

dear theophilus

Volume X, Issue 3
Fall 2005

Philadelphia!

Places to go, things to do, and food to eat
in the city of brotherly



dear theophilus

"...it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught."
Luke 1:3-4

INREACH

Emmanuel's First Family Getaway	3
Sexual Purity, a Christian Reality	18

OUTREACH

Missions : Tanzania.....	4
Missions : Uzbekistan.....	5
Carrying My Messy Cross in Hot and Humid Philly.....	6
Living in the Struggle.....	8

SEEING GOD IN THE WORKPLACE : Medicine

What Kind of Doctor Will I Be?..	9
----------------------------------	---

SPECIAL FEATURE : PHILLY GUIDE 10-15

First Impressions	
Aren't Always True!.....	10
Must See Places in Philly.....	12
Philadelphia, The Great Outdoors	
.....	14

UPREACH

All for the Sake of Love.....	16
My Times Are in Your Hands...	
.....	17

REVIEWS

Edwin Reads (So You Don't Have To).....	20
--	----

To the Emmanuel Family:

As our fall welcoming season comes to a close, we want to reflect on what a blessing it has been not only to welcome back our students who have returned from their summer breaks but also to meet so many who have enrolled in schools or relocated for jobs in this area. This issue of the newsletter comes a little bit late in the fall, our theme for this issue is to acknowledge all of our newcomers and help you to feel at home.

This has been an exciting time here at Emmanuel, as God has been working here in so many ways, not just during this fall welcoming season but even during the summer – inspiring more people to serve and to go on missions, blessing the new small group system in Phileo, and giving us testimonies. Even as He constantly changes the makeup of our community as the years pass, we know that He continues to move in our church despite the turnover. So for that reason, we want to make more of an effort to be more welcoming.

Whether you have just arrived or have been here for many years, we know that each of you has a unique story about how God has led you in the past, how He brought you here, and how He will continue to lead you in the future. We invite you to submit such stories to be shared with the community.

– *Dear Theophilus* staff

DT'S MISSION:

1. To serve as a quarterly bulletin for the Emmanuel English Congregation's various activities, events, ministries, trips, etc.
2. To be a medium for sharing personal written testimonies
3. To correspond with Emmanuel's nationwide (sometimes international) diaspora of alumni
4. To be a medium for artistic (graphic and literary) expression of God's love in our lives
5. Upon achieving these goals, the members of the congregation can be better equipped to serve individuals and ministries in prayer, general support, encouragement, and participation.

Editors-in-Chief Dan Lee, Hans Park

Editors Ruth Han, Min Lee, Sween Noh, Susan Oh, Edwin Yang, Kenny Yang

Art Director Grace Bak



Emmanuel's First Family Getaway

By Bonnie Choi

On a typical Sunday afternoon following the 10:00 a.m. service, if you head downstairs to the Fellowship Hall, the pitter-patter of little feet and the laughter of children are inescapable. If you head toward the back of the Fellowship Hall, you will be amazed at the number of bodies that are under three feet tall. I am amazed at the sight of so many children in our church and often wonder, "Where did they all come from?" Having attended Emmanuel for many years, I remember when there were very few married couples and none of them had children. However, in recent years, the number of married couples has grown steadily. With the growth in that number, naturally, more and more children are being born; thus, the need for more family-focused ministry.

On Saturday, July 9, seventeen Emmanuel couples and their children made their way to Calvary Chapel in North Philadelphia to attend Emmanuel's first Family Getaway. Our guest speakers, Jeff and Cheryl Nitz, who have been married for 25 years, came to share their wisdom and experience regarding marriage and childrearing. It was a very blessing time made up of seminars led by the Nitzes; a session where the wives and husbands had an opportunity to separate into single-gender discussion groups and really be honest about struggles and find encouragement in one another; and free time, when we played games and just enjoyed fellowshiping with one another. In addition, it was a great opportunity to get to know some of the other married couples in our church and learn from those who had been married a bit longer.

The retreat was personally very challenging for me. Marriage has really made me realize

how sinful I am. I know people say that all the time, but five years of marriage has revealed to me my selfishness, my pride, my lack of love, and so much more. One point that Jeff Nitz made that really stuck out to me was that our spouses are gifts from God. Regardless of our incompatibilities, personality differences, and so on, Steve, my husband, is a special gift that God has chosen for me. That is the one thing that I took home with me from that day and the one thing that I find that I still most often forget. I know that there are so many areas in my marriage that I need to work on and so many heart issues that I need to bring before God, but just as my spiritual walk with God is a work in progress, I know that my marriage is a work in progress as well. The retreat reminded me that God has so much more in mind for my marriage than I do. It was humbling to be reminded that God cares so much for all of our marriages and families and that through His power, our marriages can be so fulfilling and full of the love that He has in mind for them. Though I seem hopeless to myself at times, I know that I am not. It humbles me to know that God continually works in me and in my marriage for His glory. Marriage has truly been a very humbling journey for me but I am excited to see what God has in store for me and Steve. I am so thankful for Emmanuel and for these opportunities that arise when I am reminded of His unending love for us and of His faithfulness to us through all these years.

MISSIONS: Tanzania

By Donna Lee



Dear brothers and sisters,

I would like to begin by giving all glory to God. Our Father is the source of life, hope, and love. He is the One who changes people and it is this grace that enables me to share this with you all today.

My missions experience actually began during missions training. I spent many hours reading the Word and other Christian literature, listening to sermons posted online, praying, and just really learning to love spending time with God, abandoned in His presence. When I was not alone, God allowed me to “minister” to others through times of sharing and praying. Through this experience, I have come to know the joy in serving God and serving others.

When I went to Tanzania, God showed me the flipside of serving Him. To serve Him, we must often deny ourselves and be put through fire. I was challenged physically throughout the entire trip. Our trip began with a grueling fourteen-hour drive across Tanzania. Paved roads soon came to an end and we were driving into and out of potholes at forty to fifty miles per hour. If you’re thinking American potholes, think again, folks, because some of these holes are deep enough to fit a foot-long stick in them. Okay, I may have been exaggerating there but they were deep enough to cause severe rocking and nausea. I also caught a parasite that considerably weakened my already-worn-out body. I only had a few hours to recover before we went out into the villages. The villages reminded me of the time when Jesus walked on earth. People raise cattle and sheep, cook by campfire, live in houses of brick and straw, and there are still people who have never heard of the Gospel. If you can imagine walking down a dusty, windy road, accompanied by dry bushes of thorns and tumbleweeds under the stinging, raw rays of sunlight, you can begin to understand Africa.

In my moments of misery and weakness, I wondered why God would use someone who had virtually zero physical strength, and was so prone to catching all kinds of germs and parasites. But it was made clear to me when we went into a village called Msimba. We were showing the Jesus film in this village as a part of our crusade. The opposition soon made its presence felt. Our DVD skipped repeatedly during crucial moments in Jesus’ ministry. Each time the DVD started to skip, someone played loud, secular music across the street. We were already frustrated that the DVD was not working properly, but it upset us even more to see some people leaving to see what the commotion was all about. To fix this problem, we took the DVD player apart, dusted it off, changed DVDs, and pushed every button on the remote control. We did everything that we could possibly do but had forgotten to pray. So we began to pray desperately for divine intervention. Soon after we began to pray, the film played smoothly through the crucifixion scene and the noise across the street had died out! God allowed this to happen so that He could be glorified rather than us. So do not be discouraged by your shortcomings and faults when you want to serve God: God chooses to use the weak so that we may know that it is God who does all things through us.

