

A close-up photograph of a woman's face in profile, looking towards the right. She has dark hair and is wearing a light-colored top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

canontwentyfive

things christians hate about christians

Dec 2010

I hate Christians.

I hate that we aren't suppose to use the word "hate."

I hate the Christian bubble.

I hate that most Christians don't know the realities of this world.

I hate that most Christians do know the realities of this world, yet do nothing about it.

I hate that we can't practice what we preach.

Christian music sucks.

I hate that we alienate the broken and hopeless.

I hate that when faced with an obstacle we say "I'll pray for you" and feel like we've done our job.

I hate that we don't even pray for people when we say we will pray for.

Christian overnight Camps are lame.

Tyndale sometimes feels like a Christian overnight camp.

I mean, we're all adults here. Dorm hours? 10 pm? Seriously?

I hate that if a guy has a friend that's a girl, Christians automatically assume you're dating.

Christians that don't swear because it's an unforgiveable sin.

I hate the location of this school.

Did I mention Christian music sucks?

I hate Christians when they spend more time debating about what versions of the Bible to use rather than worrying about the kids starving, and the youth dying.

I hate that I feel that some mainstream artists are more honest than most worship leaders.

Because I drink beer does not make me unholy.

I hate that Christians think the Cross and Jesus are the same thing.

I hate that I feel more lonely in a Christian environment than in a secular one.

Sunday services suck.

The Catholic Church abuses physically, the Evangelical Church abuses emotionally.

Why are Christians so lame?

I love that Christians are meant to love and care for each other.

I like that in some circumstances Christians really do pray for you.

I like that Christians are some of the only people to give you money to go on a mission trip somewhere.

There are plenty of other things I love about Christians.

Still, there are lots of things I dislike about Christians.

Christian culture in general really just pisses me off.

But I'll be the first to admit,

I'm part of it. We're all hypocrites.

There are things we all need to work out when it comes to our faith.

I love God, I love our Christ.

But I've came the conclusion I'll never fit the idea of what the Western Christian is suppose to be.

I wish I could fit the idea of what the

Real

Biblical

Christian

is suppose to be.

I just don't know what that looks like...

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Canon 25

Editors:

Mark Fisk
Peter Adourian

Design:

Patrick Sutherland

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Credit to Matthew Fisch* for the opening remarks

*If I sound angry, I'm really not. I'm a nice guy if you talk to me. I don't hate you. Just some of you. I joke.

Editors Note: We'll vouch for him. Can't find a nicer guy than Matt! -P.A.

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:26 (NIV). See, even Jesus wants us to hate! I know, I know, save your hermeneutical rant. I've read my Kierkegaard. Thanks to all our great contributors and remember: "You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved." Matthew 10:22 (NIV). Enjoy this hate filled issue! :)

- Mark Fisk

Can the Duck say to the Loon, "stop quacking"? Is it fit for an Ox to comment on a Bull's cleft-hoof shoes? And what of the Orangutan? Can he mock the Chimpanzee's intelligence without negating his own? I think what I'm really trying to say is, we're all a bunch of filthy animals. Enjoy your new issue.

- Pete



The Perfect Pixels

By Matt Stiller

Only a few weeks ago I was gifted a painting on a special occasion. I knew I was receiving this painting and I was extremely excited about it because I knew that the painter had spent hundreds of hours composing this work of art. When I first received it I was awe-struck—the colours were intricately displayed and it was unbearably beautiful. I was overjoyed by this gift and immediately positioned it right in front of my desk where I spend numerous hours in a day.

Throughout the day, while talking on the phone I often looked and meditated upon this painting. I scanned it from top to bottom and was in admiration of all the small details. One afternoon, when scanning the painting I noticed it . . . a mistake! In the corner was a small white spot—a spot that had not been completed. All of a sudden, everything had changed. It was no longer a symbol of perfection, but was flawed. Now, every time that I looked at that painting, all I could see was the little white spot in the corner.

This is a disease that many Christians suffer from—especially the educated ones. They are obsessive about the pixels, but not about the painting. They will persistently witness their faith to a lost soul, but will lose their motivation when they find out that they are persuaded by something small such

as infant baptism over believer's baptism. Or they will put more effort into persuading them toward Calvinism or Arminianism than they will into convincing them that Christ is Lord. This is backwards!

Educated Christians let their theoretical knowledge take charge and forget that the Holy Spirit may be convicting others of something other than what they think. That does not mean that there are no definitive answers; that just means we may not have access to every answer. Christians do not agree on anything—free will or not, baptism or not, Eucharist or not, church or not, contemporary bands or not, birth control or not, 'white lies' or not. We do not agree on anything, and we should not expect others to always agree with us—even when you are certain you are correct.

If we were to examine our own lives and see how many conversations and debates we have about the pixels and how many we have about the pictures, which one would reign supreme? If you are too focused on the pixels, you may lose sight of the picture. ■

