

Rejoicing In Lament Wrestling With Incurable Cancer And Life Christ J Todd Billings

Seeking an answer to Anselm's timeless question, "Why did God become man?" Graham Cole follows Old Testament themes of preparation, theophany and messianic hope through to the New Testament witness to the divinely foretold event. This New Studies in Biblical Theology volume concludes with a consideration of the theological and existential implications of the incarnation of God.

At the age of thirty-nine, Christian theologian Todd Billings was diagnosed with a rare form of incurable cancer. In the wake of that diagnosis, he began grappling with the hard theological questions we face in the midst of crisis: Why me? Why now? Where is God in all of this? This eloquently written book shares Billings's journey, struggle, and reflections on providence, lament, and life in Christ in light of his illness, moving beyond pat answers toward hope in God's promises.

Theologically robust yet eminently practical, it engages the open questions, areas of mystery, and times of disorientation in the Christian life. Billings offers concrete examples through autobiography, cultural commentary, and stories from others,

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showing how our human stories of joy and grief can be incorporated into the larger biblical story of God's saving work in Christ.

Acts and Monuments by John Foxe, popularly abridged as Foxe's Book of Martyrs, is a celebrated work of church history and martyrology, first published in English in 1563 by John Day. Published early in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I and only five years after the death of the Roman Catholic Queen Mary I, Foxe's Acts and Monuments was an affirmation of the Protestant Reformation in England during a period of religious conflict between Catholics and Protestants. Foxe's account of church history asserted a historical justification that was intended to establish the Church of England as a continuation of the true Christian church rather than as a modern innovation, and it contributed significantly to a nationalistic repudiation of the Roman Catholic Church. The sequence of the work, initially in five books, covered first early Christian martyrs, a brief history of the medieval church, including the Inquisitions, and a history of the Wycliffite or Lollard movement. It then dealt with the reigns of Henry VIII and Edward VI, during which the dispute with Rome had led to the separation of the English Church from papal authority and the issuance of the Book of Common Prayer. The final book treated the reign of Queen Mary and the Marian Persecutions. (courtesy of wikipedia.com)

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While thorough and scholarly, Dr. Richard H. Warneck's presentation is also insightful and practical. He not only speaks to the many challenges faced by pastors, but also presents the theological foundation of pastoral ministry in such a way as to inspire and restore the vision of parish ministry for pastors and their congregations. Book jacket.

In this rich book Matthew Levering explores nine key virtues that we need to die (and live) well: love, hope, faith, penitence, gratitude, solidarity, humility, surrender, and courage. Retrieving and engaging a variety of biblical, theological, historical, and medical resources, Levering journeys through the various stages and challenges of the dying process, beginning with the fear of annihilation and continuing through repentance and gratitude, suffering and hope, before arriving finally at the courage needed to say goodbye to one's familiar world. Grounded in careful readings of Scripture, the theological tradition, and contemporary culture, *Dying and the Virtues* comprehensively and beautifully shows how these nine virtues effectively unite us with God, the One who alone can conquer death. We're all going to die. Yet in our medically advanced, technological age, many of us see death as a distant reality--something that happens only at the end of a long life or to other people. In *The End of the Christian Life*, Todd Billings urges Christians to resist that view. Instead, he calls us to embrace our mortality in our

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daily life and faith. This is the journey of genuine discipleship, Billings says, following the crucified and resurrected Lord in a world of distraction and false hopes. Drawing on his experience as a professor and father living with incurable cancer, Billings offers a personal yet deeply theological account of the gospel's expansive hope for small, mortal creatures. Artfully weaving rich theology with powerful narrative, Billings writes for church leaders and laypeople alike. Whether we are young or old, reeling from loss or clinging to our own prosperity, this book challenges us to walk a strange but wondrous path: in the midst of joy and lament, to receive mortal limits as a gift, an opportunity to give ourselves over to the Lord of life.

"Preaching," writes Phillips Brooks, "is the communication of truth by man to men. It has in it two essential elements, truth and personality. Neither of those can it spare and still be preaching. The truest truth, the most authoritative statement of God's will, communicated in any other way than through the personality of brother man to men is not preached truth." This classic is organized as follows: I. The Two Elements in Preaching II. The Preacher Himself III. The Preacher in His Work IV. The Idea of the Sermon V. The Making of the Sermon VI. The Congregation VII. The Ministry for Our Age VIII. The Value of the Human Soul

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Current discussions about worship are often driven by pragmatics and personal preferences rather than by the teaching of Scripture. True worship, however, is our response to God's gracious revelation; in order to be acceptable to God, worship must be experienced on God's terms. Respected Old Testament scholar Daniel Block examines worship in the Bible, offering a comprehensive biblical foundation and illuminating Old Testament worship practices and principles. He develops a theology of worship that is consistent with the teachings of Scripture and is applicable for the church today. He also introduces readers to a wide range of issues related to worship. The book, illustrated with diagrams, charts, and pictures, will benefit professors and students in worship and Bible courses, pastors, and church leaders.