With physical struggles came spiritual struggles. I had a hard time avoiding thinking about myself when we were doing ministry. It was an intense battle against my flesh and earthly desires. If we are to serve God and serve others, we must first die to ourselves as our Lord Jesus did. But as many of you have experienced, this is not as easy as it sounds. So we turn to God and we pray because superhuman strength comes only from God.

While spiritual battle is still fresh in our minds, let’s not forget to mention the enemy. While his head still remains crushed at the foot of the cross, Satan is no toothless tiger. He likes to hinder us from seeing God. Sometimes the works of Satan are visible, as our team experienced in Msimba, but many more times he comes in less conspicuous forms. He likes to disguise his voice as our own. I heard a voice one morning, telling me that I must get up because I had many people to bless. At first, I thought it was my own voice because I heard it in my head. But it was actually Satan’s voice disguised as my own. So, how can we learn to distinguish Satan’s voice from our own? And how can we distinguish God’s voice from our own? We must read the Word and become familiar with God’s Word. “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27). As Jesus clearly states in this verse, if we learn to listen to God’s voice, we will soon be able to recognize it. (continued on page 7)

Carrying My Messy Cross in Hot and Humid Philly

By Danah Lee



My plan was NOT to stay in Philly this summer. No offense to y'all Philly folks (I'm from Atlanta...pardon my "y'all"). But I just wasn't feeling it, if you know what I mean. To make a long story semi-short, the Lord led me to stay. Actually, it was more of an "OK, Danah, sit down right here and don't move while I take care of some things" type of deal. So I lived in Philly this past summer with two of my friends from Atlanta. Oh yes, I can't forget my other friends... the mice and the fleas. Yep, you read that right. I lived with many mice and many fleas. While enjoying my time with these companions, I also served as a kindergarten teacher for Emmanuel Summer School. Having had many unpleasant experiences in the past, I had vowed never to teach little munchkins and instead focus only on high school or college students. But if you can imagine, the Lord sure did stretch my heart for those rascals. In addition to teaching, I co-led a summer small group. At the first small group gathering, I knew NONE of those folks. You see, Summer ECF is quite different from the school year. Guys and gals from all over flock to Philly for the summer. My small group was predicted to be the smallest, but there went God doing His thing... increasing it to twenty people (fifteen consistent), from thirteen campuses across America!

Two home friends of mine also became my ESS staff co-workers, as well as members of my small group. Boy, did the Lord know that I needed these two at my side this past summer. You see: Have you ever moved into a new house or a new dorm room, wanting to make it look its absolute best? Well I'm not sure about you, but that's always one of my goals when I move somewhere. I try to flatter the room as best as I can with nicely framed photographs or pretty furniture from IKEA. (Actually I've never been to IKEA, but that's where I heard most people go for good furniture and good food. Can it get any better than that?) Anyhow, back to what I was saying: Though unpacking and moving into a new place can be tiring, I absolutely love that "done" feeling. I love it when I can sit in the middle of my room and say, "Yes! I am done!" I also love it when I stand at the doorway of my room and see how pretty the room looks! (Guys may not fully understand this... but please bear with me!) At this point, I feel so settled in that I never ever want to move furniture around again. I never want to

see my room messy or unorganized. But we know, “Many are the plans in a man’s heart, but it is the Lord’s purpose that prevails” (Proverbs 19:21). Thus, since the beginning of summer, the Lord has been rearranging my “room.”

He’s taken out all the once-neatly placed furniture. The room is an absolute mess. Things are everywhere. It’s hard to find anything. It’s uncomfortable to have people stop by and take a look at it. But sooner or later, my Interior Designer will have the room arranged as He sees best!

For a while, I thought I knew about fellowship. I thought I knew about community, Christian brotherhood and sisterhood. I thought I knew about being my Sister’s Keeper. But the one thing I failed to see was how the Cross plays such a critical role in all of the above. I did not know what it meant to “Carry My Cross” with others. I knew: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me” (Matthew 16:24). But I had forgotten about Simon helping Jesus carry His Cross to Calvary. Think back to this scene in The Passion of the Christ. While carrying the Cross to Calvary, Jesus fell at times because He was so weakened by the flogging. But Simon of Cyrene would continuously lift Him up. At one point, he encouraged Jesus to keep going...that He was almost done. Perhaps the thing that strikes me the most is that the Cross was not a comfortable thing to carry. Physically, it was so heavy and messy. Alongside Jesus, Simon got scratches and scrapes. He was breaking out in sweat. Towards the end, Simon, too, struggled to carry the Cross. The beautiful part was that even when Simon realized how heavy the Cross was, he did not stop and leave Jesus’ side. Rather, he carried the Cross with Jesus all the way to Calvary.

I’ve always considered myself a “people-person.” I enjoy meeting new people. I enjoy building up relationships. I enjoy sharing and praying with others. However, I realized this summer that there are only a few whose Cross I carry and those who carry mine. God really used this summer to remind me of what I need to strive for in my relationships. Perhaps, the Lord provided not one, but two of my closest friends – one on each side – because He knew how heavy my Cross was going to be this summer. He knew how messy things could become once He began to rearrange my “room.” I am utterly thankful for these two sisters. Even when my Cross became so heavy and burdensome that it would scare others off... even when my Cross became so messy that it was uncomfortable to show others... even when my Cross became so tiring that I felt unwilling to trek any further... even when it seemed so pleasant to just “toss” the Cross aside momentarily, my sisters did not waver in carrying my Cross with me.

I urge us, Emmanuel brothers and sisters, to consider the Cross in Community. May we consider our community

a place where no brother and sister, whether young or old, mature or young in their faith, social or nonsocial, employed or unemployed, Penn or non-Penn, active or non-active member... has to carry his or her own Cross alone. Carrying your own load to the Cross, quite frankly, would become much too tiring and heavy at times. Let us carry our brother’s and sister’s Crosses... until the Day in which we will no longer carry it but lay it at His eternal throne. As we strive to live for that day, let us celebrate the author and perfecter of our Cross.

Missions: Tanzania (continued from pg 5)

So, what have I taken away from three weeks of what seemed to be a long session of intense physical workout? As Pastor Paul once preached over the summer, the Christian life seems like a long road of suffering and self-denial, and in many ways, it is. But it is actually better described as delayed gratification, because we deny ourselves now so that we can enjoy better things in the future, such as seeing more people coming to Christ as a result of our few days of suffering.

Even our sufferings are not sufferings, because the things of God are far better than the things of this world. We do not consider giving up worldly things to be denial but we find great joy in letting go of the insignificant for the bigger and better. If God gave up His splendor and glory for the sake of His creation, we can give up earthly pleasures and comforts for others. This is the challenge that I am walking away with at this time.

