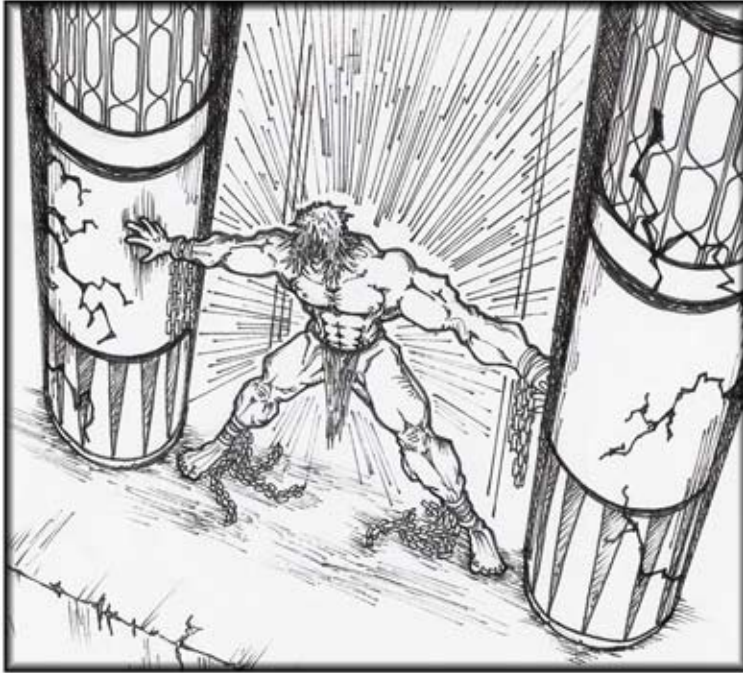


# crossculture

Asian Intersarsity Christian Fellowship

January 2008 | Issue 1.5



## InterVarsity Purpose Statement

*In response to God's love,  
grace, and truth:*

The Purpose of  
InterVarsity Christian  
Fellowship/USA is to  
establish and advance at  
colleges and universities  
witnessing communities  
of students and faculty  
who follow Jesus  
as Savior and Lord:  
growing in love for God,  
God's Word,  
God's people of every  
ethnicity and culture  
and God's purposes in  
the world.

Cover art by Jerry Wang

# Radical Hospitality

by Dave Paladino, *IV Staff*

IF YOU WERE TO SURVEY OUR CAMPUS AND ASK PEOPLE WHAT RELIGION IS, I THINK YOU'D HEAR A FAIR AMOUNT ABOUT ACTIONS THAT PROVE SOMEONE IS RELIGIOUS: "you go to church, you give your tithe, you act nicely to others." While there is nothing wrong with doing these things, they don't mean anything in and of themselves and they say little about where the loyalties of our heart lie.

Now, ask those same people on campus who Jesus is/was and you'll get answers that probably range from, "a prophet" to "a good moral teacher" to "a lunatic." Whether love, despised or misunderstood, Jesus evokes a response because of the passion and subversive nature of his teaching and life.

I think the difference between religion and Jesus is one of the facets of radical hospitality and is distinguished quite well in the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). I know this parable is quite familiar to many of us, but if we try to suspend what we think we know about the story, there's much in there to learn about radical hospitality.

Firstly, it's important to note that the parable starts off as a question posed by an expert in the law who was essentially inviting Jesus into an argumentative trap (I think it's easy to look over this). Once they have a short exchange and the customary answers are given, the man presses further "wanting to justify himself" the text states. He wanted to show off his religiousness by his ques-

tions, similar in many ways to how we defined religion above.

Jesus, in answer to the question by this expert in the law tells a story. Jesus is the master story-teller and we can learn much about how his answers through story cut to the heart of a listener in ways that formulaic religious answers cannot begin to do. In this story a man is robbed, beaten and left for dead. The religious people, the priest and the Levite (Levites were the tribe of Israel tasked with religious duties), passed the man by on the other side of the road. What's going on here? Those in this story that have the external badges of religion are not the ones who show compassion and are not moved in their heart to respond.

