

# Forgetting Ourselves On Purpose Vocation And The Ethics Of Ambition

Youth ministry has increasingly lost touch with its origins in the way of Jesus and the social practices intrinsic to Christian discipleship, and has instead substituted layers of "Jesus talk," middle class values, fun and games, and doses of "warm fellow-feeling." *Awakening Youth Discipleship* articulates the history of this domestication of youth and ministry. Mahan, Warren, and White tell a story of the ways in which our society has colluded to shape a domesticated adolescence. The authors believe a Christian response to this challenge must be multilevel, addressing the problem at three levels--society, church, and individual. The authors propose reclaiming practices of discernment that both engage congregations in social awareness and involve individuals in discerning fuller vocational opportunities than those allowed by popular cultural norms.

Leadership that seeks to be effective must navigate the emotional systems, learning habits, and power dynamics of any community it hopes to serve through seasons of change. When conflict, stagnation, and decline threaten an institution's imagination and sustainability, leaders must be adaptable, self-differentiated, discerning, and liberation-minded if they are going to cast a vision

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for--and lead the work of--transformation. With experience and practicality, Sarah B. Drummond offers critical tools, social theory, and theological perspective to equip leaders in organizational change.

Climate change is viewed as a primarily scientific, economic, or political issue. While acknowledging the legitimacy of these perspectives, Kevin J. O' Brien argues that we should respond to climate change first and foremost as a case of systematic and structural violence. Global warming is largely caused by the carbon emissions of the affluent, emissions that harm the poor first and worst. Climate change is violence because it divides human beings from one another and from the earth. O' Brien offers a constructive and creative response to this violence through practical examples of activism and nonviolent peacemaking, providing brief biographies of five Christians in the United States—John Woolman, Jane Addams, Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King Jr., and Cesar Chavez. These activists' idealism, social commitment, and political savvy offer lessons of resistance applicable to the struggle against climate change and for social justice.

The Christian Today Study Series delves into today's vital cultural issues to get to the heart of what these topics mean to you. Each 8-week study is based on articles written by some of today's leading Christian authors and published by the Christianity Today magazines. These remarkable

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studies will foster deep, authentic, and relevant discussion that will challenge and grow any small group. Faith & Work will take on a variety of topics, such as: Work-Drudgery or Delight? Ambition and Achievement A Witness at the Workplace Work & Sabbath Rest Based on articles by a variety of authors, such as: Chuck Colson Christine Gardner Marshall Shelley The Voice of Jesus Christ-Shaped Character Status, Ambition, and the Way of Jesus Justice in a Global Economy Discernment, Prayer and the Witness of the Spirit Choosing Love, Faith and Hope New Frontiers in Resilient Aging Reflections in the Shade

*A Good Way to Go considering self-determination, mercy & self-termination. tackles the difficult subjects of living, dying, suicide and euthanasia but concentrates on the care that can be given. The book is aimed at the general public not so much to be authoritative as provide original thoughts, and comprehensive enough to provide helpful material, to stimulate discussions, and provide an overview that might facilitate wholesome changes in our society. It is said to be well written and raising new and interesting points. The plea for a more merciful society begins with pastoral help to the dying, a better understanding of suicide, acceptance of self-*

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termination, a look at ethics, health services and the law in regard to euthanasia. It is written from a Christian Western perspective because that is what has brought us to this place of confusion and anxiety about death and dying. It is important, that we take our bicultural and multicultural future very seriously in an ever increasing secular world and it would be audacious to speak on any other cultures behalf. Embodied Hope explores implications of an embodied theology of hope for preachers' ability to nurture imaginative abundance and purposeful hope-filled action in the most chaotic of times. Embodied hope is grounded in a theological anthropology that foregrounds humanity's inherent identity as imago Dei and capacity to live as a nondistorting nondestructive reflection of God's presence in the earth. The conceptual metaphor embodied Hope represents that which creates within each of us yearning for wholeness and well-being, the always-speaking voice of God's Spirit assuring us of God's power, faithfulness, and redemptive presence and calling us toward loving, just, and restorative action in our world today. Humans possess the capacity to imagine and live toward a qualitatively better state of existence for all creation, but overwhelmed by the despairing realities of life, we often feel despondent and drained of imaginative potential. Preaching amplifies the voice of Hope, bearing witness and inviting us to

