"Because children have abounding vitality, because they are in spirit fierce and free, therefore they want things repeated and unchanged. They always say, "Do it again"; and the grown-up person does it again until he is nearly dead. For grown-up people are not strong enough to exult in monotony. But perhaps God is strong enough to exult in monotony. It is possible that God says every morning, "Do it again" to the sun; and every evening, "Do it again" to the moon. It may not be automatic necessity that makes all daisies alike; it may be that God makes every daisy separately, but has never got tired of making them. It may be that He has the eternal appetite of infancy; for we have sinned and grown old, and our Father is younger than we."
-G.K. Chesterton

**News from NAD Ministerial**

**NAD Ministerial Mission: Part One**

*by Ivan Williams, Director NAD Ministerial*

"The North American Division Ministerial Department of Seventh-day Adventists (NAD) focuses on ministerial leaders and their families through the service and work of the Ministerial Department. This focus includes the support of more than 4,500 pastors and 108 ministerial directors throughout the territory that covers nine union conferences and 58 local conferences in Bermuda, Canada, and the United States.

The Ministerial Department sees pastoral ministry as the lifeblood and backbone of all that takes place within its territories. Supporting and equipping the ministry and role of the local pastor in the congregational setting is our number one focus because Spirit-filled, effective, healthy, pastors and congregations have an enormous impact for the kingdom of God."

Please pray for the NAD Ministerial team as we seek to know how to serve you best. We will be meeting September 20-23 to flesh out our dreams. Please feel free to email your best ideas for ministry and we can bring them to our retreat.
Is Membership Still a Meaningful Metric?

by Loren Seibold, Editor, Best Practices for Adventist Ministry

Recently I sat down with leaders from each of my congregations to go through their membership lists, name by name. Any of you who have done this won’t be surprised that about half of those listed were inactive. (To their credit, the church leaders with whom I did this task had maintained some level of relationship with many of the missing, and I’m now in the process of visiting them.)

At the same time, I noted that a significant number of people I’d met in church weren’t on the membership list. They were baptized Seventh-day Adventists, but had never joined our congregation. Mostly these were people from other countries, occasionally students. Our congregational leaders overlook their not being official members, and give them church offices anyway.

Membership, which was such an important measurement in times past, seems less meaningful today. It may be used for some conference calculations, such as insurance, staffing or ingathering goals. But in most congregations I know, the membership roster corresponds poorly to the people you’ll see in church on Sabbath. In our conference, and perhaps yours, too, we’ve replaced membership with church attendance as the primary measurement of participation.

Is membership important? Should we get busy removing names of members who aren’t participating? (I trust none of you use the phrase “pruning out the dead wood”, nor that you would remove people from the list without trying to contact and reclaim them first.) And should we be telling attendees who aren’t members that they can’t teach a Sabbath School class until their membership transfer comes through?

The conventional wisdom is that resistance to joining organizations (of any kind) has been steadily growing through the last several generations. At one time every town and city had dozens of clubs, from gardening to chess to photography - and everyone was part of a church. Now even the VFW, whose members have in common the life-wrenching experience of having risked their lives in service to our country, can’t get young veterans interested, and the organization is dying.

Joining once gave us a sense of security and opportunity. In addition to learning and mentoring, clubs and organizations provided venues to make friends. But attitudes have changed, and nowadays joining feels to people like entrapment. (Which explains another phenomenon of modern church life: why a church job that was once done by one person now has to be diced up among four or five, not one of them willing to be called the leader.)

When Luke writes that “the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47), did he mean they kept a written list, people voted in and out? It isn’t clear. Most accounts suggest that early believers were defined by their experience with Christ, leaving the impression that participation was fluid, the group having few boundaries, and so wide open to new people. Yet I can’t imagine running a congregation without some who declare unequivocally that they belong in the group - people who are proud of being members and are willing to support the organization.

What do you think? How do you manage church membership in a non-joining age? Let’s discuss it on our Facebook page.

Media

Are you bothered by the distraction of mobile devices during the worship service? Should people be scolded in to shutting them off? Should they be checked at the door? In the next Adventist Media Summit presentation Delwin Finch, Pastor for Web Ministries at Forest Lake Seventh-day Adventist church, shares how mobile devices are becoming part of the interactive worship experience. And believe it or not, its not always the young people taking the lead.

Rick Anderson, Worship Pastor for New Hope Adventist Church, launched a Facebook group for Adventist Worship Leaders that is starting to take off. He writes: "Hey Everyone! Please help me expand this network by inviting some of your friends that you think should belong to this group. The point of this group is to be far-reaching and include SDA Worship Leaders from a variety of regions.

Logos software is tantalizing the worship world by dreaming up a new approach to presentation software by pushing the data to the cloud and allowing multiple people to collaborate on the same project without needing to email files or pass around CDs or USB thumb drives. Being cloud
based and multi-platform makes it possible to deliver a consistent look on everyone's computer-removing last minute surprises. Proclaim is still in the beta testing phase and a release date has not yet been announced.

**Reading for Pastors**

Here's one way to expose false teachers: [post them on your website!](#) (Rick Warren and Harold Camping made the list. Rob Bell hasn't - yet.)

Did you come into a church excited for the first few years, and then lose interest? [Here are 6 signs that you're coasting on past momentum.](#) Quote: "#5. You don't hear younger generations say anything that resembles the vision as it was previously expressed."

If you're new in a church, you're probably still on a honeymoon. [From The Church Executive: how to make the most of your honeymoon period in a new church.](#)

Do husbands lead, and wives submit? That's how the apostle Paul made it sound. [The debate still rages in some Christian churches,](#) highlighted recently by remarks by presidential candidate Michelle Bachman.

We keep hearing about the end of printed books. [But Christian publishers aren't complaining: religious book sales are strong.](#)

A psychologist discusses the impact our fear of death has on civilization, [and wonders about the downside of immortality.](#) Quote: "So far, their results consistently support a thesis - known as Terror Management Theory - that particular aspects of our outlook are governed by our need to manage our fear of death. In other words, our cultural, philosophical and religious systems exist to promise us immortality."

