

CROSS

r e f e r e n c e

Insight on current issues, new resources, and trends in publishing to support you in ministry

HOW TO STAY AHEAD ON THE INFORMATION SUPERHIGHWAY



Lawrence W. Wilson
Editorial Director

I don't have time to read!" That church leaders' mantra is confirmed by a recent study commissioned by Duke Divinity School's Pulpit and Pew project. Clergy from eight denominations reported spending an average of only four hours a week reading other than for sermon preparation. Episcopal clergy were highest at five hours per week; Nazarenes were lowest at two hours. Just over 10 percent of all clergy reported that they spend one hour or less.

We are confronted with millions of words each day from news sources, books, blogs, magazines, journals, and other media. And leaders in ministry must keep current with thoughts and trends, just like leaders in any other profession.

Here are five ways to stay informed.

Use a Feed Aggregator

The blog is replacing the professional journal as the medium for peer communication. There are now some thirty thousand "high authority" blogs compared with only seventeen thousand magazines in print. Use a feed aggregator such as Google Reader or Bloglines to gather your favorite voices into a daily feed. This includes online news services. Limit yourself to thirty minutes a day perusing these sources.

Read a Little Each Day

Giving up on books is not an option. Whether in hard copy or in new media such as the Kindle or Sony Reader, books are still the place where major ideas are explored and paradigm-shifting concepts are unveiled. Feed your mind with ideas in the same way you sustain your body with food—in daily portions. Establish a thirty-minute reading time each day for books. That will yield three and a half hours a week, enough to consume one or two books a month.

Use Audio Books

The average commuter spends almost fifty minutes going to and from work each day. By listening to audio books while driving, you could gain four hours of reading time each week. If you jog or use a treadmill for exercise, use that time to take in information as well.

Seek Recommendations

The single greatest factor influencing the purchase of a book is the name and reputation of the author. Recommendations from friends are a close second. Shorten your reading list by finding out what other leaders are reading. Read reviews of books before spending hours on the books themselves.

Vary Your Sources

Reading from only one source or from a single genre produces boredom, then burnout. Read a variety of material including news, opinion, books, blogs, and even fiction. Above all, maintain the daily habit of reading the Bible. Solomon's advice is still good: "Of making many books there is no end, and

Publishing News

Wilson, Heer Receive IMPACT Awards

General Superintendent Emeritus Dr. Earle L. Wilson was presented with a Wesleyan Publishing House IMPACT Award on June 7 in Orlando, Fla.



Donald D. Cady and Earle L. Wilson

General Publisher Donald D. Cady said Wilson was honored for his "ongoing commitment to communicate the life transforming message of holiness to the world." He is author of *We Hold These Truths* and the recently released *Holy and Human*.

Dr. Kenneth Heer also received an IMPACT Award for his best-selling discipleship resources *A Good Start* and *Your Next Step*, which have combined sales of 60,000 copies since 2004.

The next IMPACT Award will be announced at the Indianapolis Christian Writers Conference on Nov. 7–8. See page 4 for further information.



Donald D. Cady and Kenneth Heer

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New Bible Study Resource Launched

Users of the Wesley Bible Studies material now have a new resource to teach for life transformation. *Wesley Bible Lesson Commentary* is an annual companion to the popular weekly Sunday school and small group curriculum that includes Bible commentary, interactive learning ideas, a small-group discussion guide, charts, maps, and other learning resources.

“This resources doubles the value of our adult Bible study material,” according to General Publisher Donald D. Cady. “It helps both students and teachers get more from each week’s lesson.”

Discipleship Series Gains National Distribution

The Good Start series of basic discipleship resources has been placed for national retail distribution *LifeWay* Christian Stores in July. *LifeWay* will distribute at least 50,000 copies of the best-selling series through 124 stores nationwide. The series comprises five titles including *Knowing God*, *A Good Start*, and *How to Prepare for Your Baptism*.

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much study wearies the body . . . Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man” (Eccles. 12:12–13).

The church leader who doesn’t read has no advantage over the one who can’t. Enlighten yourself and those around you by establishing the daily habit of reading.

So what’s on your nightstand?

Toler Urges Thought Revolution

Some people see the glass half-empty; some see it as half-full. Stan Toler sees an opportunity to fill the glass to overflowing. This positive thinking guru, leadership expert, and pastor to pastors has been inspiring people to have a positive mental attitude for more over 30 years.