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*imagine the possibility and efficacy of a new reality grounded in Jesus's gospel proclamation. Embodied Hope invites us to stand at the intersection of Hope and despair as we explore the contours and possibilities of living with Hope in times such as the present.*

*No prior knowledge of Zen philosophy is necessary for this reader-friendly guide, which offers Christians a way to incorporate contemplative practices into their lives without compromising their beliefs.*

*Today's relentless, consumer culture—dominated by popular media's emphasis on bigger, better, and more, and catering to teenagers every want and desire—is leaving our youth adrift in a sea of conflicting messages. Messages that every youth worker must be able to decode and redirect away from the material world towards helping young people become who God created them to be: givers instead of receivers, servers instead of consumers. Consuming Youth is for any adult who recognizes that following Jesus means leading young people through the pitfalls of consumer culture, helping them discover vocation—where their great gladness meets a world's great need, and unleashing the kingdom of God on earth.*

*Neighbor Love through Fearful Days*

*Forgetting Ourselves on Purpose*

*Courage and Calling*

*Life-Strengths and Well-Being in Late Life*

*Organizational Ethics*

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*The Schooled Heart*

*Moral Courage in Organizations: Doing the Right Thing at Work*

*A Beginner's Guide*

With the twelve-volume series *Feasting on the Word*, Westminster John Knox Press offers one of the most extensive and well-respected resources for preaching on the market today. When complete, the twelve volumes will cover all of the Sundays in the three-year lectionary cycle, along with moveable occasions. The page layout is truly unique. For each lectionary text, preachers will find brief essays—one each on the exegetical, theological, pastoral, and homiletical challenges of the text. Each volume will also contain an index of biblical passages so that nonlectionary preachers may make use of its contents. The printed volumes for Ordinary Time include the complementary stream during Year A, the complementary stream during the first half of Year B, the semicontinuous stream during the second half of Year B, and the semicontinuous stream during Year C. Beginning with the season after Pentecost in Year C, the alternate lections for Ordinary Time not in the print volumes will be available online at [feastingontheword.net](http://feastingontheword.net). William M. Thackeray, said that "the world is a

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looking glass and gives back to every person the reflection of his own face." Life holds a mirror to us daily. We see our own reflection in the faces of others; our own story etched in their brows; our own thoughts imbedded in their brain; our own heartstrings entwined in theirs; our own secrets hidden deep within their psyche and our own story told through the pages of their lives. If you need food for thought; a short reflection; a nightcap that is not addictive; a shot in the arm that doesn't hurt; a cure for insomnia; a marriage of your head and heart; a lucid moment; a scrambler of your thought process; a heart stress buster; a soul sojourn; then this book will tickle your funny bone and even allow you shed a tear or two. It will help you climb a mountain of doubt and embrace a plethora of new insights. It will cure your myopic view of life with laser precisions and replace it with a panoramic view of life. In the comings and goings of your life, May the Wind be always at your Back. Building on the rich spiritual tradition that spans the diversity of history and theology from Ignatius Loyola to John Wesley to Jonathan Edwards, Gordon T. Smith helps open your ears and heart to the depths of the inner witness of the Spirit. By learning to attend to the Spirit, Smith urges, you will

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learn to hear and heed the voice of Jesus in everyday life.

