

# the Gospel and Our Culture

a network for encouraging the encounter in north america

## *In this Issue*

*I wonder how many people are regular readers of both Christian Century and Youthworker Journal. Not too many, I imagine. With this issue, we of the GOCN can swell the ranks for a moment. The two periodicals have granted permission to reprint recent articles written by folks who have been long time readers of this newsletter and key voices in the ferment around the gospel and Western culture.*

*The first, by Miroslav Volf, reflects on the challenge of living in distinctly Christian ways in today's America. The second (page 5) by Mark Driscoll and Chris Seay, pacesetters in the Young Leaders Network (part of Leadership Network). The way they recast the character of youth ministry speaks a wider vision touching the whole life and witness of the church in North America.*

*This issue also includes—on the inserts and on pp. 3 and 4—notes on important new books that extend the conversation about the missional church and its particular calling at the present time. And finally, the announcement of the next GOCN Consultation (page 4) anticipates an important engagement with the matter of missional implications for church systems.*

*—the Editor*

## Floating Along?

*Miroslav Volf  
Yale University Divinity School  
New Haven, Connecticut*

**I**t was with a dose of suspicion that I started reading the feature article in the New York Times Magazine (Feb. 27) about the Scheibners, a large family intent on creating a well-defined Christian subculture in the midst of what, from its perspective, is a world gone hopelessly awry. The parents

sharply and purposefully at odds with the larger culture that it is hard not to see the Scheibners, conservative and law-abiding though they are, as rebels.” Two further paragraphs in the article set this strange rebelliousness in context:

We have arrived, it seems, at a moment in our history when the most vigorous and coherent counterculture around is the one constructed by conservative

*The “way they practice their faith, puts them so sharply and purposefully at odds with the larger culture that it is hard not to see the Scheibners, conservative and law-abiding though they are, as rebels.”*

shop at consignment stores, home-school their kids, keep the teen pop culture at bay (no Leonardo DiCaprio posters!) and teach traditional family values. I have tended to think of such people as well-intentioned but naive folk who believe that they can replicate for themselves the world of their pious grandparents. Which is my definition of fundamentalism.

I knew, however, that my tendency had done the family an injustice when I read the following sentence in Margaret Talbot’s article. The “way they practice their faith,” she writes, “puts them so

Christians. That sounds odd to many of us—especially, perhaps, to secular liberals, who cherish our own ’60s-inflected notions of what an “alternative lifestyle” should look like. Ever since Theodore Roszak first coined it in 1968, the word “counterculture” has retained its whiff of *patchouli*, its association with free love, long hair and leftwing youth.

Yet today it is conservative Christians like the Scheibners who, more self-consciously than any other large social group, buck the

mainstream notions of what constitutes a fulfilled life. Indeed, much of what Roszak said of the '60s counterculture could be said of them too. It's true that the "patterns" and "mores" they have discovered are not so much new ones as reinvigorated traditional ones. Parent-sanctioned courtship, the merging of school and home, the rejection of peer-group segregation, the moral value of thri-ftall are ideas that, in the United States, last held real sway in the 19th century. But the impatience that people like the Scheibners display with acquisition, their unflinching commitment to putting the groupin-their case, the family-above individual ambition, their rejection of pop culture . . . make them radical in ways that would be recognizable to some '60s counterculturalists too.

For some time now I have been troubled by the seeming disappearance of any robust alternative to the pervasive culture of late capitalism, whether in the church or in the society at large. We are drowning in floods of consumer goods and are drenched in showers of media images. We live in a smorgasbord culture in which everything is interesting and nothing really matters. We have lost a vision of the good life, and our hopes for the future are emptied of moral content. Instead of purposefully walking to determinate places, we are aimlessly floating with random currents. Of course, we do get exercised by issues and engage in bitter feuds over them. But that makes us even less capable of resisting the pull of the larger culture, a resistance that would take shape in formulating and embodying a coherent alternative way of life.

The Scheibners have done what the rest of us seem incapable of doing: they have created an alternative culture. And they have done so in the only way that is responsible-namely, by being "selective separatists." They vote, pay taxes, work in the mainstream world (Mr. Scheibner

is an American Airlines pilot), even do community service; but they also deliberately choose, as Mrs. Scheibner puts it, "not to participate in those parts of the culture that do not bring glory to God." One can disagree with some aspects of the alternative culture that the Scheibners have chosen to create. I am not so sure, for instance, that a father must be the breadwinner in the family and that a mother's place is at home with the children. But instead of complaining about the particulars of a robust fundamentalist counterculture, we should ask ourselves: Why are we seemingly incapable of creating a viable and vibrant alternative?