To contrast this notion, Jesus has the person with absolutely no external merit be the one in this parable who responds in compassion. Samaritans were the Jews left in Israel when most were carried off by conquering nations (like Babylon and Assyria). These Jews who were left in the land didn't hold onto the traditions and intermarried with the surrounding nations. The Jews who came back from exile and captivity then despised those left behind because they did not keep the strict purity laws and intermarried. The children of these intermarriages became Samaritans. By having the Samaritan be the one who actually stops and performs an act of compassion, Jesus is turning the notion of religion on its head for the expert in the law. It's not about what you do, it's how you treat the least of those around you, the most different, the most in need that reflects your view of God. If we love rules and the appearance of righteousness, then we make that the god we are serving. However, God makes it continuously clear in the scriptures that in caring for the widow, orphan and stranger we act inline with his heart.

In light of Martin Luther King day on January 21st, it would be good to consider well the questions: Who is my neighbor? And, what would radical hospitality look like? If we're honest we extend friendship and make neighbors with those whom are most like us. We are often like the priest and Levite, defining ourselves through externals only and missing the chance to respond as Jesus would and like the Samaritan did in compassion to those who are different and hurting - those who might possibly inconvenience us.

Rebecca Manley Pippert writes in *Out of the Salt Shaker*, "Often we are blind. We act as if those around us were not really people like us. If we see them bleed, we pretend they aren't really hurting. If we see them alone, we tell ourselves that they like it that way. But Jesus wants to heal our sight. He wants us to see that the neighbor next door or the people sitting next to us on a plane or in a classroom are not interruptions to our schedule; they are there by divine appointment. Jesus wants us to see their needs, their loneliness, their longings, and he wants to give us the courage to reach out to them."

In these weeks ahead, celebrate the spirit and memory of MLK by stretching yourself in radical hospitality as you follow Jesus. Get to know the person in your hall that seems to be ignored by everyone. Grab a friend and sign-up to man a proxe station so you can share how God has called you to love across differences (especially ethnic differences) because of the gospel. Work with that person in your class that everyone avoids or who doesn't seem to be the lab partner who will benefit you the most. Ask God to open your eyes and your heart that you might see the people around you with his eyes and his heart, that you might be radically hospitable.

## CAMPUS

# C.hrist R.ules E.verything A.round M.e

by Anton Bullock, *President of C.R.E.A.M. Ministries*

C.R.E.A.M. MINISTRIES, WHICH STANDS FOR CHRIST RULES EVERYTHING AROUND ME, IS A FAIRLY NEW CAMPUS MINISTRY. We officially became a campus organization in November of 2006. Currently run by only four staff members, Dorian Harvey, Shamico Tribble, Devin Davis, and myself, we hold weekly bible studies (Tuesdays @ 8pm) and late night prayers (Thursdays @ 11:30pm) in the basement of Bursley.

The organization was once a random gathering of 4 or 5 friends that wanted to commit to studying the Word of God together. Later influenced by our pastor, David Williams of Judah Evangelistic Ministries, we began to build the foundation for a campus ministry.

Our format is very unique in that our staff members (who are all ministers in training) generally take turns leading bible study as a speaker rather than a facilitator. This works out well because the presenter gives a spirit-filled message dwelling on topics that most college students experience. Many souls were won for God through bible studies, prayers, and other C.R.E.A.M. sponsored activities such as bowl-a-thons and NCRB night just to name a few. It is our goal to create disciples through spreading the gospel across campus, and help the

weak-spirited grow strong in the Lord.

Often times we see that many successes are countered with many. It has been a challenge doing half of the things we have planned to do since we are not sponsored by anyone, so everything we do we have to fundraise for. This puts a huge barrier on the things that we can do to better promote Christ. Things like renting facilities for bible studies and other programs, planning for concerts, getting group T-shirts and advertisements, or even getting the proper equipment to conduct praise and worship are nearly impossible to do.

In addition to the lack of funds, we lack diversity in membership; this is by circumstance, not choice. We have tried to change our program in ways that we can get people of other ethnicities to participate, but all our attempts failed. We are predominantly African American, and with an all African American staff, it becomes a challenge for us to even understand what steps to take to increase diversity. This has become one of our main goals for our ministry in the 2007-8 school year.

We understand the importance of unity among races in the body of Christ and more importantly the interaction between these various groups. In heaven, every race or group of people is going to be represented. That's why C.R.E.A.M. is excited about the opportunity to work with InterVarsity for the MLK event. It gives us a chance to cooperate with the leaders of other campus ministries with different cultures. I feel there should be more interaction between campus ministries.

