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for MEN

CHRIS ANDERSON
& JOE TYRPAK

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for MEN

“A full month of meaty, masculine meditations. This is a wonderful resource for men seeking to deepen their understanding and build spiritual stamina. Each day’s reading is a rich feast. Devotional material of this quality for men is extremely hard to come by!”

—**Phil Johnson**, executive director of Grace to You

“The gospel is as necessary for daily life as it is for eternal life. This profound truth is made personal and accessible in *Gospel Meditations for Men*. Chris and Joe have helped us to see the glory of the Shepherd in the grace of the gospel. The soul food they have prepared is both sweet and nourishing. Thank you, brothers!”

—**Sam Horn**, vice president for ministerial advancement
at Bob Jones University, South Carolina

“Applying the gospel never gets old because we always need it. These fresh meditations serve men well.”

—**Andy Naselli**, assistant professor of New Testament and Theology
at Bethlehem College & Seminary, Minneapolis

“A model of robust biblical thinking, this little book is gospel gold, an ample treasury for men who long to renew their minds and be transformed by the mighty themes of the gospel.”

—**Milton Vincent**, author of *A Gospel Primer for Christians*
and pastor of Cornerstone Fellowship Bible Church, California

“I’ve often said that right thinking about the gospel produces right living in the gospel and that the gospel touches every sphere of life. With all my heart I believe this to be true, but the sad reality is that it is easier to say it than to practice it. *Gospel Meditations for Men* addresses this problem with pointed and practical applications of gospel truths that are designed to generate gospel thinking that translates to gospel living.”

—**Michael Barrett**, dean and professor at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and author of *Complete in Him* and *Beginning at Moses*

“Chris and Joe have co-authored a delightful and helpful little book of daily meditations. This is not one of those trendy Reformed “the Bible says all men have to act like John Wayne or cavemen with better table manners” kind of productions. Many of the devotions are simply gospel expositions, and those which have a male-specific orientation are on topics like lust, where male psychology is important.”

—**Carl Trueman**, professor of Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia

INTRODUCTION

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

Whether we’re writing songs, planning worship, or just fellowshiping together, Colossians 3:16 is never far from our minds. It’s a beautiful description of a church that is saturated with the gospel. We want this collection of meditations to help the word of Christ dwell richly in you. For that to happen, we urge you to read the passages recommended at the beginning of each devotional. If this or any other Christian book replaces the Bible rather than driving you further into it, it will harm you, not help you. Dig into the God-breathed, life-changing Scriptures.

On the other hand, Colossians 3:16 does commend our “teaching and admonishing” each other with the word of Christ. With that in mind, we’re glad to publish this booklet as a small part of that Christian-to-Christian instruction. We’ve done our best with both this book and its counterpart, *Gospel Meditations for Women*, to write expository studies that reflect the context of the Scriptures they address. We pray that you’ll grow in your appreciation and application of the gospel as you study them. And we’re hopeful it won’t stop with you. Though the word of Christ should be “at home” in your life, it shouldn’t stay there. It should burst forth in praising God (exaltation), reaching the lost (evangelism), and serving the body of Christ (edification). Don’t just take in the truth from these pages—do something with it!

We dedicate *Gospel Meditations for Men* to our fathers, Chuck Anderson and Peter Tyrpak. Both of them have consistently demonstrated to us what a life overflowing with gospel truth looks like. We’d also like to thank the members of Tri-County Bible Church, where we labored together for almost eight years. It’s at Tri-County where these truths were first preached. Because we love Christ, we love His church! Finally, many thanks to Abby Huffstutler and Greg Buchanan, who assisted us with meticulous editing. You’re brutal—in a good way!

May the Lord use this resource for the good of the church, the advancement of the gospel, and the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1:12).

