
CCU Review
of BOOKS, CULTURE, MEDIA, LIFE
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COLORADO CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Dear friends,

In a media saturated world, we are always asking the questions: what is really worth reading, what is really worth seeing, or what is really worth listening to?

The *CCU Review of Books, Culture, Media, and Life* was created to help you answer those questions. It originated with our former president, Bill Armstrong, in April 2014. As President Armstrong put it, the CCU review would "appear from time to time for the enlightenment and entertainment of Colorado Christian University students, faculty, staff, trustees, and friends."

The *CCU Review* is a values-driven journal — a collection of reviews and essays that are informed by the University's Strategic Objectives, Mission, Vision, and Statement of Faith. It aims to help you think, to engage with culture, to live wisely, and to deepen your faith.

At CCU, our faculty emphasize academic excellence, while encouraging our students in the relentless pursuit of truth. We want our students to grow in curiosity. We want them to develop character and courage. We want them to love God and people. Finally, we want to raise up informed, articulate citizens, who will be active in public life.

CCU is a university of the liberal arts and professions that still believes in goodness, beauty, and truth. We hold a deep respect for the authority of Scripture and the wonder of God's creation. We love learning, and we want to develop the minds and hearts of our students — but that involves the wise intake of good content.

I believe that readers are leaders, and leaders are readers. Consequently, at the heart of the CCU curriculum is the study of great books — the original works of the greatest minds, both ancient and modern.

By the way, unlike some universities which are steeped in post secularism (i.e. that all books are of equal value and texts are basically unknowable), we still believe that the texts can be known and understood. Furthermore, by reading and discussing great books and the arts, our students learn how to think, how to discern the truth from error, and how to love what is good.

We hope you enjoy this new version of the *CCU Review of Books, Culture, Media, and Life*, and we welcome future suggestions on reviews and essays that you think further the mission and vision of Colorado Christian University.

So, take up and read.

Yours in His service,

DONALD W. SWEETING, Ph.D.
President
Colorado Christian University

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The 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 President and 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 Objectives and our Statement of Faith. We welcome suggestions on reviews and essays that are centered on ideas of interest that further the mission and vision of CCU as a Christian, liberal arts university.

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CHRISTIAN CLASSICS REVISITED

Orthodoxy

by G.K. Chesterton

REVIEW BY DR. MEGAN DEVORE
Associate Professor of Church History and Early Christian Studies

SYNOPSIS

G.K. Chesterton plunged into an agnostic, self-described "spiritual suicide" in his teenage and college years, only to become a Roman Catholic and one of the most prolific and well-known Christian authors of the Victorian era. He penned one of his greatest works, *Orthodoxy*, as a personal apologetic retracing the questions and intuitions of both mind and heart that led him to Christianity. *Orthodoxy* presents a captivating, witty, and solidly serious defense of the faith, demonstrating Chesterton's spectacular conviction that "there never was anything so perilous or so exciting as orthodoxy."

REVIEW

"Until you have read Chesterton, you cannot consider yourselves educated," one of my professors memorably proclaimed. This was no mere confession of favoritism. G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) is rightfully included in lists of larger-than-life authors who articulated a significant defense of the Christian faith for their own era.

A Victorian-age public intellectual of exhilarating creativity and wit, Chesterton produced a vast collection of literary works. Among these publications, *Orthodoxy* (1908) presents a vivacious critique of contemporary social thought and a clever defense of the intellectual respectability of Christian dogma. Its passionate, multifaceted presentation of the wondrous and compelling nature of Christianity in an increasingly skeptical modern cultural milieu remains a pertinent read, as provocatively intriguing today as it was over a century ago.

As Chesterton conveys the personal quest that led him from skeptical agnosticism into unwavering commitment to Christianity, he retraces his scholarly examination of arguments for and against the veracity of the faith by way of swift vignettes and sweeping proclamations. Over the course of nine chapters — each an aspect of these "elephantine adventures in pursuit of the obvious" — *Orthodoxy* expresses Chesterton's view of life as one in colorful contrast to popular modern thought and ultimately as innately consonant with Christianity.

A foundational theme binds each of these chapters: the author's conviction that humans can only flourish in a world that paradoxically contains a "mixture of the familiar with the unfamiliar." That is, Chesterton is convinced that all humans have an intuitive desire for the mysterious, or "the combination of something that is strange with something that is secure," — this is "rightly called romance," opines our Victorian author.

Our world is a "wonderland" in which we are meant to be joyous, yet never complacently content. In Chesterton's eyes, however, the modern outlook had darkened this wonderland, as humans overestimated their abilities within it. In doing so, they rejected divine truth as well as the intellectual humility and mirth that accompany it. Throughout the book, then, Chesterton aims at the mind and the heart; to him, an apology of the Christian faith requires nothing less.

Orthodoxy meaningfully defines the faith that it is defending. To Chesterton, orthodoxy — which simply means 'sound doctrine' — is simply and profoundly encapsulated in the Apostles' Creed.

Indeed, this brief creed operates as a significant plumb line within a biblically-oriented Christian theology. It has been recited by generations of Christians over many centuries.

Chesterton's own draw to the creed is found in the broad boundaries of belief that it articulates: it is meant "to give room for good things to run wild." In other words, we can find life-altering wonder in the beautiful, wild paradoxes of our faith (love and wrath, or Christ as fully human and fully God, for example), yet this wonder is meaningfully oriented by authority greater than ourselves and the intellectual trends of our own era. The Christian faith enables true life, fostering wonder-filled freedom, Chesterton proclaims, but there is a clear definition of what is meant by "the faith."

Chesterton's insistence on theological mystery and tradition can seem counterintuitive to many modern ears. Yet this is precisely his aim, for to Chesterton, traditional creedal orthodoxy enables intellectual enlightenment as well as creative freedom, and the universe is ordered not according to rational scientific laws, but is as wildly unstable as the most spectacular fairy tale.