I would like to see all the campus ministries unite and do something together; I know we would impact the campus in a major way! C.R.E.A.M. looks forward to fellowship with InterVarsity and hopefully we can continue to join forces every month if at all possible. Continue to keep our ministry in your prayers and we will do the same.



# The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society

by Sara Wolfram, *IV Staff Worker*

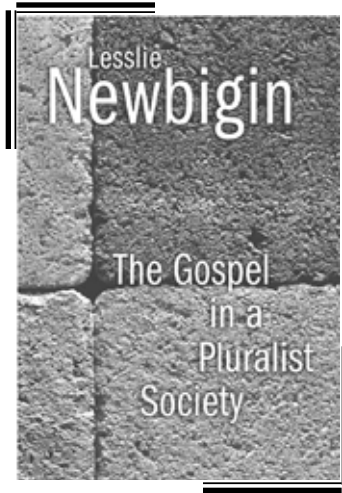
APART FROM THE BIBLE, THERE ARE FEW BOOKS I HAVE READ WHICH OFFER LIFE-CHANGING PERSPECTIVES, STINGING CONVICTION AND VAST RELEVANCE. Lesslie Newbigin's *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society* is one of these unique books and was introduced to me by my mentor and Pastor, Bob Lynn, whose insights I will draw heavily from throughout this article. It is my hope that in my modest summary of Newbigin's first two chapters, our hearts and minds will begin yearning for the gospel to more deeply penetrate our worldviews, challenge our dichotomy of fact vs. belief, and ultimately motivate us to love the Lord with all of our hearts, souls, minds and strength.

Which statement would you say you live by most: I believe in order to understand, or I understand in order to believe? No matter if you are studying to become a scientist, psychologist, engineer, architect or musician, as Christians we must understand that our understanding of what we learn in class, in church, at conferences or in books can only be first understood in light of God and the purposes of God with respect to His creation of this world and all that is in it. This is because we profess God and the works of Christ to be the fundamental starting point for all knowledge.

But do we really believe this? In what ways have we maligned the gospel to be not a fact, not the starting point for all knowledge, but a privatized spiritual belief that has no bearing on our life outside the church or AIV? Our God is no longer viewed as the Alpha and the Omega, the only true and living God, but as a being we can choose to believe in, but who we will not dare proclaim as public truth.

If God be God and Jesus lived, died,

and rose, taking on the sins of the world so that we may have eternal life and a new heavens and a new earth be ushered in, how is it that we still struggle to see this as fact and unify our spiritual lives with the rest of what we do? Believing in Jesus only for our spiritual lives prevents us from seeing his relevance to our majors and more broadly, our callings as students in the university. The gospel therefore becomes so much more than simply decisions for Christ, but about making disciples for Christ who will live a life transformed



at the core by Jesus. Newbigin says that our struggles lie in our divided ways of knowing. In school we embrace facts like the laws of thermodynamics, and mathematics. In church and AIV we embrace biblical truths and theology, but many of us fail to acknowledge the biblical truths as fact, just as we profess gravity to be a fact. However, once we can begin to see our beliefs as more than value statements, but fact, we have a new set of challenges ahead of us.

In Christ we have a new way of seeing reality. We have a new reason for doing what we do because Jesus Christ is Lord! What does it look like to bring Jesus as Lord into the classroom? What does it look like for us to challenge Je-

sus as the fundamental fact behind all that we learn at Michigan? We need to learn how to engage our peers in dialogue surrounding this. We need to allow God to enter into the picture behind the scientist who says gravity is a fact and say with confidence, "Yes, I believe in gravity, but God is behind this!" What is more ultimate than God?

We have been studying Genesis this semester which begins with the primal fact that God was there before the creation of anything! Therefore, for the rest of Genesis this is the assumption to be embraced in order to know anything.

The challenge is that for many of us, the gospel has not penetrated our worldviews to the point where we see God as a fundamental fact which lies behind all that we can know. The gospel has shaped us on a belief level, but has not gone deeper to affect how we study, view people, choose our majors, engage with this university and ultimately view reality. If we continue to dichotomize school from church, fact from belief, and our studies from God's mission, there is the danger that we will co-opt the gospel into something that it is not in order for it to fit how we view the world.

