

A Small Picture of Issues Facing Christians

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I was given a copy of the February 2009 issue of Christianity Today, “A Magazine of Evangelical Convictions” according to the by-line. It is a good magazine; I formerly subscribed but had to limit the amount of my reading material due to time constraints so I discontinued my subscription. I enjoyed this issue but was struck by the wide variety of issues facing Christians. The information age gives us lots of information on lots of subjects.

We Christians have as our focus living as Jesus would be pleased for us to live. WWJD. The variety of subjects in the articles illustrates the wide range of appeals made to Mr. Joe Christian, so many platforms from which to witness to the truth of Jesus Christ or, so many ways to be diverted into issues.

Here is a sample of articles. Most will be quotes with page number given. Some are brief synopsis.

Richard Cizik, longtime lobbyist for evangelicals, resigned under pressure because of his shift on gay unions. Cizik is a strong advocate of global warming. Time magazine named Cizik as one of the 100 most influential people in 2008 as a Scientist-Evangelical. P.11

Prosperity Gospel on Skid Row. Randy and Paula White, co-pastors of Without Walls International Church in Tampa, FL, announced their divorce. The church property is in receivership. P.12

George Docherty, Presbyterian minister credited with first proposing the addition of the phrase “under God” to the US Pledge of Allegiance, died at age 97. His 1954 sermon heard by President Eisenhower led to the insertion of the phrase. P.12

Paul Weyrich, co-founder of the Moral Majority, died at age 66 on December 18. P.12

Conservative Anglicans launched a new province in North America. Six hundred fifty six congregations with 100,000 members left the Episcopal Church over the appointment of an openly gay bishop to form the Anglican Church of North America aligned with the worldwide Anglican Church. P.15

Atheists began an outreach campaign in Washington DC and London, England using an ad campaign on city buses. “Why believe in God? Just be good for goodness sake” p.16

An editorial, “The Case for Traditional Marriage Won’t Go Away Easily”, is in response to the recent Newsweek cover article, “The Religious Case for Gay Marriage”. P.18

Recent Barna Group research found that a majority of American youth raised in church has left it by age 29. P.19

The Green Bible uses soy-based ink, recycled paper, and a stylish earthy cotton/linen cover made through a process in which “all air is purified before exhausting into the atmosphere and all water is purified and recycled”. P.28

Making of Movies to Change The World. 2008 was the year of socially conscious documentaries. Twelve films are reviewed with recommended ways for viewers to get involved. P.40

Searching For Radical Faith. Radical, in it’s origin, means to be rooted. To be radical is to be so grounded, so deeply rooted in a lifestyle direction, that one stands against the social and cultural currents that tears others away. Being radical may not be carrying a signboard. P.36

Sci-Fi’s Brave New World. The cover article reviews the work of five popular sci-fi authors. All write about a cosmic evolving journey to a limitless human future evolving through biology and technology. Pop-culture fiction, not academic nonfiction is now the cutting edge of public discourse on spirituality. P.20

Bush’s Faith-Based Legacy. Key policies at home and overseas will help victims of poverty and disease for years to come. P.44

This is a small sample of issues facing Christians. I am especially concerned about students who will be confronted by these and other issues through their educational experiences. Children can’t be shielded form these cultural currents. The March issue of the magazine will showcase an equal number of different issues of modern culture. The April issue will showcase a different set of modern cultural issues.

Keep WWJD in view.