Praise for *Big Questions, Worthy Dreams* "The things at stake in this tenth anniversary edition are even more profound and urgent than they were the first time around. This is not a little story about young people. It is a big story about humanity and the persistent quest for meaning and purpose. . . . the key is mentorship, and the payoff should be big—for all of us." —RICHARD A. SETTERSTEN JR.,

coauthor, *Not Quite Adults: Why 20-Somethings Are Choosing a Slower Path to Adulthood, and Why It's Good for Everyone* "Scholarly, wise, elegant, and deeply insightful, this book is . . . for all who work with people in the awe and angst-filled years between 18 and 32. . . . Upcoming generations have fateful choices to make that we need them to take up faithfully and fully awake. Parks, a master teacher, lights the way—theirs and ours." —DIANA CHAPMAN

WALSH, president emerita, Wellesley College; board chair, the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard "No one who cares deeply about people in their twenties should be without this book. In Sharon Daloz Parks's lyrical company we learn so much more about their biggest possibilities—and our own." —ROBERT KEGAN,

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author, *In Over Our Heads*; professor, Harvard Graduate School of Education "Parks's clear voice ... is simultaneously that of a scholar, clinician, ethicist, and priest—that of a rare and capable generalist who can nurture both teachers and students ... [and] reveal the architecture of the process by which we merge the questions of ultimate reality with the immediate needs and duties of our generation." —JANET COOPER NELSON, chaplain of the university, Brown University " .

. . [A] valuable resource for parents, professors, administrators, employers, and all others who care about emerging adults and want to see them thrive." —JEFFREY JENSEN ARNETT, Clark University; author, *Emerging Adulthood: The Winding Road from the Late Teens Through the Twenties*

*I was and I Am Dust*

*Servant of All*

*The Heart of Catholic Social Teaching*

*An Invitation to the Love-Centered Life*

*Awakening Youth Discipleship*

*Zen for Christians*

*Finding Purpose and Meaning in a Time of Crisis*

*A Homiletical Theology Reflection*

*A typically pessimistic view of aging is that it leads to a steady decline in physical and*

*mental abilities. In this volume leading gerontologists and geriatric researchers explore the immense potential of older adults to overcome the challenges of old age and pursue active lives with renewed vitality. The contributors believe that resilience capacities diminishing with old age is a misconception and argue that individuals may successfully capitalize on their existing resources, skills and cognitive processes in order to achieve new learning, continuing growth, and enhanced life-satisfaction. By identifying useful psychological resources such as social connectedness, personal engagement and commitment, openness to new experiences, social support and sustained cognitive activity, the authors present a balanced picture of resilient aging. Older adults, while coping with adversity and losses, can be helped to maintain a complementary focus on psychological strengths, positive emotions, and regenerative capacities to achieve continued growth and healthy longevity. All of us long for a sense of meaning and purpose in our lives. But where does meaning come from? In What Am I Supposed to Do with My Life? Douglas Brouwer presents a spiritual response to the vocational questions people ask in a personal, highly readable*

*way. He locates our true purpose in following Jesus' greatest commandment: love God and love your neighbor. Brouwer points out that for most people, this high calling is all the vocation they will ever need. This excellent small volume is a great contribution to the growing contemporary interest in vocation. It should enable both individuals and small groups to reflect carefully on true Christian vocation.*

*How do you decide what to read? Dan Gibson, Jordan Green and John Pattison have created this tool to make your choices easier. Besides the Bible is a guide to the wide array of great books that they believe every Christian should read—the ones that matter to the church and the world.*

*We call attention to the harsh reality that we are living in troubled times. We are especially conscious of climate change and COVID-19. We underline that these challenges impact all people. In light of this reality, we use ten primary questions that all human beings ask, consciously or unconsciously, and then amplify each of the ten primary questions with nine additional sub-questions. We then draw upon one of the great teachers of spiritual wisdom (Buddha, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad, etc.) with a brief quote and then*

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*write a short "wisdom" response to the question. By "wisdom" we mean a body of accumulated reflection about the character and meaning of life. Spiritual wisdom suggests an outlook or attitude that enables us to cope, a deeper way of knowing and learning the art of living in rhythm with the soul. We use the life experience of three authors, coming from different religious and cultural outlooks.*

*Feasting on the Word: Year A, Volume 2  
Besides the Bible*

*Explorations in Spirituality Studies and  
Practical Theology*

*Professional Morality and Guilty Bystanding  
A Youth Ministry Handbook*

*Encyclopedia of Religion: Transcendental  
meditation - Zwingli, Huldrych*

*Merton's Conjectures and the Value of Work  
The Journey of the Called Life*

Today's youth ministry is tomorrow's  
mainstream theology

What is my calling? How do I best live it out? Will my vocation change? In this revised edition of his popular book, Gordon Smith addresses these and other questions you may be struggling with. And he leads you through a process to discover your vocation by listening to God and becoming a coworker with him.