What would it look like for AIV to be a light on this campus, not only in our Friday night large groups, small groups and daily prayer meetings, but in the renewal of our minds, approaches to our studies, interactions with our friends and participation in lectures? To get here, we must first confront what is in our hearts and minds. Where are you in believing the fact of God's eternal existence, and Jesus' life, death and resurrection? I pray for us all that we would truly have the mind of Christ and be swept up in the reality of God and his purposes not only for us, but for his creation.

I encourage you to get this book and see the other ways Newbigin addresses Christianity within the pluralist society that we live in today!

# Compelled to Witness

by *Kylene Yen, Junior*

IF YOU DON'T ALREADY KNOW, THE RIVALRY BETWEEN MICHIGAN AND OHIO STATE IS INTENSE...a "my heart is filled with sorrow, resentment, and disappointment after 4 straight losses" kind of intense (don't forget to multiply that by hundreds of thousands of fans). The interesting thing about rivalries is that there are always two sides. For me, I didn't truly understand the passion that OSU fans have for their team (and hatred they have for Michigan) until I worked and lived in Ohio this past summer. Everywhere I went, I saw Ohio state flags, bumper stickers, hats, t-shirts, and even barbecue grills. It was a constant reminder that I wasn't in Ann Arbor anymore, and I felt slightly anxious everyday because of it. After all, how safe could a Wolverine be in Buckeye territory?

Even though I was worried about it, I don't think I was ever in physical danger. However, I was still subject to a lot of football trash talk. There was also a lot of Michigan degradation in general because it's a common perception that Michigan is unfriendly, arrogant, and self-righteous. I braced myself with each introduction because I would always get an interesting reaction when I answered, "So where do you go to school?" I knew that there was no reason for me to care about what people thought and their stereotypes of me, but I found myself trying extra hard to prove that Michigan people can be different. Unfortunately, this turned into trying extra hard to make people like me. The price was living in constant anxiety, fear, and shame. At work, I laughed along with Michigan jokes. Outside of work, I only wore my Michigan t-shirts to bed, and the block M on my

track bag always faced my back. I knew that I was actively denying Michigan's name – something I love, take pride in, identify with – and I hated myself for it. Despite my frustration, I could not stop. The power of loneliness, fear of judgment, and need for acceptance were just too strong.

God taught me a lot about myself that summer. He showed me that I am nowhere as strong as I thought, and that my weakness to stand up for what I believe in is also present in my life of following Jesus. At home, my family associates the church with racism, oppression, and hypocrisy. At school, my

**"The issue is not of fear but one of trust. I doubt God's power to change the lives of people I care about, and I don't believe he can do it through me."**

friends think Christians are narrow-minded, judgmental, and boring. Although the stereotypes are different, my actions are the same. Only this time, the consequences of saying nothing are much bigger; by not sharing who Jesus is and what he has done for the world, I am hoarding salvation for only myself and depriving the people I love of his amazing love, forgiveness and grace. So why am I so afraid to talk about Jesus? On the surface, I am scared of judgment, ridicule, and screwing up, jeopardizing relationships, furthering stereotypes, and not knowing answers. If I dig deeper, it's because I am scared of pain and rejection. And if I dig really deep, ultimately, I am scared that God will let me down. Suddenly, the issue is no longer one of fear but one of trust. I doubt God's power to change the lives of people I care about, and even

more so, I don't believe that he can do it through me.

Once I realized what the root of my inaction was, I took a long hard look at myself. Do I really believe the context and implications of Jesus' sacrifice? It took a lot of thinking and a weekend at Compelling to realize that yes, I do believe Jesus is the only way. Something in my soul knows that this is right, and if Jesus is the truth, then I love my family and friends too much to watch them go the other way on judgment day and know that I could have done something but didn't because I was too afraid. This potential outcome is unacceptable and has ultimately given me a sense of urgency to witness intentionally. Looking back on the past few months, I marvel at the dramatic change I have undergone. For the first time since accepting Christ just three years ago, I am sharing openly about my beliefs and involvement in AIV with friends and pursuing deeper relationships with my family. The freedom I know from openly following God in these ways brings me a sense of peace and joy more intense than any other feeling I have ever known, so much that I feel like a completely different person and no longer doubt God's power and will to transform and renew people's hearts.

