

equip to disciple

Presbyterian Church in America
Christian Education & Publications
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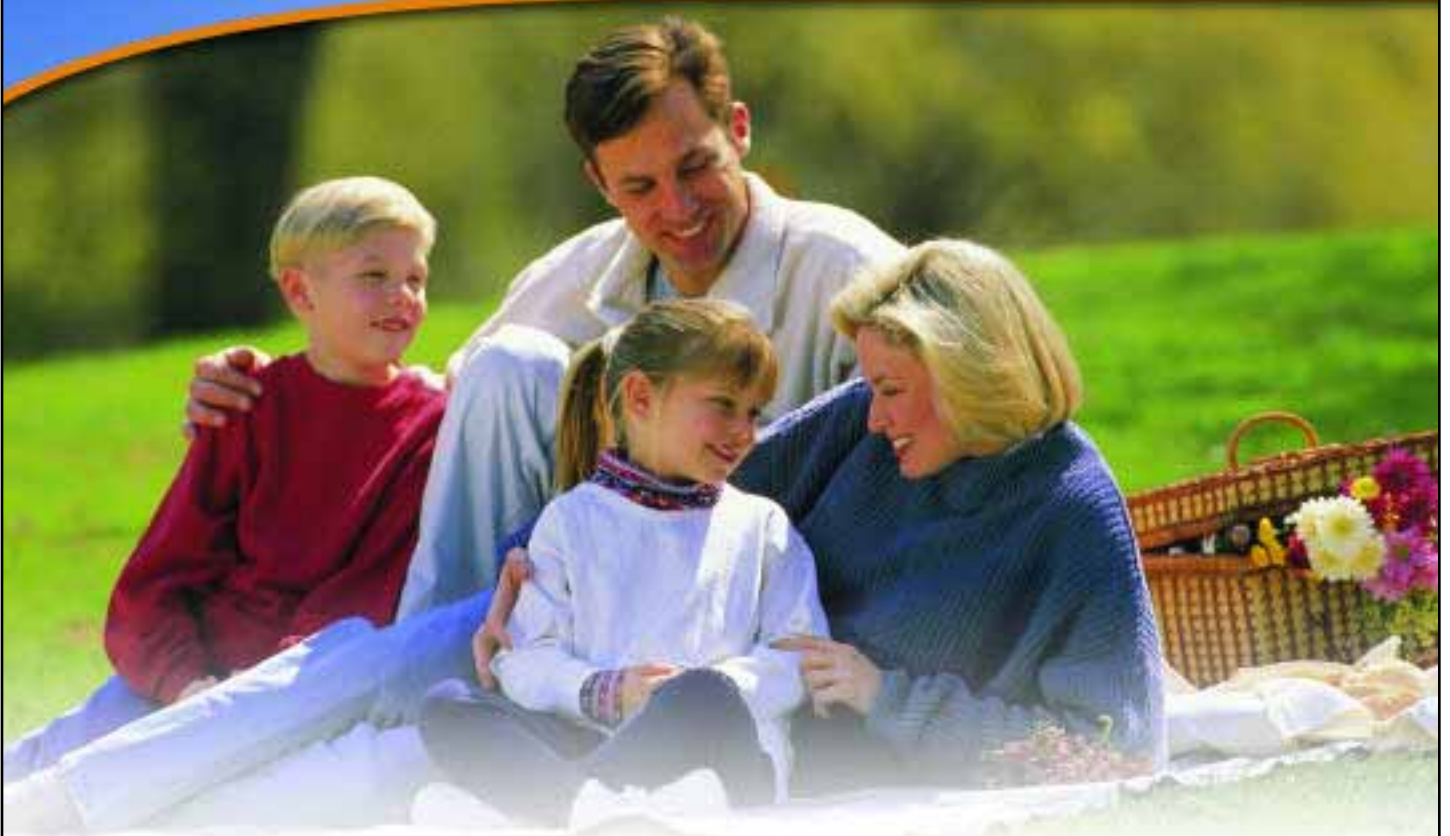
*The Church's
Great Challenge*

...**THE NEXT** GENERATION

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 CE&P

ISSUE ONE | 2007



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from the Editor

Charles Dunahoo, Coordinator of CE&P



WHAT IS OUR FOCUS?

Welcome to our first publication of 2007 and our new *equip to disciple*. As we announced in the last edition of *Equip for Ministry* in 2006, this issue marks a change in frequency. There will be four issues instead of six. This will enable us to offer the same resources with a new format and full color. Our desire is to make this publication and our website more helpful to you in a variety of leadership roles in the local church.

For 2007 we intend to take the points of emphasis from the PCA Strategic Planning Committee and feature them in each issue. Three of the four points are strongly oriented to Christian Education and Publications' ministry of providing training and resources for local church leaders and teachers. These three areas mentioned by the General Assembly's Strategic Planning Committee, which reported its work to the 2006 assembly, are: ministry to the rising generation, leadership training, and stewardship—all of which have been assigned to CE&P by the General Assembly. We will begin with the focus of our theme of discipling God's covenant people, or "making kingdom disciples," as it relates to the rising generation.

Results from a denominational survey conducted by the Strategic Planning Committee indicated that many local churches were unaware of the resources available through the PCA committees and agencies. Because training and resources are the focus of CE&P, we want you to be familiar with those resources.

...the rising generation, leadership training, and stewardship.

When we think about Christian education, we often think of Sunday school, which is an important element of education, but we want our churches to think more broadly about making kingdom disciples through all the ministries of the local church. We want to encourage churches to be intentionally focused on what their church is attempting to be and do.

If we can encourage, assist, and work together with local church leaders in the PCA, I believe we can accomplish more together than we can working alone. If we can network our resources and people, we can "come along side and encourage one another," and better facilitate "each part doing its work," thus contributing to the growth of the church and the spiritual transformation of people's lives.

