Thoughts on Ministry Fundraising

by Joel S. Woodruff, Ed.D.
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How many fundraising requests per week do you get via phone, letter, and other media from churches, ministries, and organizations? And when you get these appeals, what is your response and why?

These are questions I’ve been pondering in recent months as I have been seeking to develop a godly approach to fundraising for the C.S. Lewis Institute. My conclusions are outlined below, and I would be grateful for any insights or comments you might have.

1. Trust God to Guide and Provide

To be faithful to God, a ministry must first seek the Lord’s guidance and be certain that its vision, mission and methods are solidly grounded in Scripture and aligned with God’s kingdom purposes. As the psalmist writes, “Unless the LORD builds the house, those who build it labor in vain” (Ps. 127:1). Once this is settled, the ministry must trust the Lord to provide all of the human, material, and financial resources needed to accomplish the mission (Matt. 6:33). That is, there must be an active faith in God to supply what is needed for His work. Missionaries often put it this way, “Where God guides, He also provides.” But this principle is not limited to missionary work — it applies to any work of God. One application of this principle is that a ministry should not rely on worldly fundraising methods, “proven marketing strategies,” staff skills and abilities, or even generous people for its funding; rather, it should rely first and foremost on God and trust in Him.

2. Pray Daily

The first step in acknowledging our trust in God and dependence on Him for what is needed for ministry is to pray daily for His provision. Jesus teaches us to do this for our personal needs in the Lord’s Prayer, when He says to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11). He also tells us that, as children of God, we are to be persistent in prayer and to continue asking, seeking, and knocking, knowing that our loving Father desires to give good gifts, especially to those who ask Him (Matt. 7:7–11). This same principle also applies to provision of resources for the work of His kingdom. One reason for a lack of provision in some ministries may be that they are relying on their own ideas and efforts and failing to ask (and trust) God to supply the need (James 4:2b–3).

3. Obey Daily

Another step in trusting God for provision is to listen to and obey His commands and directions. Throughout the Bible, we see that obedience to God is the path of blessing. Conversely, disobedience is the path to trouble. We can hinder God’s provision or miss it completely if we’re not following His direction. For example, “sin in the camp,” as (continued on page 16)
One of the highlights of my year was seeing over 100 pastors and ministry leaders from Greater Washington, DC churches meeting together at a C.S. Lewis Institute sponsored event this past May with Dr. Tim Keller of Redeemer City to City. The good news is that this wasn't an isolated event but one of many meetings taking place around the nation’s capital. A number of different pastors’ groups are beginning to connect with one another across denominational, racial, and ethnic lines.

True unity is not something that can be fabricated, especially the unity that is spoken of in Psalm 133:

“Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!” (ESV)

However, it appears to many long-serving Washington area pastors that the Holy Spirit today is helping develop unity through new relationships that have grown out of prayer, confession, fellowship, service, and Christ-centered love for one another.

It has always been a top priority of the C.S. Lewis Institute to encourage and support pastors and ministry leaders as they serve the local church. For years, we’ve hosted pastor lunches and sought to help them build trusting friendships with each other. It has been a great privilege to help facilitate unity among pastors. By His grace, we are providing similar events and training not only here in Washington, DC, but also in a number of other C.S. Lewis Institute cities, including Youngstown, OH; Annapolis, MD; Cincinnati, OH; Chicago, IL; and Atlanta, GA.

As church leaders and pastors work together across denominations, and racial and ethnic lines to serve the church at-large and reach their cities for Jesus, I believe we are going to see the Holy Spirit do exciting things in the days to come. And I know that we’ll be pleasing our Lord and Savior – as He is the One who prayed and still prays, “That they all may be one” (John 17:21, ESV).

Gratefully,

Joel
Most Christians in the United States have grown up with Jewish neighbors, classmates, and friends. But their understanding of Judaism is usually limited to their reading of the Old Testament and the holiday in December called Hanukkah. Some of us were taught in Sunday school that Judaism teaches salvation by works. Many wonder how on earth Jews cannot see that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah. In this essay we will see that religious Jews typically don’t think in terms of being saved; that even when they do, they don’t believe they got into the covenant because they deserved it; and that they think they have biblical reasons for rejecting Jesus as messiah.

But first, let’s get an overview of numbers and groups. How many Jewish people are there? And into what groups are they divided?

Numbers and Kinds

Today there are roughly 15 million Jewish people worldwide, with 5 million in Israel and 6.5 million in the United States. Of the latter, 1.6 million are in New York State, and the vast majority of those are in New York City.

So you can see what a tiny religious group this is: six-tenths of 1 percent of the number of Christians (2.3 billion) and 1 percent of the number of Muslims (1.6 billion). But this has always been the case, even before the Holocaust. The Jewish population in the world has always been small in comparison to their overwhelming significance as a religious people. I say “overwhelming,” because their religion not only “invented” monotheism—at least after the prehistoric rise of polytheism—but it became the mother of both Christianity and Islam, the largest religions in the world.

In the United States, as in Israel and other countries, Jews are divided into two groups—religious Jews and secular Jews. The former believe in God and perpetuate the Jewish tradition in a variety of ways. The latter have either rejected the idea of God entirely or else, while still believing in God, do not believe that the Jewish tradition is the best or only way to God. Yet they take pride in the accomplishments of the Jewish people, including their spiritual creativity.

Religious Jews in the United States are generally divided into three movements: Reform, Conservative, and Orthodox. These are three different responses to the Enlightenment, the eighteenth-century intellectual movement that tended to reject religious tradition and embraced secular reason as the guide to all of life, both religious and secular.

The differences started in nineteenth-century Germany. Reform Jews accommodated themselves to Enlightenment culture, reducing their religion to what they thought simple and reasonable—ethical monotheism (there is one God, and we should live moral lives). They used organs in worship (a modern musical instrument then), prayed and preached in German (not Hebrew), discarded prayer shawls and head coverings, let men and women sit together (this was new), and eliminated some kosher dietary rules. They also rejected Zionism, the movement to establish a homeland for the Jewish people.

The Orthodox reacted against Reform, thinking the latter had sold out to modern culture. They prayed for the ultimate restoration of Zion (ancient biblical Israel), regarded the whole Tanakh (Old Testament) as God’s Word (the Reform thought only those parts that agreed with Enlightenment values were inspired), used only Hebrew in their services, forbade instrumental music in worship, separated men and women in the synagogue, and insisted that women cover their heads.

Conservatives, you might say, split the difference. Some have called them “right-wing modernists.” They believed that Jewish ritual is the heart and soul of Judaism, but they sympathized with Reform.
So, you’ve got Jewish friends and you want to talk to them about Jesus. You’ve read Gerald McDermott’s article about Judaism, and you’re wondering how to start connecting what you know about Judaism, what you love about Jesus, and how you long for your Jewish friends to make that connection as well. But something is holding you back. Perhaps you’re afraid you’ll spoil the friendship. Or perhaps you feel guilty that some Christians have treated some Jewish people poorly in the past. Or maybe you just don’t know your Old Testament as well as you’d like, and you’re afraid they’ll out-quote you.

All of these fears and concerns make sense. But God is able to override them and many other impediments to our fluency. Here are some pointers for telling your Jewish friends about the Jewish Messiah and the salvation He offers.

First and foremost, pray for your Jewish friends. Please don’t dismiss this as a perfunctory cliché. Since God loves the Jewish people, it makes sense that the devil hates them and, in addition to concocting an endless stream of anti-Semitism in the world, has blinded them to the truth God has revealed (see 2 Cor. 3:14). Pray diligently that God will work in the hearts of the Jewish people to make them hungry for truth, tired of empty ritual, and aching for forgiveness that cannot come from their own efforts, prayers, or practices.

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Now, allow me to share some don’ts and do’s of Jewish evangelism. (I know. It’s usually “do’s and don’ts,” but, given the realities of Jewish history, is it any wonder that I, a Jewish believer in Jesus, would gravitate toward the negative before turning toward the positive. Think about it.)

Don’t think that Jewish evangelism is going to be easy. My people have had a long history of saying no! to anything even closely related to Jesus. And given the behavior of some of Jesus’ followers, you can’t really blame them. (I know that some so-called Christians really were never born again. Granted. The problem is that some real, genuine, saved, thoughtful Christians have said and done some hateful things. Do a little research about Martin Luther’s anti-Semitism, and you’ll see what I mean.)

Don’t be surprised if your Jewish friends don’t know their Tanakh (what Christians call the Old Testament) all that well. Don’t assume they know much about Moses, Isaiah, or other prophets. We could discuss why that’s true and why it’s a shame and how it got this way, but I’ll leave that for other writers or other times.

