



Letters to My Unborn Children
Meditations on the Silent Grief of Miscarriage
Shawn T Collins

- Quill House Press, 2012
- \$11.00 (no UK price given) Pb 100pp
- ISBN 978-1-933794-58-7

Miscarriage is unexpected before it happens, frequently unexplainable when it occurs and rarely discussed afterwards. Yet there can be little worse than losing a child.

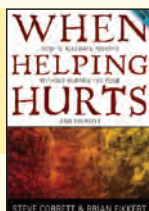
Mothers and fathers will often grieve in different ways, and sympathy can be primarily directed to the mother, which can leave fathers with less support. This book is written by a father, and while it touches his wife's feelings it is primarily about the reality of paternal grief.

Shawn Collins wrote letters to his children after three of them miscarried. It was his way of

saying 'hello' and 'goodbye'.

It is a short book, comprising letters to each child miscarried, two laments and a longer letter to all his children, including his three living children. Collins describes how the first miscarriage was about shock, the second about a shattered worldview and the third about despair. This book does not offer simplistic prescriptive solutions to painful and complex questions but will help people (especially fathers) legitimise the grief process and roller coaster of emotions from miscarriage.

Philippa Taylor is CMF Head of Public Policy



When Helping Hurts
How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor... and Yourself
Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert

- Moody, 2012
- £10.00 Pb 274pp
- ISBN 9780802457066

Who thinks Christians should help the poor? Most of us. Who has given much thought to how we should do that? Not many of us.

When Helping Hurts explores what it really means to be poor and demonstrates that churches and individual Christians often have faulty assumptions about the causes of poverty. Good intentions may result in strategies that do more harm than good. The book explains why the combination of the 'God-complex' of the rich, the inferiority complex of the poor and an over-simplistic view of poverty is an explosive combination which can cause harm and hurt in all directions. A path forward is found, not through providing resources to the poor, but by

walking with them in humble relationships. The authors use case studies and stories to illustrate ways to help the poor without hurting them, and give questions at the end of each chapter.

This is the most thought-provoking book I have read for some time. It has challenged my thinking about the ways we serve the poor both here and overseas. It takes a hard look at short-term mission abroad and also at Church projects at home. Although it asks some tough questions, it gives some practical and inspiring answers. Everyone interested in serving the poor should read this book – so that should mean all of us.

Vicky Lavy is CMF Head of International Ministries



Honouring Personhood in Patients
The added value of chaplaincy in general practice
Ross Bryson

- Whole Person Health Trust, 2012
- £7.00 Pb 72 pp
- ISBN 978-0-9544644-6-2

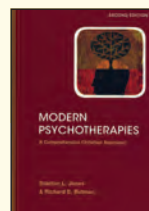
Enter here and enjoy a book that provides a unique insight into practical whole person care with an emphasis on patients' spiritual needs. The contributors offer wise consideration of spirituality as an integral component of persons and describe its place in holistic care based on extensive experience.

The role of the community healthcare chaplain is defined by a distinctive combination of eight 'key functions' and the personal qualities needed for their practice. Separate chapters describe the difference between spiritual care and counselling and the function of a prayer clinic in

general practice - all set in the reality of urban clinical care.

The evaluation of such a service and its difficulty is tackled head-on using data from research on the impact of a community healthcare chaplain. From qualitative studies, spiritual care emerges as an important component of treatment, and a person's story as the centre of the health care process. Above all, these convey the deeply healing effect of spiritual care delivered with Christian understanding and compassion in the setting of holistic medical practice.

Richard Vincent is an Emeritus Professor at Brighton and Sussex



Modern Psychotherapies
A Comprehensive Christian Appraisal
Stanton L Jones and Richard E Butman

- IVP, 2011
- \$32 (no UK price given) Pb 496pp
- ISBN-10: 0-8308-1775-1
- ISBN-13: 978-0-8308-1775-7

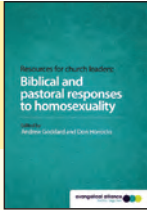
Have you ever wanted to read a Christian critique of all the major forms of psychotherapy – psychoanalysis, cognitive behavioural, person-centred, experiential, family therapy? This is the definitive version. Each school of psychotherapy is described, along with its philosophical assumptions and its models of psychotherapy, personality, health and abnormality.

The authors, who are from Wheaton Christian College, USA, state that all therapies contain some elements which are compatible with a Christian worldview and other elements which conflict with it. They do not believe that there is a specific 'Christian' form of psychotherapy, but they enumerate 18 criteria for

'a comprehensive theoretical approach to Christian counselling'. They believe that Christians should be eclectic and transform secular psychotherapies to conform to Christian revelation. As for Christian counsellors, they are called to show ten virtues – which may at times be in conflict with the approach of their secular colleagues – compassion, servanthood, accountability, transparency, love, stewardship, holiness, wisdom, integrity and a sense of community.

This is a classic which Christian counsellors, psychotherapists and clinical psychologists would do well to have access to.

