical Thinking*.

James K. Dew, Jr. is Dean of the College at Southeastern in Wake Forest, NC, where he is also Associate Professor of Philosophy and the History of Ideas. He is the author of *Science & Theology: Assessing Alister McGrath's Critical Realist Perspective* (Wipf & Stock), *How Do We Know?: A Short Introduction to the Issues of Knowledge* (with Mark Foreman) and co-editor (with Chad Meister) of *God & Evil: The Case for God in a World Filled with Pain* (IVP). He lives in Wake Forest, NC with his wife and four children.

“However else postmodern thinkers may differ with each other about various and sundry topics, they are deeply unified in their rejection of modernism’s high view of reason, especially as it relates to their understanding of the self.” *Understanding Postmodernism*, p 130

This new book is important on many levels, including historical and practical. In addition to explaining historical highlights of each era, the authors also present ten basic beliefs of postmodernism. Here are three of them (to whet your appetite):

1. Postmodernism challenges the Enlightenment confidence in human reason.
2. Postmodern thinkers view truth as something that is created/constructed by human beings, rather than something discovered that is (in some sense) already out there.
3. Postmoderns have come to increasingly see truth as more therapeutic in nature than as static and objective.

The authors are careful to be both accurate and objective in presenting both the historical demise of Enlightenment Modernism and rise of Postmodernism. Philosophical and societal change of this magnitude does not happen overnight and *Understanding Postmodernism* does a wonderful job giving us both the broad overview and important details that led to the change.

I am a child of the mid-20th century, so working with university students in the 21st century means understanding how young people today view their world differently than I did when I was a college student more than 50 years ago.

I like how author Stewart Kelly answered a question about what motivated him, as a Christian and university professor, to want to write a book about postmodernism. Here's how he answered:

“I have grown increasingly convinced that if we as Christians want to win the ear of non-Christians, we must be well informed about history, social issues, the basis and defense of our own beliefs, and the beliefs and values of the non-believing world around us. Our knowledge must have breadth and depth and be managed by careful, analytical thought. Our knowledge and thoughts must honor God by communicating truth (all of which is his) in a respectful, well-informed and accessible manner. Furthermore, a little humor almost always helps.”

I agree wholeheartedly with the professor and highly recommend *Understanding Postmodernism: A Christian Perspective* to you. Whether you are a student, parent, professor or work in a ministry to college students, I believe you will find this guide most helpful.

## Contents

1. Introducing Postmodernism
2. Criteria for Evaluating Postmodernism
3. The Demise of Enlightenment Modernism
4. The Observer as Situated
5. Philosophy of Language
6. Truth and Social Construction
7. Postmodernism and the Self



8. Realism and Antirealism, Objectivity and Subjectivity
  9. On Metanarratives and Oppression
  10. Doubts About Metanarratives
  11. Truth, Faith, and Postmodernism
  12. Postmodernism and the Critique of Enlightenment Rationalism
  13. The Hope of the Gospel
  14. Where Do We Go from Here?
- Appendix: Chart on Modernism and Postmodernism
- Author Index
- Subject Index
- Scripture Index

## From the Publisher

“Postmodernity has matured. But the challenge of navigating our contemporary culture remains. In order for Christians to make wise decisions, we first need to understand the many facets of our postmodern context.

If René Descartes is often identified as the first truly modern philosopher in light of his confidence in human reason, then postmodernism has taken Descartes to the woodshed. Stewart Kelly and James Dew detail the litany of concerns that postmodernism has raised: overconfidence in human reason, the limitations of language, the relativity of truth, the lack of a truly objective view, the inherently oppressive nature of metanarratives, the instability of the human self, and the absence any moral superiority.

With wisdom and care, Kelly and Dew compare these postmodern principles with the gospel of Jesus Christ and the Christian faith. What emerges is neither a rejection of everything postmodernism is concerned with nor a wholesale embrace of all that it affirms. Instead, we are encouraged to understand the postmodern world as we seek to mature spiritually in Christ.”

## Reviews

“To my knowledge, this is the most comprehensive and analytically refined exposition and critique of postmodernism.” (Douglas Groothuis, professor of philosophy, Denver Seminary, author of *Truth Decay*)

“Understanding Postmodernism is the best one-stop introduction to postmodernism from a conservative evangelical perspective. It describes and evaluates postmodernism from historical, theological, and philosophical perspectives and does so in a lucid and accessible manner.” (Bruce Riley Ashford, provost, professor of theology and culture, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary)

“The gospel is never preached in a vacuum. It is always heard against the backdrop of the culture’s collective mindset and mood. Well, the cultural mindset and mood is steeped in postmodern thought that relativizes truth, knowledge, and value. As a result, people today are morally confused and biblically illiterate. Confusion, darkness, and disintegration reign. Kelly and Dew cut through the confusion, ably dissecting postmodernism and demolishing its credibility. As the smoke

clears, a vision of shalom emerges where Christianity is seen as true and Jesus is seen as the fount of all wisdom and knowledge. A must-read book for all who need to be reminded of the objective goodness, truth, and beauty of Christianity.” (Paul M. Gould, associate professor of philosophy and Christian apologetics, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary)

“Ours is a world of skepticism, irony, and intellectual despair, all of which tempt us away from the kingdom of God. This book is a profoundly Christian antidote: a way to analyze our postmodern context, accept its fresh insights, identify its missteps and downright errors, then move on to a mature, thoughtful grasp of the truth in Christ and actively live out its implications. A profound book in lucid prose!” (James W. Sire, author of *The Universe Next Door* and *Apologetics Beyond Reason*)

“Postmodernism is no longer a youthful upstart but has now reached middle age. If we take 1968 as its date of birth, the revolution is now fifty years old, which explains the philosophical paunch and aching cultural joints. Understanding Postmodernism, similarly, is a mature evangelical response, more interested in showing charity and asking what we can learn from the postmodern protest to modernity than in knee-jerk reactions. The authors stay calm and carry on reasoning. In particular, they examine ten major themes, including language, rationality, and truth (they’re analytic thinkers, after all), bringing both clarity and charity to bear on a movement that has affected the academy, society, and church like no other in recent memory.” (Kevin J. Vanhoozer, research professor of systematic theology, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School)

“Critics regularly compare defining postmodernism to ‘trying to nail Jell-O to the wall.’ If this cliché is true, Kelly and Dew have done the inconceivable: they have successfully nailed the postmodern ethos to the cross. *Understanding Postmodernism* is a clear, appreciative exposition and critique of the tenets of postmodernism. This distinctively Christian introduction also provides much-needed historical framing and real-world application for college and seminary students. Highly recommended.” (Rhyne Putman, associate professor of theology and culture, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary)

“Why is the Western world involved in such a monumental collision of ideas today? What about the claims disputed hotly but seriously every day on news broadcasts, heard from college students and even professors alike, assuming, questioning, or denying the presence of any knowable truth in the world? Like the old saying states, ‘ideas have consequences.’ In this volume, philosophers Stewart Kelly and James Dew explain where this trend came from why and when it emerged as well as providing a detailed response to these ideas. Painstakingly documented and carefully reasoned, this volume provides the critique that this generation sorely needs. Highly recommended.” (Gary R. Habermas, distinguished research professor, chair of the department of philosophy, Liberty University and Baptist Theological Seminary)

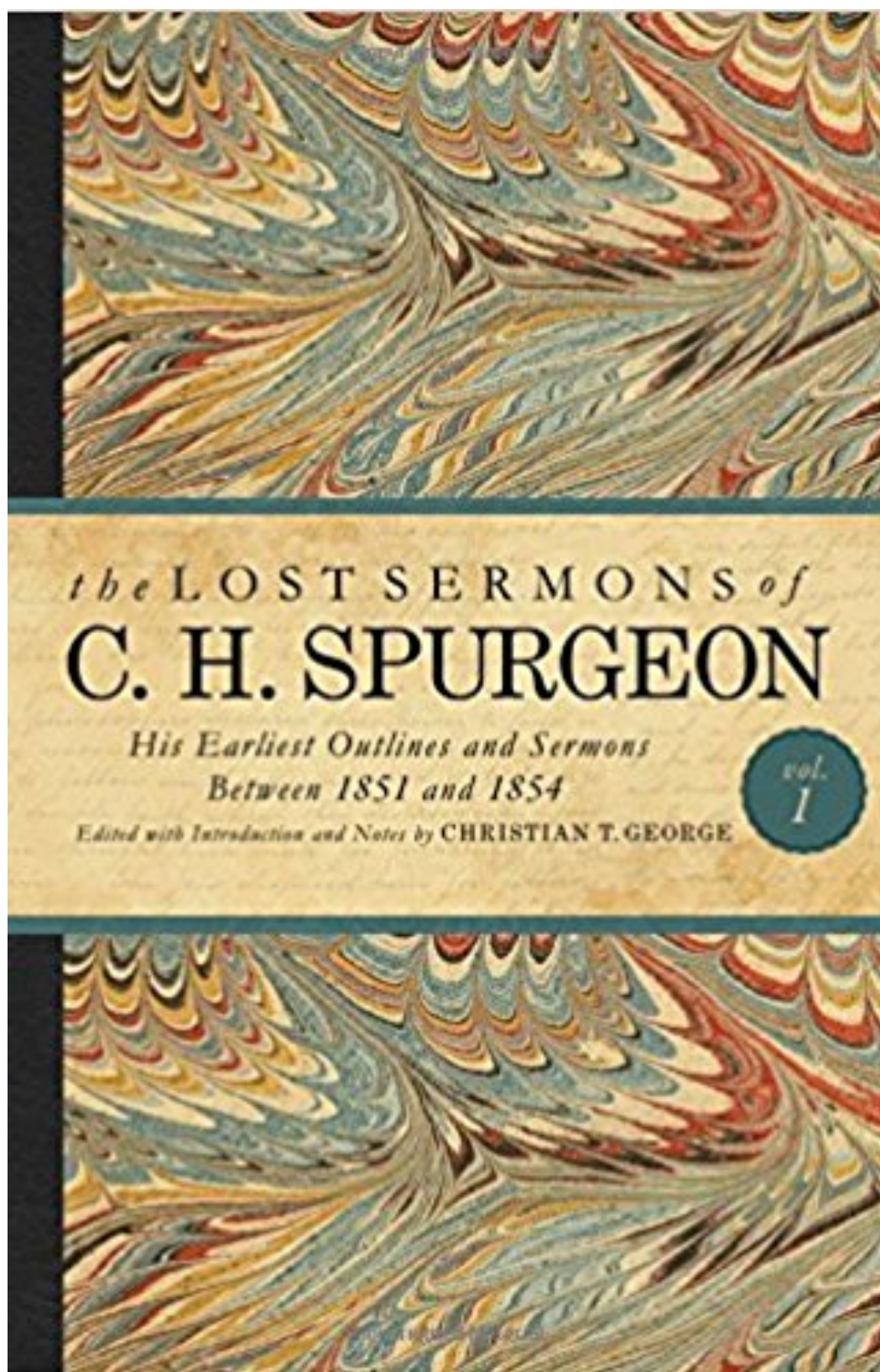
“*Understanding Postmodernism* is an important book that helps readers navigate between the extremes concerning truth: taking a completely neutral, unbiased, infallible God’s-eye view of reality or stepping into the destructive quicksand of relativism. In an age in which professing



Christians are increasingly embracing postmodern assumptions, this book is a proper corrective in its overview and assessment of the key themes of postmodernism as well as a defense of a gospel-centered understanding of truth.” (Paul Copan, professor, Pledger Family Chair of Philosophy and Ethics, Palm Beach Atlantic University, author of *An Introduction to Biblical Ethics* and *A Little Book for New Philosophers*)

*Understanding Postmodernism: A Christian Perspective* (IVP Academic, 2017, 282 pages)





Charles Haddon Spurgeon is one of the first authors I read as a new Christian. Spurgeon, along with Jonathan Edwards, John Owen, John Bunyan, Thomas Watson, Francis Schaeffer, A.W. Tozer, and C.S. Lewis helped me get a good grounding during my first year out of atheism.

“The Treasury of David” three-volume set by Spurgeon is still one of my favorites after 40 years. His insights into Scripture and his writing skills were truly extraordinary.

That’s why I was so excited to hear about *The Lost Sermons of C.H. Spurgeon* published by B&H Academic. Volume I was released in 2016 and Volume II in 2017. Volume III is scheduled for release this summer (2018).

#### The Lost Sermons of C. H. Spurgeon Volume I

The first volume contains the earliest outlines and sermons, dated 1851-1854. Editor Christian T. George and his team did a wonderful job establishing the purpose of the *Lost Sermons* series. The Introduction contains a biographical sketch of Spurgeon’s life along with a timeline from 1800-1910. It also backgrounds the sources and methods of the project.

I didn't expect the depth of detail included in the first volume. The Sermon Analysis of Notebook 1 looks at such things as –

1. Distances from Cambridge Town Centre to villages where Spurgeon preached
2. Percentage of sermons from Old and New Testaments
3. Percentage of Old Testament sermons preached from each Book
4. Percentage of New Testament sermons preached from each Book
5. Word count per sermon

The editors also did a wonderful job including photographs of Spurgeon's notebook pages along with a side-by-side printing of each page for easy readability. I found that helpful on multiple levels of interest and use. Here are the words of one of the greatest Christian preachers of the modern era when he was just a teenager (16 years old in 1851).

I especially enjoyed seeing Spurgeon's first sermon from April 13, 1851. The sermon title is *Adoption* and the text is Ephesians 1:5. It uncovers Spurgeon's depth of spiritual understanding at the beginning of his ministry. I recommend your visiting the B&H Academic website to view several fascinating videos about the Spurgeon *Lost Sermons* series. [Click here](#) to watch. You can also download a sample chapter from Volume I.

Here is a description of Volume I from the Publishers along with some endorsements for the series –

### Volume I Description

“In 1857, Charles Spurgeon—the most popular preacher in the Victorian world—promised his readers that he would publish his earliest sermons. For almost 160 years, these sermons were lost to history. Beginning with this inaugural volume, these rediscovered sermons can finally be read, studied, and enjoyed by the millions around the world who admire Spurgeon’s spiritual insights and literary grace.

This multi-volume set includes full-color facsimiles of Spurgeon’s original handwriting, transcriptions of his outlines and sermons, biographical introductions, and editorial commentary that further illuminate Spurgeon’s work. Taken together, *The Lost Sermons of C. H. Spurgeon* will add approximately 10 percent more material to Spurgeon’s total body of literature, making it a must-have for pastors and scholars as well as the multitude of Spurgeon enthusiasts around the world.

Volume 1 contains an introduction to the series, an overview of Spurgeon’s life and times, seventy-eight sermons he preached itinerantly and as pastor of Waterbeach Chapel, and an analysis of these sermons by editor and Spurgeon scholar Christian T. George.”

## Endorsements

“The publication of this critical edition of the ‘lost’ sermons of C.H. Spurgeon—sermons preached between 1851 and 1854, and never before published—is a major triumph. This first of a projected twelve volumes includes excellent introductory essays, enough critical notes to satisfy the rigorous scholar, full—color facsimiles, and careful transcriptions that make the work accessible to the ordinary reader. Heartiest congratulations to Dr. Christian George, the curator of the impressive Spurgeon Library at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.” – D.A. Carson, research professor of New Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

“Christian George’s edition of *The Lost Sermons of C.H. Spurgeon* is not only a remarkable gift to admirers of Spurgeon, but it also provides an illuminating view into nineteenth-century evangelical thought. I recommend it highly.” –Thomas S. Kidd, distinguished professor of history, Baylor University

“Charles Spurgeon has long been a beloved role model for pastors, but until recently he rarely grabbed the attention of scholars. The latter is beginning to change, in no small part because of the work of Christian George and The Spurgeon Library at Midwestern Seminary. As this inaugural volume demonstrates, *The Lost Sermons of C.H. Spurgeon* is a landmark work of scholarship and a tremendous resource for pastors and other Bible teachers. This series represents a coming together of the perennial pastoral interest in Spurgeon with the renewed scholarly

attention to the Prince of Preachers—and I trust Spurgeon would have it no other way. I pray these volumes will be a boon to historians and a blessing to the church for generations to come.” – Nathan A. Finn, dean of the School of Theology and Missions, Union University

I highly recommend The Lost Sermons of C.H. Spurgeon.







