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Rethinking Mission to the Poor

An Interview with Dolphus Weary

A Journal of Religion, Economics, and Culture

Editor's Note



More than anything else, Dolphus Weary brings credibility to the issues of poverty and economic and spiritual development. His life itself is a testimony. Weary grew up under difficult social and economic circumstances in Mississippi. He has harnessed his own life experience to lead others out of the cycle of poverty and hopelessness. His model for holistic outreach to the poor with Mendenhall Ministries has been widely adopted in other parts of the country. The Mendenhall Ministries received national recognition by President George H.W. Bush in 1991, when it was recognized as one of the Daily Points of Light. Weary's book *I Ain't Comin' Back* is the perfect reminder that the heartbreaking

issue of poverty is not a hopeless one but rather, at its fundamental level, it is an opportunity to serve. Today he continues to serve his community and many that are considered "the least of these" in his home state of Mississippi. There is an emotional conclusion to *I Ain't Comin' Back* where Weary reveals that he never had a father to look up to but "God brought along men who showed him the way." For his own kids, Weary says he wants to leave a legacy that testifies to a life spent serving "people that nobody else wanted to serve." We hope this interview will help inspire service in the same way for the reader.

Historian Mark Summers returns with another feature piece in this issue to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the American Civil War. I said before that while there have been many fascinating pieces to cover the anniversary in major publications, little has been said about faith. In the Summer 2011 issue of *Religion & Liberty*, Summers wrote about the evangelical revivals in the Confederacy and has now penned "Onward Catholic Soldiers," to tell the story of the Catholic

Church during the conflict.

David Deavel and managing editor Ray Nothstine offer reviews of important new books in this issue. Deavel reviews Mitch Pearlstein's, *From Family Collapse to America's Decline: The Educational, Economic, and Social Costs of Family Fragmentation*. Data from the book suggests that a very conservative estimate of the social cost of family fragmentation costs U.S. taxpayers \$112 billion annually. Nothstine reviews a new biography on William F. Buckley by Carl T. Bogus. This is another important account of a man who reshaped conservatism. The author covers the movement as well, adding a unique perspective from an observer who admits to being a liberal and critic of the ideology Buckley so deftly articulated.

The "In the Liberal Tradition" figure is the Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyov. Solovyov favored limits to state power and always sought to ground the person upon concrete moral foundations.

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Cover: Dolphus Weary with his wife Rose in Richland, Miss. © Dee Boyte

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Rethinking Mission to the Poor

An Interview with Dolphus Weary

Dolphus Weary grew up in segregated Mississippi and then moved to California to attend school in 1967. He is one of the first black graduates of Los Angeles Baptist College. He returned to Mississippi to lead Mendenhall Ministries, a Christ-centered community outreach organization that takes a holistic approach to solving problems of poverty. Currently, Dolphus Weary is president of R.E.A.L. Christian Foundation in Richland, Miss., which strives to empower and develop rural ministries to improve the lives of Mississippians. Among his academic degrees, Dolphus Weary has received a Doctor of Ministry (D.Min) from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Miss. He is a nationally sought speaker and writer and serves on numerous boards across the state and country. Weary recently spoke with Religion & Liberty Managing Editor Ray Nothstine.

R&L: The title of your book is, *I Ain't Comin' Back*. What story does that title tell?

Dolphus Weary: It tells a story of a young man who grew up in rural Mississippi. I grew up in a family of eight children. My father deserted the family when I was four years old and we lived in a three-room house, not three bedrooms, but a three-room house. All nine of us packed in there. We had holes throughout the house so I understand poverty.

As I grew up, I understood the difference between the white community and the black community. The school bus I rode, you could hear it coming down the road from miles away because it was so dilapidated. The new school bus passed my house. So, being poor and seeing racism

and separation between the black community and the white community, I saw that the best thing I could do one day was to leave Mississippi.

I got a basketball scholarship to go to a Christian college in California, and when I got ready to leave Mississippi, I said, 'Lord, I'm leaving Mississippi and I ain't never coming back.'

I think that the other part of that is God put me in situations in California where I discovered that racism was not just unique to Mississippi or the South. Racism was found in other places as well, and I had to conclude that racism was not where you came from, but it's an issue of the heart, and began to deal with that on an all white college campus in California. Then God began to point me back toward Mississippi, so I returned in the summers of 1968, '69, and in '70. I travelled with a Christian basketball team and toured the Orient. We were playing basketball and sharing our faith at halftime, and there the coach challenged me about full time Christian service as a missionary in Taiwan or the Philippines.

That is when I began to think about whether I was going into a mission field or was I running away from a mission field? It became clear to me that I was running away from Mississippi as a mission field. After graduating from college and seminary, my wife and I moved back to Mendenhall, Mississippi and we started asking a question. Is our Christian faith strong enough to impact the needs of a poor community, or is the best thing

we can do is tell poor people to give your life to Jesus and one day you're going to go to heaven and it's going to be better?

We began to internalize that to say that Jesus is concerned about you right now. We ended up developing a Christian health clinic and elementary school, a thrift store, a farm, a law office, a housing ministry, to try to take this precious gospel and make it into reality for poor people. Telling them that God loves you, he wants you to go to heaven, but God loves you right now and He wants you to live a decent life on this earth. What the Lord did was bring me back to be a part of the solution and not just to talk about the problem or simply walk away from it.

What was the greatest blessing, in your mind, of your background?

I think the greatest blessing for me is the blessing of understanding and seeing poverty and racism up close. Knowing what it feels like to be poor, knowing what discrimination feels like. In the midst of that, my mother was teaching us, always do the best you can and always go to school and study hard. Now I have a sense of empathy for those who are economically trapped, and I have an empathy for those who may be marginalized because of race. I was taught some things as a black person, even though they might be very different from what my white counterpart was taught. The question is how do we move from the old stuff that we were taught, to move it into a learning curve where we can do something better rather than judging

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Onward Catholic Soldiers: The Catholic Church during the American Civil War

By Mark Summers

It is a common, even clichéd saying that the American Civil War pitted “brother against brother.” Certainly, the conflict divided the nation as the seceded Southern states fought for independence, while the Northern and Border states fought to preserve the Union. Even within the sections, there were politicians, civilians, and soldiers who sympathized with the other “side.” The issues of Slavery, “States-Rights,” and the meaning of the Federal Constitution created passions and hatreds, which leapt from the ballot box to the battlefield. Even churches—especially churches—were prone to this division. Each section, denomination, and parishioner believed God to be on their side.

