

## Slow Church

In today's highly charged social and political environment, we often don't know how to talk well with others--especially with people whose backgrounds differ from our own. C. Christopher Smith, coauthor of the critically acclaimed and influential *Slow Church*, addresses why conversation has become such a challenge in the 21st century and argues that it is perhaps the most-needed spiritual practice of our individualistic age. Smith likens practicing conversation to the working of the human body. Bodies are wondrous symphonies of diverse, intricate parts striving for our health, and our health suffers when these parts fail to converse effectively. Likewise, we must learn to converse effectively with those who differ from us in the body of Christ so we can embody Christ together in the world. In community, we learn what it means to belong to others and to a story that is bigger than ourselves. Smith shows how church communities can be training hubs where we learn to talk with and listen to one another with kindness and compassion. The book explores how churches can initiate and sustain conversation, offers advice for working through seasons of conflict, suggests spiritual practices and dispositions that can foster conversation, and features stories from several congregations that are learning to practice conversation.

"Explores more than a half century of American church debate about homosexuality to show that even as the main lesson--homosexuality is bad, teens are vulnerable--has remained constant, the arguments and assumptions have changed remarkably. The story is told through a wide variety of sources, including oral histories, interviews, memoirs, and even pulp novels; the result is a fascinating window onto the never-ending battle for the teenage soul."--from publisher's description.

*Slow Church* by Chris Smith and John Pattison has been eagerly received by a people who are ready to be invited out of franchise faith and back into the kingdom of God. This eleven-session study guide provides an opportunity to reflect on the message of this groundbreaking book both individually and in community.

Exhausted with trying to "fix" the church? It's time to turn in a new direction: back to the Holy Spirit. In this insightful book, internationally renowned scholar and leader Alan Roxburgh urges Christians to follow the Spirit into our neighborhoods, re-engage with the mission of God, and re-imagine the whole enterprise of church. *Joining God, Remaking Church, and Changing the World* can guide any church -- large or small, suburban or urban, denomination-level or local parish -- to become a vital center for spirituality and mission. \* Distills the best of mission wisdom for laity and clergy today \* Roxburgh is a leading voice shaping church life ecumenically and globally Alan Roxburgh offers deep hope and concrete steps forward for churches struggling with life in a post-Christian culture. By entering more deeply into the stories of the Bible, our own stories, and the lives of our neighbors, we join God's life in the world. This is one of the most helpful books I have read, full of clear analysis and practical wisdom. -- Dwight Zscheile, associate professor of congregational mission and leadership at Luther Seminary and author of *People of the Way* and *The Agile Church* *Joining God* invites you to embark on the journey you always wanted to take. In this book you will find: **Courage:** Alan Roxburgh is unafraid to admit the unraveling of what we've been and calls us to move into new places. **Faith:** The Spirit is going ahead of us into our neighborhoods. **Ancient/future:** The answer isn't flashy promotions but deeper discipleship and community. **Hope:** When we dare to move outside our walls, we'll find work to do and our calling renewed. -- Philip Clayton, scholar, activist and author of *Transforming Christian Theology* Drawing on his years of experience with missional church theology and practice, Roxburgh outlines our attempts to end church decline and opens up fresh vision: What if the unraveling of the church is God's way of leading us out of bondage to American culture into God's new Exodus? What if God is inviting us to shift our focus and to discern and join God's presence and work in our neighborhoods? This book outlines practical steps congregations can embrace to experiment with this new/old way of living the Gospel locally. Engaging these practices will not be easy. And learning from God and neighbors how to participate in local missional experiments might actually transform both congregations and society. Don't just read this book ... gather a group to experiment with this "way" in practice! -- Gordon Scruton, Retired Bishop of the Diocese of Western Massachusetts Drawing on his work as a consultant, researcher, sociologist and teacher, Roxburgh invites congregations to build bridges between their churches and their neighborhoods. He outlines a way for congregations to reclaim their apostolic roots, a process that is rooted in scripture and grounded in prayer. His is a challenge to be faithful to the Gospel and to reap the benefits of commitment and creativity. -- Mark Beckwith, Bishop of the Diocese of Newark