Where is God in the suffering of a mentally ill person? What happens to the soul when the mind is ill? How are Christians to respond to mental illness? In this brave and compassionate book, theologian and priest Kathryn Greene-McCreight confronts these difficult questions raised by her own mental illness--bipolar disorder. With brutal honesty, she tackles often avoided topics such as suicide, mental hospitals, and electroconvulsive therapy. Greene-McCreight offers the reader everything from poignant and raw glimpses into the mind of a mentally ill person to practical and forthright advice for their friends, family, and clergy. The

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first edition has been recognized as one of the finest books on the subject. This thoroughly revised edition incorporates updated research and adds anecdotal and pastoral commentary. It also includes a new foreword by the current Archbishop of Canterbury and a new afterword by the author.

An accomplished theologian recovers the biblical theme of union with Christ, showing how it affects current theological and ministry issues.

Everyone will die. Yet we rarely talk about death or what comes after death. One reason is that we don't know what the Scripture says about the coming glory. How do we get to that point of joyful anticipation? Knowing God's promises! In *The Coming Glory: Hope Now for Life after Death*, Dr. Swets clearly presents the promises in Scripture about life after death--promises that answer seven common concerns of those facing their own death or that of a loved one.

Six scholars trace the role of lamentation in the Old and New Testaments in *A Time for Sorrow: Recovering the Practice of Lament in the Life of the Church*, reflecting on the theological significance of lament, affirming the ongoing relevance of lamentation in the life of the church, and exploring its biblical roots and application in church practice. In a church era dominated by positive thinking and slick, upbeat "worship," even mentioning the word lamentation is apt to cause a dismissive, disinterested shrug. But Christians still suffer, and this

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suffering is left mute when the church fails to integrate biblical lament in contemporary church practice. *A Time for Sorrow* looks to address this by recovering the biblical practice of bringing our pain before God in an honest and faithful manner. In this multiauthor work, learn about the role of lamentation in the Old and New Testaments, reflect on the theological significance of lament, and finish with thoughts on lament and pastoral practice today.

It is traditional to think we should praise Abraham for his willingness to sacrifice his son as proof of his love for God. But have we misread the point of the story? Is it possible that a careful reading of Genesis 22 could reveal that God was not pleased with Abraham's silent obedience? Widely respected biblical theologian, creative thinker, and public speaker J. Richard Middleton suggests we have misread and misapplied the story of the binding of Isaac and shows that God desires something other than silent obedience in difficult times. Middleton focuses on the ethical and theological problem of Abraham's silence and explores the rich biblical tradition of vigorous prayer, including the lament psalms, as a resource for faith. Middleton also examines the book of Job in terms of God validating Job's lament as "right speech," showing how the vocal Job provides an alternative to the silent Abraham. This book provides a fresh interpretation of Genesis 22 and reinforces the church's resurgent interest in lament as an

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appropriate response to God.

Promises in the Dark by Dr. Eric McLaughlin strengthens the hearts of readers to persevere in God's calling to walk with those in need. As a missionary doctor in Africa, McLaughlin knows how walking closely with those who suffer and bearing others' burdens can easily lead to burnout or cynicism—unless we find the path to perseverance that the Lord provides. This resource explores how to find both calling and hope, living in the tension between a difficult present and God's promises of renewal, how to cope with despair and futility, the importance of the suffering God for those who suffer, and how the manifestations of God bring life into a dying world. McLaughlin explores how to endure in such a yet-to-be-redeemed world as ours, which is full of tragedy and heartache, pointing to God's promises.

God desires for us to pour out our hearts to Him, whether in joy or pain. But many of us don't feel right expressing our anger, frustration, and sadness in prayer. From Job to David to Christ, men and women of the Bible understood the importance of pouring one's heart out to the Father. Examine their stories and expand your definition of worship. Also available: A Sacred Sorrow Experience Guide (9781576836682, sold separately), to help individuals or small groups get the most out of this book.

