

Volume III, Issue 5 \ May 2010

# PERSPECTIVE

THE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF MOUNT VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH

**DARE**  
**TO OVERLOOK**





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**STAFF** > **SERMON SCHEDULE**

- May 2** **Moving from Fear to Courage**  
*Psalm 27*  
 Guest Preacher: Jim Sproull
- May 9** **Will God Lead Me?**  
*Joshua 1:1-18*
- May 16** **Will God Protect Me?**  
*Joshua 2:1-24*
- May 23** **Will God Prepare Me?**  
*Joshua 3:1-5:12*
- May 30** **Will God Judge Me?**  
*Joshua 5:13-8:35*

> **FIGHTER VERSE**

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

Philippians 2:4-7

**INSIDE THIS EDITION** >

**Knowing the Body:  
 Our Newest Members**  
 Facts about the most recent members to join the Mount Vernon family. page 1

**The Bookshelf:  
 Dug Down Deep by Joshua Harris**  
 A book review on the importance and application of sound doctrine in the Christian life.  
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**Cover Article:Dare to Overlook**  
 An article reflecting on Proverbs 17:9 and the need for being able to overlook faults in relationships.  
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**Deacon Recommendations**  
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Knowing the Body  
 Our newest members

The following people were voted into membership on April 25 at the regularly scheduled Church in Conference. Please be sure to get to know and love them.

"By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." - John 13:35

**J.C. & Kelly Poole**  
 Smyrna, GA



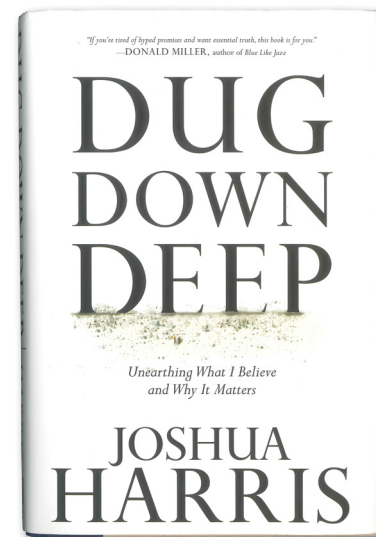
- J.C. works at Georgia Tech Information Technology.
- Kelly works as a Federal Reserve examiner.
- The two were married in August 2007.
- They attended Open Door Baptist Church in Tuscaloosa, AL prior to coming to Mount Vernon.

**Sarah Tucker**  
 Lakeland, GA



- Sarah attends Truett McConnell College in Cleveland, GA.
- She is majoring in Christian studies.
- Sarah attended Southside Baptist Church in Lakeland, GA before coming to Mount Vernon.

# The Bookshelf



**Dug Down Deep:  
Unearthing What I Believe  
and Why It Matters**

by Joshua Harris

Reviewed by Brad Thayer

WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO YOUR FAITH IF YOU LOST THE BIBLE? By “lost,” I don’t mean that you forgot the Bible’s message or it became simply a nice centerpiece for your coffee table. I mean you *literally* lost your Bible and could not find a replacement. What impact would it make on your life if you couldn’t drive to the local LifeWay store and pick another copy of your favorite leather-bound NIV or newly printed ESV Study Bible? Imagine turning over every sofa cushion, cleaning out the trunk of your car, and phoning every place you visited the past month only to discover that the Bible was gone. Would your worship of God be affected; would it be any different if you lost the only source for knowing God?

The sad fact of this frightening scenario is that it actually happened. There was a generation of God’s people just prior to the reign of King Josiah (640 – 609 B.C.) that lost the Book of the Law. They lost the Bible. As a man that “did what was right in the eyes of the Lord,” Josiah sought to clean up Israel’s idolatrous worship. During some renovations of the temple, the Book of the Law was discovered. It was read out loud to the King and, upon hearing it, Josiah was struck to the heart. He called for radical repentance because he realized that “they had not obeyed the words of this book” (2 Kings 22).