In *Orthodoxy*, the best apologetic is not defensive argumentation but exposition of mysterious infinite truths as seen through eyes that pause humbly and long enough to see the miraculous in our wonder-filled world. If this offends our modern mindsets, Chesterton might retort that this reveals how much we have unknowingly imbibed in modern philosophy. Here and in many instances, Chesterton's voice, now over a century old, can seem remarkably contemporary.

As the rollicking paths of *Orthodoxy* continue, readers are led through vivid rebuttals of religious pluralism, agnostic skepticism, misperceptions of Christianity, and overly optimistic perceptions of human nature — all in vogue among the intelligentsia of his era. (And, I might add, still our own!)

Yet, Chesterton's critique is no mere scorched-earth tactic: he exposes weakness and "lunacy" but enticingly presents explanation of essential Christian doctrines, religious authority, and ethics.

The mysteries of the faith are also practical, and they produce ethical virtue as well as deep gratitude, even in the face of the inexplicable. He crafts his arguments disarmingly; giraffes, triangles, monogamy, fairy-tales, and children's endless enthusiasm for repetition ("Again! Again!") — all find their place here. It is part of the unique allure of Chesterton's rhetoric and prose. Once you have savored this book, you will see why so many creative minds of the mid-twentieth century, not least among whom are Tolkien and Lewis, indicate debt to its inspiration.

Orthodoxy concludes with a stunning suggestion that leaves its readers at the edge of wonder. Here I would make a suggestion: read or listen to *Orthodoxy* with others. You will be particularly glad that you have companions with whom to share and discuss (then, follow this book with a reading of Dorothy Sayers' brilliant *Letters to a Diminished Church*).

As you venture into your reading, know that this book cannot be hastily scanned. Chesterton demands a deeper gaze, for he is reminding his readers who they truly are and of what Christian orthodoxy is truly comprised. Perhaps that is good reason to read *Orthodoxy*, more so than merely because educated people read Chesterton. "People have fallen into a foolish habit of speaking of orthodoxy as something heavy, humdrum and safe," this book proclaims, but "there never was anything so perilous or so exciting as orthodoxy." Indeed. ■

REVIEWER BIO

DR. MEGAN DEVORE

Megan DeVore (Ph.D., University of Wales) is in her 11th year of teaching at CCU, where she serves as associate professor of Church History. Her research and publications focus on the early centuries of Christianity and she speaks at venues both on and off-campus, including academic conferences, interdisciplinary colloquia, seminaries, chapels, and retreats. She is married to a local pastor and has two young children whose sense of wonder for God's world is a daily delight.

Martin Luther

by Eric Metaxas

REVIEW BY DR. IAN CLARY

Assistant Professor of Historical Theology

With the five-hundredth anniversary of the Protestant Reformation now past, the temptation to move on to other anniversaries without further consideration of the events of the early sixteenth century is real. Indeed, this year we commemorate the anniversaries of a number of important historical events, including the fiftieth anniversary of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr., the centenary of the declaration of Armistice, and the four hundredth anniversary of the Synod of Dordt. Yet, we would be remiss to let the Reformation dim in our collective memory.

One of the happy results of the publishing boom of Reformation-themed books last year is that we have much to read for years to come. Instead of letting the anniversaries of 2017 pass us by, let us take advantage of what some have called *Lutherjahr* ("the Luther year") and keep reading!

Many of last year's publications will be relegated to the sidelines of history, while others will remain best-sellers. Of the latter is Eric Metaxas' *Martin Luther*, a work of popular history that effectively brings the story of Martin Luther to a wide audience.

Metaxas is the *New York Times* best-selling author of biographies of Christian luminaries such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and William Wilberforce who, like Luther, also made a significant impact on world history. His new biography of the German Reformer stands alongside these others as a well-written, engaging, and informative work whose great benefit will be to bring Luther to readers who might otherwise not care to read about him.

For those who are familiar with Metaxas from his syndicated radio show, his work with Breakpoint, or his "Socrates in the City" interview series, he is a humorous speaker, who oscillates easily between a dry and self-effacing wit and serious cultural engagement. *Martin Luther* showcases this same talent.

Metaxas has a gift for storytelling and is effective at bridging the sixteenth century with the twenty-first.

Who else can liken Luther's many writings to "a modern-day late-night tweet-storm"? Luther's colorful life lends itself to entertaining storytelling as Metaxas gives his audience. From his early life as a dutiful monk, to his role as an accidental reformer, to his growth into a somewhat cranky leader, Metaxas portrays Luther in all of his earthy and humorous splendor.

Though not necessarily a criticism, it should be noted that the majority of *Martin Luther* focuses on its subject's early life, detailing the events of Luther's reforming career up to the Diet of Augsburg of 1530. Luther's later life is treated in more summary fashion in the last hundred pages or so, with the greatest focus in this part given to Luther's remarkable and moving death.

A number of highlights stand out in Metaxas' reading of Luther, the foremost of which is the attention he pays to the pastoral care that Luther displayed for his parishioners.

After the famous Diet of Worms in 1521, Luther was kidnapped and hidden in Wartburg Castle for his protection. While he was in the castle for nearly a year, he began work on his translation of the New Testament into vernacular German.