The sectional conflict of the 1860s

over slavery and union collided with other heated socio-political struggles of the 19th century. America’s pastoral Protestant society, so praised by Alexis de Tocqueville, with its patchwork of Yankee Pilgrims, Anglican planters, and Scotch-Presbyterian yeomanry was becoming more urban, immigrant-filled,

and Catholic. Southern and Border states had already assimilated a small gentry of French and English Catholics but would not see drastic ethnic and religious change. Instead, the newcomer Catholics from Germany and Ireland chose to settle in the port cities and factory towns of the northeast and Midwest. They spoke with foreign accents, crammed tenements, performed manual labor, and backed big city political machines.

to close saloons, limit Catholic immigration, restrict political office to Protestants, and require a 21-year wait for citizenship. The Know Nothing movement exploded in popularity during the 1850s as its candidates captured the mayoral elections of Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Washington. They were accused of fomenting political violence against Catholic voters in Louisville and Baltimore, and burning Catholic churches and attacking priests in New England.

Catholic voters clung to the Democratic Party for political protection. As the Know Nothing movement fizzled by 1856, much of its membership switched to the new Republican Party. Though some prominent Republicans such as Abraham Lincoln chastised anti-Catholic



Roman Catholic chaplain ministering to Union soldiers during the Civil War.

Indeed an entire political faction arose to counter the influx of refugees from the Irish potato famine and German political revolutions of the 1840s. They were officially known as the American Party but were famously nicknamed Know Nothings for their secretive ways. They campaigned, among other things,

radicals, to Irish and Catholic Germans the Republican Party became the party of “isms”: temperance-ism, abolitionism, and know nothing-ism. When that “ism” party won the White House in 1860, and southern Democrats chose to secede, many in the Protestant North questioned the loyalty of the urban

Catholic masses amongst them as the war clouds stirred.

Catholics had long shown their loyalty to the United States despite distrust from other Americans. Charles Carroll of Maryland signed the Declaration of Independence. Daniel Carroll (Charles' brother) and Thomas Fitzsimmons were members of the Constitutional Convention. Father Pierre Gibault rallied French frontiersmen to the American cause in the backcountry of Ohio and Indiana, while the Irish-born John Barry became the first American naval commander to sink a British ship. Barry's statue stands outside of Independence Hall in Philadelphia. Hundreds of Irish and Frenchmen served in the ranks of the Continental Army. Furthermore, without the aid of predominantly Roman Catholic France, American independence would hardly have been possible. George Washington remembered this service when he addressed a letter to the Catholic Church in America in 1790. He hoped that, "as mankind becomes more liberal they will be more apt to allow that all those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are equally entitled to the protection of civil government."

The prior service of Catholic Americans was largely forgotten by the time of the Civil War. Most early American Catholics had been of British or French stock. They were members of the middle class and gentry, small in number, and not seen as a threat (perhaps not even as identifiably Catholic) to the larger Protestant community. By 1860, there was an estimated 4.5 million Catholics in the United States, nearly one-sixth of the American population. Half of this Catholic population came from two decades of massive Irish immigration. There were now five archbishoprics (New York, Baltimore, New Orleans, Cincinnati, and St. Louis) and 24 bishoprics in the country. Pope Pius IX oversaw the rapid creation of new American dioceses and archdioceses, and encouraged American bishops

to conduct synods and meetings. The United States government championed Pius as a "liberal reformer" and established good relations with him and the Papal States.

Yet it was this rapid growth and success of the Catholic faith in America which created a climate of fear and hatred among the Protestant majority. Archbishop Hughes of New York complained of convents and churches having been burnt down by "the work of what is called mobs." The archbishop further confessed "disappointment at not having witnessed a prompt and healthy true American sentiment in the heart of the community at large in rebuttal of such proceedings." Archbishop Purcell of Cincinnati engaged in a series of debates with Protestant clergy where he fielded barbs against the Catholic faith and defended the loyalty of his parishioners against the charge that they were more loyal to a "tyrannical Rome" than to the United States.

Lay organizations were few in number, and the Catholic population was insular and largely foreign, which made it difficult to respond effectively to anti-Catholic bias and attacks. Even the few Catholic newspapers in the country were dismissed as organs of the Democratic Party's big city political bosses.

On the eve of the Civil War, as citizens were taking sides, and taking up arms, leading Unionists questioned where the Church stood on the issues of slavery and secession. In May 1861, the Third Provincial Council of Cincinnati attempted to clarify the Catholic position on the crisis. The Council stated that the "spirit of the Catholic Church is eminently conservative and while her ministers rightfully feel a deep and abiding interest in all that concerns the welfare of the country, they do not think it their province to enter the political arena." It further elaborated on the Catholic "unity of spirit" that recognized "no North, no South, no East, no West."

Yet historian Mark Noll states that the American Catholic position, while not as "fully developed domestically as they were abroad" created a theological challenge to prevailing American beliefs. Catholics challenged the Protestant notions that linked democracy and Christianity, capitalism and Christianity, and the individualism Protestants interpreted from scripture. Noll stated in his book *The Civil War as a Theological Crisis* that the Catholic position "amounted to a fundamental assessment of prevailing beliefs and practices that American protestants, whose main principles were so closely intertwined with the nation's dominant ideologies, could not deliver." Northern theologians could not understand Catholic misgivings about the abolitionist movement, with its willingness to break the law for its goals, and know nothing roots, while Southern radicals could not abide the Church's sympathy for and identification with the plight and suffering of slaves. Furthermore, while Protestant denominations split along sectional lines and theological interpretations of slavery, even to the point of advocating war, the Catholic Church seemed mad-deningly united and suspiciously neutral during the secession crisis.

Theological and political confusion were further complicated by the overwhelming Irish character of the American Catholic population. On the one hand, Irish Catholics could be expected to fight for their adopted country which had provided them an asylum from famine and British persecution. On the other hand, Irish Catholic Southerners could as easily liken their state's push for independence from the Union to the fight to liberate Ireland from the British Empire. While the Irish might be expected to identify with the oppressed slaves of the South, they also stood to lose manual labor jobs to any potential freedman. The Irish had long supported the Democratic Party and viewed the abolitionist Republicans with fear and suspicion, yet had previously provided military and

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community service to the nation regardless of the political party in power. The voice of Catholic America during the Civil War would have a brogue.

While precise statistics on Catholic service in the Civil War are unknown, the vast majority of the Irish and thus Catholic community sided with the Union over the Confederacy. While the Irish devotion to the Union cause can largely be attributed to circumstance of settlement rather than conviction, there were leaders among the Irish Catholic episcopate that loudly championed the Federal Cause. Archbishop Hughes of New York rallied Catholic northerners to his side, calling for the national flag to be displayed at churches, and advocating conscription, a practice that would prove to be unpopular with the Irish Catholic working class. Archbishop Hughes defended the draft, saying it was “not cruel...this is mercy...this is humanity.” He believed that “anything that will put an end to their drenching with blood the whole surface of the country, that will be humanity.” He also went on a diplomatic mission to Europe to ensure neutrality among the papal and Catholic majority nations.

