
IVP Academic Alert

IVP Academic's Book Bulletin for Professors • Volume 17 • Number 2 • Spring 2008

Inside

4 | **Subverting Global Myths**

Vinoth Ramachandra delivers rousing arguments to challenge the assumptions steering contemporary global discourse.

5 | **New & Noteworthy**

Andy Crouch believes cultural change is in the making, Art Lindsley thinks apologetics has got heart, and the 2007 Wheaton Theology Conference has transmigrated into a book.

6 | **Homosexuality**

Janelle Hallman presents new research for continued scholarship and clinical practice in *The Heart of Female Same-Sex Attraction*.

Following Christ 2008

We invite our *Alert* readers to join us at InterVarsity's Following Christ 2008, the triennial conference for graduate students, faculty and professionals. Major speakers on the theme of human flourishing include N. T. Wright and Francis Collins. The event will be held December 27-31, 2008, at the Marriott Magnificent Mile in Chicago. For more information and online registration, see followingchrist.org. ■

Dictionary Boasts Hebrew Poets

The seventh volume (and third Old Testament volume) in IVP Academic's celebrated "Black Dictionary" series is due to be released in July.



Tremper
Longman III



Peter Enns

The *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings* (DOTWPW) covers Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Lamentations, Ruth and Esther. IVP Academic's Dan Reid

interviewed DOTWPW general editors Tremper Longman III of Westmont College and Peter Enns of Westminster Theological Seminary.

Reid: The character and texture of the literature covered in this dictionary—wisdom, poetry and writings—is quite different from the Pentateuch, historical books or prophets. How would you characterize it?

Longman: Most of the books covered by the DOTWPW are poetic. That draws attention to the literary nature of these books. We have a number of articles that deal with the different characteristics of Hebrew poetry, and then the articles on the books themselves pay considerable attention to their literary features. The prose

continued on page 2

This Lord Was Made for You and Me

Joel Scandrett has had a fabulous time editing Stephen J. Nichols's book *Jesus Made in America*.



Stephen J. Nichols

While Steve is new to IVP Academic, he's a veteran author with a spate of books under his belt, and it didn't take Joel long to figure out why.

Jesus Made in America is replete with mesmerizing, dismaying and often humorous depictions of

the "malleability" of Jesus when viewed through the lens of the history of American Christianity. These depictions demonstrate how, from the historical outset, American Christians have tended to remake Jesus in their own image, to which Nichols offers a clear corrective. As such, this book would be an excellent choice as a textbook in American Christian history courses, or as an

entertaining and instructive introduction for general readers.

Joel recently interviewed Steve Nichols about his new book.

Scandrett: Steve, let me begin by asking what it was that led you to write this book. Was there a particular event or experience that motivated you?

Nichols: A few years back my wife, Heidi, who is a literature scholar, and I wanted to write a paper together for a conference. She had just finished her dissertation that was generally in the field of American Victorian culture and I was beginning to spend some time in Christology. We came up with the paper, "The Domestication of Jesus: Victorian Culture and American Christology." About halfway through putting the paper together, I realized that there was a book here.

continued on page 3

DOTWPW, continued from page 1

books included in our DOTWPW—Ruth and Esther—are themselves literary gems, so we also discuss the literary artifice in narrative as well.

Enns: I would add that the books covered in this dictionary are grouped in a way that reflects an attempt to honor ancient categories, although that cannot be done perfectly. The fact remains that wisdom elements are found in a variety of genres, and that the biblical wisdom books have their own unique characteristics. Also, poetry is a debated term among OT scholars, and it is certainly not restricted to the books covered in this dictionary. The prophetic books have significant poetic portions, and poetry also appears at important junctures in narrative texts, like Exodus 15.

Reid: As you say, the literary factor plays a big role in this volume, with articles on topics like acrostic, merism, parallelism, sound patterns and word play. Could you further reflect on this?

Longman: Poetry appeals to the whole person. Contrary to some, I believe it does inform the intellect, but it also stimulates the imagination, arouses our emotions and appeals to our will. Poets had a number of literary devices to press into service to achieve their communicative ends. As Robert Alter once said though, every culture writes its poems in different ways, so it is important to come to terms with the conven-

tions that ancient Hebrew poets used.