Don’t wait for your Jewish friends to bring up the topic of Jesus. They won’t. Don’t even wait for them to bring up the topic of God. He might not get mentioned for a long time. In fact, don’t wait for them to talk about spiritual things at all. You might be waiting when you should be guiding the conversation. God’s Word makes it clear that the gospel is “to the Jew first” (Rom. 1:16 ESV). That’s all the prompting we need to broach the topic they’d rather you avoid.
Don’t do all the talking. Jewish people generally like two-way conversation. (Actually, a lot of people do. Jewish culture and education has just been at it a bit more intensely than some others.) Ask questions. Pose puzzles. Wonder out loud and seek out responses from them. Find out exactly what they believe about God, the afterlife, sin, righteousness, ethics, etc., by asking them to tell you about their beliefs. Don’t be surprised if some of their beliefs are not what you expect would be the standard Jewish line. Again, I could explain why that’s fairly common, but I’ll let you explore such background issues on your own.

(Chosen People Ministries and Jews for Jesus have many valuable resources and insights on their websites. They can also point you to many books that can help you grow in your understanding of Jewish culture, the connections between the Old Testament and the New, and many other pertinent issues.)

Don’t be surprised if the following question doesn’t work: “If there’s no longer a temple in Jerusalem or any sacrificial system, how do you get atonement for your sins?” That question might work for some Jewish people, but for most I’ve talked to, that’s a nonstarter. They just figure that God knows the temple isn’t currently in working condition, so he must have some other system to take care of sin. That doesn’t bother most Jewish people as much as most Christians think it should!

Do’s

Do build close friendships with Jewish people. Relationships matter deeply to them and evangelism usually flows along relational lines. Given the history of persecution that most Jewish people remember, you’ll want to build trust and understanding. That takes time and intentionality. Find common ground, shared interests, and pave the way for conversations about topics that you don’t view from the same vantage point.

Do share your personal experiences with the gospel. It’s one thing to argue for the truthfulness of Christianity, the reasonableness of apologetic arguments in favor of the messiahship of Jesus, and the logical connections between the Old and New Testaments. And all of that is necessary and good. But you will also want to tell of how that makes a difference in your life, why it was so appealing to you when you first came to faith, and how it helps you in many areas of your daily life—how it gives you hope, purpose, a clear conscience, and confidence of the reality of life after death.

Remember that Jewish history has a lot of pain in it, and some of that pain is related to evangelism. You want to minimize any triggers of negative emotions. The words you say or don’t say can make big differences.

Do choose vocabulary carefully. There are some words that are painful to Jewish ears. Instead of saying “Jews,” use “Jewish people.” Instead of “Christ,” speak of “the messiah.” Rather than calling yourself a “Christian,” you might try “believer in Jesus.” Remember that Jewish history has a lot of pain in it, and some of that pain is related to evangelism. You want to minimize any triggers of negative emotions. The words you say or don’t say can make big differences.

Do admit that your conversation may be uncomfortable. Identify the elephant in the room by acknowledging the awkwardness of talking about Jesus. But don’t back down from this. Instead, pave the way for a conversation about Jesus with a conversation about the conversation. Here are a few ways you could do this:

• “I realize this might be an uncomfortable conversation. But I wonder if you’d be willing to dig into this even if it’s a bit difficult.” (continued on page 30)
The Rage for Rohr?
A Brief Review of Richard Rohr’s  *Falling Upward: A Spirituality for the Two Halves of Life*  
by Os Guinness

Faithfulness is the central issue for the church in our time because unfaithfulness is so rife in our culture. For all who follow Jesus, faithfulness to Him, to His lordship, and to His decisive stamp of authority on the Holy Scriptures should be final. Yet postmodernism has undermined all authorities and certainties by making all claims “undecidable,” so we are experiencing a plague of Christians whom Søren Kierkegaard called “kissing Judases”—those who betray Jesus with an interpretation. They treat the authority of Scripture like a rubber nose and bend it to favor whatever cause or lifestyle they happen to like. “Anything goes” theology is the order of the day, and anything-goes ethics follows close behind.

In the fifth century, Saint Augustine protested against similar Manichean distortions of the Scriptures: “For you people who believe in the gospel what you choose to believe, and do not believe what you do not choose to believe, believe yourselves rather than the gospel.” Flannery O’Connor stated the point bluntly: “The truth does change according to our ability to stomach it.”

Richard Rohr’s *Falling Upward* must be read in the light of this atmosphere. The real surprise is not the book, but that it has been welcomed so undiscerningly by so many evangelicals around the country. The aim of the book is laudable: to provide a spiritual perspective on the journey into and through the second half of life. With the graying of America as the baby boomers enter their “second half,” that aim gives the book its popularity, and its essentially New Age direction is no barrier to many American readers. The book is therefore perfect for people in the mood for “spirituality, not religion.” But why the evangelical enthusiasm when Rohr’s vision differs so starkly from the biblical vision?

First, Rohr’s notion of “spirituality for the two halves of life” is quite anti-biblical. He actually calls it a “second call.” You could never find such two halves of life in any of the great lives, such as Abraham, Moses, David, Daniel, Saint John, and Saint Paul. Nor could you justify it from the Scriptures or the orthodox Christian faith as a whole. The idea may be perfect for selling books and seminars to anxiously aging boomers, but it has nothing whatever to do with a decisively Christian understanding of the journey of life.

Second, the notion of the two halves of life comes from Carl Gustav Jung and the “perennial tradition,” as Rohr admits. It also fits in perfectly with today’s mix-and-match syncretism and the idea of the common unity underlying all the world’s religions. So the real authorities and the main ideas for Rohr’s book come from fundamentally pagan and non-Christian sources—with an occasional doffing of the cap to Scripture.

Third, there is a striking and fatal omission in the book of any of the central truths of a Christ-centered spirituality, such as sin, repentance, the Holy Spirit, growth in the fruit of the Spirit, and above all Christ’s substitutionary death for us on the cross. Rohr’s negative comments on Mel Gibson’s film *The Passion of the Christ* show that he subscribes to the views of the thirteenth-century philosopher-theologian Duns Scotus. Rohr does not hold the orthodox view of such central doctrines as the cross and why Jesus died in our place, on our behalf, and because of our sin (as set out, e.g., in John Stott’s evangelical classic *The Cross of Christ*). Rohr’s cross is the very different cross of modern liberalism that Reinhold Niebuhr described so perfectly as “a God without wrath bringing men without sin into a Kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross.”
Fourth, Rohr and his devotees appear oblivious to the glaring contradictions in his own argument. The second half of life, he says, is for reaching a higher and appealing “non-dualistic” type of thinking, whereby we achieve a holistic harmony that transcends the unfortunate dualism of our earlier lives. But to anyone who thinks as they read, it is obvious that his entire classification of the two halves of life is dualistic, and he never escapes it himself. The truth is that, for all his attacks on dualism, Rohr is as dualistic as anyone because some distinctions are inescapable. (As Robert Benchley said, “There are two types of people in the world: Those who think there are two types of people, and those who don’t.”) But what matters is that his recommended non-dualism depends on a dualism between the two halves of life that has nothing to do with Jesus and the Bible.

Fifth, there is a serious ethical danger in Rohr’s teaching. His unbiblical division between the two halves of life allows him to caricature what he sees as the first half of life, focused on legalistic “purity codes” and “Thou shalt nots.” With this distortion in place, Rohr provides a permission slip for those who wish to break out of such constrictions and “leave their family” as an act of following the “second call” to become more free in the second half of life. In other words, through his combination of caricature and false dualism, Rohr beckons people to a brand of freedom that Bonhoeffer called “cheap grace.” In the name of Jesus, he offers an alibi for actions such as divorce that are directly opposed to the plain teaching of Jesus.

In sum, Rohr’s *Falling Upward* is anti-biblical, non-Christian, and rooted in New Age thinking (often accompanied with Native American pagan practices), rather than being true to the teaching of Jesus and the Scriptures. The real question is why so many evangelicals are attracted to it. In my experience, the answer is not that many of them needed to be freed from legalistic versions of the faith, as described by Rohr, but, rather, that they were already committed to a free form of the faith, one that was experiential and lacking in serious theological convictions, let alone a well-thought-out Christian worldview. So they have easily been bewitched by such a latter-day “kissing Judas.” Faithfulness, as I said, is the crucial issue for the church in our times because of today’s mounting unfaithfulness and biblical illiteracy. Let us all read everything with eyes wide open and with discerning minds and faithful hearts—this review included. ■

**RECOMMENDED READING**


Nancy Pearcey, bestselling and critically acclaimed author, offers fresh tools to break free from presumed certainties and test them against reality.
Running the Marathon of Faith: Persevering to Life’s End

by Thomas A. Tarrants, III, D.Min.
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Following Jesus Christ is not a sprint but a marathon. We must persevere in trusting Christ and following Him until we cross the finish line on the day of our death. The sooner we recognize and embrace this fact of kingdom life, the safer and stronger we will be. As Jesus said to His first disciples, “The one who endures to the end will be saved” (Matt. 10:22).