The spring issue of *equip* will feature the topic of leadership. The summer issue will focus on stewardship. We will highlight resources and training available in these areas. As is the case with

CE&P—that it is not about us but about God, his kingdom, and church—so it is with *equip to disciple*. Without apology you are our target audience for

our training and resources. Your role, as leaders and teachers, is to make kingdom disciples, using the preaching and teaching of the Word, the Sunday school, the Women In the Church ministry, the Men's ministry, youth and children's ministry, and Bible studies. That is the mission, ministry, and intentional focus of CE&P. **e**

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The Church's Great Challenge

The PCA, as a biblically reformed church, has a particular perspective on the Church and the kingdom. Being reformed in doctrine requires a strong commitment to covenant theology, and covenant theology gives special attention to the rising generation in its implementation. God has instructed us to make kingdom disciples by teaching his people to observe all that he has commanded, and that definitely includes our children and grandchildren, “*that the next generation might know them, and the children yet unborn,*” (Ps. 78:6). The PCA is distinct in this process because its focus is not simply on programs for the children and youth, but in helping them from the earliest to know what it means to be a child of the covenant and member of God’s church and kingdom and the difference that makes in the way a person thinks, lives, and perceives all of reality.

CE&P TARGETS THE RISING GENERATION

The fact that the PCA’s Strategic Planning Committee has identified this as one of the four areas of their focus indicates that our theology really does play the major role in determining our mission as a church. Though much of the PCA’s ministry to the rising generation is done locally, five PCA committees and agencies have ministries that reflect God’s commands regarding the next generation. Ministry to the rising generation has and continues to be a high priority within the PCA. It is and has always been the focus of

Christian Education and Publications with its role of emphasizing the process of making kingdom disciples that know what they believe and why and are able to stand strong and firm in that faith.

The CE&P staff regularly evaluates the situation regarding the rising generation. Through the training and resources we attempt to assist, coordinate, and make available those ingredients to fulfill our Lord’s assignment. For example, our annual children’s ministry, WIC, and YXL conferences are some of the training opportunities that we offer. CE&P sets its focus to enable churches and families to be more affective not only in their own spiritual growth, but in their children and grandchildren as well.



Periodically, we bring together selected people across the church with particular expertise in children and youth ministries to brainstorm, discuss, and identify those areas that must be on the agenda. For example, we are in the process of developing a profile of what a typical PCA teenager, graduating from high school, should look like—what should they know, be, and do to serve God in his kingdom? This hopefully will assist churches and leaders to develop a process of moving them toward that goal.

Young people are facing some extremely difficult but important issues morally and ethically, especially in areas such as biotechnology. This is made more difficult because scientists operating in this area generally accept a dualistic view of life that separates values and morals from their work. Their mantra tends to be “if we can do it, it is alright to do so.” This manner of operation has already caused many problems that we have to face. Our young people must be taught and encouraged to think from a biblical perspective and have God’s thoughts as their guide.

CE&P begins with covenant children through its Sunday school, teacher training, and commitment to help churches and parents in discipling children and youth. More than 60 percent of PCA churches are using our Sunday school curriculum from Great Commission Publications. CE&P regularly trains and assists teachers and church leaders in developing their Christian education or discipleship program. Leaders of children’s ministries, as well as youth leaders, meet regularly for training opportunities conducted by the CE&P staff. CE&P offers counseling and consulting to churches and individuals involved in this ministry. CE&P focuses on intensive, in-depth training for selected teenagers with leadership potential from across the denomination, helping them develop a kingdom framework with a biblical world and life view.

Resources are supplied from CE&P’s staff, regional trainers, bookstore and electronic media to help local churches disciple the rising generations. Conferences on Christian schooling are an ongoing part of CE&P’s ministry as well. CE&P will be partnering with Briarwood Presbyterian Church to present a conference on Christian schooling. Check our website for details about that conference to be held June 2007 at Briarwood in Birmingham, Al.

A major focus of our mission of “*discipling God’s covenant people*” has been training older men and women to disciple the younger generations. CE&P

makes available to local churches and presbyteries training and resources to assist in making kingdom disciples. Producing resources and training defines CE&P’s role in equipping for this task.

Christian Education and Publications will continue to expand its training and resources. Specifically, CE&P will intensify efforts:

- to bring together the church, home, and school as they minister to the rising generation. At our annual children’s ministry conferences we offer workshops on that topic. We are presently teaching at several cooperating seminaries.
- to study the trends relating to the culture of the rising generation to assist churches in their discipleship ministry.
- to give attention to the multicultural needs in the PCA.
- to facilitate more effective ministries among women and men, as they relate to the rising generation.

CE&P makes available to local churches and presbyteries training and resources to assist in making kingdom disciples. Producing resources and training defines CE&P’s role in equipping for this task.

PCA COMMITTEES AND AGENCIES TARGET THE RISING GENERATION

Not only does CE&P have a key ministry to the rising generation, so does Covenant College by educating college students to become more intentionally kingdom-oriented. All of Covenant’s career paths are focused on preparing students to see the totality of the Christian life and how to integrate their faith in all that they do. The college’s focus is to disciple students with a kingdom perspective and a biblically reformed world and life view.

Covenant College and CE&P are presently



YOUTH
EXCELLING IN
LEADERSHIP
(YXL)
CONFERENCE FOR
HIGH SCHOOL
STUDENTS.
JULY 9 - 14, 07

partnering in our unique summer Youth Excelling in Leadership (YXL) conference for high school students. This conference attracts key teenagers from local churches who spend a week on the Covenant College campus. They are taught a biblical world and life view perspective and how that impacts their lives daily. Covenant College has also agreed to offer some scholarship assistance for college to those who participate in YXL. Covenant College is a valuable resource and we are pleased to be able to work with them in jointly ministering to the rising generation.

Covenant Theological Seminary is another PCA agency realizing the need to challenge and equip their students to consider full-time ministry to children and youth. The seminary offers opportunities to study today's youth culture both in urban and rural context as part of students' training. It demonstrates a strong commitment through the youth ministry track to train people for this ministry and has worked with us in that task.

Ridge Haven, our PCA conference center, is also committed to the rising generation through its facilities and programs by bringing together cooperative efforts with other PCA committees, agencies, presbyteries, and local churches in this task. These efforts are seen in its summer camps and

conferences, weekend retreats, and special events such as YoWAW (jointly sponsored by several of our committees and agencies for high school students).

Reformed University Ministries is another indication of the PCA's commitment to the rising generation. RUM establishes ministries to college students in their environment to help them know the meaning of being a kingdom disciple and seeing all of life under the Lordship of Christ. They develop opportunities through both corporate and personal ministries to students, some of whom are struggling with a variety of things such as postmodernism, the rugged individualism of Western thought, and the need to be involved in ministry either in the local church or other areas of opportunity.