Among the laity, Thomas Francis Meagher, a former Irish revolutionary leader who escaped execution by the British Empire, helped organize several ethnic Irish Union regiments into the famed “Irish Brigade.” Although the Federal government was reluctant to organize ethnic brigades, it relented in order to encourage immigrant enlistment and thwart British attempts to aid the Confederacy. The Irish Brigade consisted of the 63rd, 69th, and 88th, New York regiments, along with the 28th Massachusetts from Boston, and the 116th Pennsylvania from Philadelphia. The Brigade served with distinction in combat, losing over half of its numbers at both Antietam and Fredericksburg. Further casualties at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg reduced its size to mere regimental strength. By 1864, the Irish Bri-

gade was disbanded, but not before winning the praise of the northern public and encouraging the enlistment of many more Irish Americans.

Not all Catholics were as eager for war as was Meagher and his Irish Brigade. Among German Catholics, support for the Union cause was more ambivalent than in the Irish community. While there were German Union soldiers of all faiths, the most devoted German immigrants to the Union cause were the “Forty-Eighters.” They were political refugees from the failed revolutions in Germany of 1848 who strongly supported abolitionist Republicans, leaned towards liberal Protestantism or even agnosticism, and viewed Catholics with suspicion. German Catho-

“... a Protestant doctor remarked to a Catholic bishop that ‘there must be some wonderful unity in Catholicity which nothing can destroy, not even the passions of war.’”

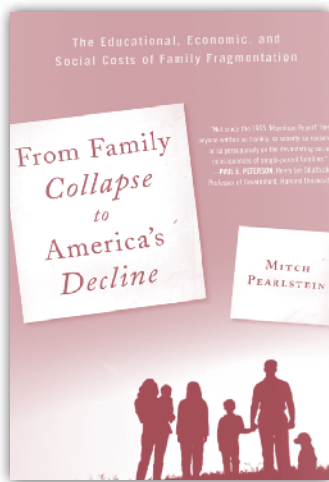
lics subsequently failed to organize for the northern war effort in large numbers. Among Irish Catholics, many of the working class were suspicious of conscription and felt they had been pulled into a “rich man’s war but a poor man’s fight.” Many participated in the draft riots in New York City from July 13-16, 1863, which killed hundreds of people, wounded thousands, destroyed millions of dollars in property, and led to race-based lynchings in which scores of African-Americans became victims.

Yet the overwhelming majority of Catholics in the north supported the Union war effort, if for no other reason than to prove the loyalty of their Church and ethnicity to their adopted homeland.

Along with the thousands of soldiers that fought in the ranks were hundreds of priests who ministered to the troops and Catholic Sisters who assisted as nurses and sanitary workers. Catholic soldiers were at a religious disadvantage compared to the Protestant comrades, as the church lacked enough priests to both serve in the army and minister to the congregations at home. Nevertheless, Catholic priests heard confession, comforted the men, and celebrated Mass prior to battle. More than eight different orders of nuns served the soldiers during the war. Before the organization of the American Red Cross, nuns were among the most organized and experienced nurses available to serve the army. Catholic sisters were praised for their assistance to all soldiers, North and South, Catholic or Protestant. When observing this ministry, a Protestant doctor remarked to a Catholic bishop that “there must be some wonderful unity in Catholicity which nothing can destroy, not even the passions of war.”

Indeed, it was this unity of the Catholic Church which proved unique among American Christianity. While Protestant denominations split over theological and sectional lines, the Catholic Church stood as the only major church which remained united during the war, even if its congregants fought on opposite sides. While the Civil War brought violence and destruction to the nation on a horrific scale, it did provide the Catholic Church in America, and its largely immigrant community, a means to show the “better angels of our nature” and the loyalty and Christian sense of duty of its parishioners; a service and devotion which continues to the present day.

Mark Summers of Petersburg, Va., recently completed his M.A. in history from Virginia Tech. He has worked as a public historian in several Virginia museums. He authored “The Great Harvest: Revival in the Confederate Army during the Civil War” for the Summer 2011 issue of Religion & Liberty.



One Percent or 33: America's Real Inequality Problem

Review by David Paul Deavel

Review of Mitch Pearlstein's *From Family Collapse to America's Decline: The Educational, Economic, and Social Costs of Family Fragmentation* (ISI, Aug 2011) ISBN: 978-1607093626. Paperback, 165 pages; \$24.95.

The American economy remains sluggish and, from all over the political spectrum, particularly the left, people have turned their attention to inequality. The Occupy Wall Street movement, though without actual plans for reform, emphasizes the growing inequality between the top one percent and the 99 percent of Americans below them, with the implication that income growth among top earners means less for everybody else. Supporting this line of thinking, the *New York Times* published an article in early November titled, "The Rich Get Richer," which somewhat misleadingly implied that the rich were indeed getting richer, even through the last three years, while the poor were getting poorer. Michael Medved, among other commentators, pointed out that, buried in the story, a study by the Congressional Budget Office was mentioned showing that from 1980-2007 the richest Americans were indeed getting richer by leaps and bounds; by progressively smaller leaps, so were the middle class and low income earners. Not to mention the fact that there was a great deal of mobility between classes. In any case, the top one percent lost the most money in terms of absolute dollars after the 2008 financial meltdown.

But if the Occupiers were right about one thing, it was that there is a growing in-

equality in American life. Scott Winship, relying on the findings of the Pew Charitable Trust's Economic Mobility Project as evaluated by his colleagues at the center-left Brookings Institution, shows that though the gains have not been as startling in the last few decades as they were for Americans 40 years back, what has been evident is indeed "pervasive economic mobility." Pervasive indeed, from downward mobility from the top and middle to upward mobility from the middle. The exception, he notes, is "upward mobility from the bottom."

Mitch Pearlstein, who worked in the Department of Education under Reagan and Bush I, and then founded the Center of the American Experiment in Minneapolis, also sees this as a growing problem. His new book, *From Family Fragmentation to America's Decline*, laments this inability of many to climb their way up from the bottom rungs of society. But rather than fixating on the one percent, he focuses on the 33 percent. This is the percent of children living with one par-

ent rather than two. These children, victims of what many call "family fragmentation," start out with tremendous social and educational deficits that are hard to narrow, nevermind close. These



Youngsters at public housing project near Hemisfair Grounds, San Antonio.

are most often the children for whom upward mobility has stalled. Their economic well-being has led to decline in American competitiveness and also the deeper cleavages of inequality that have been so widely noted.