But before I walk away, I would like to add one more small suggestion for those of you who are considering missions next year or sometime in the near future. **Missions work is not so much us going somewhere and doing Kingdom work for God, as much as it is being fed and loved by God.** It is an incredible privilege and honor to witness God Himself working half a globe away. So if you feel a tug in your heart, remember to pick up an application in January!

At the foot of the cross,
Donna =]

Living in the Struggle



By Dan Ko

This summer, I had the privilege of working on Wall Street at an investment bank in New York. I had the opportunity to intern on the trading floor where millions of dollars are traded between investment banks, institutions, and individuals.

I know that most people immediately think of money and greed when they think of Wall Street. Why else would people want to slave away for sixty to seventy hours a week? Before I came to Emmanuel, my only motive for applying to Penn's Wharton School was indeed the money that would pretty much be guaranteed to me after I graduated from college. I even prayed to God that if He let me get into Penn, I would live my life for Him. I didn't realize how seriously God took my prayers until I got to Philadelphia. God granted my sinfully selfish prayers not so that I could live comfortably, but because I believe He wanted to mold me into a true follower of Christ. Through the three years that I have been at Emmanuel, God has changed my heart to view the expanding of His Kingdom as the priority in my life rather than accumulating wealth.

So the question that I had to ask myself before this summer began was: **How is God being honored by my working on Wall Street? Wouldn't going on missions be a better application of my convictions in college?** Why put yourself in a money-driven environment where the temptations of this world are abundant? The answer that most people gave me to "make me feel better" about my decision to work on Wall Street was that God needs financially blessed people in His Kingdom too. I don't know about you, but this wasn't a good enough of an answer for me. It almost seemed like an

excuse for me to accumulate wealth, while still remaining a "Christian." I knew that God would be honored by my tithing and offering to the church and missions, but I believed God wanted more from me. He wanted me to see my summer as an opportunity to spread the gospel to unbelievers on Wall Street.

Before the summer began, I had my doubts on how successful I would be in sharing the gospel with my co-workers. Wall Street's money-driven, heavy-drinking, and womanizing environment can make even strong Christians stumble. How would I be able to tell people about the good news of Christ if I was struggling in my own faith? I shared my doubts with one of Emmanuel's pastors, who encouraged me by explaining that God wouldn't send me to Wall Street unless He would help me every step of the way. If I genuinely desired to see God honored during my summer, He wouldn't deny Himself of the glory.

Although I knew God was on my side, I can't say that it was easy. I worked around sixty to seventy hours a week, which gave me very little time for myself, unlike in college. I would only have two to three hours after work to eat dinner and wind down before I would have to sleep. It was during these times that I turned to the Word and prayer. Since I spent much of the day in a worldly environment, I realized that I was truly hungry for the Word and prayer every day. Even when I would come home late and didn't want to do my devotions, I had to discipline myself to read the Word and pray because I knew that I needed it in order to persevere. And by the grace of God, He fed and strengthened me every day. I am also thankful for the prayers of my brothers and sisters of Emmanuel who were interceding on my behalf. I definitely felt the intercession of these brothers and sisters because living in New York was a daily spiritual battle for me.

I can't say that I converted anyone to Christianity this summer. I only hope that my co-workers saw something different about me whenever the subjects of money, sex or power came up. I trust that God was planting seeds in the few co-workers with whom I did get to share my faith. Lord willing, I will return to New York next year to work full-time at an investment bank. I can tell you from experience that living in New York or working on Wall Street is not any more difficult than living anywhere else. Every place has its challenges, but people everywhere need Jesus. My experience on the West Philly mission team last year taught me that the harvest is undeniably plentiful here in the United States. During my devotionals this summer, I came across this verse: "As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty, nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy" (1 Timothy 6:17 ESV). I pray that God will use me to show unbelievers the truth of the verse above and continue to develop my heart for the people in the financial services industry.

What Kind of Doctor Will I Be?

By Daniel Sung



When I turn on the television these days, I see a lot of different shows that are based on medicine. The Thursday night lineup on NBC has *ER* and *Scrubs*. At the end of those episodes, the main character, a medical resident, has a life-changing epiphany. More recently, *Grey's Anatomy* captures the struggles of surgical interns as they adjust from medical

school to residency. All of these shows seem to make the medical career very exciting and dramatic. All of the doctors on TV save lives, find resolutions to their personal struggles, and find their patients thanking them for their expertise. In my experience, medicine is not as glamorous as it appears on TV. My days are very repetitious as they involve rounding on my patients and making decisions on their care.

One day as I was rounding on my patients, I thought to myself: **What kind of doctor would I be? Would I identify my patients by their illnesses and see them as people who are “broken” and need to be fixed, or would I see souls beyond their sickness and treat them as people in need of healing, encouragement, and hope?** I remember one of my patients, named “Al” – or “Al J.” as my intern would call him: He was a very ill man who had had a major stroke that had left him unconscious and on a ventilator in the intensive care unit. Al had lost the ability to talk and could no longer move his right side. He had developed in his right leg a severe infection with very aggressive bacteria, which was growing rapidly, and he needed an amputation to stay alive. Eventually, he regained consciousness and was taken off the ventilator. He still couldn't talk or move his right side, and he had a stump for his leg. Because of his stroke, he was unable to swallow, so he had a feeding tube inserted into his stomach to get nutrition. He couldn't clear secretions in his mouth, so the nurse would suction him every few hours. As I was seeing him on my rounds, I thought to myself: Do I view him as a broken body that needs to be maintained, as a mechanic would maintain a broken car, or Do I see him as a person who is suffering from severe pain and loss? I could suction secretions out of his mouth, like a mechanic would change the oil. I could have liquid food poured into his feeding tube, as a mechanic would fill up a gas tank. I could inject medication into his IV, as a mechanic would fill transmission fluid into the engine. But I started to see myself through his eyes: If I were him, I would have thought, “I know what I want; I know when I'm in pain; I can see everything around me, but I just can't speak, and make my wishes known. I

have thirteen children making decisions about my care; they gave the doctors permission to amputate my leg, but none of them ever visits me. I am more than just a body; I'm a person.” God opened my eyes to see Al the way He sees him. I desire to be the doctor who views my patients as people with souls, and not just broken bodies or walking illnesses.

