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NAPCE 2003 - Boston, October 23-25

Christian Education at the Crossroads:

Guiding Educational Ministries in an Age of Specialization

Gary A. Parrett, Vice President

During NAPCE 2002, in San Diego and Tijuana, it was our privilege and pain to be confronted by globally shifting realities, especially those affecting the children of the world. At NAPCE 2003, to be held in the Boston area, we will be exploring together another set of changes. All of us who are engaged in the many and varied tasks related to Christian education have experienced them—sweeping changes in the way our ministries are understood and approached in our churches and in our schools. Among these changes, perhaps leading the way (or should we say, *ways?*), is a movement toward greater and greater specialization.

The phenomenon of specialization is reflected among us in various ways. Many churches have foregone hiring a “Director of Christian Education”—a role that often envisions a centralized oversight of teaching and related ministries. Instead, many congregations today will hire specialists with more particular foci: youth ministers, children’s ministers, cell group directors, pastors to “20’s and 30’s” and so on. These specialists will likely report directly to church leaders. Christian Education committees are dismantled, renamed or effectively stripped of authority.

The changes are reflected, as well, in so-called “Christian bookstores,” where sections once labeled “Christian Education” have begun to disappear, and the

Longtime NAPCE member Dr. J. Martin Baldree passed away on November 26, 2002, due to complications of congestive heart failure and viral pneumonia.

Phyllis Kilbourn’s recommended bibliography on ministry to children in crisis situations is available on the NAPCE web site (www.napce.org/writings.html).

books which once populated those shelves have also disappeared or have been re-stacked under other headings. The teaching institutions served by NAPCE members have also been altered by these phenomena. Entire departments of Christian Education have ceased to exist in seminaries and colleges. Others have been re-named, their resources distributed to other departments. It seems that leaders in the field have been scrambling, if not to actually understand these shifts, at least to try to “catch up” to them, to retain some measure of relevance.

Finally, NAPCE itself has felt more than a few of the tremors. Movements have arisen within our own ranks that seem to be responses to the need for greater specialization, including Youth Ministry Educators and the Children’s Spirituality Conference.

In light of these, and other witnesses to a rapidly changing ministry landscape, what are the implications for the field of Christian Education? How should NAPCE, as an organization, be responding? Will there even *be* a NAPCE in twenty years time? If so, how many in our churches will understand what precisely we mean by the *CE*—Christian Education? Or will the *CE* have been replaced by other letters—*L* (for Leadership), *SF* (for Spiritual Formation), *TM* (for Teaching Ministries) or something else?

In an age of specialization, what is to become of the good ship “Christian Education?” Shall it be re-named after some more appropriate fashion? Shall it simply learn to be a smaller vessel, cruising contentedly in a sea suddenly teaming with other ships? Should we, perhaps, simply pull the plug and let this battered old ship sink? Should the ship be docked and its former crew members be assigned to new tasks—perhaps staffing a lighthouse

to provide guidance to all these newly launched ships at sea? Or could it be that the old ship is, after all, still vital, and worthy of renovation?

These are the ideas, questions and musings we hope to consider together at NAPCE 2003, in Boston.

Two guests from outside our community—Dr. Paul Lim, a professor of theology and Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, and Andy Crouch, featured contributor to *Christianity Today* and editor of *RE:Generation Quarterly*, will set the stage for us with theological and cultural analyses of the movement toward specialization. After hearing from them, we will spend the rest of our time together listening to one another.

The plenary sessions will be divided up into multiple presentations by NAPCE members. Historical perspectives will be offered by Kevin Lawson and Eileen Starr. Proposals for responding to the cultural shifts we are experiencing will be offered by Brad Waggoner, Judy Ten Elshof, Steve Kang, Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Linda Cannell and Gary Parrett. There will also be a panel discussion featuring NAPCE members whose writings have been serving the community for years. Others will offer their insights through theme-related seminars.

In addition to exploration of our central theme, there will be numerous professional development workshops and current research presentations. Time will be intentionally set aside for networking opportunities as well. The conference will conclude on Saturday afternoon, but will be followed by an optional tour of historic Boston. There will even be a return of that particular form of networking that has recently been a lost NAPCE tradition—basketball on Friday afternoon (only for the bravest of heart).