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The Story of Brain Disease and the Priest's Wife This is the story of Susan--a wife, mother, Christian believer, lover of children, writer of stories, and woman of extraordinary intellect. Susan was diagnosed with a brain tumor in her late thirties. Although it was successfully treated, the process led to her slow, unending decline. In this personal story of love and loss, Victor Lee Austin shares how caring for his wife during her painful struggle with brain cancer and its aftereffects brought him face-to-face with his God and with his faith in unsettling ways. God gave Victor what his heart most desired--marriage to Susan--then God took away what he had given. Yet God never withdrew his presence. Weaving together autobiographical details and profound theological insights, this powerful narrative shows that we are called to turn to God in the face of suffering. This book deals with Christian lament in the late Reformation by exploring the efforts of a talented yet little-known layman to cope with the death of his beloved wife. A work of haunting candor and searching faith, *The Pious Meditations* furnishes insight into life in the past as well as resources for life in the present.

John Piper examines depression from a spiritual perspective, guiding and encouraging those for whom joy seems to stay out of reach.

This womens Bible study offers an in-depth examination of the purpose of the Book of Ruth and how God used the people in the narrative to show us His plan of salvation. A

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verse-by-verse analysis, *Ruth: More than a Love Story* explores themes, motifs, and context and provides thorough interpretation.

Using the scriptures and other Christian sources, the authors point readers down the road to a successful marriage. Original.

Where Is God? There are never quick fixes or easy answers when it comes to suffering. But even when we can't immediately see God's hand—when the struggle is hard and painful—he is working. Weaving together Scripture, personal stories, and the words of the classic hymn “How Firm a Foundation,” David Powlison brings an experienced counselor's touch to exploring how God enters into our sufferings, helping us see God working in our own particular struggles—and discover how God's grace goes deeper than we could ever imagine.

This is the moving story of Matt Chandler's battle with a potentially fatal brain tumor. But it's also the stories of those in his church family who taught him, and teach him, how to walk with joy in sorrow. Readers will find encouragement and strength to get through tough times, or to support others to do so.

Lament is how you live between the poles of a hard life and trusting God's goodness. *Lament* is how we bring our sorrow to God—but it is a neglected dimension of the Christian life for many Christians today. We need to recover the practice of honest spiritual struggle that gives us permission to vocalize our pain and wrestle with our sorrow. *Lament* avoids trite answers and quick solutions, progressively moving us

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toward deeper worship and trust. Exploring how the Bible—through the psalms of lament and the book of Lamentations—gives voice to our pain, this book invites us to grieve, struggle, and tap into the rich reservoir of grace and mercy God offers in the darkest moments of our lives.

"Is disability abnormal, frightening, insignificant? No! Stephanie Hubach explains how to biblically understand disability and its challenges as well as the church's role in the lives of people with disabilities"--

Is John Calvin's view of God coercive, leaving no place for the human in redemption? J. Todd Billings explores Calvin's theology of 'participation in Christ', arguing that for Calvin grace fulfills nature. Billings reframes the critiques of Calvin in the Gift discussion, opening up new possibilities for contemporary theology as well.

In Glimpsing Resurrection, Deanna A. Thompson combines recent trauma research with compelling first-person narrative to provide insight into the traumatic dimensions of living with a serious illness. Her aim is to help those who are ill and those who care for and minister to them deepen their understanding of how best to offer support. "The tendency for Christians to move almost immediately from death to proclamations of new life risks alienating those for whom healing and new life seem out of reach," says Thompson. Glimpsing Resurrection focuses less on the "why" to help readers instead come to terms with the "how" of living with a serious disease. In particular, Thompson provides a framework and concrete suggestions for how to be a church where those who are undone by illness can be undone, as well as a place that can love and support them to hope.

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Life doesn't always go the way we hope it will. Whether it's singleness, childlessness or some other big disappointment, it's hard to be content when life lets us down. Author Jennie Pollock knows what it's like to feel discontent. With warmth and honesty, she answers common doubts that arise when life doesn't go the way we had hoped: Is God good? Is he enough? Is he worth it? She walks readers through the process of taking our eyes off the things we wish we had and instead enjoying the character of the God we do have—a God who is good, who meets all our needs, and whose promises are worth the wait. Drawing on encouragements from the Bible and the stories of others, this book helps readers to trust in God's plan for their lives and enjoy true contentment through a genuine conviction that Jesus is better than even our most keenly-felt hopes and longings for this life.

Gospel unity creates racial harmony. However, Martin Luther King Jr. once said that the most segregated hour in America is eleven o'clock on Sunday morning. Equipped with the gospel, the church should be the catalyst for reconciliation, yet it continues to ignore immense pain and division. In an effort to bridge the canyon of misunderstanding, insensitivity, and hurt, Mark Vroegop writes about the practice of lament, which he defines as “the biblical language of empathy and exile, perseverance and protest.” Encouraging you to “weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15), Vroegop invites you to mourn with him over the brokenness that has caused division and to use lament to begin the journey toward a diverse and united church. Features Prayers of Lament From Thabiti Anyabwile Trillia Newbell Jarvis Williams John Onwuchekwa Collin Hansen Isaac Adams Danny Akin Mika Edmondson Jason Meyer Garrett Kell

Well-respected Old Testament professor Victor Matthews identifies eight landmark stories that

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shaped Israel's identity.