Enns: We also treat the history of interpretation of these books, and feel that this is as important a topic to cover as the Ancient Near Eastern background. Interpreters today would do well to remember that they stand in a stream of interpretive activity that

they deserved. Work in this area over the last twenty to thirty years has sought to correct this oversight. Moreover, work in other Ancient Near East poetic texts has provided a valuable calibrating factor for our understanding of biblical poetry.

Reid: What do you think of allegorical or

The challenge before evangelical interpreters is to try to understand contemporary interpretive methods as being in conversation with the witness of the church rather than a corrective.

has been going on for the two-thousand-year history of the church, and for several hundred years before that in Judaism. The books under consideration in this volume enjoy a robust history of interpretation.

Reid: As in the broader history of OT interpretation, there have been some historical missteps in the scholarly interpretation of this literature. What are some of them?

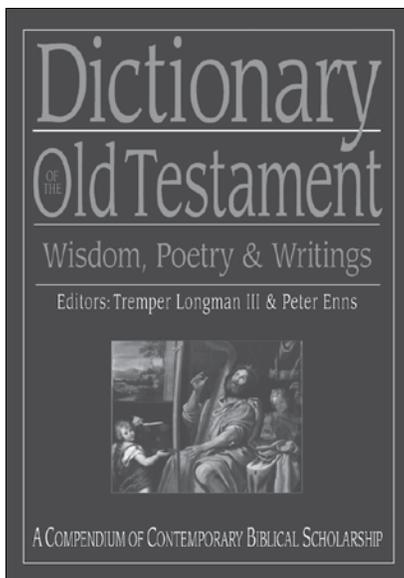
Longman: I believe that one misstep was being overly fascinated by the history of composition. By this I do not mean to say that books did not come into being over a period of time or in some cases by more than one hand. However, I do believe that scholarly attention was too devoted to these questions with the result that issues of the final form were missed. Then, of course, there are missteps in the analysis of individual books, for instance the Song of Songs, which for many centuries was interpreted as an allegory and not in reference to human love.

Enns: Another area is the nature of biblical poetry. For much of the history of Jewish interpretation, meaning was teased out from the parallelism of poetic lines that did not do justice to the poetic line itself. Christian interpretation has been highly influenced by Western—originally Greek—conventions of poetry. Hence, the conventions of ancient Semitic poetry did not receive the attention

christological interpretations of Song of Songs?

Longman: Allegorical interpretations are ways of bypassing the obviously sensual nature of the Song of Songs. They also press the details of the Song into illegitimate symbolic service. I can always get my students' attention when I point out that Cyril of Alexandria interpreted the woman's statement that her lover is "like a sachet of myrrh lodged between her breasts" (1:13) as a reference to Jesus Christ, who spans the Old and New Testaments. However, as a love poem in the canon, the Song should be read in the light of the pervasive metaphor of marriage used to describe God's relationship with his people.

Enns: These interpretations of the Song have been ubiquitous in the history of Christian interpretation. For that reason alone I feel I am obligated to give due respect to these methods. Of course, this question gets us into larger issues of hermeneutics, particularly of what our modern conventions would "allow." The challenge before evangelical interpreters is to try to understand contemporary interpretive methods as being in conversation with the witness of the church rather than a corrective. This is really the ongoing hermeneutical challenge for the church, to bridge the horizons of ancient con-



This Lord, continued from page 1

She set to work on her own book on Anne Bradstreet and I plied away at this one. She has been a wonderful and quite gracious sounding board throughout the whole process.

Initially I conceived of a traditional history, tracing out the details from the begin-

of American evangelicalism. Without taking too heavy of a hand, I do want to ask questions of the Jesus or the Jesuses that emerge throughout the past centuries and from our own contemporary horizons.

Also, there's a whole cottage industry on evangelical criticism, a sort of "crit lit"

Commodification has the effect of sentimentalizing and trivializing Jesus, turning Christianity and Christ into a product that is marketed, bought and sold.

ning of the story to the end. In the process of writing, however, the book transformed into something more like a "cultural history." The first four chapters more or less follow the historical route from the Puritans to the fundamentalist/modernist controversy in the 1920s with Harry Emerson Fosdick and J. Gresham Machen locked in debate over, with due respect to Charlie Brown, "the real meaning of Christmas." The second half of the book roams more freely in the twentieth century, picking up the strands of music, cinema, commodification and consumer culture, and lastly politics. That last chapter on politics was initially not part of the book. But once I had the phrase "Jesus on the Right Wing," I knew it had to be in there.

