



The Point

FALL 2014 | VOL. 10 | ISSUE 1

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A Letter From The Editor

Three days. Three days was all it took for God to change how I viewed my life in America. In three days I met people that will be a part of my story for the rest of my life. The Lord broke my heart for the people of Haiti in three days.

I continued to photograph the church dedication while the children clapped and sang. I knew that if I didn't take the time to remember I was worshiping our Creator with Haitian brothers and sisters, I'd regret it. So I let my camera rest around my neck. I found a spot in one of the back pews and took in my surroundings. The open air church had beautiful oak plywood ceilings; to my left, the Leogane Plain filled with sugar cane fields, to my right a dirt-paved village. The boy in the blue backpack sat in front of me. We smiled and clapped our way through the church dedication service and I stopped to take photographs of him periodically. His face is forever engraved in my mind.

Charlie, the co-owner of New Missions - an organization that plants schools and churches around Haiti and the Dominican Republic - announced that we were going to take a walk from the school to the beach. Seconds later a multitude of young Haitian students swarmed; all pulling on my hand, all clinging on to me for dear life. They grinned from ear to ear as they acted as our escorts through the little village that separated the church from the shores of Haiti.

When we got to the shore, moving wasn't an option. A sea of sweet smiles and big brown eyes all kept us glued in our places. One little girl reached up and brushed the hair out of my face. I looked up at Shayna, my friend and fellow Biola student, and she had the same amount of children at her side. They refused to let either of us leave their grasp. That same little girl gently tugged on my pink shirt to whisper something in my ear. Unfortunately, I'm not fluent in Creole or French. I con-

tinued to smile at her, praying that the Lord would let her know that I loved her.

I felt something on my foot and got nervous that it might be a crab. When I saw who it was, my heart crumbled. I had gotten sand on my TOMs during the shuffle from church to beach and the boy in the blue backpack decided to brush off the tops of my dirty feet.

The Fall 2014 theme for The Point Magazine is Perspectives. These stories exemplify different perspectives or a way in which God has radically shifted how a writer sees things. We are able to enjoy the blessing of seeing things differently than the people around us. Whether it be negative or positive, we have all undergone experiences that shape us and have crafted our mindset.

This issue of The Point is also a challenge to our readers. We are challenging you to think about the way you view the various topics within these pages. Be bold enough and brave enough to challenge them back if you do not agree. Bring all you experience to the Lord. Wrestle with God! It is OK to listen to others' perspectives, and it grows us when we allow our preconceived notions to be changed by God's wisdom. I'm not saying to change who you are; merely allow yourself to let God change your perspectives.

When I let my camera rest around my neck, I let my defense mechanism down. I was vulnerable. When the shield I frequently hide behind fell down, the Lord swept in and moved. He allowed me to see his children as he sees them. I pray, dear readers, that you would be brave enough to let your defense mechanisms down and let our Father in Heaven work.

Blessings,

Alissa C. Sandoval

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Fall 2014

We are a student publication of Biola University.
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On the web at pointmag.biola.edu
[Facebook.com/thepointmagazine](https://www.facebook.com/thepointmagazine)
[Twitter.com/thepointmag](https://twitter.com/thepointmag)

California College Media Association: *1st Place General Excellence* 2008, 2010
Columbia Scholastic Press Association: *Gold Medalist* 2009
Associated Collegiate Press: *Magazine Pacemaker* 2008
Associated Collegiate Press: *Magazine Pacemaker Finalist* 2013





EXPANSIVE

Why Christian Artists
Can Be Bold

Written by
Candace Guereque

Exhibiting Boldness

Nery Gabriel Lemus, whose exhibit *I Was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me* was displayed in Biola's Earl and Virginia Green Art Gallery this fall, is a local artist from the Los Angeles area. Choosing no preferred medium, he lets art take him where it leads him.

Lemus' exhibit consisted of art made in a handful of ways—photographs from his childhood; words oil-painted on colorful backdrops; a reunion captured on video; and even halves of the American and Guatemalan flags stitched together. Grateful for the many privileges he's had in his upbringing and education, Lemus draws predominately from his childhood and the many racial tensions he's observed in his own life and the world around him.

At a very young age, Nery Lemus recognized racism from firsthand experiences. While accompanying his mom, a Guatemalan immigrant, to her housekeeping job on the bus ride to Calabasas, he experienced unjust treatment from crude remarks and inconsiderate behavior from strangers. Yet from day to day his mother was treated kindly by an employer's family, in a way many were not.

"She was welcomed," Lemus says, reflecting on the relationship that emerged between the two Christian families. The employers became so close to the family that one of them took on the role of godfather to young Nery. "In most working relationships there seems to be a system of hierarchy where the employer and employee don't really interact like friends, but for my mom it was different. They were friends. When she ate, she ate with them. We went to their house for Christmas and Thanksgiving."

In his latest exhibit, Lemus sought to expose his family's rare experience and express his beliefs about interacting with those who have immigrated to the United States.

Once, while working at a book store and speaking Spanish to a customer, Lemus was told by an onlooker to go back to his country. This very hard moment has never left his mind. Situations like these, he says, shape generalizations we have in society. However, along with the strife that occurred at the

bookstore, Lemus has a positive story to remember.

"A lot of people with those experiences stick with them and they tend to generalize people, and since I've always had this experience, I had a healthy way of looking at things," he concludes. "I always knew there was another side to it."


The journey that has led Lemus up to this point has contributed to the shaping and molding of his artistic voice. He is very passionate about tackling various subjects, ranging from racial segregation to societal problems that affect family unity like poverty, abuse and neglect. These passions drive his work. Artists like Lemus, who strive to provoke lasting change through their work, communicate more than just an aesthetically pleasing experience. They seek true movement in the mind of their audience.

Artists of Faith

"When I am not focused on God or when I'm filling my mind with Godless things, my art is just dumb," states Hannah Mosebar, a senior art major. "It may look cool on the outside but there is nothing special, inspiring or encouraging about it; it's just kind of there. But on the other hand, when I am in a good relationship with God, focusing on Him, there are so many more creative processes to go through. When I have His joy in me, there's no end to my work."

Through a heavily interlinked relationship, the Holy Spirit plays a huge role in the truth that comes through a believer's art.

Drawing and painting professor Daniel Callis also observed something very compelling about the mark some artists' faith has made on their work. "Part of maturing in the Christian faith is growing up into the reality of who we are in Christ, which should give us incredible freedom, incredible fearlessness and an incredible curiosity to be more experimental, more provocative and more risky than artists that don't know or have the faith we have," Callis explains. "However, that is often not the case. Because we are human, we shackle that faith or haven't developed that faith."



Associate photography professor Kurt Simonson recalls the difference he's perceived in the art from his students of faith and the students who do not believe. "It seems like our students here [at Biola] are really interested in personal work, that is more about God and about others," he says. "Usually in other public schools I'll see a lot of work about political issues or social issues—and those things matter and people here care about them too—but people here are more unafraid to make work about personal life, things that are affecting them, and be more transparent and vulnerable, which I think is very unique." Simonson said perhaps the more personal emphasis among Christians comes from the inherent openness of the Christian community.

Lemus displayed both personal and social interests in his exhibition. He challenged the audience to look past racial divisions and to display kindness and love as Christ would.

Contributing to the Community

"These are images of myself and the other grandchildren that were around when my mom worked, and this was my experience growing up," Lemus says, overlooking an untitled photographic piece showing himself and the grandson of his mother's employer. "It points to this innocence, that when you're a kid you don't think about these divisions in identity because you're just a child, and as you grow up you start developing this sense of difference."

From how he communicated his passion, one could tell Lemus' exhibit came from a deep place of gratitude and compassion—gratitude for the life Christ has given him, and compassion for others who may have gone through just as much.

In his book *God in the Gallery*, Daniel Siedell suggests that art-making is intrinsically helpful in doing God's will. "A work of art enables the self to move beyond and outside itself toward another object, and this process has a significant impact on the self's development toward a reconciled relationship with the world. This transcendent relationship makes love possible ... by helping us move beyond ourselves toward our neighbor and toward God."

"But people here are more unafraid to make work about personal life, things that are affecting them, and be more transparent and vulnerable."

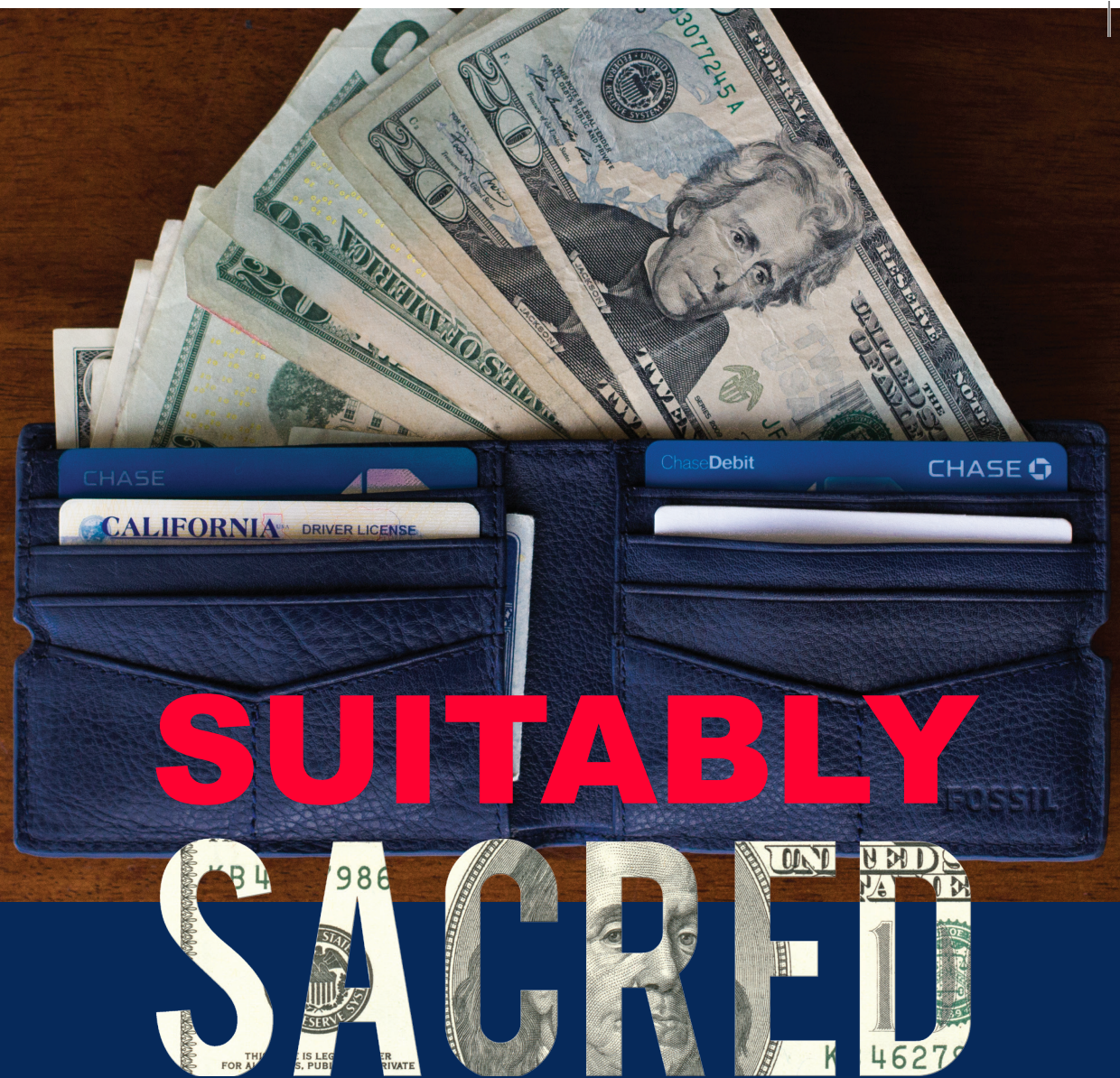
Kurt Simonson

Art's contribution to society and within the Christian community is at times highly overlooked. The power that comes from God and then to humanity in the will to create has the potential to shape people and bring them closer to Christ. Art is the platform where issues can be worked out—where there is enough freedom for two different individuals or communities of people with different views, backgrounds and beliefs to come together and discuss.