When the day of Paul’s death was at hand, he could confidently say,

The time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing. (2 Tim. 4:6–7)

Will that be true of you and me? Understanding the challenges we face in following Jesus and how to deal with them will help us persevere, and that is what we will explore in this article.

These challenges can be subsumed under three broad categories: the world, the flesh, and the devil. We face opposition from those of the world who don’t know God and who oppose His kingdom. We are troubled and tempted by the desires of our old nature, the flesh. And we are targets of the devil, our “adversary,” who “prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1 Pet. 5:8). As this unholy trinity works against us, we encounter persecution, suffering, temptation, trials, and tribulations, just as Jesus did.

The Challenge of Persecution and Suffering

Jesus gives us a glimpse of the importance of perseverance in the parable of the sower. Integrating the parallel accounts in Matthew 13:18–23 and Luke 8:9–15, we get a fuller picture. The “rocky ground” hearer, who received the Word of God with excitement and joy, endured only until he encountered tribulation and persecution, then he fell away. The time of testing revealed that he had no root and thus could not persevere. The “thorny ground” hearer also endured for a time and appeared to be producing fruit, but he was eventually seduced by the cares of the world, the deceitfulness of riches, the pleasures of life, and the desire for other things, and the fruit was choked out; he did not persevere. Only the “good soil” hearer, the one who heard and understood the Word of God and held it fast in an honest and good heart, bore fruit “with perseverance” (Luke 8:15 NASB), demonstrating the presence of genuine spiritual life. The fruit in view is the fruit of the Holy Spirit’s work in a person’s life and is ethical in character. One lesson we can take away from this parable is that all professing believers will encounter the challenges and obstacles of the rocky ground and the thorny ground, but being rooted in union with Christ and being grounded in His Word, they remain steadfast, withstand the challenges, and persevere in faith and obedience.

With this overview clear in our minds, we can see many instances of the necessity of perseverance in the Bible. Perhaps the most obvious is Jesus Himself. He was grievously tempted by the devil, rejected by many of the common people, treated with scorn, ridicule, and contempt by the religious establishment, opposed at every turn, eventually arrested, falsely charged by the Jewish leaders, spat upon, humiliated, tortured,
and finally crucified. Yet He persevered in faithfulness to God to the end.

When Jesus sent out His disciples on their first missionary outreach, He told them that they would be hated by many and would encounter persecution, suffering, and the possibility of death, but “the one who perseveres to the end will saved” (Matt. 10:22). Later, as He taught them about the terrible times leading up to His second coming, Jesus again reminded them that “the one who endures to the end will be saved” (Matt. 24:13). Ancient tradition tells us that all of the eleven original disciples died a martyr’s death, except for John. They persevered in faithfulness to the end.

Paul’s perseverance is inspiring. Soon after Paul met Jesus on the Damascus road, the Lord said to Ananias, whom He sent to minister to Paul, “I will show him how much he must suffer for my name” (Acts 9:16). And suffer, Paul did. Comparing himself to the false prophets who were trying to mislead the Corinthians, Paul said,

“Are they servants of Christ? I am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day, I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure.” (2 Cor. 11:23–29)

Paul persevered in faithfulness up to the day, when, as Eusebius says, he was beheaded on the Ostian Way, outside of Rome.

We might be tempted to say, “Well, that was Jesus and Paul; we can hardly be expected to persevere under such difficult circumstances.” But perseverance is not simply a unique characteristic of Jesus and Paul. The leaders of the early church urged the believers to endure under trial. When Barnabas came to Antioch in Syria, “and saw the grace of God, he was glad, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose” (Acts 11:23). After Paul preached to the Jews at the other Antioch, in Pisidia, we read that “many Jews and devout converts to Judaism followed Paul and Barnabas, who, as they spoke with them, urged them to continue in the grace of God” (Acts 13:43). In the cities of Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, where
Profile in Faith

Shaftesbury: The Great Reformer

by Rev. Dr. Richard Turnbull

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The second of two articles dealing with the life and significance of the British Evangelical social reformer, the seventh Earl of Shaftesbury. The first article was published in the Winter 2014 issue of Knowing & Doing.

Shaftesbury remarked toward the end of his life that “I know what constituted an Evangelical in former times. I have no clear notions what it constitutes now.”¹ He was a long-standing friend, confidant and supporter of the great Baptist preacher, Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Shaftesbury described Spurgeon as “a wonderful man, full of zeal, affection, faith, abounding in reputation and authority, and yet perfectly humble.”² Spurgeon, in turn, bemoaned to Shaftesbury, “men in whom I had confidence are turning aside.”³ A year before Shaftesbury died he was asked by Spurgeon to preside over the celebrations for the latter’s fiftieth birthday. Spurgeon pressed Shaftesbury, “you shall be allowed to go in one hour if you feel at all tired … I should like you to come because I want old-fashioned Evangelical Doctrine to be identified with the event.”⁴

Shaftesbury’s identity as and understanding of what it means to be Evangelical is crucial to understanding his motivations. In this second article we turn to Shaftesbury’s beliefs and how they formed and shaped his life and activities. In doing so we will discover passion and insight, a clarity of judgment that is at times uncomfortable, but above all a man of God dedicated to the service of the Savior. We will consider his theology, his battle on behalf of the “climbing boys,” and finally an assessment of his place in history.

Shaftesbury’s theological motivations

Shaftesbury’s application of classic Evangelical and Protestant doctrine was powerful and dynamic. In the context of the advancement of Enlightenment rationality, the power of the state and even the secular narrative, Shaftesbury stood firm. Christian theology was to be applied to society, not submerged beneath it. Evangelical belief, according to Shaftesbury, provided a template for the life of discipleship. His theological motives could be summarised in three strands; first, the principle of the Bible and its teaching; second, the voluntary worker principle expressed across denominational boundaries; third, the implications of the end times.

Shaftesbury’s starting point with the Bible could not have been clearer. He told the annual meeting of the Church Pastoral Aid Society in 1862:

There is no security whatever except in standing upon the faith of our fathers, and saying with them that the blessed old Book is ‘God’s Word written,’ from the very first syllable down to the very last, and from the last back to the first.⁵

Scripture was to be studied privately and devotionally, guiding the whole of life and being equally applicable in both private and public domains. He argued that Second Chronicles should be studied, prayed over and weighed by every person in public life. The Bible was its own missionary, accessible to the ordinary person. He told the Bible Society in 1860:

Tens of thousands have thrown off their corrupt and ignorant faith, not in consequence of the efforts of preachers, or teachers, or lecturers, but simply and solely from reading the Word of God, pure and unadulterated, without note or comment, without any teaching except the blessed teaching of God’s Holy Spirit.⁶
Shaftesbury’s commitment to both inter-denominational unity and the voluntary worker principal (the use of lay people – lay agents – in the Lord’s work) combined powerfully in his twin concerns of evangelism and social action. He described the Bible Society as “a solemn league and covenant of all those who ‘love the Lord Jesus Christ with sincerity’; that it shows how members of the Church of England and Nonconformists may band together in one great effort.”

The voluntary Christian society was the great place where all Christians could come together for service. He saw this particularly with his work with the City Mission and with Ragged Schools. He told the Ragged School Union, “all who care for the advancement of Christ’s kingdom, to whatever church they belong, must join together, heart and soul, for the purpose of bringing to completion this great, this mighty undertaking.” Shaftesbury was driven by the Christian vision of the unfinished task, of bringing the gospel to the unevangelized, especially the poor and marginalized, and its transforming power to bear upon a society that claimed to be Christian. He had an acute sense of the Lord's calling of all his people. Evangelization and transformation should be left just to the clergy. The lay agency principle was a much more effective way of the gospel penetrating even into the darkest depths of London's slums. Shaftesbury was scathing about the Victorian passion for building churches – “we want men, not churches.” The lay workers employed in the voluntary societies were key to his vision. Some, such as the City Missionaries were paid, others, many of them women, were the volunteer teachers in the ragged schools, Scripture Readers and parish visitors. Indeed his view was that these workers were in by far the best position to assess social need. The advance of the state rather led to the collapse of the volunteer principle as so many social functions were taken over by government.

The third, and crucially important, area of Shaftesbury’s theological concern was in the area of eschatology. It is here that we see a real dynamic, investing a traditional Evangelical theological position with transformative power. Too much ink was spilt in the nineteenth century, as now, over the minute details of various eschatological schemes. Shaftesbury’s commitment began with an assertion of the priority of the Second Advent, which he described as “the hope for all the ends of the earth.” He was, however, also clear where the boundaries lay:

…the Second Advent of our Blessed Lord.
Pay no attention to excited and angry critics, who charge such a scheme with all the extravagancies of the fifth monarchy, and the millennial inventions. The Second Advent, as an all-sufficient remedy, should be prayed for; and as a promise, should be looked for. The mode, form, and manner of that event are not revealed, and therefore no business of ours.