Scandrett: There are a couple of other books about Jesus in America already in publication. What sets this book apart?

Nichols: Like the other books that are available, this book also looks at the broader contours of American religion. Unlike those books, however, this one focuses on American evangelicalism. Further, the other books, most notably Richard Wightman Fox's *Jesus in America* and Stephen Prothero's *American Jesus*, are not all that interested in being prescriptive. In those books the cultural Jesuses that emerge are a cause for celebration. My aim is not just to describe the Jesus of American Christianity and the Jesus

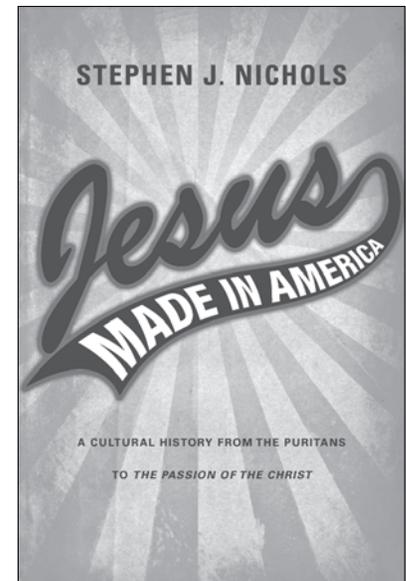
if you will. This book does flirt with this genre. While this book primarily traverses the ghetto of American evangelicalism, however, it nevertheless meanders through the broader contours of American culture. I found the subject of Christology to be a helpful focal point for this fascinating interplay between church and culture. Stanley Hauerwas once summarized John Howard Yoder's contribution by claiming, "Prior to Yoder the subject of Christian ethics in America was always America." This book, very humbly and on a much smaller scale, wants to help American evangelicals think about the subject of theology in America. We need to avoid the stinging indictment that the subject of American theologians and their work is always America.

Scandrett: What do you think your readers might be surprised to learn from reading this book?

Nichols: For the more academic readers, I think the surprise consists of how much we in the academy can learn by paying attention to popular American culture and popular American evangelical culture. For most in the church, their theological education and discipleship is coming from the songs of contemporary Christian music, from novels, and from bumper stickers and T-shirts. Andrew Greeley has written of popular culture as the *locus theologicus*. As much as we academ-

ics like to think we are the *locus theologicus*, I think that for the most part we aren't. Our histories and our analyses of American evangelicalism need to engage the trends and issues of the masses—where the bulk of the faithful live and may be found. The book gives due attention to CCM, to buyers and wearers of Christian T-shirts, and to Christian mini-golf proprietors. They have fascinating stories to tell and we in the academy can learn a great deal from them.

Scandrett: Is there one depiction of Jesus in your book that stands out to you as especially troubling or problematic? Why?



Nichols: Can I claim two? These would be commodification and politics. Jesus has been sold as everything from action figures to bracelets, from bobble heads to T-shirts. This commodification has the effect of sentimentalizing and trivializing Jesus, turning Christianity and Christ into a product that is marketed, bought and sold. This has not gone unnoticed by a skeptical public. Our commodification of Christ isn't only harmful for us as evangelicals, it ends up damaging our witness as we become almost a comic caricature by the way we flippantly wear and consume Christ.

Then there's politics. Jesus has been claimed on both the right wing and the left wing of American political ideologies. We

DOTWPW, continued from page 2

text and contemporary setting.

Reid: Do you think that the ancient wisdom and poetry of the OT has a particular drawing power in our contemporary cultural context?

Enns: Absolutely. These books hit you right between the eyes with the difficulties of life and present struggles in an unflinching, even jarring, manner. No one can accuse biblical faith of being about picket fences and flower boxes. It is quite serious and unafraid to tell it like it is. In our postmodern world, these books are both appealing as well as pointed in their challenge to the unreflective life.

Longman: If it is correct to characterize the present generation as one that inclines to images rather than propositional statements and that is not afraid of emotions and the imagination, then these books are really appealing. But it is more than that. Think of the message of Ecclesiastes: “there is no meaning under the sun.” We struggle with finding meaning today, and many deny that it is available. Ecclesiastes is a book that speaks to this question.