*Themelios* is an international, evangelical, peer-reviewed theological journal that expounds and defends the historic Christian faith. *Themelios* is published three times a year online at The Gospel Coalition (<http://thegospelcoalition.org/themelios/>) and in print by Wipf and Stock. Its primary audience is theological students and pastors, though scholars read it as well. *Themelios* began in 1975 and was operated by RTSF/UCCF in the UK, and it became a digital journal operated by The Gospel Coalition in 2008. The editorial team draws participants from across the globe as editors, essayists, and reviewers. General Editor: D. A. Carson, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Managing Editor: Brian Tabb, Bethlehem College and Seminary Consulting Editor: Michael J. Ovey, Oak Hill Theological College Administrator: Andrew David Naselli, Bethlehem College and Seminary Book Review Editors: Jerry Hwang, Singapore Bible College; Alan Thompson, Sydney Missionary & Bible College; Nathan A. Finn, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; Hans Madueme, Covenant College; Dane Ortlund, Crossway; Jason Sexton, Golden Gate Baptist Seminary Editorial Board: Gerald Bray, Beeson Divinity School Lee Gatiss, Wales Evangelical School of Theology Paul Helseth, University of Northwestern, St. Paul Paul House, Beeson Divinity School Ken Magnuson, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary Jonathan Pennington, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary James Robson, Wycliffe Hall Mark D. Thompson, Moore Theological College Paul Williamson, Moore Theological College Stephen Witmer, Pepperell Christian Fellowship Robert Yarbrough, Covenant Seminary

Defying predictions of the inevitable decline of Christianity in the US, 'Church Planting in Post-Christian Soil' presents the untold story of new churches springing up in Seattle, one of the most post-Christian cities in the nation.

?Christmas is one of the most joyful times of year, and it can also be one of the most stressful. It comes laden with expectations and, for many, overshadowed by difficult memories and emotions. If every other day of the year has us running in different directions, driven by the bleeping demands of our phones and devices, Christmas makes us run faster still. This understanding and uplifting book offers another way to approach Christmas and to discover how its joys and promises can restore our lives, not add to their burdens. You are invited to take a few minutes each day during December to join in a conversation with the bestselling author, Stephen Cottrell, who offers simple reflections and practical suggestions for making your Christmas the celebration it is meant to be. Previously published as *Do Nothing Christmas is Coming*. Suggests that modern religion is too fast paced and that a slower approach should be used so that parishioners get a more fulfilling experience.

Howard A. Snyder probes the relationship between the kingdom of God and our daily experience of the church.

Jesus is calling his church to be a multiethnic and missional people who listen and learn from the many voices of world Christianity. Graham Joseph Hill issues a moving call for churches to be missional by being conformed to the image of Jesus Christ. Hill does this by exploring the thinking of twenty-five Asian, African, Latin American, Indigenous, African American, diaspora, Caribbean, Oceanian, Eastern European, and Middle Eastern pastors and theologians. These are as diverse as Melba Padilla Maggay, Emmanuel Katongole, Lamin Sanneh, Oscar Muriu, Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Pope Francis, Richard Twiss, Lisa Sharon Harper, Willie James Jennings, Ada María Isasi-Díaz, Soong-Chan Rah, and Mitri Raheb. These voices show us the future of missional churches in world Christianity. When churches are conformed to Christ they make disciples, heal a broken world, and witness to Jesus and his gospel. Jesus forms us in his image and moves us to be a people of shalom, humility, character, justice, peace, wisdom, prayer, beauty, and witness. The church has had a Reformation but now it needs a Conformation.

Hill explores biblical themes and the voices of world Christianity to show that a missional church is conformed to the image of the incarnate, crucified, resurrected, and glorified Christ. Conformity to Christ is the heart of missional ecclesiology and discipleship.

This handbook explores contemporary Mormonism within a global context. The authors provide a nuanced picture of a historically American religion in the throes of the same kinds of global change that virtually every conservative faith tradition faces today. They explain where and how the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has penetrated national and cultural boundaries in Latin America, Oceania, Europe, Asia, and Africa, as well as in North America beyond the borders of Mormon Utah. They also address numerous concerns within a multinational, multicultural church: What does it mean to be a Latter-day Saint in different world regions? What is the faith's appeal to converts in these places? What are the peculiar problems for members who must manage Mormon identities in conjunction with their different national, cultural, and ethnic identities? How are leaders dealing with such issues as the status of women in a patriarchal church, the treatment of LGBTQ members, increasing disaffiliation of young people, and decreasing growth rates in North and Latin America while sustaining increasing growth in parts of Asia and Africa?