Thus our hope should be that artists feel supported by their community in their message; that they feel confident that the powerful medium of their God-given art contributes evangelistically to the Kingdom.

For a believing artist, there is far more from which to glean. As Francis Schaeffer states in his book *Art and the Bible*, "The Christian is the one whose imagination should fly beyond the stars."

Or, as Daniel Callis says, "It is a real challenge for us as believers, that we actually draw from a profoundly deeper pool and have the resource of the Holy Spirit in our daily life. Ultimately it is not a career we are serving; it's an eternal God we're serving—which actually changes everything."



SUITABLY SACRED

Grammy for “Best Gospel Album.” Mixtape downloaded over 100,000 times in 48 hours. A breakthrough into secular music. \$3 million net worth. Newest album debuting at No. 1 on the Billboard 200 with nearly 89,000 copies sold in the first week. And a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Lecrae has garnered the attention of both secular and Christian audiences with his music. But Christians have accused him of being “of the world” due to his success. They believe that he should not engage in such a temporal culture. His response?

In a broadcast interview on Ed Stetzer’s Christianity Today blog “The Exchange” in May 2013, Lecrae gives his answer. “I’m a big fan of just looking at Paul in Acts,” he says. “Him mixing it up out there in the culture and knowing who their modern-day poets

were, and their speakers and philosophers, and being able to integrate their ideals and values in his talks as he tries to preach Christ to them.”

Lecrae’s business is his ministry.

Tom Wilson, associate professor of Law, Ethics and Human Resource Management at the Crowell School of Business, believes one of the best ways to live one’s faith in the workplace is to find a place of influence. “We can pull back and be very critical of many things about Hollywood, or we can choose to be proactive and become a part of the business circle of Hollywood. Get places of influence, where then Christians can be a force for change. The way to have an influence with your faith is to be able to influence those cultural issues.”

WRITTEN BY

Jennifer Wenzel

Business as Ministry

Biola University desires that its students use their workplace to further God's kingdom, as stated in the Crowell School of Business mission statement: "The mission of the Crowell School of Business is to equip students to develop a biblical worldview so as to see business as ministry."

Scott Rae, professor of Christian Ethics and dean of the faculty at Talbot School of Theology, gives his interpretation of business as ministry. "The very work itself, not just the other things that you do in the workplace— pray for coworkers or show compassion for someone who is in pain, for example— but the very work you do is part of your service to Christ."

Business can be a sacred endeavor in which Christians use their resources for God's glory. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "sacred" as something that is "dedicated or set apart for the service or worship of a deity."

Money: Sacred Means

Viewing money as sacred recognizes that it is the Lord's alone. Brady Brewster, a senior business student, heeds Paul's words in 2 Corinthians 9:11. His paraphrase: "You have been made rich in every way so that you are made generous in every occasion."

This command is not for businesspersons alone. Paul clarifies this beforehand. In the ESV translation of 2 Corinthians 9:7, Paul writes: "Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."

Each one. Not just people in business. Every believer is to be generous with his or her money. If this is true, why does financial success scare Christians? Money itself is not evil.

Love, 1 Timothy 6:10 says, "The love of money is the root of all evil."

History of Church Skepticism

Calvin Redekop, a Mennonite theologian, uses his essay "Understanding Profits from

the Christian Perspective [Perspective II]" to show how the Church has been wary of profit. "[B]ishops and clerics were not to be involved in trading," Redekop writes. "The medieval church laid down stringent restrictions on wealth and the making of profits." Although the Church no longer has restrictions in these areas, hesitancy remains. Rick Bee, professor of the biblical elective "Faith and Money" and director of Biola University's Alumni and Parent Relations, explains why leaders tend to be cautious with money.

"A lot of pastors never go down the road of really teaching about stewardship, God's ownership, because it's almost like getting into someone's business. They're afraid of teaching on it for fear of what the congregation thinks."

How can this skepticism be broken? Bee attempts to answer this question by defining the essential difference between profit and greed. "If you are desiring to acquire another company or to grow a company— one side is greed. You ask yourself, 'How much more can I gain? How much more is enough? Another dollar more.' Or, are you trying to be a good businessperson and advance the work of your company? This isn't greed, but it's motivated by profit."

Money: Intended Good

The goal is to use money God has given us for His glory. Rick Langer, professor of Biblical and Theological Studies and director of the office for the Integration of Faith and Learning, gives a valuable definition of money: "Money is an abstract marker for the goodness of the created order...the goodness and blessings of creation."

Namely, money is an object of value. It gives one the ability to exchange for what is necessary and different from another's needs. Money can provide something good and beneficial to each individual. If money is intended for good, how should businesspersons handle it?

Langer gives two answers. "It's legitimate for a businessperson to say, 'I'm making \$12 million a year with my current enterprises. Should I give all \$12 million away, or should I use that \$12 million to give thousands of other people meaningful employment,

dignifying work, and healthy, stable situations for their families and produce goods that will make people's lives better?' I think that is very good. But I would never encourage people to say, 'Therefore, because I do that, I should never give.' I think giving has its own value. There is something enormously good about taking something that is so obviously good and giving it away."

Business people are to serve their families. Anyone who does not provide for his or her family, as stated in 1 Timothy 5:8, "has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." Paul was serious when he spoke of family. Family neglect is worse than unbelief and profit is a means for their provision. Businesspersons are accountable for both their families and their employees.

Rick Bee explains business success from business owners' perspectives. "They realize that it's not just the worker that comes to work, but it's the worker's family, it's the worker's kids. Their livelihood is totally dependent on the success of the business and being able to get a check. If you take your role seriously as a believer for the benefit of those that are in this world for kingdom purposes, then you need to take seriously how you do what you do for your employees."

Profit, then, benefits business and is also a service to the community.

S. Truett Cathy, founder of Chick-fil-A, Inc., built a flourishing business. In his book *Wealth: Is It Worth It?*, Cathy states that wealth is good only if one gives generously. "After all, when Jesus talked about giving, his most powerful example was not about a wealthy person giving from his wealth, but the poor widow who gave all she had."

Brady Brewster recognizes that possessions come with successful business. "It comes down to being rooted in a solid mindset of walking with the Lord and what He has impressed on your heart. I'm not saying that these things won't come. They should in time with most success in profits. But they are not your motivation."

Are Christians allowed to enjoy luxury? The rich young ruler's story is often used as a testimony against luxury. The ESV translates Luke 18:22-23 as such: "[Jesus] said to him,



PHOTOGRAPHER: MICHELLE ACOSTA
DESIGNER: RACHEL FUNK
EDITOR: KATHRYN TOOMBS

‘One thing you still lack. Sell all that you have and distribute to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me.’ But when he heard these things, he became very sad, for he was extremely rich.”

“

Get places of influence
WHERE THEN CHRISTIANS CAN BE A
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”

TOM WILSON

Jesus instructs him to sell everything and give to the poor. In reality Jesus was challenging him about God’s ownership. Theologians John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, in their commentary *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty [New Testament]*, explain Jesus’ challenge: “This action would touch on the 10th commandment against coveting, which included the idea of greed and holding onto things which are one’s own as well as wanting things that belong to others.”

Greediness is part of his sin, but that is not what Jesus tested. It has nothing to do with luxury. Jesus challenges the man’s ability to follow Him. The only way for the man to obtain eternal life was through Jesus Christ. But he chooses to live by the law and by his wealth. The man forgot his money was the Lord’s. When he walks away, he rejects following Jesus, holding to covetousness.

Provision for family, for one’s employees, and giving back to the community. This is the core of biblical business money management. Christ-centered financial success in business is good, and even sacred, if used wisely and for his glory.

A photograph of a classroom. In the foreground, a young girl with dark hair is smiling and resting her chin on a desk. In the background, a male teacher in a light blue shirt is standing and writing on a chalkboard. The chalkboard has several large, colorful question marks drawn on it.

LEARN
TO TEACH
COMPASSIONATELY
CREATIVELY
EFFECTIVELY
LIKE CHRIST.

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The world needs more teachers who teach like Christ did: compassionately, creatively, & effectively. Biola's School of Education offers state-certified teacher preparation in a supportive, all-Christian environment—a community that cares for the flourishing of every one of its students, and for the world they will impact.

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Pictured above is the classroom of alumnus Michael Long, 2008 California Teacher of the Year

LACKLUSTER

WHY HIDE YOUR **LIGHT** ?



WRITTEN BY

ELISE ANDERSON



AN UNCOMFORTABLE QUESTION

Musicians in worship bands are all religious... Right?

Matt and Danny defy this assumption. The two young atheist friends were enjoying their Friday night in Downtown Disney sitting by the fountain in front of the House of Blues. The melodic sounds of that night's band played softly in the background. With hearts and love for music, the two men use their rhythmic talents to play for church services on Sunday mornings.

The two also share a common view on Christians. "They are generally good people, but I guess that depends on the denomination," Matt explains.

Neither had a single negative thing to say about Christians. Both adhere to the "coexist" theory, where every individual has the right to his or her own religious beliefs, and as long as those views are not voiced or forced upon others, we all can live together in a utopian peace. The men were knowledgeable on most religious questions that pertain to the contents of the gospel and Christian belief.

They were confident in their answers up to the point when they were asked: What do you think happens when we die? Caught off guard

with the depth of the question, they had a brief moment of thoughtful silence. Danny finally broke the quiet pondering. "I hope that there is something better after life. But how much better can it really get than this? We are spending our Friday night at Disneyland, the happiest place on earth, and having a great conversation with two beautiful girls. I mean, look around; this is a great life."

While processing the question, they weighed various ideas but were unable to come to a conclusion. Finally, both admitted that they did not know, and the anxiety of this realization was painted on their faces.

"Anything that is unknown can be scary, and



that is the absolute scariest question that I can think of,” Danny concluded.

“CHRISTIANESE”

Biola Students live in community with roughly 6,000 fellow believers. Students are free to live out their religious views of Christianity without fear of persecution or judgment. Instead, they find praise and encouragement in their expression. Biola students are fluent in “Christianese.” Most are familiar with the cliché Christian uses of “I feel led to...,” “We are so fallen,” and “Guard your heart.”

As defined by Urban Dictionary, “Christianese is the language spoken by Christians.

It makes no sense to anyone unfamiliar with biblical texts, but earns you major points in the eyes of other Christians, because it means your words are [really] holy.” Christians often get caught up in their own “Christianese” habits and mistakenly forget the language of the surrounding world. The world hears Christian language daily, and the familiarity enables some to recite famous verses and articulate the meaning of the Christian gospel. To the general unbelieving culture, these words are meaningless and insignificant. The problem lies not within the persuasion or repetition of words, but rather in the actions of those who identify themselves as Christians.