However, the greater question is: “What kind of doctor does God desire me to be?” In August 2002, I went on a medical mission to Guatemala through an organization called Global Health Outreach. This organization's mission verse was Luke 10:9, in which Jesus said, “Heal the sick who are there, and tell them, ‘the Kingdom of God is near you.’” Jesus was speaking to His disciples, and He instructed them to heal the sick, because those they healed would then be willing to hear the Good News. My job requires me “to heal the sick,” and I enjoy that aspect of my work and most people are appreciative, but I struggle with the second command of telling people that “the Kingdom of God is near you.” I ask myself, “Why do I struggle with sharing the gospel with my patients?” I rationalize that since I'm a resident, I don't have the authority at my hospital to talk about God. I have to answer to my program director and attendings, and they may not like me discussing religion with my patients. I work in a Jewish hospital, and many of my co-workers and patients are of a different religion. I also say that I'm too busy, and cannot afford to set aside time. I also don't feel comfortable telling my patients about Jesus when I see that they aren't physically “ready” to hear the gospel. But actually, those reasons are excuses to shield me from the real reason why I don't “love” them: selfishness. I care about their physical well-being, but I don't love them the way Christ loves them. Because I don't see my patients as children of God, I make excuses for not sharing Christ with them. My work becomes a burden rather than an opportunity. My patients become reasons why I have to stay at work late, or why I can't sleep. I become selfish. I know that my heart needs to change and be more like that of Christ. I'm praying that the Lord will change me. I know that the Lord has blessed me tremendously in my life. My blessings increase, and as my worship for Him increases, my desire to share about Him with others should also increase in proportion.

By the nature of my job, I have the privilege of knowing the most intimate details of people's lives, which requires a lot of trust from my patients. As trust develops, God provides opportunities for me to share the gospel. At the time when they are sick, people are vulnerable and desperate for healing, but more than physical healing, they need spiritual healing. Some people will reject the Message, but some will not, and I pray that the Lord will continue to change my heart to have more boldness for Christ. My desire is to serve and worship God in all that I do. I pray that God will change me to be the doctor who sees not only the physical body, but also the soul of the patient. I believe that God who began a good work in me will carry it on to completion (Philippians 1:6) and make me into the doctor that He has planned for me to be.

FIRST IMPRESSIONS AREN'T ALWAYS TRUE!

By Susan Oh



Have you ever had the experience of meeting someone whom you did not initially find attractive but then realizing, with passing time, how beautiful that person actually has been all along? This parallels my relationship with the city of Philadelphia. At a first glance, it is not too hard to find Philadelphia to be an unattractive location for school, career or family. I still remember my first cab ride from the airport to the city – gawking at the dumpster overloaded with

junk cars or the oil refineries fuming blackish smoke that filled the sky. But, let me ask you to **Look Again.....**

Look above the broken pavements, dirty streets, and anger-provoking drivers. Look beyond the industrial plants, murky Schuylkill River, and dilapidated row houses. I know, I know. I've expressed all your complaints in the past too.

Let me tell you... **I also had a tough time adjusting at first. You might wonder why I've chosen to settle in Philly for the seventh year now. Only one word comes to mind: Grace.....**

Stripped far away from my security blanket, God graciously brought me to where I had nothing to claim as my own but to cling to Him for daily sustenance. During these times of helplessness and loneliness, I found solace in His unfailing presence. By His grace, I came to love His promises and to marvel at His beauty. By His grace, my life in Philadelphia now testifies to His sufficiency and His faithfulness. By His grace, I've come to taste the sweetness of the fellowship and the fruits of a local church vision. By His grace, I've seen the extension of His abounding love that reaches far beyond the imaginable. By His grace, I've witnessed the purifying power of the gospel that transforms and refines the hearts of His people. By His grace, I've come to experience His heart for the city – the broken homes, the poor, and the underprivileged. My first

impression of Philly did not say as much its inadequacy, as about the condition of my heart. He gently whispered, "I have made all things beautiful in its time" (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

So, with that said... we pray that you will find your home away from home at Emmanuel. **If you look closer, you will come to realize that we are located in a microcosm of global cuisines. Here I've listed a few hidden jewels we've discovered** as we frolicked around the town. I don't know about you, but good food makes me happy. Won't you care to find out for yourself what makes Philly such a remarkable place to live? Why don't you give it another chance? ;)

FORK • 306 MARKET ST. • 215.625.9425

- American Bistro Esp. Great for Brunch
- Daily Printed Menu w/ Fresh Ingredients Supplied by Local Farmers & the Italian Market
- Must-Try: Pan-Seared Crusted Tuna w/ Roasted Pepper in Wasabi Sauce

MARATHON GRILL

40TH & WALNUT ST. • 215.222.0100

- Great for Brunch, Salads & Desserts
- Must-Try: Screaming Fruit Smoothie; Peanut Butter Nonfat Frozen Yogurt; Grilled Cajun Tuna Steak Salad

D'ALESSANDRO'S STEAKS

HENRY AVE. & WENDOVER ST., ROXBOROUGH • 215.482.5407

- One of the Best Local Cheesesteak Joints in Philly
- Fresh Rolls Brimming w/ Chopped Steak, Melted American Cheese, Homemade Roasted Peppers & Onions Cooked to Perfection
- Closed on Sundays

TIERRA COLOMBIANA

4535 N. 5TH ST. •

215.324.6086

- Cuban-Columbian Restaurant in Northeast Philly
- Salsa Dance Upstairs from 8 pm – 2 am (Thu-Sat)
- Must-Try: Paella, Argentinean Steak & Batidos de Frutas (Fruit Smoothies)

BISTRO ST. TROPEZ • 2400 MARKET ST. MARKETPLACE DESIGN CENTER • 215.569.9269

- Mediterranean French Bistro Over the Schuylkill River
- Located inside the Design Center – Easy Parking!
- Must-Try: Grilled Citrus Swordfish with French Lentils, Arugula, Sweet Grape Tomatoes & Mind Crème Fraiche

BRASSERIE PERRIER • 1619 WALNUT ST. • 215.568.3000

- Georges Perrier's Modern Deco French Brasserie (Owner of Famed Le Bec-Fin)
- Classic French Cuisine with Asian, Italian & Southern Twists
- Must-Try: Crispy Wild Striped Bass w/ Cucumber Mint Couscous in Spicy Thai Curry Sauce Or USDA Prime Filet Mignon w/ Porcini Mushroom Risotto, Spring Onion Brik in Merlot Sauce

MONK'S CAFÉ

264 S. 16TH ST. • 215.545.7005

- Belgian-Themed Brasserie for Beer Geeks & Mussel-Lovers
- Best known for Belgian Brews, Burgers & Mussels Prepared in 8 Different Ways
- No Reservations
- Must-Try: Red Light Mussels (Cooked in Hoegaarden 'White' Ale, Toasted Chile de Arbol, Chervil & Garlic) & Fries with Bourbon Mayonnaise

BEIJING • 3714 SPRUCE ST. • 215.222.5242

- Szechwan Chinese Restaurant Located on Penn Campus
- Faster Service Here Than at McDonalds!
- Must-Try: Salt Baked Squid, Fried Shrimp in Hot Pepper Sauce, Pepper Steak

SHIAO LAN KUNG RESTAURANT

- **930 RACE ST. • 215.928.0282**
- Southern Cantonese BYOB in the heart of Chinatown
- One of Phileo's Favorite Rendezvous
- Opens till 3 am on Sun-Thu, 4 am on Fri & Sat
- Must-Try: Salt Baked Squid, Mapo Tofu

VIETNAM RESTAURANT

221 N 11TH ST. • 215.592.1163

- Classic Vietnamese Restaurant in Chinatown
- No Reservations
- Must-Try: BBQ Platter

LEMONGRASS

3630 LANCASTER AVE. 215.222.8042

- Thai Bistro in West Philly
- Easy Parking!
- Must-Try: Evil Jungle Princess & A Young Girl on Fire

MARRAKESH 517 S. LEITHGOW ST. 215.925.5929

- Cozy, North African Den Behind South Street
- No Credit Cards
- Enjoy the Hand-Washing Ceremony & Prix Fixe Menu of B'stella – a Phyllo Pastry w/ Egg, Chicken, Nuts & Spices, Grilled Lamb, Roasted Chicken, Couscous, Fresh Fruits & Middle Eastern Pastries

BISTRO ROMANO • 120 LOMBARD ST. • 215.925.8880

(My Absolute Favorite!)