For the sake of His name,

Chris Anderson & Joe Tyrpak

His Robes for Mine

READ ISAIAH 53 & 61:10

*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin,
so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

In Mark Twain's implausible but entertaining novel *The Prince and the Pauper*, two boys—identical in appearance, but opposites in social standing—trade positions and experiences by trading clothes. The prince longs for freedom from court life, so he puts on the rags of a guttersnipe. The pauper yearns for the comforts of the palace, so he dons the robes of royalty. The story aptly illustrates the biblical doctrine of imputation, which is essential to getting the gospel right. The boys were treated either well or ill entirely on the basis of their assumed identities. So it is for those who repent of their sins and trust in Jesus Christ as their only hope of salvation. God has made a “great exchange” in which His Son was treated like a sinner and repentant sinners are treated like His Son (2 Corinthians 5:21).

God clothed Jesus in our sins. The Father “made [Jesus] to be sin” (2 Corinthians 5:21a). The eternal Son of God “knew no sin”—He is the only person who has ever lived a sinless life (1 Peter 2:22). We, in stark contrast, are so morally polluted with the mire of sin that even our *best* acts are filthy rags (Isaiah 64:6). Yet, in great love for sinners and obedience to His Father's will, the sinless Savior donned the rags of the wicked. “He bore our sins in His body on the tree” (1 Peter 2:24). On the cross, Jesus was clothed in our rebellion, our lust, our deception. Even more astoundingly, He was punished by His Father as though He Himself were guilty of those sins. God forsook and crushed His Son (Matthew 27:46; Isaiah 53:4–6, 10). Jesus, draped in our sin, absorbed all of the wrath which our sin incurred. God's wrath was satisfied, and God's justice was appeased by the death of His own Son (1 John 2:1–2).

God clothes repentant sinners in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Beyond counting our sins against His Son, God completed the great exchange by crediting Jesus' obedience to us: “that in him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21b). Just as God treated heaven's Prince as though He were an enemy, so God also credits the righteousness of Christ to rebellious sinners and treats us as though we were sinless princes. This is the genius of the Bible doctrine of justification (Romans 3:21–26). All who trust in Christ are clothed in a righteousness that is *not our own* (what theologians rightly call an “alien righteousness”), the very righteousness Christ earned by His perfect obedience to the Father while He lived on earth (Philippians 3:9–10; Isaiah 61:10). In this divine version of *The Prince and the Pauper*, God has treated Christ and sinners not according to their actual identities but according to their exchanged robes and assumed roles. Christ was punished, the sinner pardoned. Christ was banished, the sinner welcomed. Christ was cursed, the sinner blessed. This is our only hope. Marvel at it. Respond to it by trusting Christ as your only Savior and treasuring Him as your greatest Joy.

*His robes for mine: such anguish none can know.
Christ, God's beloved, condemned as though His foe.
He, as though I, accursed and left alone;
I, as though He, embraced and welcomed home!*

Let the gospel provide the righteousness you lack.—CHRIS

Creation & New Creation

READ GENESIS 1

*For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,”
has shone in our hearts.*

2 CORINTHIANS 4:6

The way God created the world parallels the way the gospel affects the hearts of sinners (2 Corinthians 4:6). So when we read the first chapter of Genesis, we should marvel at God’s power to form the world with the word of His mouth; then we should let that deepen our confidence in God’s power to transform people with the word of the cross. Genesis 1 reveals three ways in which God created the universe, all of which build our confidence in the gospel.

God creates with His powerful word. Every one of the six days of creation opens with the words, “And God said.” God created the universe with nothing but His speech. Consider the power involved in that! A potter uses a wheel, clay, water, and his fingers. A carpenter uses wood, nails, hammers, and his biceps. God, however, used nothing but His own breath to create everything that exists. Compare the power of God’s word with your own. When you speak, how many listen? How many care? How many change? If you’re like me, you probably have difficulty getting even your own children to pay attention to what you say. But when God speaks, the universe comes into existence! This awesome power of God’s word is talked about throughout the rest of the Bible. “The word of God is living and active” (Hebrews 4:12). “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable”—even capable of saving and sanctifying sinners (2 Timothy 3:15–17; see 1 Peter 1:23). As God’s word was creatively powerful during the first six days of creation, so the gospel of Christ has the power to create life in the soul.

