

CCU Review

of BOOKS, CULTURE, MEDIA, LIFE

Volume 10
Issue 2



COLORADO CHRISTIAN
UNIVERSITY

Grace and Truth

ULTIMATE GIFT OF FREEDOM

Service 5 - Good Service 5 - Good

Wall Street S
Uptown & The B

4 5

Underpass to Downto

Contents

- 6** **Five Lies of Our Anti-Christian Age**
by Rosaria Butterfield
REVIEW BY RYAN WASSELL
- 8** **Christianity & Liberalism**
by J. Gresham Machen
REVIEW BY DR. GARY STEWARD
- 10** **The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge**
by Calvin Coolidge and
edited by Amity Shlaes
REVIEW BY KOTY ARNOLD
- 15** **Toxic War on Masculinity**
by Nancy R. Pearcey
REVIEW BY PAUL FAUST
- 17** **The Evangelical Imagination**
by Karen Swallow Prior
REVIEW BY DR. HOLLY SPOFFORD-
M^cREYNOLDS
- 19** **Battle for the American Mind**
by Pete Hegseth and David Goodwin
REVIEW BY DR. DEBORA SCHEFFEL
- 22** **The Ongoing Appeal of C.S. Lewis**
REVIEW ESSAY BY DR. DONALD
SWEETING
- 24** **Power, Faith, and Fantasy**
by Michael B. Oren
REVIEW BY DR. MARK FRANCOIS

CCU Review

The CCU Review of Books, Culture, Media, and Life, a values-driven journal of peer-reviewed scholarly and creative work, is published semiannually by the Office of the Chancellor and the Communications and Creative Services department. While emphasizing articles of scholarly merit, the CCU Review is a collection of reviews and essays that are informed by and further enhance the values of Colorado Christian University as outlined in our Strategic Priorities and our Statement of Faith. We welcome suggestions on reviews and essays that are centered on ideas of interest that further the mission of CCU as a Christian, liberal arts university.

CCU Review Production Team

Catherine Wagner Heather Eades
Graphic Designer Lead Editor/Writer

Kristen Rummel
Project Manager

CCU Review Editorial Board

Donald W. Sweeting, Ph.D.
University Chancellor

Ian Hugh Clary, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Historical Theology

Nicole Heersink
Director of Creative Services

Betsy L. Simpson
Office Manager and Assistant to the Chancellor

Paige E. Lier
Student Editor

Production Notes

Paper
Accent® Opaque Cover White Vellum
65lb and Text 80lb

Inks
Four-color process

Printer
OneTouchPoint – Denver, Colorado



LIBRARY OF THE MUSEUM OF GRENOBLE
GRENOBLE, FRANCE

Tolle lege

The Power of Writing

Dear Friends,



Last semester, I had a memorable conversation about writing with a student at our university. I was lecturing in a communications class on the importance of writing – specifically, how to write op-eds to influence public opinion and policy. This student raised his hand and politely but assertively told me that writing is “old school” and that he has moved on to images and videos.

Now, I don’t want to underestimate the importance and power of images and film for communication in our visual culture, but I did not want this student to underestimate the lasting importance and power of writing. With the onset of the digital revolution, many predicted that books would go away. They did not. When the new technology of speech recognition software appeared, many predicted that writing would go away. It did not. Now, many are saying something similar about AI and ChatGPT. But again, I predict, writing will not go away.

Reading and writing are two essential skills of learning — gateway skills. Our K-12 schools and universities better get them right. Reading opens worlds. Writing changes worlds. We only speak as well as we write and think. We only write as well as we read. Both skills are foundational for our democratic republic. Most of the American Founding Fathers were avid readers and disciplined writers. They understood the value of the press and the writing of political tracts and sermons. Their writings have transcended time and left an indelible mark on American history. But long before them, way back in the 16th century, Sir Francis Bacon said, “Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man.” That’s still true.

I don’t want our students (or our readers) to underestimate the importance and power of writing. Images quickly disappear. A shot on the TV screen lasts between three and eight seconds. Writing doesn’t vaporize. There is something lasting about it. It’s been said that if you want to extend your life, write and leave something worth reading.

So, I reminded this skeptical student that when God wanted to transmit his message to the world, what did He do? The Bible says He wrote something on tablets. That’s another reason to take writing seriously. Remember, the Old Testament and the New Testament were each written in and given to cultures that were largely illiterate. In other words, it wasn’t really valued. There was no demand for writing. These were primarily visual cultures. Nevertheless, God used words anyway because they have staying power — they last. And they have.

When Jesus wanted to transmit His message to the world, He chose apostles who wrote gospels and letters. Perhaps that is why Jews and Christians have been called “people of the book.” When John describes Jesus at the beginning of the fourth Gospel, he refers to him as “the Word.” At the end of his gospel, John speculates that if all the things that Jesus did were written down, even the whole world would not have room for all the books that would be written.

There will always be room for and need for great writers. That is why one of the Strategic Priorities of Colorado Christian University is “to teach students how to speak and write clearly and effectively.”

“But don’t we have enough content?” another student asked me in that same class. William F. Buckley had an apt reply: “Why do I write so much? Because my enemy writes more.” In a world abounding in bad content, we need more good content!

Martin Luther put it this way: “If you want to change the world, pick up your pen and write.” That’s an important message for Gen Z students everywhere who might be tempted to dismiss writing as “old school.” It’s certainly not!

There are two essential skills required to produce this edition of *The CCU Review*: writing and reading. The authors of each book write so that people can read. The reviewers write these book reviews so that you might get a better sense of what to read. I am grateful for the authors and reviewers whose works appear on these pages. I am also especially grateful to Dr. Ian Clary, who helped edit the *Review*, and to my assistant, Betsy Simpson, who helped make it all happen.

With that in mind, we hope you read and benefit from what these authors have written.

Tolle Lege,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald W. Sweeting". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

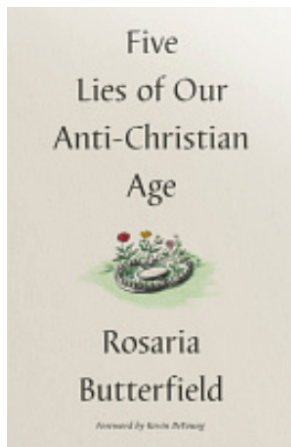
Donald W. Sweeting, Ph.D.
Chancellor
Colorado Christian University

Five Lies of Our Anti-Christian Age

by Rosaria Butterfield

REVIEW BY RYAN WASSELL

Founding Pastor of Calvary Redeeming Grace Church



The last several years have offered us a plethora of books by Christian authors evaluating our culture with respect to homosexuality, feminism, and transgenderism. Some of these accounts are good and helpful, and others are not. Rosaria Butterfield's new book, *Five Lies of Our Anti-Christian Age*, is certainly a case of the former;

indeed, it is must-reading for any of us who are concerned about the trajectory our culture is on. Advancing the arguments from her earlier books, like her stunning memoir, *Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*, where she tells her story of converting to Christianity from a life of lesbian and feminist activism, Butterfield confronts dangerous beliefs about sexuality, faith, pronoun usage, and gender roles.¹ She is the ideal author to help us think through these massive issues in our culture, given that she is a former professor of English and women's studies at Syracuse University and was a leading expert in Gender and Queer Theory. *Five Lies* is classic Butterfield: biblical, informed, personal, thoughtful, engaging, discerning, and bold.