Christian Educators of the 20th Century Project Update

This web-based database project, funded by the Lilly Endowment, is well underway, but there is still opportunity to contribute. As of November, 2002, we have 149 names on the list from Protestant and Catholic traditions, including about 40 evangelicals. Currently, 103 have a writer assigned, with 46 still needing a writer. The editorial board is considering several nominations to the list and will make our decisions soon. About fifteen entries are completed and posted on the website (www.talbot.edu/ceacademic), and another twenty are in the final stages of preparation for posting. The project continues for another year and a half, with work still to be done in developing a list of Orthodox religious education leaders to be included. If you go to the website you can see the updated list of names and get information on how to apply to write on an identified person, and how to nominate someone. For more information on the project, contact: Kevin Lawson, Talbot School of Theology, 13800 Biola Avenue, La Mirada, CA 90639 (kevin.lawson@biola.edu)

Please mark your calendars, then, for October 23-25, 2003, and plan to join us at the beautiful, new Quincy Marriott hotel near Boston. And, finally, join us in praying for this important time together. For further details, please contact me via e-mail (gparrett@gcts.edu), and look for the registration brochure that will be coming to you soon.

Children's Spirituality Conference: Christian Perspectives

Chicago, June 8-11, 2003

Christian leaders and researchers from across North America concerned with the spiritual life and nurture of children will be gathering for a four-day conference hosted at the Concordia University campus in River Forest, IL. The conference, developed by Christian education leaders from evangelical and main-line Protestant as well as Catholic backgrounds, is in response to a growing international trend to define the spirituality of children in terms that often ignore or downplay elements important to the Christian faith. This event will help network people who are currently conducting research and writing on children's spiritual development and formation from a Christian perspective, providing a means for sharing research related to this topic. It will offer a forum for the integration of biblical, theological, and social science perspectives on children's spiritual experiences, development, and formation. It also gives participants an opportunity to explore innovative approaches to the spiritual nurture of children and provides encouragement to those who oversee and participate in this important work. This gathering is intended to help stir up and guide congregational and educational efforts to promote the spiritual growth and well being of children.

Conference speakers include: Jerome Berryman (*Godly Play*), Rebecca Nye (*The Spirit of the Child*), Marcia Bunge (*The Child in Christian Thought*), Cathy Stonehouse (*Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey*), Walter Wangerin (*Rag Man: and Other Cries of Faith*), and Brenda Salter McNeil (founder of Overflow Ministries). In addition, approximately 65 seminars and workshops will be offered regarding current theological and social science research on the spiritual life of children and innovative ministry and educational approaches to fostering spiritual formation.

Conference attendance is currently limited to 300, but evening sessions will be open to the public for a small admission fee. Those desiring to register should access the conference website at www.childspirituality.org for details, or write: Kevin Lawson, Talbot School of Theology, 13800 Biola Avenue, La Mirada, CA 90639 (kevin.lawson@biola.edu)

Les Blank Receives Distinguished Christian Educator Award



NAPCE's Distinguished Christian Educator Award was presented to Dr. Les Blank during the 2002 conference in San Diego. Dr. Blank is currently assistant to the pastor for special ministries at Little Country Church of Redding, California. Prior to that appointment he served for over three decades at Azusa Pacific University. He was the founding dean of Haggard Graduate School of Theology and by the time of his retirement the school had grown to over 300 students. He was instrumental in starting that school's initiatives for training African-American, Hispanic, and Korean pastors in the Los Angeles area. His teaching interests included Christian formation and servant leadership. Dr. Blank was on the NAPCE board in the mid-1970's when the organization became an independent association, and he also served as a keynote speaker at several of the organization's conferences. His involvement with the organization has spanned four decades.



NAPCE Financial Report

Balance 1/1/02	47,007.52
Net deposits	37,375.64
Disbursements	43,169.63
Balance 12/31/02	41,213.35

All board members have detailed financial statements and questions can be addressed to them or to the Executive Administrator, Dennis Williams.

NAPCE Members Reflect Upon 2002 Conference

There were three highlights for me at the NAPCE conference this year. First, it was wonderful to have so many new people to meet. Second, there were several significant conversations with colleagues that have given me much to think about. Third, I ap-

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Book Reviews

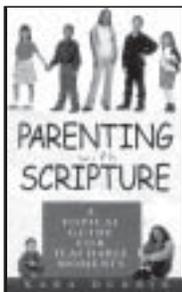
Elizabeth Conde-Frazier, Book Review Editor

Parenting With Scripture: A Topical Guide for Teachable Moments by Kara Durbin (Moody Press, 2001)

*Reviewed by Cherry Stucky,
Midwestern Baptist Theological
Seminary*

Parenting with Scripture is a quick-reference resource, designed to enable parents who want to develop intentional Christian character in their children through the use of scripture in responding to life issues. The author has provided a variety of ways the book may be used by parents, all of them realistic options. (Children's workers in Sunday school, daycare and other formal educational arenas will also appreciate this resource as they seek to interact with children biblically.) In addition, a simple orientation to the book's layout and helpful tips for use precede the actual content.

