

COMMUNICATOR

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Biblical Job Description

These roles are not things we embrace out of our own abilities. These are gifts given by God for the building up of the church.

I recently had the privilege of spending a few weeks with soon to be graduated seminarians, talking about the integration of their learning with the earthy realities of pastoring. They've obviously been taught well. In my humble opinion, our seminary is doing an outstanding job of preparing leaders for the Church.

I was especially pleased to hear these students draw their philosophies of ministry squarely from the Scriptures. It got me to thinking again about how we understand the key roles of pastor. You are well acquainted with the biblical images of ministry being expressed in the ideas of: Prophet, Priest, and Shepherd-King.

The pastor as prophet speaks of the role of truth telling in the midst of a congregation. Jesus is described in John's Gospel as one who was "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). This seems the perfect balance. Enough grace to be a healing balm in the lives of people who are broken and lost. Yet also enough truth that we are willing to speak with the sharpness of a surgeon's scalpel, exposing that which is compromised and false in lives of our people.

The pastor as priest is perhaps the loveliest form of pastoral ministry, in that we are privileged to guide our people into the presence of a God who is revealed not only as holy Creator, but also as loving Father. We call our people to gather in the name of our risen Lord Jesus Christ. We proclaim the Word of the Lord and joyfully announce the Gospel. We lead our people in prayers of confession, repentance, and covenant. We help our people to use the divine grace through the gift of the sacraments and we pronounce the blessing of God upon them in Jesus' name. What good and happy work!

The pastor as shepherd-king speaks to the most common aspects of our work. We are mostly comfortable with the shepherd metaphor. We follow the pattern of the Good Shepherd in this work, caring for the people in all the experiences of their lives. We know their stories and love them anyway. This is the work that compels many of us to fall in love with pastoral ministry.

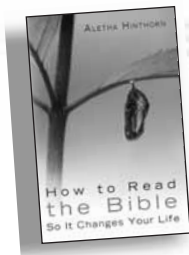
The part of this metaphor with which we are perhaps less comfortable is the image of king. We wouldn't want to place ourselves on some kind of inappropriate pedestal, to be sure. However, by "king" is meant that role of administration in the church whereby our leadership helps to create systems and structures of ministry that promote the common good. This is what we sometimes call the "business" of the church, but for us it is not to be divorced from the essence of pastoral work. Whether we like the idea or not, we wield great power in the congregation. We are spiritual leader, theologian in residence, administrative head of the organization, and mouthpiece of God. These roles are not things we embrace out of our own abilities. These are gifts given by God for the building up of the church. These are charges placed on us by the weight of our ordination vows. The ways in which we exercise these authorities will either lead to communities of peace and security, or to communities of chaos and abuse.

My deep thanks to Tim, Laura, Kara, Jason, Fabian, William, and Eric for reminding me of these things. I thank God that you are entering vocational ministry with such a solid foundation.

—Jeren Rowell



By Aletha Hinthorn



Pastors know that formational reading of the Scriptures is sometimes in short supply among our congregations. Some Christians approach Bible reading from guilt and others from obligation. Many others don't worry about it at all.

In this book, Aletha Hinthorn speaks to laypersons about how the daily reading of Scripture can impact their lives. This may be worth putting into the hands of folks that really want to incorporate formational reading in their lives but are struggling to know how to do it. Aletha's book is very

practical, with chapters like, "When Your Mind Wanders," and "Establishing Your Routine." Each chapter ends with a meditation exercise including questions that guide the reader into response.

Aletha Hinthorn is the founder of Women Alive Ministries and the publisher of Women Alive! magazine. She is a frequent speaker at women's retreats and the author of several Bible studies. She resides with her husband in Leawood, Kansas.

(Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2004, 144pp., \$12.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1379)

BOOK BRIEFS

Resources for Pastoral Ministry

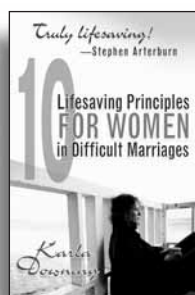
PASTORAL CARE

10 Lifesaving Principles for Women in Difficult Marriages. By Karla Downing. (Beacon Hill Press, 2003, 160pp., \$14.99, paper, COZZ083-412-050X). A Christian woman in a difficult marriage rarely knows where to turn for help. Too often, the advice of those in the church is to love your husband, submit, pray, and wait for God to change him. If that doesn't work, she begins to wonder why God doesn't answer her prayers.

This book helps women overcome their sense of powerlessness by giving them tools to improve their marriage. It examines misconceptions about Scriptures that cause confusion and even pain, helping women recover their faith that God cares for them. Women will begin to focus on what they can do to change themselves, instead of trying over and over again to change their husbands. As they learn to set boundaries with their husbands, they will protect themselves and their children from the effects of the difficult marriage. One day at a time, their lives will begin to change and heal as they apply the information, insights, and principles to their individual situation.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

A Dictionary of the Bible and Christian Doctrine in Everyday English. Edited by Al Truesdale, George Lyons, J. Wesley Eby, and Nancy Clark. (Beacon Hill Press, 2004, 352pp., \$34.99, paper, COZZ083-412-0860). This dictionary puts the results of sound theological and biblical research into everyday English for today's lay reader. It will help new Christians and even those who have made no profession of faith to understand the meaning of the Christian faith. For those with a limited knowledge of English, a brief presentation of commonly used biblical, theological, and doctrinal terms are used to assist in understanding. This tool would be extremely valuable for Sunday School classes and



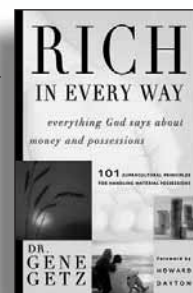
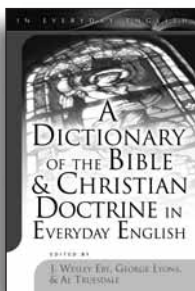
among those who are beginning theological studies, as well as for pastors and other Christian leaders who attempt to instruct new converts in the Christian faith. The book covers the major categories of Christian doctrine and presents key theological viewpoints in each.

SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

CareRings. By Dave Slamp. (Vessel Publishing, 2004, 224pp., \$17.95, paper, COZZ097-133-4544). This is an excellent manual and guide for the establishing of care groups in the local church. The author is an experienced director of small group ministries; his premise is indicated in the sub-title: "Sunday School and Small Groups Side-by-Side"; the existing Sunday School provides the best foundation for care groups. The author states that he has never found a resource to help people understand how small groups work in churches with Sunday Schools; this book is designed to meet that need. The book provides a strong and basic rationale for the small group concept and gives a complete step-by-step guide for the process of establishing and organizing them. (reviewed by Bill Bridges)

STEWARDSHIP

Rich in Every Way. By Gene Getz. (Howard Publishing, 2004, 368pp., \$14.99, COZZ158-229-3902). This is an updated publication of a previous volume under the title, "A Biblical Theology of Material Possessions." That book was the only volume that survived an arsonist's fire in the author's church office! The author met weekly for six months with eleven dedicated Christian men in studying "everything God says about money and possessions." This book is the result; consequently every principle grows out of, and is solidly based on, the Old and New Testaments. A comprehensive study, it expounds 102 supra-cultural principles for handling material possessions. Any preacher will find it to be an invaluable resource for preaching on the stewardship of our stuff and our selves. It is a great devotional book as well. (reviewed by Bill Bridges)