Reid: What would you say to someone who last had a course in this literature twenty or thirty years ago? Are there things they can look forward to discovering in the DOTWPW that are “new and different”?

Longman: Wow! This area of the canon has

seen some interesting and productive advances in understanding. As Pete mentioned earlier, even in an area as basic as parallelism, we have come to a richer, better understanding of how this literary convention works. This dictionary would function not just as a refresher course, but a continuing education course for readers who have not studied this literature for twenty or thirty years.

Enns: I agree and would add things like a more developed understanding of the structure of the Psalter, that Qohelet is an honest, struggling Israelite rather than a fool or heretic, and that Job’s friends actually have some “correct” things to say to Job.

Reid: Both of you have spent a good deal of time in this neighborhood of the OT. Did you learn anything new in editing this dictionary?

Longman: I can’t even begin to count the number of new insights I gained from the other contributors as I edited their work. We have an article on the history of interpretation of each of the books covered by the DOTWPW. Such study is becoming a mainstay of the field. I am presently writing a Job commentary, and the article on Job was an excellent launching point for my own research into the subject.

Enns: I was reminded of how wonderful and vast our Scripture is, and how many thoughtful people, past and present, have devoted

their lives to bring these sacred words to bear on the life of God’s people. And I cannot enumerate how often, during editing a sentence here or there, I paused to consider how my thinking is benefiting from reading these articles. ■

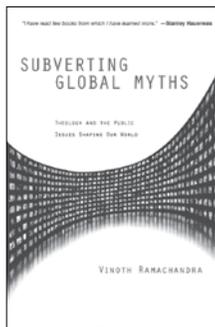
This Lord, continued from page 3

tend to be too easily seduced by the powers of the market and by politics. Jesus came to free us from such seductions. Ironically, we as American evangelicals have attempted to bind him to them.

Scandrett: Finally, what sort of impact do you want this book to have?

Nichols: We all have our blind spots when it comes to reading and understanding the Bible, confessing our theology, and serving in worship and praxis. Rather than just snicker at others—and, honestly, there are many occasions for humor in the story of the American evangelical Jesus—we shouldn’t miss the opportunity for some self-examination and self-criticism. Along these lines, I think that it could be helpful for academics to think of ways not simply to criticize what they see as not so helpful in popular Christian literature or music. Rather, we could serve the church greatly by asking what types of positive impacts we could be making outside of the academy and beyond writing for each other. ■

Sri Lankan Intellectual Speaks



It caught even our attention when Stanley Hauerwas wrote us, “I have read few books from which I have learned more. I really hope this book will have the impact it deserves.”

Vinoth Ramachandra’s *Subverting Global Myths* is one of those paradigm-shifting books that takes on the public, large-scale narratives that engage our imaginations and shape the

way we experience the world.

The book takes up six areas of contemporary global discourse—terrorism, religious violence, human rights, multiculturalism, science and postcolonialism. Here powerful myths energize and mobilize a great deal of public funding as well as academic production.

Ramachandra speaks from a unique vantage point as a public intellectual living in Sri Lanka. With a Ph.D. in nuclear engineering from the University of London, he draws on his own experience working as a pastor-theologian among university students

and professors against a backdrop of militant religious and secular ideologies in a country which has suffered from “terrorism” and a “war on terror” that has claimed over 60,000 lives. The book also reflects his experience of living and traveling extensively not only in the West but in several of the trouble spots of Asia today.

Slow, thoughtful and critical readers who care to explore reality rather than flip from one reality show to another will appreciate this invitation to engage the heretical subversion of the present reality. ■

New & Noteworthy



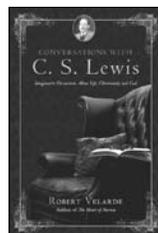
Many Christians in the academy, especially those who came of age in the era of L'Abri and Francis Schaeffer, have engaged culture through the lens of cultural critique. Andy

Crouch argues that it's not enough to critique culture (or copy or consume it). In *Culture Making*, Crouch shows why the only way to effect cultural change is to create culture.



Edward R. Brown pairs an accessible biblical case for environmental stewardship with practical concern for the local and global church. *Our Father's World* creates a new paradigm for

“environmental missions,” in which care for creation translates into holistic mission and ministry for both people and the land that sustains them.



