



Marketplace Moments

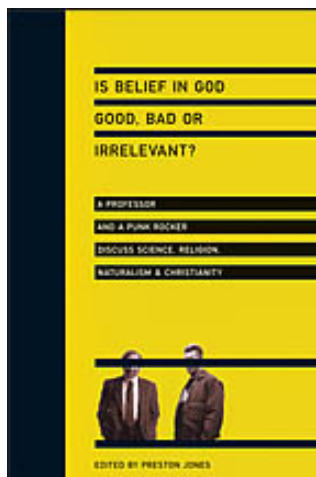
Bibliophoria

Is Believe in God Good, Bad or Irrelevant?

A Professor and a Punk Rocker Discuss Science, Religion, Naturalism & Christianity

Greg Graffin is frontman, singer and songwriter for the punk band Bad Religion. He also happens to have a Ph.D. in zoology and wrote his dissertation on evolution, atheism and naturalism. Preston Jones is a history professor at a Christian college and a fan of Bad Religion's music. One day, on a whim, Preston sent Greg an appreciative e-mail. That was the start of an extraordinary correspondence.

For several months, Preston and Greg sent e-mails back and forth on big topics like God, religion, knowledge, evil, evolution, biology, destiny and the nature of reality. Preston believes in God; Greg sees insufficient evidence for God's existence. Over the course of their friendly debate, they tackle such cosmic questions as: Is religion rational or irrational? Does morality require belief in God? Do people only believe in God because they are ge-



netically predisposed toward religion? How do we make sense of suffering in the world? Is this universe all there is? And what does it all matter?

In this engaging book, Preston and Greg's actual e-mail correspondence is reproduced, along with bonus materials that provide additional background and context. Each makes his case for why he thinks his worldview is more compelling and explanatory. While they find some places to agree, neither one convinces the other. They can't both be right. So which worldview is more plausible? You decide.

From **Inter-Varsity Press Web-Site**.
<http://www.ivpress.com/>

Additional review available from www.breakpoint.org, commentary dated 22 Aug, 2006

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香港基督徒畢業生團契

Graduates Christian Fellowship of Hong Kong

Graduates Christian Fellowship of Hong Kong

<http://www.gcf.org.hk>

It is hard to find good materials expounding on marketplace ministry. Much less is available in the Chinese language. Thank God that all is not loss. A group of brothers and sisters are as much involved in similar pursuit of upholding God in all areas of our life, including the workplace. As a fore-runner of the movement in Asia, GCF Hong Kong have accumulated a wealth of materials and reflections on the topic of integrating work and

faith.

What is most relevant is a large achieve of articles and reflections from working professionals for working professionals. Areas of discussion covers topics such as 'Work and Calling', 'Public Square', 'Theology', 'Marketplace Concepts', 'Young Graduates Forum'.

The web-site also provides a list of book reviews pertaining to Chinese publications. They have their own publishing arm under FES Hong Kong as well for a number of translated materials besides local

and overseas Chinese writers.

There are also articles and past talks or seminars materials available for downloading.

The only draw back is that they are in the standard form Chinese rather than the simplified form that most Singaporeans are familiar with. There is also quite a bit of Cantonese flow in the language rather than Mandarin, primary for their audience. Nonetheless, this is an excellent site for Chinese language materials but would probably require some contextualization and localization when we use it here in Singapore. Happy surfing.

By Timothy Liu

Of the Heart and Mind

Lessons from an old Order

In the age of the internet and media advertising, we are constantly looking for something newer, better, bigger. This is even true of some Christians in pursuit of some 'new' spirituality. Many times, we forget to look backwards and learn lessons from those who have gone before us.

I was having lunch with Henry who shared with me his own encounter of the verses, ²³ *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for*

men, ²⁴ *since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. (Col 3:23-24),* not from an intellectual capacity but from a holy reverence when the toil of work gets to us.

What does it mean to be 'as working for the Lord?' In the midst of brushing our teeth, clearing paper jams from the copier, receiving a call for quotation, changing my son's diaper; mundane daily tasks. We find some clues from the Benedictine monks. Joan Chittis-

ter, quoted in Philip Yancy's 'Rumors of Another World' summarized spirituality as 'living the ordinary life extraordinarily well... if we are not spiritual where we are and as we are, we are not spiritual at all.'

Like the eyes of a curator, who spot the stroke of masters, the maestro who hears the notes of a clarinet, we too must train to see the hand print and hear the whisper of our God in and through the ordinary and the mundane and worship the Almighty.