As the title indicates, her book is structured around five lies: Lie #1: Homosexuality is normal. Lie #2: Being a spiritual person is kinder than being a biblical

Christian. Lie #3: Feminism is good for the world and for the Church. Lie #4: Transgenderism is normal. Lie #5: Modesty is an outdated burden that serves male dominance and holds women back. Admittedly, there are additional lies confronting the Church today, but what ties these together is that the culture doesn't think "that God had a plan and purpose when he created men and women. God's proclamation in Genesis 1:27-28 stands in stark contrast to the five lies: 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them'" (290). For Butterfield, we are faced with a reality that is either creation-designed and planned by God, which would include one's sexuality or one grounded in obfuscation and lies.

When it comes to hot-button issues, the reader can expect to encounter topics such as but not limited to: biblical repentance, intersectionality, "Side A" and "Side B" Christianity, pronoun usage, resistance, gender dysphoria, ontology, and union with Christ. Butterfield's research ranges from Sigmund Freud to the English Puritan John Owen, from the 20th-century writer and philosopher Ayn Rand to the 16th-century Reformed Heidelberg Catechism. Covering that much ground may give the impression she's bitten off more than she can chew, but Butterfield's strength is her ability to identify a problem, assess its merits (or lack thereof), and lovingly offer a biblical and theological solution that is direct and thorough.

For this review, we will look at one lie, namely "Lie #4," that teaches that transgenderism is normal.

With gay marriage becoming legal in all 50 states in 2015, the LGBTQ+ movement began to promote transgender gender identity with an increased activism, consequently normalizing transgenderism. They formed a coalition for “sexual orientation and gender identity” (SOGI) laws. This coalition, Butterfield argues, changed the lay of the land when it comes to sexual ethics. “When transgenderism became a political achievement, this unleashed a social contagion” (199). Sadly, the place where this contagion was released was the public school system across the nation. Transgenderism, therefore, gained a new, captive audience of little boys and girls who could now identify with whatever gender they felt like at any given time. Butterfield writes, transgenderism was “no longer men in dresses with bad wigs and drippy eyeliner, the new face of transgenderism is a 14-year-old girl with bound breasts and a butch haircut who flies under the banner of genderqueer” (199). Parents – and not just Christian ones – are being faced with a stark but false choice if they do not accept their child’s chosen gender identity: “Would you rather have a dead daughter or a living son?” Butterfield helpfully sets parents’ minds at ease, because the solution to a child wanting to transition to the opposite sex is not hormone therapy and surgery but rather to love our children in the gospel by showing them that we are to flee the lies and embrace Christ who is the Truth. As Butterfield aptly writes, “Love holds people to the impartial, objective, and safe standard of God’s truth, not the malleability of sinful desires and the posturing of sinful people” (204).

As troubling as things have become, for Christians, it’s important to understand how we got here, and Butterfield does just this. To cite a simple example: Consider the fact that in 2007, there was one pediatric gender clinic in America, whereas today, there are nearly 100. The LGBTQ+ community firmly believes that by marshaling political force, their movement will advance through education and social spheres. And admittedly, they’re right. Political might is real. Laws do shape public institutions and cultural thought. But there is a limit to their power, as ordained by God. What the LGBTQ+ activists fail to realize is that their “war horse” of political might “is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might, it cannot rescue” (Ps. 33:17). Like all movements built upon the kingdom and wisdom of this world, “they collapse and fall” (Ps. 20:8). God “is not terrified by their shouting or daunted by their noise, so the LORD of

As Butterfield aptly writes, "Love holds people to the impartial, objective, and safe standard of God's truth, not the malleability of sinful desires and the posturing of sinful people."

hosts will come down to fight on Mount Zion and on its hill” (Isa. 31:4). Though we lament the trajectory of modern culture, as Christians, we must not lose hope. “Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world” (1 Cor. 1:20)? Does not God set “the unfaithful” in “slippery places” (Ps. 73:27,18)? Are not the children of Adam “like grass that is renewed in the morning” but “in the evening it fades and withers” (Ps. 90:3-6)? And doesn’t the King of Kings “work all things according to the counsel of his will so that we who were to first hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory” (Eph. 1:11)? The Bible tells us how things really are, not the world. America may unravel under these lies, but the Kingdom of Christ endures throughout all generations. As Butterfield reminds us, “When the whole world seems to have gone mad, we need to cling to Christ with courage” (31).

ENDNOTES

- 1 Rosaria Butterfield, *The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert* (Pittsburgh, PA: Crown & Covenant Publications, 2012).

REVIEWER BIO



RYAN WASSELL

Ryan Wassell (MDiv, The Master’s Seminary) is the founding pastor of Calvary Redeeming Grace Church that meets on the campus of Colorado Christian University in Lakewood, CO.

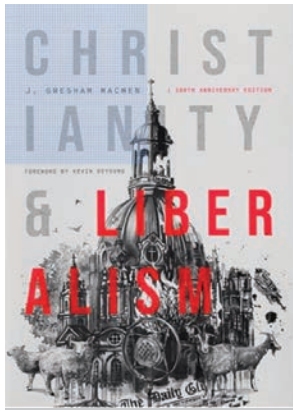
Christianity & Liberalism

100th Anniversary Edition

by J. Gresham Machen

REVIEW BY DR. GARY STEWARD

Associate Professor of History and Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences



J. Gresham Machen's *Christianity & Liberalism* is truly a Christian classic. Published just over 100 years ago in 1923, this brilliant book has endured as a statement about what constitutes true Christianity. Machen's clear articulation of Christian doctrine and insightful commentary on modern

culture make this work one that every Christian should carefully read.

Machen published this book amid great conflict in the early 20th century over the nature of Christianity.¹ An increasing number of professing Christians in American churches were making allowance for the tenets of theological liberalism, arguing that traditional Christianity had to be radically overhauled to meet the needs of modern man. Theological liberals, following the lead of German theologians like Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) and Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889), argued that the supernatural elements of Christianity needed to be jettisoned so that a new type of Christianity, one more palatable to the outlook of modern man, might gain a hearing among intellectual elites and Christianity's “cultured despisers.”² By abandoning belief in the supernatural elements of Christianity, theological liberals wanted a new kind of Christianity that

would be centered on an ethic of love, the universal fatherhood of God, and the universal brotherhood of man.

Machen, then a professor of New Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary, believed that Christian liberalism had to be met with a clear reassertion of the fundamental beliefs of historic Christianity. In his view, Christian liberalism was “a totally diverse type of religious belief, [one] which is only the more destructive of the Christian faith because it makes use of traditional Christian terminology” (2). While claiming to be “Christian,” theological liberalism represented an abandonment of biblical and historic Christianity altogether. By abandoning belief in a supernatural God who enters our world to supernaturally redeem and regenerate sinners, theological liberals had abandoned the essence and fundamental core of Christianity. Christianity, at its heart, teaches that the God of the Bible supernaturally intervenes in the fallenness of our world to redeem a people who are lost. Without supernaturalism, there is no Christianity worthy of the name. Without such things like the virgin birth of Christ, the miraculous nature of Christ's earthly ministry, Christ's bodily resurrection from the dead, and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, there is no Christianity. According to Machen, “What the liberal theologian has retained after abandoning to the enemy one Christian doctrine after another is not Christianity at all, but a religion which is so entirely different from Christianity as to belong in a distinct category” (6). While claiming to be Christian, theological liberals were really purveyors of a naturalistic system of good works, sentiment, and ethics.