His absence from Wittenberg meant that others had to take the mantle of leadership for the Reformation, which fell to Luther's more radical colleague Andreas Bodenstein von Karlstadt, who

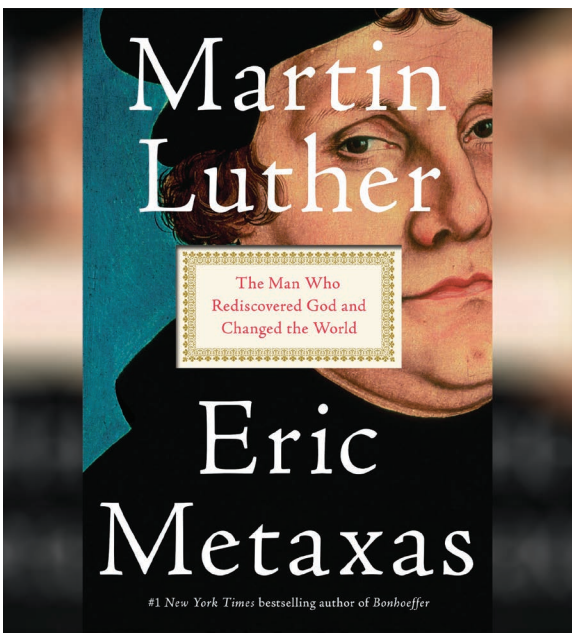
Metaxas has a gift for storytelling and is effective at bridging the sixteenth century with the twenty-first.

Who else can liken Luther's many writings to "a modern-day late-night tweet-storm?"

– Ian Clary

quickly enacted such reforms as preaching without clerical vestments or giving the laity the Eucharist in two forms (bread and wine).

When Luther returned, he saw that the Reformation was moving at too fast a pace for the laity to handle, and he wisely slowed things down so



that those who had just experienced a revolution in terms of the gospel would not become overwhelmed by all of the other changes.

As Metaxas rightly says, Luther "was deeply concerned not merely with being right but with how what one said affected the simple faithful."

Metaxas is also helpful at dispelling various Luther myths that have appeared in the many biographies published since the sixteenth century, including the likelihood that Luther did not actually nail the *Ninety-Five Theses* to the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, or that he had a bad relationship with his father Hans. Metaxas' depiction of Luther's death brought the story to a moving conclusion, where his simple but profound faith in Christ did not leave him to his dying day.

Historians will, as we like to do, debate aspects of Metaxas' historiography. But be that as it may, *Martin Luther* will have the effect that more scholarly biographies won't, and that is that it will reach a mass audience not only with the telling of Luther's life, but of Luther's gospel. Here, Metaxas shows himself faithful to Luther. Readers will learn why the reformer was so willing to face death, because the gospel "is the very focus of human existence itself, the bald and unavoidable choice between life and death, heaven and hell."

Eric Metaxas is to be thanked for bringing this gospel from the lips of a sixteenth-century reformer to the hearts of twenty-first century readers. For those who want to move from popular biography to more scholarly works, Metaxas is a gateway to other best-sellers of last year, such as the biographies by Herman Selderhuis or Lyndal Roper. So readers whose appetites have been well-whet by Metaxas can continue reading throughout 2018 and beyond! ■

REVIEWER BIO

DR. IAN CLARY

Ian Clary (Ph.D., University of the Free State) joined CCU in 2017 as assistant professor of Historical Theology. He also lectures at Munster Bible College in Cork, Ireland. He is the editor of and contributor to a number of books including, most recently, "Pentecostal Outpourings: Revival and the Reformed Tradition." Ian is married to Vicky and they live in Lakewood, Colorado with their four children.

FILM REVIEW

Dunkirk & The Darkest Hour

"Dunkirk" directed by Christopher Nolan and "The Darkest Hour" directed by Joe Wright

REVIEW BY DR.WILLIAM WATSON
Professor of History

In early 2018, the biggest treat in theaters was two historical films, both on an event that took place on opposite sides of the English Channel in May of 1940. Each centered on the evacuation of the British army from Dunkirk as the Nazi steamroller swept across Belgium and France.

"Dunkirk" tells the story, in graphic detail, of the experience of the common soldier in the 1940 evacuation of the British army from the north of France as the Nazi Blitzkrieg overwhelmed Europe. "The Darkest Hour" explains the same event, but from the perspective of Winston Churchill and the British government.

The film "Dunkirk" kept its audience constantly in suspense as it wove together the experiences of British troops trapped on the north shore of France — about to be annihilated or captured with RAF fighter pilots trying to limit the destruction of those stranded troops by the Luftwaffe, as well as civilian owners of small boats along the south coast of England crossing the channel to rescue the British army.

The film focused on one British private trying to make it onto any vessel he could to return to England. Each time, his boat was hit by German fire and destroyed. First, he tried to sneak unsuccessfully on a hospital ship, which was then sunk by German dive-bombers, then he successfully boards a British destroyer only to have it sunk by a torpedo from a U-boat. He then makes his way back to shore hiding in a beached trawler, until the tide rises and it begins to float until shot through with holes by German machine gun fire. As the boat sinks he swims toward another destroyer, which is also sunk by a German bomber.

He is finally picked up by a small craft operated by an English civilian and his son, who were bravely trying to rescue the troops. An RAF fighter pilot, played by Kenneth Branagh, saved the small boat from another German plane before his fuel ran out and he glided to the beach to become a prisoner of war. The private finally made it safely to England due to the bravery of the small boat owner and the pilot.

Many see God's hand in rescuing the British army at Dunkirk. As it seemed all was lost, King George VI called for a National Day of Prayer. Hours later, without explanation and against the advice of his general staff, Hitler stopped the German advance. German tanks were unable to advance due to marshy ground near Dunkirk. The following day a massive storm hit the coast of Belgium and France grounding the Luftwaffe.

In spite of that storm the English Channel became as still as glass, allowing small craft to participate in the rescue.

A week later the king called for a National Day of Thanksgiving for their prayers being answered.

There has been some criticism of "Dunkirk" being too white and too male, but the British army (at least at Dunkirk) was overwhelming white and male and (as an historian) I must insist upon historical accuracy. One could fault the film for giving too much credit to small craft, since the overwhelming share of soldiers

Many see God's hand in rescuing the British Army at Dunkirk. As it seemed all was lost, King George VI called for a National Day of Prayer.