# NEW DICTIONARY OF THEOLOGY

HISTORICAL AND SYSTEMATIC

EDITED BY MARTIN DAVIE,  
TIM GRASS, STEPHEN R. HOLMES,  
JOHN McDOWELL AND T. A. NOBLE

The full title of this excellent reference book is *New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic, Second Edition* (IVP Academic, 2016). The title informs us that there was a first edition. Here's how the editors explained the need for a second.

“Many students and readers have expressed their appreciation for the New Dictionary of Theology (1988). As the second of the dictionaries produced by IVP (the first being the New Bible Dictionary in 1962), it has been a trustworthy and informative guide. After almost thirty years, however, there are many new writers, issues and themes on the agenda, for theology does not stand still, and this second edition therefore has over 400 new articles. Many of the existing articles have been expanded and amended, and almost all have additional bibliographical references.”

The editors (Martin Davie, Tim Grass, Stephen Holmes, John McDowell, T.A. Noble) mentioned that they tried to give more attention in the mainly British publication to theological writers and themes in North America and around the world. The editors also pointed out that because of the publication of IVP's *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* in 2000, the *New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic, Second Edition*, would be more specifically a dictionary theology from a systematic and historical perspective.

This is an excellent addition to any Christian's library, but especially for those who research, teach and write about theological topics. It's also wonderful for Christians who want to have a full background for taking specific theological positions and explaining their reasoning to others.

As the editors stated concerning their position on theology –

“Like the original editors, the revising editors share a commitment to the historic Christian faith and particularly to the evangelical tradition which acknowledges that our systematic theology is under the authority of Holy Scripture.”

I have found the *New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic, Second Edition* to be “user friendly.” Even with the advent of Internet searches and digital books available on a variety of electronic devices, I still like pulling a book off the shelf, holding it in my hands and flipping through the pages in search for information.

I particularly like the way the editors use an asterisk (\*) before a word or phrase indicating that more information about the topic is available from other articles in the dictionary. For example, when you read the article about **Atonement** you will find asterisks in front of several words that point to other articles helpful to your research on the topic of the Atonement –

- \*cross
- \*salvation
- \*redemption
- \*sin

- \*law
- \*death
- \*sacrifice
- \*justification
- \*Resurrection
- \*devil
- \*Christology
- \*Fathers
- \*Irenaeus
- \*Eusebius
- \*Chrysostom
- \*Athanasius
- \*Gregory of Nyssa
- \*Eastern church
- \*Anselm of Canterbury
- \*Thomas Aquinas
- \*Reformation theology
- \*Luther
- \*John Owen
- \*Arminians
- \*liberal theologians
- \*liberalism
- \*theodicy

The editors have done an excellent job in both selecting the topics and presenting them in an orderly fashion that make for easy handling of the hundreds of articles in the Second Edition. I highly recommend this book for your library (both hardcover and digital).

## Publisher: About The Book

“This classic one-volume reference work has been appreciated for decades. It is now substantially expanded and revised to focus on a variety of theological themes, thinkers and movements. From African Christian Theology to Zionism, this volume of historical and systematic theology offers a wealth of information and insight for students, pastors and all thoughtful Christians.

Over half of the more than eight hundred articles are new or rewritten with hundreds more thoroughly revised. Fully one-third larger than its predecessor, this volume focusing on systematic and historical theology has added entries and material on theological writers and themes in North America and around the world. Helpful bibliographies have also been updated throughout.

Over three hundred contributors form an international team of renowned scholars including Marcella Altaus-Reid, Richard Bauckham, David Bebbington, Kwame Bediako, Todd Billings, Oliver Crisp, Samuel Escobar, John Goldingay, Tremper Longman III, John McGuckin, Jennifer McNutt, Michael J. Nasir-Ali, Bradley Nassif, Mark Noll, Anthony Thiselton, John Webster and N. T. Wright.

This new edition combines excellence in scholarship with a high standard of clarity and profound insight into current theological issues. Yet it avoids being unduly technical. Now an even more indispensable reference, this volume is a valuable primer and introduction to the grand spectrum of theology.”

## Reviews & Endorsements

“IVP continues to uphold its well-earned reputation for quality dictionaries and reference works with this second revised edition of a standard, authoritative reference work in systematic and historical theology. . . . New Dictionary of Theology is a single volume, one-stop resource that is valuable for anyone who wants a useful primer and introduction to the grand spectrum of theology. . . . You will appreciate its residence in your library and I am convinced you will turn to it time and again.” Martin Williams, Vox Reformata, 2015

*New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic, Second Edition*  
(IVP Academic, 2016, 1,044 pages)





*The*  
**EXTENT**  
*of the*  
**ATONEMENT**

A Historical and Critical Review



**DAVID L. ALLEN**

*The Extent of the Atonement: A Historical and Critical Review* (B&H Academic, 2016) is an excellent reference book for your library. At 848 pages this is a powerful tool for preachers and teachers and other serious students of the Bible.

The author, Dr. David L. Allen, is the distinguished professor and director of the Center for Biblical Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, so he understands what preachers and teachers need for sermon and lesson preparation.

Dr. Allen helps readers understand his position on the giant subject of Atonement –

“The extent of the atonement and its entailments are vital to me as a theologian and preacher. The issue touches very near the heart of the gospel. What one believes about this subject has serious ramifications for both theology and praxes in the church. The necessity of getting the gospel right is basal in my thinking.” Preface

Allen also addresses the issue of differences among Christians on the topic

—

“The question of the extent of the atonement is controversial and often engenders strong emotion. Some people on either side of the fence tenaciously cling to their view and anathematize opponents. Perhaps one reason for this visceral reaction is the fact that a via media on the extent question is not possible. There are only two options: either Jesus substituted for the sins of all people, or he substituted for the sins of only some people. The subject is delicate but important and must be considered.” Preface

Dr. Allen does address the differences in the Introduction in an interesting and personal way.

*The Extent of the Atonement* is divided into three sections —

1. The Extent of the Atonement in Church History
2. The Extent of the Atonement in the Baptist Tradition
3. The Extent of the Atonement: A Critical Review

Dr. Allen begins with the “Early Church” views on the subject of the Atonement (e.g. Irenaeus, Mathetes, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian of Carthage, Eusebius, Athanasius, Jerome, Augustine), then moves into the “Medieval Era” (e.g. Gottschalk, Peter Lombard, Johannes Wollebius, Thomas Aquinas).

The Reformation Era was a time of great challenges concerning the subject of the Atonement. Dr. Allen included the views of many Christian leaders during the Reformation era to aid our understanding of how the theology of the Atonement developed during that pivotal time (e.g. Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, Wolfgang Musculus, Heinrich Bullinger, John Calvin, Theodore Beza).

Calvin receives in-depth treatment in *The Extent of the Atonement* pulling from the Reformer's sermons and writings. Dr. Allen also included a fascinating contemporary analysis of Calvin's thought about the extent of the Atonement.

Dr. Allen also addresses some of the "Early English Reformers" (e.g. John Wycliffe, Hugh Latimer, Miles Coverdale, William Tyndale).

Jacob Arminius and the Synod of Dort receives extended coverage in the chapter about The Post-Reformation Era and The Extent of the Atonement. Dr. Allen also looks at the views of Anglicans, Puritans and the impact of Westminster on the discussions concerning the Atonement.

The Modern Era and the Extent of the Atonement is one of the longer chapters and begins with 18th century through the year 2015.

Page 457 begins the second section of *The Extent of the Atonement* by looking at The Extent of the Atonement in the Baptist Tradition. Dr. Allen begins with English General and Particular Baptists through the end of the 19th century, then turns to North American Baptist from 1800 – 2015,

followed by what Southern Baptists have said about the “extent question” from 1845 – 2015.

The third section of the book is Dr. Allen’s critical review of *From Heaven He Came And Sought Her*. “The book has ben touted by some as the ‘definitive’ scholarly word on definite (limited) atonement.” (Author)

I highly recommend *The Extent of the Atonement: A Historical and Critical Review* to students, teachers and preachers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## Publisher’s Description

“The extent of Christ’s atoning work on the cross is one of the most divisive issues in evangelical Christianity. In *The Extent of the Atonement: A Historical and Critical Review*, David L. Allen makes a biblical, historical, theological, and practical case for a universal atonement. Through a comprehensive historical survey, Allen contends that universal atonement has always been the majority view of Christians, and that even among Calvinist theologians there is a considerable range of views. Marshalling evidence from Scripture and history, and critiquing arguments for a limited atonement, Allen affirms that an unlimited atonement is the best understanding of Christs saving work. He concludes by showing that an unlimited atonement provides the best foundation for evangelism, missions, and preaching.”

## Endorsements

“The issue of limited atonement has proved a controversial matter for many years and one that is unlikely to disappear at any time in the near future. One of the reasons for this is that the question it seeks to answer is one which developed over time and has a number of subtle and sophisticated facets. Like other doctrines such as the Trinity, an understanding of the history of the doctrine of atonement is thus key to the matter. While David Allen and I disagree on the matter, this work is an irenic and learned contribution to the topic which carries the historical, and thus doctrinal, discussion forward in an extremely helpful way. I am thus happy to recommend this work of a friendly critic. It deserves wide readership and careful engagement.” —Carl R. Trueman, Paul Woolley Chair of Church History and professor of church history, Westminster Theological Seminary

“The Extent of the Atonement is among the most controversial questions in Reformed theology. It is probably also the most confusing and misunderstood. Is limited atonement the only Reformed position? What did John Calvin himself believe? For whom did Christ die? How do we preach the saving message of the cross to unbelievers? Does God love the world or not? Enter David Allen’s monumental book, an absolute tour de force. The Extent of the Atonement leaves no stone unturned in tracing the history of the doctrine, critiques every view and proponent with penetrating insight, and is written with a persuasive cogency throughout. The book is an education in how to do theology responsibly and how to read the Bible faithfully. To top it off, Allen writes with the

heart of a pastor and the wit and wisdom of a seasoned preacher. A must read for anyone interested in the question of what the cross achieves.” —Brian Rosner, principal, Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia

“In this comprehensive historiography, David Allen clarifies the views of Christian thinkers on the extent of the atonement. He argues convincingly from primary sources that unlimited atonement has been the dominant view in the history of the church, even among many Calvinists. Allen challenges readers to discern at which point precisely the atonement was limited—in its intent, extent, or application. Because of the implications for evangelism, he gives special attention to treatments of this doctrine in the Baptist tradition. Allen’s study will benefit anyone interested in the question, ‘For whom did Christ die?’” —Adam Harwood, McFarland Chair of Theology, associate professor of theology, and director of the Baptist Center for Theology & Ministry, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

“Baptists have been debating the intent and extent of the atonement since almost the beginning of our movement. The recent popularity of Calvinism among conservative evangelicals—including many Southern Baptists—has helped make this historic debate a current family discussion. To my knowledge, David Allen’s *The Extent of the Atonement: A Historical and Critical Review* is the most extensive treatment of this topic that has been written—certainly by a Baptist. I confess I don’t agree with everything he argues in this book. However, I strongly agree with Allen that both the Reformed tradition and more

Calvinistic Baptist movements have historically included advocates of both limited and universal atonement—a fact too often unrecognized in contemporary discussions about this topic. I’m confident this book will inspire renewed interest in what Baptists and others have believed about the atonement. I’m prayerful it will also encourage Southern Baptists to engage in brotherly dialogue, refine our respective views of what we ought to believe, and better partner together in proclaiming the gospel to this world that God so loves.” —Nathan A. Finn, dean of the School of Theology and Missions and professor of Christian thought and tradition, Union University

“The Extent of the Atonement offers a penetrating and perceptive treatment of a thorny, divisive theological issue. David Allen’s command of the subject, as well as his ability to lay out clearly and fairly the competing theories and arguments, is masterful. I found his critique of the doctrine of limited atonement fully persuasive. This book is must reading for all who want to understand better the Calvinism debate.” —Craig A. Evans, dean of the School of Christian Thought and John Bisagno Distinguished Professor of Christian Origins, Houston Baptist University

“This volume represents the fruit of years of careful research and writing, all with a view toward aiding and helping anyone who has wrestled deeply or has had a conversation about the extent of the atonement. David L. Allen has served his readers well by assembling The Extent of the Atonement: A Historical and Critical Review. I believe it will soon take its place among the library of volumes one must consult in any



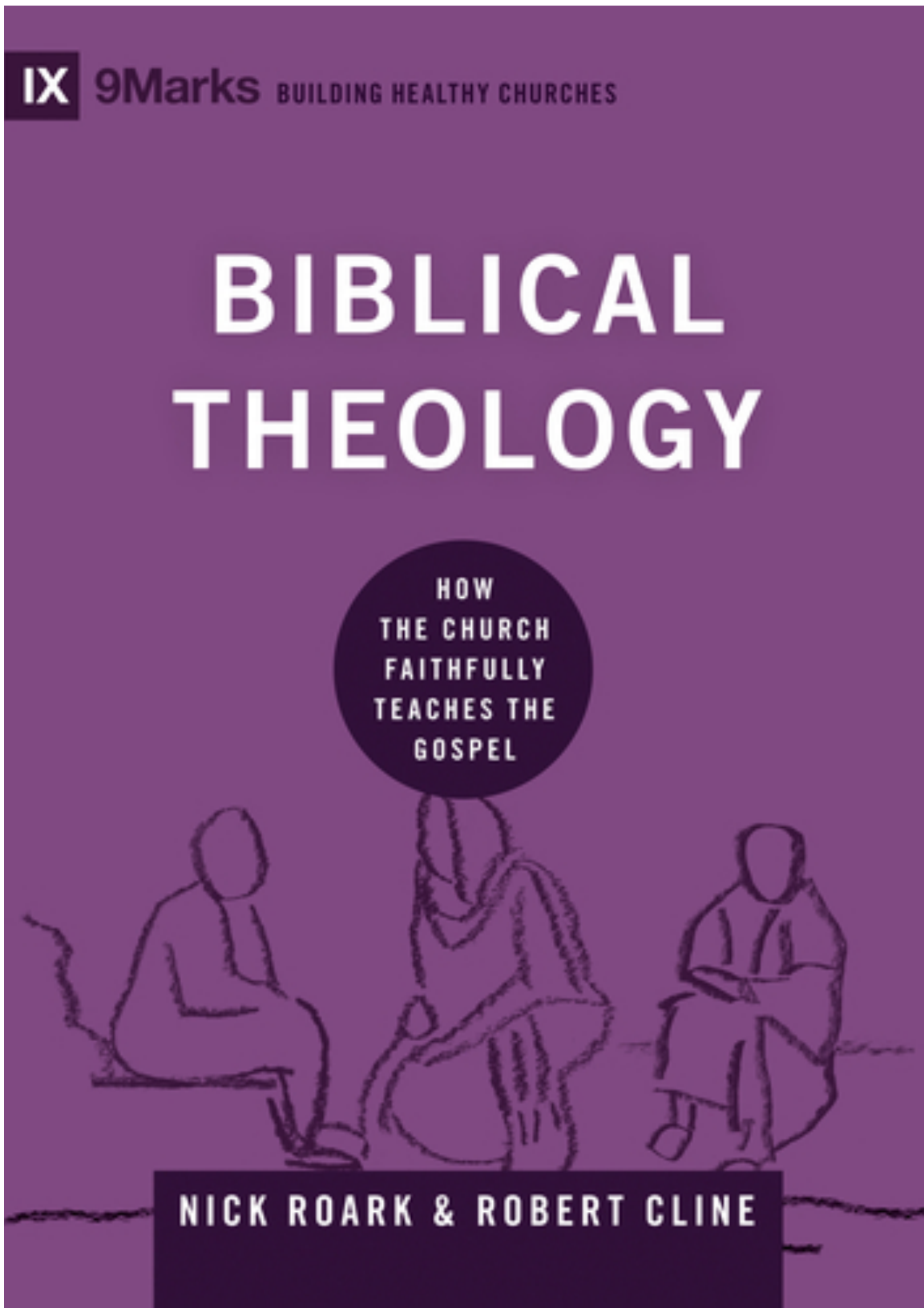
discussion related to the work of Christ.” —Jason G. Duesing, provost and associate professor of historical theology, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

“This book is encyclopedic. There is nothing like it in depth and scope. One does not have to hold the author’s perspective (though I do) to benefit from his massive research. No one interested in the extent of the atonement can ignore Allen’s important contribution.” —Daniel L. Akin, president, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

“David Allen’s *The Extent of the Atonement* is a tremendous accomplishment. He has given us a treasure trove of information on the doctrine of the extent of the atonement, tracing it in detail and providing incisive interaction with the exegetical and theological arguments for and against limited atonement that have been put forth, especially since the Reformation and by Calvinistic authors. As if this were not enough, he also treats us to an extensive and definitive critique of *From Heaven He Came and Sought Her*, which has been touted as the definitive modern work in support of limited atonement. Allen’s tome is now the book to own on the extent of the atonement and the place to turn for support of unlimited atonement and refutation of limited atonement.” —Brian Abasciano, adjunct professor of New Testament, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; pastor, Faith Community Church; president, The Society of Evangelical Arminians

*The Extent of the Atonement: A Historical and Critical Review* (B&H Academic, 2016, 848 pages)





*Biblical Theology: How The Church Faithfully Teaches The Gospel* (Crossway, 2018) by Nick Roark and Robert Cline is part of the 9Marks series that looks at building healthy churches.

