



Our committed, indefatigable team of reviewers evaluated more than 500 books, resources, movies and CDs during the past year. Here are their favorite picks for 2009.



LARRY LINDQUIST

***The Divine Commodity: Discovering a Faith Beyond Consumer Christianity* by Skye Jethani (Zondervan)**
(Reviewed May/June issue.)

Jethani identifies and uses the religious experiences, artwork and writings of Vincent Van Gogh (the positive and negative) to help us better understand the dangers of consumer Christianity. Use *Divine Commodity* to challenge your students to a faith that pushes back against marketing of the Church, entertainment-worship and “branding” of Christianity!



GEOFF KERNS

***Secondhand Jesus: Trading Rumors of God for a Firsthand Faith* by Glenn Packiam (David C. Cook)**
(Reviewed September/October issue.)

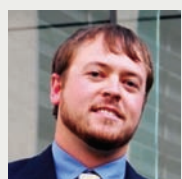
I can't help but appreciate this book's sheer honesty and vulnerability. Packiam cuts to the chase and boldly challenges the church to wrestle with God—for that's the best way to get to know Him.



MARK CANNISTER

***Sustainable Youth Ministry* by Mark DeVries (InterVarsity Press)**
(Reviewed May/June issue.)

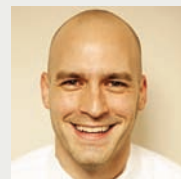
This book isn't just for youth workers. Until senior pastors and elders take the wisdom and experience unleashed in this book seriously, they will continue to roll the dice in hope of landing on a sustainable youth ministry—this time around.



PETER MOORE

***Everyday Justice: The Global Impact of Our Daily Choices* by Julie Clawson (InterVarsity Press)**
(See page 51 for full review.)

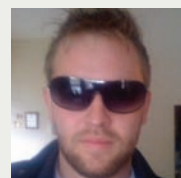
I want everyone close to me to read Julie Clawson's *Everyday Justice*, a positive, insightful, practical look at global issues and living righteously as a consumer.



ADAM GRIFFIN

***Forgotten God: Reversing our Tragic Neglect of the Holy Spirit* by Francis Chan (David C. Cook)**
(See page 50 for full review.)

Here is a book that needed to be written for this generation. It gives a unique focus to our shortcomings as God-followers and the hope and joy that come from knowing the Holy Spirit.



DAN CLARK

***The Art of Compassion* by Martin Smith, et. al. (Hodder & Stoughton)**
(Reviewed November/December issue.)

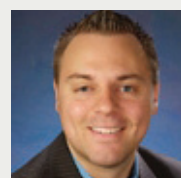
Smith is on the leading edge of how creativity and faith collide with the world. In *The Art of Compassion*, he moves that collision from sanctuaries to slums and gives us the soundtrack for a faith made alive in deeds.



DANIEL KREISS

***Toe to Toe with Your Teen: A Guide to Successfully Parenting a Defiant Teen Without Giving Up or Giving In* by Dr. Jimmy Myers (Regal)**
(See page 56 for full review.)

A superbly written book for all who live or work with difficult teenagers, this will encourage them to persevere through the challenging times. Plenty of examples and anecdotes will keep the reader interested and informed.



CHRIS EULER

***Extraordinary: The Life You're Meant to Live* by John Bevere (WaterBrook Multnomah)**
(See page 52 for full review.)

Extraordinary challenged me to seek the face of God continuously and to go beyond my capabilities and live above the norm. Bevere's stories are powerful and moving; *Extraordinary* instantly became a personal favorite!



DANETTE MATTY

***The Last Thing I Remember* by Andrew Klavan (Thomas Nelson)**
(Reviewed November/December issue.)

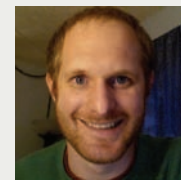
This action/thriller reads like a young-Jack Bauer-meets-teenage-Jason Bourne movie. The Homelanders series starts with Charlie West strapped to a chair in a secured facility. He doesn't remember being kidnapped or why. Fun suspense.



JAKE KIRCHER

***Closer: Devotions to Draw Couples Together* by Jim and Cathy Burns (Bethany House)**
(See page 57 for full review.)

It's hard to balance life with ministry; our marriages often take the back seat. *Closer* is as good as it gets toward helping us keep our marriages strong and a top priority.



GABE KNIPP

***Free for All* by Tim Conder and Daniel Rhodes (Baker Books)**
(See page 52 for full review.)

Free for All successfully brings a postmodern critique to biblical hermeneutics, without watering down biblical imperatives. In doing so, the book offers something to offend and shake up almost anyone—as a good book should.



PAUL BALDWIN

***Raising a Spiritually Strong Daughter* by Susie Shellenberger (Bethany House)**
(See page 56 for full review.)

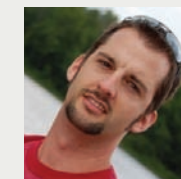
This is by far the best book I've read this year on raising teenagers, focusing specifically on the spiritual formation of parents and students. It offers practical experience about a variety of life stages, behavioral issues, purity, peer pressure and spiritual warfare. It is topped off with an excellent Bible study using the Book of 1 John. Just amazing!



PAUL TURNER

***The Long Haul: Following Jesus into College and Beyond* by Jeff Baxter (Zondervan)**
(Reviewed May/June issue.)

I may be biased because I have a 16-year-old daughter looking at colleges at the moment, but Jeff's book is a boon for any parent who needs resources and direction during this tricky phase of life.



JON PALMER

***Why We Love the Church: In Praise of Institutions and Organized Religion* by Kevin DeYoung and Ted Kluck (Moody Publishers)**
(See page 52 for full review.)

Why We Love the Church will make you ponder the damage Christians are doing to the Church through their words and actions. A must-read for anyone in or out of the Church!



STEVE RABEY

***Flickering Pixels: How Technology Shapes Your Faith* by Shane Higgs (Zondervan)**
(Reviewed November/December issue.)

***We Get to Carry Each Other: The Gospel According to U2* by Greg Garrett (Westminster John Knox Press)**
(Reviewed November/December issue.)

It was a good year for books on culture and pop culture. My top pick in the culture category was Shane Higgs' *Flickering Pixels: How Technology Shapes Your Faith* (Zondervan). Higgs, a former ad writer turned Mennonite pastor, channels media guru Marshall McLuhan and raises urgent questions about cultural influences and consumption. The top music book was Baylor prof Greg Garrett's *We Get to Carry Each Other: The Gospel According to U2* (Westminster John Knox Press), which overflows with quotes from U2's members, song lyrics, the Bible and theologians. This is a great book for a group study of U2's work. **YWJ**