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Equipping students so they can act as change agents who encourage ethical transformation in corporations, small businesses, government, social service agencies, religious groups, the military and other organizations, this text blends theory and practice as it introduces readers to important ethics theories, concepts and skills (tools) drawn from a variety of academic disciplines and outlines implementation strategies (tactics). Self-assessments, case studies and chapter end exercises foster skill development, discussion and analysis.

This book addresses a basic question about the nature of the university: should moral education figure among the university's purposes? This volume offers an affirmative response to that question. A central purpose of the university is the moral formation of students -- what Beaty and Henry call the schooling of the heart.

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Penitente Practices as a Way of Knowing  
Tending the Fire That Burns at the Center of  
the World

Living Vocationally

100 Books that Have, Should, or Will Create  
Christian Culture

How Collegiate Experience Impacts Faith

A Faith for the Generations

Navigating youth from being consumers to  
being consumed

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"The reshaping of our cultural and social landscape continues, creating unprecedented opportunities. But one question remains: Is a life of faith worth embracing? A Faith for the Generations explains how a Christian campus, a classroom, or even a simple mentoring relationship can flourish and serve in passing on faith to today's emerging adults. The essays included in this monograph cover a variety of topics related to the theme originally addressed at the 2014 Taylor University Higher Education Symposium: "'A Faith for the Generations: How Collegiate Experience Impacts Faith.'" After this brief introductory chapter, the monograph—as did the symposium—begins with an interview with Christian Smith, previously noted as a key voice in the current dialogue regarding emerging adult spirituality. This interview is not only insightful, but it also creates an excellent context for what follows in subsequent chapters."

Lovescapes introduces the reader to the various meanings and manifestations of love and its many cognates such as compassion, caring, altruism, empathy, and forgiveness. It addresses how love and compassion have been understood in history and the religions of the world. It goes on to explore the ways that our environments and heredity influence our capacity to love and suggests ways to cultivate love and compassion in one's life. The book shows how the values of love and compassion are integral to finding humane solutions to the daunting problems we face as individuals, as a human family, and as an earth community--a world in crisis. Lovescapes has the

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following features: -Describing how love is the essence of the divine, and therefore the ground of reality  
-Understanding the meaning of love and its place in our lives  
-Learning how love and compassion have been understood across history, culture, and tradition  
-Gaining insight about how to increase our capacity to love and show compassion  
-Discerning how love and compassion can be applied in all aspects of our lives, in the regions where we live, and in our global setting.

This accessible introduction covers the complete history and contemporary contexts of the church's involvement in Catholic social tradition, giving distinctive attention to the Bible, liturgy, the thought of Augustine and Aquinas, and recent theological developments. Bringing together veteran teachers of Catholic Social Teaching who have worked together on the content, this book is designed to set social questions within the Catholic tradition and contemporary life. End-of-chapter application sections address practical concerns, such as racism in the church, charity, consumerism, and talking with neighbors and coworkers about moral issues. Discussion questions, case studies, excerpts of church documents, and suggestions for further reading enhance the book's usefulness. It will work well for students of theology and ethics, particularly Catholics but also Protestants who want to know more about the Catholic social tradition. What are the pathways that lead us to God? In this book Helen Cepero leads you through the journey beginning with three ways of love, then three ways of continuing in faith, and then lastly, three ways of living in hope. These nine pathways will lead you into deeper life with Christ.