This territory is not new. In his first chapter, "From Moynihan to 'My Goodness,'" Pearlstein traces the findings of social scientists on the effects of divorce, single-parenthood, and particularly the absence of fathers from the period of Daniel Patrick Moynihan's famous (or infamous, from contemporary leftist viewpoints) 1965 report on the status of black families. While Moynihan was careful to ascribe the then-current break-

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down of the black family to factors like slavery, racism, and other economic factors, he was nonetheless demonized for racism in raising the topic. While other social scientists working from the 1960s to the 1980s vindicated everything Moynihan had said, it was not politically correct to say any of it, considering the opposition from multiculturalists and, of course, feminists themselves who seemed to believe not only that women, but also children, needed men like fish needed bicycles. Charles Murray's 1984 *Losing Ground* had the temerity to suggest that much of the welfare state apparatus assembled since the 1960s had not only not helped family life, but incentivized divorce and single parenthood, creating the same problems among whites that Moynihan had identified among blacks. The ice was finally broken when established liberal figures like Bill Moyers and then William Galston began to publicize the realities of family breakdown.

Now it is virtually certain from a social-science perspective that married fathers and mothers living together have a much greater impact on children's future economic well-being than simply being additional "income inputs." Pearlstein's chapters on the effects of family fragmentation on "every conceivable measure" and on education are sobering in their completeness. Divorce and single parenthood are seen as risk factors for poverty as well as the health, safety, and educational well-being of children across the board. He verifies this not only from studies in the U.S. but across cultures. What is particularly depressing about American family life is that American children born to two married parents are more likely to experience family breakdown (or "fragmentation" as the current euphemism has it) than Swedish children born to cohabiting parents. (Pearlstein is careful to note that this is a comparative measure—other data show that the effects of having married parents are far greater than simply legal for children. Being married is still better for kids than cohabiting.)

Like Moynihan before him, Pearlstein is careful to say not all poverty, health, and educational failure are caused by family fragmentation, but "a great deal of it is." Given the data I cited above about the pervasive upward mobility at least from the middle classes, Pearlstein's findings do not paint a pretty picture of America's future. All the data, particularly from the National Marriage Project's comprehensive 2010 study of Americans and marriage, show that the "unMarriage Culture," as Kay Hymowitz styles it, has become endemic among the broad middle classes as well. Pearlstein's data shows that the effects of family fragmentation are not limited to those in poverty, but affect kids of all classes who experience them. Pearlstein is at pains to make



clear that he is not pointing fingers at anyone, nor is he denying that many children in single-parent or divorced homes are doing well. But all the best

available data show that children in these situations are at much greater risk of educational failure and corresponding economic weakness as adults.

In a high-tech information age, the path to upward mobility is dependent on a high level of education both social and intellectual. Those who are left behind in these areas will have an increasingly difficult time not only with upward mobility but making it in general. In the groundbreaking 2008 *Marriage and Caste in America*, the aforementioned Kay Hymowitz described the "self-perpetuating single-mother proletariat" that had come into existence and paralleled the self-perpetuating cycle of university educated mothers who raise children who go to college, get married, and then have children. Pearlstein only adds to the case by noting that while many believe that the offshoring of jobs has been only to evade higher labor and regulatory costs, many high tech jobs are now being moved abroad because there aren't enough Americans with enough education to handle them. This labor deficit means weakening American competitiveness is likely to worsen down the road.

The cost of family fragmentation to the American people also has a dollar-value that can be calculated approximately. Pearlstein cites Benjamin Scafidi's 2008 study that indicated government spending to offset family fragmentation was roughly \$112 billion per year, noting that this "extremely cautious" estimate left out any account of: male-headed households, government programs like the Earned Income Tax Credit, Medicare expenses associated with non-married adults and single elderly people, the "benign effects of marriage on fathers' earning power," and the likelihood that married parents do not avail themselves of government services to which they are entitled at the same rate as single mothers. All of these and many other less calculable concerns point to a figure

much higher than \$112 billion annually. If Charles Murray was right that many aspects of this expenditure only incentivize family fragmentation, one sees how great the costs really are.

What are the solutions to all this? Or, more realistically, what can even help? Pearlstein's final two chapters on ways to strengthen education and marriage are very tentative. While he has no doubt that public education can be improved, there is a certain skepticism about the broad-based reforms which have been made over the last hundred years in education. Pearlstein thinks private religious schools are so successful because they are able to teach the unity of intellectual and moral virtue. Public schools that have succeeded are similarly "paternalistic" in that they teach reading, writing, and arithmetic, but also middle-class values like diligence, thrift, politeness, and a strong work ethic. Due to constraints imposed by teachers unions and bureaucratic red-tape, such public schools are rare and difficult to duplicate when found.

Concerning marriage, we have even less data since government encouragement of a marriage culture only began about 15 years ago. The results have not been encouraging. Pearlstein doesn't think there is no place for government in encouraging married parenthood, but his book points again and again to the root problem: our culture. Despite the widespread impression that American Christianity is largely judgmental, Pearlstein contends that "religious institutions need to be more assertive in this realm, while being no less supportive of those in need." Parents won't get married or stay married to "save the economy" or "lessen inequality," but they will for deeper reasons that will have the same result.

David Paul Deavel is associate editor of Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture and contributing editor to Gilbert Magazine.

Double-Edged Sword: *The Power of the Word*

1 Corinthians 4:9

For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men.

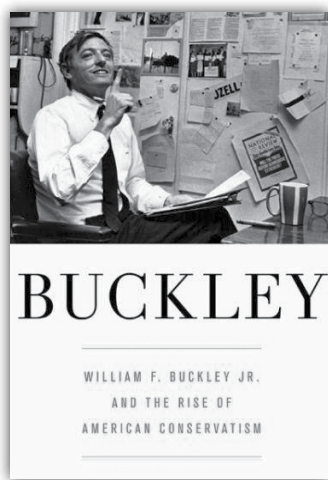
The German theologian Johannes Brenz declared, "There is no higher honor than to be classed with the prophets and the Son of God." In his letter to the church at Corinth, Paul compares the fate and treatment of the apostles to the captured competitors in Rome at the end of a parade or procession. Their sentence was a brutal and inhumane death for the entertainment of the spectators. Such was the life of the apostle that a death of suffering awaited them.

The purpose of Paul in this passage is to discipline and instruct some in the Church that had become arrogant and puffed up with pride. They felt superior in knowledge and felt they were indeed enlightened even beyond the Apostle Paul. Pride is one of the greatest sins in the Church and it plagues many of its leaders. It infected the church at Corinth and it infects many churches today.