The inability of many Christians today to live out a coherent set of practices in selective separation from the larger culture also has a cognitive side. If we are neither fundamentalists nor evangelicals, we find it difficult to formulate clearly and bindingly the content of the gospel. A year or so ago, Christianity Today offered a summary of the gospel titled "The Gospel of Jesus Christ: An Evangelical Celebration." It was signed by a broad spectrum of fundamentalist and evangelical leaders. With few excep-

tions, mainline reactions to the document were negative. Commentators found the definition of the gospel too narrow and the document as a whole lacking in theological depth. But could they agree on a more adequate formulation of what is at the heart of the gospel? Mainline churches seem incapable of producing such an alternative-for the same reason, I suspect, that they are incapable of generating a set of robust countercultural practices.

If we can neither state what the gospel is nor have a clear notion of what constitutes the good life, we will more or less simply float along, like jellyfish with the tide. True, a belief in our ability to shape the wider culture is woven into the fabric of our identity. So we complain and we act. But in the absence of determinate beliefs and practices, our criticism and activism will be little more than one more way of floating along. ■

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# BOOKS WORTH NOTING

In addition to the two books highlighted on inserts in this newsletter (*The Continuing Conversion of the Church* by Darrell Guder and *The Essence of the Church* by Craig Van Gelder), the following are worth attention:

*Crossing the Bridge: Church Leadership in a Time of Change*, by Al Roxburgh, with Mike Regele (Percept Group, Inc.).

This book is about leading congregations or denominations through a period of tumultuous transition. It weaves together change theory, a theological vision of the church, and a sense of the cultural and social setting in which today's churches live. Building on the vision of "missional church," this book helps leaders develop a sense of their calling to cultivate congregations in that direction.

The authors say: "We are that generation of leaders who find ourselves right at one of those fulcrum points of history where everything is tipping over into a very different world. We did not ask to be leaders at this time. We just are. It is what we will do with this fact that will shape not only our own leadership, but, even more, the shape of the church and its mission for years to come."

*Life on the Vine: Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit in Christian Community*, by Philip D. Kenneson (InterVarsity Press)

Phil Kenneson combines rich, theologically grounded reflection on Christian life and practice with stunning cultural analysis. After a probing introductory chapter on the necessity and complexity of cultural analysis, Kenneson takes up each of the fruits of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5:22-23. He explores what each fruit means in its biblical context, then investigates how key traits of late modern Western culture inhibit the development and ripening of each fruit. *Life on the Vine* can be read on several levels: as biblical and theological study, as an inspiring work on spirituality, as cultural criticism and as a practical guide to Christian discipleship.

*Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World*, by Robert E. Webber (Baker Book House).

In this provocative book, Robert Webber contends that present-day evangelicalism is a product of modernity. Allegiance to modernity, he argues, must be relinquished to free evangelicals to become more consistently historic. Empowerment to function in our changing culture will be found by adapting the classical faith to our postmodern time. Webber demonstrates the implications in the key areas of church, worship, spirituality, evangelism, nurture, and mission.

*ChurchNext: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry*, by Eddie Gibbs (InterVarsity Press).

Competition from nontraditional and Eastern religions join with the pressures of both modernism and postmodernism to squeeze Christianity. While new church models have sprung up to meet these challenges, they all have strengths and limitations. Eddie Gibbs, well-known church strategist and practitioner, candidly analyzes these models while proposing nine areas in which the church will need to transform to be biblically true to its message and its mission to the world.

## NEW VOLUMES IN THE CHRISTIAN MISSION AND MODERN CULTURE SERIES

Trinity Press International, a division of the Morehouse Group, has announced these new volumes in their series, bringing to twenty-four the number of volumes that have appeared to date.

*The Choices at the Heart of Technology: A Christian Perspective*, by Ruth Conway.

Ruth Conway brings under scrutiny: the deceptive dreams of development, the masculine "voice and structure" of so much technology, the obsession with control, the inadequacies of technologies that fail to take account of the "wholeness" of life and what might constitute "justice," and the impact of information and communication technologies on our ways of relating to one another.

