



Marketplace Moments

Happy New Year !!!

Bibliophoria

Comic Book Character David A. Zimmerman

It would seem odd that Christians would be taking comics seriously when a large part of the world seems to ignore it as sub-culture. But perhaps precisely that, comics unknown to many has a large part to play in shaping cultures and reflects culture. Consider the hits of super-heroes among the young and teens, the anime of the Japanese, Chinese and Korean comics. From the early days of Gundam, Gatchaman to western varieties of X-men etc. They range from simple comedy, adventure, drama, horror to love. It has not only captured the imagination of the very young but also young adults and older.

Zimmerman, as astute cultural critic and self-avowed comic book fanboy, turns a thoughtful eye to the world of costumed heroes and villains, showing how these iconic tales of good versus evil tap into universal human yearnings for justice and righteousness. Exploring the complex personas of characters like Superman and Batman, Spider-Man and the X-Men, Zimmerman unveils their cultural significance as models of moral character, virtue and heroism. Ultimately, placing comic book stories in dialogue with the Christian story sheds light on who we are, what we value and how we live. (From back cover).



This is a great book to see how one Christian uses his Christian worldview to critic and make connections of comic stories and characters to the Christian story. We can then think of our own journey as a comic reader or non-Christian friends who are avid comic fan and use comic as a bridge to discuss congruent or opposing worldview, about what is truth, love, justice, struggles with identity and humanity. Consider why many heroes wear masks to hide their identity? Why people respond differently to tragedies in their lives? You may find yourself both fascinated by the story and at the same time humbled by their reflection of life and culture.

By Timothy Liu

Inside this issue:

Bibliophoria	1
Of the Heart and Mind	2
Eyes in a Darkened Room	3
What's Up?	4

Highlights

- Comic Book Character
- Lonely Journey?
- Yes, Minister
- Events Update

Of the Heart and Mind

Lonely Journey?

It was a game that we picked up at my daughter's graduation party with her friends from her kindergarten. A Christian version of 'Snake and Ladder'. It was to help young children learn and memorize scripture verses and hymn choruses. Otherwise, it is 'Snake and Ladder'. The objective when you reach from 0 to 100, was to go to heaven (no brainer, duh).

My wife took to the task to play the game with her after we opened it and Charis happily participated. Charis was quite excited initially and the prospect of winning seems nearer. As she approached the idea of 'going to heaven' first before mummy, she suddenly stopped and said, "mummy, let us go together. I don't want to go alone."

There are many that fear death and that includes some Christians. But for those of us who have hope in Jesus, that should not be so. We will be spending eternity in the presence of God Almighty, in fellowship with Christ, together with all the saints and angels.

REV 21:1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. ² I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them.

They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. ⁴ He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."

Many fear death because there is no hope. Some Christians fear death because there is no relationship. It is not just about the fear of death. For us Christians, death should be embraced truly in the words of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 1:20-26, "²⁰ I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

Paul was torn between his love for his Lord and his calling from his Lord. If only many of us can live with such passion for both. More than not fearing death or the loneliness, Paul passionately look forward to that day. I wonder how



many of us REALLY look forward to that day when we return to Christ or when Christ returns? It is like one who is separated for a long time, yearning for a day of reunion. Or are we quite comfortable in our cosmopolitan life in Singapore that reuniting with Christ becomes simply an occasional or after thought? The intensity is directly proportionate to the depth of relationship with Christ.

There are some, who are so heavenly minded, they are of no earthly use. This is not the case with Paul. His love for Christ draws him deeply into an urgency of the calling for the work of the gospel and good work. If we are to go on living in the body, then, let it mean fruitful labor. Fruitful labor in our daily work of tending to God's creation, loving those around us and kingdom building through Christian witness in a fallen world.

At this new year, will you be able to say with Paul, "As for me, to live is Christ and to die is gain"? Have a blessed year ahead and may the Lord bless the work of your hands as you love Him and serve Him.

By Timothy Liu

Eyes in a Darkened Room

Yes, Minister/Prime Minister

This was 'The Office' of the 80s with much more wit and fun. The television series follows Rt. Hon. James Hacker (played by Paul Eddington), MP, Minister for Administrative Affairs, pitting his self-serving agendas with the wit of Sir Humphrey Appleby (Nigel Hawthorne), the epitome of civil service, aptly described by BBC web-site as 'the unflappable symbol of a machine that has no gears, only brakes.' Between them is an honest, sometimes clueless Principle Private Secretary; Bernard Woolley (Derek Fowlds) who is torn between sympathy for his minister and his loyalty as a civil servant.

The first series, 'Yes, Minister' started airing in 1980 based on the writings of Jay Anthony. A transition Christmas episode in 1984, 2 years after the last episode of 'Yes, Minister', where Sir Humphrey was promoted to Cabinet Secretary and Jim Hacker, in a tussle for party leadership, has his dream fulfilled as Prime Minister of Great Britain. The second series of 'Yes, Prime Minister' began. Today, both series have achieved cult status with the passing of Paul Eddington in



Derek Fowlds

1995.

You may ask why bring forward something so 'ancient' in media chronology? I believe this is a classic and provides both breath and depth to Christians in the marketplace and public square.

Consider how the various macro issues presents themselves in matters ranging from having policies of foreign relations, toxic wastes, education, healthcare, defense, patrons of the arts, local government, necessary evils and the greater good, to micro issues we encounter on a daily basis such as pay and status, access to information and persons, truth and consciences, loyalty, trust, camaraderie, taking sides, conflict of interests, personal pursuits and so on.

In the episode of the Tangled Web, Jim Hackers unknowing lied in the House of Parliament. Humphrey feels that he has a moral responsibility to tell the truth. But more than that, a tussle of what is the ethics of a 'need to know' basis. As a senior manager, what is considered as 'need to know'? When Hacker demanded the he 'needed to know everything', he was buried under cases of documents and papers, ranging from pencils acquisitions to other miscellaneous. What would a Christian response be?

In another episode on Power to the People, there was discussion about what the various perspective of democracy is. De-

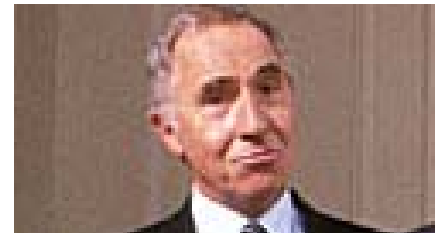


Paul Eddington

mocracy in most countries are perceptions of political parties, policy speeches. Very few people really know their political representative personally. More is dependent on party politics and their machineries. However, one suggestion, that is 'truly democratic' is of 10–20 people forming a small group, electing their own representative who then meet in larger groups of local government of 10-20 and so on. Because people know each other, there is no real need for party machineries. Would that be the best form of government?

While laughing off Hacker's oft mix analogies, Bernard's innocent remedies that usually makes things worse and Sir Humphrey's highly eloquent but empty verbiage, therein lies issues that can bring forward more weighty issues that influence our livelihood and more sober considerations. Highly entertaining (if you like British style humour) and thought provoking.

By Timothy Liu



Nigel Hawthorne

**Marketplace
Christian Network**

Teban Garden Post Office
PO Box 669
Singapore 916003



Phone: +65 6872 4732
Email: info@marketplacechristian.net
Web-site:
▶ www.marketplacechristian.net

**Kingdom Building
at the Workplace**

Coming Events

For more information check our web-site.

Happy New Year