When we look around at leaders today, especially in industry or government, we see a bounty of failed leadership. However, too much humility never seems to be the cause of the failure. Can you imagine if some of the leaders of our country stood before us and admitted failure? Then those same leaders asked for more help and guidance when it came to leading? It is hard to imagine, but I suspect more citizens would be a lot more forgiving than some might expect. A scenario like that would be too counter-cultural and shocking for many that anger may not even enter into their thinking.

The Lord Christ himself said, "The last shall be first and the first shall be last." Humility and servitude to Christ and all that he offers is no weakness at all but empowerment. In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he declares of Christ, "Though he was rich, yet for your sakes, he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." Paul also adds, "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Everything that the Apostle Paul says deserves our utmost attention. There was nobody closer to the heart and mind of Christ and no one willing to suffer so much for the glory of Christ. The chains, affliction, and suffering that Paul experienced only served to empower and justify his calling even more so. What sacrifices do we make in our own life to draw attention to Christ?



Modern Conservative Crusader

Review by Ray Nothstine

Review of Carl T. Bogus's *William F. Buckley Jr. and the Rise of American Conservatism* (ISI, Oct 2011) ISBN: 978-1596915800. Hardback, 416 pages; \$19.80.

Ronald Reagan affectionately called William F. Buckley "our clipboard-bearing Galahad" who took on the "knights of darkness." The quote delivered at the 30th anniversary celebration of *National Review* speaks to the depth of Buckley's leadership over the conservative movement. Anybody knowledgeable of ancient Christianity and theology understands the significance of biographer Lee Edwards words when he called Buckley "The St. Paul of the conservative movement." Now, in a new biography titled *William F. Buckley Jr. and the Rise of American Conservatism*, Carl T. Bogus offers his own analysis of Buckley focusing on the years 1955 – 1968, the latter date signifying the point where Buckley had left his lasting mark on conservatism.

Bogus, a self-described liberal who admits to being at times "highly critical of Buckley's ideology" nevertheless calls himself an "admirer." Bogus believes he offers a fair assessment of Buckley and the movement, and one wonders if it is enough that he just lives up to the proclamation only at times. His harshest criticism of Buckley is saved for *National Review's* general opposition to federal civil rights initiatives and action and Bogus claims "*National Review* thrived by wrapping racism with ostensibly highbrow arguments about constitutional law and political theory." Buckley of course would later say of

his position on civil rights, "I was wrong: federal intervention was necessary."

The author also criticizes much of *National Review's* advocacy for a hard-line stance against Soviet aggression, preferring the more nuanced and diplomatic containment approach to check the red menace. Bogus even calls Buckley the leader of "a movement fueled by fear." This is perhaps the overarching flaw of his account in that there is too little respect for the ideas of conservatism itself. Buckley is rather lavished with praise for putting a happy, exciting face on the movement and for impeccable leadership skills and coalition-building among rivals.

Much of the strength of this account covers the early years of organizing and bringing together fractured figures within the limited government camps that very often had little affinity for one another. Frank S. Meyer's brand of libertarianism and Russell Kirk's Burkean conservatism is just one prime example of the public conflict that Buckley helped publicly diffuse for well over a quarter of a century. The treatment of Russell Kirk and Whitaker Chambers is splendid and this book shows competency in articulating the Christian foundations of the worldviews of Buckley, Chambers, and Kirk. Addressed in detail is Buckley's first book *God and Man at Yale* and his attack on the secular humanism at the University. Chambers' famous *National Review* critique of Ayn Rand's *Atlas Shrugged* is chronicled masterfully as well as her philosophy of

Objectivism. Buckley would, of course, forever heap praise on the former communist turned anti-communist for "reading Miss Rand right out of the conservative movement." In his review, Chambers called Rand's ideology "a forthright philosophic materialism" that was an anathema to Christianity.

Similarly, Bogus offers a precise and detailed account of how *National Review* extricated itself from support of the then popular John Birch Society and its wild conspiracies of subversive communist control throughout the United States government. He describes how *National Review* had to make harsh denouncements via its editorials. Bogus sums up the magazine's position, "Membership in the John Birch Society was indefensible. It was an act of lunacy, and it was irresponsible because it harmed the conservative movement."

If any criticism of collectivism comes from Bogus, it emerges in the coverage of Buckley's 1965 New York City mayoral campaign against Republican John V. Lindsay and Democrat Abraham D. Beame. Buckley loathed the liberal Republican Lindsay and combined humorous wit, lofty rhetoric, and free-market initiatives to launch a platform for his conservative ideas. This was at a time when it was not unusual for a Republican to run to the left of the Democrat. Lindsay did just that and eked out a victory. Lindsay's two terms as mayor, as Bogus notes, was seen as a failure for liberalism. Spending, welfare rolls, crime, and poverty all dramatically in-

creased under Lindsay's tenure. In an election that saw Buckley only receive 13.4 percent of the vote, five years later it propelled his brother to win a U.S. Senate from New York as the Conservative Party candidate. Buckley's campaign would make conservative ideas mainstream, multiply subscriptions to *National Review*, and lead to the hosting of the long running series "Firing Line."

"Former National Review publisher William Rusher called this 'the blunder of 1968.'"

It is often noted that one of *National Review's* errors was not supporting Ronald Reagan over Richard Nixon in 1968. Former *National Review* publisher William Rusher called this "the blunder of 1968." This would all change by 1980. By then, many saw Reagan's victory as the triumph of Buckley's brand of conservatism. After Reagan, Americans were not only more skeptical about government programs; they were skeptical about government itself," says Bogus.

While Bogus sometimes offers too many background details to Cold War policies, Vietnam, the Civil Rights Movement, often with the purpose of undermining conservative ideas, he has constructed an account that rightly places Buckley at the center of the modern conservative movement. Although little is covered about Buckley's personal life or his notable charitable works, Bogus properly grounds Buckley as a principled conservative who championed human liberty rooted in the Christian tradition.

One glaring omission in this account is the sense of duty that often is a chief characteristic of many conservatives. In his biography, Lee Edwards pointed out that Buckley was a descendent of well-to-do parents, and when he was asked why he continued to work so hard at an old age despite wealth and fame, a surprised Buckley said, "My Father taught me that I owe it to my country. It's how I pay my debt."

What's behind PovertyCure?

In this column, in the Summer 2006 issue of *ReL*, I answered the question: *How does Acton communicate its ideas to the world?* You might recall how I explained that video will be an increasingly important tool for Acton in the future. Video, of course, is today's dominant popular medium and we've been using it at Acton for some time now to advance the cause of freedom, globally and instantaneously.

That's why Acton is one of the lead sponsors of PovertyCure, a website, documentary and group study curriculum that will change the international aid conversation by its simple appeal to the entrepreneurial spirit that is embedded in human nature. You and I know that the materialist anthropology of the U.N. Millennial Development program is a poor foundation for the development of the person. PovertyCure offers a real alternative.