[About a third of the world's population lives in places where religious restrictions have increased.](#) according to this report. Quote: "As other reports on religious freedom have found, it is scarcest in the Middle East and North Africa. But Europe, the study noted, has the largest proportion of countries where social hostilities related to religion rose. In France, for example, women are barred by law from wearing face-covering veils. More than other groups, Muslims and Christians suffered harassment based on their religion."

[Interesting piece about Pacific Union College: "Where Conviction Meets Cabernet".](#) Quote: "Angwin might be thought of as a community in flux - one that is attempting to balance a budding wine culture with an older community whose Seventh-day Adventist roots spurn the consumption of alcohol."

**To the Point**

*These quotes are from Christian writer and apologist G.K. Chesterton:*

It is absurd for the Evolutionist to complain that it is unthinkable for an admittedly unthinkable God to make everything out of nothing, and then pretend that it is more thinkable that nothing should turn itself into everything.

The Christian ideal has not been tried and found wanting; it has been found difficult and left untried.

Music with dinner is an insult both to the cook and the violinist.

I would maintain that thanks are the highest form of thought; and that gratitude is happiness doubled by wonder.

Poets have been mysteriously silent on the subject of cheese.

The true soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him.

There are no uninteresting things, only uninterested people.

The classes that wash most are those that work least.

Without education, we are in a horrible and deadly danger of taking educated people seriously.

If there were no God, there would be no atheists.

Religious liberty might be supposed to mean that everybody is free to discuss religion. In practice it means that hardly anybody is allowed to mention it.

We fear men so much, because we fear God so little. One fear cures another. When man's terror scares you, turn your thoughts to the wrath of God.

All conservatism is based upon the idea that if you leave things alone you leave them as they are. But... if you leave a thing alone you leave it to a torrent of change.

Among the rich you will never find a really generous man even by accident. They may give their money away, but they will never give themselves away; they are egotistic, secretive, dry as old bones. To be smart enough to get all that money you must be dull enough to want it.
News, Ideas & Reminders

- It's vital to protect the children who come to our churches and events. NAD Children's Ministries website supplies Volunteer Management and Screening Guidelines as adopted by the NAD Year-end Meeting, 2003, and a Volunteer Ministry Screening Form.

- Scripture Detective Agency is a new series of meetings for children, designed to coordinate with the nightly topics of Prophecies Decoded NET 2011 series.

- Facts with Hope are evidence-based health messages that may be used in a church bulletin, newsletter, or during the "Health Minute" as part of church service to motivate people to choose a full, abundant life.

- From Saddleback Church Leadership Academy: Commissioned, a church-planting conference. Quote: "We are making it super affordable. You can register this week for $99. Your spouse can come for free. We also have space for a few church planters to stay here, our beautiful Ranch in San Juan Capistrano for $20 a night. (email me for details)."

- Author and international evangelist, Dr. Matthew Gamble will be featured for the 2011 GODencounters Conference, September 15-17, at the Arlington Seventh-day Adventist Church, 4409 Pleasantview Drive, Arlington, TX 76017. Free and open to the community, all are invited to the 7:00 PM evening meetings on Thursday and Friday, as well as the closing session, 9:00 AM Saturday morning. For more information go to www.YGchurch.com.

- Previous resource links:
  - Andrews Study Bible
  - The Hope of Survivors, ministry to victims of pastoral sexual abuse
  - iFollow website
  - Dissertation on house churches from Milton Adams
  - NAD NewsPoints (formerly Friday Fax): by email, on a web page.
  - Clouzet - Standish presentation on creation and evolution
  - Back issues of REACH North America News
  - Federal Regulation Forces Crib Replacements in Church Nurseries
  - Special creation-evolution edition of REACH North America News
  - Investigating Faith newsletter - Lee Strobel
  - Babylon Rising from IIW
  - Vibrant Life magazine "Forks Over Knives" edition
  - Clergy sexual abuse awareness day
  - Tony Morgan’s free e-book on big churches getting bigger
  - Adventist Parenting e-newsletter
  - Exposing Harry Potter
  - The one Project

Got a tool, resource, site, article, idea or seminar that you like a lot? Share it with us at BestPractices@ameritech.net.

Upcoming NAD Events

Do you have an event you’d like to invite NAD pastors to? Send details to BestPractices@Ameritech.net.

Men's Ministries Day of Prayer. Sep 3, 2011, North American Division. Across the North American Division churches rally their men to pray for their families and churches. For more information, email: mlabrador@carolinadsa.com


Harold Camping
Radio broadcaster and President of Family Radio

- Predicts Jesus Christ will return and Judgment Day will be on May 21, 2011:

  0  0  0

  Hours  Minutes  Seconds

**WORD-FAITH MOVEMENT**

Faith is a force to obtain health/wealth/success, "Jesus wants you rich!", outlandish personal experiences (in Heaven/Hell, with Jesus), deification of man/humanization of God, etc.

Joyce Meyer

Beware of False Teachers

More to be added continually...

http://www.cornerstoneorlando.org/false_teachers.html
"Little gods" heresy: [YouTube link](#)  
Various heresy clips: [MP3 Audio File](#)  
Says we can speak things into existence like God:  
[YouTube link](#)

Biblical refutation:
"Thus says the LORD, The Holy One of Israel, and his Maker:  
"Ask Me of things to come concerning My sons; And concerning the work of My hands, you command Me..."

For thus says the LORD,  
Who created the heavens,  
Who is God,  
Who formed the earth and made it,  
Who has established it,  
Who did not create it in vain,  
Who formed it to be inhabited:  
"I am the LORD, and there is no other."