RUM sets forth a clear message and ministry that seeks to connect the rising generation with solidly biblical and reformed theology with special emphasis on their place in God's kingdom and especially in his church.

Mission to the World is also a part of helping churches expose their young people to other cultures and ministry needs through its short term missions programs. Thousands of PCA young people have been able to experience another culture through their ministry.

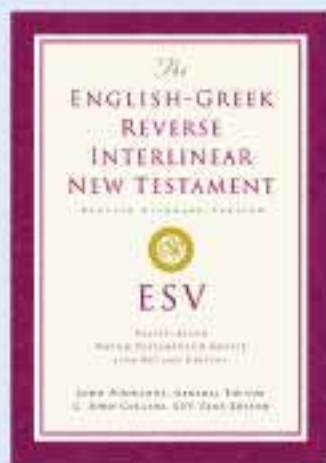
Conclusion We are attempting to impact the rising generation throughout the PCA by reflecting a clear priority to minister to them. As the committee responsible for coordinating discipleship by providing training and resources, we believe we have never faced a more challenging moment where the rising generation is concerned. With the obvious revival in spirituality, Christianity is viewed as only one among many options. With the dualistic philosophy permeating our Western churches and society in general, the Lordship of Christ is not clearly understood. Connecting Sunday with the rest of the week is not the focus. In this context, the future offers a multitude of opportunities. We have a growing sense of challenge to minister to the rising generations, plus, we are becoming more and more aware that we can be more effective working together than alone. It is true that the whole is larger than "the sum of its parts," and that is clearly evident as we think of the rising generation.

We will continue to challenge local churches to focus on discipling all their people, especially their younger generations, with a kingdom world and life view. Our role is to encourage, challenge, and assist you in that process.

At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven...whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, but whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea," (Matt 18: 1-6). e

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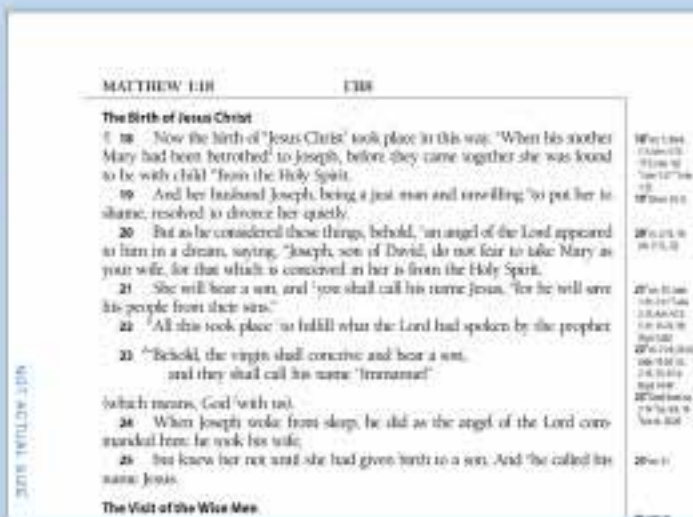
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People were bringing little children to Jesus to have Him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them.¹⁴ When Jesus saw this, He was indignant. He said to them, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these.¹⁵ I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.”¹⁶ And He took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them.

— **Mark 10:13-16**¹

¹ From the *The Holy Bible, New International Version*, Zondervan, ©1985. (Personal pronouns referring to Jesus capitalized by the author.)

ADAPTING MINISTRY FOR THE RISING GENERATION

EDITOR'S NOTE

equiptodisciple will be featuring selected churches in the PCA excelling in the ministry of making kingdom disciples. The following article features First Presbyterian Church of Stanley, N.C., Dan King senior pastor. The article by David Nelson, associate pastor of Christian education and discipleship, was written at the request of *equip*. Our thanks to David for his assistance. We asked him to highlight their ministry to the rising generation. We commend them for their vision and desire to begin the discipleship process in the early years of their covenant children's lives.

While Jesus' disciples try to keep little children in the background, Jesus elevates them to the status of *kingdom role models*. Jesus loves children! What is it about children that Jesus adores? Like Him, they're humble, meek, trusting, dependent, untainted by the world, loving, accepting of others, not proud or boastful. When Jesus says, "Let the little children come to Me... for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these!" He's saying, "these are My people, this is what My people are like! AND, they're important to Me!... don't disrespect them, push them aside, or keep them in the background. In fact, you should hold little children up as role models, because they're like the people in heaven!"

In America, younger and younger children have ever-growing access to anti-Christian philosophies through school, TV, internet, music, and contact with "well-read" friends. Our children's potential saturation with ideas contrary to Christian ideals is greater than it has been at any time in history! Author Marva Dawn writes:

My experiences over thirty years of working with thousands of young people in churches and schools, convocations and camps make me especially troubled about children in Christian families, members of the Church, residents of God's household. How are our children being formed? Do they know themselves primarily as citizens of the kingdom of God? Do we and our offspring look, act, talk, and think like people who are shaped by the narratives of our faith, by God's Revelation?²²

From, *Is It A Lost Cause? Having the Heart of God for the Church's Children*, by Marva Dawn, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, 1997, p. 3

In recent years First Presbyterian Church has seen the truth of Dawn's concern; therefore, we stepped up our efforts to confront this rising tide of ideas which compete for our children's hearts and minds. In so doing, we've grown in our estimation of children. We have greater ability to see our children as Jesus sees them; *kingdom role models* most worthy of blessing, time, energy, primary ministry resources, dignity and respect.

In response to that challenge, we've worked to improve all of our children's ministries. Changes are made with an eye toward equipping our children with the answers and attitudes of the *Christian world and life view* necessary to help them navigate the anti-Christian philosophies they'll engage in the future and, which we've learned, **they already encounter to a much greater extent than we realized.**



What are some things we do to equip them, and ourselves, in this battle for hearts and minds?

Children's Ministry Coordinator - three years ago, a member with years of experience working with children accepted our invitation to become our volunteer Children's Ministry Coordinator. She used training from the 2004 CE&P Children's Ministry Conference to create a Sunday school class, "Totally Equipped," to prepare new teachers for service; to give helpful advice toward our "Image Bearers" ministry design (below); and to provide helpful encouragement in all our children's ministry endeavors which continue to develop.