Floods of Western aid serve not to lift developing countries out of poverty, but only to poison their homegrown industries, to promote unrest within their borders, and ultimately, to strip away the dignity of their people. At the risk of sounding trite, the solution to Africa's problems is Africa; its people -- not neo-colonialist U.N. bureaucrats -- are best equipped to solve the crises of hunger and disease the continent faces.

In the battle of ideas, there are some hard lessons to be learned from the global War on Poverty. Billions upon billions of dollars have been spent to aid developing countries (almost \$50 billion by the United States in 2010 alone) and yet, when we look for results, we find little fruit. U.N. diplomats, the Department of State, and Hollywood, can present tantalizing figures as "the amount of aid that would end hunger forever," and there's a great deal of emotional pull in that argument. But, inconvenient though it may be, feelings don't alleviate poverty, and neither do the hefty but seemingly blank checks we've been writing for years.

I'm excited about our involvement in PovertyCure and the transformation we expect it to accomplish. PovertyCure's impressive list of voices and partners, many of them captured on compelling video clips, is to be found at www.PovertyCure.org, where you too can join the movement by signing the statement of principles.



Kris Alan Mauren
Executive Director

people based on what we were taught?

In your book you say, "Economics alone is not the answer to poverty." Why is that such a critical concept in meeting the needs of people?

I was on the Board of Koinonia Farms in Americus, Georgia, at the time that Koinonia Farms was building houses for low-income families that ultimately became the vision for Millard Fuller in starting Habitat for Humanity. We built a whole community of 40 houses in South Georgia, and we were of course celebrating what we accomplished. However, we did not add a spiritual challenge. We did not add any spiritual hope for folks that moved in, and so within five years, many of those houses were torn up, many of those houses were abused and

to understand that God is leading you, and God involved with you is much more important for your life. If you just hand out money, the only thing you do is create more greed.

You also declare that meeting the social needs of people is the duty of the body of Christ. Many now feel that is a concept that is primarily the duty of government. Why is it important that the church lead on poverty issues?

For a long time, the evangelical Church in America had this mission of just getting people saved. In Acts, we see the Church caring for people as well as feeding and clothing them. We have gotten away from that. We feel good about going to Africa and Asia. We feel good

last Spring, and in Joplin, Mo. too. Evangelicals have been very, very active. Because of the cultural wars they were somewhat hunkered down, and we have seen them much more active today. That is a good start, at least.

It is a good start. Churches are asking some different questions about how to engage our backyard. Katrina was such a marvelous opportunity, and for me it was exciting to see denominations and Christian organizations working together. Rather than fighting over who got the credit, they were working together because they recognized that the problem was bigger than any single church and any single organization. One church is not going to do it, but we have to work together to make it happen.

Mississippi is the poorest state in the Union. What are the challenges that face the state and what have been the biggest challenges for addressing poverty within the ministries you are involved with?

Mendenhall Ministries, a ministry I am heavily involved with, developed as a holistic Christian community development ministry, reaching out, identifying what some of the needs are, and then coming up with ministry programs that would meet those needs. We set up health clinics and a law office. We began to do those things to address the needs of the disadvantaged in the community who had little help to get on their feet.

Secondly, my work with Mission Mississippi has been a commitment that says the Church is the institution in the state that needs to work on eliminating racism. We have been working with the Christian Church throughout the state to say to Christians that it is now time to not let race separate us. If we could learn how to make decisions for our children, rather than making decisions for black children versus white children, our whole community would be much better off. Some of Mississippi's problems have come from the fact that the state has allowed racism to drive many of the decisions made years ago.

If we could learn how to work together

" We are really empowered to do that best in community at the local level."

about flying 50 people across country, paying X number of dollars to fly 50 people to stay a week somewhere. Rather than taking that money and empowering the people in the local community, some want to just take a group and fly somewhere while ignoring their own backyard. We need to rethink mission. Over the last 30 years, we have been preaching a message that says let's go to Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria, as we move to the remotest parts of the world. The Church, the body of Christ, needs to have a holistic view of reaching people, not just preparing them to go to heaven, but preparing people to deal with some of the social needs as well. I think that the Church has the greatest opportunity to hold individuals accountable and to move people along towards growth rather than along a line of dependency. We are really empowered to do that best in community at the local level.

It has been encouraging to see the response after Katrina and the tornadoes in the South



had just as many kids that were strung out on drugs and all of that. We built a ghetto because we did not add the spiritual component. We did not help people

across the barrier of race, I think we can do a lot to move from being number 50th and move up. We are making progress. And I believe that there's a spirit going on right now that more and more Mississippians are first asking the question of how can we work together to create economic opportunity and pro-growth solutions.

Often the visual image of poverty in America is one of the homeless or run-down project buildings in urban areas, but most of the poorest counties in America are rural areas. When one goes to see the Mississippi Delta, they will see an entirely different reality. What are the greatest challenges to economic opportunity in a place like that?

The urban community has concentrated poverty, concentrated problems. The rural community has spread out problems. It still does not nearly get the same attention as the urban community. My wife and I have been selling my book, *I Ain't Comin' Back*, to create a foundation that will come along beside rural Christian ministries in Mississippi. We limit ourselves to Mississippi and we limit ourselves to the rural community. We recognize that there is not much connectedness in the rural community. We are trying to encourage people to begin to start another little Mendenhall Ministries in your community, so that you can begin to address some of the problems in that community. The people and churches there locally know what is best in terms of empowering people.

Secondly, I think that we need to keep educating the Church that poverty is not just an urban phenomenon, but poverty is entrenched in those rural communities. When I served on the board of World Vision, we had to refocus because most of its mission was overseas. Thirty years ago, World Vision started shifting more focus on poverty in this country, and it did have an effort in this country but most of it was concentrated in urban areas. Poverty exists in cities, in urban communities, but poverty also exists in rural Mississippi, in Appalachia, in Kentucky, in Virginia and those places. The Church needs to realize those areas are a part of that Sa-

maria as well and to get involved in those often forgotten places.

You are heavily involved with racial reconciliation work in Mississippi. You have stressed that reconciliation is essential for the long-term economic development. How has that helped to fight poverty?

We know that if we can get the Christian Church to stop seeing itself as a black church over here and a white church over there, we really can begin to address the issues of economic poverty. It is going to be a long-term process, but it



Church in Mississippi Delta.

can happen. What happens when a black man in a church wants to start a business and he has a business plan, and then he goes to the bank and they say we are not going to loan you the money?