Tell and bring forth your case;  
Yes, let them take counsel together.  
Who has declared this from ancient time?  
Who has told it from that time?  
Have not I, the LORD?  
And there is no other God besides Me,  
A just God and a Savior;  
There is none besides Me.  
Look to Me, and be saved,  
All you ends of the earth!  
For I am God, and there is no other.  
(ISAIAH 45:11, 18, 21-22)

Various clips of her man-centered teachings, including the heresy that Jesus had to go to Hell to save sinners: [YouTube link](#)

Biblical refutation:  
Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."  
NOTE: "Today" means that very day, and NOT that they would be in Paradise (Heaven) after He wrestled with demons in Hell for a few days for more punishment.

More Biblical refutation:
"After this, Jesus, knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, said, 'I thirst!' Now a vessel full of sour wine was sitting there; and they filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on hyssop, and put it to His mouth. So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, 'It is finished!' And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit." (John 19:28-30)

Benny Hinn

- We are little gods: [MP3 Audio File]
- 9 in the Trinity: [MP3 Audio File]
- Christians don't get sick: [MP3 Audio File]
- Adam was a superhuman: [MP3 Audio File]
- Father God has a body: [MP3 Audio File]
- Lingering anointing: [MP3 Audio File]
- Sickness is demonic: [MP3 Audio File]

Jesse Duplantis

- Visited Heaven for over 5 hours: [YouTube link]
- Saw a choir of angels: [YouTube link]

TD Jakes
- Modelism Heresy: [Article](#)
- Endorses Homosexuality (Ruth & Naomi lesbians?): [YouTube link](#)
- Eroticizing the Eucharist: [Article](#)

Juanita Bynum

- A women's conference that will send you to Hell quickly: [YouTube link](#)
- Ironically, a false prophet preaching against false prophets: [YouTube link](#)
- Threatens her husband with a brick: [YouTube link](#)
- Various Clips: [MP3 Audio File](#)
- On Divorce Court television: [YouTube link](#)

Bishop Thomas Weeks (Juanita Bynum's ex-husband)

- A marriage conference that will send you to Hell (UNBELIEVABLE!): [YouTube link](#)
- How NOT to find a godly wife – this is real! Toward the end of the clip, he's a bit explicit: [YouTube link](#)

Paula White

- Prosperity Preaching: [Article](#)
- Larry King interview: [YouTube link](#)
- Huh? What is she talking about?: [YouTube link](#)
Kenneth Copeland

- "Adam is God."
- God is like man
- Christians don't get sick

Creflo Dollar

- "Pay Tithes or Get SHOT!"
- Various Clips

Also see Joel Osteen

NEW EVANGELICALS

Eliminates the Biblical doctrine of separation, Biblical inerrancy and dispensationalism and sought and continues to seek acceptance and approval of the world.

Joel Osteen

- Word-Faith heresy
- Denies Christ as the only way unto Salvation, "I don't know..."

Biblical refutation:
Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6)
• Affirms Mormonism; Does not study before commenting: YouTube link

Biblical refutation:
Apostle Paul said, "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-10)

More resources:
• Exposed as a False Teacher by John MacArthur: YouTube link
• "Todd Friel Holds Joel Osteen to the Bible":
  o Part 1: YouTube link
  o Part 2: YouTube link

Rick Warren

• Exposed for lying and hypocrisy: YouTube link
• Todd Friel exposes Rick Warren for twisting Scripture:
  o Part 1: YouTube link
  o Part 2: YouTube link
• Tells an audience of unbelievers (at TED2006 Conference) that God smiles when they are themselves: YouTube link

Biblical refutation:
"God is a just judge, And God is angry with the wicked every day." (Psalm 7:11)

• Tells a national television audience how NOT to "get to Heaven": YouTube link

Biblical refutation:
Jesus said, "...unless you repent you will all likewise perish." (Luke 13:3)

CLICK HERE to view the "True Repentance" tract.

• Rick Warren's version of the Gospel: YouTube link

Biblical refutation:
Apostle Paul said, "I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of
Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." (Galatians 1:6-10)

- Rick Warren contradicts himself:
  - Video 1: [YouTube link](#)
  - Video 2: [YouTube link](#)

Bill Hybels

- "Seeker-sensitive" Bill Hybels surveyed people on what they want in the church (as opposed to relying on what The Bible says): [YouTube link](#)
- Bill Hybels hears whispers from God: [YouTube link](#)

Biblical refutation:
Apostle Paul said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Joel Hunter

- Discourages preaching on Genesis: [YouTube link](#)
- Prayer to false gods & validated false religions at the Democratic National Convention '08: [YouTube link](#)

Biblical refutation:
"I am the LORD, and there is no other; There is no God besides Me." (Isaiah 45:5)

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"LIBERTY ISSUES"

Gambling, drinking, dancing, etc.
R.C. Sproul, Jr.

- Drinking problem?: YouTube link

**MISCELLANEOUS**

- Idol falls and breaks during Catholic processional: YouTube link
- Evangelism Linebacker: YouTube link

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."

Matthew 7:15 NKJV

Related

- Click on the button below to recommend this "Beware Of False Teachers" page to your friends on Facebook: Recommend 147
- CLICK HERE to view/download the document, "Is It Right To Name False Teachers?"
- CLICK HERE to view/download the document, "How To Find A Good Church."

Home  |  What We Believe  |  Evangelism  |  Sermons  |  Our Ministries  |  Contact Us  |  Ask Pastor Dave
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I was recently dialoguing with a very successful pastor about the ten-year vision horizon of the large church he pastors.

He made a striking comment.

“I don’t want to coast on original vision.”

It made me wonder, how do you know if you might be coasting on a vision that “used to be?”

1. You use adjectives that position the vision as historical: original, founding, previous, last season, former chapter, etc.
2. You have increasing realization of how far you God has taken your ministry in the last five or ten years.
3. You actually feel less excited about a the ideals, aspirations, or pictures of the future you used to have.
4. People around you express ask more questions about the future and show increasing curiosity for things like clarity.
5. You don’t hear younger generations say anything that resembles the vision as it was previously expressed.
6. You have updated your campus or changed your key players once or twice without revisiting the vision.