THE SECULAR PERSPECTIVE

Disneyland is commonly known as one of the best people-watching locations. The extremely diverse public presence makes it an ideal spot. People come from all over the world to experience ‘the happiest place on Earth.’

In the serenity and warmth of the massive stone fireplaces, young adults Sabryna and Hayley were relaxing in the lobby at the Grand Californian Hotel. With their combined knowledge on Christianity, they knew about the Trinity, the Second Coming, and Scripture as a guideline of how to behave. Both of them had been evangelized to, one by word of mouth and the other through being handed a simple pamphlet.

Hayley described her history with evangelism as boring and confusing. Sabryna explained that she does not like feeling forced into things. Her experience with the gospel had felt contradictory, as she noticed the evangelists were pushy in their presentation of the gospel, but when it came to the decision to follow it was presented as more of an option. She views evangelizing Christians as radical and described them as “hardcore protesters” that appear everywhere.

The true message of Christianity is not being clearly conveyed. There is more to becoming

a Christian than a special prayer and words of repentance; it involves a full heart change. There is also more to evangelism than a well-rehearsed message.

Mark, a 50-year-old from Riverside, works at the pearl booth in Downtown Disney. He opens oysters to find beautiful smooth pearls that he makes into jewelry for customers. Some are snow white, others come out as a smokey blue or dainty pink color. Undefined in his religious beliefs, the ex-Marine jeweler describes Christians as “pushy”.

Mark opened several oysters from behind the counter and retrieved the beautiful pearls from inside as he recalled a story from his service in the armed forces. One morning during his service a group of Christians came onto their base, bringing breakfast and The Bible. They shared the message of the gospel with the Marines, offering breakfast in exchange for their “acceptance of the Lord Jesus Christ into their lives.” Mark accepted Christ on this morning. Chuckling, he says, “I really just did it for the free coffee and donuts.”

LISTEN & PRAY

“My first word of advice is, do it.”

Theology professor Thaddeus Williams encourages Biola students to use their biblical and theological knowledge to evangelize: “What an absurdity to know all of that and not be doing it.”

Williams encourages students to recognize the urgency and need of evangelism, “because there’s just no other gospel that can really save.” Christians offer the unique hope of salvation that has been accomplished through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. The unbelieving world needs this message so desperately. “It’s an absolute of love and grace and compassion and redemption and justice,” says Williams.

Williams also highlights the utter importance of listening within evangelism, saying, “Listening evangelism is able to get them to the



conclusions of just how desperately they need a relationship with an infinite God.”

He explains further. “A lot of people think that the gospel is irrelevant, that this has nothing to do with me,” he says. “But to be able to show them through the gospel, the infinite God of the universe enters into your life. He becomes the sun in your solar system and gives meaning. He gives meaning to your family life, your major, your career life, your romantic life, and all of that.”

We are wired with the desire to be heard and understood. Listening to the story and beliefs of others and seeing them as equally important is one practical way to fulfill the love commandments. “Giving someone a fair hearing isn’t optional to evangelism; its essential if we are fulfilling the second greatest commandment to love others,” says Williams.

The most powerful tools in evangelism are listening and prayer. It is ultimately God that is in control of the hearts of others. As Bob Goff, author of *Love Does*, once tweeted, “No one leads people to Jesus. He leads people to Himself. All the pressure is off,

just go love everybody without an agenda.”

BEING GENUINE

“He dwells in you, and he will be in you.”
(John 14:17)

There was a sense of longing in most of the people interviewed. There was a lack of lively luster in their eyes. Their thoughts wandered as they were being challenged and asked about their personal beliefs.

The tangling of their words portrayed a craving, possibly for some amount of spiritual substance — the meaning and feeling of purpose that comes from the Holy Spirit inhabiting hearts.

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” (Ezekiel 36:26)

Williams notes that by asking the right questions with genuine concern, people are able to make their own realizations and come to their own conclusion of the need to have a personal

relationship with God. “Turning the conversation a different direction and asking about the other person’s map (personal beliefs system), and asking them to explain the different parts of it leads to their own realizations. A lot of times by asking meaningful questions, you are poking holes in their map.”

Biola is a blessed community of students that are prepared daily through their education and experiences to share the light that is offered in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is easy to fall into the Christian routines and mundane Christianese lifestyle and overlook the surrounding world. Christians should feel a sense of urgency in the sharing of the gospel because they bear the light of the only way of true salvation.

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”
(Matthew 5:14-15)



A person wearing a black, short-sleeved, knee-length dress is shown from the waist down. They are pulling at the hem of the dress with both hands, which are clenched into fists. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. Large, bold, yellow text is overlaid on the image, reading 'STUM - BLE - WOR - THY' in a sans-serif font, arranged in four lines.

S T U M -

B L E

W O R -

T H Y

WRITTEN BY
MORGAN MITCHELL

“LIKE THAT”

Being a freshman can be stressful. Well, stressful is an understatement: new classes, new home, new friends, new town and new weather. For many, the first few weeks are a hectic, chaotic blur that gets forgotten and tucked away as you adjust.

For me, not so much. I had difficulty adjusting to two things in particular: the heat — San Diegans never get weather above 90 degrees — and the dress code. One day, I got up and checked the weather report. 100 degrees! I groaned and dug through my closet for the outfit that would keep me away from heat stroke the most. A black and white crop top shirt with high-waisted black shorts. I rushed off to class without giving my outfit another thought.

Fast-forward to that night when I’m sitting in my room doing homework. I hear a knock on the door. It’s my RA.

She was pink in the cheeks and played with her hair nervously, refusing to make eye contact with me. “Can I help you?” I asked, starting to feel worried that this visit wasn’t just a friendly check up. She proceeded to tell me in the most gracious way possible that she wasn’t going to assume that I’m “like that” in any way, but I needed to protect my broth-

ers and not wear a crop top anymore. I was instantly humiliated. Of course I wasn’t “like that.” I just wanted to survive the day. Who else thought that way about me? Were boys really stumbling over one inch of my stomach while I minded my own business?

Then I thought back to Nation Ball. Many of the boys had worn nothing but tiny shorts. Everything else was exposed and certainly stumble-worthy. My heart broke. Why was I ashamed for showing so little? It might not seem like a big deal, but suddenly I viewed my body in a completely different way. I was no longer God’s beautiful creation—now I was a sexual object and felt the burden of others’ sexual sin being placed on my shoulders. I felt like Biola saw me as less valuable than their male students. I had to make sure they didn’t stumble, but no one was telling them to make sure I didn’t stumble or to not view me as a sexual object.

After my RA left, I walked over to my closet and opened it. Unfortunately, I don’t own large, loose-fitting turtlenecks and parachute pants, so the stress of being as modest as possible started to weigh on me.

THE MODESTY STANDARD

I wanted to be wrong and perhaps I was, so a year later I asked the Associate Dean of

Residence Life, Beth Tabor, why there was still a dress code and what the benefits of having one were. “The dress code is a modesty standard and a community standard,” said Tabor. “So in the ideal frame, everyone is aware of the standard and brings it to each other’s attention.”

Tabor said the benefit of having a dress code is the idea of taking responsibility for ourselves and how we impact people. “It’s helpful in respecting other people and thinking outside of yourself and that’s how all the community standards are. It’s not about you, it’s about us as a community and how we impact each other.”

She also explained why the dress code is one of the trickiest community standards to enforce: “It really should only be handled between people with relationships with each other. The modesty standard gets barely touched on because it is extremely personal. It is someone’s expression, someone’s style. The amount of embarrassment and shame you feel when being confronted is so big.”

When I told Tabor what my RA said, she wasn’t surprised. “People aren’t going about enforcing [the dress code] in a good way from what I’ve heard. They just make judgments.” She described the dress code as never being black and white. An article of clothing could

“I WAS NO LONGER GOD’S BEAUTIFUL CREATION—NOW I WAS A SEXUAL OBJECT AND FELT THE BURDEN OF OTHERS’ SEXUAL SIN BEING PLACED ON MY SHOULDERS”

be scandalous on one girl, but not on another. “That’s why we don’t enforce it very much, because it’s so particular.” Tabor shared that she believes Biola will get rid of the dress code one day. “Right now it feels like a really hard policy to enforce. I’d rather it be like, ‘Let’s make choices that honor each other and when we don’t, hopefully the community corrects us,’ but maybe not have spaghetti straps be that line.”

Tabor admits to seeing a negative side to the dress code. “As a woman, going off campus feels different than being on campus and how people look at you. Anything that smells of sexuality, there is a certain fear of it. There are good things to be prudent and stay away from and there are things Biola is just too scared of.”

Tabor shared a personal time she felt the sexualization from the dress code when she attended Biola. She felt the culture shock of coming to Biola from a public school and

suddenly having to worry about her shorts. “I wasn’t out to get attention at all, but all of the sudden I was aware of that,” she recalled.

Then there was the big question. I asked Beth if she honestly saw a double standard against women in the way the dress code is enforced. She replied, “You can say there is a double standard, but in truth, it’s not a major issue with how men are dressing. No one notices how guys dress, but people notice how girls dress often. It’s so rare to be offended or drawn to guys. You can definitely say there is a double standard in how it’s enforced, but there is a reality in what turns heads.”

She then went back to comparing it to off-campus culture. “In society, women will always be more objectified than men and it’s historical; women have always been more looked at.”

Even if this were true, is it something that we just accept? Women are doomed to be

looked at more and judged more, so let’s try to live with it?

EQUAL BURDENS

I asked John Vogel, a senior philosophy major and the resident advisor for 3rd North Horton, if he tells his boys about the dress code like all my RAs did at my floor meetings. I also asked him for a male student perspective on the dress code.

“As males there is less of an emphasis for us to address these issues as males are less likely to break the few dress code rules there are for us,” Vogel answered in an email. “The dress code does apply more to females, so female RAs are more likely to address it.”

This statement made me worried about how the rest of this conversation would go, but when I asked Vogel if he noticed a double standard, his reply pleasantly surprised me.

"I think men have been given a pass," Vogel acknowledged, alluding to men donning tank tops and short shorts. "Because we do live in a society that is just now understanding that women also struggle with lust just as men do, we will see a change in our culture's view on dress codes. As the body of Christ, we must be willing to protect one another; but this has been a one way street in the church."

Vogel said men and women should step up and bear equal burdens, then offered what men can do to fix the current imbalance.

"We must be willing to see women not as objects to be obtained, but as sisters who are to be loved. We must be willing to admit that we have damaged the female identity and turned the female body into something that be feared. We need to come alongside our sisters and admit our faults and take responsibility for our eyes and hold ourselves to the same standard we expect women to hold."

I could not have said it better myself. But I don't want men to suddenly feel guilty for not doing their part; I want men to feel angry because society doesn't think they can.

THE ROOT OF THE SHAME

I talked to Sarah Schwartz, administrative coordinator of communication studies and current Talbot student, who is known for her talk on sexuality and purity at Afterdark. "Society puts us into little categories: Men are sexual and women are emotional. There is no crossing over of the two, when in reality everyone is human and different and needs to be attentive to both. God created us to be so much more."

Schwartz told me why men should be upset at this. "We are told men are animals, they lack empathy, and have no self control so we have to cover up for them and protect them. It's completely degrading to men. Both genders have eyes, both genders experience lust; I would love to see the science behind the statement that men are more sexual."

Lighting up with passion, Schwartz explained, "This makes women feel ashamed for feeling lust and they never communicate it because they think they aren't supposed to. Which is exactly how guys feel when they have emotional needs."