*The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom*, by Alan Kreider.

This book focuses on conversion and Christendom, and the relationship of one to the other. Alan Kreider helps readers think about the meaning of the word Christendom, its character and inner dynamics. He examines Christendom as the product of conversion, the latter understood as changes within categories of belief, belonging, and behavior.

*Power, Truth, and Community in Modern Culture*, by Charles C. West.

To help Christians at the turn of the century discern their mission in today's world and to act in it with confidence and hope, Charles West examines the following areas: the gospel as truth; the gospel as community; the gospel, God's power, and human powers; and Christian hope in a fragmented world. Christians, he says, have a "new work" to do in this world, that is, to inspire it not with ideology but with hope.

*The Clash of Civilizations: An Intrusive Gospel in Japanese Civilization*, by Robert Lee.

Christianity's growth in Japan has slowed dramatically because the culture of western individualism clashes harshly with Japan's collective culture. Lee contends that in order for Christianity to grow, Christians must radically rethink the way theology and the gospel is presented in Japan.

*The Incarnation and the Church's Witness*, by Darrell L. Guder.

Using literary, historical, and social approaches to scripture, Guder challenges today's church to return to an incarnational mission—one based on the life and death of Jesus—rather than thinking of mission as just another church program. ■

## Announcing... a GOCN Consultation

### ***MISSIONAL SYSTEMS Denominations, Congregations and Schools Together in a Missional Context***

October 26-28, 2000  
Thursday Evening through Saturday Lunch  
Techny Towers, Techny, Illinois (Chicago area)

Since the publication of *Missional Church*, a vigorous conversation has developed across North America about the implications of a missional ecclesiology and our engagement with a rapidly changing culture.

Denominational leaders, seminary educators and pastors increasingly ask how we might look at our current systems of church life and reconceive them in a missional way.

During the past three years, the Gospel and Our Culture Network has been engaging the question of the inter-relationship between congregation, denomination, and school as a system. How might such a system be understood and transformed toward a missional engagement with our culture?

At this Consultation, academicians and practitioners from congregations, denominational structures and theological seminaries will come together to find new ways of engaging these missional questions together.

The consultation will be given shape by the work of research team members Al Roxburgh, Pat Keifert, Duncan McIntosh, Mike Regele, Don Troost, and Craig Van Gelder who have been exploring the issues of the consultation in the framework of three particular church systems in three North American locations.

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# A SECOND REFORMATION IS AT HAND

## Why Youth Workers Must Lead the Way

Mark Driscoll  
Mars Hill Fellowship  
Seattle, Washington

Chris Seay  
A new church development  
Houston, Texas

The cultural shift from modernity to postmodernity has created a ton of changes—and spiritual crises—for youth workers.

- You're ministering to the first post-Christian generation in American history—and there are plenty of paradoxes. On one hand "spirituality" is at a high point; there's never been a day in the Western world where you find surveys—like one MTV recently conducted—that say 99.4% of young people believe in God. On the other hand, even with the peak of spirituality, Christianity is at the bottom of the list.

- The teenage world is changing so quickly that we can no longer simply talk about youth culture—we must talk about youth *cultures*. We can no longer talk about a tribe of young

one person can reach all those cutting edges. You can, however, train a whole fleet of missionaries. And they can transform a culture!

### Getting Started

Before this training begins, we first must discuss two major roadblocks—and the factors behind them—that are preventing the church from connecting with young people of the new millennium:

- First, the modern, Western theology and methods we've been using for the last 30 years to train students are becoming less and less effective every day.

### *The modern, church-as-franchise mentality where "one size fits all" no longer exists. . .*

people—we must talk about *tribes* of young people.

- We're not returning to a modern world with its rational, cognitive, scientific, evidentialist, imperialistic understanding of reality. Rather the world is quickly reinventing itself as a global culture with multicultural and technological contexts and defined by artistic, mystical, and supernatural orientations. It represents, in effect, a second reformation for the church.

So rather than worrying about "who's on the cutting edge" we should start recognizing that there are 1.5 billion edges out there—and every one of us lives on one and needs to seek to be faithful there.

### You Must Become Missionaries

The modern, church-as-franchise mentality where "one size fits all" no longer exists, either. Your contexts are all unique—your kids and your situations and your churches and the local communities in which God's planted you all are special.