Mere Christianity meets *Tuesdays with Morrie!* In philosopher Robert Velarde's imaginative apologetic, a dying man in a hospital room encounters C. S. Lewis, who takes

him through a wardrobe for a tour of Lewis's ideas. *Conversations with C. S. Lewis* models narrative apologetics, treating such topics as Christianity's uniqueness, morality and theodicy.



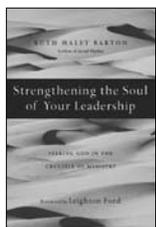
The Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture continues with the release of 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther (Old Testament Volume 5), edited by Marco Conti.

The church fathers were largely interested in typological and moral interpretation of the persons and events in these historical books.



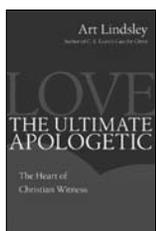
On November 22, 1963, three great men died—C. S. Lewis, John F. Kennedy and Aldous Huxley. That set Peter Kreeft thinking about what would happen if

they met on the other side and how the conversation might go. The result was *Between Heaven and Hell*, a classic of apologetics. This expanded edition includes a new dialogue in which Kreeft imagines “A World Without an Easter.”



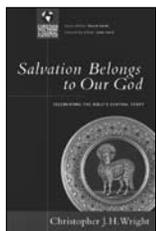
Weaving together contemporary illustrations with insight from the life of Moses, *Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership* explores topics such as the loneliness of leadership and

community discernment. Ruth Haley Barton explores what happens when leaders neglect their own spiritual formation.



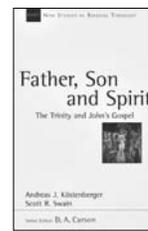
Art Lindsley's new book has been developing for years, as he has become more aware of the need for thought and action to cohere in Christian witness. *Love, the Ultimate*

Apologetic takes an unusual approach to apologetics, showing the unique character and foundation for Christian love.



There's a whole world in one verse, says Chris Wright in *Salvation Belongs to Our God*, the latest volume of the Christian Doctrine in Global Perspective series.

Beginning and ending with Revelation 7:10, we see salvation in all its permutations. We're left with the assurance, whatever our context, that God is “mighty to save.”

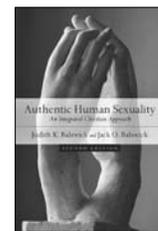


Andreas J. Köstenberger and Scott R. Swain bring us *Father, Son and Spirit*, the latest in the New Studies in Biblical Theology series. They locate and explicate the triune God as portrayed

in the fourth Gospel, considering John's representation of the Godhead in light of the monotheism of Second Temple Judaism and the mission of the church.



In *Understanding Evangelical Media*, Quentin J. Schultz and Robert H. Woods Jr. have convened a summit of sorts, bringing together Christian scholars of communication to assess the state of evangelical media in a rapidly changing social and technological environment.



IVP Academic is pleased to announce the release of a newly revised and expanded edition of the standard textbook *Authentic Human Sexuality* by veteran profs Jack and Judith Balswick

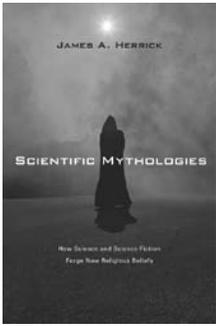
of Fuller Seminary. Updated throughout and now available in paper, the book offers a new chapter on sexual development throughout the human life span and a stronger theological foundation, grounded in a trinitarian model of relationships.



The selection of essays in *Ancient Faith for the Church's Future*, named after the 2007 Wheaton Theology Conference, explores the importance of the early church for interpreting

Scripture, engaging in missional witness, renewing our worship and prayer, grasping afresh our salvation, and even authentically engaging our surrounding culture. ■

Modern Mythmakers



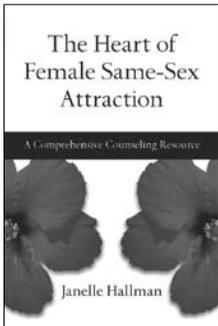
James Herrick has noticed that the promotion of alternative “spiritualities” to our Judeo-Christian tradition is not necessarily conducted by religious leaders, philosophers or theologians, but often comes from much less academic and much more popular media. In fact, Herrick shows in this book how science fiction writing and filmmaking often bring together mythological themes with scientists and (at least purported) scientific elements to create a potent religious alchemy.

