

COMMUNICATOR

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

Unsung Heroes

**The future of the kingdom of God often depends
on the people who ask the tough questions.**

Most people we serve in our Nazarene churches know something about John Wesley and the profound religious impact he had on England and the modern world. Yet, if it were not for Augustus Spangenberg, we might not know John Wesley—at least not the John Wesley we know today.

Who in the world is Augustus Spangenberg? He is not unlike many of the people in our congregations who, week in and week out, teach, sing, and share their faith. You could say Spangenberg is like the dedicated youth-group leader who always asks the teens after each meeting, “Do you really know Jesus?” Or perhaps he is similar to the children’s worker who, after crafts and snacks and amid short attention spans, faithfully retells the story of salvation and makes sure each little heart is right with Christ. Who was Augustus Spangenberg? He, like these other servants, was an unsung hero.

More specifically, he was the Moravian shipmate of John Wesley who asked Wesley ever so bluntly, “Do you know Jesus Christ?” Wesley responded that he did but later in a journal entry admitted that “these words were spoken in vain.” It took a common man’s direct question to motivate Wesley to truly consider his relationship with God. This leads me to wonder—if it were not for that moment with Spangenberg, would Wesley’s Aldersgate expe-

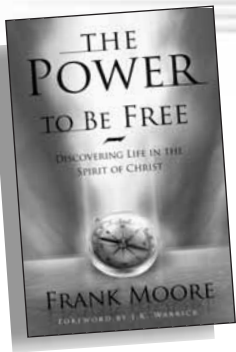
rience (when he finally came to believe that he was saved by faith alone) have somehow been different?

I like to think it is the unsung heroes like Augustus Spangenberg who play a significant role in impacting our world and ministry today. It is their faithfulness to the Kingdom that helps shape the hearts and minds of those of us who dedicate our lives to ministry. Even now you may be thinking of the precious people in your congregations who year after year have carried on in the ranks of Augustus Spangenberg. They are the unsung heroes of your community of faith; they are the seed planters and spiritual gardeners of your congregation. Think of the impact they have had on you, and how they will impact future generations. They are the ones asking the tough questions each week, the questions about full assurance and full salvation.

I know this month is pastor appreciation month, but I want to challenge you, while you are being appreciated, to take time to appreciate the Spangenbergs of your church. The future of the Kingdom needs these faithful unsung heroes to keep asking the question, “Do you know Jesus?”

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





by Frank Moore

Are you one of the millions of believers who has gathered with other believers in churches or homes across the land to discover your purpose? Have you wondered how to move from discovering your purpose to fulfilling it? You'll need power to do that and this power comes only through a heart that is fully surrendered to God and guided by the Spirit of Christ. This quest to find the power to live a life of purpose

is what *The Power to Be Free* by Frank Moore is all about. Read as a daily devotional, *The Power to Be Free* recaps the vital importance

of being filled with the Spirit of Christ, and then takes us on a journey through the five themes of guidance, love, purity, power, and character. In each theme Frank Moore provides fresh cultural accounts and reinforced biblical passages to help us think about the Spirit of Christ as He relates to our lives.

Even in the current culture it is still biblical, it is still possible, it is still vital that we live lives that place the Spirit of Christ as the ultimate source of power to fulfill God's perfect plan for us. *The Power to Be Free* is a book that should be in the hands of every pastor, teacher, and leader in congregations today as a simple yet profound way of conveying God's plan to live lives with purpose and power.

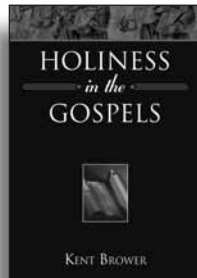
(Beacon Hill Press, 2005, 192pp., \$14.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1921)

BOOK BRIEFS

Resources for Pastoral Ministry

BIBLICAL STUDIES

Holiness in the Gospels. By Kent Brower. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, 160pp., \$19.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1913). Is there a future for the doctrine of Christian Holiness in the churches of the 21st century or will it become a dated concept that is associated only with the generations of the past? For many, the notion of holiness has been described as rigid and legalistic, leading to a routine and joyless life, centered on churches that offer casual and impoverished worship. *Holiness in the Gospels* offers Christians a new vision of holiness that is biblically responsible, centered in worship, and theologically coherent. It translates into a genuine message of good news and communicates passion and understanding for how to live a holy life today—in the 21st century.



Holiness in the Gospels examines the quest for holiness in the second temple period and establishes a backdrop with which to read the gospels. It explores the humanity and the Spirit of Christ found in the Gospel of Luke. It covers the divinity of Jesus in the Gospel of John, the aspects of Christ as Messiah in Mark, and the perfection of Christ in Matthew. This book is truly a detailed theological joy and tremendous sermon and teaching aide. You will want *Holiness in the Gospels* for your library.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

The Secret Blend. By Stan Toler. (Waterbrook Press, 2004, 192pp., \$16.99, cloth, COZZ157-856-7467).

Life had become meaningless and empty to Joe Conrad, a successful businessperson who just landed the richest contract in the history of his ad agency. As Joe struggles with the meaning of life and wealth, he finds himself in a local Seattle coffee shop about to begin his search for the answers to these burning questions. Through Mac Dalton, proprietor of Mac's Place, Joe is offered a free cup of coffee with a coupon he receives from Mac. The question posted on the back of the coupon reads, "Are you as rich as you want to be?"

