

# ACTON notes

Acton Institute Newsletter

*July / August 2014, Volume 24, Number 4*



*“connecting good intentions with sound economics”*

*Amanda Vernon performing at Acton University.*

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# President's Message

"We must remind ourselves  
and each other every day:  
I shall not be moved."

A bright spot for me during Acton University 2014 was the addition of music to our evenings. Amanda Vernon, a local musician, entertained us one evening then gave a lovely musical benediction the next. She had been touring the United States prior to Acton University, but was back in town in time to join us.

One of her songs was her own rendition of the spiritual classic, "I Shall Not Be Moved." Amanda's voice expresses what many of us hope for: a firm faith, one that out-weighs anything life throws our way. But I know, both personally and pastorally, that most of us are like Peter on the Sea of Galilee: reaching out in faith, though sinking. We are overcome by crashing waves and our own weakness.

Recent world events shake our faith. It makes no sense that children should be driven from their homes, families forced to flee and then trapped with no food or water, or that a journalist loses his life in the most hideous way. Such evil shakes anyone's faith. We may think the events of today are the most brutal in humanity's history, but this is not true. We are a sinful people and evil has had a foothold in our world almost since the creation of man.

What can we do? We can labor every day to bring about God's Kingdom, amidst weakness and doubt. We can pray that God will continue to offer us opportunities to strengthen our faith. We can share our faith with those whom our lives touch. We must hold fast to the Word of God.

The law entered in so that transgression might increase but, where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through justification for eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

—Romans 5:20-21

We must remind ourselves and each other every day: I shall not be moved. Thank you for your generous support of the Acton Institute and helping us to promote a free and virtuous society.



Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Robert Sirico". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a white background.

Rev. Robert Sirico, President

The mission of the  
Acton Institute is  
to promote a free  
and virtuous society  
characterized by  
individual liberty  
and sustained by  
religious principles.

ACTONINSTITUTE

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# Ron Blue on Biblical Financial Management

Ron Blue, who has helped Christians to be better stewards of their resources for decades, spoke to 80 guests at the Acton Institute headquarters in Grand Rapids, Mich. The event took place on August 26 and was titled “Persistent Generosity.” Blue is the founder of Ronald Blue & Co., LLC.

He is a successful entrepreneur in the financial services industry and an admired leader and speaker on the topic of biblical financial management. Blue is the author of eighteen books on personal finance, including the best seller, *Master Your Money*, first published in 1986 and now in its thirtieth printing. Indiana Wesleyan University in Marion, Ind., is home to the Ron Blue Institute.

Blue said that “biblical wisdom is timeless,” he added that “God’s wisdom is authoritative and it speaks to every financial situation anybody has in their life.” Blue also stressed that the question in terms of finances and how much is enough “is

really important at any income level.” Blue noted that “the more that you have will never satisfy the significance, the success, or the security.”

“If you’re dependent on money you’re never going to have enough, if you’re dependent on God you will always have enough,” declared

Blue. He stressed that the only way to breaking the power of money is to be willing to give. “God isn’t interested in money, he’s interested in our hearts,” added Blue, “and he uses money as a tool to get to my heart.”

Blue has appeared in Acton’s Effective Stewardship DVD curriculum, adding expertise to session five on finances and giving. You can watch his lecture in its entirety at <http://blog.acton.org/archives/72023-video-ron-blue-perpetual-generosity.html> or by searching for it on YouTube under “Ron Blue” and “Acton Institute.”

“God’s wisdom is  
authoritative and it  
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situation anybody has  
in their life.”



Ron Blue



Blue makes an appearance in The Effective Stewardship Curriculum.

## From Our Conference Participants

I can’t begin to tell you how powerful Acton University was... I took 104 pages of typed notes... now I’m methodically working through [them] to sort out how what I learned can be applied personally and in the ministry of our church.

—Steven Cooper  
San Diego, California

[Acton University] put words to the feelings I’ve had about what’s been happening in society. It allowed me to think about a broad range of topics that I believe will have a profound impact on my work and my life.

—Kevin Heyne  
Byron Center, Michigan

## Summer Interns Plant Seeds of Liberty

The Acton Institute offers a summer internship program for students interested in combining their religious passion with free markets. Some of this year's interns traveled from across the United States while others came from Italy, Hungary, and China. Interns began their experience by preparing for Acton University and then settled into their summer roles. They worked in a variety of departments, including: research, programs, and communications.