When I brought up the line that we have all heard—"protect your brothers"—Schwartz rolled her eyes.

"The Bible doesn't say women are the gatekeepers to sexuality. That rule of protecting your brothers and not being a stumbling block creates a culture of shame," she said. "All the passages about modesty in the New Testament aren't about what to wear or sexuality at all, they are about flaunting your wealth, but people interpret it in completely wrong ways."

Schwartz is referring to Isaiah 3:16-23, 1 Timothy 2:9-12 and 1 Peter 3:3. She explained that Old and New Testament writers were concerned about the people of God flaunting their wealth by wearing expensive clothes and jewelry while many of their neighbors suffered in poverty, so they told them to be more modest. But people today think they are referring to a sexual kind of modesty.

I asked Schwartz what we should do instead of having a dress code.

"We need to have conversations about how to honor and respect the image of God in each person and help students prepare to honor God in relationships after leaving Biola. A dress code is like putting a Band-Aid on a problem that requires heart surgery."

AS A COMMUNITY

After talking to all these amazing people, I came to the realization that the dress code itself isn't the main problem. Sure, it can be problematic, but the real problem is how it is enforced and who we are focusing the enforcement on.

Biola needs to remember that as a community we all struggle with the same problems, men and women. We can help each other, but we also need to take responsibility for what is going on in our own hearts. Biola needs to have more discussions on this topic and not let their fear set their students up for failure outside the bubble by sheltering them now.

I believe Biola can do this, and I believe we can make this campus a loving community with no shame, no blaming and, maybe one day, no dress code.



WIDET WIRED

WE HAVE THE TECHNOLOGY

Written by James O'Hearn

Surely the warmest spots “Down Below” are being saved for the plague of transhumanism, recently landed upon the as-of-yet unsuspecting Christian community.

What is transhumanism, you ask incredulously, perhaps wondering to yourself why you're talking to a magazine. It sounds dangerous! It sounds new-fangled, and not old-fangled at all! Probably, you narrate, the devil's work. Transhumanism is defined by that font of knowledge we call Wikipedia as something rather complex having quite a lot to do with technology and the future.

What, you ask in utter confusion, does that actually mean?

In simpler terms, it's the idea that what we think of as the traditional human body can and should be changed for the better. To which it should be added that it has a great deal to do with the aforementioned technologies, and quite a bit more to do with that age old question of what it actually means to be

human. The overarching question, then, becomes whether or not the physical parts of a human affect the non-physical. To what extent does the body affect the soul?

Does the term “genetic manipulation” fill your mind with images of genetically engineered crops, which—as the news media clearly show—are 100 percent guaranteed to give you cancer upon eating them?

Does the word “cybernetics” make you think of Darth Vader and the Terminator instead of the Six Million Dollar Man and Robocop?

Does “nanotechnology” rustle your jimmies? Well, they certainly do to some. Raised in the 21st century they may be, but they were born in the 20th, and these technological leaps and bounds befuddle quite a few brains!

The vocabulary freezes as surely as cryogenics: nanobot, android, cyborg, terabyte, floppy disk...

It's past time that someone took a bold stance

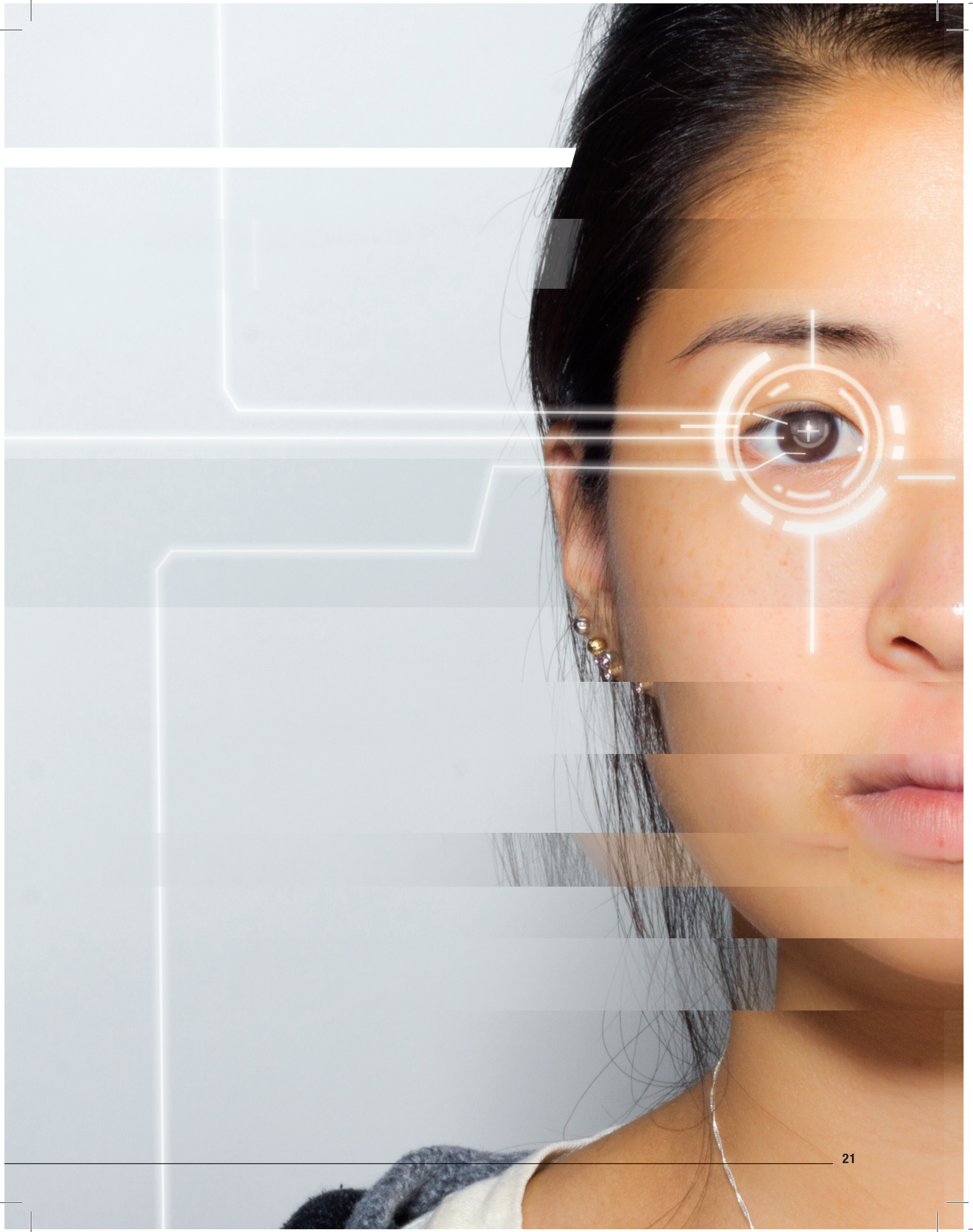
and said what everyone is thinking—type-writers were a step in the wrong direction. If some kind soul is under an obligation to write, then they can use a fountain pen and inkwell like God intended.

Imagine the sinfulness, how tapping out text on a computer screen is not entirely unlike worshipping a little wooden idol, hunched over before it! No, a true Christian would never let a glorified adding machine dictate so much of their lives, nor frequent any establishment which uses such things.

But it is on occasion stated that God is a merciful and loving God, and so perhaps before we pass judgment we may inspect a closer definition of one of these terms of transhumanism.

Let us say, cybernetics.

It turns out that most people, when they talk about cybernetics, don't actually mean a transdisciplinary approach to exploring regu-





latory systems. This is partly because most people don't speak in dictionary definitions, and partly because science fiction has done a splendid job of defining cybernetics as the integration of technology, such as prosthetic limbs, with the human body. It is, therefore, the definition that we're all comfortable with, and will continue to use from here on out. What should a Christian think about the whole thing, though?

Throughout the dark and somewhat dank corridors of the web, various Christian sites pop their heads up to yap like a rearing Yorkie, eager to prove themselves as stalwart guardians of the light. Transhumanism, claims website Face Like the Sun, inherently contains "a sinister and rather arrogant reproach of the religious, especially Christians."

Another, blog Mary Meets Dolly, makes the claim that it is the transhumanist's wish to live forever which makes it so obviously something detestable to God's sight. In response to transhumanism's goal of curing sickness and disease, the author says scornfully, "The transhumanist cannot ensure those traits

will be available to everyone. Really, how could that be?"

Finally, Logos Apologia claims, it is the means of transhumanism that makes it antithetical to Christianity. Extended life should not be pursued for its own sake, as death is a natural part of this world God has put us in. Dying to oneself is an integral part of the Christian's life, after all!

Well, so far we can see no reason to support anything of this transhumanist sort! Replacing God's perfect handiwork with manmade devices? What rubbish!

Yet somehow, I suspect that among the 1.9 million amputees registered by the Amputee Coalition in the U.S. by 2005, at least some of those use prosthetics — which is to say, use a manmade device in place of what our society terms a "normal person's" limb.

And keep in mind that these 1.9 million are amputees only, saying nothing of those who have missed a limb since birth due to congenital defects.

I recently had the opportunity to speak with adjunct journalism professor Anna Sinclair, born a congenital amputee, about her experiences with prosthetics.

Her first prosthetic she received at 18 months old, a small rounded piece called the Crawler (no relation to Spider-Man villain of the same name). A basic body-powered prosthetic followed, coming before a myoelectric arm that used electric signals from the muscles under the base to manipulate the artificial limb in its desired direction.

Myoelectric prosthetics have advanced since then, reaching the point of manipulating wrists and even digits as the user wishes. Due to physical discomfort she eventually decided to forgo using the arm, but remains happy with her choice. For Sinclair, a "perfect prosthetic," some future flawless replica of the human arm, would carry importance only insofar as it was comfortable. Wearing the less ideal versions found in the present is something she avoids to ensure she isn't defined by her disability. As Sinclair said

“

THE REAL QUESTION IS: IS THERE A PHYSICAL PART OF HUMANS THAT MAKES THEM A HUMAN?

”

in an earlier interview with the Point, “I didn’t want it to define me.”

Despite this, she remains unworried that technology will somehow change her. “I think my faith in God and that background confidence helped remind me,” she says with a smile. “I’m sure of who I am.”

Karianne Chung, an electrical engineering major at Biola interning with a doctor who regularly works with prosthetics, seems to agree.

“By enhancing ourselves with prosthetics and orthotics, we’re enhancing God’s creation, not degrading it at all,” she says. “The body’s an outer shell. If you lose an arm, or have an artificial heart, so what?”

Chung expressed doubt that humanity will ever reach anything like some of the more extreme goals of transhumanism, such as full consciousness download and practical immortality. However, she believes that there is nothing intrinsically morally wrong with

such technologies.

“Technology’s good or bad depending on how you use it,” she states with a serious nod. “If we can spread the Word while we’re all robots, then that’s just as theologically sound as spreading it with cars.”

The more we discuss this tricky issue of cybernetics, and how it fits into the ideas of transhumanism, the further we fly into what seems the Real Question: Is there a physical part of a human that makes them a human?

If there is, then perhaps it is irresponsible and arrogant in the extreme to even think of modifying it so heavily for selfish purposes, whether the methods be by way of machine or genetics. But perhaps it is alright to modify it to a lesser extent, for surely no one would claim that someone without a limb had lost an integral part of their sentient self. It is in this lesser extent that we find the distinction between gene therapy and transhuman genetics, which Biola biology professor Jason Tresser was adamant about

distinguishing between.