A salutary reminder. This position was fundamental to Shaftesbury’s theology and his ability to develop a vision for evangelism and social action. It enabled him to have a clear vision of the unity of body and soul -- for they would be united again at the end. It turned on its head Evangelical obsessions with chronology and timing and replaced them with a call to discipleship. The fascination with the minute details of the millennium proved to be an enormous distraction from the task at hand.

(continued on page 27)
Hospitality. Though the word’s cordial welcome encompasses more than culinary service, my book focuses on the host’s role of feeding people, particularly those outside the immediate family circle with its attendant obligations.

Hospitality has been characterized as a gift, even a spiritual gift, though it is not listed as such in the New Testament. There’s no mistaking that some people have natural abilities in the kitchen, in the organizational sphere, in the conversational corner. That’s why it’s so tempting to avoid responsibility: hospitality, it’s not my gift.

But the Bible calls for everyone to give it a try: “Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality,” writes Paul (Rom. 12:13). Other Epistle writers add qualifying phrases: “Show hospitality to one another without grumbling” (1 Pet. 4:9). And “Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers” (Heb. 13:2).

You may be a high-profile hostess with a sixty-inch range. I’m not, never have been. I have a bare-bones galley kitchen, not even a dishwasher. I have people over. I make it work.

Maybe your kitchen isn’t your handicap, but it’s easy for you to name another: your spouse or children, your workload; limited parking, insufficient seating. Most anyone can find a reason for not reaching out . . .

But these fifty-two meditations are not about should. They don’t present a theology or scriptural study of biblical hospitality. Nor would you find them in Better Homes and Gardens. Drawing on my own experiences—the successes as well as the failures—I’ve gone for encouragement. Dip in. Here’s what I hope you’ll find:

For hosts known for their hospitable grace and discerning culinary taste, if not skill—encouragement, camaraderie, invigoration.

For fledglings curious or envious of others who exhibit hospitable grace and culinary skill—in story form, an inspirational primer for taking a first step toward a personal success.

For guests anticipating or grateful for hospitable grace and culinary taste and sneaking a preview—an appropriate, nicely packaged gift.

For nostalgics pining for the good old days when people knew something about hospitality and grace—a smidge of humor and a handful of hope that the art of hospitality hasn’t been lost, as some claim.

For people hungry for relationships grounded in real time—an invitation to reach out and enjoy face-to-face connections: table talk.

If you read these pieces straight through, you might think that I welcome guests every weekend, which is hardly the case. This material is a condensation of decades’ worth of hospitable culinary opportunities, presented with some names changed and a few details disguised.

“Come and eat. Here, drink something.” The universal invitation never loses its potential. A parent speaking to a toddler. A friend suggesting lunch. A neighbor coaxing a grieving widow. A colleague hosting a barbecue or buffet. The invitation’s appeal is rooted deep in our humanity; we are, after all, newly needy—hungry and thirsty—every day. And in our tradition: King David welcoming Saul’s grandson to his table like one of his own; Jesus cooking breakfast for His disciples; and the writer of the last biblical chapter beckoning the thirsty to come to the water of life.

Some contemporary invitations are vicarious and virtual, broadcast by smiling chefs talking to cameras in studios. But the best invitations are real and sincere: I’d be honored for you to sit at my table.
Risk Analysis

Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. (Ecclesiastes 11:1)

Accommodating my dad in his pastoral role, my mom was an inveterate hostess, logging, for tax purposes, up to six hundred servings a year. Down-home cooking, rarely more venturesome than mustard and Worcestershire. But guests appreciated her efforts—mostly.

One weekend, hosting strangers interviewing for a church job, she laid out a roast turkey dinner with mashed potatoes, bread stuffing, and gravy. Standard company fare. Right fine in my view, a high school senior. But as Mom washed the dishes, she succinctly summarized the dinner. “That didn’t work.”

“What do you mean?”

“They didn’t like it. They didn’t appreciate it. It was a flop.”

My affirmations didn’t penetrate her negative assessment.

Several years later she again felt disrespected, when only one couple came to a New Year’s open house—an afternoon buffet set out for fifty.

It’s easier to write about my mother’s failures than my own. The New Year’s Eve party for twenty-something peers who claimed they didn’t like parties. (Did I fall asleep watching TV at my own do?) The invitations refused, some by way of Miss Manners’s practiced approach, “You are so kind, but . . .” and some less adroitly. The no-shows or apologies that someone forgot. The meals or desserts that I’ve chosen to forget or rosily gloss over.

Entertaining—extending an invitation, say nothing of opening the door to an unbidden neighbor—is a risk. Every time. Even if hospitality is perceived to be one’s spiritual gift.

An unexpended biblical find—buried under the cast-your-bread-upon-the-waters topic sentence of Ecclesiastes 11—helps to refocus my vision. “In the morning sow your seed, and at evening withhold not your hand, for you do not know which will prosper, this or that, or whether both alike will be good” (v. 6). Be generous, the wisdom writer says, but understand the realities: some efforts “prosper” and some don’t. Sometimes the food and the conversation “work,” sometimes neither. Sometimes we feel affirmed; sometimes we don’t. Sometimes the bread cast upon the water becomes a free-float- ing memory for God to redeem further down the river of time.

God, give us courage braced with wisdom as we reach out beyond ourselves and offer suste- nance for table guests.

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Note:

1. All Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version.
Ministering Personally, Ministering Pastorally

by Michael A. Milton, Ph.D.
Director and Senior Teaching Fellow, C.S. Lewis Institute
of Charlotte and the Carolinas

This article is an excerpt from Chapter 14 in Dr. Milton’s book, The Secret Life of a Pastor (And Other Intimate Letters on Ministry). The book is a collection of pastoral letters written to students, pastors, and churches in order to stir them up to greater faith in Christ and love for His Church. Dr. Milton’s forthcoming book, Pastoral Theology, will be released in Spring 2016. It is hoped that these books will not only fill a need in Bible colleges, seminaries, and universities, but also through the C.S. Lewis Institute in ministry to clergy, staff and other disciples of Christ of local churches.

Dear Students of the Gospel of Christ:

There’s something that is on my heart, something that I need to unburden myself of, and it is this: you minister to people best when you minister out of Christ’s compassion for the broken people God has placed in your life. Because all truth is God’s truth, this applies in other contexts, but its incarnational glory is fully displayed in the life and ministry of Christ our Lord. As a believer and a preacher of the Gospel, I minister out of the centering point of my life and my vocation—my faith in Jesus Christ.

In the ninth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is revealed as the great God of profound compassion. As one reads through the chapter that leads to the climactic moment when His great heart is fully revealed as a broken heart for the multitudes, Matthew shows how He had ministered. In the Lord’s compassion, He healed the sick, forgave reprobates, and raised the dead. He moved through the layers of hurting humanity with healing in His hands. Jesus Christ ministered to everyone who needed ministry. He went throughout all the villages healing every disease. There was inevitability about it all. “He will go on healing everyone,” it seems. Thus it was recorded in Matthew 4:

And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and he healed them (vv. 23-24 ESV).

So in Chapter Nine:

And Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction (Matthew 9:35 ESV).

And yet the Son of Man came to a point in Matthew’s account that He looked up on the multitude who were like sheep without a shepherd, scattered (not a “dispersed” kind of scattered but the Greek means a “downcast” and “ravaged” understanding of scattered), and it was then that Matthew — a sinful tax collector converted by the compassion of Jesus Christ and who, in this ninth chapter, placed himself in his own writing like a Rembrandt in his own painting — reveals the love of our Savior. Matthew tells us that Jesus had compassion on the multitude for they were like sheep without a shepherd. The Greek expression for compassion is a word that speaks of the very intestines of our Savior — the deep inner organs that were wracked with pain — the pain of a compassion that no one can ever comprehend. It is the compassion of the Creator for His own creation. It is the compassion of a father for his children but in an infinitely more intimate relationship of love than you or I could ever fathom. Out of this deep-seated compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ comes His command. The command of
Christ is that His disciples should pray. And for what or whom should we pray? What should be our response to this compassion of Jesus for the multitude gathered in Israel?

Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest’ (Matthew 9.37–38 ESV).

Christ therefore looks confidently over the landscape of a broken, fallen humanity and sees redemption on its way. Yet the redemption will come to the multitudes through His disciples. And those disciples will develop out of prayer for laborers for His harvest. You have heard of preachers who were called by God to preach who later learned of, say, a great-grandfather who prayed each day that God would bless His progeny with a minister of the Gospel. That example, a very common one, is a direct response to this passage.

