



Marketplace Moments

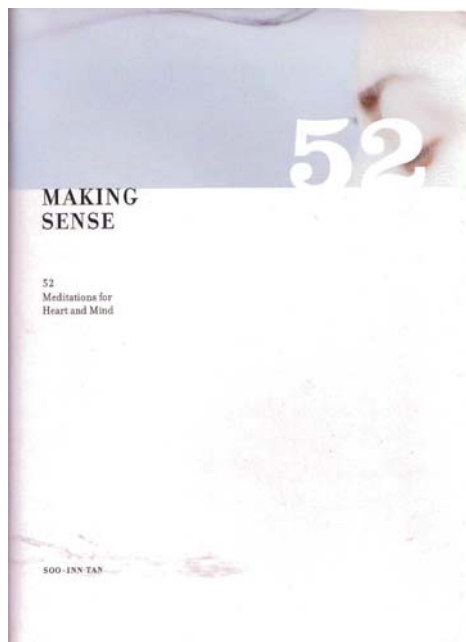
Bibliophoria

Making Sense

By Soo-Inn Tan

There are many books that talk about the Christian faith. Much has focused on the gathered life of the people of God, primarily on Sundays and perhaps in small groups. Many advocates living a Christian lifestyle limiting to prayer, bible reading and primarily in the home. Part of my attempt in this column is to introduce books about Christians engaging life and work from a biblical perspective. Many write on the theology of work, on ministry in daily life, but very few books reflect on how this is applied. Finding a local writer who reflects and documents on the one hand the bible and on the other the joy and sorrows of living is like finding a needle in a haystack. Thank God that He has created the needle and He led me to find it.

Soo-Inn writes in his preface, 'If God is real, He must be real in all areas of life. Any division of life into 'sacred' and 'secular' compartments is an approach to faith and spirituality that will not hold. *Making Sense* is a collection of essays that struggles to apply a Christian mindset to the realities of daily life. They stem from the conviction that if God is real, then He and his Word must be relevant to the struggles that we face in the world.'



Many of us professes that God is the Lord of our lives. However, in the ebb and flow of living in the modern day, it is so easy to forget how God fits into the picture, in the routines of traveling, working, eating, cleaning, washing, caring for children or parents, going to a park, grieving, traffic jams, queuing, watching TV, going to church...

My wife and I were just talking about how easy it is to forget about the role of God in our busyness, in our frustration and then we wonder, where is God? Well, he is always with us, if only we will take note....

By Timothy Liu

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Eyes in a Darkened Room

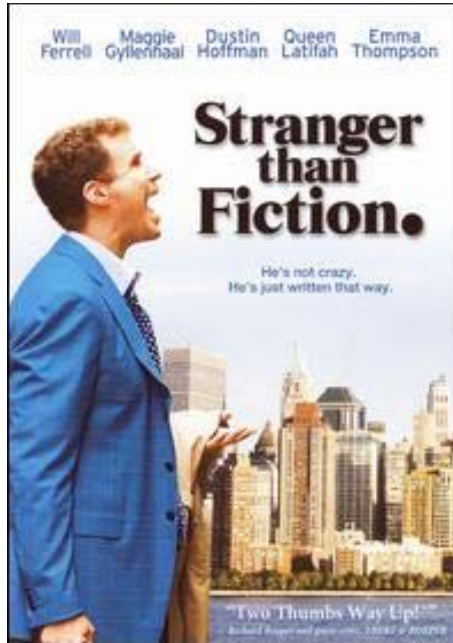
Stranger than Fiction

Harold Crick (Will Ferrell) is a tax agent, living every moment of his life by the ticking of his faithful watch, counting brush strokes or steps or tiles in meaningless existence. Kay Eiffel (Emma Thompson) is a nearly forgotten author of tragic novels who is struggling to complete her latest book. One day, Harold hears a voice, which only he can hear, narrating his own life. That voice was the writing of Kay, which Harold is ultimately guided by the words she writes in her book.

I never quite imagine doing a review of Will Ferrell's movie, which are generally quite lame. This however, with Emma Thompson, evokes a number of great points to consider.

It first brings us to consider a great theological matter which continues to be debated. How does humans' God given free will and His sovereign will ultimately plays out? Is God like someone of Kay, typing out the story of our life?

The plot ultimately draws



to how Harold will die. Kay has a choice on how she will end the story as her tragic novels essentially has all the heroes dying.

If we are given a choice, as Harold and Kay were given, how will we write out the ending of our own or even someone else's life? Ultimately, we all die, do you have a preference in the manner of our death? Harold finally came back to Kay with the words (paraphrased), 'I cannot find a more poetic and

meaningful way to end it.'

