

COMMUNICATOR

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

Authentic Faith

Authentic Christian living as Jesus prescribes is what we need in our churches and our world today.

Looking back, I have realized with gratitude that most of the preaching I heard as a young person was focused on the practice of authentic faith and Christian discipline. Many of the sermons I listened to under the ministry of my pastor, Dr. Paul Cunningham, centered on the idea of what it means to be genuinely and authentically Christian, living out Jesus' radical teachings like "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." Not only did I hear authentic faith preached, I saw it in action. I watched my pastor when he was challenged by God to give one hundred dollars to world missions, even though he did not have it to give. But on faith, with the help of a banker who loaned him the money, he gave the amount God desired.

I am glad I was under the influence of such heartfelt preaching and authentic living, because I grew up in a very affluent area of the United States. Had I not heard such sermons, it would have been so easy to grow up simply relying on my youth group, my youth pastor, my Christian parents, my Christian image, and the affluence of my surroundings, rather than on God's grace and mercy for the life God was calling me to live - a life of authentic faith.

This kind of a call to authentic Christian living has shaped my life, my marriage, the way I parent, my ministry and my preaching. Authentic Christian living has pervaded every part of my life through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within me and has full reign over me.

How will the preaching and teaching of authentic Christian faith look in your church in these days? What young person in your pews will be actively listening to you speak the words of Christ to follow

Him at all costs? What young person will be watching your every move to see if your life matches your words from the pulpit? I know, as every pastor does, how easy it would be to preach and live a faith that is comfortable and easily palatable. It would be more convenient to simply preach a faith more compatible with how our listeners want to live it. Yet, an African Nazarene pastor who preached in our church recently reminded me that it is the authentic Word of God, unflinchingly preached and obeyed, that transforms lives. It is the very Word that moved fishermen to lay down their nets and fish for men instead and freed an adulterous woman to leave behind her old life. It is the authentic Word of God that brings about dynamic change and real transformation in our churches. It is the dangerous preaching of authentic Christian living that keeps us connected to our denominational roots, and it is the proclamation of authentic Christian living in churches today that makes churches strong and not feeble.

I do not know what these brief thoughts mean to you, but I know for me these thoughts, these memories, are a call to constantly allow God to shape me and conform me to His image and His will. Dr. Cunningham's challenges to authentic Christian living were, and continue to be, the bedrock of my faith. So, as I reflect on his challenge to me as a boy and now as a man, I challenge you to be and do the same among your family and congregation. Be authentically His.

Keep Your Eyes Fixed on Him,
—Matthew S. Zimmer





Teens Face: How Parents Can Help by Barbara Curtis

Do you know what it's like to walk through the halls of today's high schools and face the pressures our teens face today? What gives teenagers the strength to live with integrity when others are giving in and conforming to the standards of the world? Barbara Curtis, mother of twelve, answers this question by interviewing numerous teenagers and asking them to share their insight and advice. She uses these interviews to remind parents to daily connect with their teenager about the

issues and events that are important to them. She develops these insights into a plan for parents to equip their child with biblical tools to

lay a foundation so they can stand firm in their Christian faith.

Curtis begins with a discussion of self-esteem, then moves to self-assurance: teens need to be confident in who God made them to be. She gives great direction about how to help teens use self-control to avoid temptation. Finally, she includes biblical perspectives on self-respect and how teenagers can make the most of mistakes and live with integrity. If you'd like to help teens find the strength to face the temptations of their culture, *Dirty Dancing at the Prom and Other Challenges Christian Teens Face* is the resource you need. Whether you are a parent, pastor, youth leader, or school teacher, Curtis will help you find a definitive, offensive plan for supporting the teenager in your life.

(Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2005, 144pp., \$12.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1859)

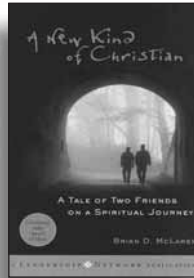
Resources for Pastoral Ministry

BOOK BRIEFS

CURRENT ISSUES

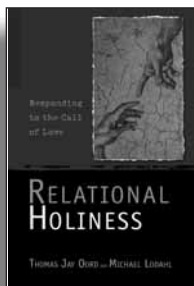
A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey. By Brian D. McLaren. (Jossey-Bass, 2001, 192pp., \$21.95, cloth, COZZ078-795-599X). *A New Kind of Christian* by Brian D. McLaren is a new kind of book that engages us in a unique dialogue about what it looks like to be Christian in a postmodern era. In his own fictional style, McLaren lets us in on an ongoing discussion between a pastor, who is struggling with his ministerial future, and his daughter's high school science teacher. These two men walk the reader down a path through the world of what once was and into what it is becoming as our society transitions from modernity to postmodernity.

