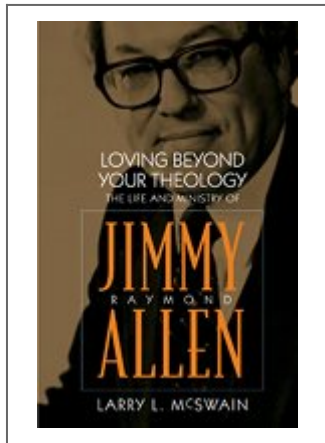


Book Reviews: Loving Beyond Your Theology

November 12, 2010

[Loving Beyond Your Theology: The Life and Ministry of Jimmy Raymond Allen](#) by Larry McSwain (Mercer University Press)



The book is an excellent model for needed biographies of a previous generation who charted new territory in social ethics. Jimmy Allen earned his doctorate in Christian ethics from famed T.B. Maston at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Throughout his distinguished career, he headed the Texas Baptist Christian Life Commission, led First Baptist Church in San Antonio, served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention and directed the SBC Radio-Television Commission. He remains an elder statesman of the Baptist movement.

Larry McSwain pulls together details of Allen's life, drawing upon personal interviews with Allen, interviews of those close to him across the span of his ministry, news stories and personal papers.

One suggestion—read the first chapter, “The Story of a Prophetic Priest,” and chapter 11, “New Geography, New Ministries, New Leadership,” as you begin to explore this book. The two chapters form the parentheses

between which the rest of the story evolves.

Allen's friends will enjoy this book as they remember themselves in and around some of the contexts McSwain covers.

Those who never have heard of Allen will find themselves discovering some good things that went on among Baptists in the last several decades because of Jimmy Allen.

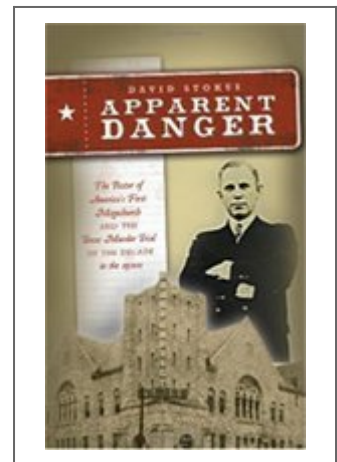
Bill Tillman

T.B. Maston Chair of Ethics

Logsdon Seminary

Abilene

Apparent Danger: The Pastor of America's First Megachurch and the Texas Murder Trial of the Decade in the 1920s by David Stokes
(Bascom Hill Books)



J. Frank Norris appears in Texas and Baptist history as a colorful and controversial character—political activist, architect of the original megachurch and the first preacher to own both a newspaper and radio station.

Intelligent, charismatic and a gifted orator, Norris entered Baylor to study for ministry. As a student, he bore major responsibility for the resignation of President Oscar Henry Cooper and seemingly developed an appetite for taking on the powerful. After graduating from Southern Baptist Seminary as valedictorian, Norris made a brief stop in Dallas before moving to the pulpit at First Baptist Church in Fort Worth.

Fiercely anti-Catholic and unashamedly anti-liquor, Norris wielded power. Some believed he skirted the law. He was indicted but acquitted of arson and refused to pay taxes on nonreligious church income. Involvement in city politics ultimately led him to shoot and kill the unarmed Dexter Elliot Chipps in his church office on July 17, 1926. Reporters from around the country flocked to the trial in what most thought would yield an easy conviction.

In *Apparent Danger*, David Stokes meticulously draws a portrait of Norris. He focuses on the events that led up to that fateful moment and the trial that ultimately diminished Norris' influence. Stokes chooses the title from the legal doctrine "apparent danger" that was frequently used in early Texas as an effective murder defense.

Apparent Danger doesn't read like history. Instead, Stokes has made history read like a dramatic and intriguing mystery.

Kathy Robinson Hillman, former president

Woman's Missionary Union of Texas

Waco

[Five Ministry Killers and How to Defeat Them](#) by Charles Stone
(Bethany House Publishers)



Charles Stone pulls back the curtain on the real-life struggles of God's servants that seem oblivious to most church members in his book, *Five Ministry Killers and How to Defeat Them*. Stone uses studies from Barna Research, LifeWay Research and *Christianity Today* to set forth what he sees to be the ministry killers pastors need to beware of.

Stone becomes transparent as he describes his own struggles with these ministry killers and how he has learned to cope. He has filled each chapter with illustrations, dialogue with pastors, humor and probing questions for the reader to ponder.

The value of this book is that the author has been there. He not only shares the ministry killers, but also very clearly sets forth a way to defeat each one.

One highlight is his dialogue with his wife, Sherryl. Her insights and counsel are well worth your careful attention.

Ministry Killers will encourage, enlighten and strengthen each person who reads it. I highly recommend this as a book for every minister, minister's wife and family to read and keep as a reference for your journey in serving our Lord.

It will bless you and equip you to recognize and defeat the ministry killers that you will face.

Leo Smith, executive director

Texas Baptist Men

Dallas