But here’s the thing that I want to say: the multitudes that Jesus saw were the objects of His divine affection, the objects of His compassion, the aim of His redeeming purposes. And yet, Jesus, according to John 17, would love those who were not yet even born. And he would do so through the testimony of His disciples. So Jesus Christ had compassion on that multitude on that day — those very people who were before him, as described in that text. Matthew tells us this. But John lets us see that His compassion extends beyond that moment, to those people of generations yet unborn, and to disciples yet unconverted, as well as to those called to answer His call to pray and minister.

Jesus Christ’s compassion would be extended to others through the very disciples who receive that compassion themselves. Therefore, Jesus cared for that mass of hurting sheep Himself. His prayer for shepherd-laborers to go into the plentiful harvest is a prayer for you and me. It is a prayer that we should reach the multitudes in our day, people He made; souls He has elected unto salvation. Yet we can only reach those who are before us. We aim our message at one, or two, or three — the people we know who need the Lord. Yet if I reach out to those who are on my heart and you reach out to those who were on yours and the other man will reach out to the people were on his heart, then we shall reach many together. This is His plan. This is our calling.

In short: Minister to the people God has placed on your heart. There are probably only a few, but because all of us are in the same condition, if you minister to that person on your heart, you will minister to many who others who are in the same condition.

I give an example from my life. I have a broken heart about two people I once knew. I knew these two people very well. One of them I wish that I had known better. But that is part of the necessary beckoning, the acute aching, the deep passion, and the God-given desire to reach them — particular people close to me and others like them close to you — and bridge the distance, enter the multitude, and bring the redemptive relief of healing to their souls through Jesus.

Who are the people from the multitude that God has placed in your life? Name them. Those are the souls — precious souls — for whom Christ has compassion. Minister to those few in your heart and you’ll actually minister to many. Minister Christ personally and you will minister Him pastorally. And Christ’s command will become an answered prayer. ♠
Thoughts on Ministry Fundraising (continued from page 1)

seen in Joshua 7, can block God’s blessing from the ministry.

4. Share the Vision Truthfully and Transparently

In some cases, it may be appropriate to privately pray about a need without relating it to anyone else. This was the method used by George Müller, the director of the Ashley Down orphanages in Bristol, England. As recounted in his autobiography, he made his needs known to God alone in prayer, and the Lord sent many millions of dollars over six decades to sustain the ministry to orphans. God can and does still ask some to follow this method on certain occasions.

However, in most cases, in order to get more people involved and invested in the ministry, it is good to make ministry needs known to God’s people in a clear and accurate manner. In this way, they are better able to pray specifically for the work and do the spiritual warfare necessary for it to stand firm against the schemes of the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Presenting the vision involves telling of the plans, the programs, and the needs of the ministry. Sharing this with others should be done honestly, truthfully, transparently, and faithfully, so they will have a clear understanding of what the Lord has called the ministry to do, how it is fulfilling that call, and what is needed to carry the work forward. Hudson Taylor, the great pioneer missionary to China, believed that his ministry should practice “full information, but not solicitation.” In this way, he could be sure that people had the information they needed to understand what God was doing in the mission, without asking them directly for funds or gifts. He trusted God to speak to their hearts and guide their giving.

5. Invite People to Give Willingly and Freely

A classic Old Testament example of making a public appeal for support of God’s work is seen in Exodus 25 when God commands Moses to ask the people to take up an offering for the construction of the tabernacle. God even gives Moses the exact items for which he is to ask, including gold, silver, yarn, skins, wood, and oil. We see a similar example in 1 Chronicles 29, when King David asks Israel to follow his example and give up their finest metals, wood, gemstones, etc., for the construction of the temple. In the New Testament, Paul invites the Corinthian believers to give generously to support their struggling brothers and sisters in Jerusalem. And he cites the impoverished churches in Macedonia as an exemplary model of such generosity.

Thus, there is ample biblical precedent for publicly inviting people to give to specific ministries and projects. The key, however, is in the way the invitation to give is extended.
Exodus 25:1–2 reads, “The LORD said to Moses, ‘Speak to the people of Israel that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me’” (emphasis added). These verses show us that not everyone will give, and that only those people whose hearts are moved will do so. Thus, when inviting people to give, a ministry should trust the Lord to work in the hearts of His people and never presume upon anyone to give, or coerce or pressure anyone to give, as a gift should be received only as a person’s heart is moved to give.

This principle is reiterated when David invites the nation of Israel to give. He states it in this way: “Who then will offer willingly, consecrating himself today to the LORD?” (1 Chron. 29:5b, emphasis added). The result of this gracious invitation is that the leaders make their “freewill offerings.” 1 Chron. 29:9 states, “Then the people rejoiced because they had given willingly, for with a whole heart they had offered freely to the LORD. David the king also rejoiced greatly” (emphasis added).

Thus, whenever an invitation is extended to others to support a ministry, it should be done in a way that encourages people to give freely from their hearts as an offering to the Lord. Paul reinforces this when he writes in 2 Corinthians 9:7, “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” Nothing should be done to coerce, pressure, induce guilt, or manipulate anyone to give. If any nonbiblical tactics or words are used to force or manipulate a gift, it is no longer a godly and gracious invitation, but a sinful, man-led means of trying to do God’s work.

Another very important principle to remember when asking people to support a ministry is that an invitation to give should never be tainted with an appeal to the donor’s pride, a practice all too common today. In Matthew 6:1–4, Jesus clearly states that people should not give to the needy to obtain earthly honor; rather, they should give in secret so as to receive a heavenly reward. Ministries must be careful not to entice people to give by publicizing their generosity. This is nothing but an appeal to pride. It can work with people who want to increase their status and prestige in the eyes of others, but it is not God’s way.

It is important to guard our hearts and seek to remain pure before the Lord; instead of loving money and using people, ministries should love people and use any money that is given to support the Lord’s work.

6. Be Grateful—Give Thanks to God and Donors

Once a gift has been given to a ministry, whether it is for one dollar or a million dollars, it should be seen as God’s provision for His work and received with thanksgiving and joy. I Timothy 4:4 states that all good gifts should be received “with thanksgiving.” Jesus sets the example for our prayers of thanksgiving in the feeding of the four thousand. When He had received the gifts of the loaves and fishes, He gave thanks to the Lord for these gifts and then multiplied them.

After thanking God for His provision, it is important to thank the person through whom He sent it. Paul sets an example for us in 1 Thessalonians 1:2–3, when he tells the church of Thessalonica that he thanks God for them and
Thoughts on Ministry Fundraising

their labor of love and work of faith. Thanks should be given in a timely manner, clearly expressing appreciation to the supporter.

7. Accountability—Be Good Stewards of the Gifts

Once a gift has been received by a ministry, it should be administered carefully and forthrightly, to ensure that there is no question of impropriety about its use. As Paul wrote upon the reception of a gift, “that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us” (2 Cor. 8:20).

These are my thoughts thus far. As I said previously, I would be grateful for any thoughts you might have as I seek to formalize the principles by which the C.S. Lewis Institute will operate in the future.

Note:
1. Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version.

I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare.

C.S. Lewis

What will you read next?

Consider one of these books by our authors

http://www.cslewisinstitute.org/CSLI_Authors_Publications
innovations. So they compromised by using mostly Hebrew in their services, allowing some instrumental music, and letting the sexes sit together.

As these movements developed into the twentieth and now twenty-first centuries, Reform and Conservative Judaism came to resemble each other more and more, to the point that today both movements have agreed to ordain as rabbis sexually active homosexuals and lesbians. It is for this and other reasons that many observers say there are really only two main groups in today's Judaism, traditionalists and modernists. Perhaps the best way to understand today's Judaism is to see how these two camps differ on eight central Jewish ideas: Torah, God, morality, human nature, Israel, religious ritual, the world to come, and messiah. Milton Steinberg outlined these differences more than sixty years ago in his book Basic Judaism, but the dividing lines are still there today.

**Traditionalists and Modernists: The Basic Difference**

The best way to see how these two Jewish movements differ is to consider where they go to find their authority. In other words, how do they answer questions about what is true, good, and beautiful? Traditionalists generally say the answers are found in Torah (the Pentateuch or first five books of the Old Testament), while modernists look to human reason and experience. For example, to answer the question, what is God like?, traditionalists would say they know about God mainly from Torah, while modernists would say that while Torah might have some inspired general ideas about God, such as God's goodness and justice, we need human reason and experience to understand what those abstract ideas mean.

**Torah**

For traditionalists, every letter and word are from God, not only in Torah and the rest of the Hebrew Scripture (Tanakh), but also in the Talmud, which are the rabbinic commentaries written in the first through the seventh centuries AD in Babylon (modern Iraq) and Israel. Traditionalists think that even the rabbinic writings after the Talmud are inspired, but to a diminishing degree. Since Torah is God's Word, and God's Word is forever, Judaism should never change—say the traditionalists. Therefore the idea that Judaism has evolved over time is an illusion. People might have changed God's law, but the law itself has not and should not change. For God has revealed His will through the Bible and Jewish tradition, and our task as humans is to stick to it, not change it.