God creates by His Holy Spirit. “The Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Genesis 1:2)—This means that the Spirit was poised and ready to carry out whatever God commanded. It’s as if the hovering Spirit is a zealous soldier that’s pulsing with excitement as he eagerly anticipates the order from his commander’s lips. As soon as he hears the word, he’s ready to rush into action. Throughout the six days of creation, God spoke the word, and the Spirit executed it (see Psalm 104:30). Again, this reveals something significant about God’s mode of operation. As in creation, so in conversion: God wills it, and the Spirit works it. When we hear the message of the gospel, God’s Spirit is the One who convicts us, opens our eyes, gives us life, unites us with Christ, indwells us, and forever seals us as God’s possession.

God creates order from chaos. Have you ever wondered why we’re told at the outset of the week of creation that the earth was “without form and void, and [covered in] darkness” (Genesis 1:2)? It’s as if God draws back the curtain and lets us come “behind the scenes” and see how His initial creation of space and matter looked before He started forming it. God gives us this “backstage tour” because He wants us to know that His creative word always brings order out of disorder, that His creation always moves in the direction of beauty and completeness. After six days of creating, speaking, dividing, setting boundaries, and assigning names and purposes, “everything that He had made . . . was very good” (1:31).

God can bring beautiful order out of a ruined mess. Have you lost confidence in the power of the gospel? Do you feel empty and dark on the inside? What God did cosmically, He still does personally—through His Spirit-empowered Word.

Let the gospel’s power encourage you today.—JOE

Your Spiritual Self-Identity

READ 1 TIMOTHY 1

The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.

1 TIMOTHY 1:15

Men often define themselves by such things as politics, sports teams, and careers. But I'd like to ask you to define yourself *spiritually*. What is your spiritual self-identity? Are you an orthodox guy? A conservative guy? A family guy? A good guy? I suggest that the most obvious self-description of a Christian man—the one that pops most readily into your head—should be this: *"I'm a sinner in need of God's grace. I'm a mess, and I need Jesus."* First Timothy 1:15 should be your calling card, leading to two basic admissions.

"I'm a rebellious and undeserving sinner." Paul describes himself in 1 Timothy 1:15 as the foremost of sinners—the “chief,” as the King James Version says. He was ever mindful of his past as a blasphemer of God, a persecutor of Christ's church, and a violent opponent of God's work (1 Timothy 1:13; Acts 22:4; 26:9–11; 1 Corinthians 15:9; Galatians 1:13; Ephesians 3:8; Philippians 3:6). And, in addition to remembering his past offenses, Paul uses a present tense verb (“*I am* the foremost”) to claim that he was *still* the chief of sinners, even as a Christian.

Some suggest that Paul's statement was strictly factual: that Saul of Tarsus (also called Paul, Acts 13:9) was the worst sinner to ever walk the planet. That's saying a lot, both in light of history and with an eye on the many “depravity lists” Paul penned in the Scriptures (Romans 1:28–32; Galatians 5:24–25; 2 Timothy 3:1–9). Indeed, in 1 Timothy 1:9–10, just a few verses before his claim to be the worst (best?) sinner ever, Paul describes sinners as “lawless, disobedient, ungodly, unholy, and profane.” He specifically mentions parent abusers, murderers, fornicators, homosexuals, slave traders, liars, and perjurers. That's quite a list! Was Paul really a worse sinner than everyone else? Well, I tend to think he's reflecting a Christian's awareness of guilt rather than making an absolute claim. It's as if he's saying, “Whatever anyone else has done, I know my own heart, and I'm the worst sinner I know.” I think it's a self-assessment that I should share: *I'm* the chief of sinners; I'm more scandalized by what I see in myself than what I see in anyone else. And *you* should see yourself as the chief of sinners. That should be *your* self-identity.

"I'm a recipient of gospel grace through Jesus Christ." The point of 1 Timothy 1:15 isn't that you should wallow in self-condemnation. Paul highlights his own sin specifically to magnify Jesus' astounding power to save. What Paul is teaching about *Christ* is the point he describes as “trustworthy and deserving of all acceptance” (Paul's way of using bold, italicized caps): “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” He came to earth on a rescue mission, and He succeeded. That's why Paul so often rehearses the fact that Jesus endured the wrath of God which our sin has earned (Romans 3:25; 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3). Paul knew that he was saved in spite of himself. That's the point of the entire passage that surrounds our text (1 Timothy 1:13–17)—that every saved sinner is a trophy of God's grace!