– Dr. William Watson

were evacuated by naval vessels. However, the bravery shown by those in boats and fighter planes, and even the self-sacrifice of those holding back the German advance toward the beaches and port of Dunkirk, was admirable. In each case, bravery was evident, but the characters were not well-developed, nor was there the intellectual depth in "Dunkirk" as there was in "The Darkest Hour."

"Dunkirk's" strength is that it gives the viewer a visceral sense of what it felt like to be there. Its weakness is that the movie is strangely apolitical. That is, in its director's efforts to avoid controversy, he did not tell the viewer much about the wider conflict or the menace of national socialism. It is precisely this omission that the brilliant film "The Darkest Hour" fills in.

"The Darkest Hour" showed the other side of the war, focusing on the political struggles of Winston Churchill and his war cabinet in the midst of this crisis. Chamberlain's attempts to appease Hitler continued until the Nazi invasion of Poland in September 1939, which resulted months later in the collapse of his government. As Churchill assumed the role of prime minister, the Nazis advanced through Belgium and France. Most Conservative MPs and the king did not want Churchill as prime minister, but other Tory back-benchers, labor, and the liberals would not accept the status quo, so Winston Churchill assumed leadership of the new government of national unity.

As the British army was facing catastrophe in France, Churchill's war cabinet — especially former Prime Minister Chamberlain and Foreign Secretary Halifax — were advising that Britain seek a peace agreement with Hitler, allowing the Nazi takeover of the European continent. They saw it as the only way to save the lives of what remained of the British army on the continent. Had Churchill not been prime minister, or had he caved to pressure by Chamberlain and Halifax to accept an armistice, the Nazis would have most likely won the war and the world would be quite different today.

There was a bit of artistic license exercised in what became the climax of "The Darkest Hour." Without any historical evidence for such an event, the film shows Churchill vacillating on his resolve to continue fighting and instead yield to pressure of accepting German terms for peace. While in route to Parliament he broke away from his chauffer and traveled on the underground, asking common people what he should do. They unanimously said to fight and never surrender. This supposed event then motivated Churchill to give his rousing speech that Britain would never surrender: "Victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror, victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory there is no survival."

The film does highlight Churchill's ability to formulate and give a rousing speech, which would motivate a nation to continue the fight. Hitler had bragged that he destroyed the British army, and believed they would not recover to fight again, but 85% were successfully evacuated to later return to fight in North Africa and on D-Day. Hitler had also hoped that Churchill would not become the prime minister, because until then he encountered mostly appeasement from the British government.

"Dunkirk" should win the award for Best Cinematography and Gary Oldman's performance as Winston Churchill in "The Finest Hour" should ensure his award as top actor at the Oscars. Unfortunately, neither film is likely to sweep the Oscars because they don't promote the current narrative by Hollywood elites, but neither film actually comes out of Hollywood since the producers, directors, and most actors were British. One could hope that Hollywood follows the British example and returns to producing quality films.

In any case, these two films should be seen together. They show two sides of a remarkable story that should never be forgotten. ■

REVIEWER BIO

DR. WILLIAM WATSON

Dr. William Watson (Ph.D., University of California, Riverside) has been professor of History at Colorado Christian University for over 20 years and specializes in British history. He served as a linguist with U.S. Military Intelligence and was a Fulbright Scholar in Moldova. He has traveled to 32 nations on four continents.

A Mind for God

by James Emery White

REVIEW BY DR. WILLIAM SAXBY

Dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences; Professor of Psychology

SYNOPSIS

A Mind for God by James Emery White, pastor, faculty, and former seminary president, is a compact book that serves as a guide for the reader in grasping how to take "…every thought captive to obey Christ," (2 Corinthians 10:5b ESV) in spite of the cultural influences around us that hinder if not obviate our progress. The corrective is informed, purposeful, and selective reading, the foundation for developing a Christian mind.

REVIEW

"Most people would rather die than think and many of them do."
– Bertrand Russell

A Mind for God by Dr. James Emery White is a small, short book of less than 100 pages but is packed with thought-provoking chapters regarding what it means to "take every thought captive to obey Christ"[1] and how that stance is employed in our journey of faith, the working out of our salvation. Dr. White's thesis, both explicitly and implicitly, identifies how this journey is also part of our profession as faculty and staff in the academe. We must understand the cultural influences that surround us and the student body in order to "…destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God."[2] Dr. White presents a number of ideas and actions directed toward having a mind for God.

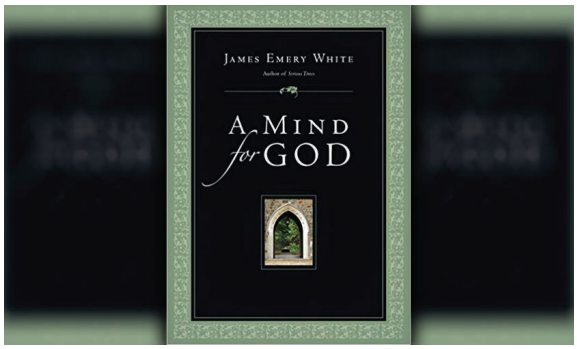
My discipline of psychology has much to say about how we see things. The concept of perceptual set is a powerful tool that manages our subjective understanding or perception of any event, even our reading. As a demonstration of this, I present twelve words, about one per second, to an audience. The words include: 'slumber,' 'rest,' 'night,' 'tired,' 'bed,' etc. At the end of the presentation, the audience is asked, "How many saw the word aardvark?" Rarely, if ever, does anyone report seeing that word. Then the audience is asked, "How many saw the word sleep?" At least 50% and at times as much as 100% of the audience will say they saw the word "sleep" even though it was not in the list shown.