As its title states, the book is a topical guide of one-word characteristics and/or issues arranged in alphabetical order. Each of the 169 topics contains a definition of the word, 5-6 scripture verses in which the issue is addressed, along with discussion questions, a suggested "Action Step", and occasionally, a further tip for parental use. The topical cross-reference index at the end of the book was particularly helpful in locating topics as needed.



This is a very thorough compilation of topics with a useful layout and simple, though helpful, activities to generate thoughtful dialogue and interaction with the concepts presented. The book does not attempt to "teach" each issue with all its varied nuances and applications; rather it assumes that parents will provide the specific articulation of their own values as they interact with their child. For parents who are new to purposefully utilizing scripture in correcting and teaching their children, additional books on parenting with a biblical worldview will support this resource. For the parent (or educator) whose desire it is to "let God tell us" how to live, this will be an invaluable tool.



Teaching for a Change: A Transformational Approach to Education by Norman De Jong (P&R, 2001)

*Reviewed by Steven T. White,
Westgate Institute*

In *Teaching for a Change*, De Jong encourages educators to examine the foundations of their approach to education. Decrying subjectivism, secular-humanism and other influences on our contemporary understandings of education, he calls us to "God-centered" education.

The work is more theoretical than practical and reminds us of the basic philosophic underpinnings of good education – beginning with the authority from which



we teach, moving through the nature of those we teach, goals for teaching, responsibility for teaching, methodology and, ultimately, evaluation. The title of his final chapter, *Who Will Teach Reformed Doctrine*, evidences De Jong's theological and philosophical paradigm.

While De Jong makes a number of very strong arguments for basing education on the authority of Scripture, his statements are unlikely to convince those who do not already lean strongly toward a very conservative approach to Christian Education.

Written largely for those involved in Christian schools and homeschooling, *Teaching for a Change* provides a helpful primer on the fundamental purpose for teaching children – the child's need to be transformed into Christlikeness.



Lifelong Learning at Its Best by William H. Maehl (John Wiley & Sons, 1999)

*Reviewed by Jane Thayer,
Andrews University*

Post-secondary faculty and administrators who are responsible for recruiting and serving a growing "adult learner" population will find *Lifelong Learning at Its Best* to be a valuable resource that can bring them up-to-date with the needs of adult learners and that will describe current models of good practice.

Compiled by a consortium of institutions and organizations convened in 1995 to study adult learning, *Lifelong Learning* reports on adult learning innovation since the early 1970s. It is particularly helpful to those in higher education because it limits its discussion to credit programs.

After reviewing important concepts in adult learning and discussing the threats and opportunities it poses to institutions of higher education, the book gives guidelines for creating programs for adult learners and then illustrates how such guidelines can be implemented by reviewing in detail 34 adult learning programs, giving contact information for each.



Transitioning: Leading Your Church Through Change by Dan Southerland (Serendipity House, 1999)

*Reviewed by Glen R. Basey,
San Jose Christian College*

If you have attended a Saddleback Leadership Conference or read *The Purpose Driven Church* by Rick Warren, you may have said, "That is great, but Rick started his congregation from scratch and so was able to lay a foundation for the phenomenal growth that has taken place." True, but the possibilities to use the biblical principles Rick Warren has identified is made real by Dan Southerland.

Dan reports how he led an established congregation with traditional values to a congregation with the power and vision for growth. He not only shares how he did it but gives the reader the tools to use to move any congregation into a vibrant growing congregation. The tools are not complicated but are practical and offered to encourage congregation renewal. They have been proven in the renewal of The Flamingo Road Church in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. Perhaps the most helpful as-

pect is that Dan used a biblical paradigm to explain his journey. Using the book of Nehemiah, Southerland provides a step by step analysis of the biblical data and shows how these principles are the foundation for the renewal process. This allows those leading the renewal process in existing congregations to help generate support for the process among existing members. The biblical base is essential to garnering support for and participation in the renewal process.

This book is essential reading even if you are not planning to bring your congregation into a renewal mode. You will learn how to lead a congregation forward in a clear and positive manner. You will not want to miss this book. It is an excellent companion volume to *The Purpose Driven Church* to give the reader a slightly different perspective on the principles Rick Warren used to establish Saddleback Community Church. Seeing the principles through Dan Southerland's experience gives a depth and new access to these principles.

Southerland provides a ready made format to use in presenting this material in class. Working from the Nehemiah framework allows one to expand the material and relate to other "growth" perspectives. For a class in Church growth, administrative leadership, or serving with a leadership team this could be a supplemental text.