Matt is a Tyndale University Graduate with an Honours B.A. in Philosophy, 2010



THINGS CHRISTIANS HATE ABOUT CHRISTIANS WHO HATE THINGS ABOUT CHRISTIANS

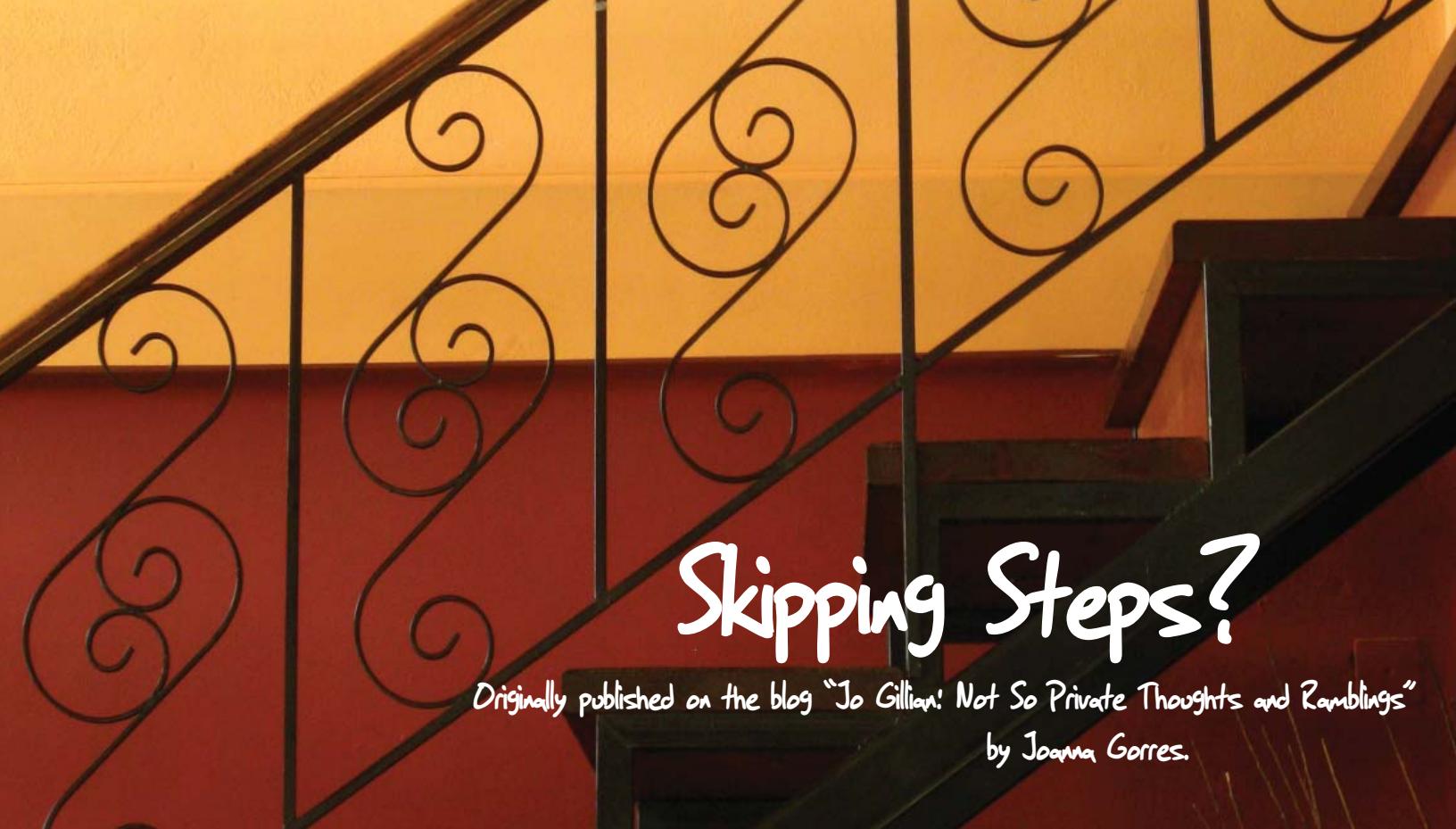
BY CHRIS DRAGOS

I hate how Christians hate things about Christians. The word “how” is important in that sentence. If, as a rule, I hated any Christian hate of things about Christians, this little article would be obviously self-defeating. Christians do terrible things that should be hated, so that’s not how I’m using “how”. I guess the “how” that I hate is how some personal and corporate brands of Christianity are defined by how they’re NOT like those other Christians.

Suppose I’m one those Christians who expresses their faith largely in contrast to the Christianity of those Christians. Suppose also that you’re one of those Christians. Suppose further that we happen to be attending the same Christian event. Seeing you and others like you, I think to myself, “Well I thank God I’m not like those Christians, those who sit in wooden pews in their long robes, those who won’t give to single mothers, those who won’t even allow a gay person into their church. I, on the other hand, minister to the homeless, I mow my neighbour’s lawn for free, I go to church at 6 p.m., I have a World Vision kid on my fridge, soon I’ll have two World Vision kids, I’m visiting my World Vision kids this summer! Dang it, I even minister in the gay community even though I don’t agree with them about everything.” You, standing over there, are thinking about how you’re not doing enough ministry, about how you’re not telling people about Jesus, and about how you should and will try. Who goes home justified?

If you’re like the first Christian, your attitude will frustrate your good deeds. You’re actually doing so much right, so much they need to stand up and do. But it’s a shame because, as a semi-famous person once said, a little yeast eventually makes its way through the whole batch of dough (or something like that). Here’s the unfortunate truth: You care too much about disassociating yourself from those Christians. Those Christians may rightly need a wakeup call, but the things you hate about those Christians lead you to care most about having a contemporary atmosphere instead of long sermons and burned coffee in the foyer afterwards, worshipping with U2 instead of worshipping with the music they worship with, using a catchy and borderline-profanity phrase instead of being a prude, coming up with a clever name for a church-alternative instead of trying to fix the church where you are, Tweeting “I’m at a pub and I’m a Christian” every time you’re at a pub. Really what you’re doing is making Christianity superfluous – like everything else in the world and with nothing transformative to offer.

Suppose you ask me, “Wanna come hang out with me and be a Christian? You can be a good person and still be relevant!” If I weren’t a Christian, I’d respond, “I’m already a good person and I’m already relevant. Wanna come hang out with me?” Thing is, we’d probably have a good time and maybe be lifelong friends. But I’d stay the same: pretty much like you.■



Skipping Steps?

*Originally published on the blog "Jo Gillian: Not So Private Thoughts and Ramblings"
by Joanna Gorres.*

So, this baby is coming out, and I'll officially be a mom forever. I can't give her back. There's no turning back.

Wow.

I remember that in AP English, as a de-stressing exercise, our teacher told us to take a moment and write down where we want to be in five years to make us realize that life doesn't end here and whatever we're going through will pass.

I'm pretty sure I wrote stuff like: have my own apartment, live somewhere else, be engaged, be in ministry, graduate from college...

Okay, so two, maybe three out of five. Not bad, right?

Then when I was in university, I definitely thought that by 25, I would married and either be in grad school or working for the government or some non-profit organization – you know, working to make a difference type of thing.

Instead, I am a mom, and I skipped a couple of steps to get here. I didn't plan on it. It happened, and I lucked out on who it happened with.

Some have said we have skipped steps to get to where we are, but who made up the steps anyway? So, I'll work after having a kid. Maybe I'll be married later. It's

not so bad, is it?

All I know is that, after thinking of what I wanted it to be, what it could have been, I need to accept the way things are now and figure out how I can make the most out of it. Who am I becoming? Who do I want to become? How do I want to live? How will I raise my child? What are my priorities?

They've changed – my priorities.

Skipped steps? Yes, but there should no longer be shame in that.

At first, I felt "second-rate" about being pregnant out of wedlock, not having a "real job" to support myself, not "living my old dreams," but I realized that I AM doing what I love now – it's just different. My other dreams,

they're still there, put on hold, and that's okay. For now, I will keep doing what I have come to love - being a good mother, girlfriend, and friend, while still being ME...or at least, finding me. ;)

Skipped steps? Yes, but there should no longer be shame in that.

One day, I'll dance again. One day, I'll write again. One day, I'll serve again.

Today, I love. ■

Joanna Gorres is a Tyndale University graduate, 2010.