This is known as perception without sensation, a perceptual set that predisposes one to see one thing and not another. In showing slumber, rest, night, tired, bed, the observer was swayed into thinking about the concept of sleep and reports seeing that word. How that is employed by our culture is through repetition of the same message. Pretty soon we have become the "walking dead" not discerning but only perceiving what the desired message is, oft times one that is contradictory to our Christian values.

Scripture admonishes us to "…not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect."[3] We must know what we are up against, i.e., what is the battle of ideas in which we find ourselves? To quote Winston Churchill, "The empires of the future will be empires of the mind."[4] This constitutes the culture wars in which we find ourselves, one ideology against another. The major ideas with which we contend according to Dr. White are *moral relativism, autonomous individualism, narcissistic hedonism,* and *reductive naturalism.*

As Christians, we are likely aware of the snake-in-the-grass called *moral relativism*. What is true for you may not be true for me because there is no way to tell what is true, thus, there is no absolute truth. Such thinking is not only the slippery slope to solipsism, it is the result of being solipsistic. Every utterance becomes a personal opinion and, therefore, is taken as fact. Our society is rife with examples. Unfortunately, this leads to thoughtlessness.

Autonomous individualism implies that not only are we to be independent, but our moral authority



comes from the self, save the laws and rules that we all know, "sometimes you've gotta break the rules"[5] and have it your way.

Narcissistic hedonism, the "it's all about me and how I feel" mantra of our society, negates "Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others."[6] Christopher Lasch, a University of Rochester history professor, wrote that "the current taste is for individual therapy instead of religion"[7] and in individual therapy, the focus is on the individual.

The naturalists exemplified by John Dewey among others, "…urged that reality is exhausted by nature, containing nothing 'supernatural,' and that the scientific method should be used to investigate all areas of reality, including the 'human spirit.'"[8] *Reductive naturalism*, the last of the four pillars of our society according to Dr. White, posits that anything that cannot be verified by scientific method, "is not simply unknowable but meaningless."

Where does this leave us? According to Dr. White, *moral relativism* has led to a crisis in values, *autonomous individualism* has led to a lack of vision, *narcissistic hedonism* has fostered empty souls, and *reductive naturalism* has proven inadequate for human experience.

The antidote is reading, "the *foundation* for intellectual development." Not just any reading, but purposeful and selective reading for which he provides 160 varied titles. C.S. Lewis argues that we need to read history and compare it with the present since "every age has its own outlook," i.e., their perceptual set. He contends that each age "is specially good at seeing certain truths and specially liable to make certain mistakes. We all, therefore, need the books that will correct the characteristics of our own period. And that means the old books."[9]

Dr. White presupposes that the Bible is foundational to all our reading. A thorough knowledge of the Bible comes with intense study of the texts and ancillary materials such as commentaries and pertinent writings from the church. We confront truth in reading Scripture. If we allow the Spirit to speak through the sacred text, we are informed and transformed.

White encourages us to read and discuss what we read so that we, along with our students, benefit from the knowledge and wisdom of others of ages past. We need also to be aware of how our discipline is likely steeped in naturalism, perhaps without a Christian foundation,[10] and how that influences how we approach our discipline. Dr. White does not dictate a direction for us, but challenges us to be lifelong learners through reading great and important books.

A Mind for God offers a map for how to think deeply and how to think Christianly. It's a map that most of us need. ■

REVIEWER BIO

DR. WILLIAM SAXBY

Dr. Bill Saxby (Ph.D., University of Vermont) dean of the School of Humanities and Sciences and professor of Psychology, is in his 17th year at Colorado Christian University and in his 26th year in the academe. He was a clinical psychologist for 13 years prior to his entry into higher education. Academic administration, teaching, and contemplative spiritual formation are his passions.

[1]2 Corinthians 10:5b
[2]2 Corinthian 10:5a
[3]Romans 12:2
[4]From his address to Harvard University in 1943
[5]Burger King 1989
[6]Philippians 2:3f
[7]Lasch, C. (1979). The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations
[8]The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. Retrieved from https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/naturalism/
[9]Lewis, C.S. (2014). God in the dock. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans
[10]John Woodbridge, personal communication, November 10, 2017

The Vanishing American Adult

by Ben Sasse

REVIEW BY JEFF HUNT

Director of the Centennial Institute

Parents, it's time to step up and take a more intentional approach to raising your children and shaping their education. That's the primary argument made in Senator Ben Sasse's new book, *The Vanishing American Adult, Our Coming-of-Age Crisis and How to Rebuild a Culture of Self-Reliance.*

The root of the problem facing younger generations is that parents and adults have become passive. We're passive in how we raise, educate, train, and prepare the next generation. We've turned over most of the responsibilities of raising our children to the public school system, and this isn't by accident.

Senator Sasse, a former Christian college president, places the blame for many of our social and educational woes at the feet of the famed American educator John Dewey. Sasse argues that Dewey's "overriding goal was universal education for a growing nation, but in pursuing it, he turned the school into the literal center of the world for children, crowding out roles and responsibilities traditionally carried out in families and communities. The school was no longer there to support parents, but to replace them."

And to what end? Sasse points out that Dewey and his humanist colleagues sought to replace a religious worldview all together. "There is no God and there is no soul. Hence, there is no need for the props of traditional religion. With dogma … (now) excluded, then immutable truth is dead and buried. There is no room for fixed and natural law or permanent moral absolutes." Dewey sought not only universal education but universal worldview change.

The result of Dewey and his humanist colleagues' work, Sasse argues, is that our children are stuck in Neverland. They are softer, unprepared for the world. Kids live at home longer, spend more time in front of screens, watch more pornography, and are less likely to get married, participate in church, and begin a career. "Childhood is no longer so much the nurturing, goal-oriented period tapering by the late teens; it is instead an amorphous period between infancy and the age of 25 or 30, interrupted temporarily by the biological awkwardness of puberty."