Here is the principle to be heeded from that story: It is possible to keep a form of religion and yet lose its power. We can go busily and even happily about the business of religion—attend the services, smile and greet people, sing and pray—and yet all the while having lost a true knowledge of God. Religious practices can continue as though we had simply changed the color of bulletin paper and yet not realizing we had forsaken God’s gift to humanity—God’s revelation of Himself. It is this very real danger that pastor Joshua Harris addresses in *Dug Down Deep: Unearthing What I Believe and Why It Matters*.

Just to be clear, Harris hasn’t toured the country to discover churches that have *literally* lost their Bibles. No. The problem he is rightly addressing is the neglect at best and abandonment at worst of a robust knowledge of God by professing Christians. As he put it, “When we talk about knowledge of God, we’re talking about theology. Simply put, theology is the study of the nature of God—who he is and how he thinks and acts. *But theology isn’t high on*

*many people’s list of daily concerns*” (9, emphasis added). Christians have traded in theology for “me-ology” or decided that theology is something left only to scholars or pastors. Some argue that it’s a specialized study for a specialized group who want to major in that field or see it as a requirement for their profession. Yet, Harris makes an insightful comment about such claims—“We’re all theologians. The question is whether what we know about God is true” (11).

That insight summarizes Harris’s purpose in writing. From there, he sets out to show that theology matters but not just any theology—orthodox theology. (Orthodoxy literally means “right opinion.”) It is best said this way: “Orthodoxy matters because the Christian faith is not just a cultural tradition or moral code. Orthodoxy is the irreducible truths about God and his work in the world... Theology, doctrine, and orthodoxy matter because God is real, and he has acted in our world, and his actions have meaning today and for all eternity” (15).

I once heard a pastor describe his personal library as a collection of friends. The authors are friends (alive and dead) that inform and serve his soul and ministry. As a pastor, I share those sentiments. I can think of a number of books that I frequent, and God has used the authors’ words and biblical wisdom countless times in my life. However, some times I can have a problem with the “friends” sitting on my shelf. The struggle is often deciding which theology book to give or recommend to someone who has little or no experience in reading theology books. It can be daunting to pick up a boulder-sized work like Grudem’s *Systematic Theology*. Furthermore, not many theology texts have a narrative feel that creates furious page turning the way a good biography does. Enter Harris’s *Dug Down Deep*. For the following reasons, I heartily recommend you take the time to read this work. These are ordered least to most important.

*First, it is a really fun read.* Harris lays out systematically very important doctrines related to orthodox Christianity, doctrines such as the nature of the Bible, the nature of God, humanity, Jesus’ person and work, redemption, sanctification, the work of the Holy Spirit, and the local church. Any reader will finish the book with a better understanding of essential truths related to these doctrines. But he or she will do so, hopefully, having *fun* in the process because it’s not simply one proposition after another (though there is that), but it is a “story.” This is a sweet mixture of autobiography and propositional truth. Harris wrote, “This book is the story of how I first glimpsed the beauty of Christian theology” (16). It is one illustrating story after another that has the reader turning page over page to see the story’s climax. Importantly, Harris does not root the truth of biblical doctrine in the experience of his story. Rather, he uses his experience of wrestling with doctrine as a way of illustrating the transforming power theology.

This narrative style of writing is important because it makes the book more accessible to the average reader and especially for those of a younger generation. (That would be my generation in their 20s and 30s.) Most of us would rather turn on the TV and be swallowed up in some form of media than curl up in a chair with a good book under a soft reading lamp. So to think about reading a 234 page book on theology is overwhelming. But let me assure you that *Dug Down Deep* is uniquely accessible because of its narrative writing style.

*Second and related, there is a conversation in the larger evangelical world about the need for more “story” or “narrative” and less doctrinal, didactical, and propositional teaching.* This is most common with, yet again, a younger generation and has been popularized by names such as Brian McLaren, Rob Bell with his NOOMA videos, and others in the “Emergent” church movement. Now, all of this may be lost on most members of Mount Vernon. Nonetheless, there are churches all across this nation that are booming and attracted to such teaching that says, “Don’t give me doctrine. Just tell me the story of Christianity.”