Modernists, on the other hand, say Torah is inspired only in parts—when they find what they consider to be truth and goodness in it. How do they know those parts are good and true? By using modern reason and experience. Those same authorities—modern reason and modern experience—also tell them that the law of change is universal, and therefore Judaism too must change with time. The ancient culture that gave us "revelation" was in fact limited by the cultural mores of those ancient days. Our modern days are blessed with so much more learning and wisdom, and we must use these modern insights to filter out what is ancient and false and bad from what we now see is good and true. Torah is revelation but only in some of its broad ideas. Many of its details were not at all inspired, but produced by cultures that we had best leave behind.

**God**

Both traditionalists and modernists say that God is one, not many (contrary to polytheism), not two (contrary to all dualisms, such as Zoroastrian or Chinese yin and yang, which believe in two equal forces that fight for mastery of the
cosmos), not three (contrary to Christianity, which Jews believe teaches three gods and therefore a kind of polytheism), and not none (contrary to atheism).

Both groups of Jews also agree that the God of the Jewish Bible (and therefore the true God!) is very different from what the religions of the Ancient Near East (ANE: Babylon, Egypt, Assyria, and Canaan) said about the divine. In other words, the true God is creator (thus the world had a beginning and is not eternal, as most ANE religions believed), spirit (God does not have a body, as most ANE religions believed), lawgiver (God is moral, contrary to the gods of the ANE, who often did immoral things), guide of history (and thus outside of history, contrary to the ANE gods who were within history and could do little to change history), and humanity’s helper, but through the resources of this world.

On miracles, traditionalists say God still performs them; modernists say God does not, for that would oppose God’s plan to run the world according to the laws of nature.

Salvation? Both groups say that word may pertain to life after death, but its primary reference is to this world when there is victory over ignorance and selfishness.

Both groups agree that God is both transcendent (separate from this world) and immanent (in the world).

**Morality**

Traditionalists and modernists both talk about a life of “decency” that is honoring to God. They agree that the prophets in the Hebrew Bible rightly showed us that this life will seek justice and compassion for all human beings. It will perform the mitzvoth (commandments), which are summed up by the Ten Commandments. They forbid idolatry (the first), using God’s name irreverently (second—in the attempt to treat God’s name with reverence, many Jews refuse to utter the revealed name “Yhwh” and will write “G-d”), dishonoring the Sabbath (third) or parents (fourth), murder (fifth), adultery (sixth), stealing (seventh), false witness (eighth), and greed for what others have (ninth and tenth).

Traditionalists believe the moral life is spelled out by the 613 mitzvoth of Torah; modernists think the general principles of justice and compassion are found through modern reason and experience.

**Human Nature**

Both traditionalists and modernists believe the human being is free to do what God commands. Here is where Jews and Christians disagree: Jews think the human will is able to master sin if it makes an effort; Christians believe in original sin, which means the will is disabled by an inherent selfishness that taints all its acts. Jews insist that although we will never be perfect, by repentance we can return to God and use God-given willpower to do what He has told us to do. Christians say this can happen only by the grace of Christ.

**Israel**

Traditionalists say God chose Israel as the chosen nation because of the merits of the fathers/patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), and that Israel (the community of Jews everywhere) now lives to communicate God’s truth to the nations.

This does not mean, by the way, that traditionalists think they are in God’s family because of their works. It’s more complex and less self-righteous than that. Some decades ago, the scholar E.P. Sanders showed that first-century Jews (think especially of the Pharisees) did not think their good works made them members of the kingdom of God. Instead, they believed God had put them into the “covenant” (God’s family) by grace, but that they needed to follow the important rules of the law to stay in. Most traditionalists, and also some modernists, believe similarly. They say God made them Jews simply out of His goodness. And now that they are in the covenant, they need to make sure they stay in the covenant by obeying God’s commandments. That faithfulness will ensure a good prospect in the life to come.

Modernists have a different view of chosenness. They agree that the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob) chose God, and this is why God chose them. But they add that if other na-
tions choose God, they too will be “chosen.” They are a bit embarrassed by the “one chosen nation” idea and interpret it as a universal call to all nations to observe the divine principles of compassion and justice.

**Religious Practices**

Traditionalists believe that everything Jews have done in their historic liturgies and daily practices (which have been developed by rabbinic tradition) represents God’s will in Torah. Therefore they are scrupulous about even the smallest details, for they believe they are all of God.

Modernists, on the other hand, think the rituals are merely human devices for making us feel close to what is good and divine. So these rituals are always subject to improvement. But their basic inspiration may have been divine.

**The World to Come**

Both groups believe in recompense after death. Goodness on earth will be rewarded then, and evil will be punished. Both groups also affirm immortality and resurrection, but they disagree on what the words mean. Traditionalists have a more literal conception, and modernists say we can’t know anything more precise than the fact of life after death.

Jewish people in general think that Christians are too presumptuous about these things, that we really can’t guess what the specifics will be like. All we know is that we will survive death and that the life to come will involve the resurrection of the body. Christians undoubtedly ascertain details based on their reading of the New Testament, which teaches far more about these things than does the Old Testament.

**Messiah**

Traditionalists say the Messiah will be a man and that they are to hope and pray for the coming of this man. He will not be God, but he will abolish evil and establish goodness on a firm foundation.

Modernists, in contrast, are looking not to a man but to an age—a messianic age. But God is not the primary mover here. We human beings will bring it about by working for our dreams of justice and goodness. God inspires our dreams, and Torah helps us understand them, but it will be our efforts that will bring this age to pass.

**Why Jews Reject Jesus as Messiah**

Perhaps you are wondering why Jews say the Messiah will not be God. This is because Jews observe that the Old Testament prophecies never predict that the messiah will be God. Christians point to Isaiah 9:6 (“For a child has been born for us / . . . and he is named / Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God . . .” NRSV), but Jews translate this as referring not to Messiah but to God who sent this child (“For a child has been born to us, / A son has been given us. / And authority has settled on his shoulders. / He has been named / ‘The Mighty God is planning grace; / The Eternal Father, a peaceable ruler’” Isa. 9:5 Tanakh NJPS).

Christians see Jesus as God not so much because of prophecies in the Old Testament but because of what they see in His own life. For example, He claimed the authority to forgive sins, which all first-century Jews knew was the prerogative of God alone (Mark 2:7). This by itself, completely apart from Jesus’ miracles, was Jesus’ own claim to divinity.

The primary reason Jewish people don’t think Jesus was the anticipated Messiah is that Jesus did not bring worldwide peace and submission of the nations to Himself, as the psalmist and prophets said the Messiah would (see Ps. 2:9; Isa. 9:2–7; 11:1–5; Jer. 33:14–26; Ezek. 37:24–28). Quite the opposite, Jesus’ followers caused division and conflict in first-century Israel, and representatives of the Roman Empire had Jesus put to death.

Christians reply that there are two streams of prophecy in Tanakh (the Old Testament) about the Messiah. One does indeed say the Messiah will bring worldwide peace and justice. But there is another one that suggests the Messiah will be a servant whose sufferings will save the world (Ps. 22; 55; 88; Isa. 53:5, 10, 12). Jesus suffered and saved in His first coming and will bring worldwide peace and justice in His second.

In his book *A Rabbi Talks with Jesus*, Jacob Neusner says he cannot accept Jesus as Messiah.
A Thumbnail Sketch of Judaism for Christians

because a true Jew would never reject the Jewish law, which was the greatest gift God gave to His people. Neusner says Jesus changed the law and focused not on daily holiness (which the law is all about) but salvation in the next life for the individual.

Christians say that Jesus did not reject biblical law, but taught the meaning of the law. He, in fact, took the law very seriously, as these words in the Sermon on the Mount show:

_Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven._ (Matt. 5:17–19 NRSV)

David Gelernter, a Jewish computer scientist at Yale, writes widely respected books and articles on theology and politics. Reflecting the thinking of some fellow Jews, he has said that he cannot accept Christian faith, and Jesus’ claims at the center of it, because of Jesus’ incipient pacifism. “Turn the other cheek” and “Do not resist the evildoer” are teachings that cannot support a robust resistance to evil which this age of terrorism demands.

Yet Christians would say that there are New Testament reasons why most Christians in history have supported the just-war tradition, which says there are times when Christians can and must fight wars to resist evil. They look to passages such as Romans 13:4 (“The [civil] authority does not bear the sword in vain!” NRSV) and say Jesus’ admonition not to resist the evildoer was probably a restatement of Psalm 37:1 (“Do not fret because of the wicked” NRSV), not a sign of pacifism.

Even if Jewish people do not agree with us about who Jesus is, we Christians can build bridges through our common beliefs in what we call the Old Testament to meaningful discussions about Jesus as we know Him from the New Testament.

An explanation of cause is not a justification by reason.