IDENTITY CHECK: DO YOU KNOW WHO YOU BELONG TO?

BY DALTON HOLLOWAY

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. - 1 Peter 2:9 (NIV)

Most of us spend much of our time trying to 'find ourselves'. Attempting to break the ties we have with our parents and establish our own identity. There was a time where I agreed with this ideal, but I gave that up a long time ago.

If you attend a lot of family functions, heavy-laden with cousins, second-cousins, aunts and uncles, you are probably used to hearing things like "You have your mother's nose" or "You shrug your shoulders just like your father." I believe that this is also true for our attitudes, temperament, etc. Of course, there are exceptions, but generally, some of our actions and nuances stem from our parents.

For a long time, I understood some of the attributes that I inherited from my father (sociable, affectionate), but I couldn't pin-point what part of my mother I inherited... Until this spring.

My mom came down to Toronto to visit her best (and only) son. We decided to take a trip downtown. We drove to Finch Station and took the TTC to GTA's centre. On the way down, my mom was giving me an update on my uncle who found himself in a really bad fix. The details aren't important. What was important was hearing my mom's thought process: What she thought of the situation, how it wasn't my uncle's best decision and what she could have done to help.

GOD: Israelites have suffered enough. I am sending you to Pharaoh to deal with this. I'll be with you.

MOSES: Who am I to do such things?

GOD: I will be with you.

MOSES: Who do I say sent me?

GOD: I AM. Gather my people. I will be with you.

MOSES: What if they don't believe me?

GOD: I'll give you signs. I will be with you.

MOSES: But I can't speak right.

GOD: I will be with you.

MOSES: Please send someone else.

This attitude of Moses keeps up for a while post-bush encounter. Moses has direct orders from the Creator on the game plan, set plays, trick plays and even the final outcome. Moses chose to focus on his own ability instead of what God was granting him: a new identity. It is safe to assume that Pharaoh didn't see Moses as the man with 'slow speech'. He probably saw Moses as the man whom God used to ruin His Kingdom.

We now have the Holy Spirit (our inner 'burning bush'), refining and working in us. But we'd rather suppress Him.

Real change is difficult; it is pain, it isolates and creates a dividing line--a seeking after and a letting go of--new forsaking the old.

Being a chosen people doesn't come without a complete abandonment of self. Priesthood has its fair share of sacrifices the ordained must embrace. A nation must have parameters and distinctive qualities that separate them from the rest.

Have a sit-down with Dad sometime soon and find out who you are. Once you find out, rejoice. 'For the creation waits

The whole time she spoke, I realized that I would have thought and done the exact same thing if I was in her shoes. It was like looking into a mirror. It was really scary at first, but then a sense of peace and realization hit me. That's how we're alike. That's where I get it from.

So, to address the Canon topic: I hate that many Christians are unaware of their identity; they are unconscious of the Spirit given them.

I'm not going to give you the benefit of the doubt. Maybe you are aware of your identity, yet choose to suppress it, in hopes you don't come off as too 'holly' or 'righteous' to your friends, family, or society as a whole. Let's go on a Bible Study to the book of Exodus, and get reacquainted with Moses, a major player in the history of Christianity.

To the burning bush we go, watching a man sans sandals having dialogue with a burning shrub. Paraphrased, the conversation goes like this:



This Is Our Church, Our Worship, GORSHIP!

By Max Aka

The scene is set in a tightly enclosed, dingy room with four greasy men thrashing away on electric guitars, drums, and a whole lot of hair flailing around. The name of the song is Silence the Oppressors. At first glance, everything is set up perfectly for another generic metal music video, and so the viewer is really quite prepared for the first line of the song: "To the following Christians! Listen closely!" Normally I would at this point roll my eyes and bang my head against the wall at the thought of yet another metal song attacking Christianity, but the twist for Riverside, California's Impending Doom is that the band is made up of Christians, a fact that makes me want to bang my head against the wall even more ... And not in the awesome way they do in the music video.

Christian metal has become quite the phenomenon in recent years. While early metal bands might have considered this very notion absurd, it does not take much searching through the music scene to find that heavy Christian bands like August Burns Red, Underoath, and Thrice are not only accepted in the broader secular market but are actually leading and defining the growing subgenres and subcultures of the underground, all while flying a very visible banner of Christianity. Generally, I would consider this a good thing from an evangelistic perspective. Kids in the scene are being exposed to Christian thoughts and generally clean and positive lyrical alternatives in an otherwise nihilistic, depressing, and often blatantly satanic culture.

Unfortunately, many self-proclaimed metal-headed Christians are simply recapitulating on the hippie mentality of the "Jesus People" of the 1960's, "Up with Jesus, down with the church!" In that regard, I consider such "metal-heads" to be nothing but dirty, ignorant hippies, who first of all have no place in "metal".

(Insert useless breakdown here.)

On a more important note, however, I see this mentality reflected in much broader circles than simply within specific

musical subcultures. For many of us at Tyndale—even those of us who come from more traditional church backgrounds—Christian rock is the norm for both worship and entertainment. We have as many as three considerably loud chapel services a week, plus ready access in the bookstore to everything from Third Day to Lecrae to Demon Hunter. All of this is good stuff, but only as long as we aren't dependent on it.

The early church did not have the luxury of what we would call "contemporary" worship. Granted, they did not have the technology for it; but even if they did, drums and electric guitars do not lend themselves well to hiding from the police force that is out to crucify you or set you on fire. I think this is a relevant point when you run into people who say things like, "Man, I can't worship without those drums".

Many times those of us from conservative church backgrounds have all kinds of gripes with the "old judgmental stuck-in-the-mud types" who criticize contemporary music forms. What I think we often fail to realize is that exclamations of "THAT BEAT IS STRAIGHT FROM THE DEVIL!" are not often motivated by bitterness, jealousy, or even prejudice, but more likely from a sense of concern for the up-and-coming generation of Christian leaders.

If you're Impending Doom, the old folks in your church might not be all to thrilled about your new goregrind praise song. Especially, if they're just getting comfortable with the idea of Chris Tomlin. They might not even like your Hillsong-style praise band if they are still getting accustomed to an "acoustic guitar". But, that does not mean that there is nothing to learn from them. That veil of "intolerance" is likely covering a lifetime of experience that can benefit you and the rest of the people in your Christian techno-death-rap group.