Image Bearers - As we grew in awareness of the need to purposefully capture our children's heart and minds at a younger age, we decided to create opportunities, in addition to Sunday school and Vacation Bible School, to develop the Christian world and life view of our younger children. Under God's direction we created a children's ministry to help our first through fifth grade children grow in: 1) Their ability to give an answer for their hope in Christ (apologetics); 2) Their vision for and ability to make disciples; and 3) Their ethic for Christian service.

In Image Bearers, we use an innovative model

that enables a few adults to successfully provide this ministry. The basic concepts we follow: 1) All the children stay together the whole time; 2) One adult leads games, one provides a snack, one leads music, and one teaches the lesson and provides a lesson-enhancing activity or service project; 3) For music, teaching, prayer, service projects and disciple-making children divide into family groups with an equal balance of children from all grades; 4) We teach interactive lessons at a third grade level where older children are coached by adult leaders to help the youngest children and thus gain experience and vision for disciple-making.

Sports Outreach and Recreation (SOAR)

- In 2004, our 16-year-old youth sports outreach ministry went to a year-round status as we added our fourth sport - Spring soccer. A concept that arose with our soccer league was the idea to change from a head coach/assistant coach model to a sport coach/prayer coach model. The sport coach develops athletic and team skills, while the prayer coach ensures prayer, team devotions, and spiritual encouragement occur at every game and practice. This change has improved spiritual aspects of our whole ministry! At our recent basketball finale, we registered over forty first-time commitments to Christ - the largest single SOAR event harvest we've ever seen!

Upholding the truth of Christ by elevating the gospel among these young people is reaping great rewards!

Strategic Planning for Children's Ministry

- In May of 2006, a retired businessman used his skills to lead a First Presbyterian Church team of fifteen through a Strategic Planning Session for Children's Ministry. In our planning session we produced a Mission Statement, a Vision statement, and an Action Plan for children's ministry while evaluating strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Our strategic planning continues to bear fruit as we've formed a Children's Ministry Team to focus on continued improvement and promotion of children's ministry in our congregation.

We teach interactive lessons at a third grade level where older children are coached by adult leaders to help the youngest children and thus gain experience and vision for disciple-making.

We thank God for where He's taken us in recent years. We're learning to be more like Jesus who said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these" And then He took the children in His arms, put His hands on them and blessed them. We look forward to God's continued leading in this fight for the hearts and minds of His youngest people! We're grateful to be a part of it! **e**

in case you're asked

WHAT IS THE PCA?

Recently, I met with a young man serving on the staff in another denomination. He wanted to know more about the PCA. From what he knew, he felt that he might be a better fit in the PCA than his present denomination. We talked about many things. I gave him some of the history, having been a part of the PCA from the beginning. We talked about the misunderstandings or misperceptions that some have voiced, such as the PCA was too narrow or too broad.

We went over some of the basic theological distinctives, including polity issues, that lead to the formation of the PCA. I wanted him to know not only of those beginnings and our strong commitment to the Scriptures and reformed theology, I also wanted him to know the PCA today. To assist me in that task, I turned to the booklet, *Being Revived, Bringing Reformation*, developed by the recent strategic planning effort in the PCA. I have used this on several occasions working with congregations assisting in their development of their strategic plan.

While the work of this denominational planning committee did not actually produce a strategic plan, it did develop a framework to clarify who we are and what we believe God would have us be and do as a denomination. As I mentioned in the "Welcome," we plan to use some of the areas of concern produced from the Strategic Planning Committee with this and other future issues of *Equip for Ministry*.

To answer my friend's question, who and what is the PCA, I gave him this summary from *Being Revived, Bringing Reformation* (This is available from CE&P bookstore).

The Strategic Planning Committee wrote:
 "Out of its unwavering commitment to the inerrancy of Scripture and the reformed faith, and in obedience to the great commission, the PCA will

pursue the following four strategic priorities to accomplish its vision:

1. Empower church health and growth for new and existing churches local and worldwide.
2. Develop leadership for the future.
3. Increase denominational understanding and effectiveness.
4. Engage the culture-timeless truth for our times."

In attempting to describe or define a healthy church, the committee set forth five crucial principles:

- the preeminence of Christ
- the importance of the local church
- the importance of cooperative ministry
- the importance of the General Assembly in contributing to the health of the denomination
- the importance of the Committees and

The mission of the Presbyterian Church in America is to glorify and enjoy God by equipping and enabling the churches of the PCA to work together to fulfill the Great Commission by making disciples of all nations, so that people will mature as servants of the triune God, will worship God in spirit and truth, and will have a reforming impact on culture.

Agencies of the church in carrying out the work of the General Assembly

The Committee further identified areas which they believed to be strategic importance:

1. The rising generation

continued on page 12

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in case you're asked: *continued from page 10*

*The PCA is
"Being revived
and bringing
reformation."*

2. Trained leadership, especially among the officers
3. Stewardship to support the whole work of the church

"The plan" identified the PCA with the following characteristics: Biblical inerrancy and authority, a reformed-covenantal theology, mutual accountability,

and as Presbyterians connected to one another, cooperative ministry. They added to that list other attributes towards which we will strive as a denomination: worshipping churches, equipping and enabling churches, discipling churches, and reforming churches. Because our denominational identity, the Committee further stated: "The PCA, through the General Assembly, its Committees, Agencies, and Presbyteries, should guide, connect and support local churches and presbyteries so that they work together to fulfill our mission statement (see on the previous page).

They summarized the mission statement with this motto: "*Being revived and bringing reformation.*"

I explained to my friend that I believed this was a true reflection and commitment of the PCA at this time. This of course is an important time for such a church to stand together, firm in the faith, and not to be driven by cultural whims or theological oddities, but communicating God's truth to this generation, walking by his Word and Holy Spirit and "*thinking God's thoughts after him*" in our mission. **e**

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Men's Ministry

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A man is hard to disciple. Men are busy, tired, over-committed, and struggling with sins they don't want to talk about. Unlike women, singles, teenagers, and children, they will not show up at church just because they like to be together. Any event for men has to have high value to them. Otherwise, they will not come to it on any kind of regular basis.

No wonder so many pastors and leaders get discouraged with men's ministry. The ministry is so difficult that mistakes can set men's ministry in the local church back for years.

