

COMMUNICATOR

NAZARENE PUBLISHING HOUSE

How Dare You Ask Such a Question?

“What are you doing to protect yourself against pornography?”

He was a stranger to me but he looked deep into my eyes and asked, “What are you doing to protect yourself against pornography?” I had been asked many questions that day, but none grabbed my attention like that question. This was supposed to be a pastoral interview, not a personal interrogation of my private life!

As the gentleman waited for me to answer, I felt a strange attraction and respect for him. At last someone was asking me a significant question. Here was a man who dared to risk offending me and the others in that room in order to discover if I was an authentic follower of Christ. It was obvious that he was not going to settle for shallow answers or artificial holiness.

How would you answer his question? This gentleman was not willing to accept vague generalities or pious statements regarding my intentions. He was demanding to know what specific steps I was taking to protect myself from this ominous temptation that is enslaving so many ministers.

It was helpful for me to review the steps that I had been taking:

1. I do not subscribe to any “premium” channels. I am no different from any other person. If I have access to HBO, Showtime or, other “premium” channels, I will be tempted to “explore” what is being offered.
2. I asked the computer technician at our church to periodically, without warning, check all of our computers, including mine, to make sure there are no signs of pornography or any other inappropriate materials.

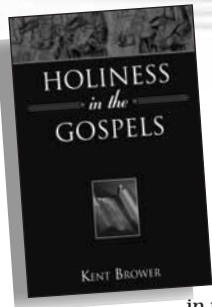
3. We installed windows in all of our office doors to protect the integrity of our staff and our parishioners.
4. I keep open communication about this issue with my wife. She has my permission and my encouragement to ask me any question at any time regarding what I view, read or talk about.
5. I never have private counseling sessions with the opposite sex without someone being in the next room. I never have lunch appointments alone with the opposite sex. Some see this as extreme but I will not compromise this policy.
6. I keep no secrets from my wife. Period. Obviously, I do not share confidential counseling issues with her but everything else is open to her.
7. I encourage others to ask me about this issue anytime they want to. I want to be accountable. I find enormous security in knowing that I have Christians who love me enough to ask the tough questions.

I became the pastor of the gentleman who asked me that question. His name is Dr. Ray Burwick. Though he recently moved to another state, I am honored to know that he prays for me daily and when he is with me; he looks me in the eye and asks me questions that sometime make me squirm. May his tribe increase!

Thank you, Ray, for loving me enough to insist that I live what I preach. I pray that every pastor in our denomination will have a partner like you. Then maybe, just maybe, the world will take us more seriously.

—Mark Goodwin, Senior Pastor,
Portland First Church of the Nazarene





Woven into the message of God's love and redemptive plan for us is the understanding of God's holiness and how mankind has responded to His holiness before and after Christ's ministry among us.

Holiness in the Gospels is a terrific new book that helps us understand the holiness of God and how mankind responded to His holiness in the time of the second temple period of Israel.

Kent Brower provides a back drop of what it meant for Jewish Christians to scripturally live the words of the Torah and also deal with the new claims of holiness that Jesus himself brought into the second temple era. He examines the humanity of Christ and the work of the Spirit in His life

in the Gospel of Luke. And he looks at the divinity of Jesus found in the Gospel of John, the journey of Jesus and the understanding of Him as Messiah in Mark, and finally the perfection of Christ and our call to perfection in the Gospel of Matthew.

Kent Brower brings to this book more than a contextual biblical study of first century holiness tradition. He brings us a renewed understanding of what holiness looks like in the 21st Century. *Holiness in the Gospels* presents a strong message of what the holiness of God presently requires. This book speaks on a much deeper level than just a mere historical account. It is a must read for every pastor, Sunday school teacher, or anyone interested in early Christian studies as it relates to present holiness teaching and preaching.

(Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2005, 160pp., \$19.99, paper, COZZ083-412-1913)

BOOK BRIEFS

Resources for Pastoral Ministry

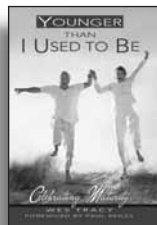
CHRISTIAN LIVING

Younger Than I Used to Be: Celebrating Maturity. By Wes Tracy. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, approx. 144pp., \$12.99, paper, COZZ083-412-2235).

Younger Than I Used to Be by Dr. Wes Tracy is a refreshing and candid look at the timeless theme of what it means to stay vibrantly alive as long as you live—especially in the senior years. Tracy suggests that it's during the senior years of life that we can actually become "younger than we used to be" because learning is more fun than it used to be. We can take the time to really see God's creation, to really see God, and to realize that we are now free to explore our unique selves.

Younger Than I Used to Be is a convincing reminder that living is more than survival and that old age is more than a leaning tower of decades. Yes, there are adjustments and changes to be made, but Tracy helps us to see that our spirit cannot and will not age over time.

This is a book that will positively encourage you as a senior adult to move out of the negatives of old age and into the positives of living in the center of God's will and into an attitude of celebrating life. After all what's not to celebrate when "every day is Saturday?"