The authors begin with a strong statement that it is the responsibility of every Christian to help build a healthy church. That is the basic premise of the 9Marks series.

In *Biblical Theology*, Roark and Cline look first at the need for Biblical Theology, then explain what it is, the Bible's "big story," and how Biblical Theology shapes both a church's teaching and mission.

"Simply put, you won't understand the story of the Bible unless you see that it's all about Jesus! From Genesis to Revelation, Jesus is the Hero and the point of the story. What's more, you won't understand who Jesus is unless you understand the larger story that's all about him! Jesus is the interpretative key to the Bible, which means a careful Bible reader will find him in the beginning, middle, and end of this story." *Biblical Theology*, p 17

The authors also believe, as do I, that Biblical theology helps guard the church and guide it into evangelistic outreach. It also helps Christians "read, understand, and teach the Bible way Jesus said we should."

Two of the **major** problems in the Church today are false gospels and false teachers. Roark and Cline list several of the primary offenders including “The Prosperity-Gospel Church” and “The Civil-Gospel Church.”

The solution is simple and direct –

“Biblical theology provides that framework because it guides our reading of the Bible and therefore guards against bad interpretation. Biblical theology is an approach to reading the whole story of the Bible while keeping our focus on the main point of Scripture, Jesus Christ. In other words, biblical theology is the scriptural road map that leads us to Jesus.” p 23

“The prosperity gospel and other false messages make the Bible all about us, when in reality it’s all about Christ.” p 123

I love the tone of the book in addition to the content. Both authors have a solid understanding of Biblical theology.

“If we’re reading the road map of Scripture correctly, it should always lead us to Jesus and who we are as his people.” p 30

“The very heart of the Bible’s message is the good and right reign of God over all his people and over all his creation.<sup>1</sup> The story of Scripture, then, is the story of God the King, and his loving and gracious purposes of saving a people for himself to delight in his glorious presence forever.

Understanding this story brings us to the center of all reality. Come soon, King Jesus.” p 74

I highly recommend *Biblical Theology: How The Church Faithfully Teaches The Gospel* to you, your family, friends, and teachers and pastors at your church. The authors share many **Preaching and Teaching Tips** pastors and teachers will find helpful in ensuring the accuracy of their message.

“... biblical theology helps guide preachers and teachers toward evangelistic, Christ-centered exposition that emphasizes the glorious Hero of the whole story, Jesus Christ.” p 75

## The Authors

Nick Roark is pastor of Franconia Baptist Church in Alexandria, Virginia.

Robert Cline is the managing director for training content and curriculum at the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

## Publisher Description

“How does the church guard against false gospels?

Every week, many churches around the world read the Bible but miss the main point—and end up teaching false gospels week in and week out. One of the most important safeguards against this danger is an

understanding of biblical theology: reading the Bible in light of its main message, culminating in Jesus Christ.

Starting with a framework for understanding the storyline of the Bible and then explaining basic principles for prioritizing the teaching of this message, this book aims to help churches guard the truth of the gospel.”

## Contents

### Series Preface 13

1. 1 The Need for Biblical Theology 15
2. 2 What Is Biblical Theology? 23
3. 3 What Is the Bible’s Big Story? Part 1 31
4. 4 What Is the Bible’s Big Story? Part 2 57
5. 5 Biblical Theology Shapes a Church’s Teaching 75
6. 6 Biblical Theology Shapes a Church’s Mission 101

### Conclusion

Appendix: Additional Biblical-Theological Examples 119 Notes 141

Recommended Resources 143 General Index 145 Scripture Index 151

## Reviews

“This little book packs a big punch. Absorb its contents, and feel its effect for years to come.” Constantine R. Campbell, Associate Professor of New Testament, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

“Faithful preaching and teaching not only zooms in on a particular text but also zooms out and considers the storyline of the whole Bible. Nick Roark and Robert Cline show how biblical theology is essential for the church, for preaching, and for living. They survey the big picture of the Scriptures and show us some wrong turns that are commonly made. A very helpful resource for pastors, teachers, and laypeople.” Thomas R. Schreiner, James Buchanan Harrison Professor of New Testament Interpretation and Professor of Biblical Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

“I love biblical theology, but I don’t always love biblical theology books. Too often, they are so technically written that they miss the majority of believers. This book is an exception. The authors not only define, defend, and describe biblical theology but also do so in a way that is accessible to all believers. This book is simple while addressing complex ideas, short but packed with information, and theoretical yet filled with practical examples of doing biblical theology. It is both a call to do biblical theology and a handbook for doing it well. I finished it with a deeper desire to see Jesus in the Word and to help my church members do the same.” Chuck Lawless, Dean of Doctoral Studies and Vice President for Spiritual Formation, Southeastern Baptist Theological



Seminary; author, *Spiritual Warfare: Biblical Truth for Victory and Putting on the Armor*

“There is not a single effective biblical expositor today who does not employ biblical theology to make sense of his text and to deliver its Christ-centered message. Roark and Cline explain in a very clear and direct way how biblical theology helps the church and pastors to understand and proclaim the big story from Scriptures.” Augustus Lopes, Pastor, First Presbyterian Church, Goiânia, Brazil

“Wow—this short book bundles a library of wisdom for grasping God’s biblical storyline and faithfully teaching the Word! The authors have done us all a great favor by distilling heavy biblical concepts and making them simple, user-friendly, and transferable. This is the kind of book you want to hand out to a Sunday school teacher, an aspiring pastor, or a missionary candidate. Well-meaning Bible teachers often take the easy path of proof texting to make a ‘practical lesson,’ but miss the larger theme, the glorious centerpiece of the passage. A wonderful tool for keeping me on track as a missionary and for teaching new converts how to study and teach the Word, this small book should be translated into many languages!” David L. Frazier, Executive Director, Equipping Servants International; author, *Mission Smart*

“This brief book explains important theological concepts in a clear, faithful, simple way. It is perfect for those in the church who might find an in-depth academic book a challenge, but who want to understand sound theology and grasp the biblical concepts needed in order to teach the

gospel well. This is an excellent resource, and I can't wait to recommend it to my women's ministry team." Abi Byrd, former missionary to the Balkans; Bible Instructor, The Simeon Trust; Deacon of Women's Ministry, Loudoun Valley Baptist Church, Purcellville, Virginia

"A believer is measured by faithfulness, and it is imperative that a believer know how to be faithful to the Word of God, our one timeless authority. Through explanation and example, Nick and Robert's book simply and helpfully instructs believers on how to rightly understand individual biblical passages while always keeping in mind the big picture that Christ is the goal and end of all Scripture. I highly recommend it as an invaluable companion for any believer desiring to hear the words, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'" Ndagi Job Goshi, international bivocational church planter

"Biblical theology is a frequently ignored subject, despite being indispensable to understanding the entire Bible. The authors of this excellent book realize the importance of this topic for comprehending the storyline of redemptive history. If you are looking for a resource that explains and applies biblical theology well, this is your book. It is biblical, well written, easy to understand, practical, brief yet not superficial, full of information, and extremely helpful for preaching and pastoral ministry. I'm amazed at how much solid instruction was put into such a short book." Miguel Núñez, Senior Pastor, International Baptist Church of Santo Domingo; President and Founder, Wisdom and Integrity Ministries

“As an elder of a church located in one of the major global crossroads of the world, I long to equip Christians who will return to challenging places where they often face persecution and false teaching. Biblical theology is a critical tool to help Christians protect and proclaim the gospel. I am immensely grateful for this book and excited to see it used to strengthen the global church. It strikes the perfect balance of breadth and depth, easily translates across cultural and language backgrounds, and will help all Christians better see, celebrate, and communicate the gospel.”  
Andrew Gizinski, Elder, RAK Evangelical Church, Ras Al Khaimah, United Arab Emirates

“Nick and Robert have accomplished something rare in a field this broad. They have succinctly clarified the core of biblical theology without oversimplifying the process. Every Christian will benefit from the numerous examples of how an informed biblical theology transforms how we read, apply, and teach the Bible. This is a trustworthy map down the Emmaus road, where the discovery of Christ in all the Scriptures delights the heart.” Chip Bugnar, author, *Grace Beyond the Veil*

“In this book full of powerful, illuminating illustrations, Roark and Cline argue convincingly that seeing how the storyline of the Bible is all about Jesus Christ equips every believer to serve him in line with the purpose of God. Read this book and see for yourself! The phrase biblical theology may give you the impression that this is a textbook only for Bible colleges or pastoral training. But here is a must-read book for every Christian because we are all meant to be stewards of the church

of Christ.” Conrad Mbewe, Pastor, Kabwata Baptist Church; Chancellor, The African Christian University, Lusaka, Zambia

“Trying to put together the various historical epochs and literary genres of the sixty-six books of Scripture into one consistent whole can seem like a daunting task. In this eminently readable and practical book, Roark and Cline help us to see that this difficult task might not be so hard after all; for, as Jesus says, all Scripture points to him. The authors are to be commended for writing a book to help Bible teacher and student alike to understand the point of God’s Word and protect us from applying it in wrong ways to our lives and our churches.” Shawn D. Wright, Professor of Church History, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary; Pastor of Leadership Development, Clifton Baptist Church, Louisville

“As a pastor I’m often asked for a brief book that provides the Bible’s storyline and unity, centered on the crucified and risen Lord Jesus Christ. From now on, this book is my answer. But this work does more than describe biblical theology; it shows the reader how this often neglected discipline can guard us against numerous errors—in both our interpretation of Scripture and the practice of the church.” Lee Tankersley, Pastor, Cornerstone Community Church, Jackson, Tennessee

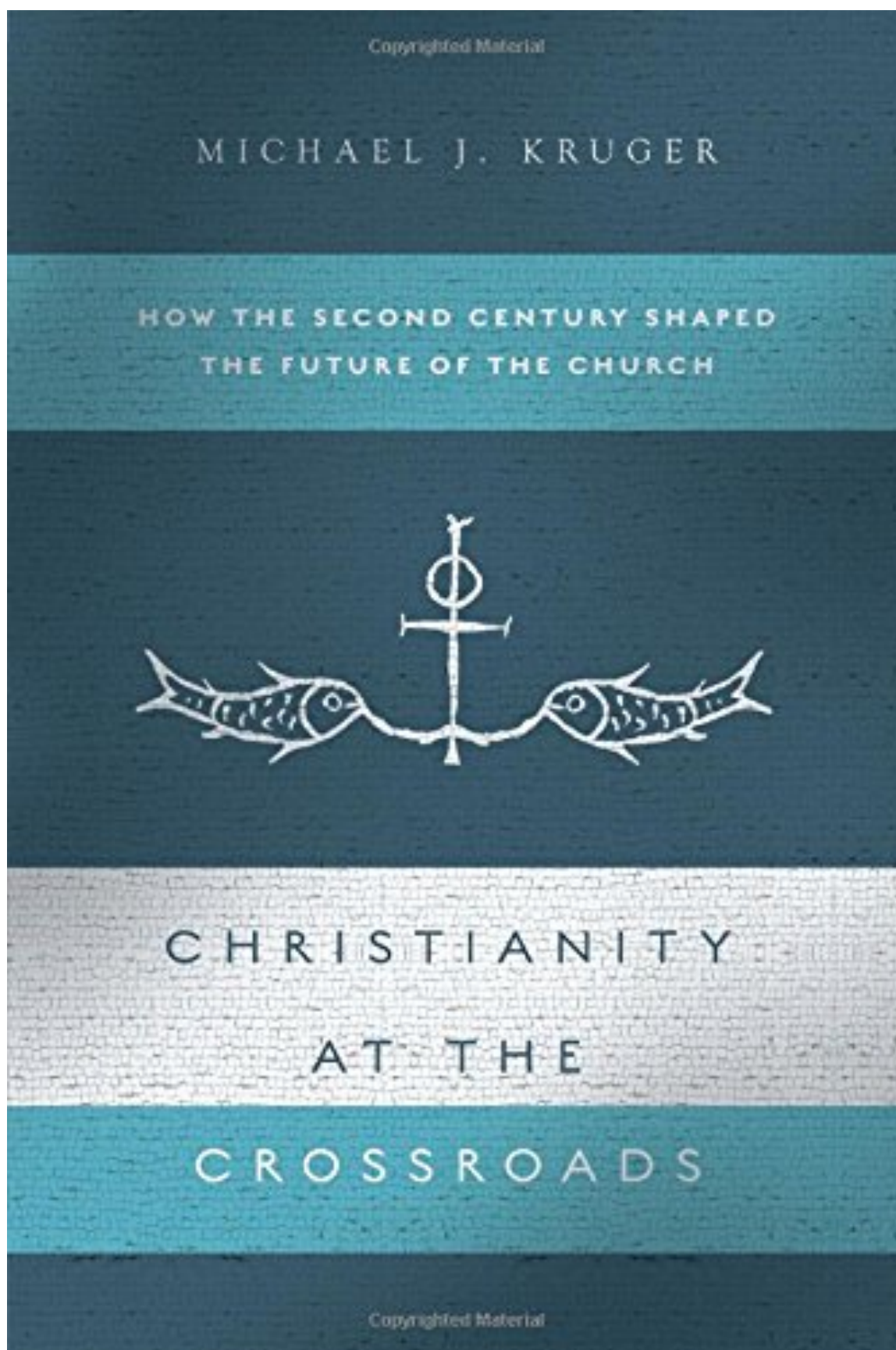
“I have been on the lookout for a book on biblical theology that I could confidently hand to any person in my church. I have finally found it. This book is an answer to prayer.” Jason Meyer, Pastor for Preaching and Vision, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Minneapolis

*Biblical Theology: How The Church Faithfully Teaches The Gospel*

(Crossway, 2018, 160 pages)

[We received an electronic review copy from Crossway]





*Christianity At The Crossroads: How The Second Century Shaped The Future Of The Church* (IVP Academic, 2018) will be an excellent addition to anyone's personal, teaching, pastoral or church library.

Written by Dr. Michael J. Kruger (President and Professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina), this new book does a wonderful job demonstrating the importance of the 2nd century to the life and future of the Christian Church.

"There was a time, nearly two thousand years ago, when Christianity was in its infancy. It possessed very little cultural influence, was weak and frail, and found itself fighting for its life. Theological formulations were imprecise and undeveloped, factions and 'heresies' were dominant, attacks from pagan philosophers were rampant, and the future was altogether uncertain. On top of all this, Christianity was, for the first time, moving forward without the direct guidance of living apostles and still did not yet have a fully formed New Testament canon.

When was this time? It was the second century. This particular block of time is one of the most critical in the life of the Church – perhaps the moment when it was most vulnerable. It is what we might call the transitional century for the early Christian faith. The Church was out of the apostolic womb and now trying to take its first breath." *Christianity At The Crossroads*, Introduction, p 1

I have been fascinated as a Christian by how the early Church developed after the Lord's Apostles died. What would become of the Church that Jesus said He would build?



Christianity (broadly speaking) is currently the world's largest religion with more than 2.3 billion people. However, it wasn't always the largest. Estimates about the number of Christians at the beginning of the 2nd century usually fall in the range of 100-thousand to 200-thousand people at the most.

Though the number of Christians was small and the opposition was great, they were very active in carrying out the Lord's command to "make disciples of all nations."