- Housed in an 18th-century Granary in Society Hill
- Piano Bar or Mystery Dinner Theatre on Fri & Sat Nights
- Must-Try: Mistro Mare (A Combination of Shrimp, Scallops, Calamari, Mussels, Clams in a White Wine, Garlic Herb Sauce)

CAPOGIRO GELATERIA • 119 S. 13TH ST. • 215.351.0900

- Italian-Style Gelateria Offering Euro-Desserts & Quick Bites
- Must-Try: Baked Heirloom Apple Gelato

LORENZO & SON PIZZA • 305 SOUTH ST. • 215.627.4110

- Known for Best Giant-Sized Pizza Slices
- At the Center of South St. Nightlife
- Open Till 3 am on Mon-Thu, Sun Nights

MUST SEE PLACES IN PHILLY

By Sona Kim

As a Philly native, I've heard many people complain about how Philly doesn't measure up to other cities. I can testify that, as someone who has learned to love the city over the years, Philly is definitely a place to be! It has traces of every era of American history, boasts the best restaurants, and has so many interesting places to visit. Here are some of my favorite places to check out in the "City of Brotherly Love."

PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

- Amazing collection of Impressionist art
- Run up and down the "Rocky steps"



SOUTH STREET

- Check out eclectic stores and good eateries such as Lorenzo's Pizza and Jim's Steak

If you are new to the area, or even if you have been here for a while, take a walk through the city on a nice, breezy day. You will be surprised to discover your "niche"— your favorite café, store, park, or even a bench. It will help you feel at "home."

FAIRMOUNT PARK

- Great place to be if you love the outdoors – running, bike riding, roller blading, picnicking
- Experience nature without ever leaving the city!



BROAD ST./AVENUE OF THE ARTS

- Enjoy a spectacular performance of the Philly orchestra in the Kimmel Center, its new, state-of-the-art venue
- Check out other theaters and restaurants along this beautifully lit street



OLD CITY

- Get a glimpse of America’s past by visiting the new Constitution Center or the Liberty Bell, or going on a historic tour on horseback!



FIRST FRIDAY (IN OLD CITY)

- Every first Friday of the month, all the galleries in Old City are open to public for free

PENN’S LANDING

- Across from South Street, Penn’s Landing is a host to many concerts, events, and, during the winter months, an outdoor ice skating rink



CITIZENS BANK PARK

- For all those avid sports fans out there, welcome to the wonderful world of Philly sports and more importantly, Philly spirit! Check out this new stadium with breathtaking views, home to Phillies and Eagles, and enjoy a good game with delicious food (Geno’s, Tony Luke’s, Schmitter’s crab fries).

CHESTNUT HILL

- Enjoy an array of antique stores, restaurants, and more, lined up on a beautiful cobblestone street. If you happen to be a fondue fan, be sure to check out Melting Pot (fondue specialty restaurant).

NEW HOPE, BUCKS COUNTY

- About a 45-minute drive from Philly, this town is small, cozy, and picturesque.
- Find antique and novelty stores, art galleries, historic tours, “romantic” boat rides along the Delaware River, restaurants.
- Go on a historic train ride on the “New Hope and Ivy Railroad” around Bucks County.

MANAYUNK

- Eclectic shopping, cafes, restaurants, and my favorite, African art store!



PHILADELPHIA, THE GREAT OUTDOORS

– Philadelphian Outdoorsman testifies that Philly just sucks you in and never lets you out. Read on to find out how he came to fulfill his longings for Rocky Mountain bike trails and freshwater fishing in the city of Brotherly Love.

By Steve Choi I am a Philadelphian Outdoorsman. “What on earth is this dude talking about?” you might ask. If someone had said this to me five years ago when I first moved into the area, I would have thought they were on some serious drugs. I mean come on... what outdoor activities are there to do in the Philadelphia area? Especially for a guy who grew up fishing, cycling, camping, hunting, backpacking, and skiing in Boise, Idaho?

The Philadelphia area was not my first choice as a place to settle down and raise a family. It was actually my last. You see, I’m an imported Emmanuel husband. My wife has been attending Emmanuel for almost her entire life and we moved to this area because I thought she was stubborn. I discovered later that it was God who had brought us here for His purpose. I fought hard not to move. I even sabotaged my résumé so I wouldn’t have to move here... but we did and I was unhappy.

I was really depressed when we finally arrived in Philadelphia... really depressed. It was the most difficult time of my life. I was miserable. It started to affect my health and my marriage. I kept asking myself, “Why am I so unhappy here?” One day I realized the root causes of my misery stemmed from two areas. One, I had stopped trusting God in my life. Before I was married, I had always said, “Lead me, Lord and I will follow.” After I got married, I began saying, “Thanks for all your blessings, God, but now I want the



controls. I want to move back to the Pacific Northwest, settle down, raise a family, and go fishing and cycling. Fishing and cycling... those are my two FAVORITE hobbies. That’s the second reason why I was so unhappy. There were no places to go fishing or to ride my mountain and road bikes. In Idaho, I fished for wild trout and steelhead in unpolluted streams, rivers, and lakes. Pick up a Pennsylvania fishing regulation guide from a local sports shop and you’ll see that all of the local ponds, streams, rivers, and lakes are contaminated with mercury and other toxins. You’ll also read about the recommended fish consumption limits so that you won’t get sick. Why would I want to catch mutant fish under these conditions? When my wife and I started to scout places to live, I would always look at the size of the shoulders on the road. I did this because I was looking for safe places to ride my road bike. Boise is a top-ten rated bike-friendly city, and my buddies there are hardcore enthusiasts. There are huge shoulders on most roads, and much fewer cars. But in Delaware County, most of the roads have no shoulders, which makes biking dangerous, especially with all of the aggressive East Coast drivers. I was



scared for my life to ride the roads here. I would also look for mountains, hills, and trails to see if I could find places to ride my mountain bike. Back in Idaho, the foothills of the Rocky Mountains were in my backyard. There are thousands of trails, hills, and switchbacks. Once again my search in the Philadelphia area was fruitless.