That's why you—the youth workers of the new century—must become missionaries to your local cultures and communities. You must train and equip your students to reach out to their particular contexts. Because it will be your students—on their own cutting edges—who will do the work, not you. You're not going to live in a youth culture 24 hours a day, seven days a week! And even if you could, no

- Second, the church isn't recognizing characteristics of and changes in the ever-increasing number of youth cultures and tribes out there.

That's why—as we exit modern ways of processing reality—it's crucial to reexamine long-held beliefs and assumptions regarding how we communicate with youths and teach them to live out the gospel.

1. **"Garbage In-Garbage Out."** Many of us learned early on about "garbage in-garbage out." You know—whatever you think, you become. The garbage in-garbage out philosophy assumes that the brain is a sponge that will buy into whatever it's given.

Let's look at the prophet Daniel in this context. He's a teenager (like a good number of Old Testament prophets) who's taken from Israel where everyone knows God, and is placed in Babylon—the most pagan context known to man. There Daniel goes to school and is taught sorcery, cultism, and magic. According to the Bible, Daniel becomes far more adept at these practices than even the people who've taught him. So, if garbage in-garbage out is true—if we become whatever we're exposed to—Daniel would have to have become a pagan priest, right? Right.

But he doesn't.

Despite the wicked practices Daniel learns, he is able to discern truth in the midst of his cultural context. He makes

hard choices: “They want me to eat food God said not to eat—I’m not going to eat it. They want me to bow down, I won’t. They want me to stop praying, I won’t.” Daniel is placed in a situation no youth workers want their students exposed to, but he learns to walk a fine line—and succeeds.

That’s the same missionary tightrope upon which we all must tread in the postmodern culture—and we must train our students to walk on it, too.

**2. “Propositional Truth” Evangelism.** In the modern context, the church ignored biblical narrative and complexity, instead reducing the gospel to a set of propositions—e.g., “All you have to do is pray these statements, ask Jesus to come into your heart, and you’re done.”

But if that’s all the gospel is, then really all we need to do is wage a kind of air campaign, “dropping” propositions on kids—and as long as they buy the propositions, they’re converted. We never really have to meet them or know them.

That’s exactly what a lot of evangelism has resembled in the modern era. And it doesn’t work anymore.

**3. The Gospel of Consumption.** Through youth group activities, we’ve taught kids that life is something you take in and devour—like entertainment. You come to youth group, sit, and consume: Band, skit, drama, food, production. And furthermore, because we’ve taught kids to buy our propositions about the gospel—essentially, just believe what I tell you, okay?”—they take that same mentality of consumption and apply it to what they’re exposed to in secular culture: “Okay, I sit. I consume. I believe. I’m buying what I’m sold.” The result is that our students are helpless—because we haven’t given them interpretive lenses with which to critique what they’re seeing and hearing outside (and inside) the church.

In the same way, the church as a whole has become a business that exists to attract consumers by marketing a product. So the gospel is no longer something you participate in—it’s something you consume. And when it’s a business, it has to compete with the church down the street and fight to draw consumers. That’s a major reason why we’re nowhere near thinking of youth ministry in missiological terms—it’s all about goods and services. Profit and loss. Consumption.

**4. “Worldliness.”** When you enter the average church and ask folks there for their definitions of worldliness, you’ll probably get responses like: smoking, drinking, dancing, R-rated movies, loud music.

The above activities wouldn’t be surprising to hear. But what if you were to suggest things like: debt, greed, divorce, adultery, overworking gluttony.

You might get chased out the sanctuary! Why do so many Christians overeat, overwork, worship athletic teams, run their credit cards into massive debt, throw their kids into day care, and chase the American dream? Because modern society has declared those pursuits admirable values. In turn, we—the Body of Christ—have recreated these idols as Christian values.

When we engage teenagers, we need to give them a better definition of worldliness than simply “not consuming the right products.” Worldliness ought to mean “embodying values contrary to the gospel, contrary to redemption, contrary to community life, grace, and the missionary call of God.” Because you can be a Christian and still be worldly—and thus, ineffective as a missionary to your culture.

**5. “Christian Culture.”** At some point we began proclaiming the notion that there’s a “safe Christian culture” out there—one in which our kids can engage and avoid being tainted by the world. And because we’ve constructed this alternate reality, we’ve told ourselves that Genesis 3 won’t affect them. But when folks like Sandi Patti and Michael English commit adultery and Amy Grant gets a divorce, the illusion of what is “Christian” begins to crumble. The Christian cultural bubble, in effect, bursts.