We have seen that happen just 20 years ago. A sharp black guy developed a business plan. He took it to the bank, the bank would not loan him the money. However, at a Mission Mississippi prayer breakfast, this person met a white businessman and they began to talk. The white businessman took him to the bank, he got the loan and he now has a fast growing business.

Historically, black people created black relationships, white people created white relationships, and it just so happened that years ago, black people did not have access to the same opportunity. Now they are getting a little bit more access, but you still need each other in order for us to actualize economic development, sustainability, and prosperity in the community.

How do you encourage African-American small business owners, and what is the greatest challenge to their development and success?

The greatest challenge is the damage of historical racism. If a young African-American wants to do something in the black community, he has to have the mindset of overcoming a perception that he cannot be successful. My daughter is a pediatrician in a small town in Mississippi. She is in partnership with a white pediatrician, and her patients second-guess her all the time by going to the white pediatrician to verify if her diagnosis is accurate. That is a damage of racism. They have not seen a black doctor but they have seen many white doctors. The challenge is that if a black person wants to be successful and develop a business, he has to also deal with the racial damage that is taking place. In other words, it is going to take a lot of education, and a lot of resilience to keep bouncing back. However, do not give up. Do not give up because change does not come overnight. It comes out of persistence.

I tell young entrepreneurs, you still must be creative, and you must begin to ask the questions. What can we do now to reclaim our community? What kind of a business can we now come up with that will be innovative, grow, meet a need, and create jobs? All the time I say to young people, I understand the damage of 50 years ago. I understand the damage of 40 years ago. I understand when a black man wanted to provide for his family, the welfare system said if you are not in the house, the mother and the baby can get more money if you are not in the picture. That is damaging too. Now I still have to say, what are you going to do to move forward? Rather than sitting around as a victim and telling me that you cannot do anything, we are always trying to encourage people to do what they can and really do it with the fact that God wants to see them succeed. It is hard to get that message to people who have been beat down, but I think people really need to hear that message now more than ever.



Vladimir Solovyov [1853 – 1900]

Socialism really stands on the same ground as the bourgeois régime hostile to it, namely, the supremacy of the material interest. Both have the same motto: “man liveth by bread alone.”

The Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyov has been cast in many contradictory ways, not all without merit.

Born in Moscow, as a teenager he abandoned Christianity in favor of atheism, only to return to faith by 18 after encountering Spinoza, Kant, Hegel, and Schelling. Despite some syncretistic tendencies and despite plausible rumors that, in the interest of ecumenism, he once took communion at a Catholic mass, to his death Solovyov identified himself as an Orthodox Christian. The thought world of Solovyov's Russia, especially among the upper class of society, contained

extremes of atheistic materialism which he set himself against in much of his work, finding favor and criticism in nearly all sectors of Russian society.

In the third book of his work *The Justification of the Good*, Solovyov focuses on the dignity and infinite, moral potential of every human being, realized in human society. He believed that all social action ought to be limited by morality. Thus, he favored limitations to government power, writing, “[T]he demands of the positive law [of the state] are not absolute but are limited by the natural law which is sanctified by religion....”

In the realm of economics, this leads him to biting criticism of amoral *laissez-faire* economics and outright condemnation of socialism. According to Solovyov, “To proclaim *laissez faire*, *laissez passer* [apart from morality] is to say to society ‘die and decompose.’” The free market, to Solovyov, has no value

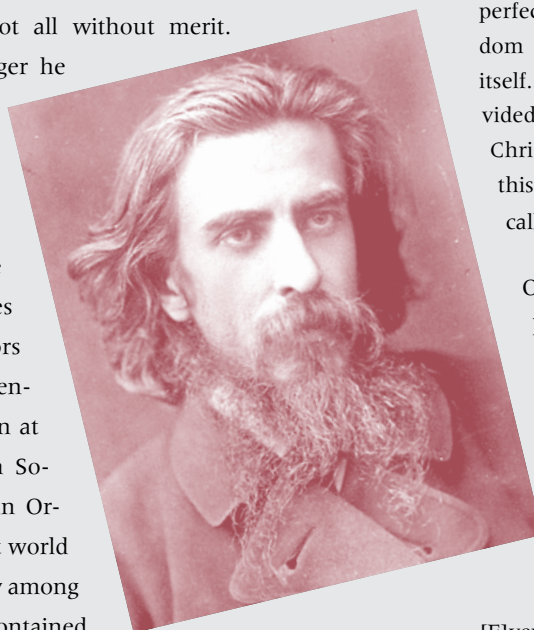
divorced from morality. With regards to socialism, he writes,

Socialism envies [the rich] and Christianity pities them—pities them because of the obstacles which connection with Mammon puts in the way of moral perfection: it is hard for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. But socialism takes that kingdom itself... to consist in nothing other than wealth, provided it is differently distributed. That which for Christianity is an obstacle, for socialism is an end; if this is not an antithesis, I do not know what else to call by that name.

One might wonder, with all his criticisms, what Solovyov's political and economic views really were. One commentator has claimed that Solovyov was “an early advocate of... the democratic welfare state” due to Solovyov's view of the state as “collectively organized compassion.” However, one must not forget that Solovyov would emphasize its moral limits. Indeed, he writes,

[E]veryone should have the means of existence (e.g. clothes and a warm and airy dwelling) and sufficient physical rest secured to him, and... he should also be able to enjoy *leisure* for the sake of his spiritual development. This and *this alone* is *absolutely* essential...; *anything above this is from the evil one.*

It is clear how far he intends the “collectively organized compassion” of the state to reach. In this he is no more a proponent of the welfare state than Pope Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum*. Indeed, after establishing that the state can be a means of morally limiting the market (e.g., by liberating Russia's serfs), Solovyov cautions, “Reference to this fact does not prejudice the question to the extent to which such regulation may be desirable in the future....” Thus, one ought only cautiously to presume that he would have been for or against any particular, contemporary social program. No doubt, we can be certain that Solovyov's position would be limited by humanity's moral potential and innate and inalienable dignity.





The Vatican's Economic Letter

In October, the Vatican released an 18-page document titled "Toward Reforming the International Financial and Monetary Systems in the Context of a Global Public Authority." Since then, it has been celebrated by advocates of bigger government the world over.

What's ignored is that the document—released to stimulate debate, not offer official doctrine—embraces a sound economic theory concerning the cause of the world financial crisis: the breakdown of the postwar Bretton Woods monetary system and the unleashing of fiat currencies and central-bank printing presses.

Let's look at a representative passage, while keeping in mind several important markers: 1971 was the year that the Nixon administration killed the gold standard, and along with it Bretton Woods and hard currencies; in the early 1980s, financial deregulation in many countries removed the last major barriers to virtually unlimited amounts of credit; and the 1990s was the decade when the drive to suppress interest rates became the common policy of central banks around the world. Since the 1990s, we have seen that money and credit instruments worldwide have grown more rapidly than revenue, even adjusting for current prices. From this came the formation of pockets of excessive liquidity and speculative bubbles which later turned into a series of solvency and confidence crises that have spread and followed one another over the years.

