

Silent Savior

A.J. Gregory

Revell (Baker Publishing Group)

softcover, 192 pages, \$12.99

978-0-800-73285-1

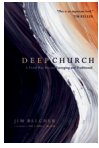
Gregory, author of the previous book *Messy Faith*, relates to the divine disconnect that is the experience of many a believer—those wondering if God is still involved in their lives—and candidly shares times of self-doubt and of God-doubt she has experienced personally, in *Silent Savior: Daring to Believe He's Still There*

Gregory touches on some sensitive issues of faith, such as the error of chasing miracles, understanding when to be still and becoming more aware of one's compassion toward others.

She reintroduces God to her readers, revealing Christ as a Savior who was not afraid to go against the grain to bring freedom to His followers. They are able to experience His compassion and understand that while He may seem silent at times, He is absolutely present.

Silent Savior is helpful for anyone willing to let God out of the box of tradition and embrace His presence, silent or not, in their lives.

—Heidi Ippolito



Deep Church

Jim Belcher

IVP Books (InterVarsity Press)

softcover, 233 pages, \$17

978-0-830-83716-8

Twenty-first century Christianity presents believers with a dilemma—to ride the crest of the future with the Emergent Church or to cling to what some think is the irrelevant past of the traditional church.

In *Deep Church: A Third Way Beyond Emerging and Traditional*

, Belcher offers an alternative known as "Deep Church," a phrase coined by C.S. Lewis to refer to those committed to "mere Christianity."

The Emergent Movement rails against traditional church for being too doctrinally narrow and committed to Enlightenment rationalism. In turn, the Traditionalists contend that Emergents are too worldly as well as tolerant of postmodern thinking and the loss of objective truth. Belcher carefully proposes a solid blueprint for a Deep Church that can be missional, culturally engaged, creedal, confessional and innovative in its approach.

Book Reviews CR Sept 7

Written by Production
Monday, 31 August 2009 02:51 pm UTC

While *Deep Church* is primarily written for pastors, church leaders and seminary students, readers who want to understand the contemporary debate will appreciate it, too. Ultimately, it is a fair-minded treatment of a polarizing and polemic topic.

—C. Brian Smith



Fresh Start

Doug Fields

Thomas Nelson

hardcover, 224 pages, \$19.99

978-0-849-92055-4

Fields, a teaching pastor at Saddleback Community Church and best-selling author, offers a message of hope in *Fresh Start: God's Invitation to a Great Life*.

Fields taps into a basic human need to restart every once in a while, to turn one's life around and to get unstuck. Habits and characteristics like fear and pride can tether a person to a track that leads to nowhere. Fields analyzes how rejection, anger, conflict and pain can hold a person back and offers an invitation to live the life God promises.

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For those who are looking for some simple encouragement from a friendly voice who's not too proud to admit he's been there himself, *Fresh Start* lives up to its name.

—Cara Davis



Fields of Grace

Kim Vogel Sawyer

Bethany House Publishers (Baker Publishing Group)

softcover, 352 pages, \$13.99

978-0-764-20508-8

Sawyer brings to her readers a moving tale in *Fields of Grace*, based on her own unique family heritage.

Opening in Russia in the latter half of the 19th century, members of a Mennonite family are faced with one of the greatest challenges of their lives. In an effort to save their eldest son from being forced into military service on his 18th birthday, Lillian and Reinhardt Vogt face the grim reality of uprooting their family and leaving behind their close-knit community to find religious freedom in America. What they discover on their journey tests the very foundation of Lillian's faith.

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Fields of Grace is a heart-touching story about what it means to be a family. Finding hope, the Vogt family rekindles faith and makes a new life in what becomes for them a true promised land.

—Vickie B. Mathews



Leaving Carolina

Tamara Leigh

Multnomah Books

softcover, 384 pages, \$13.99

978-1-601-42166-1

With a new city, a new career and a new name, Piper Wick thinks she has left Pickwick—the town and the family—for good. But when her rich uncle decides to make retribution for the family's wrongs by dividing up the estate in his will, the family calls on Piper, his favorite niece, to intervene.

Piper's uncle's intention to reveal a secret causes her to leave her big-city job and congressman boyfriend to use her skills as an image consultant to persuade her relatives to leave well enough alone. Such persuasion proves difficult due to her uncle's genuine faith, which challenges her own, and due to the influence of his godson, whom she finds both surprising and strangely alluring. Forced to deal with the reasons behind her leaving, Piper is challenged to forgive her family.

Leigh's characters pop off the page with personality and charm. *Leaving Carolina* is an appealing story of a family and a town turned around through forgiveness and redemption.

—Allison Hyer



Toe to Toe With Your Teen

Jimmy Myers

Regal Books

softcover, 227 pages, \$14.99

978-0-830-74901-0

Right off the bat in *Toe to Toe With Your Teen: A Guide to Successfully Parenting a Defiant Teen Without Giving Up or Giving In*, Myers, a licensed professional counselor, explains that the book was not written for the parents of teens who chafe at their parents' directives with the occasional smart mouth comment, but rather for the parents of teens who are crawling out of the bedroom window at night and getting arrested. He provides a diagnostic tool, the Adolescent Defiance Scale, to help parents separate teen behavior into ranges of normal, defiant, extremely defiant and criminally defiant.

For the parents of the defiant, Myers offers compassion and hope. He gives practical advice

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and valid strategies to help parents help their kids. Any parent would benefit from reading this excellent book.

—**Deborah L. Delk**