This focused concentration and celebration of Anglican life could not be more timely. Debates on sexuality and gender (including women bishops), whether or not the church has a Covenant, or can be a Communion, and how it is ultimately led, are issues that have dominated the ecclesial horizon for several decades. No book on Anglicanism can ever claim to have all the answers to all the questions. However, Martyn Percy's work does offer significant new insights and illumination - highlighting just how rich and reflexive the Anglican tradition can be in living and proclaiming the gospel of Christ. These essays provide some sharply-focused snapshots of contemporary Anglicanism, and cover many of the crucial issues affecting Anglicans today, such as the nature of mission and ministry, theological training and formation, and ecclesial identity and leadership. Church culture is often prey to contemporary fads and fashion. Percy's work calls Anglicanism to deeper discipleship; to attend to its roots, identity and shape; and to inhabit the world with a faith rooted in commitment, confidence and Christ.

2015 Christianity Today Award of Merit (The Church/Pastoral Leadership) 2014 Readers' Choice Awards Honorable Mention 2014 Best Books About the Church from Byron Berger, Hearts and Minds Bookstore "When . . . faith communities begin connecting together, in and for the neighborhood, they learn to depend on God for strength to love, forgive and show grace like never before. . . . The gospel becomes so much more tangible and compelling when the local church is actually a part of the community, connected to the struggles of the people, and even the land itself." Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens and Dwight J. Friesen have seen—in cities, suburbs and small towns all over North

America—how powerful the gospel can be when it takes root in the context of a place, at the intersection of geography, demography, economy and culture. This is not a new idea—the concept of a parish is as old as Paul's letters to the various communities of the ancient church. But in an age of dislocation and disengagement, the notion of a church that knows its place and gives itself to where it finds itself is like a breath of fresh air, like a sign of new life.

How do you decide what to read? Dan Gibson, Jordan Green and John Pattison have created this tool to make your choices easier. Besides the Bible is a guide to the wide array of great books that they believe every Christian should read—the ones that matter to the church and the world.

Assisted by a diverse mass media industry, American evangelicalism has been long plagued by consumerism, entrepreneurism, and social engineering. Churches and movements that carry the name of Christ have become projects of ambition and scandals in the public eye. Without fixing its dysfunctions, these ministry models have expanded to other parts of the world, reaping similar fruits of corruption, prejudice, and abuses. The alarm call of #MeToo and #ChurchToo movements since 2017 made it more urgent for the global body of Christ to inspect its pathological patterns. What kind of response does the #MeToo movement require of our public theology and leadership ethics? Sociologist Li Ma invites us to re-engage with biblical exegesis while being attentive to new mandates of God revealed from #MeToo. A creative Ellulian integration of sociological analysis and theology, Babel Church incisively reveals why American evangelicalism and its global projects have succumbed to the temptations of worldly power at the expense of vulnerable members in the body of Christ.

With nearly fifty years combined global church-planting experience, Craig Ott and Gene Wilson are well qualified to write a comprehensive, up-to-date guide for cross-cultural church planting. Combining substantive biblical principles and missiological understanding with practical insights, this book walks readers through the various models and development phases of church planting. Advocating methods that lead to church multiplication, the authors emphasize the role of the missionary church planter. They offer helpful reflection on current trends and provide best practices gathered from research and empirical findings around the globe. The book takes up a number of special issues not addressed in most church planting books, such as use of short-term teams, partnerships, and wise use of resources. Full of case studies and real examples from around the world, this practical text will benefit students, church planters, missionaries, and missional church readers.