*"But when Peter saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, 'Lord, save me!' Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him. 'You of little faith,' he said, 'why did you doubt?' And when they climbed into the boat, the wind died down. Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'"*

[Matthew 14: 30-33]

# Worshipping God: an Event or a Lifestyle?

by Kenny Tang, *Sophomore*

BEFORE I CAME TO COLLEGE, WORSHIP TO ME WAS A 2-HOUR SERVICE ON SUNDAYS AND A HANDFUL OF SONGS PLAYED BY GUITAR AND CHRISTIAN BANDS. It was pretty clearly defined on the church bulletin as “Worship Service”. When I got to campus and started to experience more and more new viewpoints and perspectives on what it really means to be a Christian in church and the numerous leadership and learning events in AIV, it became evident that that definition is clearly limited. For example, in the book 1 Timothy, Paul describes various instructions on the forms of worship and organization of the Church to Timothy, his younger colleague. In Chapter 4 verse 16 is a significant verse relating to how “we” worship.

*“Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.”*  
[Timothy 4:16]

“We” is a term that includes the Church, which is the body of Christ (and therefore every single individual in it.). As a consequence, Worship is definitely not an appointment we keep on a weekly basis or by song: it's God's calling in our lives. The calling is for God to be praised and known in every aspect of one's life, by any means necessary. From 1 Timothy we also see that worshipping God is also the means by which we evangelize and witness to others and that scripture and its application in our lifestyle is the means by which that is accomplished.

It's easy to say that we should be

worshipping, but it's often difficult to see worship beyond the well-known interpretations of that. Church services, outreach, music and vocal praise are some of those “typical” means for evangelism and worship, but since we know that God has given us unique and differ-

**“I’ve always been interested in shoe art and painting, and really found it to be an effective means of expressing God and making scripture relevant in my life.”**

ent gifts in which to serve (1 Peter 4:10), there definitely should be more means in which we apply that. We worship in our hearts and in our actions, and so we therefore can broaden worship into ev-

ery aspect of our lives: our relationships, jobs, vocations, hobbies, schoolwork, habits, use of time, networking, et. al.

I've found that I can worship in ways I'd never have thought about before, as well. I've always been interested in shoe art and painting, and really found it to be an effective means of expressing God and making scripture relevant in my life (Ephesians 6:17 describes our metaphorical feet as being “fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.”). I draw great pleasure from the powerful message and vivid imagery that the bible offers, and in explaining the scriptural inspirations for a particular shoe design really allows me to introduce scripture and God's character into conversations.

It's been encouraging to see God at work in every aspect of our lives, and we should always be worshipping and celebrating that in every aspect of our lives as well, not marginalizing it to an appointment or event. As Christians God desires for us to praise and make known His gift of life, to be seeking that in scripture, and zealously attempting to apply it for God's kingdom.



**“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.” [Romans 12:11]**

## PRAYER

# Joy is Prayer

by Nathan Cheng, Sophomore

*I am no expert on prayer. In fact, I struggle with the very challenges and foolish practices that I mention in this article. This is just an expression of my thoughts on prayer and its connection to our lives.*

SEE A SUMMER CAMP WITH HUNDREDS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN BOYS AND GIRLS LINED UP AND DOWN A SET OF STAIRS IN FRONT OF A FATIGUED CAMP-GROUND BUILDING. Feel. The warm summer breeze blow over the lake cooling sun-baked skin. Hear. Voices shouting and crying out for order as the lines deform and reform. At last, the counselors give up and accept the raucous. They need a volunteer. Silence overwhelms the camp. Every little hand shoots up and reaches for the heavens. The kids know that only a couple of them will be chosen, and this makes them try all the harder. One or two lucky volunteers are picked from the crowd. They are ecstatic and honored to take the climb the steps to the very top. Upon reaching the top, the chosen ones look out across the field of kids. And they pray.

