

# FACTS *and* TRENDS

Fall 2012

Spiritual disciplines essential to spiritual growth



The man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence indeed is the Lord, is blessed. He will be like a tree planted by water; it sends its roots out toward a stream, it doesn't fear when heat comes, and its foliage remains green. It will not worry in a year of drought or cease producing fruit.

—Jeremiah 17:7-8 HCSB

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# From My Perspective

Thom S. Rainer, president and CEO, LifeWay Christian Resources



## Lead your church to spiritual transformation

**S**piritual transformation and spiritual discipline are inseparably bound. Unsurprisingly, those disengaged in the disciplines of prayer, reading the Bible, Scripture memorization, fasting and acts of obedience to God are the very same who feel the deepest need for spiritual transformation. Many church members who express a desire to grow spiritually do so because they have failed to engage in the disciplines of the faith. Others have never been exposed to the joy of spiritual discipline, yet God has made access to the riches of His presence so easily accessible.

In this issue of *Facts and Trends*, you'll read about a recent study by LifeWay Research that found a lack of engagement by Protestant churchgoers in the most basic spiritual disciplines. The results of the study are disheartening, especially for those of us who desire to see all Christians living a vibrant spiritual life. For many, the distractions of this world – the day-to-day busyness of life – take precedence over practicing spiritual disciplines.

Our role as leaders in the church is to guide believers in their journey to becoming more like Christ. Without a teacher to guide them into the mission of God, believers miss the lessons necessary to continue being transformed by the power of Christ.

Here are a few ways you can spur on your congregation to spiritual transformation:

**1. Model the spiritual disciplines for your church.** People need godly examples to follow. Tell them how God is transforming your life through these practices.

**2. Talk about the spiritual disciplines in your preaching and in one-on-one conversations.**

**3. Focus on an encounter with God rather than religious activity.** The spiritual disciplines are practices used to draw us closer to God.

Remember, your role as a church leader is not to transform people. Instead, you are to place people in the path of God's transforming power. Disciples are made the way they've always been made: by the power of the Holy Spirit working through the church.

If you find your congregation's spiritual transformation has waned, then it's time to help them get back on track. Christ's plan for His people is for them to become more and more like Him every day. When God's people begin to act like Jesus, when God's church lives like the body of Christ, the world will not only take notice but also experience a change itself. ■



Follow Thom Rainer on Twitter @ThomRainer. His blog is available at [ThomRainer.com](http://ThomRainer.com).

# Exactly what goes into creating a disciple of Christ?

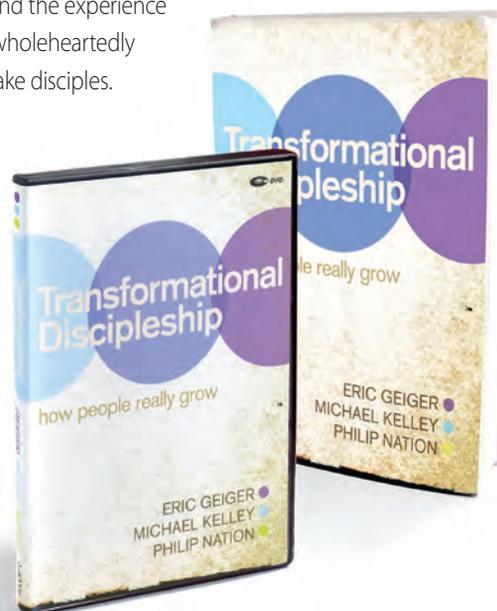


Most Christians want to become better disciples of Christ. They want to grow in their knowledge, their love, and their faith. But how do people really grow? Are there elements that are common to all disciples?

We created Transformational Discipleship to help answer these questions. The resources do not provide a magic formula. But they do offer a combination of biblical understanding, solid research, and the experience of churches and individuals who have wholeheartedly answered the call of Jesus to be and make disciples.

As part of the Transformational Church initiative, Transformational Discipleship serves as a reliable guide for church leaders and members to practice the intentional efforts needed to foster an entire culture in which people grow in Christian faith.

**To learn more about the *Book* or the *DVD Discussion Guide*, visit us online.**



# The Exchange

Ed Stetzer, president of LifeWay Research

## Spiritual Disciplines significant for spiritual development

**“The spiritual disciplines” sounds like a phrase from another era of history. Whenever a book is written or a sermon is preached on the subject, people wonder if it is a subject only for ancient saints or a group of monks cloistered away in a mountain retreat.**

The spiritual disciplines, however, play a significant role in our spiritual development. They represent practices of our faith that give us the opportunity to interact with Christ.

To better understand how churchgoers practice spiritual disciplines, LifeWay Research conducted a survey of more than 4,000 Protestants in the U.S. and Canada. In the book *Transformational Discipleship*, authors Eric Geiger, Michael Kelley and Philip Nation describe a “discipleship deficiency” that is plaguing the church. Given the research, I agree with their descriptor.

In this issue of *Facts and Trends*, you’ll see that fewer than half of the respondents to our survey engage in the two most basic spiritual disciplines: prayer and Bible study. On a daily basis, only 48 percent “set aside time for prayer of any kind.” Even fewer – 19 percent – are reading the Bible on a daily basis. The discoveries are bleak.

So how do we address the fact that Protestants in the U.S. and Canada who attend church at least once a month (the basic requirements for participation in the survey) are not engaging in the most basic spiritual disciplines?

**First, leaders must lead by example.** I am one to give those in ministry leadership the benefit of the doubt. But I also believe in a high level of accountability. If leaders want the people to read, pray, fast and all the rest, then they must make sure they are doing it as well. The vision for spiritual maturity in a church will rarely exceed that of a leader’s life. So go where you want to take people.

**Second, find ways to practice the disciplines in community.** There is an old saying about leadership: If you are leading and no one is following then you are just out for a walk. Don’t walk alone toward spiritual maturity. Discover the various ways to lead people. The list is endless. Read the New Testament together over the summer months. Memorize a key passage that follows the theme of a message series and repeat it during worship. Commit to a church-wide fast while making key decisions. Often the spiritual disciplines are misrepresented as exclusively practiced in solitude. Make sure they are used to draw the body of Christ closer together as well.

**Third, never measure disciplines as an end to themselves.** For the sake of research, we measured people’s behavior at



a relatively broad level. As a local church leader or member, you are called to a deeper engagement. Over the last three years, we have studied the issue of transformation in the lives of Christians throughout North America. Our study gives conclusive evidence that lives, churches and communities are being changed, but it is not occurring without leadership and effort.

In the Transformational Discipleship study, an attribute we discovered has been termed “unashamed.” One of the issues we have known intuitively came hurtling out of the research: believers willing to publicly own their faith and have accountability for growing in their faith display lives of transformation. It is to this end that we create assessment tools to survey personal development. Whether you use a tool or simple conversations, you need to measure personal advancement.

Leaders need to grow, lead through community and hold followers accountable. Using the spiritual disciplines as instruments for spiritual growth provides a great platform to do all of these. ■



Follow Ed Stetzer’s thoughts on Twitter @EdStetzer. His blog is available at [EdStetzer.com](http://EdStetzer.com).

# Time for transformation

Daily practice of spiritual disciplines is essential to spiritual growth

*by Philip Nation*

**W**hen was the last time you went to the movies? If you're like most Americans (67 percent), you've been to the theater at least once in the last year. Next question: when was the last time you visited the dentist? Or had the oil changed in your car?

These are just a few of the activities that Americans engage in as often or more than churchgoers engage in the practice of spiritual disciplines, according to a recent study by LifeWay Research.

The LifeWay Research team recently surveyed Protestant churchgoers on the frequency with which they engage in the following spiritual disciplines:

- 1. Prayer**
- 2. Reading the Bible**
- 3. Fasting in order to concentrate on prayer or meditation**
- 4. Scripture memorization**
- 5. Obedience to God**

The study showed 19 percent of churchgoers read their Bible every day compared to 68 percent of pet owners who exercise their pets daily.

It also showed that 48 percent of churchgoers pray every day. That's almost as many Americans who floss every day (49 percent). Almost half (49 percent) of Americans visited the dentist in the last



six months, while only 15 percent of churchgoers fasted in that same time period.

While I advocate good dental health, our spiritual health is immeasurably more important. It seems we're more concerned about our teeth than we are about our souls.

"Things that matter in life require personal investment," said Scott McConnell, director of LifeWay Research. "Too often, we as American churchgoers invest more of ourselves in caring for things that won't last 100 years from now than we do in caring for our relationship with God that matters for eternity."

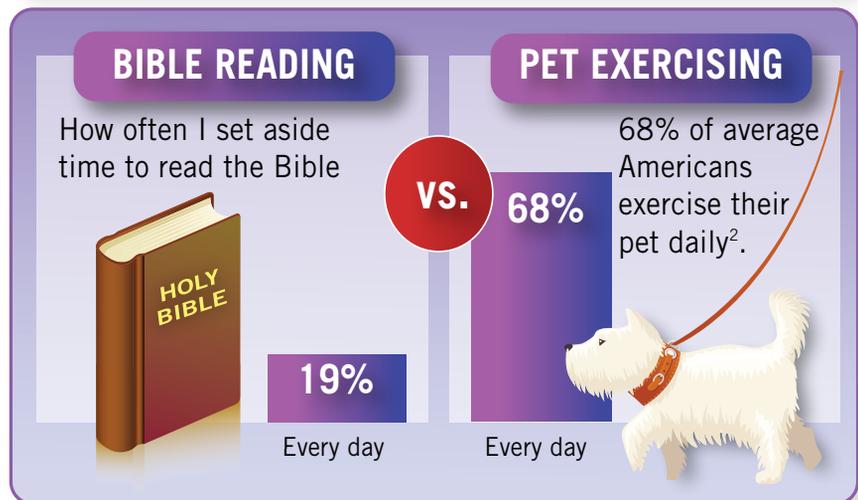
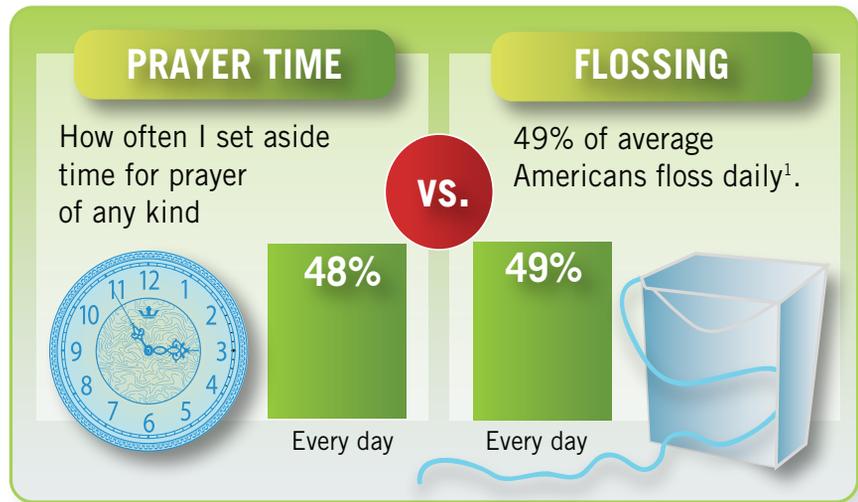
The sad reality is the daily lives of many people in our churches mirror those of nonbelievers. We must ask ourselves if the lives of churchgoers are not transformed, is true discipleship taking place?

