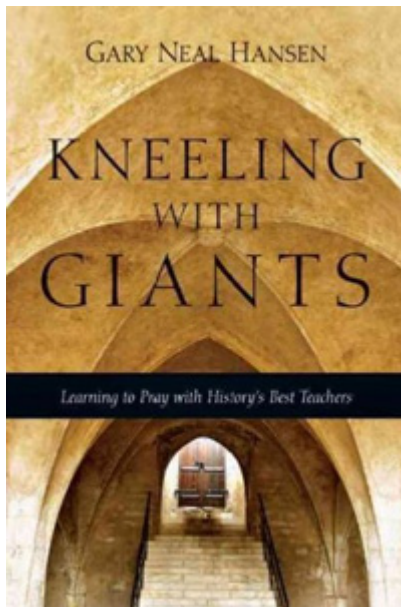


Book Reviews: Kneeling with Giants

March 8, 2013

[*Kneeling with Giants: Learning to Pray with History's Best Teachers*](#)
by Gary Neal Hansen (IVP Books)



Gary Neal Hansen has written a useful study of prayer in his book, *Kneeling With Giants: Learning to pray with History's Best Teachers*. This great tool takes readers all the way back to St. Benedict (c. 480-550) and ends with Andrew Murray (1823-1917). The book focuses on 10 "giants of prayer," and it is divided into four sections dealing with the language of prayer, Scripture in prayer, conversational prayers and asking God for help.

Hansen provides two pieces based on the Psalms aimed to help any reader with his or her personal prayer life. One is a guide for listening. He offers insight into reading the Psalms as God speaks in the present, past, relating to others, community and the world. The second is a great list of questions to help study the prayers in the book of Psalms.

The author also provides two appendices that direct use of the book in a small-group setting or putting prayer into practice. Here the author gives practical help to apply the truth of each chapter to your own life and schedule.

Kneeling with the Giants challenged me in several ways. It gave me a

greater appreciation of the prayer roots in the early church. It was refreshing to see new ways to pray. *Kneeling with Giants* is a good tool for anyone who would like a challenge for his or her prayer life.

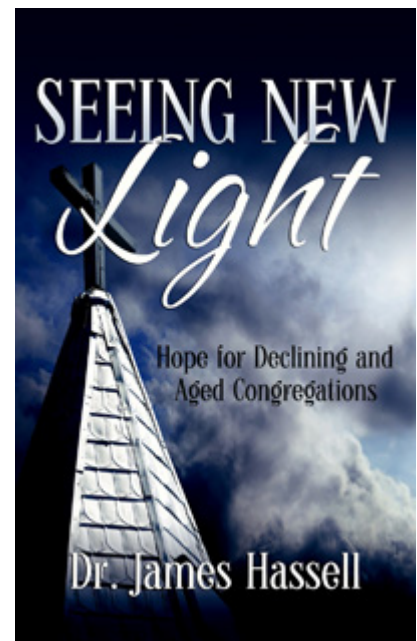
Leo Smith, retired executive director

Texas Baptist Men

Alvin

***Seeing New Light* by James Hassell (Austin Brothers Publishing)**

The subtitle of James Hassell's book expresses his heart's desire—to provide “hope for declining and aged congregations.” Hassell, preaching pastor of Agape Baptist Church in Fort Worth, tells about his young daughter's reaction when she met members of the congregation at a reception for the new pastor and his family: “This is a church full of Pee-paws.” Hassell offers helpful suggestions on ways to bring new life and light into places “where Mee-maw and Pee-paw go to church.”



He presents a partnership model of Christians engaging together in cross-cultural ministry. Although Hassell's approach is more descriptive than prescriptive, he presents a model built on three ideas—renewal, reconciliation and resolve. Renewal involves taking seriously the call to follow Jesus, even if that means letting go of a “fetish for church growth” and instead joining God in what he may already be doing in a community. Reconciliation includes sensitivity to structures and systems that exclude

some people from worship or ministry. Finally, Hassell calls on churches to resolve to be relevant and rediscover their calling.

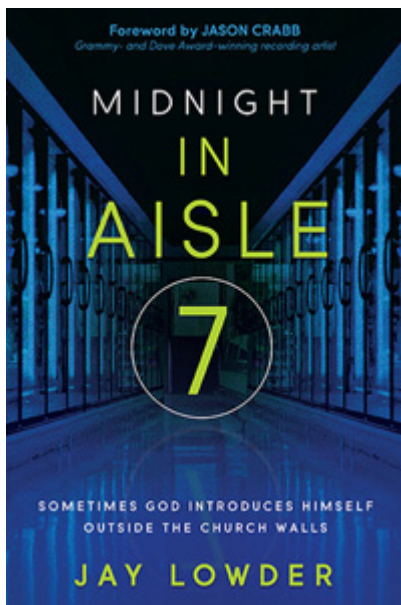
For Christians who think the moment of opportunity has passed for their church to make a difference, he offers encouragement: “Relevance for your church has nothing to do with catchy music, state-of-the-art facilities or big extravaganzas. It is all about loving people and being willing to make a difference in their lives. This can be done by any believer in any church.”

Ken Camp, managing editor

Baptist Standard

Plano

[Midnight in Aisle 7: Sometimes God Introduces Himself Outside the Church Walls](#) by Jay Lowder (Passio)



The front of *Midnight in Aisle 7* seems more like the cover of a riveting mystery than one classified under spiritual growth. However, Jay Lowder’s book does contain riveting stories, true ones of God at work “in the most unexpected places through the most unlikely encounters at the most unforeseen times.”

The author, a native Texan who travels across the United States telling of the Father’s love, honestly shares events from his own life, some of which

he's not proud. He pulls other moments from the experiences of friends, family, acquaintances and those who simply crossed his path. Each is compelling. Each is unique. Each is a picture of God at work. But each does not have a happy ending, because each person makes an individual choice.

The moving tales compel the reader to turn page after page to learn what happens. From the beginning story of his late-night spur-of-the-moment visit to a historic jail to the final chapter chronicling his childhood memory in the path of the deadly 1979 Wichita Falls tornado, Lowder illustrates the urgency of salvation for ourselves and for everyone we meet.

Kathy Robinson Hillman, 2nd vice president

Baptist General Convention of Texas

Waco