

Matters of Life & Death
Human dilemmas in the light of the Christian faith
John Wyatt

■ IVP/CMF 2009
■ £12.99 Pb 303pp ■ ISBN 978 1 84474 367 4

This substantially updated second edition examines ethical dilemmas at the beginning and end of life. Written by a Christian professor of ethics and perinatology, the philosophical, theological, legal and medical aspects of these issues are discussed in a real-world setting.

The book starts with reviews of well-known UK medical cases that have presented ethical challenges. The first chapter examines the contemporary worldview of humanness, society and medicine. The next presents biblical perspectives on humanness, suffering and redemption. Subsequent chapters scrutinise reproductive technology, biotechnology and stem cells, and include new sections on regenerative medicine

and saviour siblings.

A historical perspective on abortion is presented, then the Christian understanding of personhood. Wyatt demonstrates how he brings Christ's love into his work in 'The dying baby'. Assisted dying and attempts to change UK legislation are then analysed. The book finishes with a challenge to the Christian doctor to be distinctive, and to be inspired by the biblical understanding of humanity's future.

This book excellently combines well-referenced philosophical and medical discussion with clear biblical exegesis. Wyatt's personal faith shines through and his clinical experience makes this book essential reading.

Claire Stark Toller is an SpR in Palliative Medicine in Oxford



Travelling Light
Daily Bible meditations for student electives
Various authors

■ CMF 2009
■ £4.95 Pb 139pp slim ■ ISBN - N/A

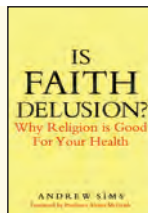
Travelling Light is a daily Bible meditation containing a mixture of thoughts, readings and stories from doctors, nurses and students who have spent time abroad. It is split into weekly chunks under headings including 'Hope', 'Reliance on God', 'Dealing with death, suffering and inadequacy' and 'Rising above the day to day'.

This book is a real companion for those spending time abroad and confronted with abject poverty, new cultures, different types of healthcare, and perhaps a face of Christ that is less than familiar. The Bible readings challenge yet comfort, and

encourage deeper trust in God. There is a great sense of solidarity in the pages, not only from people in the Bible who have gone before but also from the contributors.

My advice is this: buy the book but resist the temptation to read it before you go on your elective or mission trip. You will then discover a fresh perspective from your heavenly family at a time when you may well feel in need of people who understand the joys and the difficulties of working for Christ abroad.

Katie Dexter is an intercalating medical student from Leeds



Is Faith Delusion?
Andrew Sims

■ Continuum 2009
■ £14.99 Pb 237pp ■ ISBN 978 1 84706 340 3

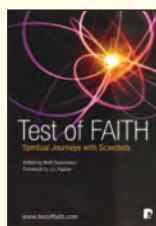
Andrew Sims, CMF member and former President of the Royal College of Psychiatrists and professor at Leeds, considers the question: is faith delusion? He presents the evidence concerning religion and mental health and explains why it is not. Ranging widely, he includes a chapter on the history of psychiatry that recalls Freud's statement that belief in God is delusional.

He finds the great majority of studies show a positive association between faith and mental health. Religious belief conveys a health advantage for conditions including depression, anxiety, psychosis and substance misuse. Spiritual healing through prayer is considered and its efficacy found to be

weakly positive, although more rigorous research is needed. The relation between religion and personality is covered in depth.

Andrew Sims speaks with integrity from his professional and personal experience. He says attitudes have changed such that it is acceptable to allow patients to discuss how their beliefs relate to their mental illness. He provides evidence for why this should be encouraged. This authoritative book is a valuable resource for all who work in mental health and seek to justify the importance of spiritual care therein, and for others who wish to learn about belief and wellbeing.

Clare Cooper is Associate Director of PRIME (Partnership in International Medical Education)



Test of Faith
Spiritual Journeys with Scientists
Ruth Bancewicz

■ Paternoster Press 2009
■ £7.99 Pb 192pp ■ ISBN 978 1 84227 661 7

I was not expecting this to be the read it was, despite being a scientist of sorts – well, aren't all medics? I am easily confused by complex scientific concepts and I expected to be confused. However, this is not so much a book of science as a book of stories of scientists and how they became able to reconcile science and faith. At the end of each chapter there is a meditation from the scientist featured.

This book is easy to read, although relatively easy to put down as each chapter is complete in its own right. There is an accompanying DVD, to be

used with a study guide and leader's guide for small groups. This focuses more on the issues at the interface between faith and science, providing a format for discussion.

This book does not explain or apply science but shows its impact in real life. If you want to work through how science and faith fit together, this may not be the place to look. If you want to see how people live with science, faith and integrity, then it's a good place to go.