Our entire mission as believers and churches is to "make disciples." Unfortunately, the facts show a discipleship deficiency in much of the church in North America. The fundamental reason your church exists is to make disciples of Jesus.

"God shapes congregations through the shaping of individual lives. This shaping of individuals doesn't just happen; it's through intentional effort on the part of both leaders and church members," said Lifeway President Thom Rainer.

We aren't talking about behavioral modification here; we're talking about

## Transformational Discipleship SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES Survey of 2,930 Protestant churchgoers



<sup>1</sup> Crest.com/ada-webcast/surveyfindings.pdf <sup>2</sup> Cyberpet.com/dogs/articles/general/crawford.htm

heart transformation. God does not want to tweak our behavior; He desires to transform our lives. The kind of transformation we should desire can only come through discipleship centered on Jesus. When true transformation occurs, behavior follows. When behavior is merely

modified, legalism follows.

The spiritual disciplines are not activities reserved for the super spiritual of another historical age. They are for every believer, in every age, in every culture and are an essential part of our everyday lives. The spiritual disciplines are not the end result

*Fasting was defined as going without eating for a certain period of time in order to concentrate on prayer or meditation.*

for themselves but provide a relational space for the presence of God in our lives.

The spiritual disciplines turn our hearts toward God. They provide a tool for God to deepen our relationship with Him.

As leaders, we know that for people to develop in their faith, they must prioritize God and His work in their lives. It takes intentional effort on the part of the pastor to create a church culture in which church members grow spiritually. Here are some ways to get started:

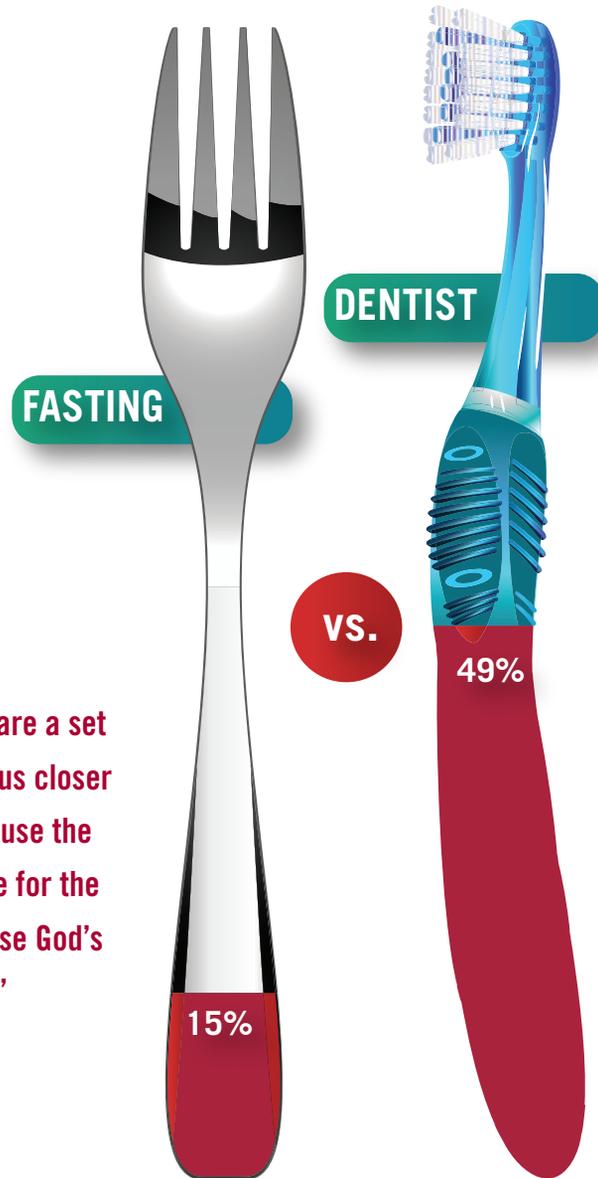
1. Spend time with God studying His Word and being a person of prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what needs to be done next in the discipling ministry of your church.

2. Find a way to help those in the church assess their own discipleship journey. Many in your church are painfully unaware of who they are in Christ, where they are in their spiritual journey and what is supposed to occur in discipleship. LifeWay's online Transformational Discipleship Assessment (TDA) delivers both individual and group reports on spiritual maturity and provides leaders with next steps for spiritual development.

3. Decide when and how you are going to start talking about discipleship

**“The spiritual disciplines are a set of practices used to draw us closer to God. Believers should use the disciplines to give a place for the Holy Spirit to speak and use God’s Word in our lives.”**

— Philip Nation



15% of churchgoers have fasted in the past 6 months

49% of Americans have visited the dentist in past 6 months

in your church. Make an intentional effort to teach, preach, discuss and have private conversations about spiritual transformation. The church needs to know if growth is a priority for God, then it is a priority of the leaders of the church.

People will grow. Not because of some special program, magic formula or church mantra, but by the power of the Holy

Spirit working through the church. The spiritual disciplines are a set of practices used to draw us closer to God. Believers should use the disciplines to give a place for the Holy Spirit to speak and use God’s Word in our lives.

One of the most beautiful images of this kind of spiritual growth comes from Jeremiah 17:7-8: “The man who trusts

in the Lord, whose confidence indeed is the Lord, is blessed. He will be like a tree planted by water: it sends its roots out toward a stream, it doesn't fear when heat comes, and its foliage remains green. It will not worry in a year of drought or cease producing fruit."

Reading the Bible, praying, fasting and all the rest are the means by which you position your life to receive the life-giving breath and strength of the Spirit on a daily basis. Every time you practice these disciplines, you put yourself in that position – a position that is radically dependent on the Spirit of God.

Isn't it time you took your church on the journey that will change how they view God's Kingdom and all of life? ■

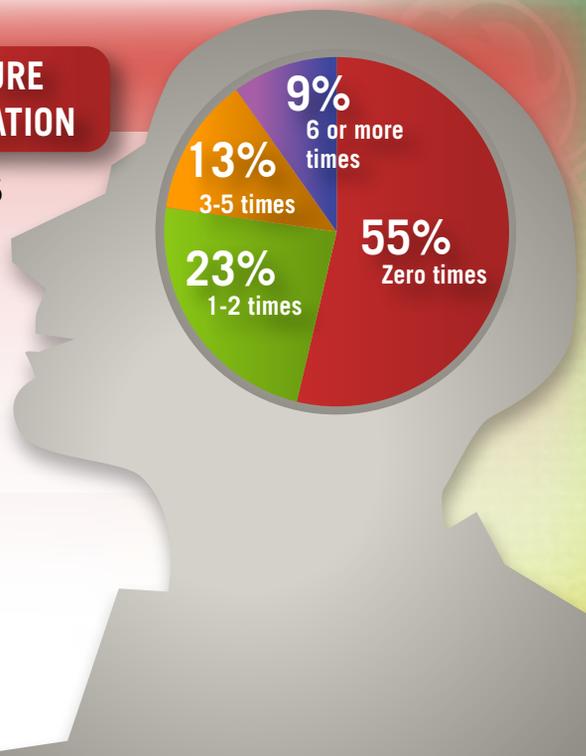
**Churches can help guide conversations in their congregation to address areas of spiritual need by using a validated assessment such as the Transformational Discipleship Assessment (LifeWay.com/TDA).**

*Methodology: The survey, conducted in Oct. 14-22, 2011, sampled 2,930 randomly selected American adults who attend a Protestant church once a month or more. The sample provides 95 percent confidence that the sampling error does not exceed +1.8 percent. Margins of error are higher in subgroups.*

*Philip Nation is director of adult ministry publishing at LifeWay and co-author of the book Transformational Discipleship (B&H 2012) with Eric Geiger and Michael Kelley.*

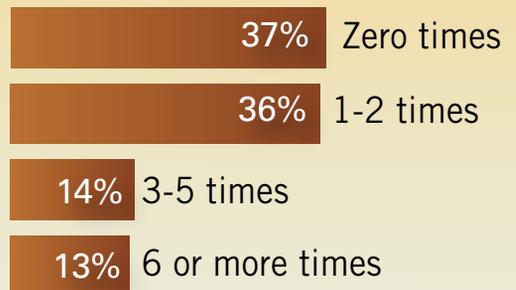
### SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION

In the past 6 months, how many times have you memorized a Bible verse?



### OBEDIENCE & SACRIFICE

In the past 6 months, how many times have you made a decision to obey or follow God with awareness that choosing His way might be costly to you in some way?