So what is Senator Sasse's solution? Engagement. He recommends that we reestablish intergenerational connections, develop a strong work ethic, consume less and produce more, immerse our children in other cultures, build a family bookshelf, and recapture the ideas that made America great.

One of the areas of Sasse's book that particularly struck a chord was his call to "flee age segregation."

He points out that we have lost the connections between older and younger generations that were previously commonplace. "Today, young people's lives are driven by one predominant fact: birth year. Instead of helping with the family business or apprenticing, teenagers are now hanging out, in person or online, with friends, most whom are their same age and school year. Correspondingly, senior citizens live out their years in nursing homes where they also interact mainly with their age peers."

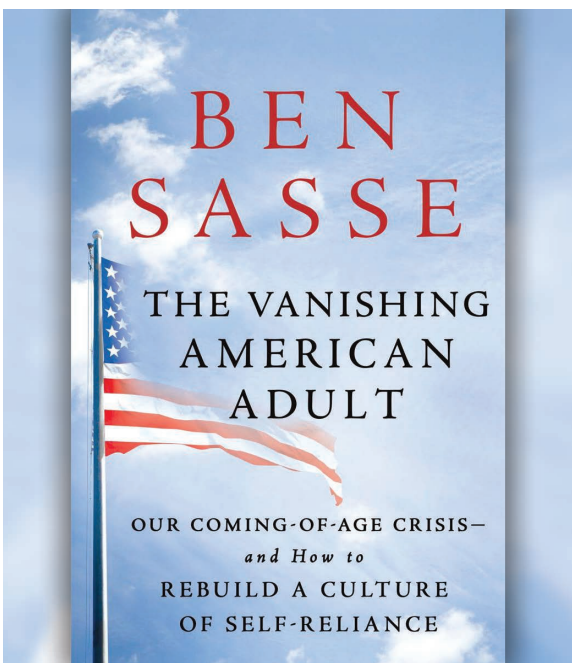
I agree that the segregation of society by age is dramatically harming family connections. Young

Young people are losing the opportunities to learn and be shaped by their grandparents. A lifetime of wisdom is quietly fading away between the walls of our nursing homes.

– Jeff Hunt

people are losing the opportunities to learn and be shaped by their grandparents. A lifetime of wisdom is quietly fading away between the walls of our nursing homes.

For Senator Sasse, these intergenerational connections beget wisdom. Children learn from parents and grandparents that death is a central fact of life. This then allows young people to understand what it means to truly live well. It also reframes how young people understand sex. For younger, age-segregated generations, sexual intercourse is only



about pleasure. But within the context of a multi-generational family structure, sex has a spiritual and covenantal component in addition to procreation and pleasure purposes. In other words, when your grandparents celebrate a 50th wedding anniversary, sex and marriage are far more meaningful.

As Senator Sasse closes his book, the final recommendation to rebuilding our culture is to recapture the civic ideas that helped establish the greatest country in the history of the world. Sasse claims that we have lost our American identity. "American exceptionalism is not some claim to ethnic or moral superiority; rather, it is a claim about the American Founding being unique in human history."

Sasse believes we need to revisit the poetry of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and our other founding documents. We also need to return to participation in civil society.

"The meaning of America is not in its government or its elected officials. It is in our civic organizations... it's in the churches. It's even in the juries."

As Robert Putnam pointed out in his book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*, America is in decline in civic engagement and this has broad consequences. Membership numbers for Boy and Girl Scouts, fraternal organizations, church membership, service organizations, even bowling leagues are all in decline. This results in a loss of social capital, friendships, overall social and community health, and national identity.

We are fortunate that at such a time as this, Colorado Christian University is training up young people with a robust understanding of U.S. history and civic engagement. In fact, partly because of our history classes, The American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) has given Colorado Christian University an A rating for its core curriculum. CCU is one of only twenty-four schools in the country to receive this grade. When it comes to U.S. history, ACTA only gives schools credit for U.S. history "if they require a survey course in either U.S. government or history with enough chronological and topical breadth to expose students to the sweep of American history and institutions."

In addition to our core curriculum, it is a Strategic Objective of Colorado Christian University to impact our culture in support of the original intent of the Constitution and to promote the ideas that formed Western civilization.

Furthermore, CCU students are expected

to complete 180 hours of ministry service in the community. This is because CCU believes that service is an opportunity to shape students as well-rounded, holistic individuals who are equipped for Christian leadership, trained with the skills needed for meaningful careers, and ready to actively engage in the world.

Overall, this book is a clarion call to parents to take ownership in raising their children but it is lacking in its complete understanding of the challenges facing future generations.

One area Senator Sasse misses are the few fathers left to help raise children. What I have called "The Great Desertion" is a culture with no accountability upon fathers. Today, it is perfectly acceptable for fathers to abandon their families with no consequences outside of small monetary fines for child support. Even in the case of child support, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that only "44% of custodial parents receive the full amount of child support." This is leading to a generation of young people growing up without fathers.

According to Dr. Bradford Wilcox of the University of Virginia, "One Princeton study found that boys raised apart from their fathers were two to three times more likely to end up in jail before they turned 30." He also points out that "girls whose fathers disappeared before the girls turn six were five times more likely to end up pregnant as teenagers than were their peers raised with fathers in the home."

The Institute for Family Studies has compiled data to show that an absent father has dramatic effects on children in other areas. Children without stable fathers are more likely to struggle with mental health issues including substance abuse, are impacted when it comes to academic and career achievement, and are less likely to get married and produce stable families themselves.

Senator Sasse's book is great if you have engaged parents. But what if the father of the family isn't engaged? The book doesn't offer much of a solution. Unfortunately, this is becoming more and more of a reality for America's youth.