A first crisis took place in the 1970s until the early 1980s and was related to the sudden sharp rises in oil prices. Subsequently, there was a series of crises in the developing world, for example, the first crisis in Mexico in the 1980s and those in Brazil, Russia and Korea, and then again in Mexico in the 1990s as well as in Thailand and Argentina.

The speculative bubble in real estate and the recent financial crisis have the very same origin in the excessive amount of money and the plethora of financial instruments globally.

We went from a hard-money regime, in which there were restrictions on the power of central banks and financial institu-

tions to create money and credit, to one where money became purely paper. There were no restrictions remaining on the power of governments to finance unlimited debt. Banks could create credit seemingly without limit. Central banks became the real power in the world economy.

None of this was true under a gold standard. That system limits the expansion of credit by an indelible physical fact. There was a limit, a check, a rule that went beyond the whim of financial masters and politicians.

But discerning the disease and finding the cure are very different undertakings, and here the Vatican document falls short. It imagines a new world central bank and political authority that will rule without "any partial vision or particular good" but rather seek "the common good." Its decisions should "be made in the interest of all, not only to the advantage of some groups, whether they are formed by private lobbies or national governments." Somehow, with an intelligence never before discovered in government bureaucracies, these proposed global authorities would create "socio-economic, political and legal conditions essential for the existence of markets that are efficient and efficacious."

Contrary to what is being said, this document presumes the existence and continuation of "free and stable markets." The problem is that the Vatican imagines that a "world central bank" and a "global public authority" can do this with more competence than national governments that have a checkered history in this regard.

It was centralization that caused this mess in the first place. Central banks created paper money, easy and limitless credit, and the moral hazard that accompanies them.

Many people who favor free markets worry about the implications of the Vatican document. And there is no question that it will be used around the world to stir up political mischief. It will also be used to convince the Catholic faithful that big-government solutions are morally justified. But let's not forget that there are really two parts to the document: the diagnosis and the prescription. We should embrace the former and eschew the latter.

This is adapted from an article that first appeared in the Wall Street Journal. Rev. Sirico is president and co-founder of the Acton Institute.

How will evangelicals respond to contemporary cultural shifts?

What we believe influences how we respond and this will have significant ramifications for the future of a free society and its business, economic, and public sectors.

Sometimes the way forward is found by looking back.

Abraham Kuyper elaborated on the doctrine of common grace, a theology of public service and cultural engagement of Christians' shared humanity with the rest of the world.

As Kuyper noted, "If God is sovereign, then his lordship must extend over all of life, and it cannot be restricted to the walls of the church or within the Christian orbit." Kuyper's work shows us that God is not absent from the non-church areas of our common life and bestows his gifts and favor to all people.

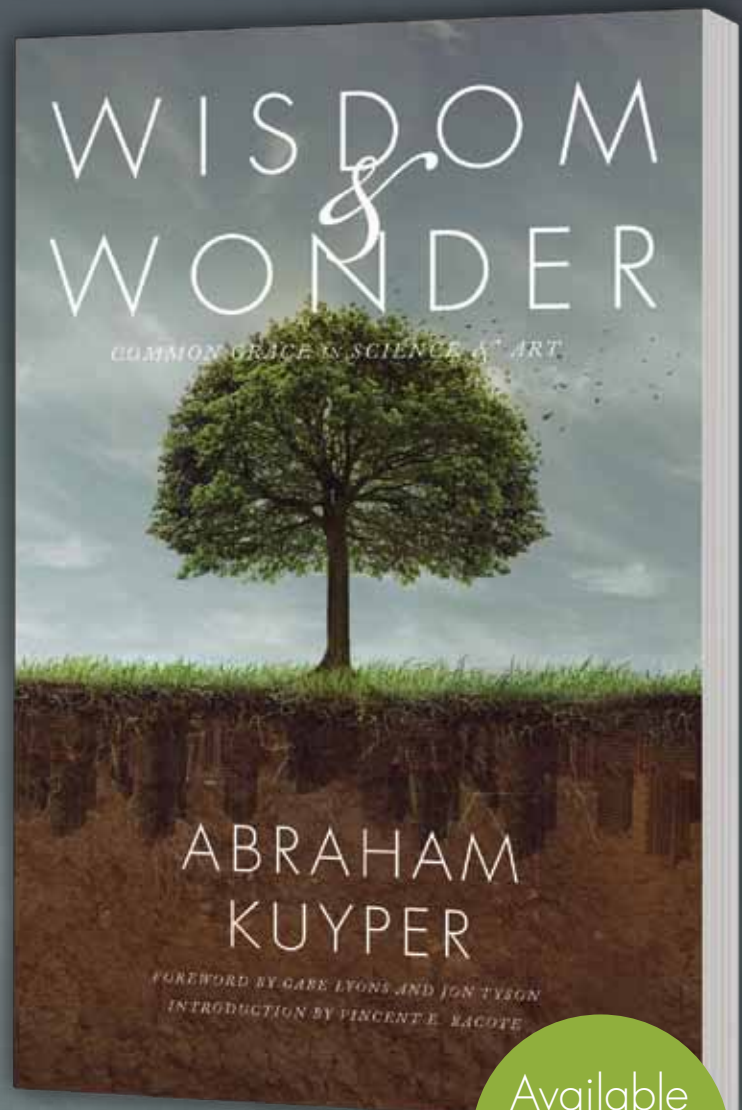
"Abraham Kuyper was a profound theologian, an encyclopedic thinker, and a deeply spiritual man who believed that it is the believer's task 'to know God in *all* his works.' In a day when secular science is seeking to establish hegemony over all knowing, and when postmodern art is threatening to bring an end to art, Kuyper's solid, Biblical insights can help to restore perspective and sanity to these two critical areas of human life."

—Chuck Colson, Founder, Prison Fellowship and the Colson Center for Christian Worldview

"The appearance of this treatise in English translation is for me the beginning of a larger dream come true. Kuyper's writings on common grace are much needed 'for such a time as this' and *Wisdom & Wonder* is a marvelous foretaste of more that is to come!"

—Richard J. Mouw, president and professor of Christian philosophy, Fuller Theological Seminary

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) is a significant figure in the history of the Netherlands and modern Protestant theology. A prolific intellectual, he founded a political party and a university, and served as the prime minister of the Netherlands (1901-1905). His enduring passion was to develop a theology for the general public and was seen in his extensive elaboration of the doctrine of common grace.

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