This book will help the reader think about how we traditionally have presented the gospel and explore what it means to be authentically Christian, looking beyond familiar lenses or filters. The book is a great historical gauge for pastors to once again familiarize themselves with the ever-changing secular and sacred philosophies of our day. It is a book whose perspective will be a breath of fresh air for many readers. For those willing to step outside the bounds of modernity a little, this book will help the reader explore a variety of different ways to think about how we as individuals and as a Church can better connect with God on a daily basis.



THEOLOGY

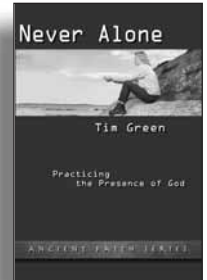
Relational Holiness: Responding to the Call of Love. By Thomas Jay Oord and Michael Lodahl. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, 144pp., \$13.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1824). *Relational Holiness* offers insight and evidence for understanding the theology of holiness by focusing on love - the core of God's nature and character - and describing how God invites us to share in a life of divine love. Thomas Oord and Michael Lodahl present this new paradigm for sanctification in a relevant and understandable style that is engaging and insightful, showing us that holiness is not an obscure, intangible doctrine. Rather, holiness is about relationship---the relationship of love between the Father and us, and between us and our fellow man. Every believer can be enriched by this new dialogue about the holy life and what it looks like in our lives and churches today.



DISCIPLESHIP

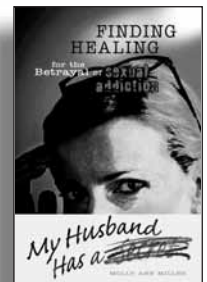
Never Alone: Practicing the Presence of God. By Tim Green. (Barefoot Ministries®, 2005, 80pp., \$8.99, paper, 083-415-0085). Ever wonder what your life would be like if you prayed constantly? Have you ever wished that your prayer life was as constant and ongoing as a daily conversation with a friend? Ever wish that the pieces of your life fit together, and there was no separation between your daily routine and your spiritual walk? How would your life be different if you lived like you believed God would "never leave you..." and that His Spirit is always with you?

Never Alone: Practicing the Presence of God helps teenagers and young adults answer these tough questions. Tim Green leads the reader through an updated version of the devotional classic by Brother Lawrence with the purpose of helping the reader recognize God in every detail of daily life. *Never Alone* will help the reader explore in today's language the practicing of God's presence while preserving the very heart and thought of daily devotion to God that Brother Lawrence conveyed so long ago. This is a great read for young and yearning believers.



CHRISTIAN LIVING

My Husband Has a Secret: Finding Healing for the Betrayal of Sexual Addiction. By Molly Ann Miller. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, 144pp., \$12.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1840). Never afraid to tackle tough issues in the Church and in society, Beacon Hill Press has released *My Husband Has a Secret* to help spouses of sexual addicts better understand issues of codependence, coaddiction, grief, setting boundaries, recovery, and the impact this addiction has on children. This book provides comfort, information, and most importantly, faith and hope for the future. It is more than just a twelve-step resource: it is a true account of how one husband and spouse have dealt with sexual addiction. An open and candid book, this is one resource that should not be ignored by pastors and church leaders today.



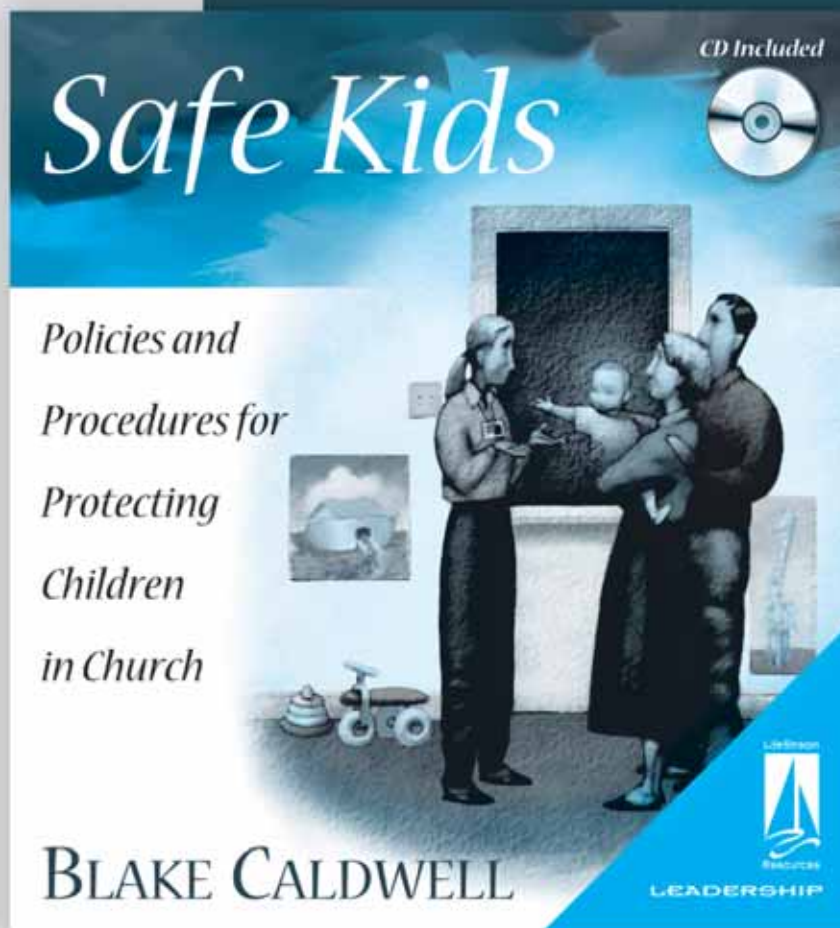
SEE US ON-LINE FOR ALL YOUR RESOURCE NEEDS AT www.nph.com