The theological liberals of Machen's day wanted to downplay any need for belief in the historic doctrines of Christianity, asserting instead that Christianity is fundamentally an experience. If one has a "Christian" experience, what difference does one's creed or beliefs make? Such a perspective might initially resonate with those who have experienced the grace of God in their lives, but Machen challenged his hearers to consider how Christianity, from its very inception, was founded upon a specific set of beliefs, such as belief that Jesus is indeed the Christ, the Son of God, and that He was crucified to make atonement for sins, and raised bodily from the dead for our salvation. According to Machen, "the Christian movement at its inception was not just a way of life in the modern sense, but a way of life founded upon a message. It was based, not upon mere feeling, not upon a mere program of work, but upon an account of facts. In other words, it was based upon doctrine" (21).

Machen goes on in *Christianity & Liberalism* to contrast Christian assertions with the views of theological liberals on the topics of God, man, the Bible, Christ, salvation, and the church. At each point, Christianity and liberalism are shown to be worlds apart. Machen also gives an insightful critique of the "impoverishment" of modern life that has looked to "modern" [i.e., naturalistic] science, technological innovations, utilitarianism, and materialism to make a better world. In his words:

The modern world represents in some respects an enormous improvement over the world in which our ancestors lived; but in other respects, it exhibits a lamentable decline. The improvement appears in the physical conditions of life, but in the spiritual realm there is a corresponding loss. The loss is clearest, perhaps, in the realm of art. Despite the mighty revolution which has been produced in the external conditions of life, no great poet is now living to celebrate the change; humanity has suddenly become dumb. Gone, too, are the great painters and the great musicians and the great sculptors. The art that still subsists is largely imitative, and where it is not imitative it is usually bizarre. Even the appreciation of the glories of the past is gradually being lost, under the influence of a utilitarian education that concerns itself only with the production of physical well-being (9–10).

Societal renewal can be found, according to Machen, in a rediscovery and reassertion of the Christian religion as it truly and really is.

Today, just like in Machen's day, the word "Christian" has become so watered down that a commitment to maintaining clear definitions is essential. This is why the historic creeds and confessions of the Church can be a significant help to us. Believers were first called Christians in the first century (Acts 11:26), and it is important that we don't allow the word "Christian" to be watered down in the present day. Machen's argument is as relevant today as it was 100 years ago. We shouldn't allow this word to refer merely to a type of religious sentiment or a system of ethics. As C. S. Lewis once wrote, "...it will really be a great nuisance if the word *Christian* becomes simply a synonym for *good*."³ We would do well to follow Machen's footsteps and insist upon the fundamental doctrines of the faith that make Christianity what it is.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Bradley J. Longfield, *The Presbyterian Controversy: Fundamentalists, Modernists, and Moderates (Religion in America)* (New York: Oxford, 1993).
- 2 Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- 3 "The Death of Words," in *On Stories and Other Essays on Literature* (Orlando: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1982), 107.

REVIEWER BIO



DR. GARY STEWARD

Dr. Gary Steward is an associate professor of History and dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Colorado Christian University. He specializes in American political and religious history and has published works on the American Revolution and Christian approaches to social reform in antebellum America.



PRESIDENT CALVIN COOLIDGE SPEAKING AT ARLINGTON AMPHITHEATER IN MAY 1924.

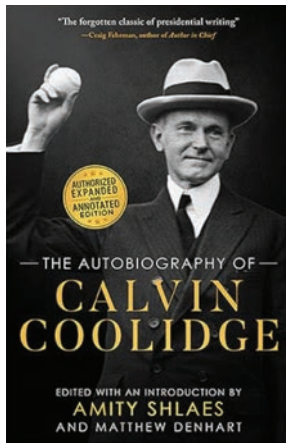
The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge:

Authorized, Expanded, and Annotated Edition

by Amity Shlaes and Calvin Coolidge

REVIEW BY KOTY ARNOLD

Assistant Professor of Politics



Calvin Coolidge was the only American president who was born on the Fourth of July. This fact could be argued as symbolic of his future legacy, for it is rare to find a statesman in modern American political history who has so perfectly embodied the spirit and principles of the Founders as has Calvin Coolidge. And yet, he remains

an understudied president. He is often known more for what he did not do than for what he did do. “It is much more important,” Coolidge once said, “to kill bad bills than to pass good ones” (12). Coolidge’s restrained vision of the presidency was very far from the activist, transformative vision of such presidents as Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Barack Obama. Yet, he is no less relevant today than he was 100 years ago. In a nation torn apart by polarization and the politics of personal destruction, Coolidge’s example of quiet humility, modesty, and integrity instruct Americans about a higher and nobler kind of politics than that which they currently observe.

Amity Shlaes, a Coolidge biographer and scholar, has done the nation a great service by publishing — for the first time in years — a new edition of *The*

Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge. This republication is sure to bring this neglected classic of presidential writing to the attention of more readers. Shlaes not only edited this delightful new edition of the autobiography but also penned a thoughtful introductory essay that explains the reasons that a revival of Coolidge’s principles and an emulation of his example could benefit America in 2024. In the afterword, essays by former governor of Vermont Jim Douglas and Coolidge’s great-grandchildren further demonstrate Coolidge’s positive place in the pages of American history.

It is not Shlaes’ introduction to *The Autobiography* or the afterword essays in this volume, however, that teach us the most about the president; it is the words written by Coolidge himself. For many reasons, Coolidge’s autobiography stands out among the flurry of presidential memoirs that have appeared in the decades since he left office in 1929. Coolidge’s *Autobiography* does not provide a meticulously detailed account of all the facts of his life in the years leading up to his presidency, or even during his presidency more generally. Indeed, *The Autobiography* includes only one chapter focused on his becoming president and another on the duties of the office. While Coolidge does provide a brief overview of his entire life, he focuses on the general themes and the major people who most influenced him. He begins with his childhood, discusses his education at Amherst College, and offers an account of his time in local, state, and national politics. Throughout *The Autobiography*, Coolidge always presents the story of



PRESIDENT CALVIN COOLIDGE IN THE OVAL OFFICE
AUGUST 1923.

his life in a way that is accessible and that reads as a narrative.

Coolidge's autobiography includes a memorable cast of characters, and it is clear that his rise to the presidency was only made possible because of the inspiration, support, and love that many of his family and friends provided. John Calvin Coolidge, Sr., his father, looms especially large in the early parts of the book, as a man whose example of service and self-restraint forever imbued his son with those same political values. Coolidge's wife, Grace Coolidge, also appears as an indispensable asset to the president, a woman whose love and support always elevated the quality of her husband's life and even contributed to some of his political successes. Quiet and reserved, Calvin was never known as the life of the party. It was Grace who balanced his taciturn qualities and organized all the White House's social events during his presidency (134). A popular and dignified First Lady, Grace Coolidge added a measure of poise, dignity, and — yes — grace to a White House that would have been lacking in her absence.

While other figures from Coolidge's life are also given ample attention, perhaps the most important person described in *The Autobiography* — apart from

his immediate family — is Charles Garman, his professor of Philosophy from Amherst College. "We looked upon Garman as a man who walked with God," Coolidge recalled in his autobiography (43). "His course was a demonstration of the existence of a personal God, of our power to know Him, of the Divine immanence, and of the complete dependence of all the universe on Him as the Creator and Father 'in whom we live and move and have our being'" (43). From Garman, Coolidge drew his keen sense of Providence and his belief — expressed often in this autobiography — that he was but an instrument in the hands of a benevolent, loving God. Coolidge also describes, at length, Garman's influence in shaping his own personal, Christian, ethical philosophy. Coolidge rejected selfishness and conceit as foundations for politics and instead stressed each person's call for a Christian spirit of service, sacrifice, and charity (44). Coolidge's moral and ethical philosophy always remained at the forefront of his politics. He believed in limited government and fiscal responsibility not because he accepted radical forms of individualism, but because he believed that excessive government intervention into the economy would reduce personal moral responsibility and undermine each citizen's call for service and sacrifice.