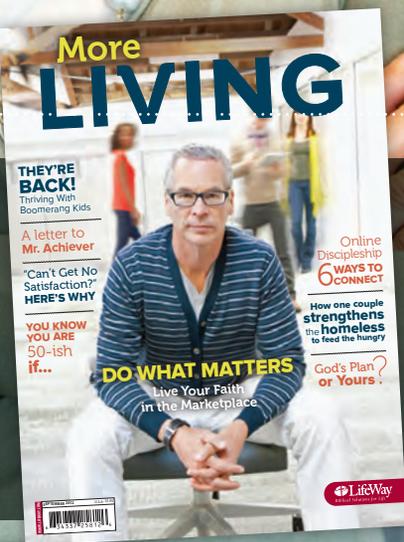




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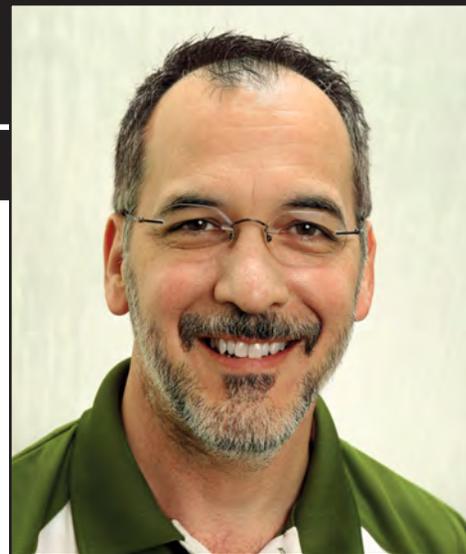
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# #sociallyspeaking

Marty Duren, LifeWay social media strategist

## What is a ‘tweeter’ and why should it matter?



**I must confess. When Twitter first appeared on the Internet and a few of my friends were talking about it, I did not get it. I was already a blogger with scores of lengthy posts written. The idea of “micro-blogging” in 140 characters made no sense at all.**

Regardless, I opened a Twitter account just to check the fuss. It seemed really, really dumb – a bunch of people talking about what they had for lunch, going to the gym, washing smelly socks. The entire thing seemed like a waste of time.

Fast forward a few years and things have changed dramatically.

News sources regularly get breaking stories from Twitter or other social media. Recently a major broadcast and online news agency announced the layoffs of more than two dozen photographers, opting to use “crowd-sourced” photography. That means they follow social media, especially Twitter, to capture photos being uploaded by Smartphone owners in the middle of the event.

Major news events broken on Twitter include the landing of US Airways flight 1549 on the Hudson River in New York City and the discovery of ice on Mars. Helicopters involved in the raid that killed Osama bin Laden were heard and tweeted about by Sohaib Athar in Abbottabad, Pakistan. There are many other examples.

Pastors and theologians also have taken to Twitter to spread inspirational thoughts,

scripture, leadership principles, opinions and the like. An article in the *New York Times*\* recently provided examples showing how well-known pastors and Bible teachers have more influence on Twitter than some movie or music celebrities.

Across the Southern Baptist Convention (and other denominations) pastors, professors, theologians, entity heads and church members are tweeting. Everything important to the Christian life: instruction, encouragement, exhortation and, occasionally, rebuke, takes place on Twitter. Far from being a waste of time, it is a tool of great potential.

If you are not yet using Twitter for communication with your friends, family and church, you can easily sign up in about three minutes. Use the search function to find people to “follow” (have their tweets come to your feed), and you’re on your way.

As you interact, people will follow you. Publish your Twitter name (“handle”) in your church bulletin and website so all your members will follow you. Your influence will grow and the body of Christ will benefit as you share biblical wisdom, observations and interests. ■

Marty Duren can be reached at [marty.duren@lifeway.com](mailto:marty.duren@lifeway.com). Follow him on Twitter @MartyDuren.

\* “Twitter Dynamos, Offering Word of God’s Love,” June 2, 2012

# 'The Gospel Project' now available on iPad, e-book

by Russ Rankin

**T**he Gospel Project curriculum created by LifeWay has introduced a digital delivery format to serve as yet another way for churches to engage in the three-year study designed for Sunday schools and small groups of all ages.

The Gospel Project is a Christ-centered curriculum looking at the grand narrative of Scripture and how the Gospel transforms lives, said Trevin Wax, managing editor of The Gospel Project.

With the curriculum's first printed material having made its debut this fall, LifeWay has introduced a Gospel Project e-book version for devices such as Kindle and Nook and also has launched a Gospel Project iPad app for adults and an iPhone app for students. An iPhone app for kids eventually will launch, giving parents a

view of what their children are learning.

"We are so encouraged by the initial response to The Gospel Project," Wax said. "Thousands of churches from a variety of denominations and affiliations have ordered the curriculum, and it is selling nearly twice what we originally forecast."

LifeWay expedited a third printing of the curriculum to keep up with the orders that have continued to come in, he said.

A digital delivery format will enable churches to adjust sessions to their specific needs, Wax said.

"I'm excited about the new iPad app for



adults and the iPhone app for students because there are a lot of great things we can do in an app that we can't do in a printed piece," Wax said. "Both students and teachers will have an enhanced study experience with the app as a supplement to their study. These new resources represent a major step forward for us in how we can serve churches digitally."

A new "curriculum manager" was launched Aug. 1 and is designed for churches that purchase the digital files (in PDF and RTF formats) in order to keep things orderly and organized.

"We're very pleased with how Southern Baptists have responded – thousands of churches are ordering hundreds of thousands of resources," said Ed Stetzer, general editor of The Gospel Project. "However, we've been surprised with how many non-SBC churches have ordered as well."

"At its core, people value the theological depth but also appreciate the fact that we use our confessional statement (the Baptist Faith and Message) as our standard," Stetzer said. "They are saying they trust LifeWay and the theological guidelines we use to convey the narrative of the gospel."

Ken Whitten, senior pastor of Idlewild Baptist Church in Lutz, Fla., said several factors contributed to his staff's decision to use The Gospel Project, including the "creative resources" that are provided and



the flexibility.

"The curriculum is designed for small groups or large groups, and it is available in print or as a downloadable version," Whitten said. "The teaching tools are used to free up, not weigh down, a leader."

"As a senior pastor I believe we learn better in circles than in straight lines, and I teach what we need each week in transformation and application – not just information and explanation. We are supporting our denomination because they desire to support and serve pastors. It's more than a project. It's a Person, and His name is Jesus."

Nashville church planter Gary Morgan said his church chose The Gospel Project for their kids because the materials fit with the flow of their community.

"We want kids and parents to be engaged together and be connected to the big picture of Scripture and how the story of

Jesus is woven throughout," Morgan, pastor of Mosaic, said.

"The digital resources were a huge plus for us," Morgan said. "Our numbers fluctuate and as a small church that meets in a building that is not our own, we needed material that is flexible in different settings."

Each session of The Gospel Project immerses participants – adults, students and kids – in the Gospel through every story, theological concept and call to missions from Genesis to Revelation.

"By year's end, it's likely that 300,000 people will be using these materials," Wax said. "Knowing that we can have a small part in serving so many people is a humbling responsibility we hope to steward well." ■

*Go to [GospelProject.com](http://GospelProject.com) for more information. Follow on Twitter @Gospel\_Project.*

# Pastors Today newsletter relaunches with more resources, helps and options

by Polly House

**T**housands of pastors have been receiving the *Pastors Today* free newsletter from LifeWay by email every Monday morning for 10 years. It's been good, but now it's better.

LifeWay has launched a revamped and upgraded version of *Pastors Today* with more content features to help pastors with issues they deal with all the time.

The new version will offer:

- A redesign and relaunch of the *Pastors Today* newsletter
- A renewed focus on providing content (articles and sermons) for pastors on LifeWay.com
- A refresh of the existing *Pastors Today* Twitter account (Twitter.com/PastorsToday)
- The launch of a new *Pastors Today* page on Facebook. (Facebook.com/PastorsToday)
- A growth plan that will introduce even more features, such as a related pastor-focused blog



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- Product Group Articles (131)
- Age Group
- Church Strategy Life Size (42) Transformational Church (3)
- Subject Church & Ministry (259) Bible (198) Christian Living (81)

Recommended Articles

- Stand Firm Webcast featuring Pastor David Platt - The author of Radical talks about the Secret Church movement and the need for discipleship. Plus, Kenny Luck offers another exclusive leadership segment.
- Deacons: A Fellowship of Servants - The head of LifeWay's Office of Pastoral Relations stresses a biblical model for church deacons.
- Two Big Distractions for Pastors (Thom Rainer's blog)

Sermons

- The Gospel Project - September: God Speaks

PASTORS TODAY  
Practical solutions for pastors

Pastors Today - Hate the...  
Caleb Lyons explains how we should express Christian love to a sinful world.

Pastors Today - Are we ...  
How does a pastor's theological approach affect his ability to preach about Jesus and the cr...

Pastors Today - What is ...  
Ed Stetzer speaks with LifeWay Research specialists on feedback from church assessments.

In a post on his blog (ThomRainer.com), LifeWay President Thom Rainer wrote that as a former pastor and the father of three current pastors, he is a strong advocate for pastors.

He said, “I am incredibly excited to announce the release of [*Pastors Today*]. It will be full of resources to help the pastor both in his vocational ministry and in his personal life. It is LifeWay’s and my gift each week to pastors. It is our attempt to say thank you for the ministry you do for others.”

Rainer listed five convictions for the relaunch of the newsletter:

- Pastors are called by God. We should respect and revere that calling.
- Pastors give of themselves every day. We desire, even in this small way, to give something back to them.
- Many pastors don’t have the funds for needed resources. We pray that this free newsletter will help. We also will point pastors to our free or affordable resources. We particularly hope this newsletter will benefit the bivocational pastor who is often short on time and resources.
- Pastors deal with enormous pressures and constant criticism. We want them to know we have their backs.
- If we can help pastors, we will also help churches, the bride of Christ.

Craig Webb, pastor for vision and purpose at The Glade Church in Mt. Juliet, Tenn., will continue as *Pastors Today* editor.

Steve Drake, LifeWay’s director of pastoral relations, will join Webb as a regular contributor to the newsletter. His role will be to assist pastors and staffs as they lead their churches.

Drake said, “I want to be available to help pastors in any way I can. My role as director of pastoral relations was created for that purpose. My email address is [steve.drake@lifeway.com](mailto:steve.drake@lifeway.com), and I look forward to hearing from pastors or other church staff members when they have questions or comments.”