_C.S. Lewis_

**RECOMMENDED READING**


Respected scholar and Messianic Jew answers sixty common questions Christians have about Jewish people, culture, practices, and the Jewish background to the New Testament.
Running the Marathon of Faith: Persevering to Life’s End

(continued from page 9)

kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22). These and many others were urged to persevere.

Talk of persecution and suffering for the sake of Christ may sound strange to modern American ears. But it is raging in various parts of the world today. Researchers say that during the twentieth century, more people were killed for their faith in Christ than in all the centuries since the time of Christ combined. In our own history, there has been little or no persecution of believers for faith in Christ. But times are changing in America. The tide has turned. Signs of persecution are on the horizon.

The Challenge of False Teaching and Deception

Persecution and suffering are not the only challenges that face followers of Jesus. False teaching was a major concern for the early church. Paul had to confront it in Corinth, Galatia, Colossae, and Thessalonica. Paul warned the Corinthians about “false apostles,” saying they were “deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds” (2 Cor. 11:13–15). A theologically orthodox friend of mine who attended a liberal seminary told me that one day he arrived at his preaching class to find the blackboard emblazoned with the words “Be sneaky.” The professor explained that the soon-to-be pastors needed to introduce liberal theology into their churches in a way that wasn’t obvious, so the people didn’t revolt. As an old man, the apostle John also had to confront false teaching of an early gnostic type in his congregation. The heretics finally left the church, but not without leaving behind poisonous ideas about the nature of Christ that John had to combat.3 False teaching is no less a problem today. There is arguably more false teaching confronting the church today than at any time in history.

The Challenge of Daily Temptations

The most common challenge we face in following Jesus is daily temptations to the particular sins that appeal to the inclinations and passions of our old fallen nature, which Paul calls “the flesh.” Paul describes the experience of every true Christian when he says “the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do” (Gal. 5:17). Do you find a struggle raging in your heart as you are tempted to sin and then seek to resist? If so, that is a good sign, an indication that God’s Spirit is at work in you. The path to victory, says Paul, is to “walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16). This means saying no to the sinful desires that tempt us and yes to the Spirit’s prompting to obedience.

Some people have been defeated so often that they have given up hope of gaining victory over the sinful temptations that assail them. This is a great mistake and an unnesse-
Running the Marathon of Faith: Persevering to Life’s End

sary capitulation to sin. It is also a great danger, for it makes them vulnerable to the hardening effects of sin in their hearts, which can lead to gradually drifting from faith in Christ. They need to understand the Bible’s teaching on how to deal with remaining sin by putting to death the deeds of the body by the power of the Spirit (Rom. 8:13). We are not the helpless victims of our sinful desires and temptations, even though it may sometimes seem that way. Paul assures us that “no temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it” (1 Cor. 10:13). Through learning constant reliance on the empowering presence of the Spirit, we can resist the fleshly temptations that assail us. In some cases we may need the wise counsel and prayers of a godly pastor or elder or an accountability group.

The Spiritual Benefit of Challenges

So far, following Jesus has sounded like a life of unmitigated misery. Is there any good news? Anything positive or encouraging? The answer is yes. The first thing to say—and to be thankful for—is that normally our daily life is not besieged by all of these challenges at once! Although we can expect to encounter temptations to sin on a daily basis, things like persecution, suffering, false teaching, and demonic attack tend to come and go. They intensify at certain seasons, then recede, unless we are living in an especially hostile, anti-Christian environment or period of time.

But the most encouraging news is that God uses the challenges we experience for our good. They play an important role in our transformation into the image of Christ. Paul says, “We re-

joyce in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us” (Rom. 5:3–5). Paul is telling us that suffering actually strengthens our endurance and ability to persevere, and lays the foundation for the increase of other virtues.

James takes it a step further when he says, “Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness [i.e., perseverance]. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing” (James 1:2–4). We are to rejoice in trials, says James, because they produce perseverance, which helps move us on to maturity.

Peter, likewise, commends the value of trials and testing: “You have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 1:6–9). Trials serve to purify our faith and make us stronger and more Christlike. And they will also bring us praise, glory, and honor when Christ returns, as well as glorifying Him who enabled us to persevere.

Towering over all the difficult experiences of life is the unshakable truth that “for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose” (Rom. 8:28). This doesn’t mean that everything will somehow turn out to be good from a human point of view. Rather, it means that God will use all the difficult things we encounter as part of His process of conforming us to the image of His Son, which is the ultimate good (Rom. 8:29).

The Necessity of Perseverance

We have looked at a number of passages that urge us to endure in faith and to overcome the many and varied obstacles we encounter as we seek to faithfully follow Jesus Christ to our life’s end. It remains to state explicitly what has been implicit up to this point: Only those who con-
continue to trust and follow Christ to the end will ultimately be saved. As Paul said to the Colossians who were in danger of being led astray by false teachers,

>You, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel you heard. (Col. 1:21–23)

The writer to the Hebrews said the same thing to Jewish believers who were tempted to return to Judaism,

>Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. (Heb. 3:12–14)

Do these passages (and others like them) mean that a true Christian can lose his salvation if he does not persevere to the end? God gives strong assurances of His unchanging love and His almighty power to keep and preserve His true children unto salvation. But a vital part of how He does so is to warn soberly all professing believers of the tragic consequences of giving up faith in Christ and to urge us to persevere. Such warnings are meant to be taken very seriously and to be heeded, because some who profess Christ actually do forsake Him. Arminians would say that such people were true Christians who lost their faith. Calvinists would say they were never true believers, whose lack of saving faith is seen in their turning away from Christ. But both would agree that such people will not be saved. The true believer will take God’s warnings seriously and will earnestly seek His grace and power to be obedient and faithful in the midst of the trial and temptations of life, and will never forsake Jesus. The true believer will faithfully use the means God has given for growing in grace and will heed the words of Peter to make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election sure, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. (2 Pet. 1:5–10)

**Will We Persevere to the End?**

The question that faces each of us is, Will I persevere to my life’s end? I know how weak I am, and how prone to sin. Will I really make it to heaven?

The words of Jesus give great encouragement and assurance:

>All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out . . . And this is the will of him who sent me that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. (John 6:37, 39)

Later on, Jesus said,

>My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand. (John 10:27–29)

These promises apply to those who have come to saving faith in Jesus. Such people are recognized by the fact that they persevere in trusting and following Jesus, who said, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”. (John 8:31–32)
Paul’s words to the Philippians also give much encouragement to those who know Christ: “I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ”. (Phil. 1:6)

Finally, Paul marvels at God’s grace and exclaims,

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God’s elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, “For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:31–39)

Yes, we must persevere to life’s end; there is no other option. But even more important is the fact that the God of grace is persevering with us. He is enabling us to persevere and ensuring that no matter what comes against us, we will not be lost, but will make it home at last.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising its shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. 12:1–2)

Notes:

1. Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are from the English Standard Version. All italicized emphases are added.


3. 1 John 2:26.


[Senior devil Screwtape to junior devil] The long, dull, monotonous years of middle-aged prosperity or middle-aged adversity are excellent campaigning weather. You see, it is so hard for these creatures to persevere.

C.S. Lewis

RECOMMENDED READING

Scripture’s commands to persevere, and warnings of the consequences if we fail, have been met with apathy by some, and led others to doubt the state of their salvation. Thomas Schreiner once again tackles this difficult topic in Run to Win the Prize. Clarifying misunderstandings stemming from his more detailed treatment in The Race Set Before Us (IVP 2001), Schreiner draws together an illuminating overview of biblical teaching on the doctrine of perseverance.
Shaftesbury was a premillennialist. He believed that human sin was such that the condition of the world would worsen and only the Second Advent could offer ultimate hope. However, he reversed the classic premillennialist approach to life and to society. Rather than wait for the ultimate reversal to happen with a life of quietism and pietistic withdrawal from society, Shaftesbury pressed the responsibility of the Christian to act. He was not distracted by the mania for matching the signs of the times to the chronology of the book of Revelation or the setting of dates for the return of Christ. Hence, Shaftesbury was able to press very precisely the view that the day of judgement would include a reckoning for the believer’s stewardship of the gifts of God. He urged constant attention to the responsibilities of the present and the dynamic of living in constant, yet unknown, expectation of the second coming. The duties of the Christian extended to the responsibilities of the nation, as all would be held to account. The nearness of the Second Advent and judgment was to Shaftesbury an impulse to action, not withdrawal. Faithful and obedient discipleship in the period before the return of Christ lay at the root of his work. It was this which animated his labour as legislator, missionary activist, and supporter of Christian voluntary societies. He set it out clearly:

I am now looking, not to the great end, but to the interval. I know, my friends, how great and glorious that end will be; but while I find so many persons looking to no end, and others rejoicing in that great end, and thinking nothing about the interval, I confess that my own sympathies and fears dwell much with what must take place before that great consummation.12

Climbing boys

Shaftesbury was a great campaigner against social evils. The “boy sweeps” was a matter which concerned him throughout his life and which he fought with tenacity. The wealthier members of society demanded that their chimney flues (the narrow funnel through which smoke rose until ejected into the atmosphere) be cleaned. So did the insurance companies, nervous of the risk of fire. For much of the nineteenth century this was a process which was not yet mechanised. Hence the only way to effectively ensure that the sweep’s brushes could be fully extended up the chimney and the flue cleaned was to use manual labour. Since the flues were narrow, the younger the better. Children as young as five were sold into the employment of the master sweeps by unscrupulous parents who gave the necessary assurances on age (from 1788 there was a minimum age of eight years old, but it was widely flouted). Their existence was miserable. The incentives which were provided to encourage reluctant youngsters to climb the chimneys were cruel. They included forcing pins into feet of a boy or lighting a fire in the hearth. Deformities, injuries and deaths resulted. Once a boy was too big he was discarded onto the street.