That is the reason that we need to gain the counsel of many other men who are doing men's ministry, because "in the abundance of many counselors, there is victory," (Prov. 11:14). This wisdom that results from many counselors is the purpose of "Get In The Game." This bi-monthly e-newsletter provides insight about men's ministry from the most effective men's ministries in the country. It supplies updates on resources that are available and enables you to stay abreast of what is happening in men's ministry in the PCA. It is a great tool to encourage and equip the men on your men's ministry leadership team, so make sure you go to www.pcacep.org/men to sign up for your entire team. **e**

Women's Ministry

2007 WIC Leadership Joins Mercy Ministry

- casting a vision for mercy ministry.
- teaching and equipping congregations to extend their borders by ministering to the strangers and aliens, the oppressed and needy.
- developing an integrated approach to ministry so that mercy permeates the entire church and

becomes not just a program, but a way of life for the people of God.

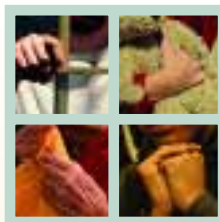
The offering taken at the 1999 Women In the Church Conference became the seed money for the committees on Christian Education and Publications and

WIC Leadership *continued on page 14*

Extending the Kingdom in the Context of the Church

In 1999, Christian Education and Publications hosted a PCA Women In the Church conference on mercy. Dr. Charles Dunahoo welcomed the 4000 participants to this strategic conference with these words: "In these days when many accuse the church of lacking authenticity and integrity, and the younger generation questions the church's validity, we must show that the church is real and that a relationship with Christ and his people is vital for serving Christ's purpose."

The conference was a call to daughters of the covenant to love God and to be women of compassion who love justice, mercy, and humility. There was a strong commitment to work alongside of the men of the PCA in:



2007 Mercy Ministry Conference: Enriching the Kingdom

"Enriching the Kingdom: People Hurt, God Calls, Church Responds," is the theme of this year's bi-annual Mercy Ministry conference. This conference is sponsored by CE&P and Mission to North America and will be held April 20-22, in conjunction with the Women In the Church Leadership Training conference (see related article).

Bob Edmiston, consultant for CE&P, will lead the conference. Keynote speakers include: Phil Ryken, pastor of Tenth Presbyterian in Philadelphia; Diane Langberg, a practicing psychologist from Philadelphia; Randy Nabors, pastor of New City Fellowship in Chattanooga; and March and Mariam Bell. March is the Senior Trafficking Counselor for the U.S. Department of Justice and Mariam is the Director of Public Policy for the Wilberforce Forum, a division of Prison Fellowship.

Workshop topics will include: Poised to respond to disaster relief, ministering to special needs families, diaconal leadership in mercy ministries, ABCs of community ministry, mobilizing deacons, and comfort for the grieving. See the CE&P website for more information. The conference will be held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Atlanta. **Online registrations and other details can be found at www.pcacep.org/mercy.**

WIC Leadership *continued from page 13*

Mission to North America to host ongoing denominational conferences on mercy. The first one was in 2001 and others followed in 2003 and 2005.

In 2007 the Women In the Church once again will join their annual Leadership Training Conference to the purposes of the denominational Mercy Conference (as was done in 2001 and 2003). The two events will be held jointly, April 20-22 in Atlanta, Ga. The timing of this joint training is quite significant, said Jane Patete, Women's Ministries Coordinator, "The respective purposes of both events are complementary and work together with CE&P's ongoing mandate of training leadership men and

women. It also builds upon the themes and equipping of the 2006 Women In the Church Conference."


Plan now to attend this kingdom training. Start now promoting it within your local church. You will be challenged and equipped to live out the requirements of biblical faith and to

pass on the richness of the reformed tradition to the next generation.

For more information, go online to www.ppacep.org/wic/leadership07.htm. You will see full details on purpose, schedule, speakers, and workshops and registration procedure. **e**



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07 SUMMER CONFERENCE

Youth Excelling in Leadership (YXL), our annual conference for senior high students, will be held at Covenant College, July 9-14. This conference has a special niche because it is not the typical senior high conference. It focuses on teenagers from local churches who demonstrate leadership ability and potential. Partnering with Covenant College, YXL offers in-depth training in a kingdom perspective with a biblical world and life view. Plenary sessions, small group times, even the recreation events, are built around leadership training from a kingdom perspective. More details will be found at www.ppacep.org/yxl.

A second conference in the YXL network will be held in New Mexico with the same dates, under the leadership of teaching elder John Pickett. Seeking to demonstrate the same philosophy and objective as the conference sponsored by CE&P and Covenant College, this satellite conference will be held for the third year Glorieta, N.Mex.

CE&P's vision for YXL is to build a network of conferences across the country committed to training young people to have a kingdom world and life view perspective from a biblically reformed framework. **Training the rising generation for strategic participation and leadership roles in the kingdom and church is the mission of CE&P. e**

www.ppacep.org/yxl 800-283-1357

CE&P Produces Unique Curriculum for **Pre-teen and Teen Girls**

The energy and design behind this new curriculum is to produce a discipleship study that will help pre-teens and teen girls to know how to think biblically about womanhood.

When the CE&P Committee developed its most recent strategic faith plan, it included developing curriculum and studies for teens. Under the able leadership of Susan Hunt, writer, consultant, and former Women In the Church Coordinator, CE&P plans to introduce a curriculum for teen girls and older pre-teens. The title of the teen curriculum is *Becoming a True Woman While I Still Have a Curfew* and the pre-teen version *Becoming a True Woman When I'm Trying to Make it Through Middle School*. The first part of the two-to-three-year curriculum is based on two of the books authored by Susan Hunt and



studied by the Women In the Church. *Spiritual Mothering* and *True Woman* will be the basic texts for the first year of the curriculum.

The energy and design behind this new curriculum is to produce a discipleship study that will help pre-teens and teen girls to know how to think biblically about womanhood. The curriculum's core verse is Psalm 144:12 b "...our daughters will be like pillars carved to adorn a palace."

The curriculum will be made up of several components—the two basic texts mentioned above, a leader's guide, and journal for the girls. The lessons

are designed for a variety of uses. For example, year one will have 15 lessons that can be divided into several lessons, if desired. The curriculum will contain Bible exposition, life stories, and for the students, a journal with weekly assignments and prayer requests.

