

# 2nd Opinion: Sermons, storytelling & novels

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Bill Moyers, the ol' East Texas boy who did good, interviewed novelist John Grisham recently on his PBS program *Bill Moyers' Journal*. After Grisham talked about his storytelling ability, Moyers asked if he had heard a lot of sermons.

Grisham said he had heard them all, "from the long sermon on Sunday morning to the revivalist, tent crusades ... where the whole town turned up. It was kind of exciting at times and boring at times. But I've heard a lot of sermons."

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Then Moyers asked the question seldom asked on national television, "Were you born again?"

"Sure," Grisham replied, "When I was 8 years old, I felt the call to become a Christian. I felt the need to. I talked to my parents. I talked to my pastor. And I accepted Christ when I was just a little small boy. That was very much a part of growing up."

Moyers wanted to know how that experience or moment had played out in Grisham's life and work.

“Once you make that conversion, you are and always will be something different,” Grisham explained.

His books are popular not only because they are well-written, but also because they are exceptionally clean. You can give his books to your 15-year-old son or your 80-year-old mother and not be embarrassed. Grisham shared this idea when I heard him speak in Waco years ago. (Grisham loves baseball, and the Baylor baseball coach knew him in Mississippi and promised he could sit on the bench for a Baylor game if he would come. He came, he spoke, but the game was rained out.)

“My books are exceptionally clean by today’s standards,” Grisham said. “I wrote a sex scene one time and showed it to my wife. And she burst out laughing. She said, ‘What do you know about sex?’”

Moyers, himself a Baptist, said, “Spoken like a true Baptist.”

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