Armed with this moral and political philosophy, Coolidge entered a long political career after he left Amherst and enjoyed remarkable success as a Republican candidate for office. When he eventually became governor of Massachusetts, Coolidge faced one of the most dramatic tests of his life: the Boston Police Strike of 1919. No event was more important in explaining his ascent to the White House. When the Boston Police went on strike in a demand for higher wages, Coolidge believed their actions threatened to leave thousands of Boston citizens unprotected in their lives and property. He crushed the strike and restored the rule of law, saying that there is “no right to strike against the public safety by anybody, anywhere, any time” (86). Though this move was politically risky and threatened to damage his standing with progressive-leaning voters, Coolidge placed his devotion to the rule of law ahead of expediency, doing what he thought was right. Unexpectedly and fortuitously, however, Coolidge’s handling of the strike was celebrated throughout the country and lauded by figures in both parties — even the progressive Democrat Woodrow Wilson. Coolidge was immediately propelled into the national limelight and transformed into a serious presidential contender in 1920.

Republican Party leaders rewarded Coolidge not with the presidency, which he did not seriously seek, but instead with the vice presidency. Serving under his friend, Senator Warren G. Harding, Coolidge was the president’s liaison to the Senate, traveled the country, and delivered many of his greatest ceremonial speeches. His vice presidency was short, however. Harding, whose health as president was never robust, suffered a heart attack and passed unexpectedly.

Coolidge was suddenly thrust into the most important political office in the world. He felt himself prepared for these responsibilities, however, and immediately worked to realize his and the former President Harding’s conservative policy agenda. Coolidge sought to promote a policy of “constructive economy.” Favoring tax cuts, balanced budgets, and reduced government spending, Coolidge turned the economy around after the postwar depression. After many years of Progressivism, Coolidge revitalized the American faith in individual enterprise and personal responsibility. He viewed the prosperity of the 1920s as his “chief satisfaction” as president. The American people agreed, giving Coolidge a landslide victory when he ran for a term in his own right in 1924

and then giving his secretary of commerce, Herbert Hoover, a landslide win in 1928 when he essentially ran on continuing Coolidge’s economic policies. Despite being essentially guaranteed to win a second term in 1928, Coolidge refused to run, citing his belief that a president should never serve for more than eight years, lest he become ever more distant from the American citizens whom he is supposed to represent (154).

The Autobiography of Calvin Coolidge is a truly remarkable presidential memoir. It gives readers a portrait not only of Coolidge’s life, but it also teaches them about politics in its truest sense. Coolidge’s religious character, his emphasis on civility, his contempt for demagoguery, and his dedication to American political and constitutional institutions give us a timeless example of statesmanship. At all times, Coolidge’s intense devotion to character remains clear. He spoke of how a president should not only “not be selfish, but ought to avoid even the appearance of selfishness” (154). When the personal character of officeholders evaporated, so too would the citizenry’s trust in their political institutions. Coolidge’s autobiography is a lesson to readers not only about the nature of a presidency, which would benefit today from a man characterized by Coolidge’s modesty and humility; it is more fundamentally a lesson about how integrity and character can ennoble constitutional self-government. *The Autobiography* is not a pedantic or detailed history book, but it is an instructive lesson about the timeless and true elements of statesmanship.

REVIEWER BIO



PROFESSOR KOTY ARNOLD

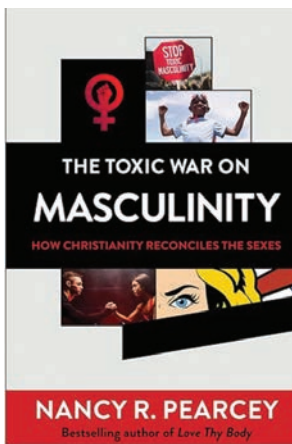
Koty Arnold is an assistant professor of Politics in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at CCU. He specializes in American political thought and the American political tradition. Currently finishing his doctoral dissertation, he has published works dealing with the intersection between political theory and statesmanship throughout American history.

The Toxic War on Masculinity: How Christianity Reconciles the Sexes

by Nancy R. Pearcey

REVIEW BY PAUL FAUST

Campus Pastor and Dean of Spiritual Formation



In her newest book, *The Toxic War on Masculinity*, celebrated author and professor Nancy R. Pearcey tackles head-on one of the standard, and now near-universally accepted, tenets of modern discourse, namely that masculinity is fundamentally toxic and that its toxicity is a direct result of the teachings of Christianity. Drawing widely on

recent findings in sociology and with careful attention to historical context, Pearcey systematically debunks the myth of any connection between true Christianity and masculine toxicity, proposing instead that a return to a vibrant, historically orthodox, decidedly Christian definition of manhood would resolve many modern social problems.

One of the great strengths of the book is Pearcey's careful avoidance of the temptation to oversimplify or to deny that some forms of masculinity are, indeed, toxic and destructive. She even begins with the shocking story of her "two fathers: a Public one and a Private one" (13). As a victim of spiritual, emotional, and physical abuse at the hands of her father, a respected church leader, Pearcey knows well the kind of damage a twisted concept of masculinity can cause in a home and community. Throughout the book, she deftly walks a challenging line, calling men up to a higher, more biblical standard than secular modern culture would

ask from them, while simultaneously proposing honest admission of and accountability for the failures of many Christian organizations and churches to confront and challenge men who have abused their power over others in the name of submission or spiritual leadership.

After setting the stage by pointing out the distressing state of manhood in the West, perhaps best summarized by her citation from the *New Scientist* that "[b]eing male is now the single largest demographic factor for early death" (25), Pearcey presents some of the most surprising sociological findings in recent decades regarding the impact of faith practice on society, focusing particularly on the dramatic difference between committed, churchgoing fathers and what experts call "nominal" Christian fathers. The differences are stunning: "Whereas committed churchgoing couples report the *lowest* rate of [domestic] violence of any group (2.8 %), nominals report the *highest* rate of any group (7.2 %) – even higher than secular couples" (37). In multiple areas, it has now become clear that to be nominally connected to the practices of Christianity is worse for family and society than not to be connected at all. Pearcey points out that, in the case of masculinity, this is because nominally Christian men are often around church teachings enough to hear the *language* of headship and submission, which gives them a sense of divine support for their pre-existing views of male dominance, without any substantive connection to the full teaching of male leadership through service or any real commitment to the example of Jesus.

Having set the stage, Pearcey moves into the core of her argument and her thoroughly-supported claim that the flow of culture in the United States since its



founding, and with it our accepted definition of what it means to “be a man,” has been a steady flow *away* from the core values of Christianity and its celebration of virtues like humility, honor, sacrifice, commitment to family, and servant leadership. The particular impact of the Industrial Revolution in taking fathers out of the home and defining their identity more and more in terms of their roles *outside* the home as worker, achiever, and producer and less in terms of their roles inside as husband, father, and caretaker had a multiplying effect on American culture’s move away from its definition of a man in distinctively Christian terms. Pearcey argues convincingly that it is the *secular* definition of manhood that has taught men to value independence, dominance, greed, and sexual conquest, not the Christian one. Her solution, then, is *more* of what the Bible offers in its definition and training of men, not less.