Some of the topics include: *The True Woman's Purpose*, *A Helper by Design*, and *A True Woman Reflects Her Redemption by Serving; By Encouraging Others* and *By Accepting Others*.

The anticipated publication date will be the summer of 2007. Check our CE&P website for further information and updates regarding the curriculum's availability. **e**



THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM

In the last two issues of *Equip* we have looked at the use and benefit of having a good understanding of *curriculum*. This time I want to look at “hidden curriculum.” Hidden curriculum is what is taught and conveyed nonverbally in the classroom.

We teach a great deal by *how* we communicate. For example, when a student asks an off-topic question with true sincerity and curiosity, how do you deal with it? Do you dismiss the question? Do you tell the student that the question is not important because it has nothing to do with the lesson? Here, your hidden curriculum is how you decide to handle the situation. While we don’t want to get off the topic, we must make sure the students understand that they are important, and their question is important, but at a more appropriate time.

Another example of our hidden curriculum can be the physical setup of the room. The room should be set up in a way that invites interaction. Typically, the classroom is set up to make the teacher the focal point of the room. A better arrangement is to set the room to enable the students to interact with each other as well as the teacher. Color! Did you know that sterile white walls can be a distraction for some students as well as having too much color? All of this communicates to students without our saying a word.

When you teach, are you standing or sitting? If you are standing the whole time you can be communicating a sense of superiority over the students. Being at the same

level as them communicates an openness and equality with them in Christ.

Budgets are also part of the hidden curriculum but less subtle. Budgets communicate just what value the church places on the students. If students lack for supplies or a written curriculum, then it says to these students that they are not important enough for the church

to provide for at any cost. Did you know that 80-90 percent of all church budgets are spent on those over 18? Yet, on average, at least 50 percent of most churches are made up of those under 18!

One of the greatest weaknesses I see in our hidden curriculum is when we don’t help them know how to apply what we are saying. There is this myth that all we need to give is the information and the Holy Spirit will do the

applying. If this were the case, half of many of Paul’s letters would never have been written! More than ever people don’t think through things on their own. They need help knowing how to take the truths we are presenting and apply them to their lives. We should never allow our students or congregation to go away asking what they are supposed to do with the information they just received. We need to direct them so that the Holy Spirit will do the applying of what we have said.







The hidden curriculum should not be feared, it should be something you try to think through as you put yourself in the place of your listeners. We cannot control all of it, but we can make adjustments when we make ourselves aware of what our listeners are hearing us not say. **e**

Hidden curriculum is what is taught and conveyed nonverbally in the classroom.

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Kids UNDER CONSTRUCTION

The 2007 annual Children's Ministry Conference was held January 16-18 at the Lawrenceville, Ga., Marriott. For two days, 150 people gathered from across the church for instruction, inspiration, encouragement, and networking. This Christian Education and Publications event featured Steve Smallman, Sr., as the keynote speaker. Smallman, a pastor, teacher, and author spoke on the spiritual birthline concept from his recent book *Spiritual*

of Philadelphia and is an adjunct professor at both Westminster and Covenant Theological Seminaries.

Other plenary speakers included Allen Curry of Reformed Theological Seminary and a regional trainer for CE&P, Susan Hunt, writer and consultant for CE&P, and Mark Sumpter, an Orthodox Presbyterian Church pastor from Oregon and a CE&P regional trainer. The plenary speakers spoke on various aspects of kingdom discipleship within a covenant context and how that relates to and impacts children's ministry in local churches and families. CE&P Coordinator Charles Dunahoo explained the purpose of the conference in his opening welcome, "How to tell God's story to the next generation within a kingdom of God, world and life

impact your lives and ministry."

Other highlights of the conference focused around the worship times. Steve Smallman Jr., son of the main speaker, led the worship time. Steve is the associate pastor of New Song Community Church in Baltimore.

A variety of workshops were offered: protecting against child abuse, helping children learn to use their Bibles, fundamentals of children's ministry, knowing how to effectively relate to and teach children, uniting a covenant church with a covenant home, and church growth from children's ministry experts were among the topics offered. Small focus groups gathered around selected topics for discussion: nursery, PCA 101, music, special events, recruiting volunteers, and special needs education were among the topics.

While the conference laid out a strong biblical and theological base for ministry among God's covenant children, it was balanced with practical instruction and application. **e**

CATECHISM:

The Catechism for Young Children

- Samuel Richard Brown
First Presbyterian Church
Dillon, SC



Birthline and his latest publication from Presbyterian and Reformed Publishers, *How Our Children Come to Faith*. Steve's wife Sandy added her perspective on these topics from their family experiences. Smallman is currently serving with CityNet Ministries

view context, from a covenantal perspective that will touch many practical areas of application in ministering to the children, churches, and families—that is what this conference is all about. It will seek to blend the truth with application and practice that will