Senator Sasse's book is an important challenge for parents to engage seriously with their children. Shut off the TV, attend a PTA meeting, help with homework, introduce your children to hard work, civic responsibility, religious values, and ultimately guide and direct your children's lives. We cannot allow public institutions that are becoming more secular, atheistic, and individualistic by the minute to be the primary forces shaping our children. God has entrusted us with the call to guide the minds and souls of our children. As Charles Spurgeon, the famous preacher put it, "You are as much serving God in looking after your own children, and training them up in God's fear, and minding the house, and making your household a church for God, as you would be if you had been called to lead an army to battle for the Lord of hosts." ■

REVIEWER BIO

JEFF HUNT

Jeff Hunt (MPS, George Washington University) joined Colorado Christian University in 2015 as director of the Centennial Institute, the University's public policy think tank. He has served as media coordinator for the Senate Republican Conference, director of operations of the Clapham Group, special assistant to Senator Rick Santorum in his 2012 White House bid, and director of Colorado Coalitions for Mitt Romney's presidential campaign.

Vivaldi Recomposed

by Max Richter

REVIEW BY CHARLES DENLER

Director of Worship Arts, Composition, and Music Production and Engineering
Assistant Professor of Music

Tampering with a well-known staple of concert halls from around the globe is daring to say the least. Max Richter takes a traditional slice of classical repertoire by Antonio Vivaldi and turns it into a modern musical masterpiece — boldly reconstructing *The Four Seasons* (1723) with brilliance!

When my family and I lived in Connecticut, we resided in a beautiful quintessential New England home built in 1780. The only issue I had with living

in a historic landmark was that any work done on the house had to be approved by the local historical commission. The goal was always to preserve the original look and feel of the building for matters of preservation. Classical music has often taken a similar perspective on the works of the masters, such as Antonio Vivaldi and his cherished work *The Four Seasons*. I have always loved Vivaldi's music, but I often tire of the many renditions being heralded as new recordings of an old masterpiece. What would *The Four Seasons* sound like if Vivaldi wrote them today?

German composer Max Richter had the courage to take on an old standard with a modern twist. The album *Recomposed* (2012) creates an in-depth look into the world of Vivaldi from the eyes of a contemporary musician. Richter uses a palette filled with the colors of a traditional orchestra, further augmented by a landscape intermingled with Moog Synths and 21st century tonality. The album was released through Universal Classics, a division of Universal Music Group and Deutsche Grammophon.

With one's first listen, it is easy to find the cadence and motif intended by Vivaldi in his original orchestration. As the music unfolds, Richter adds soaring violins, and at times, stark melodic stanzas. This is perhaps a reflection of the depth and often disparity that may have been found in the actual life of Vivaldi.

A composer lives behind the music in corners that the general public never sees. Vivaldi is celebrated and adored by modern audiences, but the listener seldom feels the reality of his life in desperation and financial demise. I often delve into melancholy when choosing my repertoire for listening.

Like many people, I love a sad song. Music often evokes a deep longing that causes the mind to drift into a world that is hauntingly beautiful — a world that is generously endowed with a yearning that reaches for something slightly beyond our grasp.

> *The seasons are well defined and recomposed with a vigor and passion that draws the listener deeply into the life of one of history's great composers.*
>
> *– Charles Denler*

The initial renderings by Richter are fairly easy on the palette, but the instrumentation eventually morphs into modern interpretations that are not for the faint of heart.

Wide soundscapes with indigenous backgrounds seasoned by the sonorous voices of birds begin to take the listener into a forest of musical prose. The seasons are well defined and recomposed with a vigor and passion that draws the listener deeply into the life of one of history's great composers.

In short, Richter takes the magnificence of Vivaldi and translates the music for the modern ear in a way that honors the original compositional intent. I wonder if this is the way Vivaldi would have written *The Four Seasons* if he were still alive and composing for today's audience. ■

REVIEWER BIO

CHARLES DENLER

Charles Denler (B.A. Colorado Christian University) is a two-time Emmy award-winning composer with nearly 200 film and television scores and multiple film festival Gold Medals to his credit. Denler has composed for The United States Marines, "National Geographic," The History Channel, Animal Planet, Honda, Coca-Cola, Oprah, Dateline, PBS, NBC, NASA, and the new theme for The Colorado Rockies. Denler has worked with actors such as Richard Gere, Helen Mirren, Burt Reynolds, Susan Sarandon, Richard Dreyfuss, and artists such as Creed, Paul Simon, and Cyndi Lauper.

HISTORICAL EXHIBIT

The Dead Sea Scrolls are Coming to Denver

REVIEW BY DR. DAVID KOTTER
Dean of the School of Theology; Professor of New Testament Studies

For the first time in history, the Dead Sea Scrolls from Qumran will be visiting Denver along with hundreds of other archaeological artifacts from Israel. These historic documents include some of the oldest handwritten copies of the Old Testament and are of inestimable significance to Christians. For this reason, Colorado Christian University is one of the key financial sponsors of this exhibit at the Denver Museum of Nature & Science.

Even though many people have heard of the Dead Sea Scrolls, it may be helpful to review the nature of the scrolls, the people behind these ancient texts, and the significance of these documents for the Christian faith.

What are the Dead Sea Scrolls?

The term Dead Sea Scroll describes more than 800 manuscripts discovered between 1947 and 1956 in 11 caves near the ancient site of Qumran near the northwestern shore of the Dead Sea. Every book of the Old Testament is represented (except Esther) along with extra-biblical books (such as Enoch, Tobit, and Jubilees) and other sectarian documents from early Judaism. The vast majority are written in the Hebrew language, though some are in Aramaic and even Greek. Most are written on parchment (though some are papyrus and one is written on copper), so the ravages of time mean that many are now in fragmentary form.

Who wrote the Dead Sea Scrolls?

