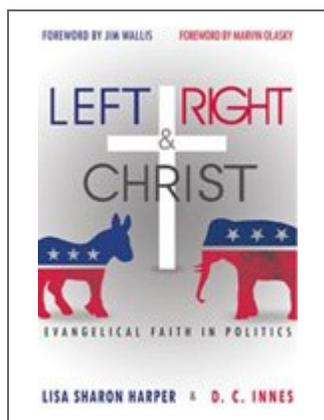


Book Reviews: Left, Right & Christ

January 20, 2012

[*Left, Right & Christ: Evangelical Faith in Politics*](#) by Lisa Sharon Harper & D.C. Innes (Russell Media)



In a country where partisanship has devolved into demonization of opponents and where politics has become a full-contact blood sport, two committed evangelicals offer some hope. They tackle the issues that divide the nation with the intention of helping readers understand them from a distinctly Christian perspective. They succeed in part.

Lisa Sharon Harper, director of mobilization at Sojourners, writes from the perspective of a liberal Democrat. D.C. Innes, associate professor of politics at The King's College in New York and an ordained minister in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, examines issues from the viewpoint of a conservative Republican.

On the positive side of the ledger, both writers make clear their belief that neither political party offers perfect solutions and neither should demand the allegiance a Christian owes only to Christ and his kingdom. Furthermore, the authors model the way people with strong Christian

convictions can come to drastically different conclusions about political issues, state those views forcefully, but still view those who disagree with them as brothers and sisters in Christ—albeit misguided spiritual kin.

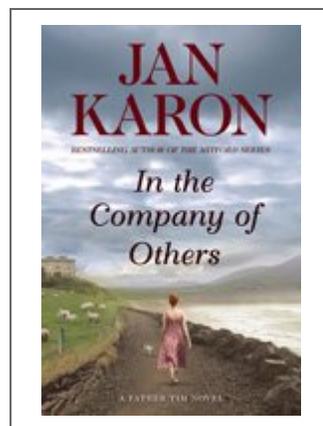
On the negative side, the writers offer no middle ground. They represent absolute polar opposites and offer what might be considered false dichotomies. But maybe that's intentional. The book bills itself as a conversation-starter. Perhaps it is the reader's role to discover the sensible middle between the extremes.

Ken Camp, managing editor

Baptist Standard

Plano

[In the Company of Others](#) by Jan Karon (Penguin)



In this "Father Tim" novel, bestselling author Jan Karon takes the beloved Episcopal priest Timothy Kavanagh and his talented wife, Cynthia, to Ireland, the land of his ancestors. But what is supposed to be a holiday celebrating Cynthia's 64th birthday in a bed-and-breakfast becomes a stay fraught with intrigue, broken promises, bitter feuds and family secrets.

The cast of characters includes two brothers who grew up at nearby Cathamore, a massive family estate. The elder Paddy gains the major

inheritance, while Liam receives one valuable painting and makes his living running Lough Arrow Lodge with his wife, Anna. When the painting goes missing, a feud comes to light. Cynthia and Timothy hope to discover answers to the century-old conflict in an old journal.

As Father Tim unravels the mystery, he leads Liam's alcoholic mother to recover her faith tattered by lost love. And he shows his new flock how to put aside bitterness and stubbornness to say, "I'm sorry." While Kavanagh may be retired from the church, he proves once again that a pastor will always be a pastor as he teaches lessons of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Kathy Robinson Hillman,

former president

Woman's Missionary Union of Texas

Waco