

Reviews: Christian renewal, spiritual practices and a children's book

October 19, 2017

The Pietist Option: Hope for the Renewal of Christianity

By Christopher Gehrz and Mark Pattie III (InterVarsity Press)

In a time when the assumptions about American evangelicalism are being questioned and re-evaluated, Bethel University professor Christopher Gehrz and Salem Covenant Church pastor Mark Pattie III offer their own vision for how the church can find renewal—*The Pietist Option*.



As the title suggests, *The Pietist Option* makes the case that the church's future lies in its past. Just as the church benefited in the 17th century from a movement of believers who prized Spirit-led devotion to God and church unity over doctrinal purity, Gehrz and Pattie argue that embracing such

thinking would benefit the church and its mission in an age when we often are known more for our bickering and hypocrisy than our love.

Drawing upon both the history and the principles of the original Pietists, the authors make a compelling case for learning the lessons of the saints who came before us and applying their values to the church's present situation. For anyone interested in the direction of the American evangelical church, *The Pietist Option* offers an inviting, charming vision for reaching into our past to shape our future.

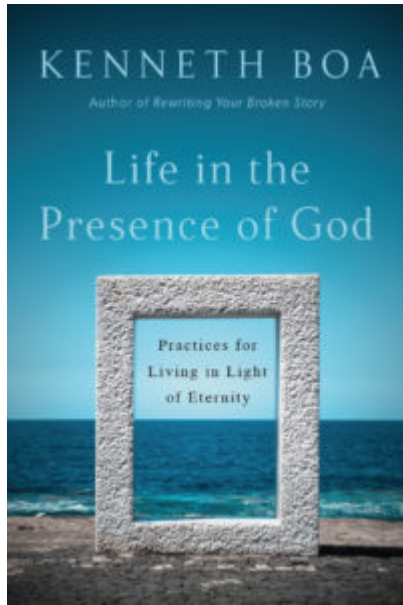
Daniel Camp, pastor

Shiloh Baptist Church

Crawford

Life in the Presence of God: Practices for Living in Light of Eternity

By Kenneth Boa (InterVarsity Press)



In his latest book, Kenneth Boa, president of Reflection Ministries and author of *Rewriting Your Broken Story* and *Faith Has Its Reasons*, deals with the individual practicing the presence of God. Boa writes: “Knowing God and living in his presence is the best thing that can happen to us; it’s life-giving, not draining.”

The book is divided into two sections. Section One, consisting of four chapters, provides the biblical basis. Section Two deals with “How to Practice His Presence.” The first chapter in the second section deals with training, and each of the seven chapters that follow in that section highlight some action required in order to get back to what God has for his people. “Repenting of Sin” is a good example.

Each chapter ends with Scripture, and the book includes a dynamic bibliography. This is a very rich book—a wonderful addition to the library of every Bible student, whether layman, staff member or pastor.

Skip Holman, minister of discipleship

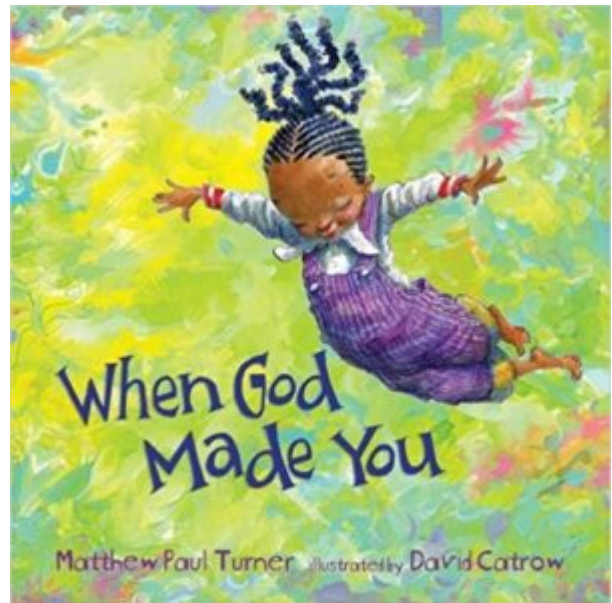
Northeast Baptist Church

San Antonio

When God Made You

By Matthew Paul Turner, illustrated by David Catrow (WaterBrook)

Matthew Paul Turner writes his delightful *When God Made You* for girls and boys ages 3-7. David Catrow's colorful illustrations add light brightness to the rhyming account of God's one-of-a-kind creation—you! The book, which is a "Best Seller in Children's Christian Social Issues Fiction," affirms the creation and creativity of each individual.



The story begins with a young girl nestled in an oversized chair reading while baby brother or sister plays nearby on the floor. A dog and cat peer over her shoulder as she reads, "You, you, when God made YOU ... a you unlike anyone else ever known."

Among other adventures, the child's imaginary journey takes her out the window, biking across the town, painting on the sidewalk, skateboarding through the countryside and spinning in the sky. All the while, poetry describes God's special plan, including, "A you who views others as sisters and brothers and lives by three words: love one another."

Although the reader is a girl, the book also appeals to boys. While girls are likely drawn to the dancing sequence, boys particularly enjoy the skating/bicycling/skateboarding section. The story closes with the child returning to her chair, reading the couplet, "'Cause when God made you, all of heaven was beaming. Over YOU, God was smiling and already dreaming."

Chandler Joy Hillman, age 4, with her grandmother

Kathy Robinson Hillman, former president

Baptist General Convention of Texas

Waco