A practical look at how we can renew wellbeing in our own lives and our local communities. After Ruth Rice unexpectedly found herself grappling with her own mental health, she began to look for ways to renew her own wellbeing. As she introduced simple habits woven around prayer and stillness into her life, God began to give her a heart to help others too. The Renew Wellbeing charity was born, assisting churches to open accessible, safe spaces on the high street for those who have mental ill health. Ruth shares why the renew centre/ cafe model is so different, looking at the three important principles of being present, being prayerful, and being in partnership. Full of helpful resources, readers will learn how to connect, keep learning, get active, take notice and give in order to maintain their own wellbeing. Ruth inspires, encourages and enables the church to step out and provide Renew spaces. This timely and insightful book is packed full of practical resources to help local communities journey alongside each other to renew wellbeing. 'This book is much like its author . . . practical, inspiring, humorous and hugely relatable. Ruth Rice is not only a great writer, but also a great theologian, a great leader and a great person. Through long and hard work, she has renewed her own wellbeing, moving from a position of languishing, to a place of flourishing. For that I am in awe of her courage, skill and tenacity. 'Slow Down, Show Up and Pray is both inspiring and practical and of course hugely accessible as well. I unreservedly commend it to anyone who wants to help the Church become an even greater expression of Christ among us - a safe, nurturing and welcoming place for all to encounter the grace of God in tangible ways.' Daniel Whitehead, CEO, Sanctuary Mental Health Ministries 'Sometimes your own pain, your own unexpected journey to a different (and better) place and the purposes of God entwine together to create something beautiful and worth sharing. This is Ruth's experience as God has birthed Renew Wellbeing [the organization she leads]. This book resonates in my soul, inspires me once again as a church leader on our own journey to connect people with the welcoming love of God and offers huge amounts of practical wisdom that will equip us to travel well.' Revd Lisa Holmes, Lead Minister of Skipton Baptist Church, Member of Spring Harvest Planning Group and the Evangelical Alliance Council 'Ruth has walked her talk, so this book is full of hard-earned wisdom. Not only is it essential reading as we all consider the issues around spiritual and emotional wellbeing, it is also incredibly practical. You will find yourself encouraged but also equipped to think about the wellbeing of yourself and others in new, insightful ways. Highly recommended reading.' Cathy Madavan,

speaker, broadcaster and author

"Spirituality" has become a buzzword in our contemporary culture as individuals strive for meaning and fulfillment. Its detachment from the church and conventional definitions of religious practice highlights the seeming redundancy of what has come before. "Spirituality" in this light signals a new attempt to find wholeness unencumbered by outmoded doctrines and stale rituals. It is the conviction of this publication that the intuition behind contemporary searches for spiritual reality is a good one. It acknowledges that there must be more to life than what secular media or consumerism might tell us. The joyful message of *Perspectives on Prayer and Spirituality* is that the spiritual quest is a valid one and worth exploring. There is treasure to be found. However, the surprise is that we must rediscover what we have left behind. In the words of G. K. Chesterton, "it is not that the Christian ideal has been tried and found wanting, rather it has been found difficult and left untried." This book offers us the tools to mine the riches of Christian spirituality and find that elusive treasure. The title, *Perspectives on Prayer and Spirituality*, alerts us to the fact that life-giving spirituality stems from relationship with a personal God who can be known.

Many people have given up on the church. But that doesn't mean that they've given up on God or Christianity. In many cases, it was merely that local church congregations were not the best context for missional people to live out their sense of God's call. The good news is that God is raising up vibrant movements of Christians in a vast array of vocations around the world: disciple-making ministries, missions, relief and development, social activism, advocacy and much more. These are all strategic ways to live for the kingdom—in venues beyond the local church. Wherever movements of the gospel have occurred, visionary people and apostolic structures have been essential. Mission leader Sam Metcalf shows how God has always worked through entrepreneurial individuals and organizations that launched out in fresh ways. He gives biblical and missiological foundations for missional movements, showing that what has often been called "parachurch" is an equally valid manifestation of the church. Affirming the strengths of apostolic personalities, Metcalf shows how they can be deployed to cross cultural barriers, renew secular societies and transform the nations with the power of the gospel. God may be inviting you to join what he is doing around the world. Answer the call and discover how God can use you beyond your imagination.

A pocket guide to keeping calm and staying cool this Advent, with daily readings, prayers and reflections from December 1 to 24. Includes contributions from some of today's bestselling religious writers.

Edward Schillebeeckx (1914-) is a prominent Catholic theologian, remarkable for having survived three inquiries into his possible heresy by the Vatican. He explores traditional Catholic concepts in the light of twentieth century understanding and is committed to working out a satisfactory statement of the relationship between the Church and the world. *God is New Each Moment* presents a series of interviews, at once inspiring, provocative and illuminating, between Schillebeeckx and fellow theologians Huub Oosterhuis and Piet Hoogeveen.