If you have not attended a Saddleback Leadership conference this book will give the reader insights into the growth of this congregation as well as Southerland's congregation. Don't miss this valuable resource to encourage your students to seek to bring renewal in the congregations they serve.



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Introducing NAPCE's New Board Members

CLASS of 2006

Eileen Starr - President
Alaska Bible College
Work: 907-272-8760
E-mail: ESTarAK@aol.com

Karen Jones - Secretary
Huntington College
Work: 260-359-4270
E-mail: kjones@huntington.edu

Gary Bredfeldt - Treasurer
Moody Bible Institute
Work: 312-329-4035
E-mail: gary.bredfeldt@moody.edu

Steve Kang - Seminars
Wheaton College
Work: 630-752-7958
E-mail: steve.kang@wheaton.edu

Kevin Lawson - Research Proposals
Talbot School of Theology
Work: 562-906-4598
E-Mail: kevin.lawson@biola.edu

CLASS of 2004

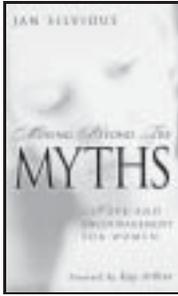
Beth Posterski - Hospitality
Tyndale College and Seminary
Work: 416-226-6620 x6734
E-Mail: bposterski@tyndale.ca

Moving Beyond the Myths by Jan Silvious (Moody Press, 2001)

*Reviewed by Laverne Winn,
Leadership Training Consultants*

Silvious writes about myths that cause women misery, and she explains that truth is found when myths are uncovered. She defines a myth as a belief assumed true. Her analysis suggests that myths fall into three categories: relationship to God, relationship to self, and relationship to men. Some myths are listed in chapter one, and I found it hard to understand why women believe some of these thoughts. Silvious provides a solution for finding the truth. She asks, "Where is it written?" or is what I believe working? Myths feed on perception.

Silvious creatively paraphrases Biblical stories, and she uses good illustrations. She explains that myths leave you hopeless. It intrigued me that she quotes 2 Timothy 3:1-7 twice in the same chapter. However, she added two additional verses to the second quote. Both quotes were printed in the book. The most interesting chapter is titled "The Myth of Church is Always a Safe Place." Instead of the Church being a safe haven for women who are hurting, church leadership often is inconsiderate for the wife when her husband has strayed. The wife was wronged in the marriage, the husband is not chastised, but his wife is. "Where is it written?" Why does the woman bear the brunt for the misbehavior of her husband? Silvious describes five men who interceded for the women in their church. They prayed that the women would succeed in their church.



Local churches would grow more if men were concerned about the problems women face and were not only interested in the finances women bring to church. Men should read this book for awareness of the troubles women go through. I would advise the reader to pay close attention to the last chapter.

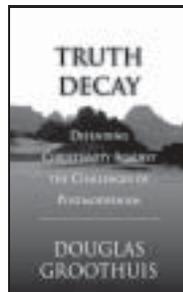
This book would be good for those working with women with low self esteem, men and women in leadership or taking courses in leadership, and for the enlightenment of all Christian women.



Truth Decay: Defending Christianity Against the Challenges of Postmodernism by Douglas Groothuis (InterVarsity Press, 2000)

*Reviewed by Darwin K. Glassford,
Montreat College, & Salt Lake
Theological Seminary*

Douglas Groothuis applies the scalpel with the precision of a surgeon in dissecting postmodernism in order to offer an apologetic for a biblical view of truth as the best means for combating postmodernism's corrosive effects. He maneuvers with precision through the writings of influential postmodernists, describing their "perspectives" with clarity in *Truth Decay*. This is the strength of the book. Yet, in spite of his lucid description of postmodernism his response to the challenges posed is less than satisfying. His response involves recovering a biblical view of truth. His understanding of a biblical view of truth appears to be rooted firmly in the modern rather than the premodern era of



Christianity, which he treats in a mere 1¾ pages. And upon further reflection, a disconcerting and haunting sense develops that if his argument is followed, a postmodernist must become a modernist before becoming a Christian. Groothuis' diagnosis of the postmodern situation is helpful and his prescription for addressing the issues raised should provide great fodder for discussion.