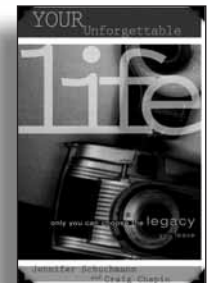


So begins the journey of a lifetime as Joe returns to the coffee shop time and time again to learn the meaning of true wealth and the priority of relationships from his new friend Mac. *The Secret Blend* by Stan Toler is a warm, rich, and slightly caffeinated parable about building strong relationships and discovering what really matters in life. This book is a great read for pastors, and for anyone who would enjoy relearning life's most valuable lessons through excellent fictional writing. Fill your mug, get comfortable, and join Joe and Mac on a rich and robust journey to discover a rewarding new way of life.

CHRISTIAN LIVING

Your Unforgettable Life. By Jennifer Schuchmann and Craig Chapin. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, 144pp., \$12.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1875).

John Allston said, "The only thing you take with you when you're gone is what you leave behind." We will all leave a legacy. And we don't have to be rich, famous, or even dead to leave one. Our legacies are left as imprints on the hearts and minds of those who know us best. The small choices and behaviors we repeat over time is what others will remember long after we've moved, changed jobs, or died.



Your Unforgettable Life examines the impact our decisions have on the legacy we leave and in doing so demonstrates how to make wise choices that will result in an unforgettable life. *Your Unforgettable Life* will provide biblical examples and encouraging stories of legacies that have impacted generations, it will help you deliberately and confidently build a legacy and teach you to develop a vision for the legacy you leave, supplying you with ways to engage in healthy choices that will result in an unforgettable life. This book is an excellent reminder and resource for living. It is also a great resource for developing sermons that discuss how we should be living our lives with purpose instead of merely drifting along with no life goals or ambitions. If you struggle with what memory you'll leave behind or if you need a good point of reference as you preach on biblical characters and their choices, *Your Unforgettable Life* is the book for you.

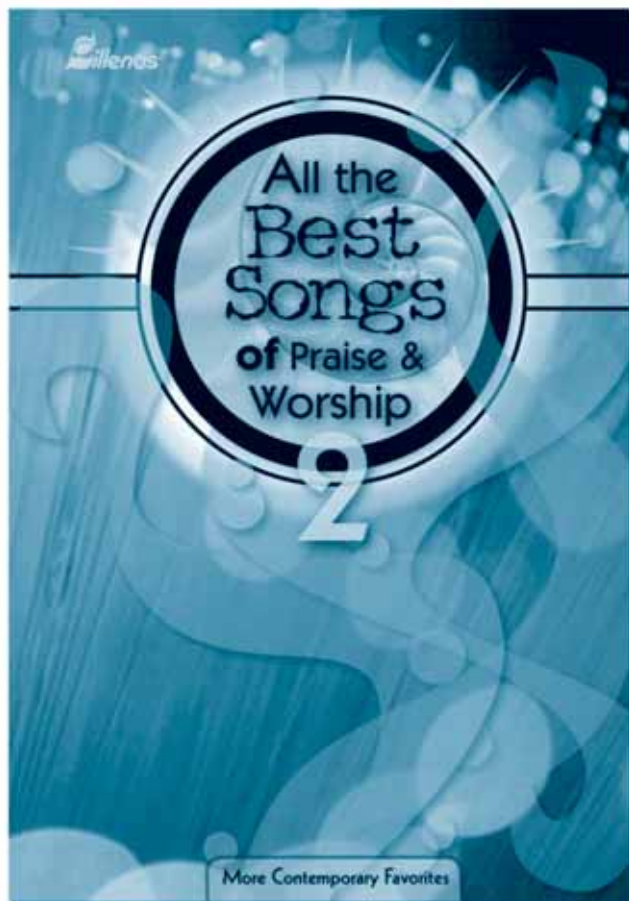
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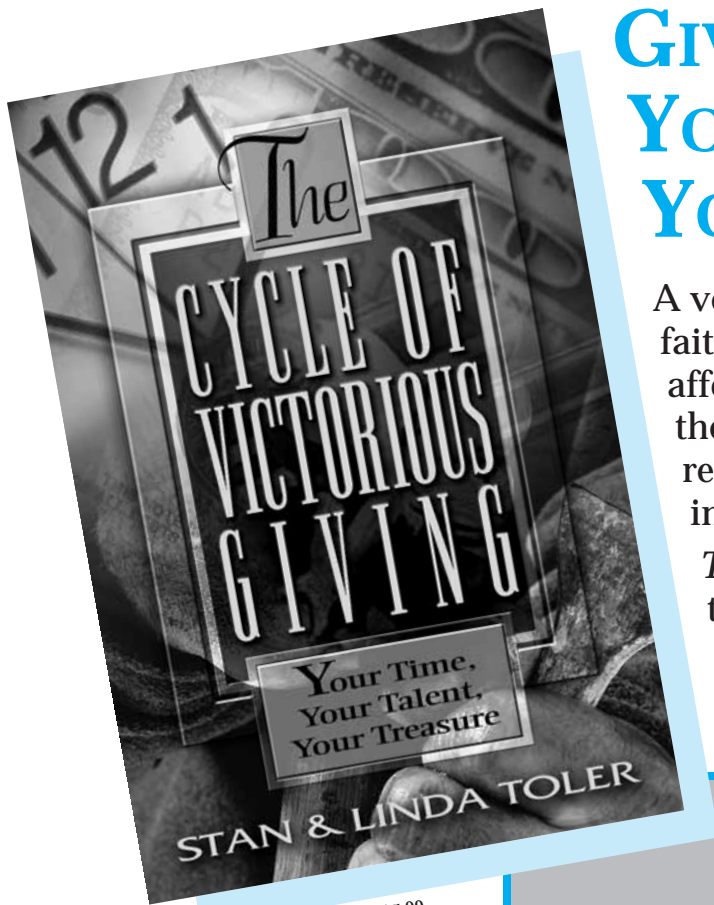
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