The scrolls likely belonged to a community of people called the Essenes. This early Jewish sect was committed not only to copying Scripture, but also to a stricter adherence to the laws of Moses than even the Pharisees described in the New Testament. Most scrolls were preserved in ceramic jars and hidden in caves — apparently to conceal them from the Roman legions that destroyed Qumran in 68 A.D. (while quashing a Jewish revolt).

What is the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for Christians?

First, until the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered, the oldest manuscript of the Old Testament dated to the 10th century A.D. Handwriting analysis and carbon dating indicate that the Dead Sea Scrolls were copied during a period from the second century B.C. until the first century A.D., about 1,000 years older than any previously known biblical writings. Careful comparison of the texts separated by this millennium span verified the careful transmission of the biblical text and therefore gives Christians greater confidence in the reliability of the Old Testament.

Second, the nonbiblical texts from Qumran provide helpful background information about Jewish beliefs and sects during the time of the

Followers of Christ do not trust in religious sentiments, but rather have faith in a historic and risen Savior.

– Dr. David Kotter

Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, and other groups who interacted personally with Jesus in the Gospels.

Third, the physical reality of documents written by people who were alive when Jesus Christ was walking on the earth reminds believers today of the historicity of the Christian faith. Followers of Christ do not trust in religious sentiments, but rather have faith in a historic and risen Savior.

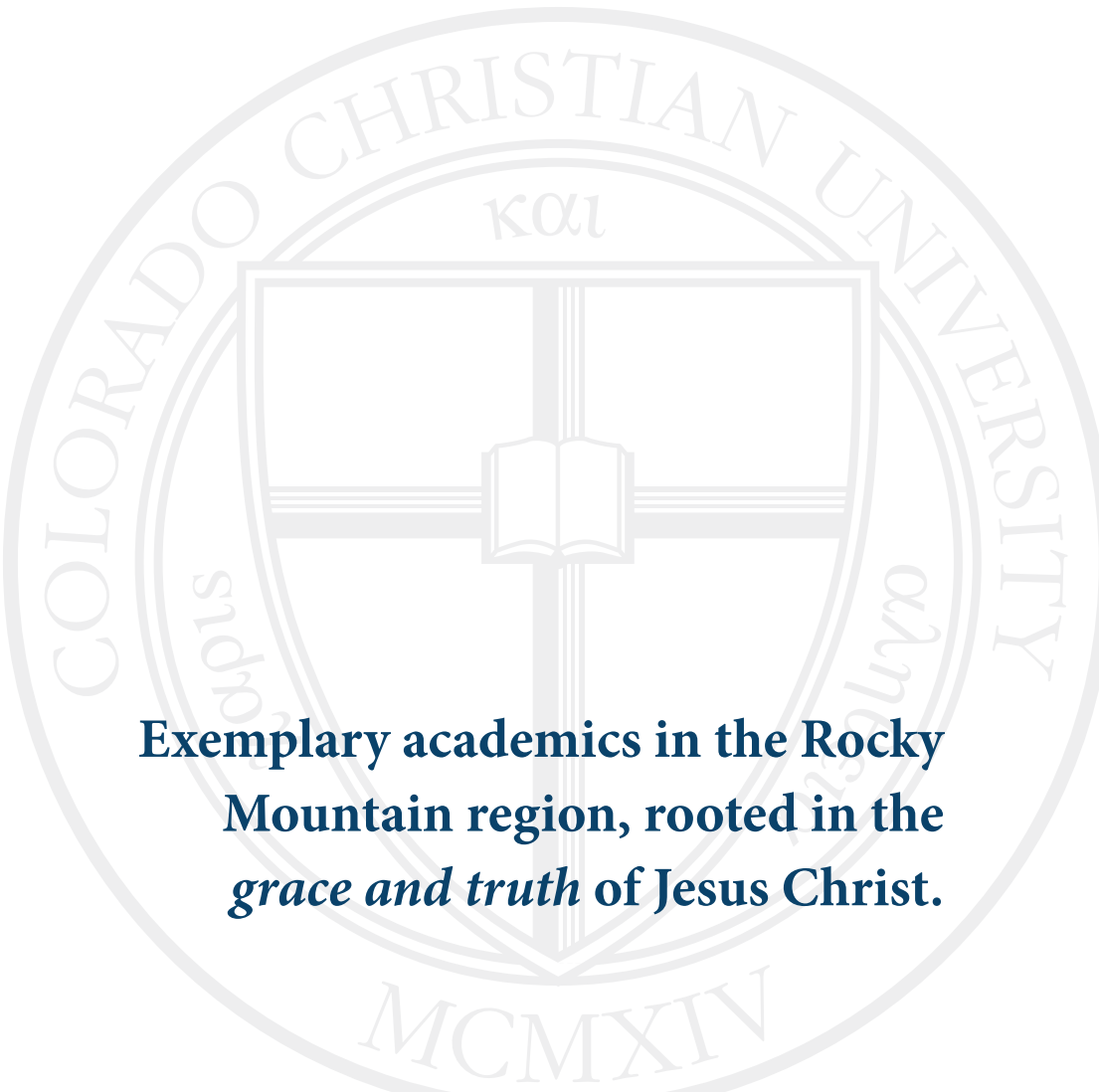
Where and when can we see the Dead Sea Scrolls in Denver?

In addition to the CCU sponsorship of the Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit, the faculty of the School of Theology have secured discounted tickets and will be facilitating a visit for several hundred students and local pastors on Friday, April 27. The exhibit will be open to the public daily from March 16 to September 3, 2018. ■

REVIEWER BIO

DR. DAVID KOTTER

David Kotter (Ph.D., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) is both an archaeologist and theology scholar. He leads CCU students in yearly archaeological excavation experiences in Israel. Dr. Kotter is also a visiting scholar for the Institute for Faith, Work, and Economics outside of Washington, D.C.



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