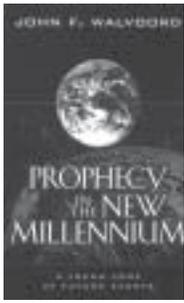


Prophecy in the New Millennium: A Fresh Look at Future Events by John F. Walvoord (Kregel Publications, 2001)

*Reviewed by Karen Crozier, Ph.D.
Candidate, Claremont School of
Theology*

In *Prophecy in the New Millennium*, Walvoord argues that the return of Christ is soon. His analysis of the three major areas of prophecy (the nations, Israel, and the church) provides a theological and existential lens to interpret changes in world events. After presenting his analysis, Walvoord unabashedly and unequivocally concludes that the historical changes in the nations, Israel and the church are consistent with Scripture's description of what is to occur both before and after the Rapture. Convinced that the Rapture is near, Walvoord has a three-fold purpose in his examination. They are as follows: 1) to assist Christians in their understanding of biblical prophecy in light of current events; 2) to provide practical exhortation for people to be saved; and 3) to provide practical exhortation on how people can fulfill God's plan in their individual lives. If Christian educators are persuaded by Walvoord's analysis and conclusions,

then Christian education will reflect urgency for conversion to Christianity, and preparation for Christ's return. While teaching with the End in mind can be profitable, it can also be dangerous in that a myopic vision emerges. Can humans really know how soon, "soon" will occur? Balancing the tension between a remote or imminent "soon" and the daily vicissitudes of living the Christian faith, as a prospective Christian educator, I find Walvoord's work to be a strand of what is needed to effectively educate people in the Christian faith.



The Master's Perspective on Biblical Prophecy edited by Richard L. Mayhue and Robert L. Thomas (Kregel Publications, 2002)

*Reviewed by Tomi Lee Grover,
Dallas Baptist University*

This book is the fourth in a series by the Master's College faculty. The editors have compiled eleven selections written by professors from 1991-1997 for "The Master's Seminary Journal." While the topics discussed concerning Biblical prophecy are timeless; the articles are somewhat dated. Each article is a scholarly work and is written for academic purposes. The usefulness of this text outside the pursuit of academia in systematic theology is questionable. The book would be especially useful for doctoral students of systematic theology. The text's greatest purpose is to define the college's stance on a variety of prophecy topics.

Conference continued from page 3

preciated the presentations by Phyllis Kilbourne that exposed us to the plight of children. I have had previous exposure to some of the tragedies children suffer through documentaries, reading, and my own ministry and travel. I think the power of Phyllis' presentation was seeing data about so many of the abuses and injustices in one presentation. It was informative and precipitated deep feelings of grief. I appreciated Phyllis' measured words and her reflective spirit that allowed for responses of both our minds and our hearts. ~Faye E. Chechowich, Taylor University



San Diego was my 13th NAPCE conference, and the first one where when it came time to pray after one of the plenary sessions, all I could do was weep. The fellowship and discussion in the vans to and from Tijuana was rich, and the ministry models shared by Eileen Starr and Gary Newton were challenging. It was good to have our cages rattled, and may God continue to bring out fruit from this time together. ~Kevin E. Lawson, Talbot School of Theology



In a matter of fact, low key manner, Dr. Kilbourn laid before us the plight of the world's children. Our eyes and hearts were opened as we listened, and as we traveled to Mexico, stood in a dusty, dirty graveyard and saw the sparkle in the eyes of the beautiful children who ran from their make shift homes to meet us. We wrapped up the conference being challenged to action by colleagues who have begun effective ministries with the poor. What a challenging event! ~Cathy Stonehouse, Asbury Theological Seminary

Pazmiño Reprints Available

The following works by Bob Pazmiño are now available from Wipf & Stock Publishers, 150 W. Broadway, Eugene, OR 97401, Tel. 541-344-1528, E-mail WSPub@academicbooks.com:

- *Basics of Teaching for Christians*
- *By What Authority Do We Teach?*
- *Latin American Journey: Insights for Christian Education in North America*
- *Principles and Practices of Christian Education*

Also the Spanish translations of both *Foundational Issues in Christian Education (Cuestiones Fundamentales de la Educación Cristiana)* and *Principles and Practices of Christian Education (Principios y Prácticas de la Educación Cristiana)* are now available.

Future Conferences: Membership Preferences Requested

The NAPCE board is looking ahead to future conferences and considering the influence of NAPCE on our field. We would like your input on the following:

1. Topics of interest or concern that we should address
2. People we should hear (speakers for future conferences)
3. Projects NAPCE should undertake or support
4. The best conference schedule for you.
 - End at noon Saturday
 - End Saturday evening
 - End Sunday morning
 (Do you have a different preference if the conference is held in Midwest/South, East coast, or West coast?)

Please send responses to Dr. Eileen Starr (EStarAK@aol.com)

Images from NAPCE 2002 in Tijuana, Mexico.