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Faith and Work

Lent through Eastertide

Asking the Right Questions

Vocation and the Ethics of Ambition

Dynamic Discernment

Christian Resistance in a Consumer Culture

Reason, Emotion, and Power in Change Leadership

Consuming Youth

***Editors Mary Elizabeth Moore and Almeda M. Wright address the harsh, challenging, and delicate realities of children and youth—who live as spiritual beings within a beautiful yet destructive world. Providing a practical theological analysis of the spiritual yearnings, expressions, and challenges of children and youth in a world of rapid change, dislocation, violence, and competing loyalties, Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World provides readers with a purposeful conversation on this important topic. This book will serve as more than a collection; it will be a genuine conversation, which will in turn stir lively conversation among scholars, theological students, and Christian communities that seek to understand and respond more adequately in ministries to and with children and youth. Contributors include: Claire Bischoff, Susanne Johnson, Jennie S. Knight, Bonnie Miller-McLemore, Mary Elizabeth Moore, Joyce Ann Mercer, Veronice Miles, Rodger Nishioka, Evelyn Parker, Luther E. Smith Jr., Joshua Thomas, Katherine Turpin, David White, Almeda Wright, and Karen Marie Yust.***

***There are a variety of people, practices, and celebrations in the Catholic Church. At times some of these can be dismissed too easily as extreme, superstitious, or uninformed. Such is the case with the Penitentes of New***

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***Mexico. In *I Was and I Am Dust*, David M. Mellott shares his experiences of the Penitentes as an outsider. Through the voice of Larry Torres, one of the senior members of the Penitentes, Mellott poignantly provides readers with a more intimate picture of this community of practitioners. Readers may be surprised to discover a depth of meaning in these seemingly extreme Holy Week rituals and to realize the beauty of being dust.***

***Neighbor Love through Fearful Days is a reflection on pandemics--the Covid-19 pandemic, the accompanying economic collapse, a summer of climate chaos, and the pandemic of white supremacy--as well as on the calling to "serve thy neighbor" and work toward the common good, even and especially in times of crisis. Mahn's real-time reflections begin with an entry dated March 17, 2020, after the college where he teaches moved online and his family began sheltering in place; they end with an entry dated August 31, 2020, when the college reopened for an unprecedented fall term. Through the intervening entries, he reflects on perennial questions about purpose, faith, and vocation as they take on a newfound urgency as cities lock down, economies reopen and close again, and our fractured country teeters on the edge of civil war. Each entry grapples with the anxieties and opportunities, the suffering and sense of being summoned, that characterize that same period. Jason A. Mahn's evocative narrative is a story about living through a time when the world as we know it is being leveled by pandemics--and it is also a deeply philosophical exploration of what it means to live well. In the pages of this book, Mahn invites readers to muse on the difficult balance between self-care and other-care; the role of love in social justice, and how white privilege might be atoned for; and how, amid intense suffering, to practice a faith that is not***

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*escapist, but embraces a hope more durable than optimism and a public, strategic love more fierce and enduring than previously imagined. Ultimately, these reflections acknowledge the immense challenge of living a purposeful life in the middle of crisis but invite readers to the shared hope that from the ashen stillness, we may just hear new callings to imagine healing, cultivate hope, and love neighbors in creative ways.*

*The topic of moral courage is typically missing from business ethics instruction and management training. But moral courage is what we need when workplace pressures threaten to compromise our values and principles. Moral Courage in Organizations: Doing the Right Thing at Work, edited by Debra Comer and Gina Vega, underscores for readers the ethical pitfalls they can expect to encounter at work and enhances their ability do what they know is right, despite these organizational pressures. The book highlights the effects of organizational factors on ethical behavior; illustrates exemplary moral courage and lapses of moral courage; explores the skills and information that support those who act with moral courage; and considers how to change organizations to promote moral courage, as well as how to exercise moral courage to change organizations. By giving readers who want to do the right thing guidelines for going about it, Moral Courage in Organizations: Doing the Right Thing at Work is a potent tool to foster more ethical organizational behavior. Mothering, Public Leadership, and Women's Life Writing Lovescares, Mapping the Geography of Love Mentoring Emerging Adults in Their Search for Meaning, Purpose, and Faith Embracing Your God-Given Potential A Practical Approach*