I was there two years ago. I felt the eagerness of each child as they all wanted to pray to God. I watched in amazement as each and every single participant in that summer camp wanted to pray so badly. These were inner-city kids that were at this camp more or less because their parents needed someone to watch over them as they worked long hours to sustain their livelihoods. These were ordinary kids that had an extraordinary passion for prayer. I look at my youth group in Minnesota and at AIV, and I wonder, how is it that these kids no older than thirteen understand

how marvelous this prayer thing is? What do they get that we have yet to comprehend? My youth group, as chaotic as it was, could be silenced, without fail, with one question: who wants to pray? Then everyone froze and the staring contest with the floor began. Otherwise it's the nose game, or whoever is 'unfortunate' enough to be the eldest in the group, or some other lame excuse to get out of praying. When we think about it, we know that it is childish and inane. Yet we find ways to shrug it off and keep up our comfortable lives.

Prayer should be one of the primary foundations of our faith. Our faith should be so pervasive in our lives so that everyone who knows us also knows about our relationship with God. So why do we shy away from talking to

**“My youth group could be silenced with one question: who wants to pray? Then everyone froze and the staring contest with the floor began.”**

God? From my personal experience, sometimes I am ashamed to talk to God. How can I approach someone so pure and holy when I know that I exhibit all the sins of man? But God already knows who we really are, even better than ourselves. The amazing thing is that he still listens to us in our state of depravity. Be honest with God, true raw honesty may be rather offensive from a human perspective, but this is God, he can take it. Explain your doubts, fears, anger, and everything else about life--he wants to hear from us. In the Psalms, King David divulged some rather shocking things to God and this made the bond between him and God so much stronger. God wants us to know him, to know his love, and what better way to build upon our relationship with God than to talk to him. Sometimes I doubt that he hears my prayers and all too of-

ten my prayers are not answered in the manner that I desired. Yet I remember that God is not the reluctant one in the equation, sometimes the problem lies with me. James 5:15-16 presents three things that factor in to prayer. We must pray with faith and believe that God will answer. We must pray without barriers between us and God, so that our prayers are effective. Lastly, we must be righteous, living according to God's will. Now I understand that these are no easy tasks yet I believe that they are worth working for, even if it takes a lifetime. The Bible says that God wants to hear our prayers and that he wants to answer our prayers in inconceivable ways. But we need to start that miracle.

**Here are some verses that highlight the promises that God made regarding prayer:**

*“And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”*  
[Matthew 21:22]

*“So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.”*  
[Luke 11:9]

*“Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”*  
[John 14:13]

*“Call to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”*  
[Jeremiah 33:3]

Prayer is really an incredible thing that God has established and I believe that, if we are serious about our faith, then we ought to pray more than we already do. This change could be as small as a quick prayer right as we get up or something like finding a DPM that works with our schedule. Whatever it you chose, I implore you, pray more.

## TESTIMONY

# But what I have, I give to you

by Enid Chan, Senior

*"The gospel is not merely a message that confronts the mind but an explosive power that turns a person's life upside down."* [Linda Belleville]

I HAVE BEEN TO MANY TRAINING EVENTS IN MY THREE AND A HALF YEARS WITH INTERVARSITY. Some of them have been integral in my walk with God (Chapter Camp 2005), and some have helped me discover things I would have never known about myself (MAC 2006). Most recently, one has helped me encounter God in a way I have never before – Compelling 2007.

My time here at Michigan has been full of ups and downs. From having a hard time adjusting my freshman year to a joyful, fruitful, and in many ways life-changing sophomore year, I suddenly found myself in a downward spiral starting my junior year. I began to distrust God with hard decisions I had made when I was standing on the highest mountains of my spiritual journey, which consequently began to tug at my heart and cause me to doubt not only my decisions but my faith in God. Did God really want me to be a Sport Management Major? What did it mean for my parents? How could God ever want me to cause financial burden on my parents even if it meant I could study something I truly enjoyed? What kind of Asian studies Sport Management anyway? How the heck am I supposed to use Sport Management for God? Did God really

even want me at Michigan? Maybe I'm supposed to go home, keep my parents company, and make everyone happy?

As I began to question my faith in God and my decision to pursue Sport Management despite the hardships and uncertainty I knew would come, I began to not only doubt God but doubt myself. I began to wonder if I actually saw myself in a career with Sports. Did I actually have the capacity to succeed? I began to look to my identity and wonder who I really was. I began to compare myself to my housemates and even wondered where I fit in amongst my own housemates. Though I have always struggled with low self-esteem, I had never experienced it to a point that I didn't even know who I was anymore. I felt overshadowed by my friends and questioned the very abilities and gifts I once knew God had blessed me with.

