

Book Reviews

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Why the Rest Hates the West by Meic Piese (InterVarsity Press)

Why the Rest Hates the West fills two important needs. First, it provides a helpful historical analysis of how Western culture (primarily North America and Western Europe) has evolved in ways that put it at odds with non-Westerners around the world. Second, it provides a critique of Western culture that avoids the extremes of both political and patriotic correctness. In fact, more than anything else, this balanced and well-articulated approach by Meic Pearse makes the book worth your time.

What will make this book especially helpful for the average Baptist is seeing how much of anti-Western resentment is grounded in assumptions that we (North Americans and Western Europeans) have rejected traditional morality and yet still assume a natural superiority over nations and cultures who aren't as "civilized" as we see ourselves. Understanding that point might soften the hearts of those of us who also place a high value on personal and societal morality yet still find it easy to harbor anger and resentment toward nations and cultures that reject America, sometimes violently.



What are you reading that other Texas Baptists would find helpful? Send suggestions and reviews to books@baptiststandard.com.

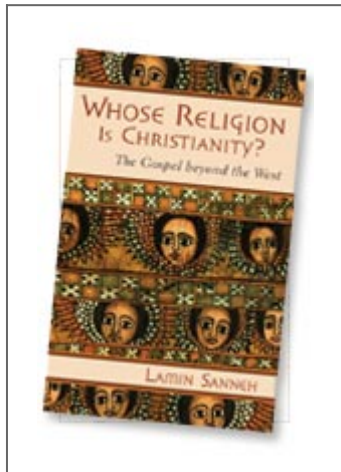
Matt Cook, pastor

First Baptist Church

Rosebud

Whose Religion is Christianity?: The Gospel Beyond the West by Lamin Sanneh (Eerdmans)

Written in an engaging, readable style, this compact text introduces the phenomenon of "non-Western Christianity," which promises to galvanize and revolutionize our religion as we know it.



It shows how the lamentable decline of faith among Westerners has been paralleled, intriguingly enough, by an impressive rise of faith in the Southern hemisphere. Concentrating on his native Africa, Sanneh issues some fairly radical proposals and makes some unavoidable suggestions for

how Western Christians might learn from, say, Nigerian Anglicanism and Ghanaian charismatic movements. Highly recommended for all readers interested in discerning Christianity's future.

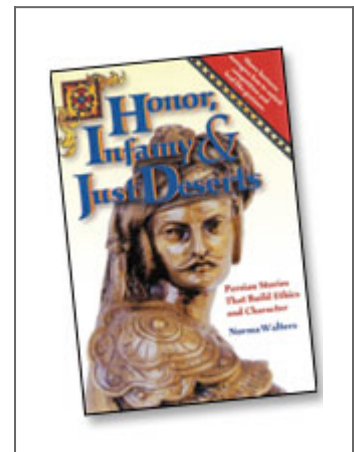
Darren J. N. Middleton,

associate professor of theology and literature

Texas Christian University

Fort Worth

Honor, Infamy & Just Deserts: Persian Stories That Build Ethics and Character by Norma Walters (Brown Books)



Honor, Infamy & Just Deserts is a collection of stories that take the reader from the rise of the Persian Empire through its decline. The stories stretch from 700 to 330 B.C., giving insight into the lives of the rulers and military leaders of the time—their personal interactions, their political intrigues, their gods and their decision-making processes. People who are interested in ancient classical history and literature will find a treasure in this book. The average reader (I include myself in this category) may find the story plots difficult to follow and the application at the end of each story somewhat a "stretch."

For Christians who have studied the Bible, these stories provide a rich understanding of cultures that were intertwined with the Israelite people through prophecy and political processes, but of which the Bible gives only brief glimpses. The reader gains a better understanding of their influence on the Israelites.

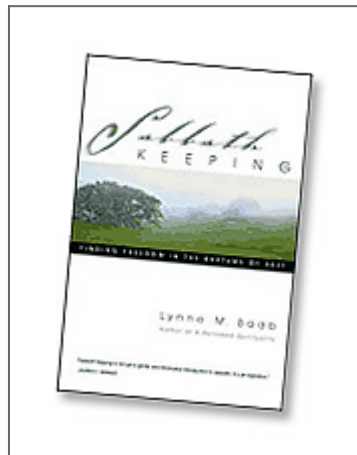
Margaret Hunt Rice, executive director

Student Services and Regional Outreach

University of Houston-Victoria

Victoria

Sabbath Keeping by Lynne M. Baab (InterVarsity Press)



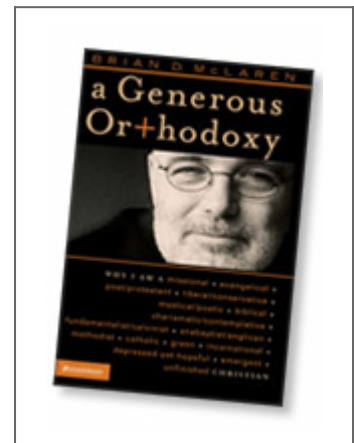
Reading *Sabbath Keeping* reminded me just how busy and stressed people are and convinced me that I need to “keep a Sabbath.” Baab has kindled within me a willing spirit for a day of rest, though the flesh remains weak. Her practical suggestions may help you to carve out at least a small block of time where we slow down and wait on God.

David Morgan, pastor

Trinity Baptist Church

Harker Heights

***A Generous Orthodoxy: Why I am a missional+evangelical+ post/
protestant+liberal/ conservative+mystical/
poetic+biblical+charismatic/ contemplative+
fundamentalist/calvinist+ anabaptist/
anglican+methodist+catholic+green+incarnational+ depressed-yet-
hopeful+emergent+unfinished CHRISTIAN*** by Brian McLaren
(Zondervan)



In the great tradition of Augustine, Thomas Merton and Holden Caulfield, Brian McLaren writes his confession of sorts as he seeks to explain what “a generous orthodoxy” looks like in his own journey. While sitting down to a treatise on varying atonement theories is not high on my list, I am a sucker for a person's own journey (even if it includes varying atonement theories), and McLaren does an excellent job in sharing his spiritual journey in a way that is both accessible to a wide audience and littered with the kind of simple profundity that keeps you awake at night. He writes with the honesty of Anne Lamott and the self-deprecating humor of a wise comedian, and I find myself cheering and gnashing my teeth within the same chapter, but always thinking-which makes for a great read.

Erin Conaway, associate pastor

South Main Baptist Church

Houston

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