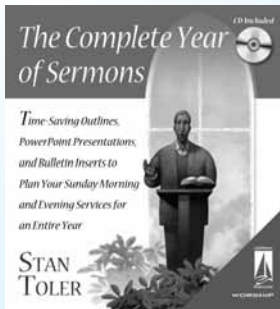


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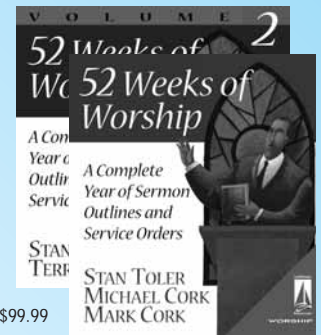
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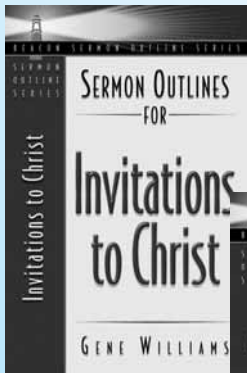
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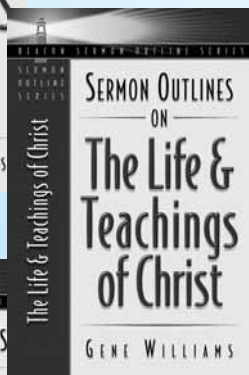
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Cut your planning time in half when working on your Sunday service. *52 Weeks of Worship* and *52 Weeks of Worship, Vol. 2* are excellent resources for churches with small staffs or any pastor in need of planning ideas. Together these two resources give pastors and worship leaders two complete years of sermon outlines, service orders, worship sequences with transitions and musical suggestions, and even bulletin inserts for note-taking congregations.

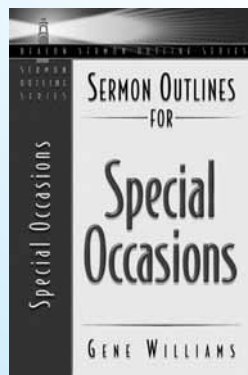


COZZ083-412-0623 \$6.99

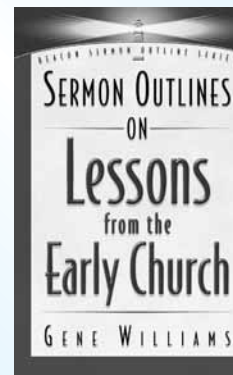
The *Beacon Sermon Outline Series* is designed to give you a place to start in sermon preparation or provide additional thought to add substance to Sunday's message. Each book in this series provides 25 to 30 outlines. Every sermon outline is directed to the needs of today's congregants—to challenge, inspire, and motivate toward serving Christ and His kingdom.



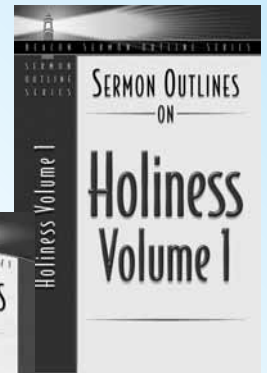
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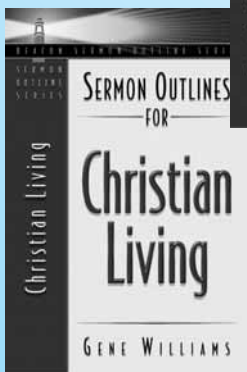
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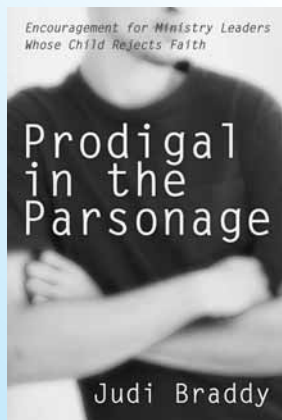
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Judi Braddy is an ordained minister and pastor's wife who knows firsthand the pain and suffering of watching a beloved child walk away from God. *Prodigal in the Parsonage* offers parents, especially those in ministry, an insider's perspective and time-tested encouragement for struggling with the daily trials that come when your child rejects faith.

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"While I'm preaching, you keep an eye on that kid with the sling-shot."