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## ***May the Wind Be at Your Back Its Origin and Contemporary Significance Big Questions, Worthy Dreams***

Work as center of life has such an important role in our lives; it bears a standard by which we measure our success. It is a major component of self-actualization and well-being. Professional life offers the hope of rewarding work, not just financially but work that is fulfilling. However, professions are also riddled with complexities and ethical conflicts that obstruct the goal of meaningful work. Our jobs are fraught with moral ambiguities and dilemmas; these become sources of frustration and alienation. What is needed is a transformation, a renewal of our professional lives and the institutional contexts in which we operate, to humanize the alienating aspects of work and professions. Thomas Merton (1915-1968), though a cloistered monk, wrote extensively on spiritual and social issues. He has been called "a spiritual master" for contemporary times. He possessed an uncanny sense of self-awareness and moral imagination. His life and writings have inspired countless persons on life's spiritual journey. Yet, while people have looked to Merton for guidance on spiritual issues, the implications of his thought for several other areas of life are open to exploration. This book focuses on the significance of his reflections in *Conjectures of a Guilty Bystander*, which offer one the confidence to embark on a

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journey that seeks to transcend the complexities of professional life, and courage to transform the negative features of workplaces and organizations through reasoned moral action, moral imagination, and leadership.

In the wise and often witty *Forgetting Ourselves on Purpose*, Brian Mahan considers the question of how it is possible to create a meaningful spiritual life while living in a culture that measures us by what we have rather than who we are. Drawing on nearly two decades of teaching experience, Brian Mahan shares stories of personal struggle and triumph that demonstrate how those who seek meaning and purpose have recalibrated their authentic selves by resolving the inevitable tension between personal ambition and spiritual vibrancy.

In the thick of modern life, we are tempted to forget what we are doing and why we are doing it. We are busy socializing, building careers, and looking for fun—but what's it all for? The ancient concept of "vocation" has recently gained popularity as we return to questions about the meaning of life. Almost all religions include the idea that divine purposes should guide our lives; Christianity has particularly accentuated it. The God who called Israel and sent Jesus has something in mind for us. God's call challenges us, but also opens us to the best sort of life imaginable. In *Living Vocationally*, the challenge and the joy of

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the called life is thoroughly explored. Part one considers the benefits of living vocationally, biblical traditions of call, and subsequent Christian understandings. Part two examines why vocation pertains not only to careers, but indeed touches every dimension of our lives and encompasses our full journey through life. Because every person's life includes many callings, some very difficult, part three considers the virtues we need to live the called life well. Living Vocationally demonstrates why to have found a calling is to have found a good way to live.

Today's complex social and economic problems leave many people in the affluent world feeling either overwhelmed or ambivalent. Even the small percentage of us who have examined the ethics behind our financial decisions and overcome the often-detering factors of self-interest rarely know what to do to make any difference. By providing tools for examination and concrete actions for individuals, communities, and society at large, Justice in a Global Economy guides its readers through many of today's complex societal issues, including land use, immigration, corporate accountability, and environmental and economic justice. Beginning with a basic introduction to the impact of economic globalization, the book provides both critical assessments of the current political-economic structures and examples of people and communities who are actively

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working to transform society. Each chapter concludes with questions for discussion and reflection.