Dominic Beer is a retired psychiatrist in London



Biblical and Pastoral Response to Homosexuality

Resources for Church Leaders
Andrew Goddard and Don Horrocks (eds)

- Evangelical Alliance, 2012
- £7.00 Pb 144pp
- ISBN 9780957244801

This very useful resource is an update of the EA's 1998 report *Faith Hope and Homosexuality* (FHH). It will be of value to CMF members as well as the target audience of church leaders, not least for its extensive bibliography (which includes CMF publications). It aims to provide a contemporary theological and sociological commentary on ten affirmations restated from the original twelve of FHH. The final half of the book comprises nine case scenarios, all illustrating graphically the practical issues arising from the tensions between the affirmations, encouraging 'evangelical congregations to welcome and accept sexually active lesbians and gay men' and

stating the belief that 'both habitual homosexual activity without repentance and public promotion of such activity are inconsistent with church membership' (p103).

One of the case discussions is on Oliver and William, a gay couple in a civil partnership, who have an adopted handicapped child. Oliver has recently made a profession of faith and the couple want to have a dedication service for their child. The book does not duck the issue on advising how the authors believe a church leader should respond.

Trevor Stammers is Programme Director in Bioethics and Medical Law, St Mary's University College, London



Engaging with Martyn Lloyd-Jones

The life and legacy of 'the Doctor'
Andrew Atherstone and David Ceri Jones

- Apollos, 2012
- £16.99 Pb 376pp
- ISBN 978 1 84474 553 1

This is not a biography. Eleven academic historians and theologians have meticulously researched and copiously annotated this well written work.

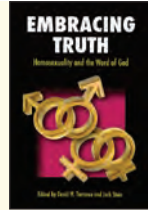
It concentrates on 'several areas of his theology and legacy that remain hotly contested'. His links to the inter-war Calvinist resurgence and to Wales, his views on revival, the charismatic controversy, the demise of preaching, ministerial education, fundamentalism, Barthian theology, Roman Catholicism, the Anglican secession crisis and the Protestant past are all examined.

Of particular resonance is Lloyd Jones's reminder: 1. That humanity's ultimate need is not

that he is sick, unhappy, poor or uneducated, but being in rebellion against God and consequently under the wrath of God. 2. That the Bible is God's announcement of how, through Christ's death on the cross, he has provided a means of forgiveness and reconciliation. 3. That the primary task of church and preacher is to proclaim this message.

At a time when churches are again being torn apart by conflict, Lloyd Jones's view that doctrinally pure churches as a vital precursor to religious revival, will again be scrutinised.

John Wenham works for the Royal Flying Doctor Service based in Broken Hill, Australia



Embracing Truth

Homosexuality and the Word of God
David W Torrance and Jock Stein (eds)

- Handsell Press, 2012
- £6.95 Pb 256pp
- ISBN 978-1-871828-74-0

This is an interdisciplinary collection of essays with a Scottish flavour which grapples boldly with arguably the most contentious social and theological issue of our day.

For many the subject is inherently confused and confusing. The opening essay by Andrew Goddard, offering an outstanding survey of the current state of play in this esoteric field, is therefore welcome.

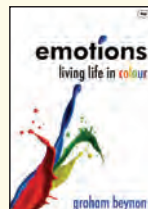
There follows an array of perceptive essays by a range of academics and experienced pastors, including several notable Scottish contributors. The overall impression is one

of convincing reasons to stand for truth against prevailing social and cultural forces which would seek to undermine the natural order.

Popular readers will find some essays more readable and relevant than others. However, this is an excellent general resource which provides a serious overview of the debate as it currently stands. There is also much for those who wish to engage more deeply.

The paperback edition has almost sold out but it is available on Kindle.

Don Horrocks is head of public affairs at the Evangelical Alliance



Emotions

Living life in colour
Graham Beynon

- Hart Publishing, 2011
- £ 8.99 Pb 176 pp
- ISBN 978-1-84474-589-0

Emotions are 'unimportant', or so I once famously remarked as a somewhat naive medical student, probably in reaction to what I perceived as excesses in the opposite direction. God soon disabused me of this notion through a variety of interesting circumstances, but this book would have been really helpful at the time. Emotions may not be everything, but they are certainly not nothing.

Graham Beynon's easy and accessible writing style is matched by biblically-balanced content, to help us think through the important issue of our feelings. Through ten chapters he establishes some basics about emotions, leading on to a consideration of various practical issues.

In addition to focusing our attention on Jesus as the perfect man, with feelings as God intended, he also addresses areas such as depression, and emotions in worship. He seeks to help us liberate and celebrate the God-given emotional aspects of our lives, that we might become redeemed whole people with integrated thoughts, feelings and actions, and that we might respond to God with all that we are.

I found this book very useful in addressing some of my unbalanced theology, and encouraging in helping me to regard feelings in a more positive and God-honouring way. I recommend it.

Everett Julyan is a psychiatrist in Ayrshire