Wilberforce had been an early campaigner but regulation was patchy. In 1840 Shaftesbury introduced a bill to prevent the employment of children as sweeps. He noted in his speech that the practice had ‘led to more misery and degradation than prevailed in any other Christian country.’13 Once again we see the powerful link of the responsibilities of a Christian nation in response to the prevalence of sin in its midst. Shaftesbury was clearly in possession of first-hand information, probably from the City Missionaries, and was even involved in one successful ‘buy-out’ of a young sweep. The 1840 legislation proved similarly ineffective as its predecessors. Then, in 1847, a master sweep was convicted of the manslaughter of a seven-year old boy. He had been forced into the flue of a chemical works just nineteen inches wide. He had inhaled the soot, suffered burns, was beaten and then died. Shaftesbury became chairman of the Climbing Boys Society.

The master sweeps were prevented now by the legislation from taking apprentices under
the age of sixteen years. In 1853 Shaftesbury explained to the House of Lords that the provisions were circumvented by sweeps employing children to carry the bag of tools and brushes. Once inside, the doors would be locked and the child forced up the chimney. By this time more mechanisation was occurring in London, but not in the provincial cities. The government prevaricated. In 1863 a further report noted that the use of climbing boys was again on the rise and the illicit trade was returning to London. There were still several thousand boys employed, as young as six, with the regulations continuing to be violated. The report noted the deaths of twenty three boys since 1840. Shaftesbury introduced further legislation laying the blame at the door of the householders who resisted mechanisation. The rich, he added, prefer not to ask how their chimneys are cleaned.

Effective regulation continued to prove elusive. The fifth report of the Children’s Employment Commission in 1866 provided evidence of the continued evasion of the Acts introduced by Shaftesbury. The Earl was stirred into action again in 1872 after eight year-old Christopher Drummond died in a flue. He tried to rouse public opinion with a letter to The Times, describing the practice as a disgrace to England. Three years later a boy died in a chimney in Cambridge. This time The Times thundered into action in an editorial demanding final and resolute action. Shaftesbury moved in the Lords for an inquiry which was denied and so on 20th April 1875 he gave notice of new legislation. In his speech to Parliament, Shaftesbury said his interest lay in the temporal and eternal welfare of this oppressed group. He described the practices as Satanic. The Bill passed unscathed and effectively ended a century of misery. The Earl was seventy-four years old when the Act passed. He had shown remarkable tenacity and perseverance in the cause. This was a characteristic of his campaigns and a reason for his success. Meticulous in gathering and presenting evidence, for Shaftesbury both the eternal destiny and the bodily welfare of the child sweep were of equal concern.

Shaftesbury looked for a partnership between a Christian state and the Christian voluntary society. This enabled him to create a unique Evangelical vision for mission.

**Place in history**

How are we to assess Shaftesbury’s life, significance and contribution to history? He resisted senior government office because it would threaten his independence. In 1866 alone he was offered a seat in the Cabinet three times by both Whig and Tory Prime Ministers. As a result the legacy is probably greater, but perhaps less well known. His sense of calling and Christian passion and compassion ran very deep indeed.

Shaftesbury had a vision for God in society. This came from his uncompromising Protestantism, a conclusion that some might find uncomfortable. As a campaigner for some “party” causes he was unyielding. (For a discussion of Shaftesbury’s Protestant campaigning, see Tum-
Undoubtedly he made errors and misjudgments. However, this same commitment gave him a clear vision for God in the public domain. It was because the nation was Christian that the state carried responsibilities for God’s creatures.

The role of the state was, however, limited. Shaftesbury looked for a partnership between a Christian state and the Christian voluntary society. This enabled him to create a unique Evangelical vision for mission. He saw the Evangelical voluntary societies as instruments used by God, practical expressions of Christian discipleship in preparation for the Second Advent and the day of judgement. The return of Christ was an impulse to action. The advance of state intervention after around 1870 caused a serious imbalance in the relationship of the state and the voluntary sector and the Evangelical societies lost ground.

Shaftesbury inspired and exacerbated in equal measure. To him the campaigns for Protestant truth, evangelism and social reform were all driven by his Christian faith and Evangelical commitment. He achieved more than any government could ever have done. He was an intelligent and skilful operator. As well as his reforms and Christian work in the nation, for ten years as Viscount Palmerston’s adviser he ensured more faithful appointments to the bench of Bishops. He studiously maintained his independence from government – the only offices he sought were the chairs of the Evangelical societies. He was, in essence, a man, flawed, but also one of courage, integrity, consistency and persistence; in short, he was a man of passion. He showed to the nation true Christian leadership, discipleship and service. His legacy is on the statute books, in the voluntary evangelical mission societies and their work, evangelistic and social, and in the vision for a Christian nation and public policy. He was an inspiration for Christians in the public square then and now. Lord Shaftesbury, thank you.

Notes:

3. Ibid, 199
4. Ibid, 200
5. Ibid, 213
6. Ibid, 214
7. Ibid, 215
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid, 217
10. Lord Ashley, Diaries, 26th December 1847, Turnbull, Shaftesbury, 219
11. Turnbull, Shaftesbury, 220
12. Ibid, 222-223
13. Lord Ashley, House of Commons, 14th April 1840, Turnbull, Shaftesbury, 113
14. Ibid, 198

RECOMMENDED READING

Richard Turnbull, Reviving the Heart: The Story of the 18th Century Revival (Lion Hudson, 2012)

The English Revival of the 18th century was an exciting time for Christianity that most people today know little about. For instance: What caused it and why did it spread? Did it prevent a revolution in the UK, similar to that which had convulsed France? And what effect did it have—locally, nationally, and globally? This book answers all of those questions and more.
What Do You Say to Your Jewish Friends about Jesus?
(continued from page 5)

• “I’m aware that most people in our world try to avoid the topic of religion. I hope the depth of our friendship can handle it.”
• “Would you be willing to talk about our two faiths? I’d like to learn more about Judaism because it’s so tightly linked to my faith as a believer in Jesus.”
• “I’m guessing this might be difficult, but are you willing to explore these issues even if they’re not popular or easy to believe?”
• “I know that the history of Jewish-Christian dialogue has been a mess. I’d still like to talk about God and see if we can avoid some of the pitfalls. What do you think?”

Do use the Bible. In particular, show how Jesus fulfilled messianic prophecy. But this may not be as simple as you might think. While there is great benefit from seeing parallel lists of “predictions” and “fulfillments,” the nature of Old Testament prophecy is fuller than many Christians realize. And that’s a good thing! In fact, a personal study of Old Testament prophecy can deepen your confidence in the Scriptures in powerful ways. Then, from that deep well, you’ll be able to show your Jewish friends how Judaism and Christianity fit together, how events in the Tanakh pointed the way to a savior, and how our deepest longings can be met through the One who delivered answers to age-old questions, resolving age-old tensions.

Jesus was Jewish, and most of His first followers saw their faith in Messiah as the logical culmination of their trust in the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But the devil has done a masterful job of obscuring the connections between the old and the new, the promised and the fulfilled, and the foreshadowed and the delivered. God can use you to help your Jewish friends find what their Jewishness points to, and He will deepen your appreciation of your faith along the way. Some of your Jewish friends will thank you for sharing the good news. And you’ll have a very long time to rejoice together about the One at the center of those conversations. ♦

RECOMMENDED READING

Jews for Jesus founder, Moishe Rosen, and his wife, Ceil, have written a guide for Christians who want to share the love of Jesus with their Jewish friends.
C.S. Lewis Institute is now in Charlotte!

The C.S. Lewis Institute of Charlotte and the Carolinas is currently in the development stages and is seeking like-minded and like-hearted men and women called to help establish a Fellows Program in the Carolinas by 2016. We are organizing an Advisory Board and are conducting a search for mentors. If you feel called to be a part of this discipleship movement, please contact us using the information below.

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