By Timothy Liu

Eyes in a Darkened Room

Transformation and Transportation - Strutting your stuff Mad, Hot Ballroom

(PG), 2005, Nickelodeon Movies/Paramount Classics, Marilyn Agrelo, Director, & Produced by Amy Sewell

Perhaps it's happened to you, or perhaps you've read or heard about it happening to someone else, that special something/someone (music, acts of service, teacher, counselor, etc.) which magically changed your life or the life of another person. Music has been that special something for me at different points in my life

and to a lesser extent, dance also. One of my most vivid memories ever is of leaping (it felt like flying) through the air in a ballet dance class I took while in college. In those fleeting instants of music and/or movement, you taste an ecstasy at once ethereal, even 'redemptive', but always transforming. Could something so anachronistic as ballroom dancing have a similar effect on city-hardened students in New York City?

In 2002, soon after the 9/11 terrorists attacks in the United States, the American Ballroom Theatre offered a 10-week crash course in ballroom dancing to 6,000 children in the New York City's



public Schools. Director Marilyn Agrelo and producer Amy Sewell decided to do a documentary following these students through that period. These are gawky Primary 5 students aged 10 to 11. In the beginning, they fumble awkwardly as they are put through the basic paces. For some, you can see the sulkiness of childhood skepticism. The de-

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Admittedly, this movie is not getting any awards at the next Oscars. It was an afternoon where my wife and I need a break from children, work etc. We decided on something silly.

The movie talks of Michael Newman (Adam Sandler), an architect who is overworked by his boss. And a loving father and husband In jest of our obsession with remote controls, which Michael always have difficulty finding the right one to use, decided to get a 'universal' one at the store, only to find one which can skip chap-



ters of life, like an argument with the wife, mute annoying conversation and fast forward to the next promotion.

This all seems well until Michael

finds himself fast forwarding an ever increasing episode of life itself.

It has been a while since I have watched a movie that is funny, cheeky and also touching. We really like the ending. In our endless pursuit for success, it is a good reminder that we are not to miss out on the things truly important. It also has a wonderful cast with Kate Winslet (Pearl Harbour), veteran actors Christopher Walken and Henry Winkler (Happy Days).

By Timothy Liu

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▶ Kingdom Building at the Workplace



Coming Events

Reality Café.

02 Sep – Mission Impossible?
(Date change from 26 Aug)
07 Oct – Rojak and Poh Piah

2pm-5pm at 03-05, Bible House,
7 Armenian Street. Register with
Elaine, info@marketplacechristian.
net. Drinks and Snacks provided
(RSVP)

GCF Annual Dinner

15 Sep – Is Our Public Square Naked?
Speaker: Richard Magnus
(RSVP) – Call Simon 63144910 or e-
mail gcfsing@gcf.org.sg

For more information check our web-
site.

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mands of the discipline are not helped by flat-footedness or other gross and fine motor skills required of children not accustomed to any undertaking that demands grace and poise. Not surprisingly, from the start, the girls are more eager, earnest, determined. Predictably also there is the awkwardness that comes with close physical contact and other attendant social graces such as bowing and waiting upon one's dance partner- the necessary but foreign niceties of a distant (grown-up) age yet to be discovered. However, as the weeks progress and fluency with the language of dance increases, the physical as well as psychological transformation in these children is almost palpable. That change is heightened no doubt by progressive competitions that culminate in a final dance-off at the Winter Gardens of the World Financial Center - the very same venue that was a ghostly cathedral in the aftermath of 9/11.

Because the schools followed in this documentary are located in different boroughs of New York City, the differences in attitudes, ethnic traits, values, and social perspectives are poignantly apparent. As an example, in brief discussions among the girls from Washington Heights, a predomi-

nantly poor neighborhood with a large immigrant population, mostly from the Dominican Republic, it is obvious that these children are street-wise beyond their years.

Recently I recommended this movie to the principal of my son's school who I had heard is open to the idea of using movies to 'educate' his teachers about the psychology of educating students. I hope he takes me up on that suggestion. Here is a documentary movie with observations that are worth some discussion.

Questions to ponder:

1. How did ballroom dancing have a positive effect on the students? Do you think it had any negative effects?
2. After watching this, do you know anyone or group(s) of people who might benefit from ballroom dancing? Why?
3. Can dance be a medium used in to communicate the gospel or in reaching the lost? How so? Who are some people for whom it might be more effective than traditional evangelism methods so?

By Yap Vong Hin