



Marketplace Moments

Bibliophoria

Inside this issue:

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

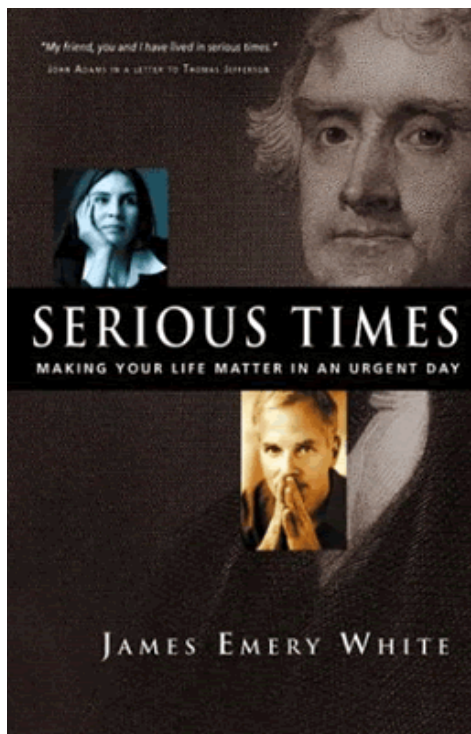
Serious Times

James Emery White

It started with a simple letter from John Adams to Thomas Jefferson towards the end of their lives with the quote, "My friend, you and I have lived in serious times." They were the founding fathers together with George Washington in the struggle for independence of the United States of America. White, takes first a historical perspective of history and speaks of a 'second fall' The first fall led to God expelling Adam and Eve from the Garden. The 'second fall' occurred when men returned the favor. 'The leaders of science and commerce, of education and political machination have ceased operating with any reference to a transcendent truth, much less a deity.' He traces from modernity to post-modernity.

White rightly observes, 'But what kind of Christian will this take? The world is full of Christ followers—committed ones—particularly in the United States. Yet the tide does not seem to be turning...But what is to be developed? I return again and again to two areas: my mind and my soul. And the outposts I must fill? It would be hard to miss the front lines of kingdom advance: my vocation in the world and my place in the body of Christ, the church.'

I like how Lon Allison (Director of Billy Graham Center) writes of the book. "My soul is quaking under the impact of



this book. Rather than another yawning treatise on cultural demise, Jim White calls us to 'kick at the darness till it bleeds light.' And the way we kick, he rightly assesses, is with 'deepened souls and developed minds.' Fill our churches, Lord, with such illumined saints, and start with me"

There comes a time when every generation of Christians is invited to respond to the needs of a desperate world. Yet many times, as Richard John Neuhaus writes that we live in a "naked public square". Even as we live in this tiny island state of Singapore, are we ready to rise to the occasion? My friends, you and I are living in Serious Times.

By Timothy Liu

Highlights

- Serious Times
- What is man?
- Shortcut to Happiness
- Events Update

Of the Heart and Mind

What is Man?

There were some recent events (distinctly different) that through the inspiration of a journalist of ZaoBao (蔡深江) had somehow made connections.

Edison Chen (陈冠希) became the first Rat (过街老鼠) on the street to be beaten in the new year. His recent notoriety in the Chinese entertainment news of being the source of many lewd photos of former actress/singer girlfriends on the internet was condemned by netizens to be 'bestly behaviour'. When people let their guards down and rely solely on base desires, people do foolish things, even behaviours befitting beasts.

Back to the little red dot and we find an almost human status of Ah Meng, the beloved Orang Utan of the Singapore Zoo who has passed on (if I may even use this phrase). There was even a funeral service for Ah Meng!!! People cried and remembered its' almost human life interaction of the famous 'Breakfast with Ah Meng'. Only a few days later, the zoo lost another baby orang utan in a panic of other orang utans trying to save it when it was caught in a tangle of ropes.

It almost seems strange as we consider when animal ends and human begins in this reversal between human and beast. Many pet owners will attest to some human like characteristics of their pets and perhaps wonders sometimes if humans are worse than animals.



PS 8:4 what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? PS 8:5 You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. (Psalms 8:4,5)

What does it mean to be 'imago dei' (made in the image of God)? GE 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." Genesis 2:7 writes, 'the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.'

This is further complicated by the recent call for feedback by the Bioethics Advisory Committee (BAC) on the issue of chimeras (human-animal combination cells).

Unless Christian can fully appreciate what it means to be made in the image of God, we will continue to grope in the dark as to how to engage a postmodern world with an under girding of Darwinism that is atheistic in its' worldview.

One of the key distinction between humans and animals is the ability to distinguish and make a moral choice. This ability to choose doing the 'right thing' can be achieved despite physical and/or psychological predisposition.

Consider a dog who walks by a fire hydrant and is pre-disposed biologically to take a pee. Humans can decide to do it at a later and more appropriate context. I don't think a group of dogs will be able to congregate to discuss the morality of passing urine at the fire hydrant in concern for the environment.

The common mantra of many is that "I was born such and such way" is to deny imago dei and make cheap the high calling to be human. Such a mantra places human on the same level of animals and therefore could not speak of (or even suggestion) anything morality. Can for example pedophiles hide behind this mantra and commit crimes against children and says that it is because "I was born this way" and get away with it? If we buy the Darwinist or the postmodern worldview of relative morality, this is exactly the 'natural' conclusion we will come to.

By Timothy Liu

Eyes in a Darkened Room

Shortcut to Happiness

Set in modern day New York, it is a classic fable about Jabez Stone (Alec Baldwin) who has come to wits end as a kind hearted but struggling writer. He had great friends and self-respect. That is until, in a desperate moment, when he had lost his job, 500 dollars left and was thrown out by legendary publisher Daniel Webster (Anthony Hopkins), he traded his soul for 'success' in a contract with the Devil (Jennifer Love Hewitt).

Despite a great cast, the movie fall short of anything really



fresh but it is still worth a view because it continues to deal with a very essential topic in contemporary life: What is success? What I like about the movie is the last segment after all the money and women that Bez has gotten but finally wants out, consummates into a celestial/hellish court hearing, Bez is the defendant who claims that the contract was null and void as there was no success achieved, with Webster as his counsel.

There was a whole host of accusations in the Devil's statement of how God has made into being a fallen creation, the miserable existence of humankind. The devil stated that she upheld the contract by giving success to Bez and therefore has ownership of his soul.

Webster in my opinion makes a bad defense as you already know the approach is purely humanistic with sporadic reference to Almighty.

But here is the exciting part, even if you just watch the last segment. If you have a group of friends, set up a similar court and debate about the validity of what the definition of success is



and in defense of the veracity of the biblical account to such accusations at the gospel. Many of the questions in the movie are typical views hurled at Christians and the gospel. Have fun with the movie and more importantly, the discussion afterwards.

By Timothy Liu



Quotable Quotes

"Vocation is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." Frederick Buechner

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**Kingdom Building
at the Workplace**

Coming Events

For more information check our web-site.

28 Feb - A Matter of Spirit and Matter
By Engr & Sci CF (ESCF) 7:30pm

15 Mar - The World Through Christian Eyes
By Issachar Forum. 1:30pm

22 Mar - Opened Eyes in a Darkened Room
Movie: Crash (3 - 6 pm)

26 Mar - Mental Health of Singapore
Challenges and Opportunity (7:15pm)

Above Events at 420 North Bridge Road, #05-04
Graduates' Christian Fellowship Office.