"It was when the Church was still in its infancy, trying to stand on its own after the apostles had passed on and facing serious and sustained opposition from the surrounding culture, that some of the most critical steps were taken. During these 100 years, the fledgling Christian movement made enormous strides – geographically, numerically, demographically, structurally and theologically. So much so that by the end of the second century Christianity was on a path of ascendancy that would eventually culminate in its becoming the dominant force of the Roman Empire just a few generations later." p. 227

I was amazed at how much Dr. Kruger covered in a relatively small book (256 pages). He covered many important topics with surprising depth. He reports on the major Christian leaders across the empire and many of the Church's primary opponents. Kruger also shares great insight into the development of the Canon of Scripture during the 2nd century.

I highly recommend *Christianity At The Crossroads*. It is one of the best new books on the topic of Christianity during the 2nd century.

## Contents

- Preface
- List of abbreviations
- Introduction: What is so important about the second century?
- A peculiar identity: The sociological make-up of second-century Christianity
- A strange superstition: The political and intellectual acceptability of second-century Christianity
- Worshipping Jesus: The ecclesiological structure of second-century Christianity
- Alternative pathways: Diversity in second-century Christianity
- The Great Church: Unity in second-century Christianity
- A textual culture: The literature of second-century Christianity
- A new Scripture: The New Testament canon in second-century Christianity
- Conclusion: Christianity at the crossroads
- Select bibliography
- Scripture index
- Author index
- Subject index

## Author Bio

“Michael J. Kruger (PhD, University of Edinburgh) is President and the Samuel C. Patterson Professor of New Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC, and the author of a number of books and articles on early Christianity. He is one of the leading scholars today in the study of the origins of the New Testament, particularly the development of the New Testament canon and the transmission of the New Testament text. He is the author of numerous books including *The Gospel of the Savior* (Brill, 2005), *The Heresy of Orthodoxy* (Crossway, 2010, with Andreas Köstenberger), *Canon Revisited* (Crossway, 2012), and *The Question of Canon* (IVP, 2013). He is also the editor of *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the New Testament* (Crossway, 2016), and co-editor of *The Early Text of the New Testament* (Oxford, 2012), and *Gospel Fragments* (Oxford, 2009). Dr. Kruger is ordained in the Presbyterian Church in America and also serves (part-time) as Pastor of Teaching at Uptown PCA in downtown Charlotte.”

## Publisher's Description

“Christianity in the twenty-first century is a global phenomenon. But in the second century, its future was not at all certain. Initially Christianity possessed little social or cultural influence and found itself fighting for its life. While apostolic tradition was emerging as a “rule of faith,” factions contested the nature of the gospel, and pagan philosophers found its claims scandalous. And while its pathway was tenuous, Christianity was

forming structures of leadership and worship, and a core of apostolic texts was emerging as authoritative. But it was the challenges, obstacles, and transitions faced by Christians in the second century that, in many ways, would determine the future of the church for the next two millennia. It was a time when Christianity stood at a crossroads. Michael Kruger's introductory survey examines how Christianity took root in the second century, how it battled to stay true to the vision of the apostles, and how it developed in ways that would shape both the church and Western culture over the next two thousand years. *Christianity at the Crossroads* provides an accessible and informative look at the complex and foundational issues faced by an infant church still trying to determine its identity. The church's response to the issues of heresy and orthodoxy, the development of the canon, and the transmission of the Christian Scriptures not only determined its survival, but determined the kind of church it would be for generations to come."

## Reviews

"If you've ever wondered what happened to the church after the apostles, how the church began to expand and grow, and why it developed its particular beliefs, then Michael Kruger has written the book for you. In this learned volume, Kruger takes readers into the mysterious second century, where he lucidly explains things like the formation of a distinctive Christian identity, pagan responses to Christianity, the rise of certain heresies, and the canonization of the New Testament. This book will open a whole new world that you never knew

existed!” (Michael F. Bird, lecturer in theology, Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia)

“This is a good introduction and overview of Christianity in the second century, which was a crucial period of growth, opposition, and development of doctrines and practices. Readable and informed, Kruger’s book is a recommended choice for course readings and for individuals seeking to know more about early Christianity.” (Larry W. Hurtado, professor emeritus of New Testament language, literature, and theology, School of Divinity (New College), University of Edinburgh)

“Kruger takes us into a world in which ‘Christianity’ is still very much at risk and up for grabs, struggling to find its identity in the midst of forces within and without seeking to define its identity or suppress its existence. His book invites us into the tensions and trajectories that would eventually give shape to what we, in distant retrospect, take for granted as Christian faith, practice, and polity. I recommend it highly, alongside the texts that have richly informed it (the apostolic fathers, the early martyrologies, and the apologists), to all those interested in learning how ‘New Testament faith’ found its footing and began to take root.” (David A. deSilva, trustees’ distinguished professor of New Testament and Greek, Ashland Theological Seminary)

“Though most of us are pretty sure that something happened between the apostolic era and the Council of Nicaea, even professional historians can be pretty foggy on what that ‘something’ was or why it matters; the second century has always been the black box of Christian history. Now

with this well-researched yet highly accessible book, Kruger recovers important flight data that shows just how crucial this overlooked trajectory is to understanding Christian history and even Christianity as we know it today.” (Nicholas Perrin, Franklin S. Dyrness Professor of Biblical Studies, Wheaton Graduate School)

“The second century, a sprawling, fascinating, and formative period in the history of Christianity, may be well studied, but it is neither well nor easily comprehended. Mike Kruger’s *Christianity at the Crossroads* is an excellent remedy for that problem! Any reader who wants a better understanding of the situation of the church in that period, its place in the world, its worship, its struggles, and its Scriptures will benefit from this highly informative compendium. Besides being a trustworthy guidebook, it is also a well-designed source-book for those interested in further study.” (Charles E. Hill, John R. Richardson Professor of New Testament and Early Christianity, Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando)

“Many scholars of early Christianity are pushing beyond the New Testament era, into the second century; however, the complexity of issues magnifies due to the intersection of such a diverse expression of Christian groups interpreting biblical texts and developing their approaches to theology and society. With *Christianity at the Crossroads*, Michael Kruger provides an orientation to the diversity of groups, texts, and practices that students and scholars of Christian origins will find invaluable. He summarizes the best of contemporary research about second century Christianity and provides robust bibliographies for further

study. This is definitely a book I wish I had a decade ago, when I began my work in this area.” (Ben C. Blackwell, assistant professor of Christianity, Houston Baptist University)

*Christianity At The Crossroads: How The Second Century Shaped The Future Of The Church* (Michael J. Kruger, IVP Academic, 2018, 256 pages)

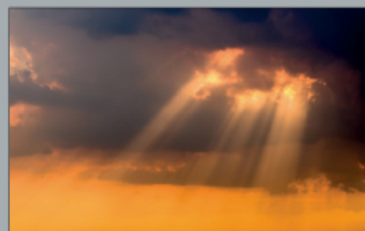




NSBT NEW STUDIES IN BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

# Death and the Afterlife

Biblical perspectives on  
ultimate questions



Paul R. Williamson

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Series Editor: D. A. Carson

*Death and the Afterlife: Biblical perspectives on ultimate questions* (IVP Academic, 2018) by Dr. Paul Williamson is a great guide into a subject that impacts everyone on earth.

The contents of the book were originally part of a lecture Dr. Williamson gave during the 2016 Annual Moore College Lectures, so the book has some field testing as well as careful thought into such an important topic.

*Death and the Afterlife* is part of IVP's New Studies in Biblical Theology series. The purpose of the series is to help thinking Christians understand their Bible better. Dr. Williamson's new book certainly does that.

While I don't agree with all of the author's conclusions, I appreciate how carefully he laid out evidence for each chapter. Dr. Williamson looked at how ancient people viewed the issues of death, along with Old Testament, Inter-Testament, and New Testament perspectives.

Dr. Williamson's sourcing is excellent. Serious students will find the Index of ancient sources very helpful in their own research, along with multiple footnotes in each chapter.

*Death and the Afterlife* will certainly help thinking Christians understand their Bible better, which meets the basic purpose of the New Studies in Biblical Theology series. I highly recommend this new book for your "thinking" library.

# Contents

## Introduction

1. After death, what? Ultimate questions about death and the afterlife
2. Death – the ultimate separation?
3. Resurrection – the ultimate makeover?
4. Judgment – the ultimate verdict?
5. Hell – the ultimate honocaust?
6. Heaven – the ultimate destination?

## Conclusion

- Bibliography
- Index of authors
- Index of Scripture references
- Index of ancient sources

## About the Author

Paul R. Williamson is lecturer in Old Testament, Hebrew and Aramaic at Moore College, Sydney. He is the author of *Sealed with an Oath*, a contributor to *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* and *Dictionary of the Old Testament*, and coeditor of *Exploring Exodus*.

## Publisher's Description

“Significant aspects of death and the afterlife continue to be debated among evangelical Christians. In this NSBT volume Paul Williamson surveys the perspectives of our contemporary culture and the biblical world, and then highlights the traditional understanding of the biblical teaching and the issues over which evangelicals have become increasingly polarized. Subsequent chapters explore the controversial areas: what happens immediately after we die; bodily resurrection; a final, universal judgment; the ultimate fate of those who do not receive God’s approval on the last day; and the biblical concept of an eschatological “heaven.” Taking care to understand the ancient Near Eastern and Greco-Roman backgrounds, Williamson works through the most important Old and New Testament passages. He demonstrates that there is considerable exegetical support for the traditional evangelical understanding of death and the afterlife, and raises questions about the basis for the growing popularity of alternative understandings. Addressing key issues in biblical theology, the works comprising New Studies in Biblical Theology are creative attempts to help Christians better understand their Bibles. The NSBT series is edited by D. A. Carson, aiming to simultaneously instruct and to edify, to interact with current scholarship and to point the way ahead.” IVP Academic

## Reviews

“This volume is likely to become the stimulus for more than one series of sermons . . . More importantly, it may well stimulate its readers to live life now and die well because they have learned to live with eternity in view, cherishing the blessed promises and consolations of the gospel of Jesus Christ.” (D. A. Carson)

*Death and the Afterlife: Biblical perspectives on ultimate questions* (IVP Academic, 2018, 256 pages)





Edgar Andrews

Author of *"Who made God? Searching for a theory of everything"*

# WHAT IS MAN?

*Adam, Alien or Ape?*

Edgar Andrews has a way of making the profound accessible. His scholarship informs the reader about key questions of our time, offering wise guidance and illumination.

Paul Copan, *Pledger Family Chair of Philosophy and Ethics,*  
*Palm Beach Atlantic University, USA.*



*What Is Man?: Adam, Alien or Ape?* (Elm Hill, 2018) by Dr. Edgar Andrews is definitely a **must-have** addition to any Christian apologist's personal library. I would expand that to say it is a must-have book for **any** Christian interested in understanding the truth about the origin of the human race.

Dr. Andrews is in a unique position to write such a book and we can all be thankful that he did. He is also the author of *Who Made God? Searching For A Theory Of Everything* (Evangelical Press, 2009, 2012).

Dr. Andrews' new book addresses a deep and important topic in an easy-to-read style. Non-scientists, like myself, will find it helpful in understanding much of the debate about human origins without having to get a degree in science. Dr. Andrews does that for us.

*What Is Man?* looks at a multitude of scientific arguments concerning the origin of the universe and human beings including cosmology, astronomy, physics, anthropology, chemistry, palaeontology, genetics, archaeology, biology and quantum mechanics.

Fortunately for us, Dr. Andrews does a superb job using language and illustrations that make understanding complex science easy. He also ventures into some of the science "fiction" that has made its way into human origin discussions.



Scientific evidence for the creation of the universe and humanity is one of the primary reasons I left atheism for Christianity almost five decades ago. I know the power it has to convince people who honestly search through the evidence for the purpose of learning what's true.

Dr. Andrews does a wonderful job of presenting the evidence for both creation and evolution. His understanding of the arguments for both sides will help you to appreciate how unique you are and the wonderful gift God has given you. You will also learn how to share the evidence with people who are confused or have been misled about the science.

Some of my favorite topics in *What Is Man?* are about the primary theories of human origin, whether the universe can create itself from nothing, the fine tuning of the universe, exploring mega-universes, the uniqueness of human beings, genes and genomes, what we learn from fossils (including various testing processes), the nature of reality, the historicity and fall of Adam and Eve, why humans are unique, Jesus Christ the perfect Man, and evidence for the Resurrection of Christ.

I highly recommend *What Is Man? Adam, Alien or Ape?* for your library .. and to give a friend!

## From Author's Preface

"In 1906, American humorist Mark Twain published a sixty-page essay entitled "What is man?" Consisting of an interminable dialogue between a senior citizen (who believes that man is just a machine) and a young man (who believes nothing in particular but is open to persuasion), it wasn't one of his finest books. But at least he tried. Authors since then seem to have avoided the subject like the plague, often tackling the respective roles of men and women in society but seldom asking deeper questions about what it means to be human. When the psalmist asked, "What is man?" (Psalm 8 v.4) he was, I think, seeking an altogether more profound answer.

Avoidance of the subject is all the more strange because there has never been a time like our own when curiosity about human origins and destiny has been greater, or the answers on offer more hotly disputed. It's a safe bet that any attempt to give the "big picture" on the origin, nature and specialness of mankind will be contentious—which might explain why writers have generally fought shy of it. Yet at heart it is the question most of us really do want answered, because the answer defines that precious thing we call our identity, both personally and as a race.

The Psalmist did, of course, offer his own answer three millennia ago. Man, he claimed, was created by God for a clearly defined purpose—to exercise dominion over planet earth and (by implication) to ultimately share something of the glory of the divine nature. The rest, as they say, is history, but it's not a happy tale. As Mark Twain says in another essay; "I can't help being disappointed with Adam and Eve". Not surprisingly,

then, a large proportion of humanity today are looking for alternative solutions, accepting the challenge of the Psalmist's question without embracing the optimism of his answer.

In this book we are going to consider the alternative solutions on offer by considering what it means to be human against the backgrounds of cosmology (man's place in the universe), biology (man's place in the animal kingdom), and psychology (man's consciousness and mind). Finally, we return to the biblical context, arguing that the Psalmist got it right after all.

- Don't let the science-sounding stuff put you off. Like its popular prequel, 'Who made God? Searching for a theory of everything', this book is written with a light touch in a reader-friendly and often humorous style. It is intended specifically for the non-expert, with homely verbal illustrations designed to explain and unpack the technicalities for the lay-person. As Dr. Paul Copan (Pledger Family Chair of Philosophy and Ethics, Palm Beach Atlantic University) says, "Edgar Andrews has a way of making the profound accessible. His scholarship informs the reader about key questions of our time, offering wise guidance and illumination."

## Endorsements

“The question of human identity is one of the most pressing issues facing this generation. Edgar Andrews employs his scientific understanding to respond to some of the key humanistic and evolutionary answers provided to that question, and then sets out the biblical case for humanity as made in the image of God, with Jesus Christ as the perfect exemplar. Professor Andrews has a rare ability to make complex scientific issues plain to nonspecialists without dumbing down his explanations, and that ability is on full display in this book.”  
Robert Strivens, Formerly Principal of The London Theological Seminary

“In *What Is Man?* (a sequel to his excellent book *Who Made God?*), Prof Andrews tackles another great question we all ask. Next to a true knowledge of God, a true knowledge of ourselves remains critical. With his usual combination of reliable and helpfully explained science, biblical knowledge, cultural awareness, good humor and rapier-sharp reasoning, the author covers virtually every important aspect of the question. Would that every young person could read this book, which offers such clear direction amidst the many voices calling for their attention.”  
Steven Bowers, Director, European Missions Fellowship and Former Pastor

“This engaging book, written by an accomplished scientist and easily digestible by a general readership, succeeds splendidly in breaking down into ‘bite-sized’ pieces complex ideas about the origin, constitution, significance, and final destiny of mankind—offering a sometimes humorous but still profound critique of the claims of

secularists. Apt analogies taken from everyday life are an outstanding feature of the book.” Martin Erdmann, Theologian, Author, and Director of the Verax Institute

## About the Author

Edgar Andrews is Emeritus Professor of Materials Science in the University of London, England, and a former Head of Department and Dean of Engineering. He holds a BSc in theoretical physics and a PhD and DSc (higher doctorate) in Solid State Physics. He is a Fellow of the British Institute of Physics and a Chartered Physicist and Chartered Engineer. He has published over 100 scientific research papers in leading peer-reviewed Physics and General Science Journals.