RELATED POSTS

1. Walt Disney’s Original Vision Pitch to Bankers
2. Vision and Strategy Church Trends for 2011 and Beyond
3. 36 Questions for 20/20 Church Vision from Start to Finish
6 Comments on “6 Signs that You Are Coasting on Original Vision”

- **sean buchanan** says:  
  August 5, 2011 at 8:51 am

  Great thoughts on revisiting vision. I especially love #6, it makes me wonder what other indicators there are to prompt a fresh look at the vision.  
  Many pastors I speak with feel that they’ve been given a “vision from God” and that it should never change. There is always then the tension between that “founding vision” and what God is placing in the hearts of the congregation today.

- **Joel Zehring** says:  
  August 12, 2011 at 4:01 pm

  I agree that fresh vision is critical. I don’t think fresh needs to be different, but current.

  Here’s my question: can you share any examples of vision statements that include God as the grammatical subject, rather than the direct or indirect object?

  Grammar might not be a pertinent factor in effective vision casting, but it strikes me that many visions depict people as the main actors, and God as a passive third party in the life of the church.

- **Will Mancini** says:  
  August 12, 2011 at 6:01 pm

  Joel, I love your question. I build this God-centric nature of vision into the Vision Frame which is the centerpiece of all I do. Basically the four sides of the frame have “us” as the subject. What do we do, why do we do it, etc. But the middle and main part of the Vision Frame, what I call “vision proper” answers the question, “Where is God taking us?” All vision is God breathed. All our dreams where dreams God had first. My book Church Unique does lay some contextual foundation on God as subject. Great question and great pushback.

- **Old Vision and Cultural Change - churchthought.com churchthought.com** says:  
  August 15, 2011 at 10:03 pm

  [...] few weeks the idea of old vision has been chasing me around lately. It started with a post by Will
Mancini on the idea of original vision, followed by Thomas Moradpour on the horse carriage syndrome, and [...]
• Onsite Consulting
• Vision Co::Lab
• Workshops

• All Things Clarity
  • Vision Room

• Recent Hits
  • Top Ten Church Logos for Telling Story through Design
  • The Main Thing the Church can Learn from Steve Jobs
  • The Story that Pastors Are Forgetting to Tell
  • Methodist Gathering Resource Links

• All Time

• Will's Fav

• Will on Twitter
  • "We are convinced that words reflect intrinsic values and shape destinies:" Louie Giglio discussing the Passion City Church mission. 14 hrs ago
  • @vnolarob awesome, I look forward to connecting. 20 hrs ago
  • What a joy baptizing @RomyMancini at Clear Creek today. An unforgettable experience as 250 people publically professed their faith in Jesus. 1 day ago
  • More updates...
  • Follow Will on Twitter

• Topics
  • VISION INTEGRATION MODEL
    • Clarity
    • Communication
    • Culture
    • Environments
    • Leadership
    • Process
  • MISSIONAL CHURCH
  • AUXANO
  • BOOK REVIEW
  • CHURCH UNIQUE
  • Uncategorized

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By Sam S. Rainer III

A new season of ministry brings no shortage of emotions: Excitement, stress and a burning desire to accomplish something. Any major transition in life can put people on edge. Leaders, in particular, face the challenge of visibility during these times of transition. The people are learning the new leader’s verbiage, mannerisms, vision and leadership style. The leader in turn is assessing organizational structure, relationship dynamics and culture. In many organizations leaders are more visible during this process than at any other time. This honeymoon stage is a time of high visibility for the leader but it is also usually one during which people are most forgiving.

Those in church leadership positions are probably familiar with the honeymoon stage. For most, this time is one in which the people are excited to rally around and support a new leader. But it is also a time in which problems are simmering unseen, waiting to surface once the honeymoon fades.

During the honeymoon, leaders have a tendency to revert to default modes. Some leaders default to a more autocratic leadership style; others lean towards a style that is too gracious and laissez faire. One of my leadership defaults is assessment. During the honeymoon stage, I lean towards over-assessing and over-analyzing. While leaders should assess a new ministry during a transition, the pitfall is understanding exactly who and what to assess. In order to prevent cruising in default mode, there are some good practices for the honeymoon stage. I’ve listed a few below.

Learn to love the people. Some people in the church are easy to love. For others, it takes a little more time and spiritual commitment. But all the people need to see their leadership as loving. It does not matter what leadership role you play in an organization or ministry, followers like to know who is leading them. Learning the people takes a lot more time on the front end, but this process is invaluable in the long term. Big, transformational changes are much easier if you know people’s stories.

Celebrate little victories. In a time of transition, don’t jump into unnecessary major changes. Start your tenure by pointing out small victories. Vocalizing the successes of others not only builds people up, it reinforces expectations in a positive way.

Don’t be afraid to point out some of your idiosyncrasies. Everyone has foibles. And people pick up on them quickly. Show levity by admitting them to others in a tactful way. If you tend to ramble, then tell people, “I like to think out loud.” Communication will be easier earlier if leaders recognize their own quirks.

Maintain a long-term mindset. A long-term mindset is critical to lead any group of people. Organizations are complex organisms that cannot be digested all at once. A lack of a long-term commitment will squelch any potential for a leader to act in a transformational capacity.

Get to know the community. You cannot lead a church without knowing the church. Additionally,
you cannot lead a church to reach the community unless you know the community. One of the best windows of opportunity to talk with community leaders is during the honeymoon. And one way to make an immediate impact is to ask them about their biggest needs.

**Enjoy it.** Perhaps the quickest snare to trip is stress. If you maintain a long-term outlook, some of the early stresses (which always seem smaller in hindsight) are moderated. Therefore, enjoy loving the people. Enjoy the lack of complaints. Enjoy your community. And enjoy the privilege to serve the Creator of the universe.

Sam S. Rainer III is the president of Rainer Research and senior pastor of First Baptist Church Murray, Murray, KY. [www.rainerresearch.com] [www.fbcmurray.org]
For the Bible’s authors, it was pretty clear how marriage works.

Men lead.

Women follow.

U.S. Rep. Michele Bachmann’s run for the White House put this traditional Christian view of submission in the spotlight. Bachmann, like many conservative Christians, believes that wives should submit to their husbands. That’s led some to ask whether she’d have to obey her husband when it comes to public policy.

Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission says that’s a silly question. He points to Margaret Thatcher, former prime minister of the United Kingdom, who famously said she ran the country and her husband ran their household.

“I’d like to have Dame Thatcher come out of retirement, come over here and straighten out our problems,” Land said.

Other Christians insist that men should be in charge of all areas of life, politics included, while others say men and women are equal partners and those who disagree are misinterpreting the Bible.

Most who support women’s submissiveness point to a verse in the New Testament book of Ephesians: “Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.” But that policy plays out differently in various households.

Scripture doesn’t give husbands a right to be jerks, said the Rev. Jeremy Rose, pastor of the Axis Church in Nashville. And it doesn’t mean women have to do whatever their husbands say.

Instead, Rose said, men are supposed to love their wives and put their wives’ needs first when making decisions.
“If you quote that verse to your wife, you are not in a good place,” said Rose, 32.

If the Roses disagree, it’s Jeremy’s view that prevails, although he said he breaks the news as gently as possible.

He believes that men are in charge in the church and in their homes, a view known as complementarianism. It often appeals to younger men like Rose, teaching them to grow up and be better husbands and fathers.

And he’d be fine with a woman president. So would his wife, Jill Rose, 31. She thinks that most people don’t understand what the Christian idea of submission means.

“Men and women are created equally,” she said. “People have this stigma of the male chauvinist domineering over the wife, and that’s not what the biblical perspective is at all.”

Instead, Jill Rose said, the Bible passage about submission is about trust and respect, something that was missing in the early days of the Roses’ marriage. Jeremy Rose spent most of his time at work or out hunting, playing sports and hanging with his friends. His wife drove herself to the hospital to deliver their second child while he wrapped up a softball game.

“It was a very low point,” she said.

Things changed after Jeremy Rose took a class at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. The class focused on an often-overlooked part of the Ephesians passage. Women are to submit, according to the passage, while men are to love their wives in sacrificial ways.

**Mutually supportive**

That point is often lost in discussions about submission, said Amy-Jill Levine, professor of New Testament and Jewish studies at Vanderbilt University Divinity School.

“The message is not that women are to be doormats and men to be dominators, but that husbands and wives are to be mutually supportive and attend to each other’s needs,” Levine said.

Priscilla Hofmann, 29, and her husband moved to Nashville from Boston two years ago for his work, leaving her relatives behind. She handles the family’s finances, and the couple make most decisions together. But her husband is the leader of the home.

“We have leaders here on Earth to do good...
for us,” she said. “People forget that with leadership comes a lot of responsibility — he is the one who is held accountable if it all crashes and burns.”

Hofmann, too, is fine with having women leaders outside the home.

She discovered the idea of women submitting to their husbands while studying Calvinism in college. She said the concept is based on trust.

“I really do trust him inherently to make decisions on my behalf,” she said. “I would never be married to someone who I didn’t respect and trust.”

’Husbands are called to lead’

Denny Burk is editor for the Journal for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, which promotes the complementarian point of view. Burk says God’s plan is for men to lead their homes.

“It’s not that one person is more or less valuable, but they do have different responsibilities,” he said. “It means that husbands are called to lead, provide for and protect their families.”

Burk says complementarians agree that women should submit to men at home and in the church. Some, like Burk, also believe that idea applies to all areas of life.

“All things being equal, it would be better for the man to be the leader,” he said.

Mimi Haddad, president of the Minneapolis-based Christians for Biblical Equality, says that people who believe women have to submit to their husbands are misreading the Bible. The main point of Ephesians, she said, is that men and women love and submit to each other.

“The word ‘submit’ means voluntary submission. It doesn’t mean obedience,” she said. “Unilateral authority doesn’t lead to happiness.”

And even if a husband is kind and loving, wives are still seen as second-class citizens, said Heidi Huebner Weimer.

Weimer, 34, her husband and 10 kids live in Spring Hill. She heard about the idea of wives submitting to their husbands while growing up as a Southern Baptist. The Southern Baptist statement of belief, known as the Baptist Faith and Message, was amended in 1998 to add a section that wives should graciously submit to their husbands.

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That idea was reinforced while she attended meetings of Campus Crusade for Christ at Auburn University. Men in the group were told to lead, while the women were told to obey.

“I felt like I was being ungodly for not buying into it,” she said.

What she objected to most was the implication that God talked only to men and not to women, and that a man’s point of view mattered most.

“If two people are hearing different things, the woman must be mistaken,” she said. These days, she and her husband see themselves as equal partners, a view known as egalitarianism.

They make decisions by consensus. Weimer approves of teaching men that they need to be more involved as fathers and husbands. But she doesn’t think women need to be put down in the process.

Contact Bob Smietana at 615-259-8228.

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Christian publishers count their blessings

Written by

Anita Wadhwan | The Tennessean
5:47 AM, Aug. 28, 2011

Veteran religion writer Cathleen Falsani didn’t know much about Justin Bieber when her 11-year-old son, recently adopted from Malawi, came home from school asking questions about the young superstar.

Interpreting pop culture was part of her parenting routine. But the questions ultimately led Falsani into an unexpected exploration of the 17-year-old singer’s evangelical Christian faith — and a new book. Belieber!: Fame, Faith and the Heart of Justin Bieber appears to have all the elements of a soon-to-be best-seller, with global press mentions and partnerships with Bieber fan clubs around the world, which come with a built-in potential base of 10 million devoted fans.

The book, to be released Sept. 27, is among the latest fall offerings by Nashville-based Christian publishing houses and among the inaugural releases by Worthy Publishing, a newly launched Brentwood publishing house.

The book, and Worthy, are making their debuts in the midst of good times for the $2 billion religious publishing industry, which is predominantly made up of Christian fiction, non-fiction, devotionals, religious instruction materials and Bibles. Much of it is based out of the Nashville area, although many larger publishing houses on the East and West coasts have established religious imprints of their own in recent years.