Of course, no single book can accomplish everything it sets out to do, but if there is one weakness in Pearcey’s treatment of masculinity, it is her failure to carry through on her subtitle’s promise to provide an answer to “how Christianity reconciles the sexes.” At the end of each chapter, she provides a nuanced consideration of biblical texts as they relate to the issues raised in the chapter; however, the book fails to provide a

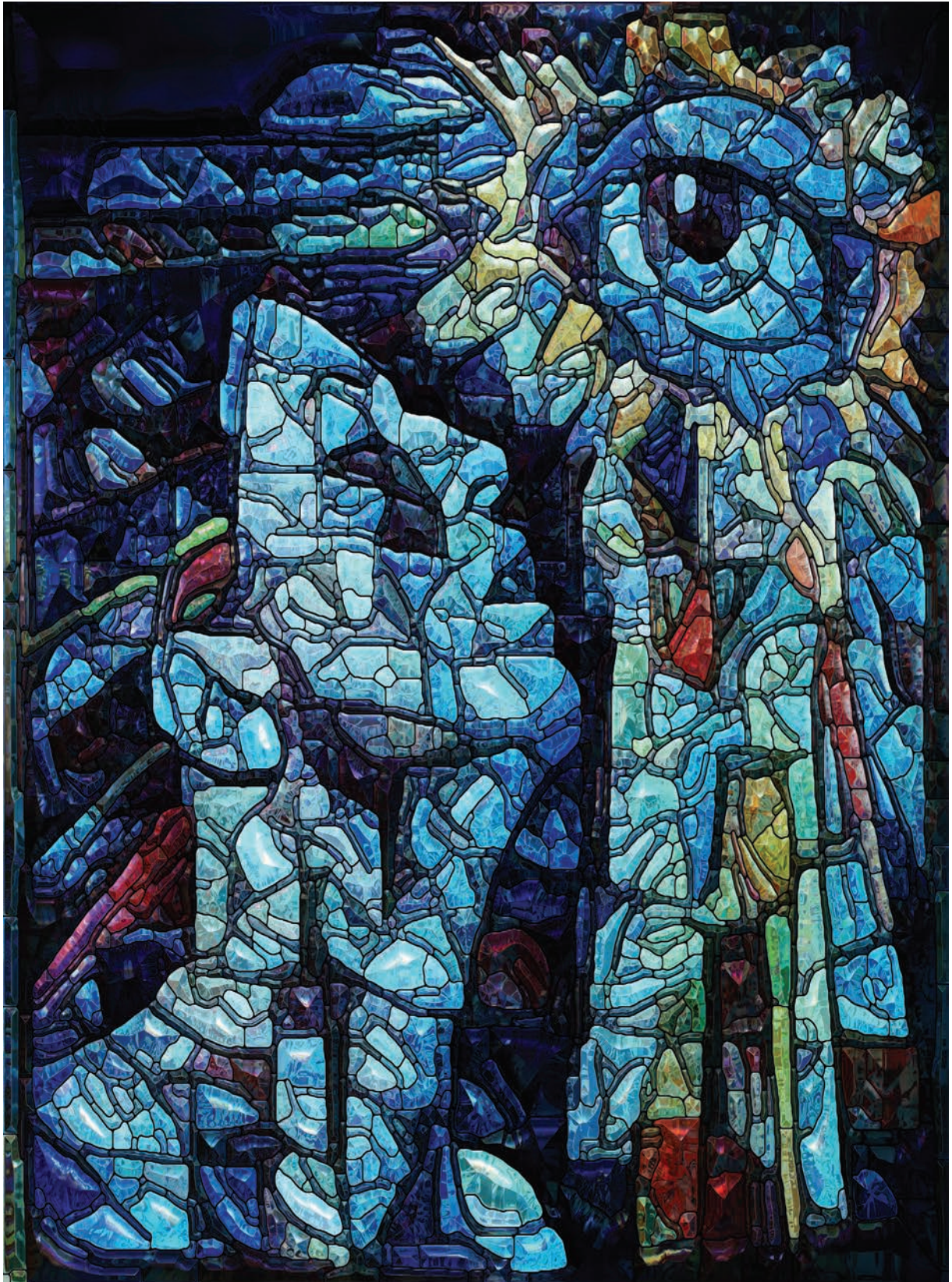
single, thorough explanation and vision for the robust biblical model of unity and reconciliation between the sexes. Despite this, the book is a much-needed, well-researched, and brilliantly argued contribution and a breath of fresh air in the midst of a discussion that has often been far too vicious to provide any real value or propose any realistic solutions.

REVIEWER BIO



PAUL FAUST

After serving for nearly a decade in the local church, Paul Faust joined the CCU community in 2021 as associate dean and now serves as dean of spiritual formation and campus pastor. He and his wife, Jenn, have been married 17 years and have four children: Bodie, Easley, Emery, and Breck.

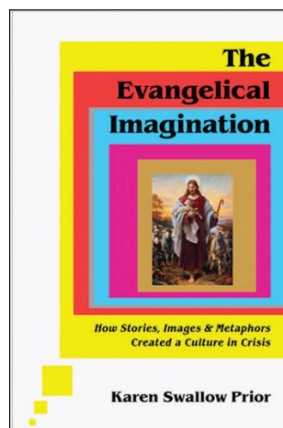


The Evangelical Imagination: How Stories, Images, and Metaphors Created a Culture in Crisis

by Karen Swallow Prior

REVIEW BY DR. HOLLY SPOFFORD-M^cREYNOLDS

Assistant Professor of English



With intriguing chapter titles, such as “Language, Dr. Pepper, and Ebenezer Scrooge,” Karen Swallow Prior awakens her readers’ imaginations: What on earth, the reader might wonder, does soda have to do with *A Christmas Carol*? And (looking at another chapter title), what do sandwiches and gingerbread have to do with Jesus? These

evocative combinations prepare us for the main argument of *The Evangelical Imagination*: Imagination matters, and we need to see and name the invisible forces that shape our collective evangelical imagination. When we do so, Prior suggests, we can more faithfully decide what comes next for evangelical Christianity.

Writing to an evangelical audience and as an evangelical herself, Prior asks readers to see evangelicalism as a building and, more specifically, as our house (3). Throughout the book, she returns to this metaphor to reveal the deep value she sees in the house of evangelicalism — and her firm conviction that our home very much needs evaluation, maintenance, and renovation. As she puts it, “A central goal of this book is to help tease out the elements of the evangelical social imaginary in such a way that those elements that are truly Christian can be better distinguished from those that are merely cultural” (30). This is a winsome way to approach the topic: She makes clear that she is not

an attacking outsider but, like any good resident of a home, will not hide the faults she finds.

She traces the cultural roots of evangelicalism to England — particularly 19th-century England. While she provides several useful definitions of evangelicalism, she quickly shifts to emphasizing a unique aspect: the shared imagination of evangelicalism, which can be described as the metaphors and ideas that lie beneath surface thoughts and shape the very way we see the world. Primarily inspired by Canadian philosophers Charles Taylor and James K. A. Smith, Prior argues that understanding this shared imagination enables us to see ourselves and our religion more clearly.

This approach — focusing on evangelicalism’s collective imagination — is particularly helpful in our current age of wrestling over definitions of evangelicalism and bristling at the way the term is flung about by critics or is defined by opposing evangelical camps. The collective imagination is vaguer than a list of beliefs but — counterintuitively — also more accurate and useful in describing something as vast as evangelicalism: It reveals the shared ground without drawing battle lines, encouraging us to explore evangelicalism’s imaginative landscape instead of taking up our weapons.

This is a heady discussion, but Prior thankfully grounds her writing in concrete examples, metaphors, and stories, aiding readers in navigating the confusing landscape of imaginaries, language, and unconscious assumptions. That landscape, of which Prior provides a fast-paced and necessarily selective tour, abounds in history and literature. Prior’s discussion ranges from



John Bunyan to Mumford and Sons, from Zora Neale Hurston to the *Left Behind* series, from Shakespeare to Jane Austen, from the Great Awakening to Donald Trump. Its great value lies in the sweep of its argument, its intriguing examples, and the way it will inspire others to explore further.