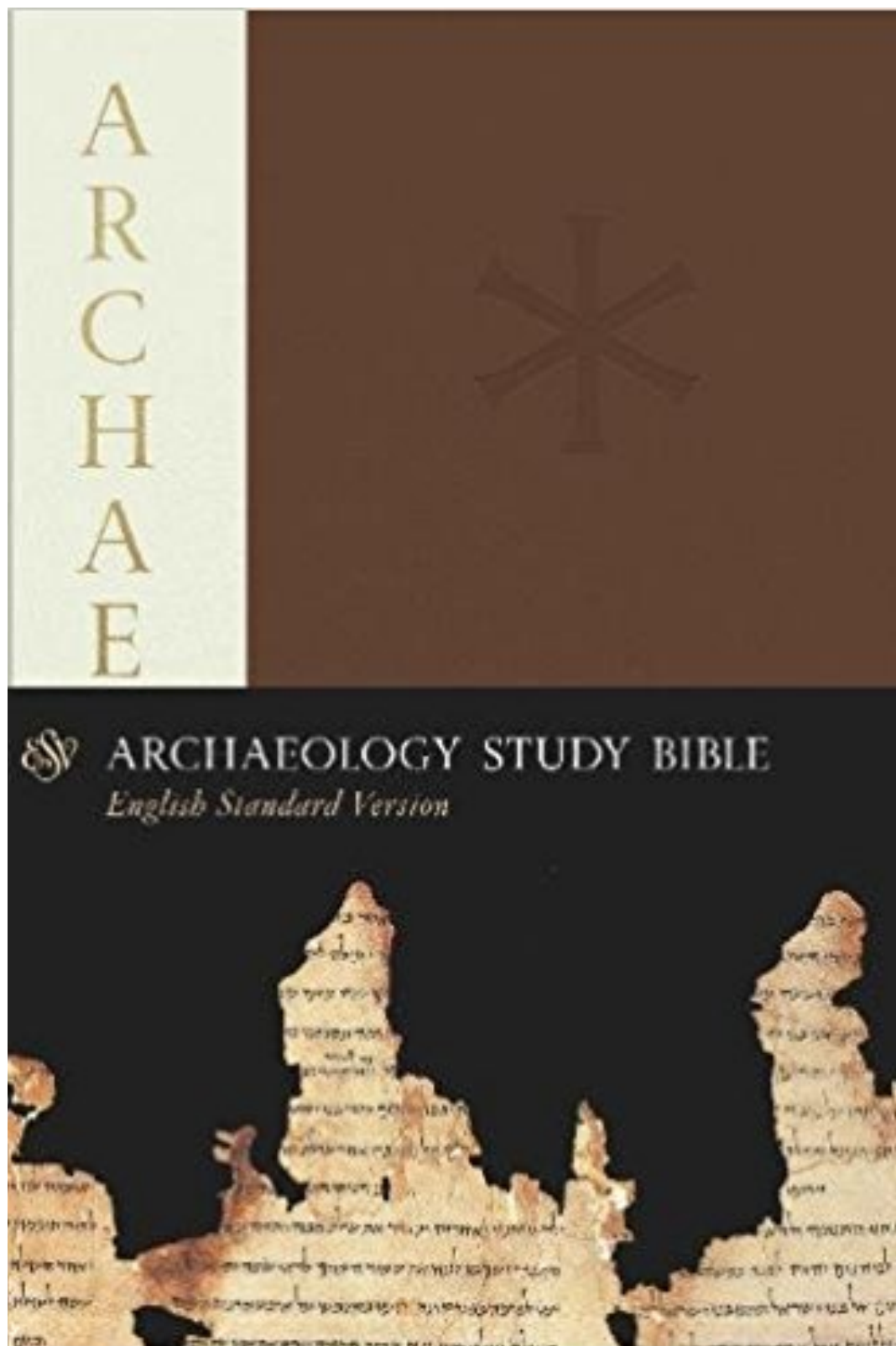
As a distinguished expert in polymer science, he served as an International Consultant for the Dow Chemical Company (USA) for over 30 years and for the 3M Company (USA) for some 20 years. He also served on the Scientific Advisory Council of the National Oil Company of Finland for five years and was an Expert Witness in a variety of long-running trials in the British High Court for over 20 years.

He became a Christian during his student days and has been active in a several Christian churches and ministries for over 60 years. He was Chairman of Evangelical Press, UK, for 20 years and Editor of the monthly newspaper Evangelical Times for ten years. He is currently co-pastor of the Campus Church in Welwyn Garden City, England. His published books include four works on science and faith, two Bible Commentaries and a

book on the theology of the Holy Spirit. He debated Richard Dawkins at the 1986 Huxley Memorial Debate at the Oxford Union, UK.

*What Is Man?: Adam, Alien or Ape?* (Elm Hill, 2018, 340 pages)







The *ESV Archaeology Study Bible* (Crossway, 2017) is a great addition to any Christian's library and especially to those who want to help non-Christians understand the mountain of evidence for the truth of Christianity.

First, let's look at the translation. The ESV (English Standard Version) is held in high esteem among Bible scholars and students. If you have an ESV Bible, you know its value. Being able to have a version you enjoy plus the amazing study notes, images, maps and other content makes this a great purchase. If you don't have an ESV Bible, the *Archaeology Study Bible* would be a good place to begin.

I say that because of how important archaeology is and has been to supporting the credibility of the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. Speaking personally for a moment, archaeology played a key role in my journey from atheism to theism and Christianity. It will be a great source for you as you learn about the great evidence that has been found in various parts of the world as attested to in the pages of the Bible.

It will also give you a strong understanding of how to use the findings of archaeologists to share with non-Christians who doubt the credibility and historicity of the Old and New Testaments. The excellent notes on every page will help you see the reality of real life during Bible times.

Crossway did an excellent job with both the content and quality of the hardcover Bible. The introductions to each Bible Book shares the theme and authorship, contributions from archaeology, outline for understanding, and a map of the locations listed in the Book.

The pages of the Bible are also filled with photos of archaeological digs and finds, along with great articles like –

- Daily Life in Israel in Old Testament Times
- The Hebrew Calendar
- Old Testament Timeline
- Judea-Palestine in the Time Between the Testaments
- Intertestamental Events Timeline
- The Dead Sea Scrolls
- The Roman Empire and the Greco-Roman World
- Daily Life in Judea-Palestine in New Testament Times
- New Testament Timeline
- Doing Archaeology
- Archaeology as an Academic Discipline
- Expository Preaching and Archaeology
- Archaeological Dating
- Biblical Geography and Archaeology
- A Short History of Archaeology in the Near East

I highly recommend the ESV Archaeology Study Bible to you and your friends. It is both a wonderful tool for your own study and one to help Christians have more confidence in their beliefs and non-Christians to see how the Bible's history is rooted in reality and truth.

## From the Publisher

The *ESV Archaeology Study Bible* roots the biblical text in its historical and cultural context, offering readers a framework for better understanding the people, places, and events recorded in Scripture. With editorial oversight from Dr. John Currid (PhD, University of Chicago) and Dr. David Chapman (PhD, University of Cambridge), as well as contributions from a team of field-trained archaeologists, the Archaeology Study Bible assembles a range of modern scholarship—pairing the biblical text with over 2,000 study notes, 400 full-color photographs, 200 maps and diagrams, 200 sidebars, 15 articles, and 4 timelines. These features bring life to the ancient texts, helping readers situate them in their historical context while recognizing the truth that the eternal God became flesh entered human history at a specific time and in a specific place.

- Double-column, paragraph format
- Cross references
- Footnotes
- 2,000+ study notes
- 400+ full-color photographs
- 200+ maps and diagrams
- 200+ informational sidebars
- 15 articles like “The Bible and History,” “Archaeology and Preaching,” “Major Biblical Finds,” and “Daily Life in the New Testament Era”
- 4 timelines
- Book introductions
- Presentation page

- 4-color printing
- Smyth-sewn binding
- Packaging: L-Card

## Editorial Reviews

“The ESV Archaeology Study Bible is a valuable combination of archaeology and text, sure to be a great help for understanding the archaeological, historical, and cultural background of the Bible. So much of this cultural background is lost to the modern reader, but the Archaeology Study Bible brings the text alive with its helpful articles, comments, and color photographs, all based on the most recent archaeological discoveries. I highly recommend this wonderfully illustrated Archaeology Study Bible that is paired with the ESV translation of the ancient texts of the Bible.”

—David E. Graves, Assistant Professor, Rawling School of Divinity, Liberty University; author, *Biblical Archaeology*; *The Location of Sodom*; and *Jesus Speaks to Seven of His Churches*

“Crossway, together with the scholarly editorial team for the new and distinctive ESV Archaeology Study Bible, is to be commended and congratulated for producing this first-rate reference tool. The articles and notes, written by a skilled team of biblical interpreters and archaeologists, bring insightful illumination to the historical context and meaning of biblical passages, events, and themes. It is a privilege to

recommend this important work, which will serve students, pastors, church leaders, and teachers well in the years to come.”

—David S. Dockery, President, Trinity International University, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

“The events and teachings of the Bible occurred in time and space, and a proper understanding of these helps give perspective to the text. Archaeology and cultural studies provide important controls to guide the reader to an appropriate contextual and exegetical study of Scripture. The ESV Archaeology Study Bible will help foster a deeper and richer appreciation of God’s revelation for humanity. The volume’s use of photographs in conjunction with Crossway’s outstanding collection of maps, which are supplemented with explanatory notes, helps facilitate one’s appreciation of the richness of God’s Word for antiquity as well as its implications for today.”

—Dale W. Manor, Professor of Archaeology and Bible, Harding University; Field Director, Tel Beth-Shemesh Excavations; author, *Digging Deeper into the Word* and *A Heart to Study and Teach*

“The ESV Archaeology Study Bible is an excellent resource for archaeological and historical information on the biblical text. Basic data can be found in the margin of the particular passage itself, with nearby boxes containing additional material on the immediate or related subjects. The maps and graphics make the Bible attractive and user-friendly. The ESV Archaeology Study Bible will make an invaluable first

stop for students of the Scriptures seeking information on biblical backgrounds.”

—Paul Ray, Associate Professor of Archaeology and Old Testament Studies, Andrews University; author, *Small Finds*; coeditor, *Critical Issues in Early Israelite History*

“While the Bible is unchanging, our knowledge of the context of the Bible is ever-changing. The best new information that can be brought to the Bible is from archaeology, which, as a science of discovery, is constantly engaged in unearthing historical and cultural evidence from the world of the Bible. In the hands of skilled biblical interpreters, this knowledge can corroborate, clarify, and add local color to the biblical text. Crossway’s first-rate team of archaeologists and biblical scholars has produced a much-needed resource that will inform biblical students about the context of Scripture with a beautifully crafted format that is essential for communication in a visual age.”

—Randall Price, Distinguished Research Professor, Liberty University; Codirector, Qumran Archaeological Project

“Everyone who wants to understand the Bible better will welcome the ESV Archaeology Study Bible. This marvelous resource will help readers visualize the people and places of the Bible and appreciate the importance of archaeology for a deeper and more accurate understanding of Scripture. All of us are indebted to editors John Currid and David Chapman.”

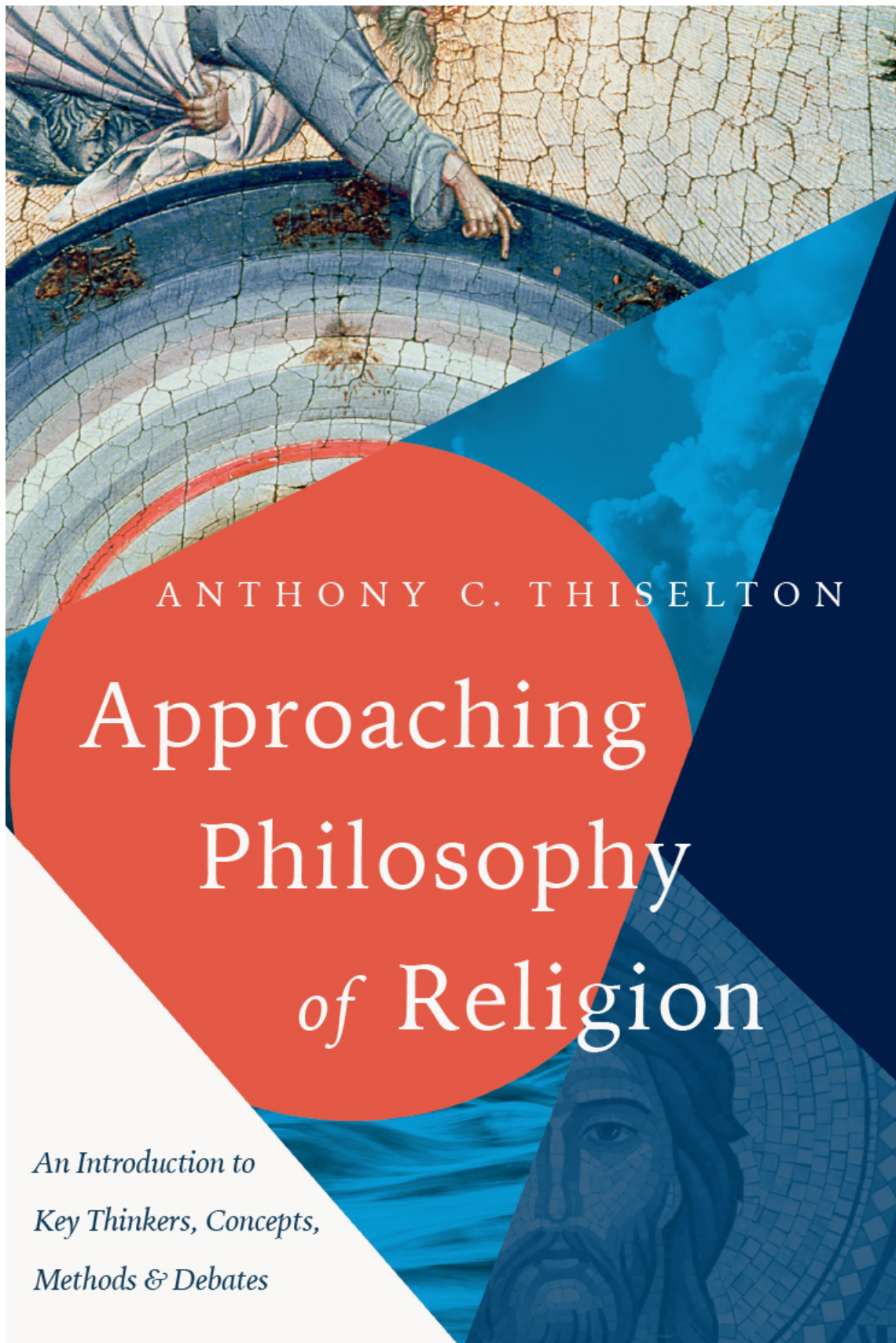
—Craig A. Evans, John Bisagno Distinguished Professor of Christian Origins, Houston Baptist University

*ESV Archaeology Study Bible* (Crossway, 2017)

[We received an electronic review copy from Crossway]







*Approaching Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction to Key Thinkers, Concepts, Methods & Debates* (IVP Academic, 2018) is written by Anthony C. Thiselton. He is Emeritus Professor of Christian Theology at the University of Nottingham and a Fellow of the British Academy. Thiselton is also the author of several other books (e.g. *Discovering Romans*, *Systematic Theology*, *The Holy Spirit*, and *The Last Things*.)

Thiselton began teaching the philosophy of religion in 1963 and shares his wealth of knowledge about the topic in his new book, which definitely lives up to its title.

He opens the book with a Chronology of the philosophy of religion that runs from the 9th Century BC to the 20th Century AD. The Introduction deals with landmarks in philosophy of religion that includes the ancient world (e.g. Greece, Near East, Far East), Hebrew, Jewish and Christian thought, and medieval to modern thought.

Some of the arguments explained in the Introduction include arguments for the existence of God, faith and reason and the problem of knowledge, and other problems in the philosophy of religion (e.g. the problem of evil).

Thiselton also devoted space in the Introduction to Hegel, Kant and Darwin. From that point the author addressed the argument from design.