In the past 12-18 months, the religious publishing category has seen its sales jump faster than those of almost every other category of books. The book publishing industry overall has remained relatively healthy during the recession, with a nearly 6 percent annual growth rate from 2008 to 2010, according to the Association of American Publishers.

Local publishers report strong sales

Nashville-based Thomas Nelson, whose...
Heaven Is for Real (by Todd Burpo with Lynn Vincent) occupies the No. 1 spot on The New York Times’ nonfiction bestseller list, also has three of the top 10 best-selling religious books in the country this week. The company reported that sales are up 43 percent over last year.

Nashville-based Abingdon Press, the publishing arm of the United Methodist Church, reports “strong” sales for physical books in the first half of 2011 and “skyrocketing” sales of digital books. The company does not release specific figures.

“It’s a great time to be a Christian publisher,” said Byron Williamson, a 20-plus-year veteran of the Nashville Christian publishing industry who has published best-sellers by Newt Gingrich and Max Lucado and launched Worthy last year.

Piracy not big issue

Nashville publishers say they have a few things going for them that other industries — particularly the music industry, to which they are often compared — do not.

The transition to digital versions of the product has been slower, and 90 percent of all book sales continue to be in physical form. That’s not to say digital book sales aren’t growing fast. They’ve grown threefold in the past year, according to the Association of American Publishers.

But without the illegal file-sharing and song-swapping problems that bleed revenues from the music industry, the economics of e-books are working in favor of both publishers and authors, Williamson said.

“It surprises people,” Williamson said. “The reaction I get a lot is ‘OK, you’re in publishing. Those e-books. I’m so sorry.’ They think it’s having the same effect as mp3s and piracy. But it’s not.”

The closure of mainstream retail stores such as Borders and Davis-Kidd, while an undeniable blow to local book-lovers and book-sellers, appears to be a temporary loss, with two new independent bookstores planned for Nashville next year.

And independent Christian retail stores, although feeling some pressures from big chains such as Walmart selling religious products, remain a “pretty vibrant” outlet for sales, with 1,500 stores currently selling 30 percent of all Christian retail products, including music and books, said Greg Bays, senior vice president of sales and marketing for EMI CMG Distribution, a division of EMI Christian Group, a recording company that is now teaming up with
Worthy Publishing to distribute books.

The recession may actually have benefited the religious publishing industry, publishers say.

“Our books address such basic, human-felt needs, and we find that in hard times readers are drawn to devotionals and to books that attempt to answer the really tough questions of faith and a faithful God,” said Audrey Kidd, executive vice president, revenue and operations, for The United Methodist Publishing House.

Worthy, un by industry veterans from other publishing houses, is poised to release three dozen new titles written by some of the best-selling Christian authors: Chuck Colson, Billy Graham, Michael W. Smith, Jerry Jenkins and Charles Swindoll.

Its partnership with EMI CMG will distribute those books directly to Christian retail stores, while separate distribution channels will also market and release books to mainstream bookstores and superstores such as Walmart and Target.

Publishers say they are cautiously optimistic about the fall and holiday book season, but expect the gradual shift to digital books to speed up.

“We believe this will be another big Christmas for e-reading devices to be given as gifts,” said Mark Schoenwald, president and CEO of Thomas Nelson.

If those holiday e-reader sales go as expected, Schoenwald said, the company expects an uptick in digital sales the following spring. Thomas Nelson's e-book sales grew to 12 percent over last year. The previous year, it was three percent.

To be sure, the industry hasn’t gone completely unscathed by the recession. Publishers believe the industry would have grown faster without it.

Some areas are performing better than others. Demand for church curriculum products, academic and reference books are down, while Bibles and fiction do well, publishers said.

“Thoughtful” reading time is shrinking with the proliferation of online blogs, tweets and other social media, where access is free and instant, challenging book publishers to think more broadly about their role.

“Our company is no longer just in the book business,” Schoenwald said of Thomas Nelson, which is developing apps and experimenting with buy-by-the-chapter digital books and other products.
Author Cathleen Fulsani speaks about her new book, **Belieber!**, on Thursday at EMI in Brentwood. The book chronicling Justin Bieber's faith, set for release on Sept. 27, is one of the first offerings from Brentwood-based Worthy Publishing. / JAE S. LEE / THE TENNESSEAN

Major area Christian book publishers

- **Abingdon Press**, an imprint of the United Methodist Publishing House
- **B&H Publishing Group**, a division of LifeWay Christian Resources
- **FaithWords**, a division of Hatchette Book Group
- **Howard Books**, the Christian imprint of Simon & Schuster
- **Thomas Nelson**
- **Worthy Publishing**

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- [Look who got Bieber-ized!](http://www.tennessean.com/article/20...)

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Imagining the Downside of Immortality

By STEPHEN CAVE

Stephen Cave is the author of the forthcoming book “Immortality: The Quest to Live Forever and How It Drives Civilization.”

Berlin

IMAGINE nobody dies. All of a sudden, whether through divine intervention or an elixir slipped into the water supply, death is banished. Life goes on and on; all of us are freed from fear that our loved ones will be plucked from us, and each of us is rich in the most precious resource of all: time.

Wouldn’t it be awful?

This is the premise of the TV series “Torchwood: Miracle Day,” a co-production of Starz and the BBC that has been running over the summer and ends in September. The “miracle” of the title is that no one dies anymore, but it proves to be a curse as overpopulation soon threatens to end civilization. The show is a nice twist on our age-old dream of living forever. And it is right to be pessimistic about what would happen if this dream were fulfilled — but for the wrong reasons.

Materially, we could cope with the arrival of the elixir. But, psychologically, immortality would be the end of us.

The problem is that our culture is based on our striving for immortality. It shapes what we do and what we believe; it has inspired us to found religions, write poems and build cities. If we were all immortal, the motor of civilization would sputter and stop.

Poets and philosophers have long been attuned to the fact that the quest for immortality drives much of humanity’s peculiar ways. But only in recent decades has scientific evidence backed this up.