What, then, might happen if evangelical Christians listen to *Prior*? By seeing our inheritance more truly and seeing how our interpretations of Scripture and Christ are shaped by our imaginations, we could keep the building of evangelicalism from tottering (scaring its inhabitants away) and instead make it a nourishing, welcoming home, centered around eternal truths rather than shifting cultural values. *Prior's* message to evangelicals, although not lacking in criticism, is thus ultimately a very hopeful one.

REVIEWER BIO



DR. HOLLY SPOFFORD-McREYNOLDS

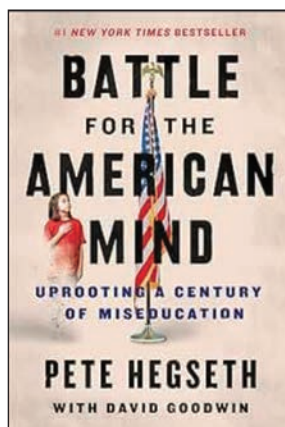
Dr. Holly Spofford-McReynolds is an assistant professor of English at Colorado Christian University. She received her Ph.D. in literature (with a concentration in religion) from Baylor University, and she primarily focuses on 19th-century British literature and religion.

Battle for the American Mind: Uprooting a Century of Miseducation

by Pete Hegseth with David Goodwin

REVIEW BY DR. DEBORA SCHEFFEL

Dean, Professor of Education



Our youth spend about 16,000 hours in school between kindergarten and the end of high school. Psalm 90:12 exhorts us “to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.” What is the impact of exposing the next generation to this much time in an education system that is, at its heart, based on a *paideia* (instruction

and enculturation) antithetical to Christian wisdom and the truth of Scripture? The destiny of a nation is shaped in its classrooms. In their book, *Battle for the American Mind: Uprooting a Century of Miseducation*, Pete Hegseth and David Goodwin tell the story of the progressive plan to neutralize the foundations of our republic through the American public school system. Hegseth is a media and cultural leader as a television host and author, and Goodwin is a researcher and educator. While neither is an academic, both are patriots, positing in this book an explanation for our nation’s biggest problems that germinate in public school classrooms. The goal of the book is to motivate the American public to reorient their lives around the priority of educating their children and grandchildren well so that the next generation may learn in the context of a classical, Christian educational renewal. The children of a culture are of all-surpassing worth in determining its direction. So, as competing interests wrestle to influence young hearts and minds, a Christian *paideia* must be the essential ingredient in their education.

Battle for the American Mind primarily describes the history of the progressive movement in the United States and how it has taken root in American public education, dominating its ideology, pedagogy, and curriculum. Hegseth and Goodwin explain to the reader the origins of the deep philosophical roots of progressivism in our schools and their deliberate, intended outcomes. Similarly, in his 1948 book *Ideas Have Consequences*, Richard M. Weaver notes that it is the ideas of a person or culture that prompt actions of individuals and nations and how they are implemented and formalized.¹ One might not expect that ideas, philosophies, and assumptions would have such a direct, predictable, even stated effect, but that is what history teaches us.

The authors begin by referencing an often-overlooked Pulitzer Prize-winning book by the historian Lawrence Cremin, *American Education*. Cremin asserted that the progressives have been so successful in influencing our culture through our public schools because they have supplanted the Western Christian Paideia (WCP) with a progressive and neo-Marxist *paideia*.² The word *paideia* is linked to ideas and assumptions about humanity and enculturation that drive how, why, and what we teach our youth. Cultures rest on a “common aspirational vision held by members of the cultural group — a vision of the good life,” and the progressive-dominated vision of that good life is life without God (48). Many have recognized that every philosophy of education begins with a philosophy of humanity. It is the corruption of that philosophy, uncoupled from our Creator, that infects everything downstream. About 100 years ago, progressives determined to target our assumptions about humanity, our Western Christian Paideia. Instead of viewing humankind as partaking

The solution posed in *Battle for the American Mind to address the progressive, neo-Marxist influence of public education and its impact on our culture is a return to classical, Christian education — a movement that has been gathering strength since 1994.*

in the divine nature, having fallen but capable of redemption, humanity is the apex of naturalistic evolution. So, by teaching the rejection of the WCP in our schools, historical Christendom (dating back over 2,500 years), divine order, the relationship between church and state, and the related thoughts, affections, and narratives through which we have interpreted life have been systematically removed. Apart from the poverty of soul that this rejection of WCP has resulted in among our youth, it has also deteriorated the foundation of ideas necessary for a self-governing people.

The book goes on to cite multiple examples of influences that have led to this point, including: Deism, promulgated at our nation's founding, which foreshadowed progressivism with its questioning of the divinity of Christ, the authenticity of Scripture, and the authority of the Church; mandatory education laws, Horrace Mann's "common school," and the organization of school districts and gradual centralization of curricula; John Dewey, the father of modern progressive education, who deemphasized a liberal education pursuing wisdom in favor of vocational education for the masses (see his 1940 "The School and Social Progress" lectures); massive and vastly influential teachers' unions, whose publications and actions betray their association with cultural Marxists; textbooks (note Howard Zinn's 1980 destructive and pervasively used history textbook, *A People's History of the United States*, an openly anti-American and socialist resource still used in classrooms today); education journals like the

New Republic (first published in 1914); the rise of social sciences, which changed the way all subjects, particularly history, are taught, antithetical to the classical tradition (see Emile Durkheim quote: "All elements of society, including morality and religion, are part of the natural world...");³ and, government accreditation of schools beginning in the early 20th century. In addition to these specific influences, in all arenas, our culture has been incrementally quashing any ideal higher than human institutions, elevating science as the only way to find truth, fostering a dependence on government to solve human problems, using "education-ese," so what appears as being taught is drowned in a bewildering language blizzard – hard for the public to understand and refute, promoting critical theory; and, finally, the church's retreat from its traditional roles in society and government has resulted in the progressive, neo-Marxist public education we have inherited.

The church has been in the cultural crossfire before. In some sense, we are always at this point. We have clashed with culture previously and risen to the occasion. We know the world lies in wickedness (1 Jn. 5:19), and the course of this world is "according to the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2); however, we are instructed to "overcome evil with good" (Rom. 12:21), apart from the odds. When God sent Gideon to lead the Israelites, He declared, "The people who are with you are too many for Me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel claim glory for itself against Me, saying, 'My own hand has saved me'" (Judg. 7:2). God does not need legions to do His work.

The solution posed in *Battle for the American Mind* to address the progressive, neo-Marxist influence of public education and its impact on our culture is a return to classical, Christian education – a movement that has been gathering strength since 1994 (when the Association of Classical Christian Schools was founded). There are currently over 60,000 students enrolled in over 300 classical Christian schools across the nation, an option that was non-existent in the 1970s when many of these changes were beginning to bear fruit in our public schools. The classical Christian tradition teaches students about wisdom, human virtue, the Truth of Scripture, *logos* (language as the connection from the divine to human reality), *telos* (a transcendent purpose for humanity), and the seven liberal arts – all for the purpose of creating

an education for children who will become citizens capable of self-governance and living in freedom. Christianity is central to this classical model as, without it, there is no transcendent truth or biblical revelation. Theology has been called “the queen of the sciences” because belief in God’s revelation precedes knowledge of everything else. Engaging the next generation in classical, Christian education is an important part of turning the tide of our culture, incrementally – one child at a time, one heart at a time, one prayer at a time – trusting God to multiply the impact as He has done in the past.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Richard M. Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences, expanded edition* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2013).
- 2 Lawrence Cremin, *American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 1876-1980* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1990).
- 3 Emile Durkheim *De la division du travail social: étude sur l’organisation des sociétés supérieures*. Paris: Alcan, 1893.