In the shadow of the cross you'll see yourself as no better than any other sinner. Your wonder at your depravity and at Jesus' saving grace will never diminish. On your *best* day and *worst* day, you'll define yourself as a sinner saved by grace, all to Jesus' glory.

Let the gospel make you more aware of your own sin than anyone else's, and more aware of God's grace than either.—CHRIS

A Psalm for Life

READ PSALM 23 & JOHN 10

The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

PSALM 23:1

You're watching a movie in which someone dies. The scene fades from the quiet hospital room to a somber cemetery. It's raining. Everyone's wearing black clothing and standing under black umbrellas. As soon as the sound becomes audible, what do you hear? The minister reading Scripture—and nine times out of ten, it's Psalm 23: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." In our culture, Psalm 23 is the stereotypical funeral text. And Psalm 23 certainly provides comfort for dying Christians and for Christians who have lost a loved one. But the twenty-third Psalm wasn't written for funerals; it was written to provide comfort *for life*! It was intended for living, breathing men who are feeling threatened and helpless. It was penned by a man—a godly, masculine, exemplary king—to calm his fearful heart. What should you do when you're afraid, when you're going "through the valley of the shadow of death," when you're standing "in the presence of [your] enemies" (23:4–5)? You should sing Psalm 23: "The LORD is my shepherd; I have everything I need" (NLT).

What does your Shepherd do? First, He *revives* you (23:2–3a). In times of trial when you're hungry and tired, the Lord renews your strength by giving you the rest and food you need—both physically and spiritually. Second, He *leads* you (23:3b). You can be certain that your Shepherd will keep you from straying off the right path, because His name is at stake—His reputation is on the line (Isaiah 48:11). Third, the Lord *comforts* you with His presence (23:4). When you're going through the darkest times of your life, your Shepherd is there with you. You'll know His presence by how He defends you with His rod and disciplines you with His staff (Derek Kidner, *Psalms 1-72*, p. 111). Fourth, your Shepherd *blesses* you (23:5–6). His blessings will overflow even as you're surrounded by enemies, and His covenant love will continually "hunt you down" until the day you're with Him forever. Your Shepherd revives you, leads you, comforts you, and blesses you. Sing from your heart, "The LORD is my Shepherd; I have everything I need."

Who is your Shepherd? *The Lord* is your Shepherd. The God that created the heavens and the earth, the "I Am" that parted the Red Sea, the Commander that crumbled the walls of Jericho—He is your Shepherd. *The Lord Jesus* is your Shepherd. When Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd" (John 10:11), He was making an audacious claim. Many thought that He was "insane" (10:20) because He was saying in essence, "I am Jehovah, the Shepherd of Psalm 23." He followed that with a statement that was just as baffling: "The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep" (10:11). That's like saying, "The farmer's going to die for his cows." Unthinkable! That's a level of care and concern that no shepherd has ever had. You say, "But the shepherd ceases to look like a shepherd and starts to look like a sacrificial lamb." Precisely. *The Lamb* is your Shepherd. For all eternity, "the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be [your] shepherd" (Revelation 7:17). "The Lord is my Shepherd; I have everything I need."

Perhaps you've never noticed, but Psalm 23 doesn't command you to do anything. Why? Because you can't do one thing to make the Lord Jesus Christ a better Shepherd for you. You can't make Him love you more or protect you more than He does. Throughout all the trials and fears of your life, all you can do is rest in the care of your Good Shepherd.

Let the gospel calm your fears.—JOE

The Basis for True Humility

READ ISAIAH 6

*Woe is me! For I am lost...
for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.*

ISAIAH 6:5

Humans—and perhaps men in particular—are nothing if not proud. We love ourselves, promote ourselves, and defend ourselves. Arrogance is sewn into our fallen nature. The problem is this: God detests pride. Proverbs 16:5 says that the proud *person* (not just pride as an impersonal concept) is an abomination to God. James 4:6 teaches that God actively opposes the proud. Pride is dangerous and foolish. Spurgeon described pride as “a groundless thing” and “a brainless thing” and “the maddest thing that can exist” (in a sermon preached on August 17, 1856).