I'm not saying contemporary worship is wrong at all. What is wrong is expecting the conservative folks in your church to be jumping up and down with you before you're willing to sit with them. ■

Be Careful

It's the little things we do
That can change a person's point of view
About who a Christian really is
The things we say and the way we live

Sometimes the greatest way to share the gospel
Has nothing to do with a church or a chapel
Sometimes the best way to share Christ's love
Is to give to others, even when we don't have enough

To share a kind word when we feel like swearing
To be patient with others when their being overbearing
To not take advantage of those in a lower position
Especially when we're frustrated with our own situation

Be careful of the things you do to people you don't know
Life has a way of moving fast, then incredibly slow
Be careful of the gospel you claim to represent
Because God knows all you do and holds the final judgment

And to those of us who feel taken advantage of
Whether it's from unreasonable expectations or a lack of love
Forgiveness goes both ways and we're obligated to do it too

There's a quote I once heard and I know that it's true
The bible never tells the other person what to do
It only tells you.

-Andre Parris



Perfect

Dear Mr Perfect

Could you please stop making me feel bad
By showing off all you have
I know you and Jesus have parties and laugh
But as a Christian I've only ever been last

And I know you have a picture perfect past
But give me time I just got rid of my mask
So I'm not used to my honest reflection yet
Of who I am and where my foundations are set

I know you never sin anymore
But I remember when we both stole from the grocery store
It was your idea and I just played it cool
Now that they put you in a suit, all you know are the rules

And because I don't speak the Christian jargon
Or only listen to Israel Haughton
You think I'm not saved enough
Like being saved is determined by a measuring up

Dear Miss perfect

Stop making my sisters feel worthless
They've been put on this earth for a purpose
And your purpose on this earth is
Not to determine their character by how long or short the skirt is

I understand you're only trying to be a good example
But you're making Christianity more than a handful
Don't forget the change in people, you didn't cause it
That only happened by the power of the Holy Spirit

So if you're going to wear your hat and your long skirt
Go ahead and make your fashion work
But don't think that your fashion determines your holiness
Because God knows beneath those clothes your life is a total mess

Imagine if God was to show Mr and Miss perfect
That their righteousness is like filthy rags
Imagine if He showed them that their lip service
Isn't comparable to a helping hand

Let's stop trying to act like we're the best
Like you don't sin because you don't wear a chain around
your neck
Everybody has their own thing that's fine and I get it
But let's stop pretending that we're perfect

-Andre Parris

C.W.D.G.I.

Things Christians hate about Christians, is it? Well, maybe we should start with a general definition of a Christian. There are so many out there these days so I think it best to agree on one definition, especially when the rest of this article will be spent annihilating them. After all, we're talking about a group so varied it includes everyone from Billy Graham to the Jonas Brothers.

I'm not crazy enough to state *my* definition of a Christian because I wouldn't want to lose half my readers that wouldn't agree with it. But I will state the definition of 'the Christian who doesn't get it' because that is the Christian I will be referring to throughout this article.

'The Christian who doesn't get it' or the CWDGI (we love acronyms don't we? WWJD?) is, in most unfortunate cases, the loudest. They are often the Christian interviewed on TV in order for the general public to get an inside look at 'the Christian perspective'. Or they are the Christian at a protest getting into heated arguments with anyone with a counter opinion. In essence, the CWDGI is the Christian who thinks it's their job to demonstrate God's wrath and judgement rather than His love.

Years ago I watched an episode of The Tyra Banks Show. Yes, the program hosted by a supermodel who became a crazy talk-show host – I've watched it on occasion. And one particular episode still stands out to me all these four or five years later. It was the episode when one Christian woman managed to make over a dozen people cry. I wish I could tell you these other guests were crying 'happy tears,' but that would be the furthest thing from the truth. Even as I watched, I had to hold back tears myself. This woman, this CWDGI was loud, obnoxious and hurtful – all in an effort to make God's will known to the homosexual guests Tyra was interviewing. Even though I can't remember the actual words she said, I can still remember the effect those words had on the people to whom she was speaking. And the most painful part was how untrue her hurtful words were. She said nothing about love and forgiveness; she only had room for disgust and hate. She had the amazing opportunity to bring love into a world of hurt, but she threw it away and instead brought further, lasting hurt. The ideas hate the sin, love the sinner, and love your neighbour as yourself or even just treat others as you want to be treated were all lost on this woman. And hers was 'the Christian perspective.'

By Larissa Benfey

Thanks for making it that much harder for the rest of us to reach a hurting world, Miss; now if you could sit down and shut up, Jesus is still able to work a few miracles.

More recently I heard about a protest held across the street from a funeral of an American soldier. That, in itself, is inconsiderate. But, of course, there's more. The protest was held by a group of Christians and their conviction was that death of American soldiers was God's way of punishing America for their behaviour. These CWDGIs must have cut their Bible studies short in passages that condemn sins while ignoring passages that speak about love and forgiveness.

Why are Christians the ones with the highest standards? Shouldn't we be the ones who understand better than everyone how unworthy we really are? *All* of us: me, the gay guy down the street and the murderer in prison for life. We're all in the same boat, but we Christians are so eager to throw people overboard when we don't think they make the cut. Who are we to judge? What was that Jesus said about me needing to remove the plank from my eye before I address the splinter in yours? Last I checked Jesus was adamant about loving everyone. His final words on earth were *not* "Judge one another."

God has the final say – all we're supposed to do is love others and love Him. Or maybe some of us have just forgotten what that looks like. So let me remind you:

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no records of wrongs. Love always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

For a group of people who claim to believe in a God that perfectly embodies love, we sure have a hard time doing it out. I hear so many conversations between Christians with judgemental undertones, it makes my stomach hurt. We need to get off our high horses, stop looking down our noses at the world and realize that we're just as much in need of a Saviour as the rest of them. Just because we know our Saviour, that doesn't make us better by any means; it makes us blessed and we owe it to others to share our blessings. It's that simple. 'Christians who don't get it', well, they just *don't get it*. Maybe it's time for them to take a seat on the back burner, have a few conversations with Jesus, and the 'Christians who *do* get it,' well, maybe they can spread the word. ■

art a teacher come from God
can do these miracles that thou
God be with him
3 Jē-sūs answered and saith unto them
Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see
God.

4 Nic-ō-dē-mūs saith unto him
man be born when he is old
second time into his mother's womb

PLEASE, DO SHUT UP

BY PRACTICAL PERCEVAL

What does this Christian hate about Christians? Answer: Those Christians who won't shut their over lubricated jawbones.