Content will be updated at least weekly and will prominently reflect the current newsletter content, plus, over time, more features will be added:

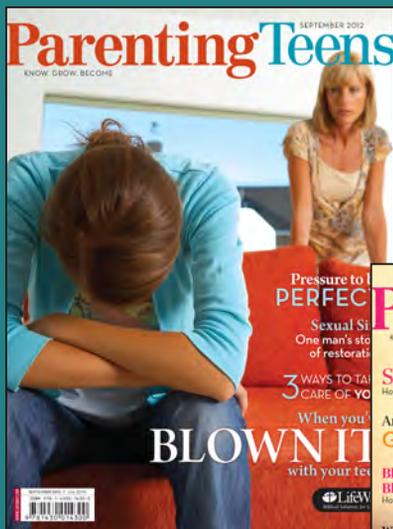
- Original article and video content, organized into specific topic areas (i.e., preaching, sermons, leadership and strategy, pastoral care, counseling, bivocational pastors, church planting, etc.)
- Various sermon series and outlines (i.e., Explore the Bible, The Gospel Project, various topical subjects, etc.)
- A repository of fresh sermon illustrations
- Promotion of and access to relevant training opportunities (both free and paid)
- Merchandising of relevant products and events for pastors and churches
- Links to sign up for related newsletters, pages on Facebook and Twitter accounts
- Links to relevant related blogs (Thom Rainer, Steve Drake, plus others)
- Links to other LifeWay-provided offerings, such as:
  - ◆ MyStudyBible.com
  - ◆ CrossBooks.com
  - ◆ WORDSearch product family
  - ◆ Commentaries
  - ◆ Other theological reference items
  - ◆ Leadership training events
  - ◆ EXTRA (a continuing helps page for Sunday school leaders)

Webb said in the future the *Pastors Today* section on LifeWay.com could also include communities and forums where pastors can interact with one another, share information and upload their own content to share with their peers. ■

***Pastors Today* is available at no charge to anyone who wants to subscribe. Go to [LifeWay.com/PastorsToday](http://LifeWay.com/PastorsToday) to sign up.**

# Parenting teens is tough; LifeWay offers help

by Polly House



**P**arenting a teenager is terrifying! “There’s no doubt about it,” said Mike Wakefield. “Even if the teenager is a great kid, it’s still absolutely terrifying to think about all the new skills a parent has to develop to navigate through those years.”

Wakefield leads the team that produces *Parenting Teens*, a relaunch of LifeWay’s popular *Living with Teenagers* magazine. The redesign of the magazine has been developed specifically to answer questions, offer advice and provide resource information to help parents be the primary spiritual developers in their families.

“I believe most Christian parents want to be the ones who teach and lead their teenagers; they just don’t know how,” he said.

“When we were redesigning this magazine, we looked at tons of other parenting publications,” he said. “We wanted this one to be different. We asked ourselves, ‘what can we do that would make a parent want to pick up this magazine

instead of some of these others?’ What we discovered is that we (LifeWay) are the only ones who look at parenting teens from a Christian perspective. So, when we went to redesign the magazine, we really wanted to highlight that difference. We also wanted to help parents develop their own Christian walk, as well as offer practical advice. I think we have done that.”

*Parenting Teens* will be divided into three sections: “Know, Grow, Become.”

“We want to help parents *know* their teens, so we will give lots of information about teen culture and issues related specifically to adolescence,” Wakefield said. “We want them to *grow* as parents, which is the section where we focus on parenting skills and issues. And, we want to help them *become* more Christlike, so we’ve added a section specifically for a parent’s spiritual growth as an individual.”

Each issue of the monthly magazine will feature a “Voice of a Teen” column. A teen will write this column and address some struggle, such as the struggle to be perfect: perfect grades, perfect body, perfect talents, etc. “On the perfection topic, we want the parents to understand their own

Go to [LifeWay.com/ParentingTeens](http://LifeWay.com/ParentingTeens) or call (800) 458-2772 for more information, including ordering. Wakefield can be reached at [mike.wakefield@lifeway.com](mailto:mike.wakefield@lifeway.com).

attempt at perfection – and, yes, parents do that too – may be having a negative influence on their teens,” Wakefield said. “Hearing it straight from the teen will have an impact.”

### Bundling option

While *Parenting Teens* will be available as an individual subscription, Wakefield said there is the option of bundling *Parenting Teens* with *ec magazine*, a monthly magazine for teens that offers challenging daily devotions and relevant feature articles designed to help students understand that their relationship with Christ should affect every part of their lives.

“Bundling these two magazines together can be a great benefit for the whole family,” Wakefield said. “The magazines will be aligned thematically to help each one build on the other. The articles won’t be the same, of course, but they will encourage discussion between parents and teens about what they’ve read.”

Parents who choose a bundle option will receive a 15 percent discount on the pair of magazines.

### Good value for churches

*Parenting Teens* will offer four Bible study outlines in each issue of the magazine – for churches that have Sunday school or small

groups for parents of teenagers.

“What youth minister doesn’t want to be a hero for the parents of his or her students?” Wakefield asked. “With this resource, he or she can provide a way for parents of youth to be disciplined throughout the week. In this way, *Parenting Teens* is so much more than just a leisure reading or advice magazine.

“We want parents who have issues with their teens to know they are not alone, insane or bad parents,” Wakefield said with a laugh. “Parenting teens can be tough. We want to offer tools to make it a little easier.” ■



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# What ministry assistants wish their pastors knew

by Polly House

## **P**astors, do you know what your ministry assistants wish you knew?

Lana Rose knows. Ministry assistants have told her.

Rose is the ministry assistant (MA) specialist for the Tennessee Baptist Convention and leads an MA conference for LifeWay.

“Most churches have fewer than 200 members,” Rose said. “These churches usually have one ministry assistant and maybe one financial secretary. So, these MAs have a lot of work to do.”

She said, “Respect, appreciation and common courtesy go a long way in helping an MA feel affirmed in the work.”

When Rose asked the assistants on her email list what they wish their pastors knew, dozens of responses came quickly.

They seemed to fall into three categories: professional, personal and personality.

### **Professional**

- I could be a wealth of information to him. I often stand in the gap between him and the church members, so I have knowledge that could be helpful if he would just ask.
- I would like to be reimbursed when I use my own car and cell phone for church business.
- I would like for him to go to bat for me on salary and benefit issues. I deserve to make a livable wage.

## **“Respect, appreciation and common courtesy go a long way in helping an MA feel affirmed in the work.”**

— Lana Rose

- I want to be acknowledged for my professional skills. I am skilled in a wide range of computer software, financial practices and graphic design, plus I have exceptional interpersonal and relational skills that I use with church members and church staff members.
- I would like to attend training so I can be better at my job and form some professional relationships with other ministry assistants.

### **Personal**

- I want to have the freedom to come to him and appropriately share struggles within the church family. He doesn't always know what is going on.
- I want to be kept in the loop. If he gets a call about a celebration, a sickness or especially a death in the church family, I need to know.
- I'd like to be kept informed about his schedule. I don't need to know

specifics, just when he will be in the office and available.

- I appreciate it when he talks positively about me in front of church members and other church staff members. If they see that he values me, they will value me as well.
- I want him to know that I am intensely loyal to him and our church. I stand up for him when others criticize him.

### **Personality**

- I wish he would say “good morning” to me when he comes in each day and would show interest in my family and me.
- I wish he would be more in tune with the church members' struggles and health issues. I hear about it when they think he doesn't care.
- I'd like to see him visit with church members more, especially the homebound.
- I want him to understand that no matter how much education he has or how well he preaches, people mostly just care about how much he loves them.
- I wish he would spend more time with his family and in prayer. ■

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*LifeWay offers training for ministry assistants. Go to [LifeWay.com/events/training](http://LifeWay.com/events/training).*

# Luter exhorts leaders to commitment and renewal

by Russ Rankin

**S**outhern Baptist Convention President Fred Luter exhorted African American believers to heighten their denominational involvement while also seeking spiritual renewal as he addressed the Black Church Leadership and Family Conference at the LifeWay Ridgecrest Conference Center.



Fred Luter

“They [many SBC leaders] fully expect me to nominate more African Americans to serve on SBC boards and committees,” Luter said in voicing his commitment to Southern Baptist diversity.

“Brothers and sisters, I’m excited about that,” he said, “but let me be clear. You and your churches must be involved in the Cooperative Program and your local associations for me to do that. It’s the way the SBC operates.”

Luter, pastor of New Orleans’ Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, told the 1,200 attendees at the conference, also known as Black Church Week, they must first be fully renewed by God before they can expect to be fully utilized by God.

“There are things the Lord requires of you and expects of you if you say ‘Here am I, Lord; send me,’” said Luter.

“There’s not a day that goes by when we are not sifted and tried by our tormenter,” Luter said. “None of us are exempt from attacks of the enemy. You can be single, saved and satisfied. You can be widowed and wonderful. You can be an upstanding usher or a devoted deacon. No one is

exempt. The enemy will do all he can to attack the minds of the sons and daughters of God.

“If you are going to be victorious, faithful to God and go where God sends you, you must have a renewed mind,” Luter said.

**A renewed mind should help you think about your Christ (Phil. 2:5).** “In other words,” Luter said, “when I think about the goodness of Jesus and all He did for me, my soul shouts.”

**A renewed mind should help you think about your choices (Phil. 2:7).**

“Jesus didn’t allow His heavenly position and reputation to affect His earthy responsibilities,” Luter said. “If you want God to send you, you need to have your decisions and choices pleasing to your heavenly Father.”

**A renewed mind should help you think about the cross (Phil. 2:8).** “Every time we take the Lord’s Supper at Franklin Avenue, it is an opportunity to turn our attention and remind us about the cross and the anguish He went through for us,” Luter said.

Jeffrey Curtis, LifeWay’s program director

for the week, said, “Black Church Week is such an important event because it helps create an awareness of who LifeWay is and the many biblical solutions and services we have for urban and black congregations,” he said. “Also, the week creates a better understanding of who Southern Baptists are and the scope of the Southern Baptist Convention.”

Each year about half of the attendees are first-timers.

“We hear it repeatedly each year that they weren’t aware there are African Americans serving with the International Mission Board. They didn’t know the work of NAMB or SBC disaster relief. They didn’t know about the six SBC seminaries and how the Cooperative Program works [for supporting national and international missions and ministries],” Curtis said.

“Awareness is huge, not just for LifeWay but for the SBC.” ■

Go to [LifeWay.com/AfricanAmerican](http://LifeWay.com/AfricanAmerican) for information on the 2013 Black Church Leadership and Family Conference, July 22-26 at Ridgecrest.

# Want to get published?

## CrossBooks offers self-publishing help

by Devin Maddox

**I**n 2009, LifeWay, through B&H Publishing Group, launched CrossBooks. Best described by CrossBooks' campaign "Share God's story by telling yours," and B&H's "Every word matters," CrossBooks combines author-assisted publishing with reputable brand association, a unique combination in the world of books.

"CrossBooks offers a way for people to tell their story and share the message that God has laid on their heart," said Joseph Glorioso, author relations manager for CrossBooks.