Several interns had the opportunity to publish on topics of interest to them. Edward Trancik, a student at Hillsdale College, published a piece on the issues of water rights and free trade. He expressed how the internship facilitated both professional and personal development:

I had the opportunity to write posts for the PowerBlog, in which I was able to mesh economics (my academic discipline) with morality and religion. This has truly been a well-rounded experience. I leave this intern-

World. By making Acton materials readable in Chinese, I hope that we can implant the seeds of liberty and virtue in China and throughout Asia.

Acton also partners with the Charles G. Koch Fellowship Program, whose participants spend two weeks in Washington learning about liberty and free-market principles before beginning their fellowship in Grand Rapids. Patrick Oetting, one of the three Koch Fellows, remarked:

Experiencing the Acton Institute through the Koch Summer Fellow Program gave me the resources to learn and implement the values of liberty at a deeper level than ever before. I loved my time spent at Acton, from the fulfilling work I was able to complete, to the interactions with a close-knit group of fellow interns. With the help of great minds, I was able to come to a deeper understanding of the role that my faith plays in a society characterized by individual liberty.

The summer internship program for most applicants began June 4 and ended on July 30. Several current full time staff members at Acton started

## ACTON News



Interns helping out at Acton University.



Summer Interns 2014

ship more competent in the workplace and knowledgeable about present issues regarding markets and morality, making me a better member of society as a result.

One of the international interns was able to advance Acton's mission abroad by translating works for a Chinese audience. Louis Ming Hin Lo explains his experience:

My primary duty was to translate the materials of Acton into Chinese so that Acton's ideas can spread in China. I am currently engaged in the translation project of the inspiring episodes—For the Life of the

out in the summer internship program.

The Acton Institute would like to thank all of its interns for their hard work and dedication this summer. They are: Justin Bailey, Noah Barger, Toni Brown, Chris Conrad, Jacqueline Derks, Shawn Flynn, Lenore Healy, Caitlin Hilton, Louis Ming Hin Lo, Fabiana Marrani, Allan Mendell, Daniel Menjivar, Edward Trancik, Patrick Oetting, Panna Percz, Dan Pittman, and Laura Prejean.

The Acton Institute would like to specifically thank our donors who have given financially to the summer internship program.

# Profile of an AU Attendee: Vicky Schultz

Vicky Schultz came to Acton University from Flint, Mich. She is the CEO of Catholic Charities of Shiawassee and Genesee Counties. One of her goals at Acton University is to be better equipped at implementing policies to help the poor and suffering in her hometown of Flint. In 2013, the city of Flint was ranked by *Forbes* magazine as #2 in “America’s most miserable cities.” Only Detroit surpassed Flint on *Forbes*’s list. Vicky made reference to the fact that Flint has recently been ranked as the number one area of violence and crime in Michigan. *Business Insider* named Flint the “most dangerous city in America” in 2013. In 2011, the murder rate in Flint was worse than Baghdad, Iraq.

Schultz decided to attend Acton University after her bishop attended an Acton event. Usually Vicky and her colleague attend a convention held by Catholic Charities USA, but instead chose to attend Acton University this year.

Originally, Schultz believed that coming to Acton University would help many of her clients, especially in the area of entrepreneurship; however, after attending a lecture on economics she believes she came away with much more than just that. She stated that, “[Flint] has so much poverty that she can apply the same principles [from foreign countries] there.” The concept behind the PovertyCure initiative intrigued Schultz, especially the ideas of micro-financing and micro-loans.

Schultz hopes to take the information that she learned back to Flint not only to help individuals find new jobs, but also to guide them in creating a new life and having new opportunities in the economically depressed city. Furthermore, she believes that she can pass along the information to her company so that individuals she has helped will be able to help others and that it creates a “train-reaction of assistance.”

“... the PovertyCure initiative intrigued Schultz, especially the ideas of micro-financing and micro-loans.”



## ACTON in the News

“The political process only works when all sides are allowed to freely express themselves, a right guaranteed by our Constitution.”

—Excerpted from Rev. Robert Sirico’s article in *RealClearReligion*.