I'm not just talking about the ones who obviously make us all look bad. Yeah sure, the ones protesting at the funerals of soldiers, threatening to burn Qur'ans and waving hateful signs around—signs like: "Thank God for IEDs", "You're going to hell" and my personal favorite: "Fags doom nations" (All of those signs were from Westboro "Baptist" Church)—those Christians are annoying and we'd all appreciate it if they would wire shut their jaws. We would be relieved if these christians—here I'm using the etymology of Stephen Colbert's truthiness—people would collectively get lobotomies and turn into drooling, yet-still-slightly-more-intelligent-than-their-former-hate-mongering-selves, catatonics. Yet, these people are insignificant. Westboro "Baptist" only has around 70 members (give or take). It is infuriating that the media gives them the soapbox they desire but it is expected; after all, persecuted minorities are always represented as their wacko fringe in the media. However, these christian people sort of make our job easier.

When sharing my faith with people who know little about Christianity they are always surprised that I'm not like the Christians depicted in the media. It gives me a leg up. When they see that I'm not interested in condemning them, but rather I'm interested in them as human beings, they immediately respect me on a certain level. We can relate as two humans trying to live life and not as one 'holy one' and one 'evil sinner'. So, the aforementioned wacked out, hate spewing, Christianity defacers are kind of doing us a favor... kind of.

The Christians that I want to shut up, even before the crazies, are the ones who incessantly vomit the good news and Biblical language like we're at a frat party and we all drank too much Jesus. They stand there talking *at* people and not *to* people. They jabber on in an incoherent language that the listener is not fluent in: "Absolute depravity, redemption, atonement, eschatology, incarnation, triune God"; all these terms are a foreign language to the uninitiated. All you just said went over their heads. They hear: "blah, blah, blah, I know more than you, blah, blah, blah." How can you even speak to someone about God if you haven't first tried to help them in some way or tried to establish some sort of relationship? You are speaking a language that you learned from years of growing up in a Christian home or, hey, I don't know, maybe at a Christian university? You may assume you understand these terms because you heard them your entire life but you probably don't. One of the -11- first things I learned from the professors here was that

the assumptions I had based my faith on were just that – assumptions. I had a lot to learn when I arrived at Tyndale (and I still have a ton to learn). So perhaps you "faithful" can do what you came here to do and learn a little more before you open that vacuous space in your skull.

Here are some tips—these aren't the '9 steps to converting people' or even '9 tips that will make you a better Christian'. This is just an incomplete list of things to do if you want to be real with yourself and with others in regards to your faith. I'm not claiming this is anything other than imperfect advice from an imperfect person

who needs to take it to heart as well:

1. Shut up and listen: Before I try to 'cram the good news down an unbeliever's unholy ear canals' I usually try to get to know them. Just going up to a random person and asking them "do you know the good news?" Sets off a warning signal in their brain: "either this person wants my money or they want me to be a convert."
2. Which brings us to my second point: Don't try and convert somebody. You're going about it all wrong; you're trying to bring about the desired end result without first dealing with all the causes that lead up to the result. Also, you might be dealing with that person like they are some disembodied soul to be "converted" (a term you obviously don't understand) rather than a human being who is loved by God, both body *and* soul, and needs to be redeemed (a word that you also don't understand but bandy about until it becomes devoid of meaning—like the word epic). Conversion is a process guided by the Holy Spirit; you may just be a stepping stone on that process.
3. If you are trying to share your faith you should probably know what you're talking about. Hint: If you are certain you know what you are talking about, you don't. If you want to know what you are talking about you should talk to professors, spiritual elders, pastors, and you should...
4. Read: If you don't read please don't express anything more complex than "Jesus loves you" and, I guess, you can continue to parrot your (usually out of context) memory verses—God can even use ignorant tools.
5. If you do read, read well: Don't just read the Bible and think you've got it all figured out (see tip number 3); Read Biblical commentaries, read what your professors recommend, read things that challenge your faith. To begin with try reading at least two of the following: The Bible (yes all of it, Old and New Testament—preferably more than once), *Mere Christianity* by C.S. Lewis, and *The Reason for God* by Timothy Keller. That is just a good starting point—hopefully you'll read more than that. Try to remain silent as much as possible until you have read a few works by Christians more intelligent than you (A vow of silence might not be amiss).
6. Remember that actions speak louder than words: If you want to witness to someone be a witness *to* them; don't just witness *at* them. Your words are meaningless unless people see you loving more, caring more, forgiving more, helping more and judging less in comparison to the

average person. Trying to live morally is very important as well, just don't be a prude about it and readily admit that you are among the first to fail.

7. Read this verse over and over until it is burned into your consciousness: "Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers; because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly" James 3:1 (NIV). Meditate on what it would mean to be "judged more strictly" by God. In fact, you should probably memorize all of James chapter 3. I'm going to start working on that now.

8. Pray: Pray often. How can you have a relationship with God if you don't talk to him? Don't just spew your requests at God like a whining child; most of your prayer time should be meditative silence before God. Which brings us full circle:

9. Shut up and listen: Because if you can't even listen to the God who is in you, how in the world are you going to listen to the people who are outside of you? ■

(A note on my "Ring by Spring" article: Apparently married couples don't get half-off their tuition. Apparently, they get 700 dollars off a piece or something like that. That wasn't the point of the article anyway—I use a lot of hyperbole, sarcasm and irony when making a point—However, I don't want to be misleading anyone into some nonexistent financially-sound nuptial bliss. Nuptial bliss is always going to cost you.) - Perceval



See the pretty horses
of white, black and pale
and of red-so bright.

Follow the spherical directions they trail.

Round and round they go
Where they stop nobody knows.

Echoes of 'come'
while person disputes person
and the bow shoots the arrows
piercing the heart
until one falls to their knees in disgrace
and the other leaves boasting.
As white snow falls laying cover over land
so the conquering shall be conquered
with the golden crown of authority

Hear the voices of anger rise
as those who speak of peace
only bring the pain to the innocence.
Heresy rides on the fiery flames.
Human against human
with swords of bitterness and confusion.
War rises on horizon's steed
as one blow strikes another.

Round and round it goes
where it stops nobody knows.

See as one measures the other
giving condemnation for deeds meant for good.
Secrecy belongs no more
yet one takes from the other;
Feigning righteousness and truth
while hearts fade to black.
And hurt mirrors the eye.
Scales come for the deeds
and puts to death the good.

Now the heavens darken
light covers to grey
as souls claimed purity
filter accusations in the air.
Echoes of thunders arise
pale sights come with death.
While the earth cries out blood
of innocence poured.
You who called yourselves pure
are dead
And you who are dead
are more alive than they.

Round and round it goes
where it stops only He knows.
White, red, black and pale
follow the spherical trail.

Curiosity about the Contagiousness of Common Christian Characteristics

By: Simon Veenstra



Nice alliteration, don't you agree? It pulls you in. Now, this article is not so much a list of things I "hate" about Christians, it is merely a list of the eccentricities that manifest themselves in Christians time and time again.