As executive director of the Toler Leadership Center, senior pastor at Trinity Church of the Nazarene in Oklahoma City, and the author of over 40 books, Stan always has a new idea to share. With *Cross Reference*, he shared the vision behind his latest project, *ReThink Your Life*.

CR: Is this a book about positive thinking?

ST: It’s more than that, really. Years ago Dr. Melvin Maxwell convinced me of the need to have a positive outlook on life. But it’s more than simply thinking happy thoughts. I’m talking about a complete revolution of the way we think—renewing of the mind.

CR: What’s the problem with the way we think?

ST: My old friend Zig Ziglar has talked about “stinkin’ thinking” for years. By that he means a pessimistic, negative, failure mindset. So much of what we hear in the news—and even in church—feeds this way of thinking. Millions are depressed, and much of it can be attributed to focusing on what is wrong with our world rather than what is right.

CR: Where did you come up with the idea for a “diet” for the mind?

ST: It originated with another book I wrote called *Total Quality Life*. The basic idea is to begin with a 21-day mental detoxification in which you empty your mind of the world’s negative message and then rebuild your thoughts according to Jeremiah 29:11. *ReThink Your Life* expands upon that idea by creating a three-week system for rebuilding your core beliefs and basic thought patterns of thinking.

CR: How do you think people in our media-driven society will react to the idea of a media fast?

ST: I think everybody can see the value in cleansing your mind of destructive thoughts. I know a professor recently asked a group of college students, “What is the greatest cause of fear in America today?” Their answer was nearly unanimous: “Twenty-four-hour headline news.” A brief media fast is an opportunity to take a timeout to rethink your life.

CR: Romans 12 talks about the “renewing of the mind.” Is this what this approach is about?

ST: Yes, just thinking positively is not enough. I have often said that positive thinking without a positive faith will result in positive failure. *ReThink Your Life* is about transformation of the heart, soul, and mind.

7 Hot Ministry Blogs


Site	Value
Gifted for Leadership www.giftedforleadership.com	Explores issues facing Christian women leaders
Lausanne World Pulse www.lausanneworldpulse.com	Missions and evangelism news, information, and analysis
LifeWay Research Blog www.edstetzer.com	Trends and issues facing the church
Preaching Today Blog http://blog.preachingtoday.com	Discussion on the art of biblical preaching
Jesus Creed www.jesuscreed.com	Explores the significance of orthodoxy in the 21st century
The Sub.Text http://thesubtext.org	Explores preaching and practicing the gospel in a suburban context
Tuesday Colum www.drurywriting.com/keith	Relevant, provocative, Wesleyan

CR: What's the hardest part of this system?

ST: Getting started is always the hardest step, because that requires making a commitment to change. Once people make the decision that their lives need to change, the steps of the diet itself will come naturally.



CR: What do you hope this book will do for people?

ST: I am an encourager by nature, and I hope the book will speak health and healing into the minds of individuals who read it. If they come away with a greater sense of purpose and direction, and they will be better able to live the holy life that we are all seeking. 

Your Ministry

Creating an Atmosphere for Transformation

by Tim Guptill

Jesus made our mission very clear when he told us to go into the world and make disciples. Our challenge, then, is to promote healthy environments where Jesus-focused life change is most likely to happen. Here are four ways to provide an environment for positive spiritual change.

Provide a Pathway

Identify a clear and simple process for becoming more like Jesus. People are more apt to take steps of life change if the process is clearly identified with multiple opportunities to engage.

Expect Change


Create a high-expectation culture for spiritual change. Where there is no higher expectation, people will gravitate to the level of the LCD—lowest common disciple. We thrive in environments that challenge us to be all we were created to be.

Promote the Payoff

Before taking on any significant endeavor, people want to know that the results will be worth their time and effort. Let people know how much better their lives and community will be as they become fully devoted followers of Christ. State the positive outcome that you are hoping for.

Share Stories of Success

There is no better advertisement for an idea than the testimony of a satisfied customer. This emerging culture will listen more intently when they hear a firsthand account of a Romans-12-style life change. Encourage those who have had an authentic encounter with God to share it with others.

Life change is not about a system or a study. It is about a Savior who wants to radically transform our lives. A fully surrendered heart will look more like Jesus everyday and that is the best possible form of promotion. 

—Tim Guptill is Lead Pastor of Crosspoint Wesleyan Church in Fredericton, N.B.