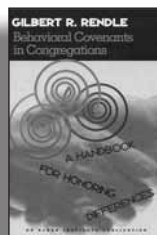
PASTORAL RESOURCES

Behavioral Covenants in Congregations: A Handbook for Honoring Differences. By Gilbert R. Rendle. (Alban Institute, 1999, 125 pp., \$15.00, paper, COZZ156-699-2095).

As a senior consultant for the Alban Institute, Gilbert Rendle has worked with many congregations torn apart by strife and hurtful un-Christian behavior between members. He wrote the book, *Behavioral Covenants in Congregations: A Handbook for Honoring Differences*, to help church leaders understand the source of such behavior and respond to it constructively, bringing healing to wounded congregations. He offers detailed suggestions and resources to halt the infusion of society's behavioral standards into the church.

This book provides step-by-step procedures for pastors to guide their lay leaders through the process of reexamining their own faith commitments and the values of their faith traditions, then translating these values into healthy behavior and relationships. *Behavioral Covenants in Congregations* offers a realistic understanding of human nature, the church, and society, as well as a workable positive response to the incivility of society. Every congregation can benefit from the processes presented and every pastor would appreciate the practical resources Gilbert Rendle offers.

(reviewed by Judith Schwanz, NTS)



SPIRITUAL GROWTH

When God Takes Too Long: Learning to Thrive during Life's Delays. By Joseph Bentz. (Beacon Hill Press, 2005, approx. 144 pp., \$12.99, paper, COZZ083-412-2189).

One of the greatest frustrations of our daily and spiritual lives is waiting. Our entire lives are subject to waiting, but what happens when our impatience gets the best of our spiritual journey? How do we as Christians respond to the timing of God in the ebb and flow of our lives?

Joseph Bentz explains in his book, *When God Takes Too Long*, that we must see God in Scripture as a God who has His own agenda. It's in this agenda that we must wait. His timing and intervention often seem late and His delays are often hard, but we can learn to see God's eternal perspective and allow His transforming power to take its full effect in our lives.

For every person who is, who has, and who will no doubt find themselves in a frustrating period of waiting this is a must read book. Don't wait any longer to read it.

YOUNG ADULT MINISTRIES

Perspectives: A Spiritual Life Guide for Twentysomethings. By Colin Creel. (Relevant Books, 2005, 176 pp., \$14.99, paper, COZZ097-603-5782).

One of the most powerful tools someone can use to influence others is their own personal experience. There is no more effective way to find the answers to life than learning from someone who has already experienced it. Colin Creel's book, *Perspectives: A Spiritual Life Guide for Twentysomethings*, specializes in giving great advice to young adults about subjects such as career, faith, relationship, character, and romance. Colin Creel, a dean at Wesleyan School in Norcross, GA, starts out every chapter with thoughts on each subject followed by advice from others. This "seasoned advice" includes thoughts from famous and average people from every walk of life. Each of these people discuss things they wish they would have been told as young adults. Scripture references and three questions at the end of each chapter are provided for the reader to consider. This book is scripturally sound, insightful, and very enjoyable. I found myself using it as a devotional and stopping numerous times to pray about certain aspects in my life that I need help with. It is a book that will change your perspective and is perfect for anyone who is willing to learn from other people.

(reviewed by Jon Edlin, a student at TNU)



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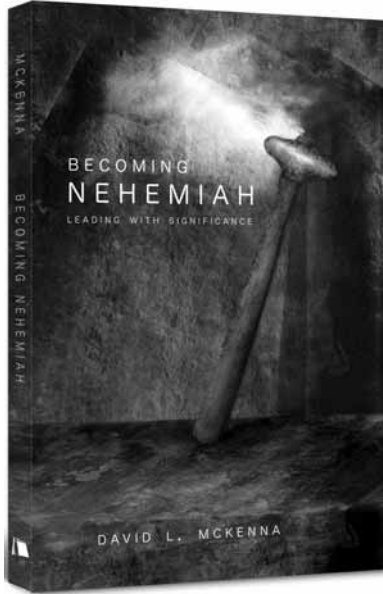
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THE LIFE-CHANGING VBS

LEARN HOW TO LEAD AS A SERVANT

Nehemiah's life continues to serve as a significant model for leaders in the 21st Century, even though he lived and served over 2500 years ago. From his beginnings as a cupbearer to the king to taking charge of rebuilding the wall of Jerusalem, he teaches us a remarkably uncommon thing—how to lead as a servant.



COZZ083-412-2170 \$11.99

In *Becoming Nehemiah*, David McKenna invites you to join this intriguing man of God on a journey of leadership that matches the trials and challenges leaders face today. Through Nehemiah's story, we recognize the difficult task of balancing the promises of biblical leadership with the premises of secular leadership and learn how Nehemiah was able to serve with full integrity in both of these settings.

Becoming Nehemiah offers:

- Information and insight into the life of Nehemiah
- Practical exercises at the end of each chapter to assist in developing your journey, regardless of your level of leadership
- Scripture references, illustrations, and relevant examples that help to bring Nehemiah's story into the 21st Century



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CHURCH OF THE COVERED DISH by Thom Tapp



"OK Larry, when I blow the horn,
you yell 'RAPTURE!'"