Some of the books featured in *Communicator* have not been reviewed for theological content and are not endorsed by Nazarene Publishing House or the Church of the Nazarene. They may have significant value, but readers should exercise theological discretion.



New from

LifeStream Ministry Resources!



COZZ083-412-0852 \$89.99

Child safety is a primary concern for unchurched parents. Churches can take active steps to assure both members and visiting parents that safeguards are in place for their child's protection.

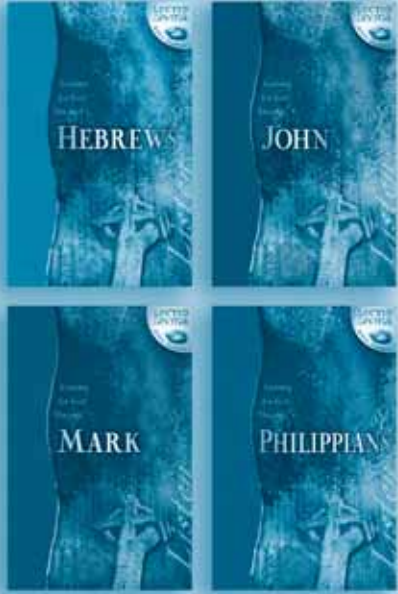
Safe Kids is a manual designed to help churches structure the safest possible environment for their children's ministry. This manual provides:

- Forms and procedures to screen volunteers
- Ideas for structuring the church building to keep nurseries and Sunday school classrooms safe
- Instructions for training children's workers
- Information you must know to identify potential predators
- Policies for reporting suspected child abuse
- And much more!

***Safe Kids* is the essential handbook for keeping children safe within the walls of the church.**

Order today from Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City
www.BeaconHillBooks.com





Lectio divina, or divine reading, is the ancient Christian practice of communicating with God through the reading and study of Scripture.

**BEACON HILL PRESS ANNOUNCES THE
RELEASE OF LECTIO DIVINA,
A NEW STUDY SERIES OF EACH BOOK
OF THE NEW TESTAMENT**

LECTIO DIVINA, JOHN CO22089-827-3005
LECTIO DIVINA, MARK CO22089-827-3013
LECTIO DIVINA, PHILIPPIANS CO22089-827-3034
LECTIO DIVINA, HEBREWS CO22089-827-3048

**\$7.99
EACH**

**Quantity
discounts up to
50%
available!**

COMING JANUARY 2006
Ephesians, James,
Timothy/Titus, and Revelation

Each Lectio Divina Bible Study is designed around these elements:

- Summary**—a brief overview of the session
- Silence**—a time of quieting oneself before reading the Word
- Preparation**—focusing the mind on the central theme of the text
- Reading**—carefully reading a passage of Scripture
- Meditation**—exploring the meaning of the Bible passage
- Contemplation**—yielding oneself to God's will
- Prayer**—expressing praise, thanksgiving, confession, or agreement to God
- Incarnation**—resolving to act on the message of Scripture

To order, call 1-800-877-0700 or visit www.BeaconHillBooks.com



To order, call 1-800-877-0700
E-mail orders@nph.com
Or visit www.BeaconHillBooks.com

COMMUNICATOR

Nazarene Publishing House • P.O. Box 419527 • Kansas City, MO 64141

Information, 1-816-931-1900 • Ordering, 1-800-877-0700
Fax, 1-800-849-9827 • E-mail, communicator@nph.com

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*® (NIV®). Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

**SEE US ON-LINE FOR ALL YOUR RESOURCE NEEDS AT
www.nph.com**

CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp

Copyright Thom Tapp. Used by permission.



**Pastors and Youth Ministers should ALWAYS
be suspect of a pat on the back.**