I finally managed to break out of my severely depressed state when I realized that God was in control. I let go of my personal desires and goals and gave Him the controls once again. It was the best thing I ever did. God blessed me with a great job and welcomed me to Philly through the sports teams (Go Eagles!). Bonnie and I were also blessed to join a very supportive married couples' small group that welcomed us and helped us to get through some difficult times. At work, I met friends who were X-mountain bike racers and was introduced to some SICK, hardcore trails in Wissahickon. I would never have imagined that Philadelphia had such a hidden treasure! I have to rate it as one of the most challenging and technical trails I've ever ridden. When Bonnie and I bought our first home in Delaware County, I found

more mountain bike trails at Swarthmore College just three miles from my house! I even discovered country roads near Ridley Creek State Park where I could ride my road bike. There are no shoulders on the roads but there are few cars and lots of hills. Again I felt blessed... I found safe roads nearby where I ride to my heart's content or till my legs turn to jello. I love it!

Shortly after I moved into this area, I started fishing again. Not for the three-eyed mutant freshwater fish but for BIG saltwater fish! Fishing in the ocean is always an adventure. I fish all year round under all weather conditions for bluefish, striped bass, sea bass, and black fish. God also answered my prayers for fishing buddies – my son, Steven, and my friend, Jim Han, an antagonist with whom I've shared some exciting fishing adventures throughout the past two years.

I compare Philadelphia to Las Vegas. It sucks you in and it won't let you out! Talk to most people not originally from this area and they will most likely tell you that they want to move out too. I've been telling myself this for the past five years. But it's been a very blessed five years. God has shown me that he cares for the little things that are important to me. Although I'm not in Idaho anymore, I've stopped comparing the beautiful outdoors that I once knew, to the new beauty of the outdoors of the East Coast. Night and day contrast, but they are both a lot of fun!

I am a Philadelphian Outdoorsman. I know there will be many newcomers to the Philadelphia area who will have similar feelings towards the area as I once had. I want to tell you that there is hope in the city if you let God open your eyes to see what's out here. Welcome to Philadelphia! Happy Trails, Eat Fish, and Go Eagles!



All for the Sake of Love

By Jeff Liu

Christianity was never taught or pressed on me. My mother was plagued by cancer, with which she battled fearlessly for eleven years until her unfortunate, untimely death. This caused me to believe that God wasn't on my side. A year prior to her passing, my mother renounced her Buddhist roots and accepted Christ as her Savior. I saw how it gave her something to believe in and provide her courage to beat her sickness. However, her faith in healing didn't seem to make any difference. Her faith in God didn't work, so it seemed. I had many ill feelings toward church, God, and Christianity. I was confused and needed something to motivate myself, but I didn't know what.

My Christian life started by trying to impress my girlfriend's parents. I went to Emmanuel with her for about a year and started to enjoy the sermons. Even though I didn't fully understand every minute detail, I was still able to grasp the main points preached. With my weekly trip to church, my knowledge of God increased and my hunger to know Him grew deeper. With many questions boggling in mind, Pastor Paul helped clarify many different thoughts that I was having and guided me to continue my journey to Jesus. Grace and I then decided to try out the Phileo Bible study – but it wasn't what I had expected: I was wary of going back. We then met a couple of very important people in our church life. These people introduced us to home Bible study. I was a bit uneasy about going at first, but I went anyway. It wasn't that bad and we continued to go every week. It soon felt weird not to go to Bible studies on a Friday night. I was getting to know Jesus.

Still, I didn't have that internal belief and relationship with Christ that every Christian experiences. I prayed for God to show Himself to me in such a way that I would know that He was watching over me. Then, everything changed one rainy Thursday morning on Route 202 at 8:00 a.m. While switching lanes on my way to a business meeting, I lost control of my Jeep and slammed into the center median, glided on the top, and then crossed back over three lanes of oncoming traffic. I ended up in a ravine and my jeep was totaled, but I escaped with few injuries. In looking back at the sequence

of events and the result, there is no doubt in my mind that God was watching over me. This was the sign for which I had been praying for. Immediately after my accident, I found myself praying and praising God for what he had done for me. At that point, I gave myself up to Christ. I know now that there is nothing and no one else that can watch over me like God can. After this point, I knew that Christianity was going to be a major part of my life.

I realized that I was on my way, but I needed more. Through my conversation with Pastor Paul, I internally accepted the gospel in my heart and mind. I used to think that Christianity is simply about believing in God; but now I see that it is our personal relationship and inherent faith in Jesus' redemption for our sins that yields "saving faith." This was perfectly illustrated through an analogy for which Pastor Paul used Chinese menus and two file folders. At his house at 10 pm, PP used the simple illustration to show me how Jesus took my filthy, wretched sins away and replaced them with his perfect, flawless record. And let me tell you, I've probably committed every sin. It finally all came together: My folder and God's folder. Jesus emptied all the sins in my "folder" and replaced it with his crystal clear folder. PP then gave me that folder so that I could go through life thinking that if God is willing to do this for me, what else is there? **I truly came to accept that Christ is my Savior: He is my guidance, my protector, and my everything. He is my God. I found a living God to whom I can talk to and get to know. For the first time in my life, I found the One for whose sake I could give my all.**

He has changed me. Before, I lived in emptiness, not knowing where to turn. Now, I live a life of happiness and gratitude. I see the change in my interaction with people and in my conversation with God. I am so thankful that God is in my life. I'll talk to anyone about it. I know God has gotten me to where I need to be.

This is just the beginning of my Christian life and I am excited about what God has in store for me in my journey. What I do know is that now I have the faith that I was looking for to explore and grow my spirituality in someone so real, awesome, and loving.

MY TIMES ARE IN YOUR HANDS...



By Melissa Knaus

“I should never have left China,” I told my mom repeatedly the day she helped me move to Philly a year ago. I had left my dream job, comfortable life, and best friends to move back to the States, only to be caught in a storm I didn’t see coming. We unpacked my stuff in a downpour of the remnants of Hurricane Ivan – only the beginning of setbacks. Everything – having no electricity to seeing the job that I had relocated fall through – happened in that first week.

Lying on my inflatable bed on the floor in the dark, I would seriously doubt that this was God’s plan for my life. Certainly I had made a mistake in moving back to America since everything was falling apart! If moving to teach in an inner city school was really what He wanted me to do, I wouldn’t be broke, alone, and miserable, right?

While my situation may not seem that dire to other people who have faced worse experiences, I had never felt so overwhelmed with grief. Unemployed with a newly leased apartment in an unfamiliar city, I rallied everyone I knew to join me in praying for something to work out. Through a complicated and miraculous set of circumstances, I was able to take a new, and much better job teaching at a local school. Instantly, my inner city calling was confirmed. I learned that my sensitivity to God’s leading and willingness to take a scary step of faith in a new city would be rewarded by God’s provision of work, a good church, and fellowship with other believers.

I still get chills when I relive the memories of those horrible first few weeks here. Through it, however, I experienced what David wrote about in Psalms 31:14-15a: “But I trust in you, O Lord; I say ‘You are my God.’ My times are in your hands.” These verses have come to mind so many times this year as I continually reevaluated what God’s will is for my life. “My times are in your hands...” The promise behind these words amazes me and instills gratitude that I am taken care of. Though the circumstances that taught me this lesson were uncomfortable, following God’s plan allowed me to see his provision.

