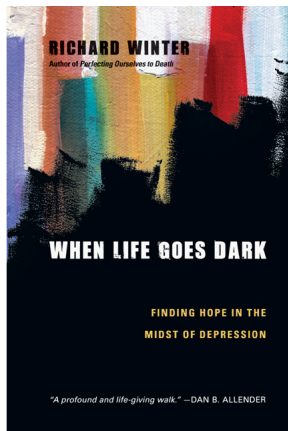


WRITING SAMPLES: INSIDE IV NEWSLETTER

Promotional book reviews written for the Inside IV Newsletter, a staff publication of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship—the parent organization of InterVarsity Press.



May 2012

New from IVP: *When Life Goes Dark*

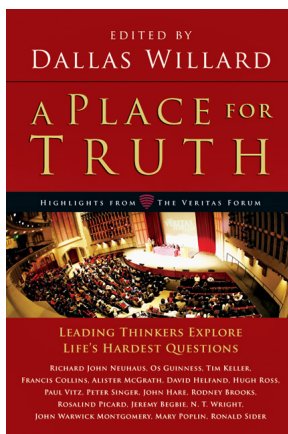
Richard Winter's non-reductionistic account of what in the world is going on when we get depressed.

New initiates to the college campus are served quite a cocktail of new freedoms and responsibilities upon arrival. It's a recipe that affects people in different ways. For many, freshman year just means fun. A time of liberated self-expression, of direct and uninhibited *experience*. But for others, the same mix results in captivity. In response to a rapidly expanding outside world, subjectivity shrinks and intensifies. A doorway opens onto the vertiginous depths of depression.

If you're a minister with some knowledge of the high emotional stakes on campus, you'll recognize the value of a book like Richard Winter's *When Life Goes Dark*. Winter is a psychotherapist, professor and L'Abri-schooled disciple of Francis Schaeffer. His book, a refreshingly three-dimensional take on depression, explores the complex medical, psychological and spiritual issues that feed this uniquely human affliction. Drawing on recent scientific research, Winter defuses Christian stigmas around the problem by explaining depression's nature (biochemical and genetic causes) as well as its nurture (social and cultural factors). Things become clearer as we begin to see that despair, loss, anger, guilt, shame and spiritual warfare all play a part.

Next year the freshman dorms will receive yet another influx of students—many of whom will indeed find campus life to be a garden of new possibilities. But a few of them will have to face up to the valley of the shadow of death that Richard Winter describes. Reading *When Life Goes Dark* is one way you can begin helping them today.

For more on *When Life Goes Dark*, visit ivpress.com.



August 2010

Has the University Lost Its Way?

Truth like a bastard comes into the world.
Never without ill-fame to him who gives her birth.
—John Milton

Introducing the book with these words, Dallas Willard might as well have forecasted skimpy sales for *A Place for Truth*, the first collection of lectures in The Veritas Forum's nearly two-decade history.

Milton's words are salient, of course. The idea that there might be a veritas—a predetermined standard that our lives are finally accountable to—weighs heavy on the mind. High and uncompromising, aloof and demanding—truth would make an insufferable opponent in a debate. And it should come as no surprise that the university, in our age

Has the University Lost Its Way? (Cont.)

of late capitalism, is no longer willing to underwrite the hunt for it.

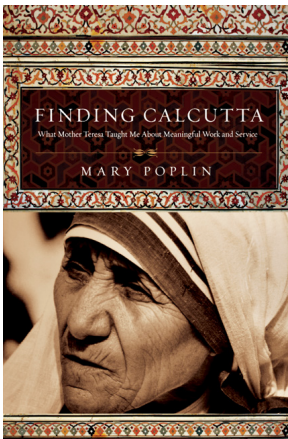
But if we want to understand The Veritas Forum, Milton's resignation about truth's exile can be misleading. Behind all the lectures presented here is the belief that truth's "ill-fame" has reached an alarming new low. If we see the intellectual atmosphere of today's universities through the lens of history—which remembers a marriage between truth and the university lasting well into the nineteenth century—we find that the truth is not so much being marginalized today as it is being deliberately suppressed. As Willard writes, "Any attempt at a generous and rigorous examination of the major questions of life and reality . . . cannot now be done as part of the serious business of earning credits and picking up research methods and letters of recommendations for the next move up. Anyone who does not see oppression here would not recognize it if it ran right over them."

The story of the modern university, as Willard tells it, is one of progressive decline. Expelled from the garden of veritas, the university reinvented itself as an institution of Enlightenment-era knowledge, only then to become the so-called value-neutral research facility we know today. For Willard, Richard John Neuhaus, Os Guinness, Mary Poplin and others, this story is suggestive of a vast dislocation of values that threatens the very idea of a university. Indeed, no longer propelled by the idea of truth's singularity, the modern research university has been referred to as a "multiversity."