Todd Huizinga

Title: Russia and Ukraine

Program: *Newsmakers - WGVU Television*

Air Date: 8.22.14

Rev. Robert Sirico

Title: The Holy War on Corporate Politicking

Publication: *RealClearReligion*

Date: 8.11.14

Rev. Robert Sirico

Title: Hobby Lobby Decision

Program: *Bloomberg TV*

Air Date: 6.30.14



## Reminder

### Help Acton Promote Freedom and Virtue!

The Acton Institute depends on the generosity of supporters like you. If you have not donated to Acton, but enjoy *Acton Notes*, please consider helping us meet our goals! Your help makes possible our mission to promote a free and virtuous society. You may choose to donate using the envelope provided, or you may visit the Acton website to make a secure donation online. We send our heartfelt thanks to those who have been so generous in the past with your strategic support as well as your prayers. You have a broad vision and a generous heart.

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## ACTON UNIVERSITY 2014



# ACTON Book Shop



## The Elders Handbook - A Practical Guide for Church Leaders

By *Lester DeKoster and Gerard Berghoef*

This Handbook is structured by St. Paul's parting instructions to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, as recorded in Acts 20:28-31: Keep watch over yourselves,/ Keep watch over the flock/ Of which the Holy Spirit has made you Guardians;/ To feed the Church of the Lord/ Which He won for Himself...

**Softcover 304 pages    Sale \$10.00**



## Get Your Hands Dirty

By *Jordan Ballor*

This volume brings together a decade of reflection at the intersection of culture, economics, and theology. Addressing topics ranging from the family to work, politics, and the church, Jordan J. Ballor shows how the Christian faith calls us to get involved deeply and meaningfully in the messiness of the world.

**Softcover 238 pages    Sale \$22.00**



## For the Life of the World: Letters to the Exiles - DVD & Blu-Ray Combo Pack

Produced by *Acton Institute*

*For the Life of the World* is an entertaining film series that explores the deeper meaning of Salvation. Have you ever wondered, "What is my Salvation actually FOR?" Is it only about personal atonement, about getting to heaven, or something that comes later? Is it just to have a "friend in Jesus"?

**DVD & Blu-Ray    Sale \$59.99**



## For the Life of the World - A Field Guide

By *Heidi Segal*

*For the Life of the World* is an entertaining film series and study that explores the deeper meaning of salvation. The companion Field Guide jump-starts group and individual investigation and includes additional content to enhance the film experience.

**Softcover 78 pages    Sale \$9.99**

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<a href="#">The Elders Handbook - A Practical Guide for Church Leaders</a>	\$10.00		
<a href="#">Get Your Hands Dirty: Essays on Christian Social Thought (and Action)</a>	\$22.00		
<a href="#">For the Life of the World: Letters to the Exiles - DVD &amp; Blu-Ray Combo Pack</a>	\$59.99		
<a href="#">For the Life of the World - A Field Guide</a>	\$9.99		

Make checks payable to "Acton Institute." For orders in the United States, Canada, and Mexico: for the first item, add US \$6.75 for shipping; plus US \$1.00 for each additional item. Overseas orders: US \$8.75 for the first item, plus US \$1.75 for each additional item.

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### Calendar of Events

#### ACTON INSTITUTE EVENTS

Date	Event	Location
<b>Sep 23</b>	<b>A Journey of Faith and Art</b> Makoto Fujimura to Speak	Grand Rapids, MI
<b>Sep 25</b>	<b>Liberty, Solidarity and Crony Capitalism</b> Samuel Gregg to Speak	Washington, DC
<b>Oct 2</b>	<b>Renewing America and its Heritage of Freedom</b> Gerard Francis Lameiro to Speak	Grand Rapids, MI
<b>Oct 9</b>	<b>Acton's 24th Annual Dinner</b> Keynote Speaker: Daniel Hannan, Author & Member of Parliament	Grand Rapids, MI
<b>Oct 30</b>	<b>Houston Luncheon</b> Keynote Speaker: Rev. Robert Sirico	Houston, TX
<b>Nov 10</b>	<b>Second Dignitatis Humanae Conference</b> Religious Liberty, the Church, and Civil Society in an Age of Growing Government	Washington, DC