Book publishing is a competitive market, often discouraging to new authors.

From the author's perspective, finding a reputable publisher can be difficult, especially with a first manuscript. From the publisher's perspective, finding a quality manuscript among a sea of submissions can be difficult. CrossBooks is a mutually beneficial solution.

"Many self-publishing companies publish anything and everything that comes across the desk," said Steve Drake, LifeWay's director of pastoral relations. Drake leads the theological review team for CrossBooks. "CrossBooks vets each manuscript through a team of theological readers, ensuring each manuscript is consistent with LifeWay's core values."

LifeWay, as an entity of the Southern

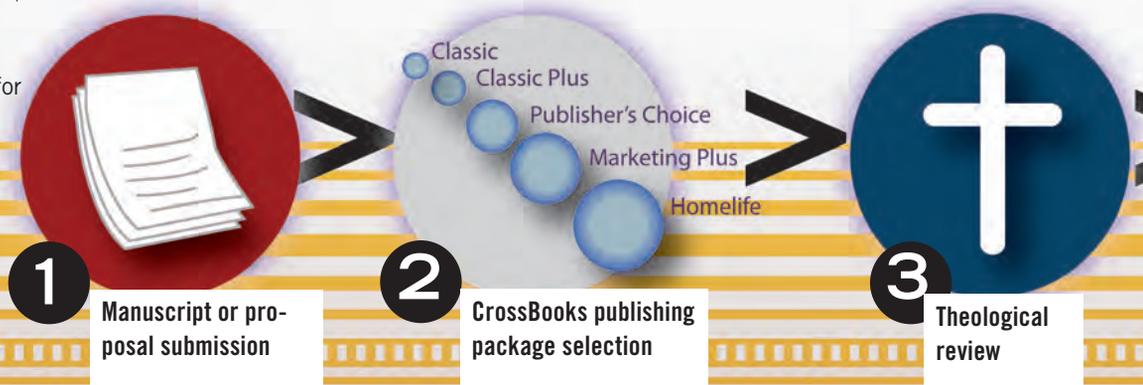
Baptist Convention, uses the Baptist Faith and Message (2000) as the doctrinal standard by which all manuscripts are measured. If the content of the submission is contrary to the BF&M, the manuscript is returned for further edits or dismissal.

CrossBooks is not simply "self-publishing," but rather an author assisted platform, ensuring a high level of theological and editorial integrity, explained Glorioso. By protecting the integrity of their titles, CrossBooks strives to offer a partnership with authors rather than merely a service. According to LifeWay President Thom Rainer, CrossBooks' approach is unique in the publishing industry.



## Publishing with CrossBooks

CrossBooks titles cover a diverse range of topics, including (but not limited to): theology, biblical studies, commentaries, church life, inspiration, fiction, children's books and devotionals. Visit [CrossBooks.com](http://CrossBooks.com) for more information.



“The book publishing business is going through a challenging period in which creative new relationships between authors and publishers are gaining favor,” Rainer said when CrossBooks was launched.

“CrossBooks, as a new genre of publishing, is a groundbreaking solution.”

CrossBooks distinguishes itself from other self-publishers, specifically in its statement on theological reviews.

“We do regret turning authors away, but since CrossBooks is a division of LifeWay Christian Resources, we are committed to maintaining an established standard that meets both literary expertise and Christian values,” Drake said.

Glorioso sees the theological and editorial review process as vital to reaching readers with the gospel. Allowing CrossBooks to

assist the author through theological and editorial review frees the author to focus on their message, a luxury many who self-publish struggle to find.

“The message the author feels led to share may be a legacy to their family, a witness to non-Christians or a message to help believers grow in their relationship with Christ,” he said. ■

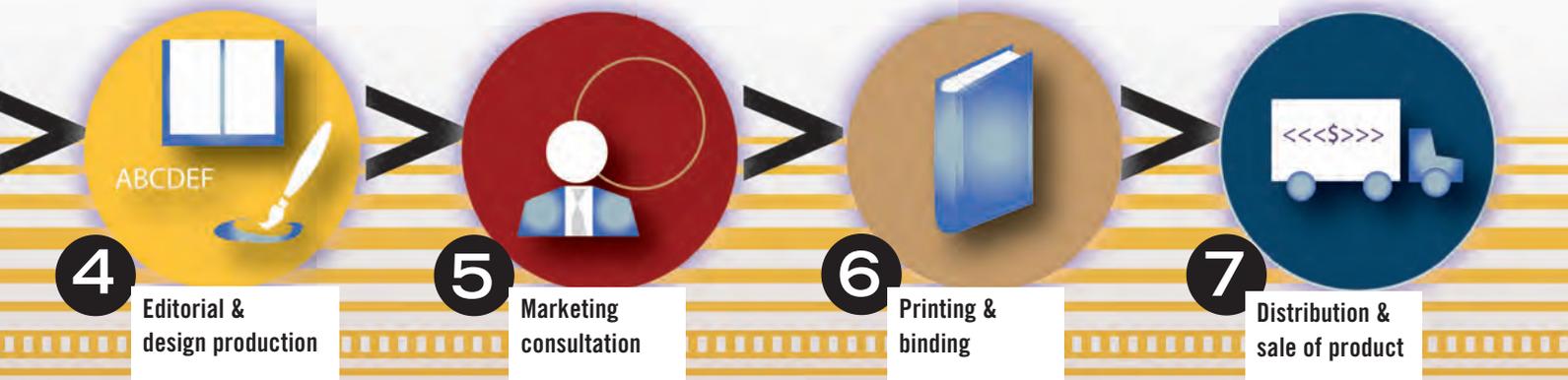
*Visit [CrossBooks.com](http://CrossBooks.com) for more information.*

### REFER A FRIEND

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### CROSSBOOKS OVERVIEW

- Offers author assisted publishing solution, more than a self-publisher
- Introduced by LifeWay in 2009
- Led in part by Joseph Glorioso and Paul Mikos of B&H and Steve Drake of pastoral relations
- Has a strong commitment to theological integrity, preserved through the theological review of each book
- Generates hundreds of new book projects each month
- Provides a diverse range of publishing products for prospective authors, including various marketing, editing and design solutions
- Includes notable titles such as: *Primer on Biblical Preaching* by Jerry Sutton (required text at Liberty University), *Breaking the Evangelism Code* by Victor Benavides (required text at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) and *When Christ Sets You Free* by Betty Hassler (2012 Selah Award winner)



# Passion Week spotlighted in January Bible Study

**S**tart 2013 off right with a time-honored tradition: a churchwide Bible study.

The 2013 January Bible Study chronicles the *Greatest Week in History: Luke's Account of the Passion Week*.

Can't do it in January? No problem! It doesn't have to happen in January. JBS is flexible enough to use any month, any day of the week, with any age group.

This seven-session study will be the first in the 66-year history of JBS that the study has focused on Jesus Christ's final week on Earth.

"There have been many significant events that have marked time in our

collective history," said JBS Team Leader Dwayne McCrary. "As significant as dates like Pearl Harbor, man's first step on the moon and Sept. 11, 2001 may be within the context of American history, they are secondary compared to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. That one event and the week leading up to it mark all of history for eternity. Those seven days serve as the foundation for both the character and substance of Christianity."

McCrary continued, "In these days of tolerance, it appears that the distinctive traits of the Christian faith are being lost or at least blurred. In some settings,

the focus is on the teachings of Jesus rather than His sacrificial redemption.

Jesus is more than a great teacher or worthy example. First and foremost, He is Savior. The purpose of this study is to call people back to the cross and the events leading up to his resurrection."

LifeWay offers free online administrative

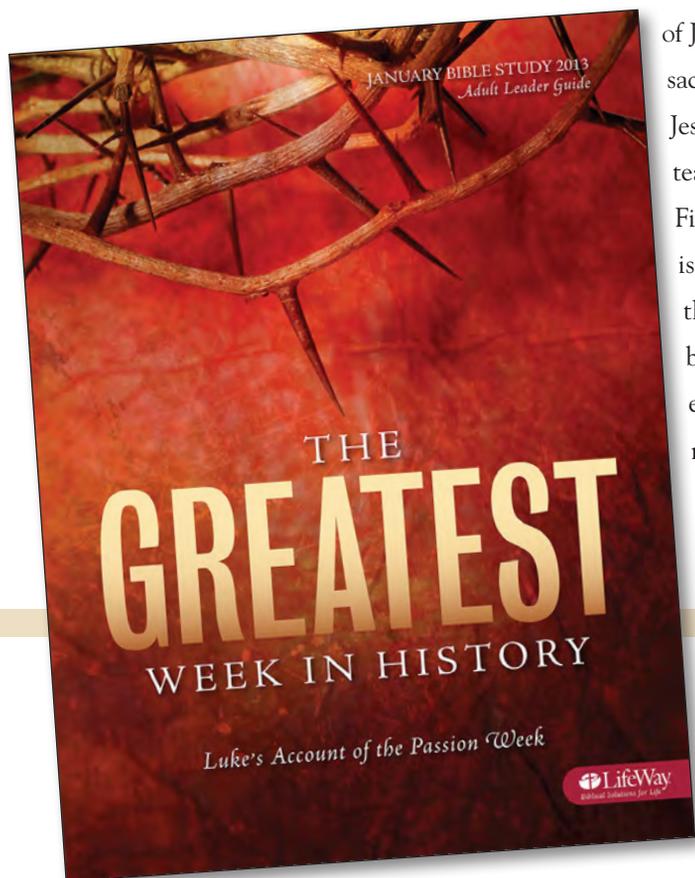
helps that give leaders assistance in planning and promotion, a sermon guide and promotional posters at [LifeWay.com/JBS](http://LifeWay.com/JBS).

New for 2013 is an eLeader option.

"This is a PDF portfolio that offers everything in one download," McCrary said. "Everything that is on the leader's CD is available as a PDF package along with an ePub version of the leader guide. For just \$12.95 it's a bargain that will make the leader's preparation and implementation even simpler."

Rob Futral, pastor at Broadmoor Baptist Church in Madison, Miss., wrote the 2013 learner guide material. Timothy Paul Jones, associate professor of leadership and church ministry at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, wrote the expositor's notes and John McClendon, founder of the 4:12 Network, wrote the teaching plans.