“Both are modifying the human body, but one of them is trying to restore us to our state before the Fall, cure diseased alleles—that aspect of transgenic science is medicine at its finest.” Transhumanism, however, isn’t just about fixing the damaged aspects of the human body—its goal is improvement. Give humans new genes, new abilities that they haven’t had before. Tresser, while not averse to this in principle, advises that we should probably be thinking more deeply about the responsibilities these new technologies come with.

“If we could give humans the ability to do something else they couldn’t naturally do, like see into the U.V. range ... It’s just a technology, so does that change who we are or is it just an added feature? In my mind, it’s not going to change the fundamental parts of what it means to be human. If I lose my

“ IN THIS PRESENT AGE, IT'S FAIR TO SAY THAT OUR SOUL IS FUNCTIONALLY DEPENDENT ON OUR BODY - BUT IT'S NOT EQUIVALENT TO OUR BODY.”

RICHARD PARK

finger, I haven't become less human. If I lose an arm, I haven't become less human. My grandfather had an artificial pig valve in his heart; did he become some kind of weird human-pig hybrid?”

Shaking his head and grinning, Tresser admitted that technically the description was accurate—insofar as strict definitions go. He added a reminder, though, that we humans tend to swap parts a lot. We give each other blood transfusions, organ donations, and all manner of scientific hijinks that result in saved lives. If all our parts are replaced over time anyway, what's so special about this physical form?

In an interview with Richard Park, a professor of philosophy here at Biola, the idea of the famous Ship of Theseus was brought up. Theseus, merrily sailing along without a care in the world, bumps face-first into a storm—a random event that results in a broken mast. Shrugging, he orders his crew to make a new mast and continues on.

Over time, Theseus and his poor ship get so battered and broken that every single part has been replaced at one point or another. The question, then, is simply: is it still the Ship of Theseus?

“My view,” Park says, “is that the person

remains the same through innumerable part replacement because the person is more than the body—the person is the soul. What's the soul? Something like the mind, or what the Hebrews would call the heart. Is that circular? A bit; the person is the soul and the soul is the person.”

He continues to extrapolate on how human enhancement is hardly a new thing, giving examples of minute modifications like spectacles to see better, or even Tylenol to help with a headache. Having an extreme hardline stance on human modification, he explains, takes away from the tremendous possible utility that it has in terms of disease treatment such as cancer research and the like. Utility isn't the only thing that is important, he adds, but it is important.

“Traditionally Christian virtue ethics has been more about what kind of person we become as a result of what we do. With the whole cybernetics thing you have to ask, is there a part we can replace after which we no longer are who we are? I would say that there is no physical part of our being in which our soul consists. In this present age, it's fair to say that our soul is functionally dependent on our body - but it's not equivalent to our body.”

In much the same way, it could be argued

that a car remains a car no matter how many odd modifications it undergoes - for instance, adding rockets to the back of it merely makes it a better and faster car, not some new machine entirely.

While it's important to keep sight of the responsibilities that our many new technologies bring, it also brings a strong sense of wonder at imagining the myriad ways the human body will change in the future. Will we have an uploaded series of brains, racing along the Internet's highway somewhat more literally than before? Or perhaps gene augmentation will be the way of the future—and not the dark eugenics programs that our science fiction has brought to mind, but something brighter and purer, better able to deal with the problems that inevitably accompany human beings.

Regardless of which way it is, there is one aspect that will remain unchanged—the soul. It is, after all, hard to change the spiritual with the physical. And it is, perhaps, oddly comforting to know that trying is futile. No matter what odd iterations humanity goes through, we have a core provided to us.

A blueprint, so to speak.





UNHEARD

WRITTEN BY CHELSEA WIERSMA

A TESTIMONIAL

"If you deny Jesus, we will send you home."

Pastor Tan looked up into the barrel of a black gun, held by the Chinese guard who had just spoken. For Pastor Tan, a woman who loved the Lord with her whole heart, there was no question as to what her reply would be. Looking the guard straight in the eyes, she replied. "How can I deny the God that loves, saves, and gives me strength to face this every day? With my dying breath, I will preach the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Stories are often left untold for a reason — no one wants to relive them. However, these stories are the stories that need to be told, the stories that need to be heard. They are the stories that affect the lives of the people around us, and change the world we live in.

Pastor Tan had been in the work camp for several weeks, doing unbearingly horrendous work. She was sent there after her church was shut down for the illegal practice of Christianity. After several years in the camp she was released, but went home to find that her church had been closed down and turned into a factory.

Tom Kimber, a Bible professor at Biola who served for nine years in China and is still actively involved in the country planting underground house churches, was a close friend of Tan. He says that to this day, she would still rather talk about the grace of God than the misery of persecution. She sees persecution as a normal part of the Christian life.

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During his time planting churches in China, Kimber experienced this kind of persecution first hand when one of his churches was shut down. When his church was prospering and was increasing in number, he never expected to find a note on the door saying, "This is an illegal meeting." The next thing he knew, they were forced to scatter with no place for fellowship, teaching, or the church to gather. Occasionally, pastors in China are arrested and sent to prison, causing fear to be instilled into the eyes of many.

According to Kimber, it is important to remember that persecution does not look the same everywhere. Often times in China, those who are caught partaking in an illegal practice of religion will suddenly disappear one day, never to be heard from again. In other countries, one is able to visibly witness Christians being persecuted or even killed for their faith.

Kimber once waited at a private meeting place for his pastor friend's return every day for four months. He warned Kimber not to look for him if he went missing. Kimber waited in suspense, wondering if he would ever see his friend again. His friend eventually resurfaced, explaining that he had gone into hiding when he heard that the Chinese government suspected him of practicing Christianity. According to Kimber, even legal churches in China are being persecuted. Members are being told how to practice their faith and being disallowed to have Sunday school or evangelize.

China is only one of the many places around the world where persecution is taking place. Another place facing a massive amount of violence over persecution is Afghanistan.

“You have shamed me and are a disgrace to this family. Convert, or you are not my son anymore.”

These were the words spoken to Muhammad 10 years ago that completely altered his life. In that moment, facing his well-respected Muslim father, Muhammad knew that his response would completely alter his future. But he was prepared to take it. He was prepared to give up everything in order to follow God. His parents took away everything that they had provided for him. Muhammad had to drop out of school. He had never worked a day in his life and left with 30 dollars in his pocket. He didn't know where he was going, but he knew he was following the Lord. And so he left, knowing that if he ever went back home, he would be arrested or killed.

“I believe that the solution to all of the violence and issues is because of lacking a spiritual presence of God. The solution to all the problems is Christ. I believe with all my heart that someday, the power of Islam will be broken, like the Soviet Union. I believe that in my heart all that will change,” he says. Despite everything that had happened to him, Muhammad remained unafraid. He knew that mankind can harm the flesh, but not the soul. He now only remains in hiding for the safety of others.

WHERE IS GOD?

A STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE

Thankfully, many others like Muhammad have escaped persecution in the Middle East.

Steve Coombs, a Biola student, had a family of refugees from Iraq live with him this summer during his mission trip in Turkey. The family was escaping from ISIS and were a part of the Yazidi religion. In Iraq, Yazidis were known as “devil worshipers” and were killed. This summer, 40,000 Yazidis were trapped on Mount Sinjar without food or water due to their village being bombed. The family that Coombs was sheltering had escaped just in time before their village was bombed. Night after night, they received pictures and news alerts of family members and friends dying.

Coombs described how the family would be up until four in the morning worrying and waiting for the next big news. He explained that going through this with the family was a huge wake up call.

“It's not just the Christians. Other people are suffering and being killed for their faith too.”

Before, Coombs says, he too often found himself thinking that no one else suffers. This makes it seem as though some Christians can be ignorant to the fact that others are being persecuted for their faith also. Even Muslims are being persecuted for not being the right kind of Muslims.

“I'm much more aware that people are people. It helped having a face and a person to associate to a religion,” explains Coombs. He says that we need to show love to those who aren't part of our religion and be more aware of persecution of non-Christians.

QUICKLY RISING

“If we only fight for our own and love only those who love us in return, where is the reward in that?”

People in China know that they are called to take up their cross and follow Jesus. They have a perspective on persecution rooted in those passages of Scripture. To paraphrase a well known saying, people here in America are praying for a lighter load, where in other places they are praying for a stronger back. Kimber mentions that the church has often grown the most during seasons of persecution and has retreated during seasons of prosperity. China has one of the fastest-growing churches in the world, while they face persecution.

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PHOTOGRAPHER: MICHAEL HALLMAN
DESIGNER: GRACE PAN
EDITOR: KATHRYN TOOMBS



THE CHURCH

Victor Khalil, a professor who teaches Arabic at Biola University, agrees. Growing up in Egypt, Khalil was raised by a father who was a Christian pastor. To Victor, God was the reason for all of their persecution. His father was persecuted every week. “He wasn’t afraid, but I was. I thought that one day we would get killed. I lived in fear. I never knew if he would come home or not. I thought, ‘If this is the God you are serving, why can’t he protect you? Why worship this God?’”

Now, Khalil sees that though the Christian church is persecuted, the church is penetrating the hearts of many people by ministering to them in their own homes. “If you do it quietly, you can win the hearts of many. We cry with those who are dying and know that God is in total control, he’s on the throne, he has not left us, and we are protected.”

The church of Christ has always been persecuted, but God continues to protect the church. Believers, as we communicate together in fellowship and oneness, can sustain each other and remain together. Fellowship is how we survive—by doing things together. Today, Victor has been arrested, detained, thrown out of country, and blacklisted in a country. But he knows that through his evangelism, he is doing the right thing. He sees that persecution is helping to build the church.

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According to Khalil, the church does not have to be persecuted to be strong. “I think we can serve God without being persecuted, God wants that. People already live in hell. We need to help save the people who are already burning. I don’t like that Christians are persecuted, but look at the results. They are great. The church is united,” he says.

Finally, Khalil was asked the big question: why do we suffer?

“Why do we suffer? We still don’t know and we never will. But we know one thing, that God is a loving father,” Khalil explains. “He wants the best for us, for us to live in peace. Working with God is the best way.”

VICTOR KHALIL

In closing, Victor explained what Biola students can do as a result of knowing this. “I believe in the power of prayers,” says Khalil. “I am here today because someone prayed for me. Because somebody loved me regardless, that changed my life.”

The answer is to never cease praying.

So here Biola students sit, in their comfortable dorm rooms, at a school where their faith is encouraged and where there are classes that help further their relationships with Christ. There are pictures on the news and stories of persecution such as with ISIS, but none of that seems like reality. Bhutan, Vietnam, Nigeria, India, Iran, Pakistan, Iraq, Sudan, Sri Lanka—these are only some of the places where people are being persecuted for their faith. Churches are being burnt, families are being split apart, and people are being killed. How can we help them when many of us feel we don’t have the means to?

There are people coming to us.

There are students in Biola’s classrooms who have escaped this kind of suffering. They may need help practicing their English or getting a job. They may simply need someone to pray for them.

Biola students and people in this generation must realize that if one person or family is helped in a small way, that help is tangible and real.