Observing scientists such as Francis Bacon, Francis

Crick and Carl Sagan; filmmakers such as George Lucas and Steven Spielberg; and investigating the science fiction of writers such as Olaf Stapledon, (the late) Sir Arthur C. Clarke and Isaac Asimov, Herrick offers a fascinating study of the curious collisions of scientists with religion and science fiction writers with science. These amalgams are not only generating interest in tabloids but are influencing political, scientific and religious perspectives as well.

As we learned in science class, when a vacuum occurs in the natural world, something will attempt to fill the void. Herrick shows us how this is equally true of the growing spiritual vacuum we’re experiencing now with the erosion of our own Judeo-Christian tradition in the West. ■

Female Same-Sex Attraction



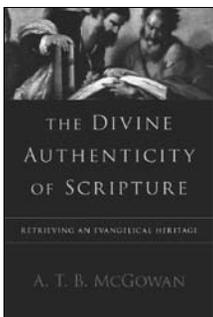
Janelle Hallman has researched, taught, presented seminars and done extensive counseling with women struggling with same-sex attraction. Much of her experience involved taking what was being learned about men and finding how such insights did and did not illuminate the trials of women dealing with their unwanted attractions. Now Janelle combines her research and teaching with counseling experience to provide a truly comprehensive guide for Christian

therapists, counselors and pastoral staff for dealing sympathetically and realistically with those women they seek to serve. Interweaving research analysis, theoretical considerations, practical guidance and interactions with her clients, this will be a welcome resource to the counseling community and those seeking competent help.

“Therapists, pastoral counselors, mentors, mothers, and, most significantly, women wrestling with sexual identity and emotionally dependent patterns will find a gold mine in this book. . . . A new standard in this area of therapy and ministry.”

—Wendy Gritter, national executive director, New Direction Ministries. ■

McGowan Proposes Divine Spiritation



A. T. B. McGowan of Highland Theological College in Scotland has written a thought-provoking book on the nature and function of Scripture in evangelical Christianity. Convinced that in formulating our doctrine of Scripture we need to review our vocabulary, our theology and our use of Scripture, he offers a reassessment of key concepts like inerrancy. In order to maintain a high view of Scripture, McGowan

calls our attention to a European evangelical tradition exemplified in James Orr and Herman Bavinck. Notably, McGowan wants to retrieve Bavinck’s thinking as a valuable theological resource for a contemporary evangelical doctrine of Scripture.

I. Howard Marshall writes: “[McGowan] steers a wise course between the dangers of an unthinking fundamentalism and a skeptical liberalism, and suggests that terms such as *spiritation* and *infallibility* express concepts that are basic to a sound doctrine that will have practical relevance to the preaching of Scripture.” ■

Andy Le Peau
Associate Publisher, Editorial

James Hoover
Associate Editorial Director
& Senior Editor, IVP Academic

Daniel G. Reid
Senior Editor, IVP Academic

Gary Deddo
Senior Editor, IVP Academic

Joel Scandrett
Associate Editor, IVP Academic

Al Hsu
Associate Editor, IVP Books

David A. Zimmerman
Associate Editor, IVP Books

Ellen Hsu
Rights Manager

Kristie Berglund
IVP Academic Sales
& Marketing Manager

Adrianna Wright
Print Publicity Manager, IVP Academic

Addenda & Errata Blog:
ivpress.com/blogs/addenda-errata/

The IVP Academic Alert is published three times a year by InterVarsity Press. To order any books featured in this bulletin, return the accompanying reply card or contact:

InterVarsity Press
P.O. Box 1400
Downers Grove, IL 60515-1426
(630) 734-4321
academic@ivpress.com
ivpacademic.com

Manuscripts and book proposals should be sent to the appropriate academic editor. Questions, comments, change of address notifications and all other correspondence may be sent to academic@ivpress.com.

For information about translations of InterVarsity Press titles, please contact Ellen Hsu, Rights Manager, at translations@ivpress.com, or visit our website at ivpress.com/info/translations.

Academic journal editors, for media copies visit ivpress.com/media.

Vol. 17, No. 2
Copyright © 2008 by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA. All rights reserved.