We learn who we are as we walk together in the way of Jesus. So I want to invite you on a pilgrimage. Rwanda is often held up as a model of evangelization in Africa. Yet in 1994, beginning on the Thursday of Easter week, Christians killed other Christians, often in the same churches where they had worshiped together. The most Christianized country in Africa became the site of its worst genocide. With a mother who was a Hutu and a father who was a Tutsi, author Emmanuel Katongole is uniquely qualified to point out that the tragedy in Rwanda is also a mirror reflecting the deep brokenness of the church in the West. Rwanda brings us to a cry of lament on our knees where together we learn that we must interrupt these patterns of brokenness. But Rwanda also brings us to a place of hope. Indeed, the only hope for our world after Rwanda's genocide is a new kind of Christian identity for the global body of Christ—a people on pilgrimage together, a mixed group, bearing witness to a new identity made possible by the Gospel. Learn the secrets about creating a successful team culture.

*Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus* InterVarsity Press

This is the third book in the "Sharing Jesus in the Buddhist World" series, written by evangelical mission "reflective practitioners" who are committed to developing more effective ways to win the Buddhist peoples to the Lord Jesus Christ. The opening chapter describes "The Changing Demographic Context of Global Buddhism"; the next six describe some of the best models of mission approaches for reaching Buddhists; and the last four depict some past and present "people movements" or "church planting movements."

Confucianism and its influence on culture in East Asia has profoundly impacted Chinese churches and the development of their leaders. As a cultural force it continues to affect the perceptions and practices of Chinese pastors and how they lead. This work seeks to build an indigenous approach to developing church leaders by understanding the theoretical, and the situational foundations, of relational leadership from both cultural and biblical perspectives. The research is further enriched through case studies and interviews observing the practices of leadership in contemporary Chinese churches.

Provides a comprehensive theological framework in which good eating contributes to the healing of communities and the world. *Seeking the Church* intends to introduce students, teachers and inquirers to key themes and dynamics in being the Church. In a time of significant change and search for new forms of Christian community the book locates such developments within the wider Christian tradition of theological reflection on the doctrine of the Church.

Within the past decade, there has been a re-emergence of tourism in Europe, especially in the central and eastern regions. With socialism becoming a distant memory, these former communist countries are now attractive destinations for travel. Research on this current phenomenon is essential, as professionals and scientists must stay informed on the modern development of this global region. *New Trends and Opportunities for Central and Eastern European Tourism* provides emerging research exploring the theoretical and practical aspects of contemporary tourism in Eastern Europe and its effect on economics and sociology. Featuring coverage on a broad range of topics such as monument protection, economic features, and socialist architecture, this book is ideally designed for travel agents, tour developers, restaurateurs, hotel management, economic analysts, government officials, policymakers, tourism journalists, tourism practitioners, researchers, and professors seeking current research on the development of travel in Eastern and Central Europe.

Change is everywhere in life. God seems to have designed it that way. Whether beautiful or painful, life-altering or small, our pages are written with a story of change. If change is everywhere, we are encountering new realities all the time: from our first conversation with a person to our first kiss to a new job to our first experience with loss. When encountering change, we can be hesitant to embrace it, even outright resist it. It could be scary or hard or too much or not as much as we desired, or possibly a combination of these. Because change is constant, it can seem as if we are walking through the same scenarios again and again. We have felt these feelings before, or had these conversations before. These painful moments seem to never fade. Even as we journey through the same situation for a second or third or tenth time, it calls for something new, for our story of change to continue in God. You can read a review of *Change for the First Time, Again* by the Englewood Review of books by clicking [here!](#)

Soul Mentoring draws upon the wisdom of Gregory the Great from his Pastoral Care, one of the most widely read books on mentoring from the ancient world. Those who walk in Gregory's steps will discover practical guidance for the journey into mentoring, including the formation of a mentor's soul, and wisdom in learning to care for others. Gregory describes mentoring as the art of arts, the highest creative endeavour we share together. Gregory has ancient wisdom applicable to mentoring in our time, both for mentors and mentees, friends and family, coaches and teachers, clergy and spiritual directors, among other people looking for guidance in the ancient art of caring for souls.

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