To begin, before coming to Tyndale, murmuring "mhmm" or saying "yes Lord" or "Father God" in prayer was inconceivable. I never did it. I didn't have anything against it but it simply didn't happen. Now, I find myself doing it too. It seems so infectious. I know other people have caught the bug as well. Before Tyndale there were no "yes Gods" and then, at Tyndale, acclamations and affirmations galore. Don't get me wrong. These are, for the most part, sincere signs of affection for the Lord. I feel no need to be immunized.

Guitars.

You knew this was coming. It appears as though if you are Christian (and especially if you are a guy) it is your apostolic obligation to know enough guitar chords to play Kumbaya around the Christian camp campfire. There are even YouTube parodies about Christian guys and their guitars. But for all of the guys at Tyndale who, like me, have tried to learn the guitar but failed miserably because of a lack of musical talent, don't worry. You are not alone. We'll start up a club—all 4 or 5 of us.

"I'll pray for you."

Oh man, I've got a fine line to walk here. I often say this and a lot of other Christians, especially in the Tyndale circle, say it on a regular basis too. We legitimately mean it (for the most part at least); our heart goes out to you and the situation that you are in. The question though is do we actually do it? When you say, "I'll be praying for you," how often do you actually follow through on your promise? Does your promise become anything more than an easy way out of an awkward situation? I know my success rate in this area is quite dismal. I am as guilty of this as the next person. So this is more of a call-to-arms than anything. When you say you will pray for someone, actually pray for him or her. Otherwise, don't make promises you aren't going to keep.

Theology.

It's great but sometimes it drives me nuts. You may not always experience this with Christians outside of Tyndale, but here we have all experienced it. This is a place where Christians from all different denominations and backgrounds are together and theology always seems to end up as a top discussion topic. Walking down the halls, during class discussions or sitting in the cafeteria, theological banter is ever-present and inescapable. Sometimes, I just get sick and tired of it all. Seriously, I do not want to get into an argument with you all the time. Baptists versus Pentecostals, Calvinists versus Arminians, John Piper versus N.T. Wright. We do not always need to have the "versus" attitude. So, yes, theology is great to discuss but not always. Let's just get along... please?

So, I think we can agree that some stereotypical, "Christian-typical" characteristics are great, and some others aren't so great. Some are good habits and others bad. This list is not at all complete. I'm sure you all have your own list of "Christian habits" that frustrate you. Maybe a guy writing an article about pointless things that annoy him is just that which tops your list. ■

You Only Need To Take It To God, Not!

By Stephanie Vandewater

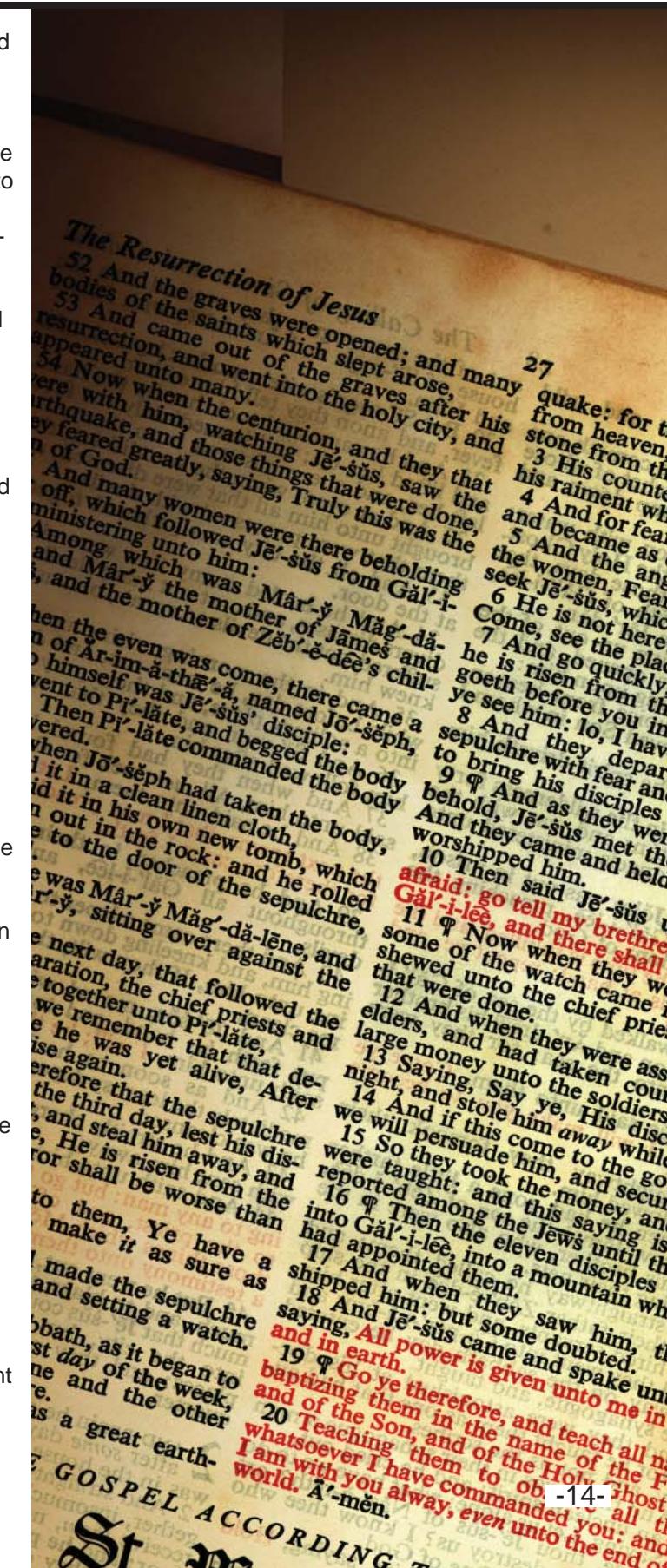
I guess you could say my worldview has been stretched over my life but in particular over the past two years. And in this period of time I have come to realize just how stubborn / narrow-minded we as Christians have become. I mean, have you ever taken a good, hard, serious look at how we treat Christians who are different or whom Christianity as a whole has decided cannot fit into our "perfect Christian mould?" Honestly though I can't believe how many times I have heard stories of a Christian trying to be supported by a fellow brother or sister in Christ by confiding in them that they are dealing with a mental illness (among many other earthly issues) and getting the dismissive comment "you need to take it all to God in prayer."

I'm not saying on its own this comment is a negative or false one, because it is not false, but it is the way people say it that I have an issue with. But also, the fact that this is the number one Christian response to hearing someone has a life-altering issue is a big concern to me. We use this statement as if it is the "be all and end all" of mental health issues. Whoa, Wait, Red Flag, STOP! This statement could not be further from the truth.