REVIEWER BIO



DR. DEBORA SCHEFFEL

Dr. Debora Scheffel serves as the CUS dean of the School of Education at Colorado Christian University. She earned a Ph.D. in Communication Sciences and Disorders from Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois, and completed a National Institutes of Mental Health post-doctoral fellowship in cognitive science at the University of California, San Diego. Her research interests are in education reform policy, reading, and oral language development and disabilities in children. She is currently serving a second six-year term as a member of the Colorado State Board of Education, representing Colorado’s 4th Congressional District. She is passionate about quality education and providing a range of available educational options for all children.



The Ongoing Appeal of C.S. Lewis

REVIEW ESSAY BY DR. DONALD W. SWEETING

Chancellor, Colorado Christian University



There is a man who, more than 60 years after his death, is much more famous today than when he was alive. I'm referring, of course, to Clive Staples Lewis (1898–1963), a fellow and tutor of English literature at Oxford University and professor of Medieval Renaissance Literature at Cambridge University.

He was an academic, a distinguished literary critic, the author of best-selling novels, and a Christian writer and apologist. Lewis, who made the spiritual journey from atheism to faith in Christ while teaching at Oxford, is often referred to as one of the most popular defenders of orthodox Christianity in the English-speaking world and one of the greatest writers and thinkers of the 20th century. He wrote around 60 books that sold more than 200 million copies. More than 200 books have been written about him. Lewis is as popular as ever, and I suspect many of my readers would be quick to name him as a spiritual influence, as would I. But why? What is so compelling that he continues to have this kind of following?

This spring, I've been blessed to teach a class at Colorado Christian University called "The Life and Writings of C.S. Lewis." And in teaching, I find that Lewis continues to have a six-fold appeal. First, he wore many literary hats. Think of it: Spenser was known for his poetry, Shakespeare for his plays, and Bunyan for his allegory. But Lewis did what few could; he was

able to cross literary genres. As Peter Kreeft puts it, "Before his death in 1963, he found time to produce some sixty-first quality works of literary history, literary criticism, theology, philosophy, autobiography, biblical studies, historical philology, fantasy, science fiction, poems, sermons, letters, formal and informal essays, a historical novel, a spiritual diary, religious allegory, short stories, and children's novels. Clive Staples Lewis was not a man: He was a world."¹

Young readers know him as "the Narnia guy." Many believers know him as an apologist, or as *The Atlantic* put it, "the apostle to the skeptics." Others know him for his fiction called the *Space Trilogy*. All the while, he was a first-rate academic and lecturer. He even inspired others to write, particularly J. R. R. Tolkien. It's been said that *The Lord of the Rings* might never have been written without Lewis.

Second, C. S. Lewis was a romantic rationalist. You usually get one or the other. On the one hand, Lewis was part of the Romantic resurgence after the two world wars, which rejected materialism, nihilism, and scientism, and affirmed not just emotion but the experience of longing and joy. Early on, he aspired to be a great poet. But Lewis was not purely a romantic. For him, Romanticism was not enough. Our longings suggest that the human soul was made for more than this world. His Christian faith tempered his Romanticism. On the other hand, Lewis was also a rationalist. He affirmed reason, logic, and objective truth. But he was not a pure rationalist. Reason alone is not enough. Reason and logic are rooted in the rationality of God. For Lewis, Christianity held his romantic and rational sides together, which made room for reason and emotion, fact and imagination, mind

and heart. This was the path of his conversion. This was also the key to his powerful communication.

A third aspect of Lewis' appeal is that he could explain the Christian faith in a way that made sense to many people. During the Second World War, he had to learn how to communicate the faith at military gatherings and at national radio addresses. So, he avoided jargon and excelled at explaining difficult ideas to common people.

In one of his radio addresses, Lewis advocated for "mere Christianity," namely what all Christians believe, and made an intelligent defense of this faith. As he wrote in his book, *Mere Christianity*, "God made us: invented us as a man invents an engine. A car is made to run on petrol, and it would not run properly on anything else. Now God designed the human machine to run on himself. He himself is the fuel our spirits were designed to feed on. There is no other. That is why it is just no good asking God to make us happy in our own way without bothering about religion. God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from himself because it is not there. There is no such thing!"²

Fourth, C. S. Lewis helped explain the crisis of the modern and late-modern (or post-modern) world. He has been called a 20th-century prophet because he saw things that others did not see. He saw two great worldviews in collision: naturalism and supernaturalism. He saw that relativism and radical subjectivism would erode the moral foundations of the Western world. He saw the emergence of elite controllers and the coming of a soft despotism in the West. He saw the danger of what a relativistic education would do to the nation's schools. He believed that abandoning objective truth and morals is not progressive but destructive and regressive.

Fifth, many of C. S. Lewis' writings are characterized by the pursuit of Joy. Some have likened Lewis to Augustine himself, who went on a joy quest and only found a cure for his restlessness and longing in the living God.

Finally, Lewis is appealing in that he wrote about the greatness of heaven. "Joy," he said, "is the serious business of heaven." He believed that the joy we long for is found beyond this world, in Christ. The things of this world are not enough to satisfy. "Aim at heaven, and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth, and you will get neither."³

If you find yourself wanting to go deeper with C. S. Lewis, you might dig into one of his biographies. My favorite is *Jack: A Life of C. S. Lewis* by George Sayer, although Lewis's own autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*, is worth the read. A recent modern critical biography is *C. S. Lewis: A Life* by Alister McGrath. If you are wondering which book by C. S. Lewis to read, these would be his most popular works: *The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe* (and the whole Narnia series), *Mere Christianity*, *The Screwtape Letters*, *The Problem of Pain*, *The Great Divorce*, *The Four Loves*, *The Space Trilogy*, and *The Abolition of Man*.

Why read C. S. Lewis? Because he enlarges us. His work enlarges the mind, the soul, and one's view of God. It enlarges us to the reality of the person and work of Jesus Christ. It enlarges us by putting its finger on the conflict of the ages. And it enlarges us by holding out the prospect of eternal joy. Lewis wrote in another age and culture. So, it might take a little adjustment to hear him speak to a mid-20th-century audience, but it is altogether worth the effort.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Peter Kreeft, *C. S. Lewis: A Critical Essay* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972), 4.
- 2 C. S. Lewis, "Mere Christianity," in *The Complete C. S. Lewis Signature Classics* (New York: HarperCollins, 2002), 49.
- 3 Lewis, "Mere Christianity," 112.

REVIEWER BIO



DR. DONALD W. SWEETING

Donald W. Sweeting (Ph.D., Trinity International University) is the chancellor at Colorado Christian University and an ordained minister in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church.

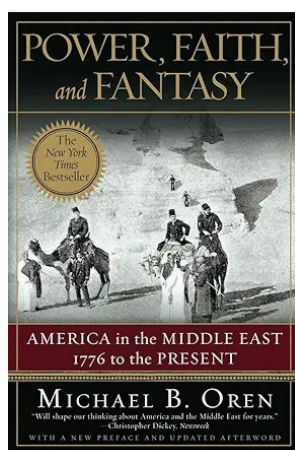
Power, Faith, and Fantasy:

America in the Middle East: 1776 to the Present

by Michael B. Oren

REVIEW BY DR. MARK FRANCOIS

Assistant Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Languages



Power, Faith, and Fantasy provides a fascinating window into the relationship between the United States and the Middle East from America's founding in 1776 to more recent events, such as the terrorist attacks on 9/11 and the war in Iraq. As the title suggests, this story is presented by weaving together three central

themes that serve as the backbone for its narrative (13–14). “Power” refers to America’s political and military involvement in the Middle East. “Faith” refers to how religion in America, especially American Protestantism, has shaped America’s views of and involvement with the Middle East. “Fantasy” refers to the fascination and romantic views that Americans have often had about the Middle East based on the Bible, books such as *A Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, and, more recently, films and television series about the Middle East.