In movies and in our own lives, many loathes meaningless and senseless death, particularly in the aftermath of the Virginia Tech shootings. If life is but random and accidental, then why is there, for many, a deep yearning and search for purpose and meaning?

FIR, the Mandarin pop group has a piece called the "Song Bird". The song bird sings more beautifully than any other and its' voice transcends heaven and earth. But with that one song, it uses all its' strength. When the song ends, so does its' life. Even Whitney Houston has her ballade "One Moment in Time".

Questions for reflection

- 1) How would you like you life to end? Given a choice, would you pick a short glamorous life or a long simple life?
- 2) How are you living in God's purpose and finding meaning in your life?
- 3) If you have a sentence or two to carve on your grave, what will it read?

By Timothy Liu

Of the Heart and Mind

Works of Praise

The example of a godly women is oft quoted in Proverbs 31. She has no name. Her diligence puts many men to shame. Her managerial skills and entrepreneurship is beyond her time. She is a working mother running a property,

linen and clothing and agricultural business and managing her family.

Towards the end she was praised for her love of God and her work (Pr 31:30,31). At times as a man, I wonder what the husband is for? Rather than just an example for women, she is an example of

a devoted and full life amidst the ordinary and mundane to all. It is the quality of 'surpassing' v29 and finding joy in all she does v25 that I believe sets her apart.

To all mothers working, paid or unpaid,

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY

Of the Heart and Mind

Finding Comfort?

I was up late in the night, probably after all the stimulation at work and too much coffee.

Surfing the channels, I will try to get some updates on the shooting incident at Virginia Tech. I came across CNN which had the live telecast of the Convocation service for those students who were shot. It was a tragic incident, a real life tragedy, for both the victims and the perpetrator.

It was indeed senseless and meaningless. It caught my attention that various religious leaders were to give comforting words to the community. The first was an Imam (religious teacher) of the Islamic faith, the second was a leader from the Buddhist community, third was from the Jewish faith and lastly a Christian pastor.

Each took turn to provide comforting words and thoughts from each religious tradition. It was unfortunate (or perhaps deliberate) that when the pastor was about to speak, someone at CNN decides that it should be switched back to the studio for useless commentaries on what has just

happened. (Yawn).

It was a lesson in comparative religion. Perhaps that break prompts me to wonder what I as a Christian, would have said on that platform? What would you have said?

We know as believers in Christ that God is an all powerful, just and loving God. But if He is all powerful, just and loving, then why does He allow such to happen? Many, even Christians doubt the 'hesed' (a difficult Hebrew word to translate, but usually as loving-kindness) of God at such times. Michael Card in his book 'Sacred Sorrow' goes in depth to elaborate on the meaning of 'hesed'. For many of us, the seeming irony is just too much to bear.

For a man like Jeremiah, who is acquainted with much sorrow and grief, perhaps what we need to find is not the reason for such senseless death although I am sure God has a loving and just explanation. Perhaps it is not just plain fatalism; that it is the will of God. I don't believe a just and loving God wills people to die in that manner. Perhaps it is not just a season and a time, 'a time to live and a time to die'. Even more I be-

lieve, is not karma, that it was payment for past sins in a previous life.

Perhaps, the key to finding comfort is in the words of Jeremiah in the book of Lamentations, which he writes, 'Remember my affliction and my bitterness, the wormwood and the gall! My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore I have hope: The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness. "The Lord is my portion," says my soul, "therefore I will hope in Him." The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.' Lam 3:19-25

Perhaps more than anything, comfort is found not in philosophy, religion or community (though they are helpful in some ways). But true comfort comes from a person, the person of Christ Jesus, whose steadfast love never ceases. Perhaps 'hesed' is better understood in a true sense of steadfast love.

So whatever your struggle may be, may you find rest in the steadfast love of His love. They are new every morning!

By Timothy Liu



Photo from Wikipedia

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**Kingdom Building
at the Workplace**

Coming Events

**May 24 (Thu) - Open Forum
Intelligent Design—Science or Faith**
7:30pm St. Andrews Cathedral

**May 25 (Fri) - Public Meeting
Darwinism and Intelligent Design**
7:30pm St. Andrews Cathedral

May 27 (Sun) - Global Day of Prayer
7:00pm National Stadium

May 31 (Thu) - Lift Jesus in the Health Field
2:30pm-6:30pm at Chapel of the Holy Spirit
(Seminar fee of S\$15 applies)

For more information check our web-site.