After putting up a wall that didn't allow me to feel hurt and be vulnerable (one that meant that I cried only once in a year and a half ... which I think I deserve a medal for as a girl) because of things that had happened to me in high school, I suddenly found myself so depressed that one day, the dam to my tear ducts broke wide open. That semester, I proceeded to cry enough to make up for a whole year's worth of crying.

I know some of you probably think I might be psycho that I got depressed because I was uncertain about my area of study, but there's a lot more to it and I'll be glad to tell you sometime. But to make a long story short, junior year was one of the hardest years of my life. I struggled day in and day out to see the joy in the life of a Christian. I served as Evangelism Coordinator but was exhausted. I found it hard to enjoy the work I was doing and trudged to get through it. With a million things on my mind and a heavy heart, thankfully, God was with me and provided people that have been my strength when I had none, and faith when mine began to waver.

You'd think that the next thing I

would tell you is that as junior year ended and I was accepted into the Sport Management program, I found myself in a happy relationship, my faith in God was suddenly renewed and I was happy again. Far from it, actually. I don't think I found real joy – joy in God – again until this past November when I attended Compelling and met Kristina Crosetto.

Up until Compelling, I had been very tired from ministry. New Student Outreach was exhausting and it was to a point that sometimes going to events felt like a chore because I was so involved with the planning. (I'm sure many of you know what that feels like). There was joy in seeing the fruits of God's work through NSO, but the exhaustion overshadowed the joy. Again, I began to wonder what the point of everything was. I realized I had lost much motivation and much joy in my life: joy in being a child of God.

But Kristina Crosetto changed all that. I have never seen a woman so clearly in love with God, so clearly glowing with God's power. When she was in the room, I knew that the Holy Spirit was not only amongst us, but moving powerfully. She spoke about the life of a true witness: stepping out of our comfort zones, overcoming our own fears and failures, and being prayer warriors against our opposition. On the same day she spoke about this, she told us a story that will stick with me for the rest of my life.

I know that there is no way that I can do this story justice on paper and even run the risk of ruining a powerful testimony, so in a nutshell: Kristina told us of how God used her to heal a woman who was sick with cancer! She cried out in tears as she recalled this story that despite her failures before and her refusal to subject herself to disappointment and failure again, the power of God was in her and with her. Brothers and Sisters, we have the power of the Holy Spirit and we are connected intimately with the Holy Spirit to live a life



of purpose for God! “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea & Samaria & to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

At that point I cried out to God and desperately wondered how I could have ever doubted my Lord, my God. How could I have ever let my faith waver over something so ‘trivial’ as whether or not God wanted me in Sport Management when here Kristina was telling me of a God who can heal? Sure we learn of these things all the time, hear stories, read of them in the bible, and maybe even have had people tell us before. But haven’t we all wondered (deep, deep down) if this was really true? That God could heal illnesses that no human has a cure for? I know I have. But at this very moment, there was not an ounce of doubt in my heart. I knew whole heartedly that this woman was a child of God and that He was moving powerfully in her. That meant only one thing for me: God could move powerfully in me too! Not only that, God could move powerfully in ANY of us!

We all have been blessed differently, but remember this: “I know what I have. I know what I don’t have. But what I have, I give to You.” We might not all be blessed with the same gifts but Brothers and Sisters, we have the power of the Most High God. This is the God that we are called to tell to all the ends of the earth. Trust in His power and let it move in you as you live your life of a true witness, giving your all to our Lord, our God.

## MEDIA

# Spiritually Redeemable

by Caleb Tseng, *Freshman*

WHAT WE ARE CONSTANTLY WATCHING OR LISTENING TO HAS A HUGE EFFECT ON US, WHETHER OR NOT WE REALIZE IT. The music we listen to, the movies we watch, and the television shows we follow all change how we perceive the world, our attitude toward hardships, and even the way we articulate these thoughts and emotions. However, as Christians, our worldview should be shaped by the authority of the Bible and the revelations in our lives by God. It is our duty to try and tune out the negative noise of the world to listen to what God says to us. While reading the Bible and praying are absolute essentials to a Christian life, God is not limited to these modes of speaking to us. It is a common misconception to believe that God only speaks to us when we’re doing quiet times or in church. However, God constantly speaks to us, be it through gentle whispers or undeniable signs. It is our job to be constantly listening to what God has to tell us, allowing what he says to dictate our actions (Matthew 13:19).