Charlotte Hattersley is a GP in East Yorkshire and works for CMF with younger graduates



I could do that!
15 short accounts of working overseas
 Andrew Fergusson and Steve Fouch (Eds)

■ CMF 2009
 ■ £6.95 Pb 79pp ■ ISBN 978 0 90674 739 1

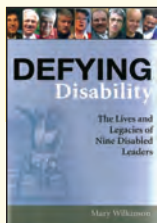
These compelling stories, modestly written, demonstrate how Christian doctors, nurses and midwives have followed God's prompting and made important contributions to the health of the communities they have gone to serve. Probably none of them had any idea where their obedience would lead, but the stories describe their progress and achievements step by step. These are ordinary people doing extraordinary things. The role of mentors in offering support and encouragement was central in many cases.

For those with a vision for mission, this is a heart-warming read. Anyone testing whether he

or she should go into a mission setting, whether overseas or in their own country, will find this book challenging and encouraging. It could be the confirmation they need.

This book is not only for healthcare professionals. It would help those in a church setting to consider whether a candidate wanting to do this work will be able to cope with it. Friends and family of someone going out to the mission field would gain an insight into the opportunities and experiences of those who have already trodden this path and proved God's faithfulness.

Liz Capper chairs Christian Nurses & Midwives



Defying Disability
The Lives and Legacies of Nine Disabled Leaders
 Mary Wilkinson

■ Jessica Kingsley 2009
 ■ £17.99 Pb 224pp ■ ISBN 978 1 84310 415 5

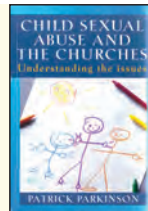
This book examines nine high-profile disabled people and how their achievements influenced British disability politics over the last 40 years. It provides remarkable insight into those disabled lifelong with a range of conditions. As a disabled doctor, I anticipated a source of inspiration, yet struggled with this book and only diagnosed why near the end.

The book profiles well-known personalities including Jack Ashley, who defied deafness to become an MP, and Tom Shakespeare, the achondroplastic academic. Shakespeare made a film about his daughter, who of course inherited his genes, only to hear a colleague say 'How could Tom have gone and had a child

knowing there was a strong possibility she would be disabled?' A recurrent fear underlies: 'How disposable are we, the disabled?' Unsurprisingly, most are against eugenics and euthanasia.

The struggle for acceptance runs through the book. While I admire the determination of these nine people, it left me sad that wheelchair Olympian Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson concluded that to be accepted, 'performance was what counted'. How much stronger would these remarkable people be if they found that Christ's estimate of everyone, 'disabled' as we all are, is that each of us is priceless?

Mark Houghton is a part-time GP in Sheffield



Child Sexual Abuse and the Churches
Understanding the issues
 Patrick Parkinson

■ Aquila Press 2003
 ■ £8.99 Pb 321pp ■ ISBN 978 1 87696 056 6

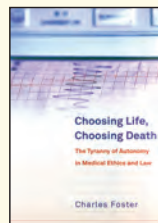
This author pulls no punches in tackling tortuous and challenging issues in this updated edition of his 1997 book. An Australian law professor specialising in child protection, he shows remarkable insight into these intensely painful areas of human experience, from the perspectives of child victims, adult survivors, family members, church leaders and indeed perpetrators.

He does not shy away from exploring some of the most difficult questions facing churches and individual Christians. These include providing sensitive and appropriate accompaniment for abuse survivors, and the necessity of facing up to current abuse

occurring in church families and within church activities. He also examines the time and place for forgiveness, grace and repentance.

Many Christian doctors are sought out by patients, family, friends and churches on such issues, and this book provides a resource for informing, supporting and perhaps educating those who look to us for wise counsel and support. 'Child protection awareness' may be familiar to professionals but is rarely ventured into voluntarily. I will certainly be sharing my copy with those able and willing to read it.

Ruth Cureton is a GP in Surrey and Trustee of the Trauma and Abuse Group. www.tag-uk.net



Choosing Life, Choosing Death
The Tyranny of Autonomy in Medical Ethics and Law
 Charles Foster

■ Hart Publishing 2009
 ■ £22.50 Pb 189pp ■ ISBN 978 1 84113 929 6

Charles Foster concedes: 'In many ways this book is utterly trite. It states something that is obvious – that medical law and ethics, dealing with the whole of the immensely varied human condition, needs to listen to other principles as well as autonomy.' Yet this book is an important challenge to the dominance of autonomy in medical ethics and law.

Having summarised autonomy's dominance, he goes on to consider the place of autonomy in laws relating to abortion, consent to treatment, the end of life, and other issues. One conclusion is that, while judicial decisions appear to defer to autonomy, the courts do employ other principles.

The problem, however, is that the other principles (such as beneficence and justice) are often employed implicitly, giving the impression that autonomy is the only principle.

Recognising these other principles in medical law and ethics explicitly is important because it is necessary for 'intellectual democracy' and thus 'intellectual integrity'. This book will therefore be a useful and thought-provoking resource for those studying or teaching medical law and ethics.

Mark Campbell trained in medicine, retrained in law, and is currently a visiting tutor in the School of Law, King's College London