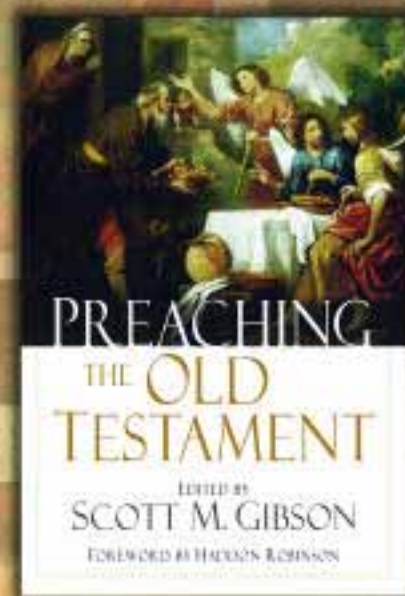
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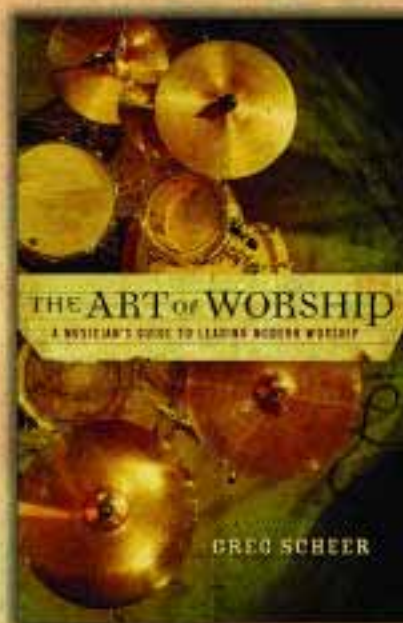
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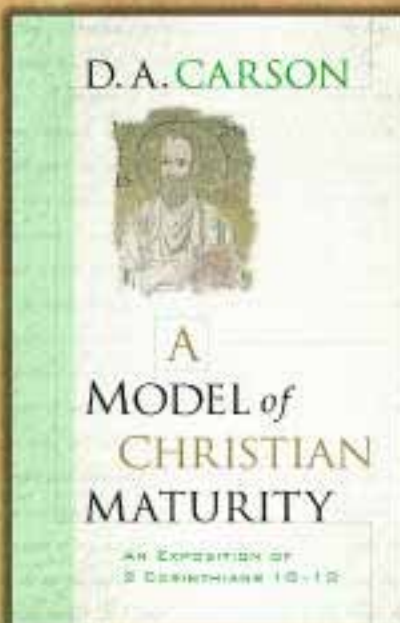
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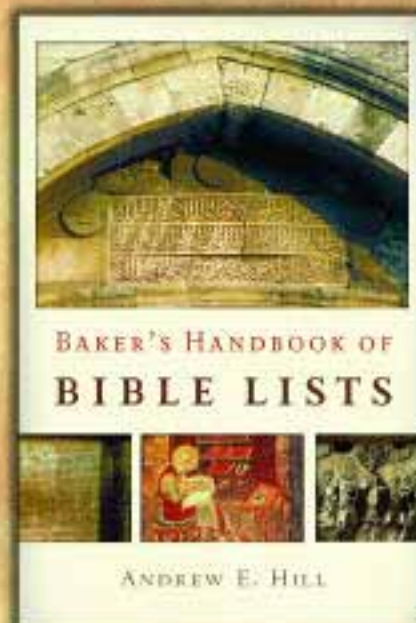
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Why a Suffering World Makes Sense,

Chris Tiegreen, Baker, 2006, 208 pages, \$10.39p (#9285)



We know something is wrong because of all we see around us. We know people do awful things to each other that cause pain and suffering. We don't always understand why but we know something is not right.

Some cannot accept a good and loving God while living with pain and suffering. Chris Tiegreen brings this into focus in a simplistic yet profound way and shows us how it is to live in a fallen world. He brings us face-to-face with suffering and pain in his personal experience with his sixteen-year-old son.

Why a Suffering World Makes Sense gives a clear presentation of the presence of suffering and why suffering is part of God's revelation of who he is, his attributes, and the blessings that can be found through suffering. If suffering were not part of life then we would not know God as we know him. He would be a hidden and distant God rather than being the powerful, loving, healing, and personal God he really is. Tiegreen explores suffering as part of God's plan and how pain and suffering reveal God's mercy and healing—all of which we would not know if we did not live in a fallen world. This book gives incredible insight into what most people think is inconceivable—a good God allowing his people to suffer with promises of good things to come from it. Need is the stage where God's mercy demonstrates itself.

Why a Suffering World Makes Sense brings suffering and blessing together and there is much to gain from reading the book. It gives new depth to why we should always seek the lesson God would have us learn through suffering and pain. It helps answer the "why" question.

The overall point of the book is to help us

understand there is purpose in pain. It brings together God's creation as to his power as the Creator, man's free will, and the consequence of man's choice to attempt to make it "all about me" rather than it being all about God. The author helps us understand why God remained silent at the most crucial time in the history of mankind and helps to give meaning as to why we live in a fallen world; even the earth groans in turmoil.

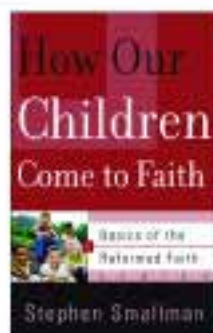
Why a Suffering World Makes Sense gives a new dimension to the presence of pain and suffering in a believer's life. The overall purpose is the glory of God but the journey is difficult, and this book is an encouragement while withstanding the darts of the evil one. It is a strong reminder that as Christians we are not fighting against just a problem but against the problem maker.

This book should be read by Christians, especially those struggling through pain, doubts, or asking questions regarding why things have happened that seem to have no answers, as well as to be read by non-Christians seeking to understand why life seems so empty and futile. It reverses the questions to answers while explaining why we need to be asking different questions. The author seeks to bring his readers to see as Christians we need to be relating with the One who allows the suffering; not spiritually crippled by the suffering. It's all about the Person, not the problem. Difficulties, pain, suffering, hurt, disappointment, betrayal, divorce, death, are all here to stay. What we need is to work through all the trials with our Father who meets us in our suffering. **e**

—Allan McLean, CEP Staff

This book gives incredible insight into what most people think is inconceivable—a good God allowing his people to suffer with promises of good things to come from it. Need is the stage where God's mercy demonstrates itself.

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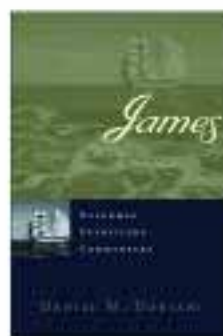
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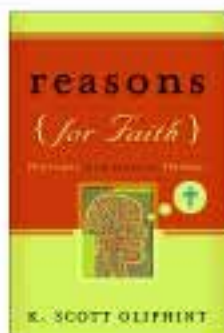
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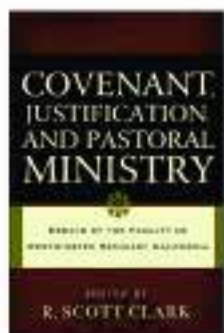


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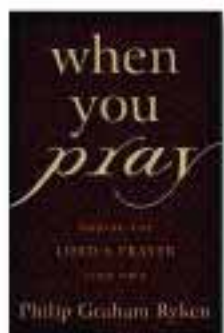


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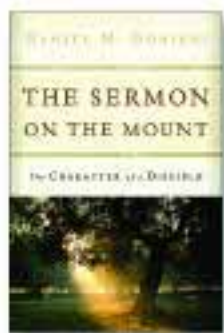
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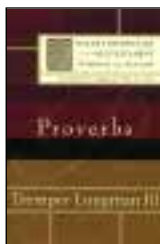
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Proverbs, Tremper Longman III, Baker, 2006, 607 pages, \$31.99 (#8600)

The Book of Proverbs, Bruce K. Waltke, Eerdmans, 2004 • Chapters 1-15, 693 pages, \$40.00 (#8603) • Chapters 16-31, 589 pages, \$40.00 (\$8604)



In an issue focusing on the rising generation, no better book of the Bible could be highlighted than Proverbs. This book of wisdom is full of advice and counsel directed to the young. If there is one message that comes through from Proverbs and should be part of the kingdom discipleship emphasis, it is that life and reality are all about the sovereign Lord who has created a life and reality that has structure, meaning, and purpose as we live according to his design.