This cycle of God’s plan and provision, so evident throughout scripture, is also evident through our lives. In my twenty-five years, each time I have obeyed God’s plan for me, I have been able to see his provision. When I felt Him calling me to China, He sent a representative to one of my education classes to recruit teachers to teach in China only four weeks after I started at my university. When I left the guy I thought I was going to marry for my two-year commitment in China, God provided life-changing, unique experiences that I would have missed if I had gotten married and settled in rural Ohio.

Certainly there are people who have seen much more profound examples of God’s provision when they took a step of faith. These stories illustrate the facets of God as Shepherd and Father, caring for us. With each turn of this cycle, our trust in Him should be strengthened, as we look back at previous times where God took care of us when we followed His leading.

Fast forward to the present. I am again without a job and the purpose and stability that work brings. One would think that as I retrace God’s hand on my life, I would rest in my knowledge of the plan/provision cycle. Humbly I admit that though I now lay on a comfortable bed in my well-lit bedroom to do my doubting, I still have more to learn about trusting God’s plan. In that sense, I welcome points of instability to draw me closer and teach me further about the One who is constant.

Sexual Purity, a Christian Reality

All Fred sees are breasts. He knows that there are other features on a woman's body, and yet, as though by magnetic attraction, his eyes are continually pulled below her neck. Attempting to be inconspicuous, he varies his gaze to resemble one who simply has a healthy curiosity about the world about him. But it doesn't take an optometrist to tell his eye saccades spend a disproportionate time in one area. Less obvious to others are the fantasies that are generated in Fred's mental world. He struggles to avoid this roving perception and the way he undresses women in his mind. But the more he tries, the more he begins to insert himself into this picture, enjoying the imagined stimulation of this forbidden thought. He is able to distract himself long enough to shift his focus onto the other demands of the day, but when he is alone at night he quickly accesses this mental file and replays it – only this time, doing to himself what he could not do in public. He feels excitement, pleasure, and relief, only seconds before the familiar wave of tremendous guilt and self-loathing begins. He declares, "It will never happen again."

Bill and Marsha had begun dating in college. Being Christians, they had decided "not to go all the way," but were in the habit of heavy petting and found restraint difficult. They decided to marry right after graduation, citing commands not to "burn with desire," and actually did technically manage to avoid intercourse until their wedding night. They enjoyed a vibrant sex life, pleasuring one another fully and frequently. Then came their daughter, Hannah. They were great parents, devoting much energy into raising her in a godly way. That their lovemaking curtailed to once a week, and then to once every two weeks, seemed understandable given how tired each of them felt at the end of the day. Most of the time it could be done without even being awake – each with predictable positions and roles, almost mechanically executed. Then Bill began to masturbate, figuring this was much easier than trying to synchronize his and Marsha's desires and schedules. This progressed to performing the act while imagining erotic pictures, then to actually seeking out such images online. He then utilized the canvas of relationships with women in his life to draw upon for visual inspiration. It wasn't until a female co-worker flirted with him and he began to rationalize pursuing a sexual relationship that he knew something was wrong.

How might we understand these two vignettes? Some may suggest that the issue lies in attempting to pathologize any form of sexual expression at all. In a culture where we look to sex in the city and find amusement in desperate housewives, people have become less vigilant about defining and understanding clear boundaries for sexual expression. Freud and Kinsey would admire the shedding of Victorian prudishness that has occurred to date, though even they would not see the above behavior as healthy. Is this a "drive" or "instinct" that, like steam in a pressure cooker, may be suppressed to a point but eventually will find expression one way or another? Others

By John Applegate

may offer that there is no crime in imagination as long as one does not act upon one's fantasies. Still others may point to hormone fluctuations, gene expression, and pheromones to account for the force behind these behaviors. Your worldview will direct your conclusions; your philosophy will dictate your possible realities. For the Christian we look to the Bible, and it has much to say about sex – and it is in conflict with most of the above-mentioned explanations.

For purposes of brevity, I will assume that the reader accepts the authority of Scripture, desires to follow God's will, and has probably received adequate teaching from the pulpit on the "do"s and "don't"s of sexual behavior. Limited space and attention spans do not allow for such a primer here. What I will not assume is that you are engaged in a community where sex is properly and freely discussed, and where you can feel comfortable talking with a brother or sister in Christ with your struggles, receiving biblical counsel and encouragement. On the contrary, one's struggles are more likely to have festered in silence, out of the hope that they would go away without notice. Instead one has accrued more layers of guilt that wall off but do not eliminate this problem area in your life. The purpose of this article is **simply to become vocal about sexual purity and illuminate the cause of impurity, so that we may biblically deal with the problem at its root.** This is a multidimensional issue and I will not cover everything here, but will instead focus on (1) what sexual impurity is, and (2) what we can do about it.

When Binh and I were in the process of painting our living room we chose a hue of beige for the walls. When it was applied we came close to returning the paint because it looked as white as the ceiling and crown molding. It wasn't until we repainted the molding an Ultra Pure White (Behr) that we saw that the paint salesman hadn't pulled one over on us. In the same way, in order to see the range of sexual impurity, we must first look at what is pure – namely, at sex as God intended.

If I were naïve about sex and all I had to go on was what I learned from General Hospital, I would venture that sex is what brings people closer together and creates intimacy (that is, of course, until they discover that their lovers have cheated on them with their evil twin brothers or sisters who had been missing in a plane crash but who has miraculously survived and has come back for revenge). But in the Bible, sex is an expression of an intimacy that already exists. And God intended marriage to be that vehicle by which two may experience that intimacy – to mirror the unity between Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5:31-32). We are united in Christ, and our bodies do not belong to ourselves, but are members of Christ Himself (1 Corinthians 6:15-17). Such is the case in marriage as well, as two become one, and sex may be one expression of that intimacy. In a

marriage that contains intimacy, sexual expression can take many forms, frequencies, and styles – as long as it is a consequence of intimacy already achieved. It is the spiritual intimacy experienced that then precedes and gives value to sexual expression, not the other way around. Pentecost was not arrived at through fornication.

Anything that deviates from this is sexual impurity. Obviously, sex apart from marriage is not God's plan for our bodies (1 Corinthians 7). But even within marriage, using this standard, sex is often misused. Husbands who do not take the time to invest in their marriage relationships, but simply "get a little closer" when bedtime comes are not following the plan that God has in mind. Sex is about otherness. Too often, sex is motivated by a desire to satisfy the fire of a biological craving that is stoked with the images of lust and that, at its essence, is a self-centered, self-gratifying act. Masturbation is sex with oneself, and is the epitome of this departure from otherness: there is no other involved. Sexual impurity is sex without intimacy – an attempt to eat dessert without dinner, to win the medal without running the race, to erect the golden calf to get from God what we want without investing in our relationship with Him.

If you have struggled with sexual impurity, chances are that you have already thought much about this, have made multiple vows to "finally stop once and for all," and are well acquainted with feelings of guilt, shame, and perhaps even despair. My aim is not to amplify these feelings. But I also issue a warning: if you are hoping to find here a method to overcome sexual impurity and to use God to conquer a sexual addiction, you will be most disappointed. You see, in order to understand the problem, we have to redefine it. It is not about the behaviors involved as much as it is about our relationship with God.