Before I go any farther I want to make one thing clear, I am not writing this to rag on Christianity – I am writing this to, in my own small way, debunk a Christian myth that has plagued me for the past two years. For those of you who don't know I was diagnosed with clinical depression two years ago – so yes, I have personally lived through the agony of hearing this statement many times.

When this statement is used as a solution to a mental illness what the person stating it does not seem to realize or remember is the sufferer too is a Christian and knows the power of prayer and have therefore in 9.9 out of 10 cases all ready been taking it all to God in prayer. So the next logical response is "well you must not be praying correctly or hard enough" right? Wrong, because what this is failing to remember is our God is a sovereign God who likes it when we pray but does not need our prayers to know what goes on every second of every minute of every day of our lives.

So what is my proposed solution to the Christian "you need to take it all to God in prayer" problem? Well, I believe Christians as a whole need to be more open to the fact that there are two un-earthly bodies ruling over the earth. Now before I lose you in the technicality of that statement what I mean is there is God, ruler over the benefit of human kind, and the Devil, ruler over the demise of humankind. I am not saying the devil is as powerful as God but what I am saying is every life has a tug-of-war between good and evil. I believe that if Christians remember this, we will come to realize there are many situations in life, especially those concerning mental illnesses, where a solution does not simply arise if we simply believe that "you need to take it all to God in prayer." For a complete solution, we must take it to God, the good in prayer, and fight Satan, the bad, at the same time. So I guess in writing this I realize my prayer is for a willingness to look at situations in different ways if necessary to spread throughout Christianity. ■



Letter to the Canon 25 Editors

Letters are printed exactly as received; they will not be altered or edited in any way.

Letter to the Canon 25 Editors

Re: Article "Ring by Spring" by Practical Perceval, page 10, Nov 2010 issue.

I am writing in response to Practical Perceval's statement, "*When I get out of here I'll have a useless Bachelor of Arts degree....*"

I often wonder how students made their decision to study at Tyndale, and perhaps I mistakenly assume that they were led by the Spirit either through diligent prayer, fasting, etc. When someone like Practical Perceval (and there are many) makes sarcastic comments about the price of tuition or about the world's perception of the caliber of Tyndale's academic degrees, I have no choice but to believe that they did not seek the Lord's direction (or at least wait for an answer) about whether or not to attend Tyndale in the first place. If they had, they could not make the same disparaging remarks without insulting the very Spirit they claim led them here. If God's will is to be studying at Tyndale then money and academic reputation does not matter; only obedience does. There's no need to try and make sense of it all.

Some profess to serve the God who owns all the gold and silver and the cattle on a thousand hills, but when things get tough they forget their Provider's promises and bitterly lash out at their perceived enemy. In this case it's Tyndale.

Practical Perceval, there is only one of two people to blame for your presence at Tyndale—God or yourself. I choose you. If you did not seek God's direction about coming then why are you still here and, according to you, throwing good money after bad? If you did receive your direction from God, then zip it and honor His will for you. Either way, you have no right to complain. You are either fulfilling God's destiny for you or you're making your own way by making your own choices.

You may leave Tyndale without a wife; just make sure you don't leave without your first Love.

Signed: Fervent Faith

Letters like the above make me excited to be the editor of a student magazine. They let me know that people are, at least, reading the magazine. And, some are finding something in it that elicits an emotional response. Fervent Faith, I'm glad you wrote in expressing your opinion. However, I'm not sure I can objectively respond to it...

Your opinion is expressed anonymously through the guise of a pseudonym. I understand your desire to use a pseudonym as it is only fitting in responding to another pseudonym (that of Practical Perceval). However, every anonymous work Peter and I have printed we have known the authors. No work printed by us (yours being the exception) has been printed without knowledge of the author. This aside is all to say (to everyone—not only you) that in the future if you see an article printed under a pseudonym feel free to address your response to the writer in question directly and we will pass on your comments. Of course, we would also require reciprocation and in that case we would need to know who you are. No articles will be printed where Peter and I are unable to identify the writer. Not to worry, this is obviously your first time submitting to a magazine so we'll let it slide this time.

As for your objections to Perceval's article; I think that I can safely speak for him as I know him better than most. You focused on one, out of context, sentence that didn't even address the main thrust of the article. If Perceval honestly thought that his Bachelor of Arts degree was "useless" then why would he be here at a Liberal Arts institution? Could he possibly be referring to how it is difficult for people with a Bachelor of Arts degree to find meaningful employment in their field of limited expertise? Or perhaps, Perceval is referring to the fact that, for the most part, Bachelor of Arts degrees are perceived as useless in a subjective secular society. Perception, of course, is not reality. However, when you are dependent on other people's perceptions for your livelihood it can make a simple undergraduate degree, for all intents and purposes, useless. Of course, the fact remains that Perceval is here and writing for the student magazine. So he must care about this institution and his degree... to a degree. So perhaps that statement simply fit into the sarcastic tone of the persona/pseudonym.

Ironically, I think that you will find that the people who make fun of Tyndale the most are also the ones who respect it the most. My "disparaging remarks" insult the Spirit? That's a dubious claim. Rather, if understood, those remarks encourage appreciation for this institution. Wait... did I say "my"? Woops, Freudian slip.

Fervent Faith, you would be well served to read the last paragraph of "Perceval's" last article drawing on all of your understanding of sarcasm and irony. Perceval loves Tyndale and he's not afraid to say it.

Sincerely,

Mark Fisk, Editor

Dear Christian Boy,



You are such an incredibly Godly boy. I'm so glad you go to your accountability groups. I'm so happy to know you are trying to so hard to be pure for me. I'm so amazed that you are saving yourself for me. And really I'm overwhelmed that you are learning to look at my heart and see my soul. I'm so glad you want to wait to kiss me. I know you respect me so much that you want to make certain that you know all about me before we give any of ourselves to one another. I am so blessed.

But Christian boy, I have to confess. I'm not all I appear to be. I too go to accountability groups. But I don't tell you because I'm embarrassed. You don't know that I struggle too. I try so hard to be pure for you, but some days I just can't. And I haven't saved myself for you. My past is coloured and you wouldn't be my first. I try to love your soul and your heart, and I do. But sometimes I look at you and love—lust for—what I see. Sometimes I don't think so much about how incredibly caring you are, but how much I really ache for you. I don't want to wait to kiss you. I just want to kiss you and I want more than that. I am so guilty.