The three primary parts of the book look at Approaches, Concepts and Issues, and Key Terms. Here's a brief overview:

### **Part 1: Approaches**

1. Analytic philosophy
2. Continental philosophy
3. Empiricism and rationalism
4. Existentialism
5. Feminist philosophy
6. Personalism
7. Phenomenology
8. Pragmatism

### **Part 2: Concepts and Issues**

Subjects addressed include:

- Cosmological argument
- Design argument
- Divine action
- Evolution
- Faith
- Free will
- Gender
- God (attributes and existence of)
- Good and evil

- Humanity
- Life after death
- Miracles
- Morality
- Ontological argument
- Religious experience
- Religious knowledge
- Religious language
- Revelation

### **Part 3: Key terms**

This is an excellent section where Thiselton gives brief definitions and descriptions of dozens of important aspects about religious philosophy. Here are some examples:

- Agnosticism
- Atheism
- Causality
- Creationism
- Deism
- Determinism
- Enlightenment (the)
- Epistemology
- Eternity
- Ethics
- Evolution

- Fideism
- Foundationalism
- Humanism
- Idealism
- Logic
- Materialism
- Metaphysics
- Mind
- Modernism
- Monism
- Monotheism
- Mysticism
- Myth
- Naturalism
- Natural theology
- Neoplatonism
- Nihilism
- Ontology
- Panentheism
- Pantheism
- Pluralism
- Postmodernism
- Reductionism
- Realism
- Relativism
- Skepticism
- Scientism

- Soul
- Spirit
- Teleology
- Theism
- Theodicy
- Transcendence
- Utopia

I recommend this book for anyone interested in the subject of the **philosophy of religion**. It will help you understand thousands of years of religious thinking in a short book that you will be able to reference for study and teaching for years to come. The author has taken a complex subject and made it easy to read and understand.

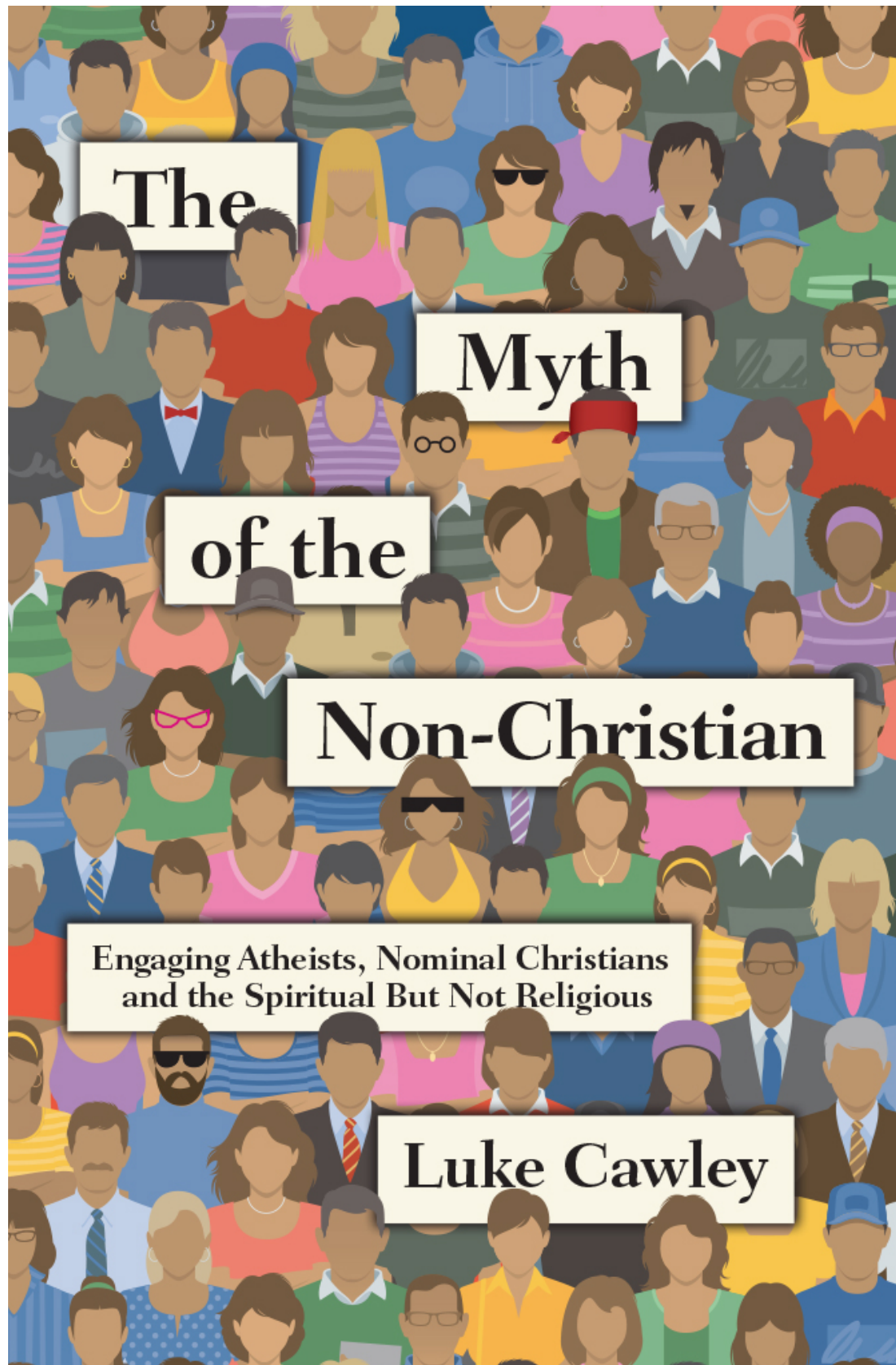
## Reviews

“Anthony Thiselton has written a fine companion to his earlier A Concise Encyclopedia of the Philosophy of Religion. In this particular volume, his treatment of seminal philosophy of religion topics reveals a remarkable breadth and depth of scholarship, and presents these topics incisively and accessibly. An excellent resource!” Paul Copan, professor, Pledger Family Chair of Philosophy and Ethics, Palm Beach Atlantic University, author of A Little Book for New Philosophers and An Introduction to Biblical Ethics”

*Approaching Philosophy of Religion: An Introduction to Key Thinkers, Concepts, Methods & Debates* (IVP Academic, 2018, 240 pages)









*The Myth of the Non-Christian: Engaging Atheists, Nominal Christians and the Spiritual But Not Religious* by Luke Cawley (IVP Books, 2016) addresses an important aspect of our Lord's directive to "make disciples" – *Contextual Apologetics*.

"The art of formulating appropriate and diverse ways of sharing Jesus, based on a thorough understanding of those with whom we are interacting, is one that has a rich history with Christianity. Strangely, though, even some fantastically gifted Christian communicators manages to overlook its importance." *The Myth of the Non-Christian*, page 15

Luke Cawley has been involved in ministry in the UK and Romania for many years and shares what he's learned in his new book. Cawley is honest in sharing his own struggles and the insights he gained through them.

Cawley presents three key groups of people –

"In this book we will follow Jesus' footsteps by learning to be contextual apologists in our own settings. We will meet three sets of people:

- The "spiritual but not religious"
- Convinced atheists

- Nominal Christians (page 23)

That, I think, is one of the strengths of *The Myth of the Non-Christian*. Cawley's primary point, and reason for the book's title, is that "there's no such thing as a non-Christian." He believes it's an obsolete category.

"I've rarely met anybody, though, who calls himself a 'non-Christian.' It's strange, then, that we Christians persist in treating the label as if it were somehow rich with meaning. Perhaps the time has come to retire the term and to rediscover the rich variety that exists among people who are not yet following Jesus. Not everybody is the same. Our approaches to sharing Jesus should therefore not treat people as such. We need to move from having a strategy for communicating with all people to having multiple strategies for different group." page 13

Cawley spends the rest of his book looking at a variety of strategies for reaching people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is where we meet with his idea for *contextual apologetics*.

I found *The Myth of the Non-Christian* challenging and a great read. I recommend the book to you and other Christians interested in making a difference in the lives of people who are not yet followers of Jesus Christ.

# Contents

## **Part I: Engaging Diverse Contexts**

1. Flexibility
2. Plausibility and Desirability
3. Tangibility

## **Part II: Engaging the Spiritual but Not Religious**

4. The Temple in the Desert and the Mysterious Massage
5. Does Christianity Enable A Richer Spirituality?
6. Inviting Others into an Experience of Christian Spirituality

## **Part III: Engaging Atheists**

7. Dawkins on a Bike (and Other Tales)
8. Isn't Faith in God Irrational and Outdated?
9. Creating Safe Spaces for Exploring Questions

## **Part IV: Engaging Nominal Christians**

10. The Pimp, the Planter and Their Friends
11. Don't You Realize I've Been There and Done That?
12. Communities That Facilitate Rediscovering Jesus

Epilogue: Adventures with Ukrainian Comic Book Jesus

Appendix 1: Comparative Statistics for Canada and the United Kingdom

Appendix 2: Did God Command Genocide?

Appendix 3: Suggested Further Reading

Acknowledgments

Notes

## About the Author

Luke Cawley is a writer, speaker, trainer, and the director of Chrysolis, an organization he helped start in 2012 with a vision to enable organizations and churches to better communicate the Jesus story. Luke has spent most of his adult life founding and developing missional communities on university campuses in Britain and Romania and is a regular speaker at conferences and outreach events around the world. An active writer and blogger, Luke has trained people at churches, parachurch organizations, and universities to better engage those around them with the story of Jesus. He enjoys thoughtful engagement with people who wouldn't normally consider Jesus and he often speaks in contexts where God is not typically discussed, such as schools, bars, cafes and theatres. Luke has a master's degree in evangelism and leadership from Wheaton College and a certificate in theological and pastoral studies from Oxford University. He's married to, Whitney, a schoolteacher, and they have three children.

## Publisher's Notes

There's no such thing as a non-Christian.

Somebody might self-identify as spiritual but not religious. Or they might be a practicing Hindu, Buddhist or Muslim. Or they might call themselves an atheist, freethinker or agnostic. But the one thing that people never describe themselves as is a "non-Christian." So Christians who want to

“reach non-Christians” need to realize that they’re not all the same. Evangelism is not one-size-fits-all.

Luke Cawley shows how Christians can contextualize the gospel in different ways to connect with different kinds of people. Here he unpacks the religious identities of three key demographics: the spiritual but not religious, committed atheists and nominal Christians. Each group has particular characteristics and requires specific approaches and practices to make the Christian faith plausible, desirable and tangible to them.

Filled with real-life stories of changed lives, this book is a practical and hopeful resource for helping people to encounter God.

## Reviews

“The world of real estate is ruled by one word repeated thrice: location, location, location. In the real world of relationships, which is the real estate of life, one word reigns supreme: context, context, context. Luke Cawley has written the new go-to book for contextual apologetics. This book is everywhere thoughtful and judicious; it is wide-ranging and deeply illuminating.”

Leonard Sweet, E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism, Drew University, bestselling author of *From Tablet to Table*, creator of [preachthestory.com](http://preachthestory.com)

“I am convinced that we need to rethink evangelism in light of the increasingly missionary situation of the church in our time. This is a top-class book that will help God’s people do just that. We might just become a more genuinely good-news people in the process.”

Alan Hirsch, author and activist

“I’ve been equipped and inspired anew by this book to better understand and connect with the many different kinds of people who don’t yet follow Jesus. Ditch the one-size-fits-all approach to being a witness: let this book help you do the things that may actually meet our friends’ felt spiritual needs.”

James Choung, national director of evangelism, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA, author of *True Story*

“I have read many books on helping people to faith in Christ, but this is one of the best. Perceptive, well-read, full of illustrative stories and extremely practical. Buy it and use it!”

Michael Green, theologian and evangelist

“While many people think of apologetics and cringe for fear of engaging in heated, insensitive arguments, *The Myth of the Non-Christian* presents a refreshingly different perspective. Listen to people, love them, help them connect to Jesus in a way that makes sense to them. It’s a simple yet profound concept that can transform the ways we

engage people with the gospel. Luke Cawley winsomely communicates to people of diverse backgrounds that following Jesus makes intellectual sense and satisfies our deepest longings. This book is a gift to all of us who are seeking to share this message!”

Jessica Leep Fick, author of *Beautiful Feet*

“Luke Cawley’s book is a brilliant resource for anyone interested in any form of Christian apologetics—for evangelists, teachers, pastors and indeed for anyone who wants to engage those who don’t understand what Christ offers that the culture cannot. The book is full of captivating snippets of conversations you and I have every day. It will make every reader more able to understand those who do not know Christ and more able to present him in ways they can understand. Cawley covers the gamut of unbelievers—skeptics, atheists, the unchurched and the spiritual but not religious. Importantly, Cawley is not afraid to engage the serious topic of spiritual reality. The text is highly accessible without compromising depth and should be read by all who ever want to talk with nonbelievers.”

Mary Poplin, professor and author of *Is Reality Secular?*

“A riveting back and forth between compelling principles of contextualized apologetics and life story. Luke speaks powerfully and prophetically about what apologetics in our day should look like as he gives the reader a fresh glimpse of what happens when our head and heart come together in our striving with people. Luke has an obvious

love for God and for people. He paints a picture of what it looks like to do an apologetic and evangelistic ministry with impact and compassion. Theory, practice, heart, passion and presence—few books bring this level of integration together as *The Myth of the Non-Christian!*”

R. York Moore, national evangelist, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA

“Suppose Christians take seriously the call to spread the gospel, to answer questions about the faith and to give a reason for the hope that they have in Jesus Christ. If we shoulder this crucially important task, shouldn’t we seek to engage and speak to actual people rather than our idealized notion of a ‘non-Christian’? Absolutely! Luke Cawley shows us why and how. He combines a much-needed diatribe against ‘one-size-fits-all’ apologetics with some very practical and easily accessible suggestions on how engage in apologetics. I cannot imagine a better book for a community of people who desire to share their hope with a world that desperately needs Christ!”

James Beilby, professor of systematic and philosophical theology, Bethel University, St. Paul, author of *Thinking About Christian Apologetics*

“I recommend *The Myth of the Non-Christian* to any Christian interested in evangelism and apologetics. As a vocational minister, however, I would especially recommend it to other vocational ministers and church leaders. It will help us understand the challenges in reaching post-Christian Westerners for Christ as well as best practices for doing so.”



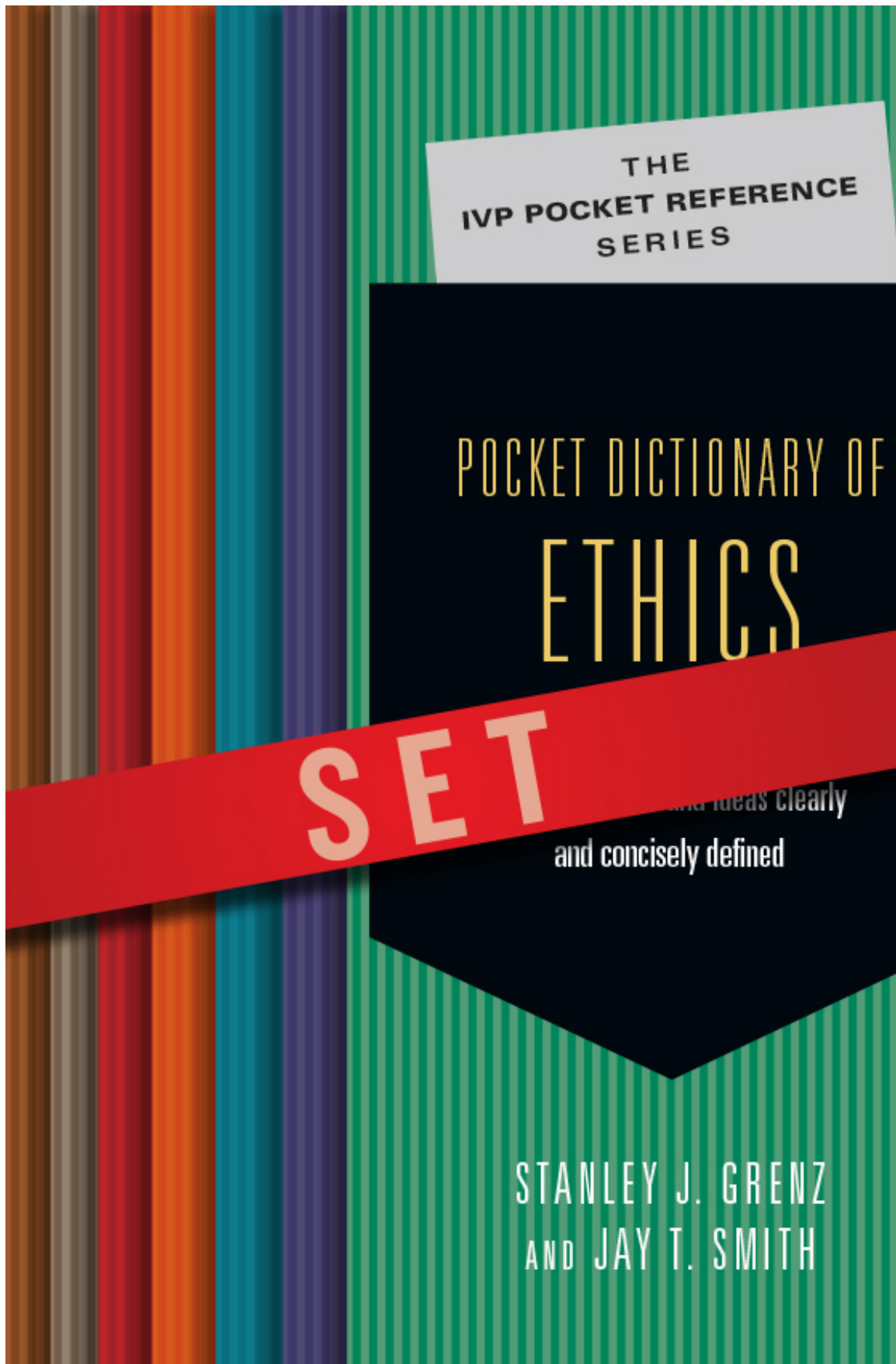
George P. Wood, Influence, April 15, 2016

“Real-life encounters, provocative sidebars, and questions at chapters’ end help readers further interact with the book. The New Atheists and approaching nominal Christians are also considered. Recommended to anyone wanting to more effectively share the Gospel.”