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WEIGHT LESS

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OUR WORDS
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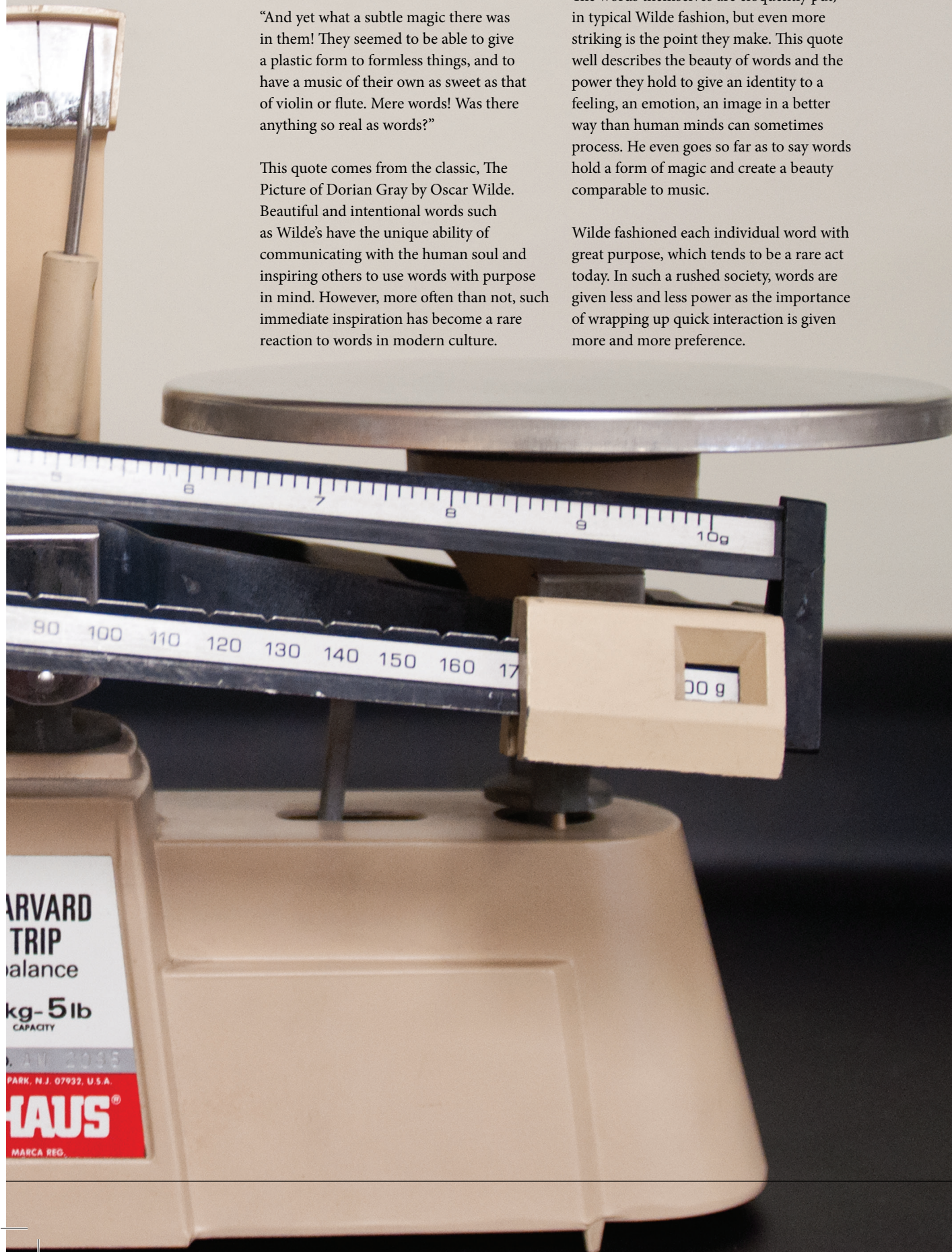
WRITTEN BY **TORIE HAMILTON**

“And yet what a subtle magic there was in them! They seemed to be able to give a plastic form to formless things, and to have a music of their own as sweet as that of violin or flute. Mere words! Was there anything so real as words?”

This quote comes from the classic, *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde. Beautiful and intentional words such as Wilde’s have the unique ability of communicating with the human soul and inspiring others to use words with purpose in mind. However, more often than not, such immediate inspiration has become a rare reaction to words in modern culture.

The words themselves are eloquently put, in typical Wilde fashion, but even more striking is the point they make. This quote well describes the beauty of words and the power they hold to give an identity to a feeling, an emotion, an image in a better way than human minds can sometimes process. He even goes so far as to say words hold a form of magic and create a beauty comparable to music.

Wilde fashioned each individual word with great purpose, which tends to be a rare act today. In such a rushed society, words are given less and less power as the importance of wrapping up quick interaction is given more and more preference.



WORDS IN RELATIONSHIP

Imagine the everyday passing conversation one has with a friend or acquaintance. Hi, how are you? Good. You? Fine. It is reasonable to assume that the average person has this exact interaction several times a day. The more one has it, the more they are likely to become aware of the hollowness in their own words as “good” and “fine” most often do not honestly describe one’s current status.

“Through the fall of man, we hide. Every culture and subculture, Biola culture, we have found the words that are safe to use and yet still hide,” says Brent Dedmon, communication theories professor.

These safe words create instability in conversation and they present the possible problem of stopping relationships short of progressing to a new level of depth. Humans may not always be capable of assigning a specific word to their feelings; however, intentionality in choosing words for one’s present feelings opens the door to honest communication that is necessary for growth.

“We have to see the value in expressing. And then we have to think carefully about the words to express where we are at,” says Dedmon. “You ask someone how they’re doing and they say the word ‘hurting,’ that word is incredibly important. Even though we could use any word for it, it’s important that that person uses the word ‘hurting’ because that means something significant.”

Furthermore, society selects words that are quick and easy. The emphasis is put on getting one’s point across in the shortest fashion possible rather than on truly communicating one’s meaning. Technology allows society to give into this trend more than ever before with quick texts and messages.

Sarah Anne Dubbeldam, editor in chief of Darling Magazine, deeply values the importance of maintaining personal connection in a rushed and distant society.

“There’s nothing wrong with pausing. We fire off emails and we fire off texts and we

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SARAH ANNE DUBBELDAM

fire off answers,” says Dubbeldam. “How can we embrace the power in vulnerability and how can we ask each other really intentional questions? It’s about getting rid of this urgency of this technological world we live in and to slow down.”

THE SHIFT IN MEANING

There are a few choice words that make a recurring appearance in current language. For example, awesome. It can describe a wide variety of things but at its foundation, its meaning connotes one’s response to the presence of God. The online Oxford Dictionaries definition reads: “Extremely impressive or daunting; inspiring great admiration, apprehension, or fear.” Does one even know what it means to stand in awe if the word ‘awesome’ is losing its power from the original meaning?

‘Nutella is awesome,’ for example. Do people truly feel awe, even fear, when tasting the chocolate hazelnut goodness? Not to underestimate the power Nutella holds over individuals, but it would appear almost

ridiculous to place Nutella and God on an equal level because the same word describes them both. However, while culture has formed and molded awesome into a different adjective than it primarily was, it does not necessarily prevent humans from describing a worthy God.

“If ‘awesome’ doesn’t apply to God because it’s been diluted, then another word will take its place because of that hunger for describing God in terms that feel somewhat appropriate inasmuch as we can capture language of God’s character,” says Christopher Davidson, associate professor of English.

Another example is love. Love is such a word that is used often and without boundaries in modern culture.

“Love is more today an affection for something that gives you something versus an affection for something that you can serve or sacrifice for. Those words don’t go with love anymore,” says Dubbeldam.

The politically correct definition of love is a profoundly tender, passionate affection for

another, most closely applicable to personal relationships. If society is unable to fully understand the politically correct definition, how can it expect to understand the definition of the love of God, or agape? According to Dedmon, there may be more to the picture.

"I wouldn't say we know less about God. I wouldn't say we love him any less. I would simply say the words that used to have an incredibly special meaning about God in our culture, do not," says Dedmon.

Ultimately, through culture change, these words have strayed from their original meaning. However, this does not necessarily mean that society is losing its depth. People continue to feel deeply, but the difficulty lies in putting words to those feelings. As Dedmon emphasized, words are inherently limited and humans as creative beings assign them as symbols for things and concepts. People give meaning to the words; they don't give meaning to people.

"The connection exists between our understanding of the word and our understanding of the thing it refers to. You are the one, and your culture and the people around you are the ones, who have ascribed meaning to different words," says Dedmon.

THE POWER REMAINS

That being said, words remain incredibly pertinent and powerful. Dubbeldam, a former L.A. model, witnessed firsthand media's damaging illusions of what constitutes beauty. Her observations started as a dream for change and ended with a magazine that makes it its goal to empower women through intentional discussion, encouragement, cultivation of creativity, and the recent "Real Not Retouched" campaign that celebrates natural beauty through the guarantee that none of the model's skin or bodies have been retouched in the magazine. Darling is a rare company that values the sacredness of words, and the effect that the magazine's articles have on women is evident.

"In media, there isn't a lot of love and grace and truth expressed through words to people. There's a lot of tearing down. We try to really principle everything on a foundation of love," says Dubbeldam. "Is every single word that's pouring through this article and this idea that we're trying to present someone — is it uplifting? We have women in tears that will say things like, 'I've never felt beautiful a day in my life until I read Darling.'"

Because people are the givers of meaning, the call is simple: Be more creative. Be more

intentional. Language is a God-given gift for communication and that has to be recognized. "Our ability to communicate with words is maybe what reflects the image of God most," says Dedmon.

Because language is a God-given thing, being deliberate with words is a form of praise. Humans hold the power to fully grasp the beauty and the meaning of words. They have the power to be fully intentional in every interaction. Maybe then the insubstantial interactions could grow to relationships of depth and understanding.

"As people, we have to value our words and watch our tongue," says Dubbeldam. "What can I say right now that will be the most impactful and the most true? How can I use my words to be more of a true person?"

Hope remains for the current generation to return meaning to words. Awareness of word choice and what is conveyed through the specific words is foundational to intentionality. It requires an internal reflection and an acceptance of the ability to change.

"The only way to bring meaning back to words is to back them up through action and is to look at the definition of the words that we are using and that are becoming overused. Personally challenge yourself and your own definition of that word," says Dubbeldam.

One way to challenge yourself can be found in the practice of handwritten letters. It allows the space, time, and effort for one to give purpose and meaning to the message, just as Wilde did. Oscar Wilde may have written those beautifully articulated words in 1890, a different time and a different culture. However, the art of words is not a lost art. Humans remain creative beings who carry the ability to take words and use them as tools to praise God for who He is and to revel in the beauty of this artfully crafted world.

**“WORDS
HOLD A FORM
OF MAGIC AND
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COMPARABLE
TO MUSIC.”**

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WRITTEN BY MELISSA WILLS

THE BIOLA STUDENT

"I feel pressured to be the perfect Christian."

"I struggle to find community because I feel like I have to put myself out there to be a part of a group."

"I feel like I am constantly putting on this façade because if I were to open up about my real struggles people will judge me."

Walking from a dorm room to the Caf, one will pass a diverse community of students, often laughing, saying hi to every person on every corner, surrounded by groups of friends. Never once would it seem that any one of those students was struggling to find himself or herself or feeling completely lost in a crowd.

Biola thrives on being the embodiment of a top conservative university that represents Christ-centered community and academic excellence. Naturally, entering as a freshman comes with high expectations of joining such a unique community. However, this time in a student's life comes with pressures that so often go unnoticed.

After having honest conversations with students it is revealed that the lack of transparency lies with the insecurities they are faced with, the comparisons they make, and the people they choose to identify with.

STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Reylena List, a recent psychology graduate, identified with this and openly writes about the pressures she faced.

"At Biola I felt a social pressure to be a well-rounded Christian. A Christian that was strong in ministry, social justice, academics, relationships and in my faith. I understand

that we are to pursue excellence in all we do, but there is a fine balance."

For List, being a Resident Advisor came with the pressure to lead by good example, so it was hard to expose weaknesses in that position. However, she recognized that strong relationships were made when she broke free from the pressure to have it "all together." She thinks this change was an opportunity and a blessing.

"Thankfully, one of my closest friends, a new Christian when I met her, never adhered to these social ideals. Our friendship forced me to ask for help, challenged me to be a humble learner and never did I have to come to her with everything in order."

This new perspective challenged her to be real with others without feeling the pressure to put up a front.

"Additionally, taking Jesus Life and Ministry reminded me that my efforts toward perfection contradicts God's message of grace and salvation," List writes.

List realized that God was calling her to pursue Him in her current state, instead of the state she was expected to show.

Hailey Vaccher, a senior sociology student, shares a similar perspective.

"I have felt like there's a lot of pressure to be biblically educated. For example, if you can't recall certain people or situations off the top of your head, then you're an amateur and inferior to everyone else."

So, even though this community can be reluctant to talk about these common struggles, everyone faces them in some way or another. Most often this occurs because students enter college experiencing a new, transformative stage in their life.

CONSTRUCTING A SELF

"Late adolescence revolves around constructing a self. In part the product of that is trying on different selves. So, almost literally, it is like you are putting together an outfit."

Betsey Barber, director of spiritual renewal and associate professor of psychology, believes that transitioning into college, especially in late adolescence, can be difficult because it is a developmental, spiritual, and psychological process.

Barber notes to find, transparency, one has to accept the process of figuring out where God is calling them and where they will be used.

"Many times folks get a sense spiritually of vocation. There is this notion of Ephesians 2:10 that says, 'We are His workmanship

made in Christ Jesus to do good works.' And there is that specific question, 'For what am I made?' And that is an important question to ask when we are talking about being authentic: 'What is my sense for God, what am I made for in the body of Christ?'"

This is a difficult state that students are faced with while at Biola. It is common for students to go from class, to chapel, to their dorms, and feel completely meaningless because of their struggle to find a sense of purpose.

However, the real question is this: Do they lack transparency, or has it been redefined?

THE REDEFINITION OF TRANSPARENCY

"Those that are in college right now are living lives that are way more transparent to people than any previous generation before."

Christopher Grace, professor of psychology and vice president of student development, believes transparency has a completely transformed meaning now.

"Transparency has become the shallowness of broadcasting with the world so many details about our existence, and ironically in doing so it is not associating it with an in-depth, true,

or honest transparency of what is really going on in the heart," Grace says.

The pressures are different for Biola students because they are usually not attacked for their faith. Instead they get wrapped up in how others view them or how they are portraying themselves. Betsy Barber explains what this process is commonly like for students. "Students come to Biola having carved out a space for themselves in their homes, high schools, and where they were working. Then they come here and there is a whole bunch of people who have a whole bunch of abilities, and it is hard to stand out. Some of that reason is because they envy what other people have."

Merari Stacy, a recent graduate, wrote about the pressures that she saw while at Biola.

"There's a subtle pressure to change who you are in order to feel accepted and fit into the Biola community. Many students hide who they truly are to fit in. They avoid moments of real and true connections, where vulnerable feelings are shared, fearing that someone might find something about them that is wrong or unacceptable."

This pressure plays a huge role in a student's first years of college. So where do they draw

the line when being transparent with others? Barber notes that transparency does come with boundaries.

"There is a difference between honesty and privacy. And I think that is an important distinction; you want to trust the trustworthy ones. So it is not like you want to lie or deceive others, but be wise in how open you are."

Barber explained how relationship is what God calls people into, and He hand picks others to come into their lives as blessings. She said it is important to recognize who those people are.

"The best course for that is having a mutually interdependent, reciprocal relationship with somebody where you're entrusting yourself to that person and they are entrusting themselves to you and together you have this free flowing, honest relationship."

So what is the solution?

THE CHALLENGE

"The solution comes down to a recognition that if I am really going to connect with another person it is going to take effort, it is going to take becoming 'other focused' and it is going to take being vulnerable."

“

THE CHALLENGE IS TO PUT DOWN THE WALL THAT SAYS YOU HAVE TO HAVE IT ALL TOGETHER WHEN YOU ARE CLEARLY FALLING APART.

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Grace emphasizes the need to start taking interest in other people. For Biola's community to grow stronger, Grace says students need to cultivate it in themselves to truly listen and invest in others. Authenticity and transparency begin when students stop concerning themselves with trying to be interesting, he says.

"Usually there is pressure to fit into a crowd, find as many friends as possible, and become interesting to others. Though if we become interested in others, instead of interesting, it could radically revolutionize some of our ability to be authentic and transparent with other people."

The challenge is to put down the wall that says you have to have it all together when you are clearly falling apart. Reylena List understood that once she became honest about her weaknesses, she was able to relate to others in a deeper way.

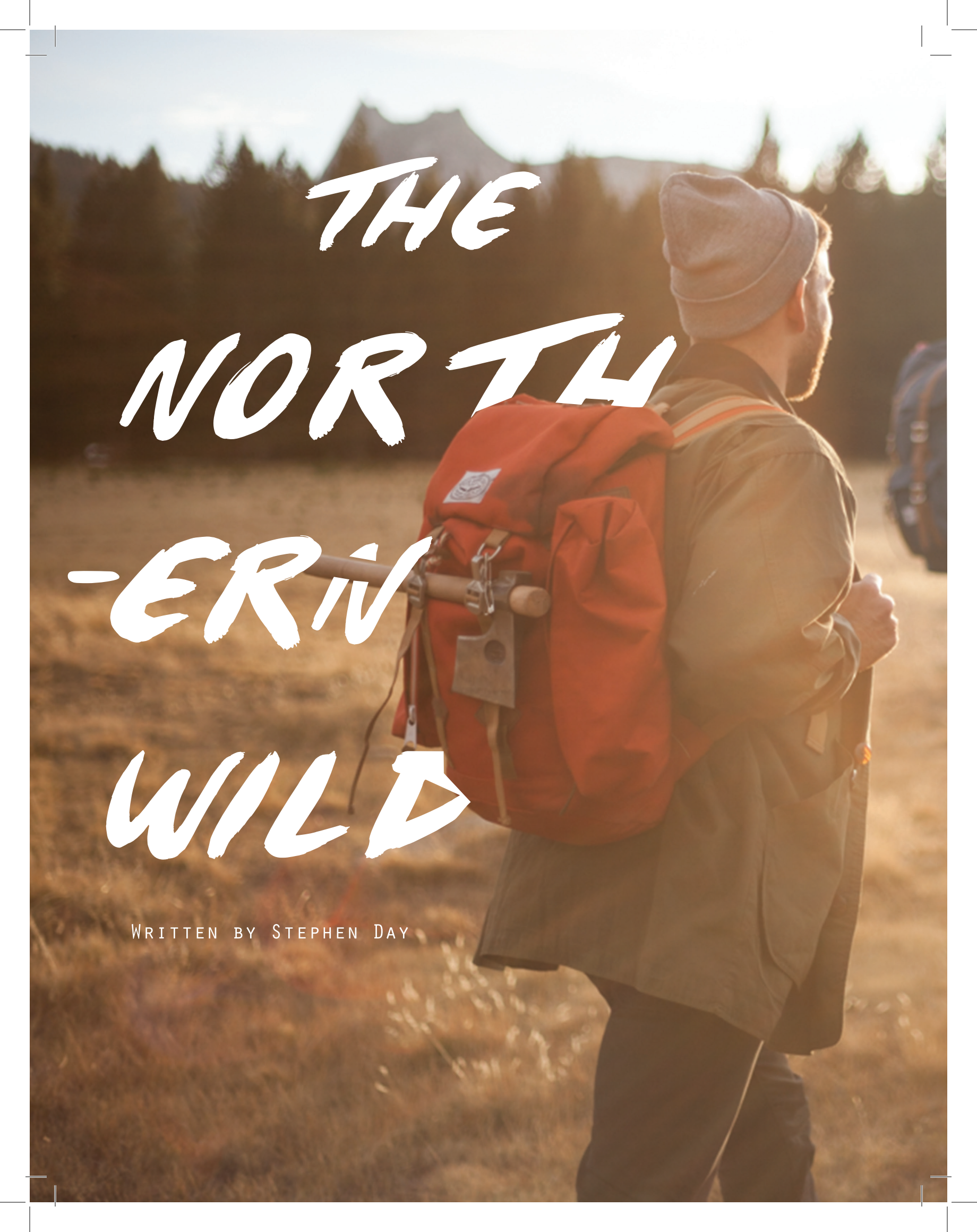
"During Biola I fought against vulnerability, but thankfully I had friends who encouraged me to unfold in Christ, unfold my hidden sins and fears. Yes, the Biola community brought a hidden pressure, but it also brought incredible people to remind me of Christ's character."

We were made for community, so let's stop pretending to be something we are not. Let's have honest conversations so that we may become a community that lets go of the pressure to identify with what others are conforming to.

Merari Stacy realized that during her time at Biola, vulnerability opened the door to valuable relationships and relatability on a deeper level. She encourages students to do the same.

"I challenge you to not be afraid. God has called you to use your gifts, and the only way these will be used is if you are open and willing to stand out. Be yourself and be confident in the way God has made you."

It is never easy to be transparent when living life, especially in college, but community can grow stronger if students can let go of the pressure to get noticed, fit in, or identify with a group. If they realize that they are all facing the same struggles, they can grow more united in their relationship with Christ and each other.



THE NORTH -ERN WILD

WRITTEN BY STEPHEN DAY



IN MY MIND

I sat outside by the fire for a long time, staring into the warm tongues of flame as they wrapped themselves around the dry pine logs, wondering why I couldn't write. Every time I picked up a pen or opened my laptop to place words where they should be, my mind would drift away, leaving nothing but a frustrating inability to produce any work and another long evening staring at blank pages.

Placing a fresh log onto the waning fire, I finally accepted that my heart wasn't here. I didn't want to write about nature and camping. I didn't want to write about climbing, hiking, wandering or exploring. I just wanted to be out there — in the wild — doing it.

To adventure is like a drug. It's full of mystery and wonder, because we've gradually taken ourselves further and further away from the only places we're still free to explore. Choosing to experience the world through the eyes of others — their blogs, photos, articles and social media — we've forfeited our ability to exist in the reality that still endures around us, opting instead for the vicarious fabrication of an existence we wish we inhabited. When the reality is rediscovered, though, the significance of this discovery is immense.

IN THE CITY

Here in the Los Angeles Metropolitan it's easy to feel stifled by the torturously polluted air,

congested roads and tar-riddled neighborhoods in which we abide. However, we are fortunate to find ourselves right beside some of America's most beautiful natural sanctuaries. Whether you wish to drive for just an hour or you enjoy multiple days of interrupted and uncomfortable sleep on the road, the West Coast's exquisite natural dwellings afford us the freedom and space to breathe.

Alongside the oceans to the west or in the dense woods to the north. Through the vast deserts to the east or atop the mountains that surround. In these places we can find the necessary peace and rest for our souls that the clutter of school, work and city-life creates. In these places we can escape the long, busy nights and dreadful early mornings.