Why do we insist that we’re the “pure people” offering a “pure culture”? Why do we insist on protecting, insulating, and inoculating our kids against a pagan world? Why do we think we can do so in the first place?

Friends, the pagan world has taken over.

But now isn’t the time to circle our wagons and hide. Instead we must say to our students, “You’re going to engage this real world. You’re going to be exposed to things on the Internet, in film, in music, in school, in life. And if you don’t now, you’re going to leave your family someday, and you’ll make up for lost time then.”

Again we need to offer kids interpretive lenses through which they can understand Scripture and the redemptive narrative of the gospel. Because if we don’t, they’re going to end up being bad missionaries, preaching the wrong gospel, and out to convert others to “Christian culture.”

**6. Western Christianity.** Inhabitants of the Western world are very individualistic, very consumeristic, very rugged, and very entrepreneurial. Much of what we believe is founded on Western thinking and informed by Greek ideals and the history that’s been given to us since Descartes. Therefore *those who’ve come to Christ in a Western context will have a difficult time relating to Christ outside of that context.*

For example, when we do missions, we don’t only import the gospel—we also bring Western values, music, clothing, and culture. And we slam it into the second and third worlds because we believe that our Western way of life is Christianity. A phenomenal arrogance has crept in, to the point where some modern Christians are declaring that, “You can’t critique anything we say or do because we are the people of the truth.”

Here’s one scenerio:

Youth workers rarely touch the Song of Solomon—because we’re Western and we don’t know what to do with passion. It just freaks us out. So we intentionally avoid certain difficult Scriptures and instead turn to topical and therapeutic preaching—things like “Five Points to a Better Self-Esteem,” “How to Empower the Individual,” “How to Make More Money,” on down the line.

But the postmodern kid comes along and says, “No, no,

no. Let's do narrative. Let's do whole life. Let's do honesty. Let's open the Bible."

It's here that a postmodern world view violates some Western cultural values that have crept into the rule book of modern Christianity. What happens next is that modern-oriented Christians often will fight against this critique—thinking they're defending the faith—when, in fact, they're just defending cultural values.

**7. Jesus as "Personal Savior."** We need to reconsider the idea of individual salvation. The reasoning goes: "I think, therefore I am...and it's *all* about me." We think in terms of ourselves before anyone else—not in terms of communities and tribes. But as we read the New Testament, men like Cornelius (Acts 10) are baptized *along with their whole household*. They make a decision together, as a community, to come to Christ. And that's what we're looking at today—a youth-oriented, tribal understanding, interpreted and lived in the context of community. That's because the autonomous, isolated individual doesn't know everything and isn't certain of everything.

So if you're going to work with the teenagers of the new century, you must think in terms of tribes. Because kids don't come to your meetings by themselves—not unless they know Christians who're in the group (and that's their tribe).

Everybody else brings members of their tribes *with them* to youth group. And they're coming as "scouts to check out the land." If they like it, the next week you see a few more members of the tribe. And in the end, kids tend to make decisions for Christ—from what we've seen in our contexts—together. You don't get individuals walking down front. You get communities forming and dialoging, and they come to a sort of group consensus.

**8. "Sacred and Secular."** We no longer can safely divide the world into things that are sacred or things that are secular. We can't say, "This is sacred, so it's safe and it's okay; this is secular, so it's not." That kind of assumption is based, again, on our modern, Western version of Christianity. We must look at things in terms of what can be redeemed and what cannot be redeemed.

## Redeeming the Culture

I was invited by some Christian high school students to preach at their chapel service a few years ago. I arrived, we sang some worship songs, and then, before I preached, I showed the Smashing Pumpkins video "Bullet with Butterfly Wings" onscreen and kicked on the sound system:

*Despite all my rage I am still just a rat in a cage/  
then someone will say what is lost can never be  
saved...tell me I'm the chosen one/tell me there's  
no other one/Jesus was an only son for you/and  
I still believe that I cannot be saved.*

Know what the whole student body did? *Sang it*. These Christian high school kids sang those words better than they sang the worship songs. Much to the dismay of the administration, the students were riveted. But that wasn't a gimmick—I wasn't done.