One example: 3:1 ff “*My son, don’t forget my instruction, and let your heart protect my commands. For the length of days and years of life and peace they will add to you.*” Longman says, “...if a son obeys, he will find grace and good favor in the eyes of God and humanity. Or, perhaps to put the same thing in different words, to find grace and good favor in the eyes of God, and humanity, the son must pursue obedience.”

Longman gives the following quote from Bruce Waltke that reflects Waltke’s exposition of Proverbs 3:1-13, “In theological terms, the admonitions in the odd verses of 3:1-12 present obligations of the son, the human covenant partner; the argumentation in the even verses shows the obligations of the Lord, the divine covenant partner. The human partner has the responsibility to keep ethics and piety, and the divine partner the obligation to bless his worshiper with peace, prosperity, and longevity,” (page 130). I use this quote of Waltke from Longman because it summarizes Waltke’s comments in his commentary, but also demonstrates how the two commentaries interface with one another.

Not only would I encourage pastors and teachers to study and teach the book of Proverbs to their people, I would say that if you have these two commentaries, you have the best resources available for this undertaking. Both reflect painstaking exegesis, yet are written in a very usable manner. The appendix of topical studies contained in Longman’s work would provide a good action plan for teaching and studying this book. It selects key topics such as anger, appropriate expression of emotions and use of words, friendship, and women/marriage, to name a few. Longman says with the last topic listed, “A final word: As pointed out earlier in the commentary. Proverbs discusses women and wives and not men and husbands, because in its original setting the book was addressed to young men. However, modern women can certainly read the proverbs and apply them to their relationships with men.”

Both Waltke and Longman demonstrate in these commentaries the importance and relevance of the Old Testament for one’s Christian faith and life. Both books, while reflecting the best of scholarship, are equally useful and readable.

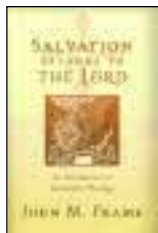
Longman said of Waltke’s work, “Everyone who seriously studies Proverbs needs to read this work.” I would agree but add the same words for Longman’s commentary. Both are successful at dealing with the original context and setting of Proverbs but also in making it applicable to our present day. Both commentaries reflect a consistency with other traditional commentaries but are also willing to consider new possibilities where appropriate. **e**

I would say that if you have these two commentaries, you have the best resources available for this undertaking—the study of Proverbs.

Salvation Belongs to the Lord,

John M. Frame, Presbyterian and Reformed

Publishers, 2006, 282 pages, \$19.99 (#9287)



Here is a book that you must read, preach, and teach. John Frame has produced another outstanding kingdom-building book. Though the title could be a bit misleading, true and wonderful as it is, it is more than about salvation. It is an introduction to systematic theology. Before you disregard it as just another theology book, remember from Frame's other books, he views theology as life and life as theology. Even though he says that this is a book for beginners in theology, it will challenge us all to think more biblically. He says he has written for a college-level audience which I believe would also include new seminarians.

Salvation Belongs to the Lord is unique in that it will challenge those engaged in full-time teaching and preaching, but it is also very readable for others in the church. Frame says that this is not a part of his Theology of Lordship series, but I believe it should be read before the others in that series. In a readable and understandable style, Frame gives us the big picture of the Sovereign God and Lordship over all things, including the church and salvation. I agree that understanding the big picture of God's truth and reality will enable us to handle the details more effectively.

This is also a timely book in that we are living in a time when studying doctrine, at least in a systematic way, is not very popular. Systematics is a pedagogical device to help us understand more of God and his Word as it relates the parts to the whole and ties the teachings of the Bible together. Frame is right when he says, "the Bible is not a miscellaneous collection of ideas but a coherent, consistent system of truth in which major doctrines depend on one another." I believe that is why it is difficult for people to know how to think biblically, because they cannot always connect the dots in the Scriptures. This book will enable the reader and student to do that bet-

ter and more practically than many other books that have been written.

The book contains two parts. Part one lays the foundation for what he writes about in his Lordship series books. It is about the Sovereign and Triune God, His Word, His Son, and His Holy Spirit. Part two deals with the *ordo salutis*, salvation, thus the title.

In part two he opens up the doctrines of grace, including the means of grace. He also treats the topic of the church and kingdom clearly. For example, while the Reformers listed three marks of the true visible church, Frame suggests that several others should be part of that list: love among the brothers and sisters, worship, and the Great Commission.

He gives good insight into the government of the church. His conclusion on the "Nature of the Church" challenges us to remember that "the well-being of the church has more to do with the work of the Spirit than with the form of government." His section on the Church and Kingdom is also helpful. For example, he says that God's kingdom is synonymous with God's sovereignty. "The church consists of those who have been conquered by God's saving power, who are now enlisted in the warfare of God's kingdom against the kingdom of Satan...The church is the headquarters of the kingdom of God, the base from which God's dominion extends and expands," (page 249).

He also uses the term "missional church" to underscore the church's task in making kingdom disciples. He highlights three elements that make up the missional church—worship, nurture, and witness.

Because of the value of this book, I would hope that a leader's or teacher's guide would be produced to assist churches in building this into their kingdom discipleship curriculum. Dr. William Edgar, professor at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, made a descriptive comment on the cover of the book, "We can be grateful for such a powerful and clear exposition of the whole range of theology. It is at once vigorously orthodox and sweetly pastoral." *e*

In a readable and understandable style, Frame gives us the big picture of the Sovereign God and Lordship over all things, including the church and salvation.

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