"When a whole church can have a shared experience such as January Bible Study, it's a great thing," McCrary said. "Hearing the same story and learning the same lesson from Scripture can bring a congregation to share the same heart." ■



**"Jesus is more than a great teacher or worthy example. First and foremost, He is Savior."**

— Dwayne McCrary

# B&H Publishing Group wins four Retailers Choice Awards

**L**ifeWay's B&H Publishing Group continues to receive kudos for its resources.

B&H received four honors at the 12th annual Retailers Choice Awards, sponsored by *Christian Retailing* magazine and held during the 2012 International Christian Retail Show in Orlando, Fla.

*The Resolution for Men* by Stephen Kendrick, Alex Kendrick and Randy Alcorn won the Retailers Choice Award in the Nonfiction Men category. *The Resolution for Women* by Priscilla Shirer won in the Nonfiction Women category. Both books were released in association with the hit film *Courageous* and have become New York Times and CBA best sellers.

In relation, B&H's *Courageous Living Bible Study Leader Kit* took home the DVD/Video honor.

The publisher's fourth win was in the Health and Fitness



category for *Reshaping It All: Motivation for Physical and Spiritual Fitness*, a New York Times best seller by Candace Cameron Bure and Darlene Schacht.

Winners were selected from among more than 300 products nominated in 41 categories. Retailers were asked to judge nominations based on the impact they have had on staff and customers, including their ability to: speak to people's hearts and evoke emotion, open people's minds to new ways of thinking and encourage and affirm Christ-like living.

"We are so thankful for this industry affirmation," said B&H President Selma Wilson. "Just like the authors who created these projects, retailers are our ministry partners, and we value their knowledge and talents in our relationship together." ■

Go to [BHPublishingGroup.com](http://BHPublishingGroup.com) to learn more about resources from B&H.

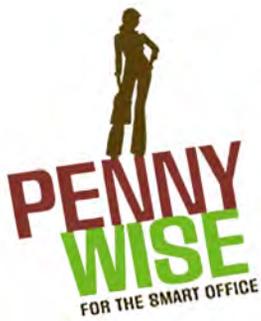
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# Save money on your office supplies

## LifeWay, Penny Wise announce savings program

**L**ifeWay recently announced a savings program with Penny Wise Office Products, a major national supplier, giving churches the purchasing power of a much larger company.

Penny Wise offers a vast selection of name brand office products at low prices and with fast free delivery.

“Coupled with LifeWay’s aggregate purchasing power, LifeWay church customers will receive great sale prices,” said Jennie Taylor of LifeWay’s retail marketing department. “Through the agreement, LifeWay customers can buy

brands like 3M, HP, Bic and hundreds more at a fraction of the regular selling price.”

Penny Wise offers the largest online office products ordering network in the nation and online buyers receive an additional three percent discount for all orders. LifeWay customers also can order by toll-free phone, email or toll-free fax.

“While no office supply company can guarantee their prices are the lowest on every product every day, LifeWay’s program assures our members the lowest price available,” Taylor said.

“If you buy a product from Penny Wise,

then see it advertised for less and send the ad to Penny Wise within 30 days, Penny Wise will credit your account,” she said.

“In addition, your satisfaction is 100 percent guaranteed,” she said. “If you aren’t happy, neither are they. They will send UPS out to pick up your return absolutely free of charge.”

Call (800) 464-2799 or go to [LifeWay.com/PennyWise](http://LifeWay.com/PennyWise) to learn more about the program, request a catalog or place an order. LifeWay customers should use the savings code “LIF” to receive discounts and benefits. ■

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# B&H Kids imprint launches with movie tie-ins, Bible storybooks

**B** &H Publishing Group is excited to play in the children's marketplace with the fall 2012 launch of its B&H Kids imprint, led by a fun assortment of movie tie-in projects and Bible storybooks plus a highly experienced editorial and marketing team.

Flagship releases include *Firebird* – a colorfully illustrated tale featured in the inspiring new film *Unconditional* (in theaters fall 2012) – and *Courageous Teens*, the latest in a series of popular products based on box office hit *Courageous* that includes current best sellers *The Resolution for Men* and *The Resolution for Women*. Author Michael Catt brings fresh insight to stories of people in the Bible who displayed great courage when it would have been easier to play it safe.

*Courageous Teens* hits bookstores at a strategic time as students head back to school this fall and need that extra nudge of encouragement to stand up for their beliefs and not just go along with the crowd. Parents should consider reading the book with their teens and using the discussion questions at the end of each chapter to encourage dialogue about the pressures of life and how we can respond as Christians.



*A Read-to-Me Toddlers Bible* (available in English and Spanish with associated interactive apps) and *The 365 Day Children's Bible Storybook* also are scheduled for fall 2012 release. Several complete Bibles for kids featuring a unique range of classic and modern designs are planned for winter 2013.

The God-given responsibility to disciple children into an authentic faith can be daunting for parents. B&H Kids wants to come alongside parents and help them lay a spiritual foundation for their children and equip them to help their children

understand the gospel and lead them to faith in Christ.

The B&H Kids team is working to provide the best resources to help children and teens grasp the truths of God's Word and how it applies to their everyday life.

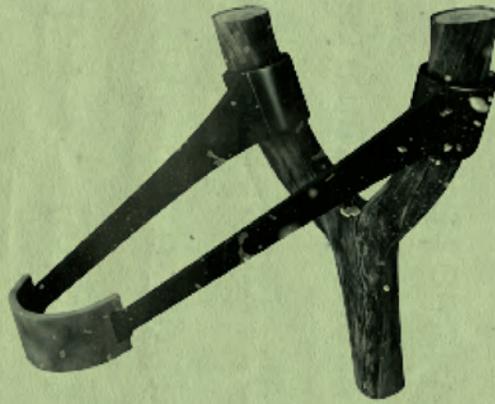
The B&H Kids team is guided by lead acquisitions editor Dan Lynch, whose 30 years of experience include tenures at Word Records and Tommy Nelson, and marketing vice president Mary Katharine Hunt who was previously a director for LifeWay Kids. Additional support is provided by acquisitions editor Dawn

Woods, formerly of Thomas Nelson, and marketing strategist Shannon Kozee who most recently was a marketing manager at Big Idea.

"B&H Kids is taking off in a big way with a strong commitment to fun and innovative content and tools to engage children," Lynch said.

"Whether it's print or digital, a book or an app, our products are especially geared to help parents and leaders interact with kids in ways that truly make an impact, a powerful difference in their lives."

Hunt agreed, "With tools to help parents build a strong connection with their kids in ways they never have before, B&H Kids will become a trusted teaching partner for them to turn to time and again whenever they need biblically and theologically sound, age appropriate, engaging content." ■



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and sign-up to preview one month for free.

## Statistics:

# Big Apple brought big numbers

by Polly House

**A**lmost 80,000 children and adults made professions of faith, receiving Christ as their personal Savior, as they took a Big Apple Adventure during Vacation Bible School 2011.

Almost 25 million churches have reported statistics to LifeWay's VBS area, and those numbers are telling some good news.

More than 2.8 million preschoolers, children, teenagers and adults were enrolled in Vacation Bible School in churches across the United States and around the world.

The number of churches reporting their VBS numbers was up by more than 2 percent, reversing a several-year decline in the numbers of churches reporting.

"Vacation Bible School consistently returns a statistic that says the number of professions of faith made by those attending VBS equals about 25 percent of the number of baptisms in the Southern Baptist Convention," said Jerry Wooley, LifeWay's VBS specialist.

"Having more churches reporting their statistics helps us have a better grasp on just how many people are reached through VBS," Wooley said. "Numbers are important when you remember that every



Worship Rally during Big Apple Adventure VBS in New Freedom, Pa. Photo By Kent Harville



number represents someone touched."

Wooley said the LifeWay VBS team is encouraged by the numbers.

"It shows how much prayer and work our churches put into making VBS not only fun, but most importantly, evangelical," he said.

The statistics show VBS enrollment for 2011 was up by about 3 percent over 2010.

"Some great news for churches was the number of prospects added to their Sunday school rolls," said Wooley. "This number

was up more than 15 percent. This represents more than 39,000 men, women and children who said they want to be contacted by churches and enrolled in Sunday school.

What takes place following the week of VBS is as important as what goes on during the week.

"Good follow-up is crucial," Wooley said. "You have opportunities following VBS that didn't exist before. We can't even measure how many people may be reached after VBS ends when churches get the privilege of visiting with the families of the people attending VBS."

Statistics for 2012's Amazing Wonders Aviation VBS will be available in summer of 2013. ■

# Student Life joins LifeWay family

by Marty King

**T**ogether, LifeWay and Student Life, Inc., minister to more than 100,000 teenagers each year as two of the largest providers of Christian student conferences. On Aug. 15, Student Life officially became part of the LifeWay family of resources.

Leaders of both ministries emphasized that while their camp experiences are programmatically different, each ministry is committed to seeing the lives of students transformed by Jesus and His Word.

“LifeWay and Student Life share a passion for serving the church and helping the next generation grow in their devotion to Christ and commitment to reach the world for Him,” said Ben Trueblood, LifeWay’s director of student ministries. “That passion for young people makes this relationship possible and beneficial to the Kingdom.”

Student Life, based in Birmingham, Ala., has provided Christian summer camps and conferences for kids and youth since 1993.

Because of the unique differences and emphases of each organization’s camp offerings and locations, leaders do not expect significant changes will be necessary in programming or locations.

“Both of our organizations provide conferences and camps in slightly different ways that meet needs

of individual churches and student ministries,” Trueblood explained. “Many of those differences won’t change so that we can continue to meet specific needs of individual churches.

“Student Life staff members are now LifeWay employees but will continue to work out of their Birmingham offices, and Student Life will continue to promote its own identity and conference offerings,” Trueblood said.

Student Life President J. Roger Davis said the ministry “has been faithfully serving churches for nearly 20 years by creating events and experiences for people to have an authentic interaction with God.

“This new season of ministry for us is exciting as being a part of the LifeWay family will allow us to continue to serve the churches we have served and

also partner with new youth ministers throughout the country as we all work together to raise a generation of devoted Christ followers,” he said.

Earl Roberson, who will continue as vice president of operations for Student Life, said he is eager to “continue the great ministry of Student Life as a part of the LifeWay family.”