But this is why The Veritas Forum works—it interjects right at the spot where the university's autobiography stops making sense. Since 1992, to campuses in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France and the Netherlands, The Veritas Forum has brought a voice of learned dissent and accountability to the ideals of the past.

But is the search for veritas just nostalgia for a golden age? Does truth even have a place among us anymore? Today's most formidable Christian thinkers have been gathering annually for the past eighteen years to discuss this very question. *A Place for Truth* documents their findings.

A Place for Truth is the latest release in Veritas Books, InterVarsity Press's partnership with The Veritas Forum. For more on the book visit ivpress.com. For more on The Veritas Forum, visit veritas.org.



July 2008

InterVarsity Press: Finding Calcutta

Mary Poplin's *Finding Calcutta*, to be released in September 2008, is the latest release from Veritas Forum Books, a partnership between InterVarsity Press and the Veritas Forum.

Poplin makes clear upfront that while the book's central focus is Mother Teresa, it is neither an academic biography nor hagiography. *Finding Calcutta* is, in her words, a "simple story of my brief encounter with Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity and of my struggles then and now to understand."

As a professor steeped in the values of liberal education, Mary Poplin's will to understand her uniquely religious experience in Calcutta (now Kolkata) represents the central tension of the book. It is the dissonance

between a "leftist intellectual" who has "dabbled in feminist theology...forms of meditation, drugs, and the New Age movement" and a "small, curious-looking nun" who says things like "fall more in love with Jesus every day" and "our work is not social work; it is religious work."

Finding Calcutta (Cont.)

In the introduction to the book, Poplin struggles to make any affirmative statements about Mother Teresa whatsoever. We read, for instance, that Teresa was “not an intellectual” and “not interested in universities, philosophies, worldviews or public conversations.” Even positive associations of Mother Teresa with medieval Christianity or ancient monastic life, Poplin admits, would only relegate the nun to a bygone era—yet another way of circumventing definitions.

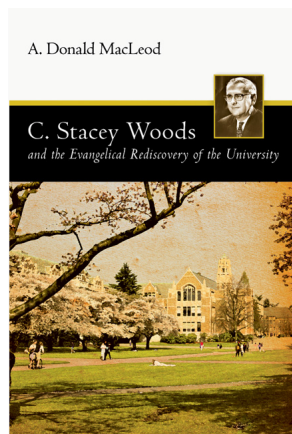
But while Poplin’s frustrated attempts to categorize Mother Teresa and her subsequent decision to tell a “simple story” can be mistaken for a Quietistic forfeiture of the mind for the heart, the book does maintain a framework of philosophical inquiry, most notably in the appendixes: “A Brief History of the University and Dominant Worldviews” and “Toward a Twenty-First-Century University.”

This overriding sense of faith reinforced by intellectuality is, of course, the hallmark of Veritas Forum Books, which aspires to “academically rigorous scholarship” that will address “broad issues of culture and faith.”

At any rate, it is clear that Mary Poplin is a suitable spokesperson for such a wide-ranging initiative as the Veritas Forum, being herself personally invested in the issues that drive it:

My struggle to write this book, to tell the truth about Mother Teresa, and my struggles in the university are a testimony both to a lost public conversation and to a worldview that is very difficult for many in Western culture to comprehend fully, even some of us who profess Christ.

For more on *Finding Calcutta* and Veritas Forum Books see ivpress.com.



June 2007

A Bantamlike Evangelical Trailblazer

Stacey Woods was a lot of things. Australian, Brethren-bred, evangelical, brusque, energetic, persuasive, short. In a word, bantamlike.

But for our purposes, Woods’s most noteworthy trait was guts. Unlike the majority of evangelicals in the forties, Woods was unafraid of the university.

C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University, a newly published biography from InterVarsity Press, introduces this little known yet prominent force in mid-century American evangelicalism.

In 1933, carrying an intuitive understanding of culture and a vision for change, Woods came to Canada to head InterVarsity Christian Fellowship—later becoming the first general secretary of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship in the United States and a founder of the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students.

Author Donald MacLeod depicts the polarized cultural moment Woods inherited—the conservative American church at one post, the university at the other. But instead of joining the stand of “fortresslike churches” against the “bastions of liberalism,” Woods believed Christians could be a powerful presence on the secular campus.

Stacey Woods (Cont.)

“He helped American fundamentalism to come out of its self-imposed exile and engage the university, be responsible in addressing the culture, and raise evangelicals to new levels of intellectual and academic accountability.”

More than the legacy of one man, this biography is an important chapter in the history of evangelical engagement with culture in North America and around the world.

For more on *C. Stacey Woods and the Evangelical Rediscovery of the University* and A. Donald MacLeod see www.books.ivpress.com.