Reviews



Celebrate Colossians Bible Study DVD and Participant Guide

Keith Loy

Wesleyan Publishing House

DVD, \$24.99; Paperback participant guide, 80 pp., \$7.99

Celebrate Colossians is a DVD resource that provides 12 interactive small-group lessons that encourage people to authentically engage with the Scripture and each other. Pastor Keith Loy uses in-depth teaching and thought provoking questions to take viewers on a life-changing journey through Colossians. Each of the easy-to-lead lessons moves participants to apply what they have learned to their lives, church, and community. From an individual to any size group or class, *Celebrate Colossians* will strengthen your faith, encourage your walk, and challenge your devotion to Jesus Christ.

—J. Summers

Lydia Barnes and the Escape from Shark Bay

Heather Gemmen Wilson

Wesleyan Publishing House

Paperback, 160 pp., \$9.99



On a mission trip to Jamaica with her father, 14-year old Lydia Barnes, and her friend Ben find themselves in yet another mystery. They must help find a way to replace books destroyed in a village school fire, find two kidnapped friends, and reunite a family. But can Lydia continue on the search with an injured leg after being attacked by a shark?

In her book *Lydia Barnes and the Escape from Shark Bay*, Heather Gemmen Wilson gives her young readers a feel for real issues Jamaicans face on a daily basis, and inspires them to help others. Lydia's adventure will keep readers of all ages on the edge of their seats!

—D. Harding



Preaching to a Post-Everything World: Crafting Biblical Sermons That Connect with Our Culture

Zack Eswine

BakerBooks

Paperback, 288 pp., \$17.99

Keeping preaching relevant to today's world is a challenge every preacher faces. Although though the Bible has remained unchanged for nearly two millennia, the world is constantly changing. And whereas the world many of us grew up in was somewhat friendly toward Christianity, today it is increasingly hostile. Preachers must continually work to communicate the timeless truths of Scripture in a way that connects with the people God has called them to reach. Zack Eswine has written a book that helps to do that. It is somewhat technical but helpful nonetheless, regardless of one's level of education or experience in preaching. Most readers will want to digest the material slowly, referring to it several times before placing it on the shelf. To a preacher, this book is incredibly relevant.

—J. Liddick



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Mark Gilroy
THOMAS NELSON PUBLISHER



Stan Toler
BEST-SELLING AUTHOR

Michelle Medlock Adams is an award-winning journalist and author of over 30 books.

Nathan Birky is publisher at Triangle Publishing.

Jerry Brecheisen is managing editor of *Wesleyan Life*.

Craig Bubeck is publisher at Elision Publishing.

Don Cady is the general publisher of Wesleyan Publishing House.

Keith Drury has written more than a dozen books and teaches at Indiana Wesleyan University.

Jeff Edmondson is director of Barefoot Ministries.

Jesse Florea is editor of Clubhouse magazine at Focus on the Family.

Holley Gerth is senior editorial director for DaySpring Cards.

Bob Haslam is a freelance writer and a mentor with the Jerry B. Jenkins Christian Writers Guild.

Dennis Hensley directs the writing program at Taylor University (Ft. Wayne).

Lin Johnson is managing editor of *Christian Communicator*, *Advanced Christian Writer*, and *Church Libraries*.

Chip MacGregor is a literary agent, writer, editor, and former publisher.

Shannon Hill Marchese is an editor at WaterBrook Press.

Andy Scheer is managing editor and writing mentor for the Jerry B. Jenkins Christian Writers Guild.

Kevin Scott is an editor at Wesleyan Publishing House.

Linda Taylor is the editorial director at the Livingstone Corporation.

Kelli Trujillo is an editor for the new *LIVE Bible* from Tyndale House Publishers.

Jim Watkins is an acquisitions editor for Wesleyan Publishing House and editorial advisor for ACW Press.

Heather Gemmen Wilson is an award-winning, best-selling author.

Lawrence W. Wilson is editorial director at Wesleyan Publishing House.

Top Ten Books

September 2008

1. *The Shack*
William P. Young, Windblown Media
2. *Standard Lesson Commentary KJV 2008-09*
Standard
3. *The Winners Manual*
Jim Tressel and Chris Fabry, Tyndale
4. *A Sister's Hope*
Wanda Brunstetter, Barbour
5. *90 Minutes in Heaven*
Don Piper and Cecil Murphey, Baker
6. *The Five Love Languages*
Gary Chapman, Moody
7. *Captivating*
John and Stasi Eldredge, Thomas Nelson
8. *Walking With God*
John Eldredge, Thomas Nelson
9. *The Power of a Praying Wife*
Stormie Omartian, Harvest House
10. *Do Hard Things*
Alex and Brett Harris, WaterBrook

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