How, then, can we cultivate humility? Is it a way of walking or speaking? Is it an “*Aw, shucks*” personality? A self-loathing? On what is true humility based? Scripture answers these questions definitively in Isaiah 6:1–7. True humility begins with a right estimation of God.

Our humility grows when we recognize God’s unrivaled majesty. The prophet Isaiah was given the unfathomable privilege of seeing God’s majesty (6:1)—the glory of the pre-incarnate Christ, according to John 12:41! Jehovah was enthroned in the temple, which shook beneath His sovereignty (6:1, 4). His robe had a vast train which testified of His splendor (6:1). He was identified as “the King” and “the Lord of hosts” (think “Commander in Chief,” 6:5). His reign outshone the recently ended reign of King Uzziah (6:1). Whereas Uzziah had died, Jehovah lives. Whereas Uzziah’s reign was limited in time and sphere, Jehovah’s is infinite. There is no King like Christ. We too would be humbled if we would see God in all of His majesty.

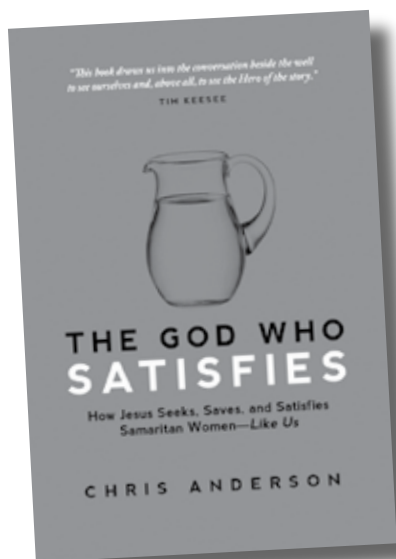
Our humility grows when we recognize God’s unrivaled glory. Verses 2–4 go on to describe angelic worship in God’s presence. Seraphim surround the throne of God and call out His praises. They’ve done so since their creation, are doing so today, and will continue to do so for eternity. Their flying signifies service. Their covering of their faces and feet shows reverence and humility, which is astounding. As magnificent as the seraphim are—and their very title means “fiery ones”—they’re *still* humbled before God. He alone is “Holy, holy, holy” (6:3); He is completely unique; no one is like Him. Even sinless angels have no grounds for boasting before their matchless Creator. We too would be humbled if we would see God in all of His glory.

Our humility grows when we recognize God’s unrivaled purity. Finally, in Isaiah 6:5, the prophet responded to what he had seen by acknowledging his own sinfulness. Although he lived in a notoriously wicked nation (as he testified throughout the book), he didn’t presume to side with God in condemning sinners “out there.” Rather, he saw himself as a part of the sin problem all around him. He needed cleansing, which God mercifully granted (6:6–7). Isaiah, one of the godliest men of history, needed the forgiveness provided by the ultimate altar, the cross of Christ (Hebrews 10:10, 14). We too would be humbled if we would see God in all of His purity.

True humility is rooted in the gospel. We find it in studying Christ through the Scriptures and responding to Him with faith, love, and worship. My friend Tim Potter puts it this way: “Humility is constantly measuring ourselves by God.” Bow to Jesus, and watch the gospel remove your pride even as it reveals it.

Let the gospel crush your pride.—CHRIS

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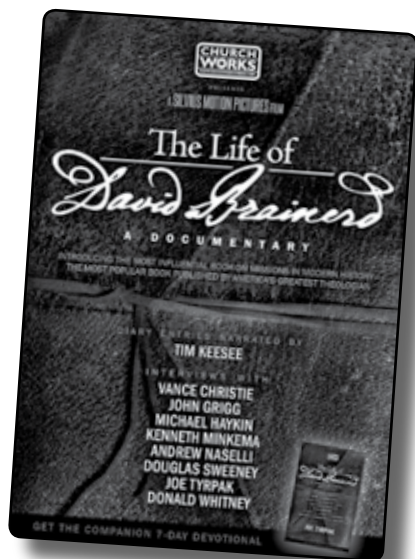


"In this little book, a gifted poet transitions to prose. I have known Chris Anderson for over two decades, first as a student and then as a fellow laborer in the work of the Kingdom. This book's focus on the Samaritan woman is full of Christ and the glorious gospel of grace. Written in an easy-to-read, popular style full of real-life illustrations, the book effectively links helpful background facts and precisely-stated theological truths to experiential application. It is a book that can be used for evangelism as well as for warming the believer's heart to renewed gratitude for what Christ has abundantly supplied."