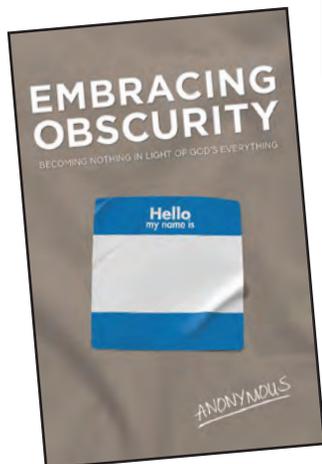
Even though LifeWay and Student Life leaders have begun the necessary behind-the-scenes transition, both organizations already have a full schedule of 2013 conferences available at their respective websites: LifeWay.com/Fuge, LifeWay.com/WorldChangers, LifeWay.com/PowerPlant and StudentLife.com.

This union does not include the Student Life curriculum line, Trueblood said. ■



# NEW RESOURCES

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## B&H PUBLISHERS

### *Embracing Obscurity*

by Anonymous

An established Christian author electing to remain anonymous writes about living and dying in simplicity, contending that true success as modeled by Christ starts with humility, service, sacrifice and surrender. Releases in October.

Product #9781433677816. \$14.99

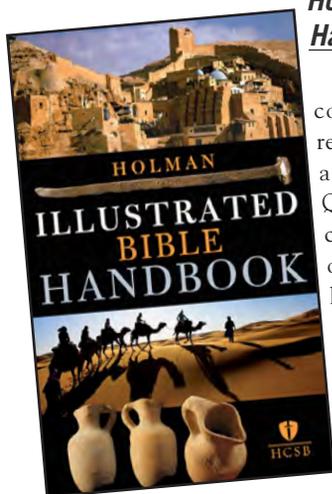
### *Creature of the Word: The Jesus-Centered Church*

by Matt Chandler, Eric Geiger and Josh Patterson

When the gospel is declared and applied to God's people, the church becomes a "creature of the Word," understanding, embracing and living out the reality of Christ. The authors examine the scripture-based beauty of a Jesus-centered church and present practical steps for churches in order to be completely saturated in the gospel in theology, culture and practice. Releases in October.

Product #9781433678622. \$14.99

### *Holman Illustrated Bible Handbook*



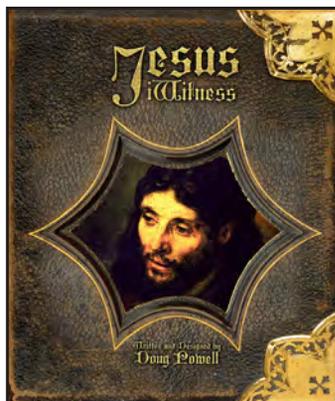
In addition to full-color maps, photographs, reconstructions, charts and a Smartphone-accessible QR code included in each chapter that leads to related on line teaching, this handbook provides a full overview of all 66 books of the Bible. Releases in October.

Product #9780805495874. \$17.99

### *Jesus iWitness*

by Doug Powell

Thirty-two intensively designed, interactive pages bring readers into the true story of Jesus' life on earth with remarkable photographs,



painting and other visuals. Releases in October.

Product #9780805495850. \$19.99

### *All to Jesus*

by Robert J. Morgan

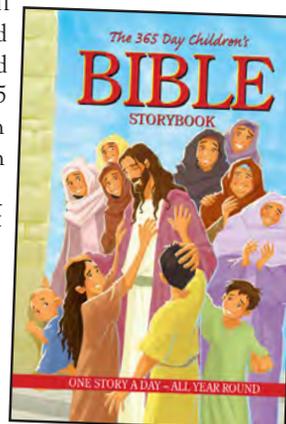
Daily readings derived from the pages of real life and a pastor's heart reveal God's immeasurable power and keen attention to the smallest detail, as well as how He cares for us in ways we never have imagined. Releases in October.

Product #9781433677861. \$14.99

### *The 365 Day Children's Bible Storybook*

Favorite Bible stories come alive in this bright, durable storybook that guides children through the Bible with colorful illustrations and easily understood retellings of 365 character-driven lessons. Releases in December.

Product #9781433680069. \$24.99



### *Exemplary Life: A Theology of Church Life*

by Andy Chambers

Andy Chambers revisits Luke's theology to reassert the apostle's voice in 21st Century conversations about the faithful formation of New Testament churches. Releases in November.

Product #9780805449617. \$29.99



### *Forgotten Songs: Reclaiming the Psalms for Christian Worship*

edited by C. Richard Wells and Ray Van Neste

This book offers a look at the biblical and historical foundations for the use of Psalms in worship. In addition, it examines ways to use the Psalms in worship today. Releases in October.

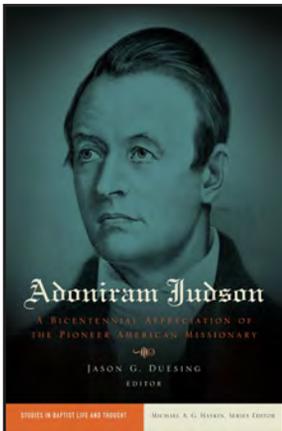
Product #9781433671784. \$19.99

**True North:  
Christ, the  
Gospel and  
Creation Care**

by Mark Liederbach  
and Seth Bible

A Christian ethics professor explores the person and work of Jesus Christ in relation to creation, redemption and restoration, explaining why creation care involves more than global warning debates. Releases in November.

Product #9781433676888.  
\$14.99



**Adoniram Judson:  
A Bicentennial Appreciation  
of the Pioneer American  
Missionary**

edited by Jason G. Duesing

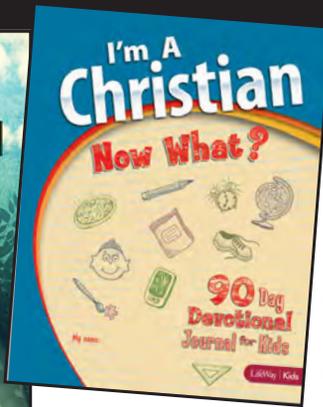
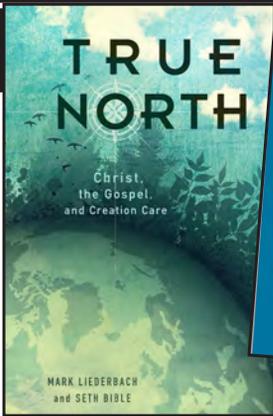
This volume honors the life and mission of the man whose departure for the Far East in 1812 marked the beginning of Americans formally joining the modern missions movement. Releases in October.

Product #9781433677656.  
\$24.99

**CHURCH  
RESOURCES**

***I'm a Christian, Now What?***

*I'm a Christian, Now What?* will help kids grow in their relationship with God.



This journal includes 90 days of quiet-time guidance, topic-related articles, games, and activities, plus guidance in taking worship notes and locating Scriptures. It's perfect for use as a follow up to the *I'm a Christian Now!* new Christian's class. Releases Oct. 1.

Product #005490151, \$6.95

***Wholly Kids***

Helping leaders and parents understand child development just got a whole lot easier. LifeWay is introducing *Wholly Kids*, full of fun graphics and details about how kids develop and learn. Topics include learning styles, guiding



VBS 2013 Sampler  
& Super Sampler



Club VBS 2013  
Starter Kit

behavior, characteristics of kids, teaching kids with special needs and more. Give a copy to all the volunteers in your ministry and watch their ability to interact with kids blossom. This book is perfect for leaders and parents. Releases Oct. 1.

Product #005490111, \$12.99

***Club VBS 2013 Starter Kit***

Each day, kids will discover the One True God, and you'll have the opportunity to challenge them to respond to Jesus as the Living Savior and Lord of All. *The Club VBS 2013 Starter Kit* will help you plan your Jungle Jaunt with confidence. It's jam-packed with one leader guide and one set of learner cards for each age group – along with samples of promo items and accessories – to help you assess the needs of your church. Simply order the amount

of curriculum and other supplies for each class separately. Releases Oct. 1.

Product #005490102, \$99.99

***VBS 2013 Sampler***

Planning VBS is easy with the *VBS 2013 Sampler*. It's packed with curriculum, promotional items, music and instructions to help as you promote, plan and host your VBS. The sampler includes one leader and learner guide for each age group – babies to preteens – plus one adult VBS learner guide and one youth learner guide. You'll also find planning resources, promotional helps, music and more.

Releases Oct. 1.

Product #005487573, \$69.99

***VBS 2013 Super Sampler***

In addition to all that you'll find in the Sampler, the Super



# NEW RESOURCES

Order online at [LifeWay.com](http://LifeWay.com), call (800) 458-2772 or visit a LifeWay Christian Store.

Sampler contains a Worship Rally Pack, preschool rotation resources, numerous additional promotional items and other accessories – including decorations. The Super Sampler is a must-have for getting the most out of your VBS planning. Releases Oct. 1.

Product #005487652, \$199.99

## ***Backyard Kids Club Kit***

Take Colossal Coaster World VBS into your neighborhood and surrounding community with the VBS 2013 Backyard Kids Club. The *Backyard Kids Club Kit* provides all the basics to host and lead a Backyard VBS: promotion instructions, snack ideas, folders filled with children's and preschool Bible study, activities for crafts and music – all at an affordable price.

Hosting a Backyard VBS at multiple sites? Order one kit per home. For mission trips or community settings, a good rule of thumb for ordering is one kit for every 20 kids. Releases Oct. 1.

Product #005532691, \$34.99

## ***Backyard Kids Club Director's Guide***

The VBS 2013 *Backyard Kids Club Director's Guide* has step-by-step guidance for planning and organizing teams to host and lead Backyard Kids Clubs.

Multiply the impact of your VBS outreach with *Backyard Kids Club*. Releases Oct. 1.

Product #005532692, \$14.99

## ***The Gospel Project for Kids***

*The Gospel Project for Kids* follows a chronological timeline of Bible events. Each week, these stories come to life through video, music, activities and more as kids connect biblical events to God's ultimate plan of redemption through

Christ. Sign up to review the first month of digital resources free at [GospelProject.com](http://GospelProject.com). Releases Oct. 1.