Michael Oren is particularly well-situated to write a book on this topic. Born and raised in the United States, Oren received a Ph.D. in Near Eastern studies from Princeton University and is the author of an important volume on the Six-Day War.¹ As an adult, Oren immigrated to Israel, served in Israel’s armed forces, and even served as the Israeli liaison to the U.S. Sixth Fleet during the Gulf War.² Oren’s

expertise in the Middle East combined with his personal experience in Middle Eastern conflicts make him an excellent guide for exploring the complexities of this topic.

Power, Faith, and Fantasy is divided into seven main sections with 28 chapters in total. The first section deals with the relationship between the United States and the Middle East from 1776 to the 1820s. A key focus of this section is America’s military involvement with Morocco, Tripoli, Tunis, and Algiers — the so-called Barbary States of North Africa (18). The Barbary States were home to Muslim pirates who would frequently attack European and American vessels, hold their crews for ransom, and sometimes sell them into slavery (18). When the 13 colonies declared independence from Britain, American merchant vessels lost the protection of both the British navy and the tribute that Britain paid to the Barbary States (20). America soon had to pay its own tribute to the Barbary States but lacked the military power to enforce their agreements. As Oren points out, this conflict was significant in the history of the United States because it served as a major impetus for the ratification of the Constitution (30) as well as the establishment of the U.S. Navy (31).

Section two deals with the period between the 1820s and the American Civil War. Oren begins with the fascinating story of George English, the Harvard-trained New Englander who would eventually convert to Islam and lead Egyptian troops against rebels in Sudan (101–103). One of the main focuses of this section, however, is the work that Protestant missionaries carried out in the Middle East during



MAJESTIC BLUE MOSQUE (BUILT 1616)
ISTANBUL, TURKEY

this period. After experiencing severe setbacks in the 1820s and 1830s due to sickness, death, and political upheaval, American missionaries successfully established schools for the education of Christians, Muslims, and Jews (133). These schools were often seen as preparatory work for sharing the message of the gospel (134). However, as one American visitor to Syria in 1842 noted, there was a real danger that the missionaries' focus on education might overshadow the more important task of sharing the message of the gospel in that region (134). These fears were eventually realized as many missionaries exchanged a focus on the message of the gospel for a social gospel that emphasized education, medicine, and the teaching of American values (287).

The third section deals with America's relationship with the Middle East during the Civil War and Reconstruction. America's fascination with the Middle East can be seen quite clearly in the Middle Eastern apparel that was worn by Zouave regiments in both the Union and Confederate armies during the Civil War. One of the most interesting aspects of this period that Oren discusses is the relationship between the United States and Egypt.

Readers may be surprised to learn that the Egyptian navy participated in the naval blockade of the Confederacy during the Civil War (192–3). Readers may also be surprised to learn that after the Civil War, veterans from both sides were hired as consultants to train and modernize the Egyptian military (194–5). These veterans eventually established Arabic-language schools to increase the literacy of the commissioned and non-commissioned officers they were teaching (198). At the request of their students, they even permitted their sons to attend these schools so that they, too, could learn to read and write.

The fourth and fifth sections deal with the relationship between the United States and the Middle East between 1882 and the Paris Peace Conference that concluded the First World War. Oren devotes a significant amount of space in these chapters to the Armenian Genocide in Turkey, the rise of Zionism, and the political situation in Palestine after the First World War. One of the most interesting observations that Oren makes in this section is the hopes that were raised among Zionists and Christian missionaries after the fall of the Ottoman Empire, which had ruled the Middle

The future role of the United States in this region will be determined largely by how the history of this region and the history of America's involvement in this region are told and retold.

East for centuries, including Palestine (349). After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Zionists hoped to establish a Jewish State in Palestine. In the past, many Protestant missionaries would have hoped for the same result. Indeed, many Protestant missionaries came to the Middle East with the express purpose of converting the local Jewish population in the hopes that this would precipitate the Second Coming of Jesus. However, despite their hopes, Protestant missionaries had very little success among the local Jewish population. As a result, they concentrated their efforts on Arabs. Muslim Arabs were equally uninterested in the message of the gospel but showed a keen interest in the American education that the missionaries provided to their students. Many Protestant missionaries eventually focused their efforts on education and the promotion of American values rather than on sharing the gospel. After the fall of the Ottoman Empire, rather than hoping for the establishment of a Jewish State like many of their predecessors, many American missionaries hoped for the liberation and independence of the Arab world.

Part six deals with the relationship between the United States and the Middle East from the early 1920s to the recognition of the Modern State of Israel under the administration of Harry Truman. This portion of Middle Eastern history is particularly relevant today as American students protest America's support for Israel and falsely condemn Israel as a foreign colonial power. The events that led to the establishment of the State of Israel are complex. When these events are misrepresented, oversimplified, or are simply unknown, this can lead to false narratives that threaten America's support for Israel and even the very existence of Jews in Israel. Oren provides a balanced and well-researched account of how these events unfolded. Finally, part seven deals more briefly with America's relationship with the Middle East from the 1950s to the Iraq War. This section also provides context to current debates about American involvement in the Middle East.

As the recent conflict between Israel and Gaza and the recent U.S. airstrikes against Houthi militants in Yemen have made clear, the United States will continue to be embroiled in Middle Eastern politics for the foreseeable future. The future role of the United States in this region will be determined largely by how the history of this region and the history of America's involvement in this region are told and retold. Bad history leads to bad public opinion.



Bad public opinion will eventually lead to bad policy decisions. *Power, Faith, and Fantasy* is good history. Although it provides no answers for today's conflicts, it can help Americans think through the complex foreign policy issues that will continue to engage them for years to come.

Power, Faith, and Fantasy is an excellent resource that can be used by the CCU community as we think about current events in the Middle East, including the conflict between Israel and Gaza and the widening of this conflict through the proxies of Iran. CCU is a great supporter of Israel. This book can provide useful context as we engage with false narratives in the media about the history of this conflict and as we continue our support for Israel. In my opinion, however, the most important lesson that can be learned from this book has to do with our primary mission as a university. Though written from a non-Christian perspective, this book reminds us of the danger of exchanging our central focus on the gospel for goals that may be good but are less important in light of eternity. It reminds us that our goal is not simply to educate students but to provide Christ-centered education that will transform students to impact the world with grace and truth.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Michael B. Oren, *Six Days of War: June 1967 and the Making of the Modern Middle East* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002).
- 2 Michael B. Oren, *Ally: My Journey Across the American-Israeli Divide* (New York: Random House, 2016).

REVIEWER BIO



DR. MARK FRANCOIS

Mark Francois (Ph.D., University of St. Michael's College) has recently joined the faculty of the School of Theology at CCU after serving 12 years as a pastor in Ontario, Canada. His main areas of academic interest are Deuteronomy, OT Law, Hebrew, and Classical Syriac.

Colorado Christian University
8787 W. Alameda Avenue
Lakewood, CO 80226

VISIT US ONLINE
CCU.EDU



COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
Grace and Truth