In a study that began in 1989, a group of American social psychologists found that just briefly reminding people that they would die had a remarkable impact on their political and religious views.

In their first experiment, the researchers recruited court judges from Tucson. Half the judges were reminded of their mortality (via an otherwise innocuous personality test) and half were not. They were then all asked to rule on a hypothetical case of prostitution similar to those they ruled on. The
judges who had first been reminded of their mortality set a bond nine times higher than those who hadn’t (averaging $455 compared to $50).

These psychologists — Sheldon Solomon, Jeff Greenberg and Tom Pyszczynski — were testing the hypothesis that we have developed our cultural worldviews in order to give us the sense that we might defy death. They reasoned that if this were not the case, when faced with reminders of mortality, people would cling more fiercely to their beliefs and be more negative about those who threatened them. This is just what happened with the judges: when reminded that they would one day die, they were more severe in punishing those who violated their worldview.

Social psychologists have since tested this hypothesis in more than 400 experiments that aim to explore different aspects of our worldview, from patriotism to religion. So far, their results consistently support a thesis — known as Terror Management Theory — that particular aspects of our outlook are governed by our need to manage our fear of death. In other words, our cultural, philosophical and religious systems exist to promise us immortality.

Every civilization has had such systems. They are embodied in the pyramids of Egypt, the cathedrals of Europe and even the skyscrapers of modern cities. Odds are that you too, dear reader, subscribe to at least one such system — a set of beliefs that motivates you and somehow promises life’s continuance. Perhaps you believe that if you attend church or a synagogue or a mosque, your soul will endure in another realm. Perhaps you are encouraging your children’s confidence that something of you will live on in them; or perhaps you are taking vitamins and jogging in the hope that you can outrun the Reaper.

Some of these systems overtly flaunt their death-defying promise: Christianity and Islam, for example, make a great deal of the prospect of eternal bliss. As do the arts, in particular cinema and its accompanying celebrity culture — as the film star James Dean acknowledged when he said that “the only success, the only greatness, is immortality.” But when we look deeper we also find the promise of deathlessness in places where it is not at all explicit: in the accumulation of wealth, with its attendant aura of life-sustaining power; through immersion in a greater whole, whether a nation or a football team; or even in the pursuit of scientific research, with its claim to enduring truth.

The real question posed by the “Torchwood” scenario is: what would happen to all our death-defying systems if there were no more death? The logical answer is that they would be superfluous. We would have no need for progress or art, faith or fame. Suddenly, we would have nothing to do, yet in the greatest of ironies, we would have endless eons in which to do it. Action would lose its purpose and time its value. This is the true awfulness of immortality.

Let us be grateful that the elixir continues to elude us — and toast instead our finitude.
A third of the world -- about 2.2 billion people -- live in nations where restrictions on religion have substantially increased, according to a new report.

The Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life study, released Tuesday, also shows intolerant countries growing more hostile to religious freedom, and tolerant ones growing more accommodating.

"There seems to be somewhat of a polarization," particularly in countries with constitutional prohibitions against blasphemy, said Brian Grim, the primary researcher of the report. "When you have one set of restrictions in place then it's easier to add on."

Among those nations with the greatest increases in government religious restrictions, ranked from most to least populous, were: Egypt, France, Algeria, Uganda and Malaysia.

Among those nations where government restrictions declined, ranked from most to least populous, were: Greece, Togo, Nicaragua, Republic of Macedonia and Guinea-Bissau.

The report, culling data from 198 countries and territories from 2006 through 2009, also measured social hostility toward religious groups. North Korea, one of the most repressive regimes, could not be included for lack of reliable data.

Researchers collected statistics before the Arab Spring, but said the report may shed light on this year's uprisings across the Middle East.

"It's indisputable that increasing levels of restriction were part of the overall context within which the uprisings took place," Grim said. "Whether they were the trigger or they were just part of this trend in societies is difficult to tease apart at this point."

As other reports on religious freedom have found, it is scarcest in the Middle East and North Africa. But Europe, the study noted, has the largest proportion of countries where social hostilities related to religion rose. In France, for example, women are barred by law from wearing face-covering veils.

More than other groups, Muslims and Christians suffered harassment based on their religion. But Pew researchers noted that together, these groups comprise more than half the world's population. Smaller religious groups that suffered disproportionately, the study found, included Jews. Representing less than one percent of the world's people, Jews were harassed in 75 countries.
Overall, about 70 percent of the world lives in nations with significant religious repression -- a figure that matched that of a similar study Pew undertook two years ago. But the nations in which religious repression is increasing tend to be populous, the study’s authors noted.

Posted by Sarah Pulliam Bailey on August 9, 2011 4:18PM

COMMENTS

Sharing the love..

Posted by: Jesse Davis at August 9, 2011

If things keep going in the direction they seem headed for in the United States, it looks like many of us here who call ourselves Christians may begin to experience restrictions on voicing our beliefs. I’m talking about Christians who believe that objective ideas of what is right and wrong are delineated in the Scriptures, and who want to see scripturally expressed morality and right living continue as a part of the American way of life. So, as more and more people with power and influence come out against traditional Christian precepts, not only here, but throughout the western world, as well as all the rest of the world, we can see more and more a need to bring to the light John’s final quote of Jesus’ words and John’s response from the last few verses of Revelation: “He who testifies to these things [concerning those who would take away from that book of prophecy] says, ‘Surely, I come quickly.’” And John’s response: “Amen. Come Lord Jesus.”

This is what we need, Emmanuel, God with us on the earth again, so that the grace and peace of God’s love through Jesus, the only kind of restrictions that will never fail and will last forever after man-made restrictions have been destroyed, will be spread to every nook and cranny found all over the world for all time. That would be some of the Good News—the final solution to problems mentioned in the article—that we don’t hear enough about today. As Jesus is building his church today, he is coming to believers’ hearts and minds in spirit. But let us not forget, in the not-too-distant-future he is also coming to this earth in literal power and glory to save it and us from those trying to restrict against his power of grace, faith, and love, all about which the bible so tells us. Amen indeed. Come Lord Jesus.