IN THE WILD

Oh, how we lament the early morning when there is actually such a blissful and unappreciated purity to being awoken while the sky is still dark and the sun is fighting for the pale greys and purples of dawn. There is such a joyous contentment in the corporate whistle of early-risen birds soaring through the crisp morning air, and in the sun's soft, maize glow that slowly floods the slopes of lush, fertile valleys below as it appears over the mountain ridges to the east.

There is an allusion in the smell of freshly

ground coffee and in the crackle of dry-wood, subdued under the sizzle of breakfast frying in the pan. The aromas and sounds arouse more than just our immediate and instinctive senses. They awaken a deep desire for community and relationship that is accentuated by the delicate chill of autumn and the harsher bite of winter's throng. It lies in the reflective white of early-season snow, the hard crunch of fallen pine needles, and the low, plunging fog that cloaks the mountainous landscapes.

When you allow yourself the time to abide, purposefully and relationally, in the sensory acquaintance of nature, you can conclude two things — that a creation so magnificent, so beautiful and so intricate necessitates a creator of even greater magnificence and beauty, and that it was surely created to be experienced and enjoyed.

Now, depending on how far you are willing to travel and what your intentions are, your destination will vary significantly. The desert, the ocean, the forest and the mountains all offer a unique experience to the explorer that cannot be replicated elsewhere and will differ throughout the four seasons.



THE COAST

The California coast is one of the few places where you can sit and stare out across the vast ocean and watch the sun fall closer and closer to the empty abyss beyond it. The light blues of daylight turn to stunning pinks and the sun becomes a glowing ball of golden, honey light, as the thin ribbons of coral and magenta reaching left and right become the only thing separating the darkening sky from the ocean's reflective surface below.

There are a series of gorgeous beaches north of L.A., beginning with those between Malibu and Santa Barbara. These are perhaps the closest spots that allow you to truly feel like you have escaped from the city, as you can camp on

the beach, falling asleep to the sound of the sea and waking up to the smell of salt and sand.

Farther north, Big Sur is perhaps the epitome of coastal magnificence. With enormous cliffs and some of the most gorgeous sunsets in the country, the stretch of coast from San Luis Obispo to Monterey is perfect for all your envy-inducing Instagram panoramas and is only a scenic four-to-five hour drive along the PCH.

Farther still, beyond both Santa Cruz and the San Francisco Bay, is a stretch of ocean that remains relatively overlooked due to its location and lack of accessibility. Free from highways and the hustle of tourism, the Lost Coast is

still one of California's best-kept secrets. Here is an expanse of land and ocean where violent winter waves crash onto rocky cliff-faces and summer swells roll slowly and methodically in and out from the shore without so much as a turn of the head. Here the trees turn from their lively greens to a fiery, autumn orange and the full cycle of seasons is truly experienced in the foggy, frozen winters and the vibrant blues and violets of exploding, colourful springs.

THE MOUNTAINS AND FORESTS

For the time-conscious, the San Bernardino National Forest is home to Lake Arrowhead,



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Big Bear and many other beautiful destinations. Just an hour or two from La Mirada, the national forest is a great place to partake in a little slice of recreational snow activity or clear your mind while taking a nice day-hike.

Further to the north are the Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks. Home to the tallest peak in California, Mt. Whitney, and 38 gorgeous groves of sequoias, these National Parks are perfect for both inexperienced or seasoned hikers intent on a night or two in the wild.

Finally, the jewel in the crown of California’s expansive national forests and mountain ranges is Yosemite National Park. The most

well-known and frequented of California’s parks, Yosemite is always bustling with tourism, but don’t let this deter you from experiencing its grandeur. While Glacier Point and Half Dome will always present a hive of eager, camera-happy enthusiasts, the lesser-known Tuolumne Meadows on the eastern side of the park are the perfect respite, especially in the spring when the roads re-open from the south and west.

BACK IN MY MIND

Earlier in the semester I was actually in Yosemite with three friends, ostensibly finding inspiration to write this piece on camping, and

nature, and the outdoors. But there was such an overload of sensory stimulation. So much beauty and so many experiences that I knew I couldn’t justify with my words. What could I say to portray such an experience? What story could I tell to illustrate my perspective on the insane beauty of the wilderness that surrounds us? I think maybe the cliché “a picture is worth a thousand words” really stands, and in this case — maybe a few thousand more.

PHOTOGRAPHER: SUMMER STAEB
DESIGNER: CHRISTINE MOON
EDITOR: ROBERT JAMES WINANS



RETRO SPECTIVE

Written by Mystiana Victorino

The Point Magazine emerged in 2006 when Tamara Welter, a journalism professor, had a dream to create a student-produced campus publication. Public relations professor Carolyn Kim, then sophomore Carolyn Wallace, served as the first editor in chief.

"THE VISION WAS TO PROVIDE A MAGAZINE THAT COULD DO JUSTICE TO SENSITIVE ISSUES, POP THE BIOLA BUBBLE AND GIVE A HUMAN FACE TO ITS SUBJECTS," says Kim, who still recalls pitching the idea to the school provost.

The Point has enjoyed eight years of publication, yielding 18 issues that have tackled controversies and unearthed some bizarre nuggets of information. These 11 stories from our archives provide an apt retrospective on The Point's bold, diverse work so far.

MOST DEBATED

A Controversial Calling: Women in the Pulpit by Rebecca Nakashima (Fall 2012)
In a male-dominated field, the idea of women behind the podium can still raise some eyebrows. Nakashima concluded that the action of sharing the Word of God holds greater weight than the one who communicates it. Interestingly, Biola currently has 280 female undergrad Biblical Studies majors.

MOST INNOVATIVE

Top Ten Pit Stops for Web Wanderers by Kati Smith (Fall 2007)
It may be difficult to imagine a time before BuzzFeed or Instagram to provide a momentary break from a three-hour study session. This article lists 10 creative online alternatives to MySpace or YouTube in 2007. Popular pitstops for procrastination included puzzlepirates.com, a multiplayer role-playing game, or slacker.com, the equivalent to today's Spotify.

MOST HARDCORE

Unshackled by Allison Abel (Spring 2006)
In the very first Point issue's cover story, one Biola student shares how going to jail was the best thing that could have happened to him. On a downward spiral of drugs, alcohol and violence, San Diego native Beau Boyd was sentenced at the age of 16. Introduced to Christianity through a prison church service, Boyd says that doing time is what set him free spiritually.

MOST BIZARRE

Contract, Burden or Blessing by Will Anderson (Fall 2006)
Two students talk about choosing to attend Biola because of its contract, and finding it helpful in breaking their addictions to marijuana and alcohol. The article also revisited some features of past contracts, thankfully now obsolete. In the '80s, shorts were only allowed in the cafeteria on Saturdays. In the '50s, curfew violators were subject to "campusing," a disciplinary action where the guilty party was shunned. The rule forbade students from leaving campus or talking.

MOST RETRO

Seven Biola Throwbacks by Kristina Nishi (Spring 2014)
An overview of the traditions that have been formed and forgotten, this piece highlights some bits of campus culture from past generations. Ever wonder where the old Biola tradition of playing basketball while riding on live donkeys began? The hoofed sportsmanship was invented as a fundraising event in the 1930's. The '81 yearbook shows Biola Men, a club that sought to develop community relationships, hosting a game of Donkey Basketball. Dr. Richard Chase, Biolas' sixth president, can be seen taking part in the games.

MOST IRONIC

Biola/Azusa Lovefest by Kelli Shiroma (Spring 2011)
The competition between Azusa Pacific University and Biola University was perhaps one of the most well known in the Golden State Athletic Conference. Shiroma highlights the similarities between schools: Both are Christian universities in southern California, share a love for the color red, and frequently swap professors. Later in 2011, however, 40 years of friendly fighting came to an end when Azusa transferred to the Pacific West Conference in the NCAA Division II.

MOST DARING

Boy Meets Wild by Jesse Kleinjan (Fall 2006)
One brave Biola student journeyed across the Sequoia National Park for three days without packing water, food or shelter. Surviving off of the land, eating acorn porridge and trekking through snow-laden woods, Kleinjan took a unique opportunity to experience God's raw creation.

MOST ONCE- IN-A-LIFETIME

Biola, CA 93606 (Fall 2010)
Hoping to find some similarities, the fall 2010 Point staff took a mid-semester road trip to the northern town of Biola, Calif. The rural community was founded by Bible Institute of Los Angeles alum William Kerchoff in 1912, just a few years after the school's 1908 opening. Surrounded by raisin fields, Biola is a quirky town known for its strong sense of community. The staff arrived just in time for the half-a-century-old annual Raisin Day Celebration, a festival complete with a parade and Raisin Man mascot.

MOST INSIGHTFUL

Own Your Stuff: Treasuring Not Trashing by Kahlie Colwell (Spring 2014)
In a consumer-oriented society, it can be difficult to see our belongings as God's and not our own. During one finals week, Biola alumnus Parker Gross found brand-new Nike shoes and more on a dumpster-diving spree. His findings amounted to \$2,000 of unwanted goods. While students may not realize the extent of such waste prompted by suitcase size, perhaps the call to simple living is something to take to heart.

MOST PRACTICAL

Charting the Course by Tonika Reed (Fall 2012)
This article addresses the problems many students face when it comes to finances. A Point Magazine survey conducted in conjunction with the piece revealed that 70% of students did not make a budget and were unaware of how much they spent each week. Packed with practical tips that help students to be cash smart when budgeting their money, it suggests assessing needs over wants or using cash instead of credit to avoid overspending.

MOST FASHIONABLE

Every "Wear" in Time by Emily Agenjo (Fall 2009)
Four Biola professors reflect upon their development of style from their own college experience, and how trends influenced the person they became. They describe their experience of eras like the grunge movement, disco and the British Invasion, taking part in crazes such as bell bottoms and teased bangs. "Everything looks better in the moment," said Cassandra Van Zandt, dean of humanities and social sciences.



PHOTOGRAPHER: MARISA LIM
DESIGNER: ERIN JEFFRIES
EDITOR: KELLY MCBRIDE



DEAR READERS,

You may have noticed that The Point has undergone some changes. This is our 18th issue, and to celebrate this “coming-of-age” time in Point Magazine History, we decided to shake things up a bit! Normally, when the “R-word” gets dropped in publication, panic sets in. The “R-word” is redesign — and we embraced it with open arms.

Our nameplate has been updated, which is the first physical evidence a reader will notice while flipping through the magazine. We chose this update as a visible example of how The Point has matured. However, a new nameplate is not the only physical evidence of our new branding. We have also created a fancy new logo that you will find located on the back cover of your copy.

With “For Students. By Students” encircling the name of the publication, we wanted to highlight that students are responsible for the creation of this magazine and that each issue is made for the students. By adding this little piece to our logo we are celebrating the hard work that our staff puts in. We also want to begin to encourage our readers to share with us about what they would like to see featured in each issue of the magazine. After all, this publication is “For Students.” Our staff wants to create a product that makes our readers say, “Yes! This is exactly what we see as a talking point in the Christian community on our campus!”

Our staff was not afraid of the “R-word” and we saw it as a chance, as Jenna Rink from 13 Going on 30 would say, “to have some fun!” We let our creativity fly and unleashed our talented staff — and I believe they have raised the bar. So yes, The Point may look a little different, but the heart of those who created it can be seen evidently within every page. We hope you like what you see and that you will embrace this new and matured version of Point Magazine.

Blessings,

Ahza Sam X





DECEMBER 2014