Moral Formation in American Higher Education  
Children, Youth, and Spirituality in a Troubling World

Doing the Right Thing at Work  
The Violence of Climate Change  
Embodied Hope

A Good Way to Go

What Am I Supposed to Do with My Life?  
Beauty and the Art of Christian Formation

***There exists a deep tension between the biblical view of servant leaders and the status that Christian leaders today often desire and pursue. Many pastors and other church leaders, like it or not, struggle with ambition. In this book Craig Hill shows how the New Testament can help Christian leaders deal with this problem honestly and faithfully. Hill examines such passages as the Christ Hymn in Philippians 2 to show how New Testament authors helped early Christians construct their identity in ways that overturned conventional status structures and hierarchies. Status and ambition, Hill says, are not often addressed forthrightly in the church, as Christians either secretly indulge those impulses or feebly try to quash them. Hill's Servant of All will help Christian leaders reconcile their human aspirations and their spirituality,***

***empowering them to minister with integrity. Tending the Fire at the Center of the World engages the central question of Christian formation, that is, what kind of knowing is most likely to awaken and sustain Christian faith? This book seeks to reclaim aesthetics—beauty and creativity—as the church’s most native theological way of knowing and being, which participates with God’s own glory and creativity. This book traces the prominence of aesthetics up until the dawn of the Enlightenment, including recent theologians who reclaim aesthetics for theology and formation. The book elaborates the aims and techniques of aesthetic approaches to teaching and learning in the church. Finally, this book cautions against overly determined rationalisms and moralisms that do not retain a sense of wonder, delight, and openness in the church’s teaching, liturgy, and proclamation. In this view, the church does not simply regurgitate familiar texts, political tropes, or flattened doctrines but breaks into the world as Christ’s body, a parable, a song, a flash mob, interrupting business as usual, giving new expression to acts of care, repentance, forgiveness, joy, and communion, awake to the beauty of God’s gifts and inviting our worship. This book guides scholars and teachers of***

***theology and religion through a process of self-reflection that leads to intentional, transformative teaching, dialogue, and reform in theological education and religious studies.***

***"Feasting on the Word offers pastors focused resources for Sermon preparation, written by companions on the way. With four different essays on each of the four biblical texts assigned by the Revised Common Lectionary, this series offers preachers sixteen different ways into the proclamation of God's Word on any given occasion. For each reading, preachers will find brief essays on the exegetical, theological, homiletical, and pastoral challenges of the text. The page layout is unusual. By setting the biblical passage at the top of the page and placing the essays beneath it, we mean to suggest the interdependence of these four approaches without granting priority to any one of them. Some readers may decide to focus on the Gospel passage, for instance, by reading all four essays provided for that text. Others may decide to look for connections between the Hebrew Bible, Psalm, Gospel, and Epistle texts by reading the theological essays on each one. Wherever they begin, preachers will find what they need in a single volume produced by writers from a wide variety of disciplines***

***and religious traditions. These authors teach in colleges and seminaries. They lead congregations. They write scholarly books as well as columns for the local newspaper. They oversee denominations. In all these capacities and more, they serve God's Word, joining the preacher in the ongoing challenge of bringing that Word to life.... We have been honored to work with a multitude of gifted thinkers, writers, and editors. We present these essays as their offering-and ours-to the blessed ministry of preaching."***

***-From the introduction by David L. Bartlett, Barbara Brown Taylor***

***The Teachers of Spiritual Wisdom***

***Gaining Perspective on Life's Perplexing Questions***

***Engaged Teaching in Theology and Religion  
Lent Through Eastertide***

***Neighbor Love Through Fearful Days:***

***Finding Purpose and Meaning in a Tim***

***Strategies for Home, Community, and World***

***Lessons of Resistance from Nonviolent Activists***

***Youth ministry has increasingly lost touch with its origins in the way of Jesus and the social practices intrinsic to Christian discipleship, and has instead substituted layers of Jesus talk, middle class values, fun and games, and doses of warm fellow-feeling. Awakening Youth***

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*Discipleship articulates the history of this domestication of youth and ministry. Mahan, Warren, and White tell a story of the ways in which our society has colluded to shape a domesticated adolescence. The authors believe a Christian response to this challenge must be multilevel, addressing the problem at three levels--society, church, and individual. The authors propose reclaiming practices of discernment that both engage congregations in social awareness and involve individuals in discerning fuller vocational opportunities than those allowed by popular cultural norms.*