Gerald Wysz, CBA Retailers+Resources, March 16, 2016

*The Myth of the Non-Christian: Engaging Atheists, Nominal Christians and the Spiritual But Not Religious* (IVP Books, 2016, 240 pages)



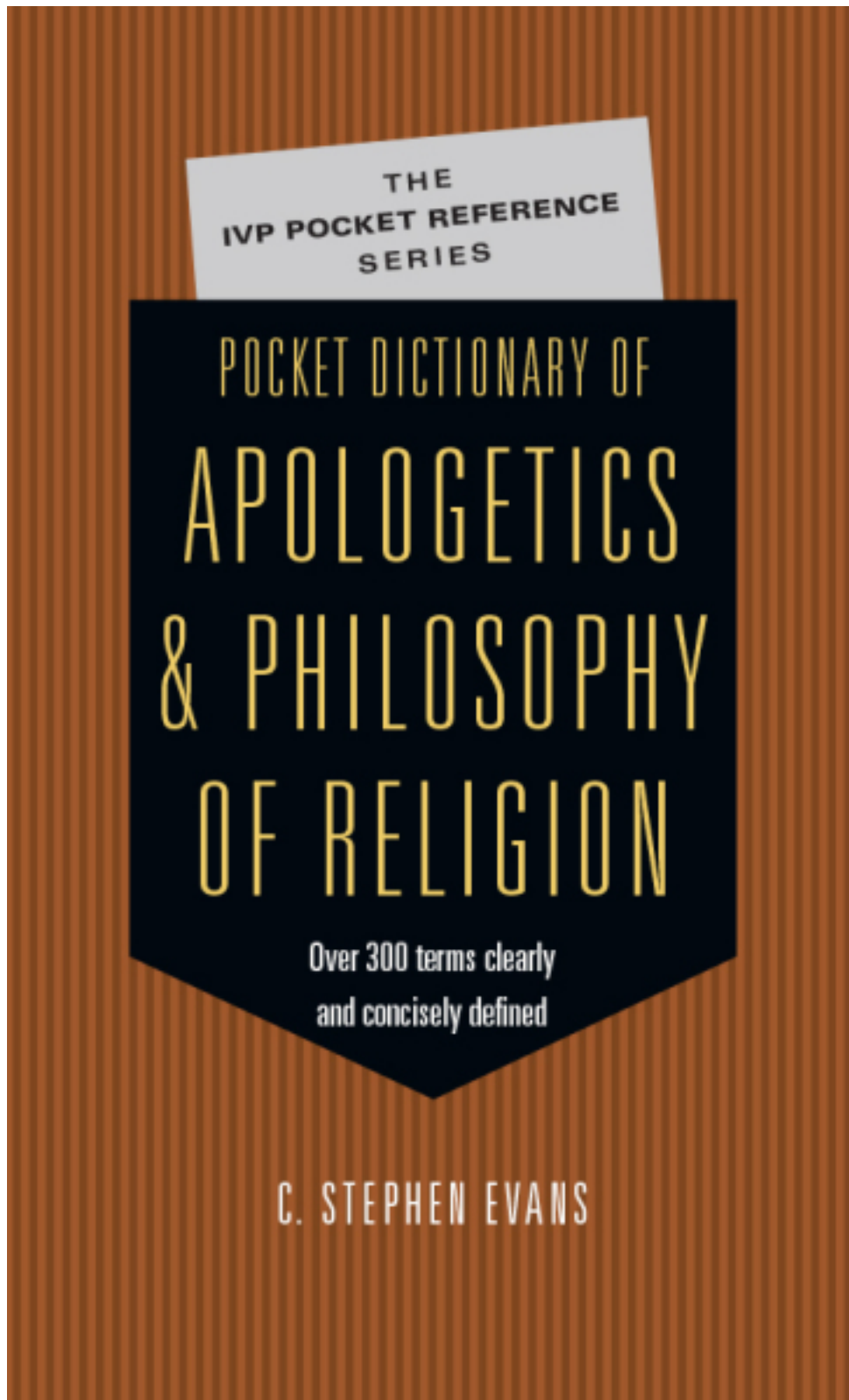


The IVP Pocket Reference Series is a great way to build an excellent reference library without having to spend a lot of money. The entire series of 13 books costs \$130 (\$117 through IVP) and individual pocket dictionaries retail for just \$10 (\$9 through IVP – less than on Amazon.com and [christianbook.com](http://christianbook.com)).

The series includes:

- Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms
- Pocket Dictionary of Theology
- Pocket Dictionary for the Study of Biblical Hebrew
- Pocket Dictionary for the Study of New Testament Greek
- Pocket Dictionary of Biblical Studies
- Pocket Dictionary of Ethics
- Pocket History of the Church
- Pocket Dictionary of Church History
- Pocket Guide to World Religions
- Pocket Dictionary of Liturgy Worship
- Pocket Dictionary of the Reformed Tradition
- Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics & Philosophy of Religion
- Pocket Handbook of Christian Apologetics

Since FaithandSelfDefense is primarily an apologetics ministry, I'll review the two IVP books about apologetics.



The Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics & Philosophy of Religion (IVP, 2002) was written by Stephen Evans.

Dr. Evans is University Professor of Philosophy and the Humanities at Baylor University. He is the author of other books, including *Kierkegaard: An Introduction*, *Natural Signs and Knowledge of God: A New Look at Theistic Arguments*, *God and Moral Obligation*, *Why Christian Faith Still Makes Sense*, and *Philosophy of Religion*.

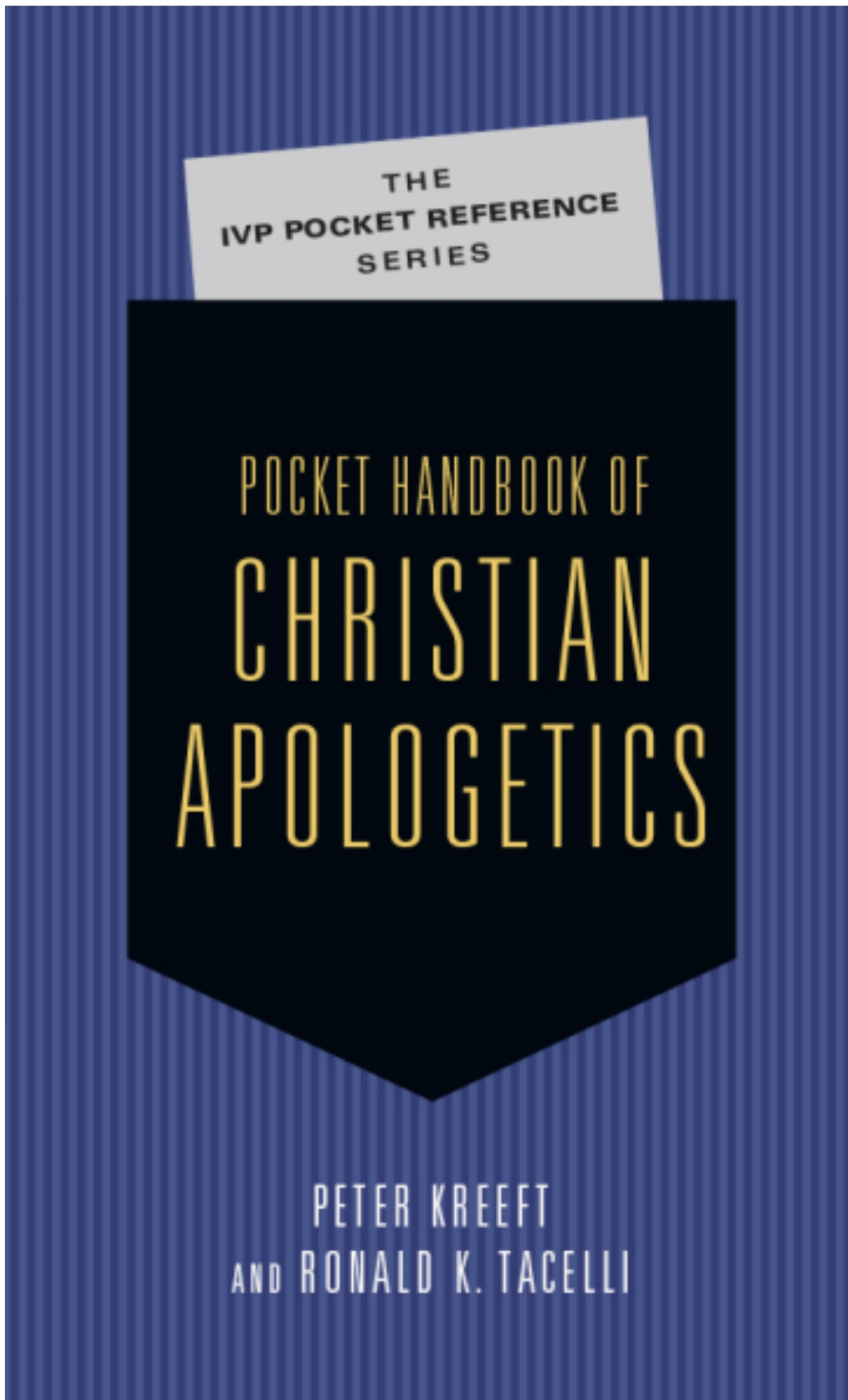
This dictionary is excellent for Christians at every level of study and involvement in ministry. Whether you are a beginner or have involved in apologetics and philosophy for decades, I believe you will find this pocket-sized dictionary helpful in understanding terms and ideas of importance to talking with people about the Gospel of Christ.

## Publisher's Notes

The Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics Philosophy of Religion is designed to be a companion to your study of these two related disciplines. Among its 300 entries are

- terms, from a posteriori to worldview
- apologists, from Abelard to Van Til
- philosophers of religion, from Alston to Wolterstorff
- movements, from analytic philosophy to voluntarism
- apologetic arguments, from the cosmological to the wager
- theologies, from Arminianism to Zoroastrianism

Here is an affordable and easily accessible “help key” for your readings, lectures, writing assignments and exam preparation. It’s a must-have study aid for any student who expects to cogitate on coherentism or ruminate on Ricouer.





The Pocket Handbook of Christian Apologetics (IVP, 2003) was written by Peter Kraft and Ronald Tacelli.

Dr. Kreeft is professor of philosophy at Boston College where he's taught since 1965. He has written more than 70 books, including *The Best Things in Life*, *The Journey*, *How to Win the Culture War*, *Christianity for Modern Pagans*, and *Fundamentals of the Faith*.

Ronald Tacelli is associate professor of philosophy at Boston College.

The *Pocket Handbook of Christian Apologetics* is a good introduction to apologetics in a pocket-sized guide. It would be helpful both for the person asking serious questions about God, the Bible and Christianity and the person answering those questions.

## Publisher's Notes

"Be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in you," wrote the apostle Peter.

That is what apologetics is all about.

Here is a concise, informative guide for anyone looking for answers to questions of faith and reason. Peter Kreeft and Ronald K. Tacelli have condensed their popular Handbook of Christian Apologetics, summarizing the foremost arguments for major Christian teachings and offering

compelling responses to the most common arguments put forward against Christianity. In this book you'll find answers to questions about

- faith and reason
- the existence of God
- creation and evolution
- predestination and free will
- miracles
- the problem of evil
- Christ and the resurrection
- the reliability of the Bible
- life after death
- heaven and hell
- salvation and other religions
- objective truth

The Pocket Handbook of Christian Apologetics is the place to begin for people with questions about Christianity.



PHYLLIS J. LE PEAU  
AND ANDREW T. LE PEAU

# GRANDPARENTING

*Loving Our Children's Children*



Over  
15 Million  
LifeGuides  
Sold

9 STUDIES FOR INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS

With Grandparents Day just around the calendar corner (Sept. 9th), we thought it would be good to look at the important role grandparents play in the lives of children.

Grandparents can be a big support to their children who are the parents of their grandchildren. By support I mean being involved and available for the spiritual, physical and emotional support of their family.

Children from Christian homes are walking away from their faith in Christ and belief in God at frightening speed. Parents who have looked to church and Christian school leaders to prepare their children to leave home for college or career are now asking “what happened” to their kids. Why would their child call them to say they no longer believed in God?

May I state the obvious? God expects parents to raise children to believe in Him and be able to defend their beliefs when attacked by a secular world.

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

Deuteronomy 6:6-9

“Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

“My son, hear the instruction of your father, And do not forsake the law of your mother; For they will be a graceful ornament on your head, And chains about your neck.” Proverbs 1:8-9

Proverbs is an excellent example of how parents should train their children. King Solomon used the term “my son” more than 20 times in his wisdom writings. He was addressing his son personally and pointing him to the many errors a young man can make in life.

One of the reasons I wanted to review this book about Grandparenting is because of the position God has given grandparents in the lives of their grandchildren. We can make a difference in their lives as well as the lives of our children.

*Grandparenting – Loving Our Children’s Children* is part of IVP’s Life Guide Bible Studies series of books. It is designed for individual or group study. I recommend that grandparents go through the study as a couple first, then talk with some of your friends about going through it as a group. There are benefits in both ways of approaching the study.

While the study is not specifically designed for a discussion about helping our grandchildren defend their faith in Christ (apologetics), it does address those supporting issues well. You could also transition from this book into another study that addresses faith defense for your grandchildren. I definitely recommend it for you and your friends to study and discuss.

# Contents

## Getting the Most Out of *Grandparenting*

### 1. A Grandfather's Blessing

*Genesis 48:1-20*

### 2. Praying for Our Grandchildren

*Ephesians 1:15-22; 3:14-21*

### 3. From Generation to Generation

*Psalms 78:1-8*

### 4. Nurturing Contentment

*1 Timothy 6:2-10*

### 5. Loving Your In-Laws

*Ruth 1:1-19; 2:8-13; 4:9-16*

### 6. The Problem with Favoritism

*Genesis 27:30-41; 37:1-26*

### 7. Family Forgiveness

*Matthew 18:21-35*

### 8. Never Too Late to Change

*2 Chronicles 33:1-20*

### 9. When It Is Time to Step Aside

*2 Samuel 19:31-40*

Leader's Notes

## Publisher Notes

Written by grandparents and expert Bible study authors Phyllis and Andrew Le Peau, this LifeGuide Bible study explores the biblical framework for being a godly grandparent.

In nine sessions, this study guides you in how to be a loving and caring presence in the lives of not only your grandchildren but also your adult children as they parent.