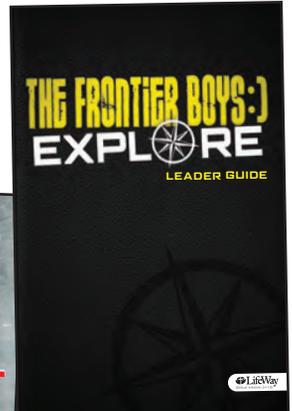
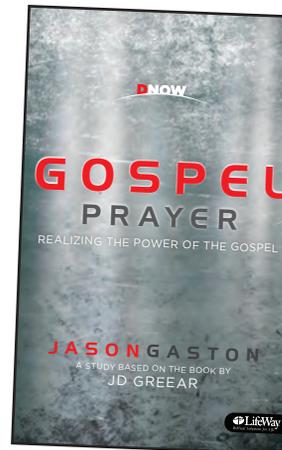
Available in digital or print format. Pricing online at [GospelProject.com](http://GospelProject.com).

## ***Gospel Prayer: Realizing the Power of the Gospel***

by Jason Gaston

*Gospel Prayer* guides students into a deeper, understanding of the gospel – God's gracious acceptance of us in Christ. More than just a means to salvation, the gospel propels and enables us to live the life Christ has called us to live. *Gospel Prayer* will truly take students on a journey to realizing its power. Releases Oct. 1.

Student book, Product #005539274, \$3.95; Leader guide, Product #005539275, \$7.95



## ***The Frontier Boys: Explore Bible Study***

Life after death. Purpose. Miracles. Decisions. Prayer. Future. These are all issues students wrestle with,

and *The Frontier Boys* explores these. Through group sessions and personal study, students will explore key aspects of the Christian faith and better understand the struggles teens face. The leader kit includes an exploration guide, leader guide, *The Frontier Boys* movie and viewing license and the explore video curriculum. (6 sessions over 7 weeks) Releases Oct. 1.

Exploration guide, Product #005539342, \$9.95; Leader guide, Product #005539316, \$6.95; Leader kit, Product #005539343, \$79.95

## ***Kairos: Defining Moments***

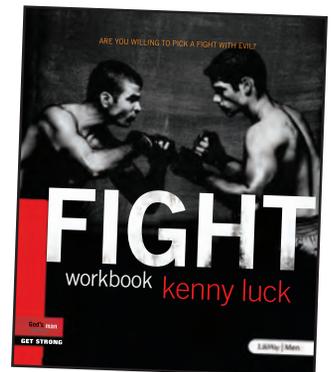
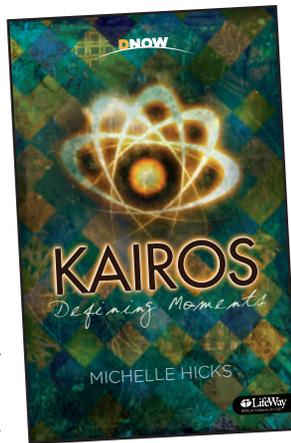
by Michelle Hicks

*Kairos* is defined as an opportune moment or period of time in which something special happens.

This five-session Bible study will examine five Old Testament people and explore how moments shaped

each individual. Students will begin to better grasp and understand the importance of developing and reflecting character aspects that honor and glorify Christ. Releases Oct. 1.

Student book, Product #005539276, \$3.95; Leader guide, Product #005539277, \$7.95; Leader bundle, Product #005539240, \$24.95



## ***FIGHT: Are You Willing to Pick a Fight with Evil?***

by Kenny Luck

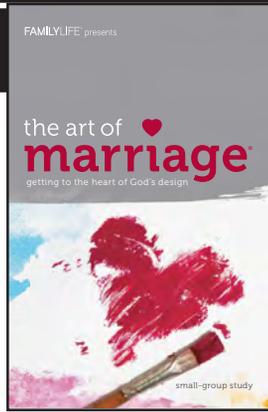
Many men ignore the spiritual

war surrounding them. This eight-session study can help men respond to the fight with boldness and duty. This workbook will equip men – in a devotional setting, accountability partner setting and in group – to do spiritual battle with the enemy. This includes recognizing the deceptions, realizing the roles men play and rescuing the captives from the enemy's stronghold. Releases Oct. 1.

Leader kit, Product #005469700, \$34.95; Workbook, Product #005469701, \$10.95

***The Art of Marriage: Getting to the Heart of God's Design***

Every marriage is unique, expressed by the colorful personalities of each spouse and textured by the circumstances at play in their lives. Blending



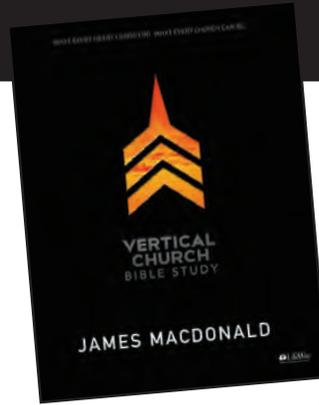
these to make marriage work is challenging but definitely worth the effort. Releases Oct. 1.

Leader kit, Product #005501954, \$49.99; Member book, Product #005501955, \$9.99

***Vertical Church Bible Study: What Every Heart Longs For, What Every Church Can Be***

by James MacDonald

Vertical Church helps church members get beyond a human-



centered horizontal church to focus on seeking God's glory. Participants will examine four requirements for a God-focused church: unashamed adoration, unapologetic preaching, unafraid witness and unceasing prayer. The member book includes activities, viewer guides and group experiences. For more information, go to LifeWay.com/VerticalChurch. Releases Oct. 1.

Leader kit, Product #005522646, \$99.95; Member book, Product #005522647, \$11.95

***It's Not Too Late: How God Uses Less than Perfect People***

by Tony Evans

God frequently uses broken people to accomplish His purposes on earth. A broken person who has learned dependence on God is a force to be reckoned with. This six-session study looks at three men and three women of the Bible who were used mightily by God despite their previous mistakes. You too can learn to focus on the potential of your future, not the missteps of your past. For more information, go to LifeWay.com/ItsNotTooLate. Releases Oct. 1.

Leader kit, Product #005475107, \$99.95; Member book, Product #005475108, \$11.95



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# NEW RESOURCES

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## ***Birds and Bees: A Conversation About God, Sex, and Sexuality***

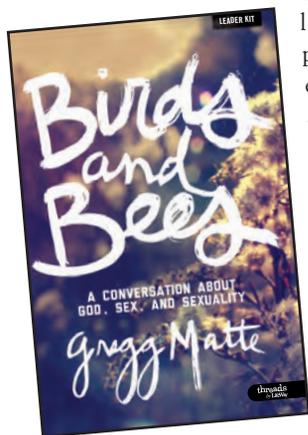
by Gregg Matte

Sex and sexuality are incredibly complicated and powerful topics.

They involve several different layers and connections – physical, of course, but also emotional, social and even spiritual. In this study, Gregg Matte offers an opportunity to dive deeply into such a conversation by engaging the truth contained in God's Word. Through it all, you'll learn how your experiences with sex – now or in the future – can be as sweet and tender and passionate and powerful as God always intended them to be. (6 sessions)

Releases Oct. 1.

Member book, Product #005474745, \$9.95; Leader kit, Product #005474746, \$49.95



## ***A Biblical Marriage in a Broken World: Building a Relationship that Will Go the Distance***

by Danny Akin

Whether you're married, divorced or not yet married but want to be married one day, Danny Akin lays out a clear plan for building a satisfying relationship that will go the distance. He talks specifically to husbands and wives about their role in marriage. He also shares profound advice for parents about raising their kids. This insightful, entertaining and practical resource is ideal for marriage/family workshops, retreats, weekday studies, individual counseling and for marrieds and singles of all ages. Releases Oct. 1.

Leader kit, Product #005535021, \$179.95; Leader guide, Product #005535023, \$7.95; Participant book, Product #005535022, \$8.95



## ***Why Do You Believe That? A Faith Conversation***

by Mary Jo Sharp

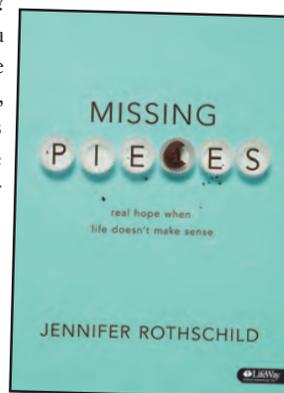
How confident do you feel in talking about matters of faith? Do you wish you could express your beliefs with more effectiveness? Join Mary Jo Sharp in a practical seven-session study to equip you to have meaningful spiritual conversations. You'll gain understanding and skill to share Jesus effectively with others, and you'll better understand your own faith. Answer your doubts, build your confidence and start changing lives. Releases Oct. 15.

Member book, Product #005513459, \$12.95; Leader kit (Contains DVDs and member book with leader helps), Product #005474741, \$99.95

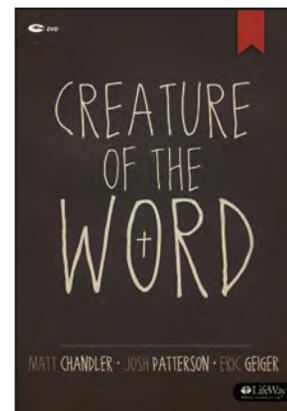
## ***Missing Pieces: Real Hope When Life Doesn't Make Sense***

by Jennifer Rothschild

Does God care? Is He fair? Is He even there? Although you may know all the right answers, they don't always feel right. Explore these and other questions in this realistic look at the messy, mysterious uncertainties of faith. God's ways don't always make sense, but He is trustworthy. Come close to Him. Trust Him more than your feelings.



God will reveal Himself and fill in your missing pieces. Releases Oct. 1. Member book, Product #005371621, \$12.95; Leader kit, Product #005371622, \$149.95



## ***Creature of the Word: The Jesus-Centered Church***

by Matt Chandler, Josh Patterson and Eric Geiger

The Reformers viewed the gospel as not merely one thing among many in the life of a church but rather the means by which the church exists. When the gospel is rightly declared and applied to God's people, the church becomes "a creature of the Word," which understands, embraces and lives out the reality of Christ's birth, life, death and resurrection in more than her doctrinal statement. The gospel impacts all the church is and does. The DVD resource supplements the book by introducing and expanding on the book's content. It also provides a discussion guide for participants and small groups. The DVD includes four video sessions, each approximately 30 minutes long. Releases Oct. 1.

Trade book, Product #005514775, \$14.99; DVD discussion guide, Product #005471369, \$29.95



# BALANCE

We know your role as a pastor is multi-faceted as it is, why add a plethora of church management roles to it. Digital Church is an aggregation of web-based resources and services that you can implement to help your ministries grow - all while simplifying your life. Get back in balance by partnering with Digital Church today!



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