—**Michael P. V. Barrett**, dean and professor at
Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and
author of *Complete in Him* and *Beginning at Moses*

"This DVD documentary represents an excellent introduction to the life and ministry of the famed missionary. Together the interviewees paint a picture of Brainerd that is informed by the best scholarship, is honest about his various struggles and failures, but remains warmly sympathetic to Brainerd's life, thought, and missionary zeal. The film itself reflects quality craftsmanship and includes many beautiful shots of locations that were prominent in Brainerd's life, original manuscripts of his writings, and portraits, statues, and other memorials of figures discussed in the documentary. The film should prove a helpful resource for use in local church Sunday School classes, small groups, and discussion groups."

—**Nathan A. Finn**, dean and professor at Union
University and writer for the Jonathan Edwards
Center at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School



OTHER TITLES IN THIS SERIES



Gospel Meditations for Women

“Wrestling with guilt and frustration, far too many Christian women are living below the privileges of their spiritual inheritance. The solution is not found in any strengthened resolve of duty, but rather in having souls settled in the blessed liberty of Christ through the sweet enjoyment of the gospel. A union of sound doctrine and practical teaching, *Gospel Meditations for Women* beautifully highlights those unbinding messages of grace that so powerfully ignite joyful passion for Christ and holy living. What an invaluable resource!”

—**Holly Stratton**, conference speaker and blogger at *LifeHurts.us*



Gospel Meditations for the Church

“We have come to expect meaty, edifying, superbly written devotional entries from Chris Anderson and his team. Here are thirty-one more, and they don’t disappoint.”

—**Phil Johnson**, executive director of Grace to You



Gospel Meditations for Missions

“By almost any standard—the intentionality of local churches to train, assess, and prepare prospective missionaries; the length of time it takes a missionary to raise support; the little sense of gospel partnership we have with the missionaries we do support—Western Christians don’t do missions very well. The reason we don’t do missions well is that we’ve not thought about missions well. This book has our poor thinking about missions in its crosshairs.”

—**Matthew Hoskinson**, pastor of The First Baptist Church in New York City and author of *Assurance of Salvation*



Gospel Meditations for Prayer

“Brief and biblical, these meditations are full of sharp edges. They lead us to pray as cross-bearing disciples of Christ. Yet Anderson, Tyrrak, and Trueman comfort us with Christ’s perfect grace for fallen people. So *Gospel Meditations for Prayer* is an encouraging book, but one designed to stretch you.”

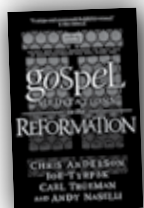
—**Joel Beeke**, president of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, and editor of *Taking Hold of God: Reformed and Puritan Perspectives on Prayer*



Gospel Meditations for Christmas

“This work is more than a mere devotional and collection of meditations for Christmas. These meditations are a mini Christology. I hope they will be read far beyond December. There is too much truth here to be relegated to the Christmas season alone. I highly recommend this work for your greater understanding and worship of Jesus Christ.”

—**Rick Holland**, pastor of Mission Road Bible Church, Kansas City, and professor of Homiletics at The Expositor’s Seminary



Gospel Meditations on the Reformation

“Theologically rich, thoughtful, and historically rooted devotionals are a rare treat. This volume, which unfolds the theological commitments and pastoral heart of the Reformers, is a unique and enormously helpful devotional.”

—**R. Albert Mohler, Jr.**, president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville

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About the Authors



CHRIS ANDERSON has pastored since 1997. He's the senior pastor of Killian Hill Baptist Church in Lilburn, Georgia. He has written dozens of modern hymns published by Church Works Media and has recently published his first full-length book, *The God Who Satisfies*. He and his wife, Lori, have four daughters.



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