"Celebrating the Lord's Supper," says award-winning author and theologian J. Todd Billings, "can change lives." In this book Billings shows how a renewed theology and practice of the Lord's Supper can lead Christians to rediscover the full richness and depth of the gospel. With an eye for helping congregations move beyond common reductions of the gospel, he develops a vibrant, biblical, and distinctly Reformed sacramental theology and explores how it might apply within a variety of church contexts, from Baptist to Presbyterian, nondenominational to Anglican. At once strikingly new and deeply traditional, Remembrance, Communion, and Hope will surprise and challenge readers, inspiring them to a new understanding of—and appreciation for—the embodied, Christ-disclosing drama of the Lord's Supper.

Representing two generations of counselor education and practice, Megan Anna Neff and Mark McMinn provide practitioners with a fresh look at integration in a postmodern world.

Modeling how to engage hard questions, they consider how different theological views, gendered perspectives, and cultures integrate with psychology and counseling.

Hans Joachim Iwand's 1941 monograph, *The Righteousness of Faith According to Luther*, is an important contribution to contemporary appreciation of Luther's theological significance for today. Although Iwand wrote his study three decades after the beginning of the Luther Renaissance, it nevertheless developed some of the central insights of Luther scholarship during that period. Two concepts--in particular, promise and simultaneity--are crucial to an appreciative understanding of Luther's doctrine of justification. The language of promise presents justification to the believer as a reality that has yet to arrive or is hidden under present reality. And the language of simultaneity attests that humans remain throughout their lives one

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in the same, sinner and saint. This beautiful translation by Randi H. Lundell makes Iwand's down-to-earth presentation of the doctrine at the heart of Luther's theology, at long last, available to English-language readers.

Alan Scott, a leader in the Vineyard Movement, draws upon his years of experience to share inspiring stories of cities transformed by scattered servants. He shares practical ways for church leaders to move beyond the building walls and take the kingdom to those who need it most. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Scott argues that every believer, not just the leaders, can fill their city, workplace, and family with the beauty and power of Christ. When believers become scattered servants, the Holy Spirit will equip them to advance the kingdom and change lives through their hearts and hands.

Kelly M. Kopic meditates on how our suffering—particularly our physical suffering—relates to the Christian faith. This is not a theodicy or a book of easy answers. It is an invitation to reshape our understanding of suffering into the image of Jesus. What we discover is that in Christ and through his church, God displays his deep love and provision for his people.

"We tend to use words like miracle and mystery in the context of serendipity. In this frank and eloquent account of life transformed by cancer, Deanna Thompson explores these articles of faith as they are also wont to appear--on the hard edges of hope and the dark side of joy."

--Krista Tippett, from the Foreword Hoping for More is a story of a young religion professor with a stage IV cancer diagnosis and a lousy prognosis for the future. Amid the grief and the grace of her fractured life, this theologian--who is also a wife, mother, daughter, sister, and friend--searches for words adequate to express her faltering faith. More Anne Lamott meets Harold Kushner than the teller of a pious, God-saved-me-from-cancer tale, Thompson unpacks

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the messy realities that arise when faith and suffering collide. Told in shimmering prose, *Hoping for More* takes readers on an unsentimental journey through the valley of the shadow of cancer--beyond the predictable parameters of prayer, the church, even belief in life after death. What emerges is a novel approach to talking faith and accepting grace when hope is all you've got.

This book fills a real need for pastors and students. Though there is currently a large body of material on the theological interpretation of Scripture, most of it is highly specific and extremely technical. J. Todd Billings here provides a straightforward entryway for students and pastors to understand why theological interpretation matters and how it can be done. / A solid, constructive theological work, *The Word of God for the People of God* presents a distinctive Trinitarian, participatory approach toward reading Scripture as the church. Billings's accessible yet substantial argument for a theological hermeneutic is rooted in a historic vision of the practice of scriptural interpretation even as it engages a wide range of contemporary issues and includes several exegetical examples that apply to concrete Christian ministry situations. Eib shares amazing, true stories of those who have been through cancer and discovers that when God and cancer meet, hope is never far away. This book is packed with a daily dose of encouragement.

Those who experience and survive cancer live in bonus time, a season of grace that can be both disorienting and wonderful. In this honest and hopeful account, two-time survivor Alec Hill helps readers recalibrate expectations, grapple with survivor's guilt, and steward the opportunities for new purpose and growth. Survivors and caregivers can discover how encountering death can bring us to a different kind of life.

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