We were made as worshippers. Either we worship God or we worship something else (Romans 1:18-32; Ephesians 5:3-5). **We don't start out wildly sinning and idolizing sex as a substitute for intimacy. Like all entrenched sinful behaviors, it begins by experimentation, and this leads to pleasure and enjoyment.** But like all idols, it ultimately does not satisfy us. And it becomes necessary to engage more in the behavior to recapture that fleeting pleasure. Boundaries that you had once set for yourself are successively crossed until the idol of sex has now mastered you and you feel enslaved. This feeling of entrapment is often what people

cite in order to suggest that this is an irrepressible natural drive. But sin is natural – it is who we are, apart from God (Romans 3:9-20). For some, sex is not as much of an issue as is something else, like drugs, alcohol, exercise, food, sleep, TV, people, etc. But there usually is something else, because idols all accomplish the same thing – they possess our hearts when we are not worshipping God. And as we continue to sin, we "grieve the Spirit" (Ephesians 4:29-32), we "quench" the Spirit (1 Thessalonians 5:19-22), and we dull our consciences each time we compromise. The most frustrating part of this walk, as Paul empathizes, is that even when we know the truth, our sin affects us and guides our lives (Romans 7:8-22). One author defines addiction as "bondage to the rule of a substance, activity, or state of mind, which then becomes the center of life, defending itself from the truth so that even bad consequences don't bring repentance, and leading to further estrangement from God." (Welch, E.T., *Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave*, 2001, p. 35. P&R Publishing Co.)

But Paul doesn't stop there, and neither do we. "Who will rescue me from this body of death? Thanks be to God – through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Romans 7:24-25) There is a power to overcome this sinful nature. Rather than feeling hopeless because, once again, this shortcoming has been highlighted in your conscience, turn to the hope found in the gospel. Sin keeps itself separated from God so that you will not experience freedom (Galatians 5:17). Shame prevents it from being talked about in church. But the gospel includes it with all sin, and therefore there is hope in the one who conquered sin and who rose from the dead (Romans 8:1-17).

Secrecy makes the issue a behavioral problem to be quelled, controlled, and endured. Christ makes this a heart problem to be identified, repented of, and turned from as we turn to Him.

The answer is the gospel. We all know that on an intellectual level, but our sinful nature hides our spirit from this truth. And it will continue to hide it from us as long as our sin is not confessed in the body of Christ.

For this reason, we have begun a men's biannual seminar at Emmanuel that focuses on sexual purity. The first meeting was on April 30, and another is planned for the winter. In addition to this open forum, practical ways of striving to be pure are discussed. (Though this is commonly thought of as a man's problem, certainly this also applies to women. Women usually want intimacy and sex as a means to a desired end. But sex apart from God's plan does not deliver this end in truth.) This issue is as ubiquitous as pride, but without acknowledgement it can shield itself from God's Spirit of deliverance. Perhaps pride is a co-conspirator in maintaining the silence, but we hope to break this through the admission of our sins. May we each boldly encourage one another to seek His will for our (sex) lives.

EDWIN READS (SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO)



Book Review: *Searching For God Knows What*

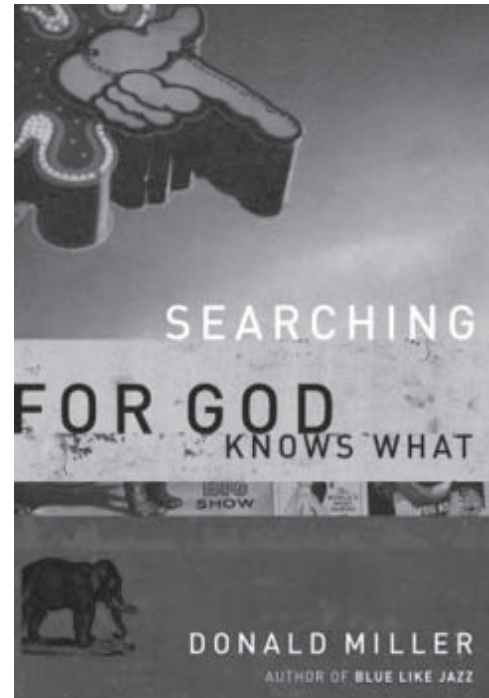
By Edwin Yang

I've been spending a lot of time lately in Barnes and Noble/Borders, ostensibly for the purpose of preparing lesson plans for my students (I teach kids how to read good). But just like back when I was in school, the same ratio holds true; for every two hours spent in "study," roughly 6-8 minutes of real work gets done. I would blame this on ADD, but when I think of how I pore over issues of Sports Illustrated with the intensity of a Talmudic scholar, I know this can't be the case. Sometimes I'll spot a book with an interesting cover or title, and, tragically for the bookstore and author, sit there and read the entire thing. This happened recently with *Searching for God Knows What*, written by Donald Miller.

When I fall for a book, I fall not so much for its content, but for the glimpse of the author I see in his/her writing. Don's like that friend you have with the messy apartment filled with all kinds of random books. The man reads everything, and he references most of it in his writing. Not in a look-at-me, I'm intellectual way, but instead with the manner of somebody whose greatest apparent desire is to participate in a book group discussion. **Simply put, he derives great pleasure from the beauty of the written word. Moreover, he believes that this beauty is inextricably intertwined with meaning.**

Miller points out that the Bible contains a lot of poetry. This poetry isn't just fluff tossed in as a sentimental touch (as in, warfare and genocide for the guys, and Psalms and Song of Solomon to draw the ladies in). Rather, it's the poetry that gets to the very substance of the matter. Miller writes that back in biblical times, people would have thought that one quoting a poem was "getting to the core of an idea, to the real, whole truth of it." This is kind of counterintuitive thinking in our science-obsessed, post-industrial world, but I think Miller has a point.

I recently experienced this myself when I ran across a quote written by one Mark Doty, the author of a random book that I have never read. He writes that "grief begins in time to coexist with pleasure; sorrow sits right beside rediscovery of what is to be cherished in experience." This



strikes me as being truth. A man laid low by grief over love lost can come to marvel at the fact that such a thing as love had entered his life. Grief, after all, is exceedingly selective about the company it keeps; it really only ever accompanies love. Doty's prose speaks truth in a way that a clinical science book couldn't hope to rival.

And that's indicative of the main thrust of *Searching for God Knows What*: **the Bible is a message from a relational God to a relational people, and has to be read as such.** To reduce it to a formula for morality or salvation might produce accurate tracts for handing out in a subway, but one would miss out on a lot of the meaning behind the words. Nothing particularly revolutionary, but Don's the guy who actually has a chance at making you want to read the Old Testament. In one of his previous books, *Blue Like Jazz*, Miller writes about the performance that changed the way he felt about jazz music. "I was outside the theater one night when I saw a man playing the saxophone. I stood there for fifteen minutes and he never opened his eyes... **Sometimes you have to watch somebody love something before you can love it yourself.**" Maybe Don's the person to show you how to fall for the author of the Word.