My chapel sermon was walking the students through that song—interpreting that video as critically and carefully as we do scripture. It was an incredible discussion. We talked camera angles, thematic elements, the lyrics, world view. And all of a sudden, kids are making quite astute observations: "Yeah, they're singing in a pit, and everybody's covered in mud. It seems to be a metaphor for sin—and there's no way out"; "It's hopeless, there's no redemption"; "The song's reference to Job seems to say we suffer unjustly, mysteriously—we don't know why."

Now I'm looking at these kids who previously were auditioning for extras in "Beavis & Butt-Head," and now they're making very logical arguments and statements.

But even though it was clear this exercise helped the students think through the mysteries of the faith, the administration wasn't happy with my video choice. They said it exposed the students to wrong things—except for the fact that they already knew all the words.

Here's the point: Let's bring reality to bear and realize that the culture is upon us. Our kids are already in it. It's not a matter of needing to rescue the kids from the culture—it's a matter of rescuing the lens through which they interpret culture. It's a matter of them living in a community, discerning the truth, and redeeming what aspects of the culture can be redeemed.

You may have to start by doing a lot of activities offsite—at coffeehouses, at record stores, wherever. You may need to move your ministry outside of the church walls. But by all means, move!

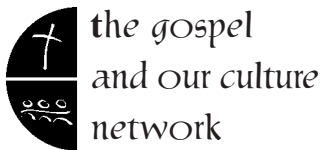
## We Have to Look Deeper

There's a Goth girl in my church—you know, white face, black clothing, red lipstick, lots of jewelry. She went to hear an evangelist speak at a friend's youth group, and this guy—in the middle of his talk—looked at her and said, "I can see a spirit of depression in you. I can see a spirit of suicide and despair, and God can deliver you."

She went up to him afterward and asked, "Why did you say that?" He replied, "Well, just look at you." She's like, "Really? That's all it takes? To interpret my whole existence? Just 3 seconds, in light of Almighty God, because I'm wearing black."

This young woman is a Christian, she lives in the women's ministry house at my church, she leads a small group, she's going through foundational theology, and she wants to go to Bible college so she can study to be a youth pastor. She's a wonderful woman of God, very mature in her faith. Regarding her appearance, she's explained to me that it's simply an artistic expression. But still, a lot of us would look at her and think, "Wow. I know where that kid's at."

But the kids are saying back to you, "Maybe you don't." As culture continues to fragment and become increasingly pluralistic, entertaining the notion that "we're the authority figures, we've been educated, we can interpret and decode you, and we can give you what you need" is great arrogance. Kids see it really as a lack of affection because we're not living in their world—we're not understanding the



soil that they're growing from. That's why we misinterpret so much of what they're expressing.

### **The Wrong Gospel?**

There are Christians—youth workers, too—who insist that the world sees the gospel as irrelevant. That it doesn't relate to real life. That's certainly not an unfamiliar argument.

But here's something that perhaps you haven't heard. Maybe the gospel's irrelevant to most people today—especially to teens—*because we aren't giving them the gospel at all.*

Maybe before we ask, "How do we engage the culture so we can put the gospel in the culture?" we should ask, "What is the gospel?"

What is truly the gospel—the historical gospel? Not the "me and Jesus," personal individualistic gospel. But what is the totality of it? The whole story of what God is doing, has done, and will do?

Because if it's true that the gospel spans from perfection in Genesis I and 2 to perfection in Revelation 21 and 22, and that it involves sin and chaos and families and nations and people and life and death and sex and passion and food and the whole of human existence—and our lives are part of the great story that God is telling—then to say "the gospel isn't relevant" is absolute foolishness.

That's exactly why, when we try to sell Jesus as a "personal savior" to a teen world that's rapidly becoming holistic and community-based, we hear responses like, "I don't need a personal savior." *That's* when the gospel becomes irrelevant—because God is no longer big enough. God isn't Lord over all anymore. He's not involved in all that we are any longer.

We don't talk about the whole of life because—you've heard it before—"the supermarket does food, the politicians do politics, Hollywood does entertainment, and the church does the soul." We're left with a disembodied little chunk.

Historic Christianity—the entirety of God's story—must take the lead in our minds and hearts in this new century. If it does, we'll see some incredible things happen. But if we stick with a modern, western Christianity, we're going nowhere. It's time to say, "No more."

It's time to say, "The gospel is everything—the whole story of God for whole people."

It's time to tell the truth. ■

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