How do we gauge what is permissible to watch or listen to? Just as pornog-

raphy has been condemned by society for not having any “morally redeemable” qualities, or lacking elements that would spur improvements in the world, we need to consider whether or not the media we come in contact with has any “spiritually redeemable” qualities. We need to ask ourselves if what we watch can help us grow closer to God, taking into consideration what God could possibly be trying to teach us or tell us. God is always speaking to us, desiring to teach us and draw us closer to him (Revelation 3:20). We just need to keep our eyes, ears, and hearts open to what he has to say to us, being alert to all the possible ways that God is working in our lives (Matthew 11:15). This can be through the Bible, other people, movies, songs, or whatever our limitless God chooses to use to speak to us.

On the other hand, if any media causes us to stumble in any way, it is our responsibility to know our limits and stay away from such things that hurt our relationship with God. If action movies cause us to develop a constant violent mindset, it would be wise to avoid such movies. If horror movies cause us to live in a fear that Christ’s blood has freed us from (Romans 8:15), don’t watch them! And brothers and

## Obey Optimus Prime. Do your quiet time.

The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures,  
he leads me beside quiet waters,  
he restores my soul.  
He guides me in paths of righteousness  
for his name’s sake.

[Psalm 23]



sisters (brothers especially), if explicit songs or graphic movies cause us to lust, how would that media be any different than pornography? And why is it that we so often get songs stuck in our head but never seem to get the Word stuck in our head? (Matthew 6:21)

While the effects of music can sometimes be subtle, the effects of movies are more obvious, as I'm always amazed at how well movies play with my emotions, sparking desires and wishes even after the film is finished. After *Inside Man*, I wanted to rob a bank. After the *Notebook*, I had the sudden urge to build a house and steal and run away with someone else's fiancé and make out in a rainstorm. After *Jet Li's Fearless*, I was

desperately hoping some random punk would mess with me, just so I could use the kung fu that is deeply embedded in my Asian genes to undo him. After *Napoleon Dynamite*, I was left depressed and suicidal, as I couldn't believe that I had just painfully wasted two hours of my life. However, after *I am Legend*, I was inexplicably grateful for and deeply moved by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to cleanse us of our sin and impurities.

To me, *I Am Legend* turned out to be a very pro-Christian movie that God used to speak to me in. The little things such as the prayer on the helicopter or the cross dangling from the rearview mirror could be the result of coincidence. Insignificant tidbits of trivia such as the survivors' colony being named "Bethel" (meaning "house of God") merely point us to the reality of a Christian theme. This is a movie depicting one man, who after three

years of dedication, finds the cure for a "soul sickness" that has plagued the world which had left the earth filled with Dark-Seekers, mutants afraid of the light. John 3:19-21, anyone?! This sound like anybody we know well? Watching the movie keeping in mind that we as humans are just as deranged and enslaved to darkness as the mutants portrayed in the movie helps us understand the huge sacrifice of Jesus in coming into such a dark and evil world. Through Will Smith's voice, I could hear the desperate cry of a loving God, screaming "I can help you. You are sick and I can help you. Let me save you!" *I am Legend* helped strengthen my faith, as I got a glimpse of the improbable yet great love of Jesus Christ (Romans 5:8). And even more importantly, I was reminded to keep my ears open; as Anna said in the movie, "If we listen, we can hear God's voice." (Matthew 13:43).

## LARGE GROUP SCHEDULE

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God."  
(Colossians 3:15-16)

**Every Friday, 7:00pm,  
at Forum Hall  
in Palmer Commons**

1/25 | **OT: Wisdom Books**  
Speaker: Tom Trevethan

2/1 | **MAC II**

2/8 | **Small Group Night**

2/15 | **Freshman Night**

"Behold, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind." [Isaiah 65:17]



Emily Yao, Sophomore