Christian boy, I don't understand how I can be a woman and be satisfied with the affection of a thirteen year old boy on a first date. I don't understand how the women I see around me are so passionate and forward in their relationships with men, and yet I am told to wait. I must wait for you to come to me, for you to initiate anything, for you to propose, for you to marry me so I can feel the feelings that the Church tells me I don't have. Yes I do struggle with self esteem and some days I lack the confidence to look you in the eye. But I struggle with more than that. I am so confused.

You see, Christian boy, I don't want to neglect what God tells me about marriage and sex. I don't want to fall to sin. I just want to be honest. I want you to understand I am a woman, fully and wholly. I want you to understand that I struggle as you do. I don't want to be embarrassed by that anymore. I don't want it to be taboo anymore. I want to talk about it with other women, with you, and know that there is not judgment but acceptance. I am so scared.

Christian boy, I'm so scared that when you know about my past, know all that I feel and struggle with, when you know who I am you won't want me. Can you just tell me it's ok? Please.

*Love,
Christian Girl*



the SOBBIT:

a column written by local derelict intellectual

t.t.c. tolkien

Remember the garbage strike?

I was going to the El Mocambo one evening during that malodorous period in our city's history. All of College and Spadina was covered in trash – all four corners (not just the Waverly). It was depressing. I always thought that place was a special community of artists and social activists. Turns out it was just a bunch of kids from London and Ottawa whose life goal was to move to a real city and become *au courant* vagrants.

(I could tell you about hypocrisy, greed, and perversion, but this is all sex and sex has become dully overrated and public consumption both of the product and the topic has led me to believe that I may exist only as a sexual creature and that that is the only thing I have in common with the animal kingdom. For of course, the same fools would also tell us that no animals ever had a war).

This business is simple: The sky is black at night and blue during the day. And the seas are blue or green but never as clear as water should be. Then us, the monkeys in the middle. The experts have thrown one eye into space and another into the sea and perceived only as much as a fly can appreciate on a piece of toast. We swat the fly and the experts together, for they ruin our breakfast. And breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

I happened to be in the west end again last week, and, feeling wearisome from the cold and dark, I stepped into a coffee shop to consume my favourite drug. I ordered "one coffee, please," at which the girl ahead of me in line, who had already ordered, took the opportunity to tell her friend that this place had only recently become too trendy. I ordered it "double-double, please," and the obvious Inquisitors of anti-dairy and anti-obesity cartels, sitting across from the till, paused their conversation to observe the injustice. "Can you break a twenty?" at which a disgusting mother's son in a three-quarter length jacket mumbled something about evil chartered banks and the glory of the Mennonite Credit Union. "No, no whip cream, thanks" earned me scowls from two men in neon scarves. "Thank you," I said, dropping a toonie, a quarter, and a dime into the styrofoam cup, yielding an eyerolling by the waitress who either wasn't satisfied with a 90 percent tip or had had enough of people with normal haircuts hitting on her at work. Hands shaking with angry embarrassment, I zipped up my jacket and went back into the winter cold. Sitting outside this coffee shop was an elderly man with an empty cup. I put mine in his and walked five blocks to the nearest McDonalds.

While waiting for the streetcar this morning, all of this came back to me in a flash. I saw a homeless man across the street with an unmarked, fast food, fountain drink. He was walking stoutly, aimlessly towards and about nothing. He pulled the straw out of the lid and threw it on the ground. He pulled off the lid with his teeth and then spat that onto the sidewalk. Taking one large gulp of what appeared to be Coke (is Pepsi ok?) he then tossed the not-empty cup behind his back, landing at the foot of a tree. Hadn't this man gotten the memo? He disappeared into the park.

That straw on the ground... it employs street cleaners, but it also chokes squirrels. I picked it up and threw it in the garbage without missing my streetcar. The ward is erecting a statue depicting the incident. The plaque below it will read, "Everybody is so proud, except the two people involved." ■

MissedConnections

Date: 2010-12-1, 5:23am EDT

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musiclover00: You still play the piano, and I'm still waiting under the fermata...

student708461999: Just want to give a shout-out to all the other commuters who walk into class late, cold, and sniffling - keep your chin up, we're not even through the worst of it yet!

This-is-silly: I enjoyed sharing a shwarma with you and I hope you enjoy the book. Now you can tell people that someone wrote a missed connection about you :) Or keep it as an inside joke ;)

notcockybut...: We both go to Tyndale. Me: boy. You: girl.

StacyLondon: I see you yonder with those stripped shirts and plaid scarves. I wonder, do you think we'd mix or match? ;)

ASDFGHJKL: OK, so at this point in the school year I thought I had already met all the people who go to this school... but we just met recently. How did I not see you there before!?!?!? Reply, and tell me what we were joking about when we met that time, and I'll give you my contact info.

Muffin11: So glad we sat together during the musical. You seem like an interesting guy and I'd love to get to know you. Me: short, blonde hair. You: Dark hair, nice eyes.

spoileralert: You are ALWAYS talking about movies, although I asked some of your friends and they said you don't actually always talk about movies, but every time I'm around you, you seem to just constantly talk about movies that I haven't seen, and you ALWAYS spoil the ending! Please, for everybody's sake, stop ruining the endings!

lifeonthebrightside: Just thought I would mention that I don't want to get married. I know these aren't personal ads, but seriously, is there anyone else in this school who thinks like me? And can I meet you!?

monster: I see you around school, and I think you're cute, but recently I saw you at pizza pizza eating your pizza like a total slob/monster. I was not impressed... but, I still can't help thinking of you! Does this mean I'm in love?

Lo_elyGuy: LoNely guy or LoVely guy? The i-nitals of the two people who have scarred me for life when it comes to relationships. Jesus took a chance on me, will you?

creeper: Saw you from my window throwing a frisbee around, and I think you're SUPER COOL! Haha, just reply if you like strange people who stare at you creepishly.

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JANUARY 6, 2010

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Canon (k ă n ə n)

- a. A group of literary works that are generally accepted as representing a field.
- b. The works of a writer that have been accepted as authentic.

25 (t w ē n t ē - f ī v)

- a. The address of Tyndale University College and Seminary on Ballyconnor Crt.
- b. Average age of middle-aged twenty-somethings.
- c. Number of people waiting in line at J&T (after chapel).

Canon 25 (k ă n ə n t w ē n t ē - f ī v)

- a. A collection of fresh perspectives and thought provoking ideas inspired by the hearts and minds of Tyndale Students.
- b. A glossy, uncomfortable substitute for toilet paper
- c. Kindling to kick start a romantic fire for two, or a pyromaniac's dream.
- d. Yet another activity to sidetrack our attention from the overwhelming list of assignments rapidly approaching their due dates.