Posted by: Charles at August 11, 2011

Really interesting piece, and a nice comment by Charles too. I live in England, and, for the most part, it is has a similar attitude to freedom, freedom of expression, and religious toleration that America has; culturally America and the UK share a lot, even though we are also different in many ways too! Regarding Christianity in the UK, we seem to be able to live as Christians quite freely here, which is a blessing. I can only add then, that whatever our circumstances, we should hold onto to our faith, not deviating from right to left, and we should serve the Lord as best we can wherever we find ourselves.

Posted by: Tim Childs at August 21, 2011

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Angwin: Where conviction meets cabernet

James Noonan | Posted: Sunday, August 21, 2011 12:00 am

ANGWIN — The city of Napa is one of the Bay Area’s more insulated locations, but it’s a virtual metropolis compared to the rural, slow-moving pace in Angwin.

Here — nestled among the trees on the slopes of Howell Mountain — the remote, tight-knit village has stood apart from the hustle-bustle on the Napa Valley floor for more than a century.

Along Howell Mountain Road — the village’s main drag — spying even the occasional pedestrian or bicyclist is a rare occurrence during the summer months. For those who do venture out for a stroll, a calming Alpine-like silence reigns, broken only by the occasional car heading down or up “the hill.”

Yet, despite its somewhat remote location, Angwin — and the greater Howell Mountain region — has become a popular proving ground for vintners and grape growers, all hoping that the area’s unique terroir will help distinguish their product from the countless other labels sporting the Napa Valley name.

For this reason, Angwin might be thought of as a community in flux — one that is attempting to balance a budding wine culture with an older community whose Seventh-day Adventist roots spurn the consumption of alcohol.

According to the latest census, roughly 3,050 people call the town home. Of that figure, many have some link to Pacific Union College, a four-year Adventist institution.

Emerging from the winding mountain pathway, visitors to Angwin are greeted by a collection of small shops and structures bordering the roadside for only a few hundred yards before giving way to the forest once again.

On one side sits a token strip mall offering a collection of essential services — things valley floor residents might expect to see on nearly every corner.

There’s a post office, a bank, a market and a hardware store — and little else — at Angwin’s community hub.

Across the road, the towering church and sanctuary of Pacific Union College dominates the mountain landscape, serving as a reminder that the Seventh-day Adventist faith plays a large role in the town and, for decades, has served as a steering hand in its development.

“I think it’s safe to say that the college has been kind of the keeper in Angwin,” said Herb Ford, a professor emeritus at the college and former president of the Angwin Community Council.

Many of the service’s that Angwinites depend on — including the village’s only market — are operated by the college, meaning they adhere to the strict religious restrictions called for by the Adventist faith, Ford said.

Members of the church are expected to abstain from tobacco, alcohol and meat. As a result, Angwin’s College Market carries none of these worldly temptations.

Inside, patrons can sift through freezers full of faux-meat products such as “vege-salami,” “rice burgers” and packages of imitation “scallop delights,” but not an ounce of real meat — or drop of alcoholic Napa Valley wine — can be found.

On Saturdays — the Adventist Sabbath — businesses are closed, further evidence of the role religion plays in the mountain-side hamlet.

However, roughly a mile up the road from the center of the PUC campus, a different culture is evolving.

Here — carved into the side of the Howell Mountain — the tasting room at Arkenstone Vineyards stands ready to pour premium reds and whites for those who are willing to make the trip up the hill.

Planting its first vineyard blocks in 1998, Arkenstone now boasts a 25,000 square-foot cave complex featuring state-of-the-art fermentation equipment and a new hospitality area — a far cry from the rural and rustic image that many have come to associate with...
the Angwin name.

In 2009, Cade Winery, a project of the Plumpjack Group — which counts former San Francisco Mayor and current state lieutenant governor Gavin Newsom as a partner and also operates Napa’s Carneros Inn — opened shop only a few miles down the road from Angwin.

As with Arkenstone, Cade offers on-site tasting by appointment.

Other wineries, including Ladera, Cimarossa and Howell at the Moon, also call Howell Mountain home and list Angwin addresses on their websites.

Drawn to the area by its natural beauty and unique microclimate, Arkenstone owner Susan Krausz says that fusing a wine culture with Angwin’s traditionalist past has presented little challenge.

“I guess it’s been pretty normal,” Krausz said. “We’ve co-existed pretty well.”

Visitors take little notice of Angwin’s religious roots, simply passing through as tourists tend to do, she said.

“When they’re in the valley, they’re in the valley,” she said. “Whether it’s Angwin or the valley floor.”

Angwinites have adopted a similar live-and-let-live approach to the area’s growing reputation in the wine industry.

Duane Cronk, long-time resident and publisher of the online Angwin Reporter, said that — with the exception of some of the surrounding forest being clearing to make way for vineyard blocks — a developing wine culture has had little effect on village residents.

Ford agrees, noting that conflict between the two interests has been almost nonexistent.

“I think it’s safe to say that they get along with the Adventists pretty well and the Adventists get along with them,” he said.

With Angwin offering no lodging, the village hasn’t developed into a destination the way that valley floor towns have. When volunteers with the Napa Valley Destination Council field requests from visitors looking for overnight accommodations, they steer them elsewhere, a council representative said.

In Angwin — where growth has long been a controversial topic — this likely suits residents just fine.

“This is not a place to grow,” said Cronk from the living room of his home on Hill Street. “Away from the college, there are no sidewalks in Angwin. There are no jobs here ... we don’t even have a doctor’s office.”

In recent years, the college’s plan to develop more than 300 homes through its “eco-village” project was met with staunch opposition. The plan was ultimately dropped, but only after years of protest from a faction of village residents.

“That left some scars on the community,” said Ford.

When compared to the threat of new housing, wineries setting up shop on the hill haven’t riled most residents, said Cronk, who was an adamant opponent of the eco-village project.

“The community now has a wine culture,” he said. “For some reason, it doesn’t clash here.”