## About the Authors

Phyllis Le Peau worked with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship for over two decades in St. Louis and the Chicago metro area. She is also the author of several Bible study guides published by InterVarsity Press and Zondervan. She and her husband Andy have four married children and thirteen grandchildren.

Andrew T. Le Peau is a writer and editor living in the Chicago area. He was the long-time associate publisher for editorial at InterVarsity Press where he worked from 1975 to 2016. Before that he was a campus staff member for InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, serving in the St. Louis area.

He is the coauthor of several Bible study guides including James and Ephesians in the LifeGuide Bible Study series, and author of Heart. Soul. Mind. Strength. and Mark Through Old Testament Eyes.



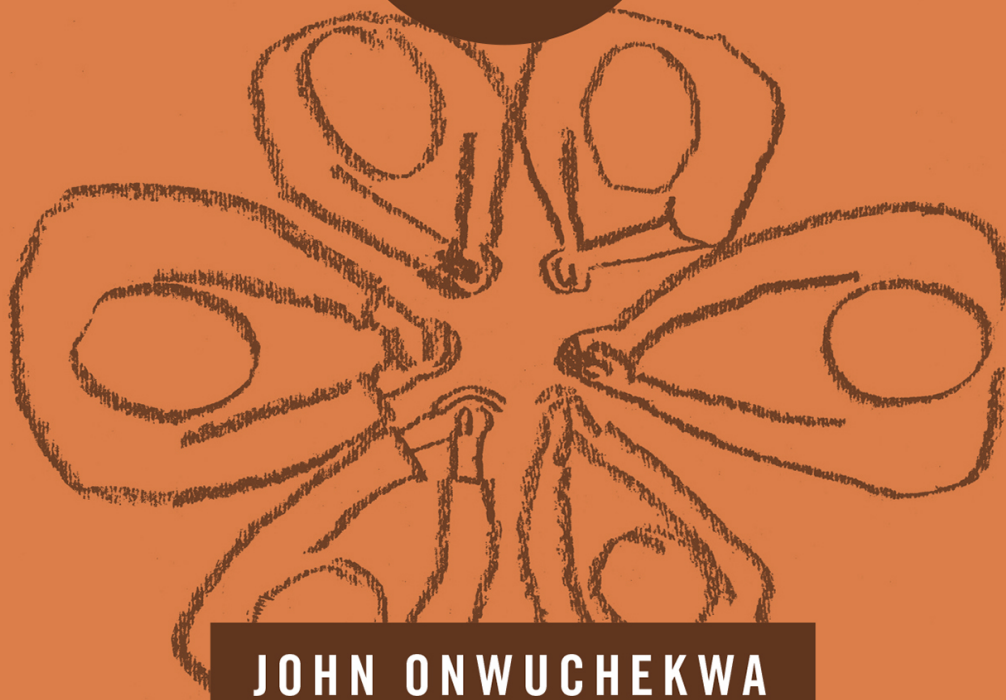
*Grandparenting Loving Our Children's Children*, IVP Connect, 2017



**IX** **9Marks** BUILDING HEALTHY CHURCHES

# PRAYER

HOW  
PRAYING  
TOGETHER  
SHAPES THE  
CHURCH



**JOHN ONWUCHEKWA**

*Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church* (Crossway, 2018) by John Onwuchekwa takes a look at prayer from a unique perspective – that of the church praying together.

“We gather to meet with God together. God has always intended that we would know him better through our engagement with others, but we don’t want our engagement with others to eclipse engaging with God. So it’s crucial that God’s Word remain central to our gathering. We hear the Word preached, sang, and read. And in response, we pray. We gather to meet with him together in large part through prayers that are responses to his Word.” *Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church*, p 78

Pastor Onwuchekwa’s perspective is that praying together as a church will shape the church.

“Corporate prayer is a way we teach our church how to engage with God. When we pray together, we want to address misconceptions about God, pray for those things many of us neglect, and show that substantial prayer doesn’t have to take a substantial amount of time.” p 78

Onwuchekwa is the lead pastor at Cornerstone Church in Atlanta. He does not assume people know how to pray, so models four types of prayer as part of shaping corporate prayer time:

1. Adoration
2. Confession
3. Thanksgiving
4. Supplication

“Our God wants a deep relationship with his people. And the deeper the relationship, the more varied the communication. We explore the wonder of who God is during our prayer of adoration. We embrace the mercy he provides during our prayer of confession. We reflect on all he’s done for us during our prayer of thanksgiving. We lean on him and feel his strength during our prayer of supplication. By including these prayers in our Sunday service, we display the width and depth of our relationship with God.”

Onwuchekwa also has an interesting perspective on what we call The Lord’s Prayer and shares his thoughts in deep way that will encourage your heart and mind.

“There’s nothing more humbling than asking someone to teach you how to do something. Thankfully, Jesus doesn’t spend time beating his followers up; instead, he builds them up, highlighting the many incentives of prayer. Through his parables and other stories, Jesus highlights what we’re missing out on when we don’t pray. When teaching about prayer, Jesus graciously reminds us that God sees us—not in the way a camera sees someone committing a crime, but in the way an undercover boss rewards an employee who is doing something right. Match that truth with Jesus’s reminder that prayers are measured by

their strength and not their length, and all of our insecurities should vanish. Our Lord's instructions leave us with no excuse for not praying, and every encouragement to pray in light of our hope." pp 36-37

I highly recommend this book about corporate prayer. Read it and share with your friends and your pastor. Praying together can shape your church!

## Table of Contents

Series Preface

Introduction

1. Breathe Again: The Problem of Prayerlessness
2. A Class Act: Teach Us to Pray
3. The World Is Yours: A Family Led
4. Soul Food: A Family Fed
5. Roots: A Family Bred
6. Glory: The Role of Prayer in Corporate Worship
7. Lean on Me: The Role of Prayer in Corporate Care
8. Doing the Right Thing: The Role of Prayer in Missions

Conclusion: Fighting Temptations

Notes

General Index

Scripture Index

## About The Author

**John Onwuchekwa** (MA, Dallas Theological Seminary) serves as pastor of Cornerstone Church in Atlanta, Georgia.

## Publisher's Notes

### **What is the role of corporate prayer in the church?**

Prayer is as necessary to the Christian as breathing is to the human body — but it often doesn't come quite as naturally. In fact, prayer in the church often gets subtly pushed to the side in favor of pragmatic practices that promise tangible results.

This book focuses on the necessity of regular prayer as a central practice in the local church—awakening us to the need and blessing of corporate prayer by examining what Jesus taught about prayer, how the first Christians approached prayer, and how to prioritize prayer in our congregations.

## Endorsements

“I don’t know if I’ve ever read a book on prayer that left me feeling the entire range of human emotion—until reading John Onwuchekwa’s *Prayer*. Here is a human book—beautiful, poignant, funny, gritty, and pastoral. This book is better than a correction to our often languid prayer lives. There’s no guilt-based manipulation. Onwuchekwa writes like a fellow traveler, and as a fellow traveler knows what travelers need most: refreshment. Here’s a thirst-quenching encouragement to join together in seeking our great God. I pray every church reads *Prayer* together; it will change our congregations. Here’s a warm invitation to the entire church, beckoning the people of God to the wonders of prayer.” Thabiti Anyabwile, Pastor, Anacostia River Church, Washington, DC; author, *What Is a Healthy Church Member?*

“*Prayer* is an excellent book by my dear friend John Onwuchekwa. It is biblically and theologically rich. It is also real and honest. Want to get a corporate prayer meeting started in your church? This book is a very good start.” Daniel L. Akin, President, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

“Everyone remembers that auntie or uncle who hushed our fears with the words, ‘Baby, we just gon’ pray on that.’ John Onwuchekwa is that voice for today, calling the church back to one of the simplest and most powerful tools in her arsenal—the habit of communal prayer. He doesn’t merely want to reawaken our atrophied prayer muscles; he invites us into the much harder work of reorienting our priorities so that they’re



more in line with God's. Onwuchekwa's call to return to such 'first things' is an excellent start to seeing Christian communities moving in the same kingdom direction." K. A. Ellis, Cannada Fellow for World Christianity, Reformed Theological Seminary

"There's likely something missing in your church, something you haven't thought much of and likely haven't even noticed. It's prayer. Onwuchekwa shares compelling, insightful, and biblical reasons why corporate prayer should be a priority for the church. What a privilege it is to pray together as a family—this is the vision Onwuchekwa casts for us. This book has the potential to transform not only individuals, but also relationships and the culture in our churches. I highly recommend it." Trillia Newbell, author, *God's Very Good Idea; Enjoy*; and *Fear and Faith*

"The early church moved forward in power because they were a praying church (Acts 4:31). If we today are so proficient at ministry mechanics that we can succeed without power from on high, we have failed. But if our churches today will heed this compelling call to prayer by John Onwuchekwa, we too will prevail against all earthly powers, for God's glory!" Ray Ortlund, Lead Pastor, Immanuel Church, Nashville, Tennessee

"This is a thought-provoking book about the life of prayer in the local church. Onwuchekwa builds a theological framework and then gives tangible and practical solutions for fleshing it out. I've had the privilege of working with John over the last decade, and I've seen no one better able

to take lofty concepts and present them in a way that is palatable for the body of Christ. This book is an outworking of his gift. He takes biblical principles and communicates them in an effective way. His work on this subject is a gift to the church.” Dhati Lewis, Lead Pastor, Blueprint Church, Atlanta, Georgia; Executive Director of Community Restoration, North American Mission Board; author, *Among Wolves: Disciple-Making in the City*

“What more could be needed by our churches than a revival of gospel-centered spirituality? And what more could we do to experience this revival than to recommit to nourishing communion with our Father through prayer? This is why I’m thankful for this exceptional book by John Onwuchekwa. It is an accessible, practical, and relatable guide to the depths of the enormous, glorious privilege of speaking to the God of the universe.” Jared C. Wilson, Director of Content Strategy, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary; Director, Pastoral Training Center, Liberty Baptist Church, Kansas City, Missouri; author, *Supernatural Power for Everyday People*

“I have a lot to say about this little book, because it’s so good. In fact, I think this is one of the best books in this series. Brief and well written, this book by pastor John Onwuchekwa looks especially at two sections of the Gospels—the Lord’s Prayer, and Jesus’s prayer in the garden of Gethsemane. Onwuchekwa shares significant observations that seem intuitive, but are also surprising. It is well illustrated, biblically faithful, and theologically accurate. This book is useful to think not only about when we should pray, but also about how we should pray, and even

what we should pray about. It reintroduces us to the ignored topic of praying together at church. Hope-giving and inspiring, specific and practical, the whole book is sweetened by touches of humor. You and others could benefit from investing your time in reading this small book on such a grand topic.” Mark Dever, Senior Pastor, Capitol Hill Baptist Church, Washington, DC; President, 9Marks

*Prayer: How Praying Together Shapes the Church* (Crossway, 2018, 144 pages)

[We received an electronic review copy from Crossway]





SPECTRUM MULTIVIEW BOOKS

EDITED BY CHAD MEISTER  
*and* JAMES K. DEW JR.

# GOD AND THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

FIVE VIEWS

CONTRIBUTIONS BY  
Phillip Cary, William Lane Craig, William Hasker,  
Thomas Jay Oord, *and* Stephen Wykstra

*God And The Problem Of Evil Five Views* (IVP Academic, 2017) is an important book to read on at least two levels. One is to see how five scholars present their view of a problem that is of deep concern to humanity. The second is to see how those same scholars respond to each others' arguments.

In addition to learning about God and the problem of evil, we also learn how to make cogent arguments for our personal views on this and other topics of importance. Being prepared to give an answer to people who ask for “a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear” is vital to our service to God and fellow human beings.

The Five Views are:

- Classic View
- Molinist View
- Open Theist View
- Essential Kenosis View
- Skeptical Theism View

The five scholars are:

- Phillip Cary – Professor of Philosophy and Scholar in Residence, Templeton Honors College, Eastern University
- William Lane Craig – Research Professor of Philosophy, Talbot School of Theology, and Professor of Philosophy, Houston Baptist University

- William Hasker – Emeritus Professor of Philosophy, Huntington College
- Thomas Jay Oord – Professor of Theology and Philosophy, Northwest Nazarene University
- Stephen Wykstra – Professor of Philosophy, Calvin College

I thought each of the scholars did an excellent job presenting and defending their arguments. Which view do you believe best explains **the problem of evil**?

## About Editors

Chad Meister (PhD, Marquette University) is professor of philosophy and theology at Bethel College in Mishawaka, Indiana. His publications include *Evil: A Guide for the Perplexed*, *Contemporary Philosophical Theology*, *The Oxford Handbook of Religious Diversity*, and the six-volume work *The History of Evil*.

James K. Dew Jr. (PhD, Southeastern Baptist) is associate professor of the history of ideas and philosophy and dean of the College at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is the coauthor (with Mark W. Foreman) of *How Do We Know? An Introduction to Epistemology* and coeditor (with Chad Meister) of *God and Evil: The Case for God in a World Filled with Pain* and *God and the Problem of Evil: Five Views*.

## Publisher's Notes

**Evil abounds. And so do the attempts to understand God in the face of such evil.**

The problem of evil is a constant challenge to faith in God. How can we believe in a loving and powerful God given the existence of so much suffering in the world? Philosophers and theologians have addressed this problem countless times over the centuries. New explanations have been proposed in recent decades drawing on resources in Scripture, theology, philosophy, and science.

*God and the Problem of Evil* stages a dialogue between the five key positions in the current debate:

- Phillip Cary: A Classic View
- William Lane Craig: A Molinist View
- William Hasker: An Open Theist View
- Thomas Jay Oord: An Essential Kenosis View
- Stephen Wykstra: A Skeptical Theism View

According to the classic position, associated especially with the Augustinian tradition, God permits evil and suffering as part of the grand narrative of divine providence to bring about the redemption of creation. Molinism modifies the classic view by adding God's middle knowledge to the picture, in which God has knowledge of what creatures would do in all possible worlds. Open theism rejects the determinism of the classic view in favor of



an account of God as a risk-taker who does not know for sure what the future holds. Essential kenosis goes further in providing a comprehensive theodicy by arguing that God cannot control creatures and thus cannot unilaterally prevent evil. Skeptical theism rejects the attempt to provide a theodicy and instead argues that, if God exists, we should not expect to understand God's purposes.

Edited and with an introduction by Chad Meister and James K. Dew Jr., *God and the Problem of Evil* hosts a generous and informative conversation on one of the most pressing issues in the Christian life."

## Reviews

"It is always enlightening to listen to a conversation among scholars who care deeply about a topic, take strikingly different positions, and engage each other in considerate and substantive ways. That's just what *God and the Problem of Evil* provides: a stimulating conversation. Well-known proponents of five distinct approaches to the most vexing of philosophical and theological topics—Why is there suffering in God's world?—summarize their positions in clear, accessible ways. Then each shows just how his view compares to the others. The positions presented cover a broad spectrum, yet each addresses with urgency both the intellectual and personal challenges that evil presents. The book makes a valuable contribution to current considerations of the topic." Richard Rice, Loma Linda University, author of *Suffering and the Search for Meaning*

“How do we come to philosophical and theological grips with the vast amounts of evil in a world created by a perfectly good—indeed, maximally great—Being? *God and the Problem of Evil* helpfully lays out the various sides of the debate on this issue. Five philosophical theologians present the distinctive differences in their respective views, also noting the points on which they agree. The result is a volume that will serve as an excellent, up-to-date resource for those seeking to further explore this crucial—and perennial—question.” Paul Copan, professor and Pledger Family Chair of Philosophy and Ethics, Palm Beach Atlantic University, author of *A Little Book for New Philosophers*

“*God and the Problem of Evil* will be a helpful volume for those new to the discussion of this problem and looking for a brief overview of the possible arguments and counter-arguments made by Christian philosophers and theologians.” Jake Raabe, *The Baptist Standard*, April 11, 2017

“*God and the Problem of Evil* offers a lucid, emotionally sensitive, and diverse set of essays on the problem of evil. It would serve well for pastors, students, and small groups who are looking for a place to start their journey into this issue, or for people who are wishing to go a bit deeper in their reflection on God and evil.” R. T. Mullins, *Journal of Biblical and Theological Studies*

*God And The Problem Of Evil Five Views* (IVP Academic, 2017, 199 pages)

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