

## The Search for God and the Path to Persuasion

Peter May

- Malcolm Down Publishing, 2016, £9.99, 254pp, ISBN 9781910786376
- Reviewed by **John Martin**, CMF Head of Communications

**P**eter May is a gifted evangelist whose insights and approaches have lasted. *The Search for God* is packed with useful outlines and worked examples for sharing the gospel.

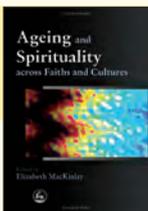
Evangelism, he says, is primarily dialogue. Conversation is a skill to be cultivated and he offers copious insights on how.

He isn't terribly keen on the term 'apologetics'; cultivating the art of 'persuasion' is closer to the mark, with the onus on the Christian to be creative and engaging. Knowing the gospel is the essential foundation. He offers approaches readers can take to memorise or make their own.

This can be delivered as a three minute version if someone asks what the Christian faith is all about. Equally it could be fleshed out in five talks.

Asking questions, he says, is more effective than stating propositions. He commends the example of Socrates the Athenian philosopher who posed questions and built skillfully on the implications of answers offered. Not every dialogue will lead to sharing the gospel, but once the process begins it can be resumed.

People today need to hear cogent reasons why the gospel makes sense. Here are helpful, practical resources to fulfil that need.



## Ageing and Spirituality across Faiths and Cultures

Elizabeth MacKinley (ed)

- Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2010, £22.99, 272pp, ISBN 9781849050067
- Reviewed by **Cameron Swift**, Professor at King's College School of Medicine

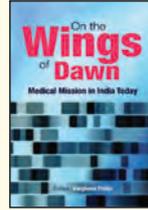
**C**larity about the concepts and inter-relationships of 'ageing' and 'spirituality' is urgently needed for healthcare professionals.

Ageing (attitudinal perceptions and misperceptions, and their consequences) is explored against background demography and speculated across a range of religious and cultural contexts either formally (drawing on traditional teachings) or anecdotally (eg amongst Australian indigenous groups). Areas of common ideological ground include 'respect' for older people and 'duty of care' (a family imperative in Islam). In care provision, awareness and sensitivity are rightly emphasised, and some practical tools to assess 'spiritual

need' are proposed.

Spirituality is widely represented as diverse, subjective, psycho-social, and culture-driven, and implicitly commended as pluralistic (versus 'fundamentalist'), with distinction drawn between 'internalised' spirituality and organised religious observance. An informative chapter usefully summarises basic Islamic teaching.

The cross-cultural insights are important and valuable. Refreshingly, one chapter on 'orthodox faith' deals not with Orthodoxy (eg Eastern or Greek) but explores (in the specific context of dementia) the core Christian understanding of spirituality as 'personhood' – every human being made in God's image – and its implications.



## On the Wings of Dawn

Varghese Philip (ed)

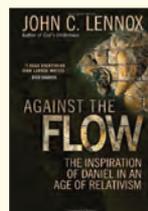
- Evangelical Medical Fellowship of India, 2015, 256pp, ISBN 9789382759157
- Reviewed by **Deirdre Shawe**, a Rheumatologist with experience in General Practice

**A**imed at people seriously considering medical mission in India, this book explains the complex history of healthcare in India and provides practical advice. The gems on its pages should be absorbed carefully as it is a unique study guide rather than a quick read. Each chapter has a different author and all bring their wisdom, advice and personal experience to the reader.

The healthcare system in India today can seem very confusing but in these pages the reader will find some clarity. There is a huge gap between the rich and poor in India, with 50% of the population having inadequate access to clean water and healthcare. An urban slum might be next to a state-of-the-

art corporate hospital but have no access to it.

Post-independence, government-funded hospitals emerged, but due to the vast population they can only provide healthcare to 20% of the poor. There is therefore a huge gap, which charitable and mission hospitals can help to fill. Local Indian missionaries are starting to meet the demand, but they need help. There is a clear role for the Indian medical Diaspora, and also foreign missionaries, who can help with short and long-term placements, funding and play a vital role in research, teaching and training. The practice of medicine is a gift from God. The harvest is plenty but the workers are few. This book will prove an inspiration to those who are called to help.



## Against the Flow

The inspiration of Daniel in an age of relativism  
John Lennox

- Monarch, 2015, £12.99, 433pp, ISBN 9780857216212
- Reviewed by **Tom Roberts**, former CMF Communications Coordinator

**J**ohn Lennox says that we live in a culture where 'God has lost his glory... holiness has degenerated into an exclusively negative concept'. Either Christianity is held to be worthless, or it is simply 'one choice' in the marketplace of ideas. In *Against the Flow*, he takes hold of the biblical book of Daniel as 'a clarion call to our generation... not to lose our nerve or allow the expression of our faith to be... squeezed out of the public sphere'.

Working through Daniel chapter by chapter, Lennox draws out essential lessons on topics such as God's role in

human history, Christian identity, the importance of Government and the rule of law. He approaches Daniel with great care, and refrains from undue speculation about the meanings of Daniel's more cryptic visions.

At over 400 pages this is no light read, and at times is perhaps a little too exhaustive in detailing every aspect of the historical setting. Nonetheless, Lennox is a deep thinker with a first-rate mind, and his analysis here is well worth the effort. This is a vital book that will help Christians understand how we can stand firm in an increasingly secular age.