In the midst of this conversation, Harris has found a way to have a voice with his narrative writing style and “story” and remaining unmistakably clear that “doctrine” matters. So this book is a useful tool to give someone who you know has bought into the lie that Christianity is about the “story of Jesus” and not about doctrine.

*Third and most importantly, it is a simple and practical introduction to theology.* This is by far the strongest characteristic of *Dug Down Deep*. Harris does not shy away from introducing his readers to a biblical vernacular used with discussing theology. You’ll learn what it means that God is “transcendent” and “immanent” (50). Have you ever wondered how we have the sixty-six books in the Bible? How was it decided? You’ll learn as he discusses the Bible’s “canonization” (62). Can you explain what it means that the Bible is “inerrant,” “clear,” and “sufficient?” You’ll be able after you read pages 68-72. Or could you explain that Jesus is fully God and fully man? I could go on and on with examples. The point is that Harris has laid out very simply an introduction to theology and doctrine that is welcoming and inviting.

But what Harris weaves in so well that most theology texts often neglect is how it affects your life. Practical application is coupled with sound doctrine, which follows the pattern found in the Bible. Life is affected by doctrine. Harris wrote, “Jesus said that the person who digs down to the rock is the one who comes to *him* (that is, Jesus). This has to be the first and final motivation. Pursuing orthodoxy and sound doctrine has to begin with a heart drawing close to Jesus—not to a theological system, denomination, or book” (30). He is exactly right. Theology is the knowledge of God. And such knowledge should create humility and love for the Savior, Jesus Christ.

Consider this wise counsel for example: Most of us want to “feel” the nearness of God in our worship and discipleship of Christ. Sadly, some are more “interested in chasing a feeling about Jesus than pursuing Jesus himself” (86). So what do you do if you long to experience greater joy and God’s nearness? How do you stir your emotion and affections for Jesus, after all the new life we’re given in Christ is anything but stale and boring? Harris rightly advises “if we want to feel deeply, you have to think deeply... emotion built on emotion is empty. True emotion—emotion that is reliable and doesn’t lead us astray—is always a response to reality, to truth” (86). That is wise pastoral counsel that should drive us to learn and study more. Over and over again Harris challenges his readers not to settle for just enough knowledge that satisfies but to dig deeper and deeper.

Whether you’ve been a Christian for a week or twenty-five years, you should read *Dug Down Deep* so that you can stand on a solid foundation of orthodox beliefs. ■



## Vacation Bible School

June 7-11

### Holy Land Adventure Bethlehem Village

If you would like to sign up as a volunteer, please do so at Connections Corner, and child registration (ages 4 through 6<sup>th</sup> grade) can be found online at [www.mvbchurch.org](http://www.mvbchurch.org) by clicking on the VBS logo.

For more information, contact Terry Earl at [terryearl@mvbchurch.org](mailto:terryearl@mvbchurch.org) or 404-255-3133.

# DARE

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## TO OVERLOOK



PETER AND CATHERINE MARSHALL knew how fragile a marriage can be. In the 1940s, Peter was the pastor of Washington, D.C.'s New York Avenue Presbyterian Church and chaplain to the United States Senate. Catherine was a godly woman who went on to become the well-known author of *A Man Called Peter* and the *Christy* series. But in the early years of their marriage, Peter was a workaholic—he traveled with seemingly little regard for the effect it had on his young bride. Catherine was a lonely and sometimes dejected wife. To make matters worse, when their son was only three, Catherine was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Bedridden for over a year, Catherine wondered if Peter would lose interest in her. Would he be tempted to leave her? Instead, according to Catherine's account, their marriage flourished. He became a better husband and, by God's grace, their later years of marriage were different, sweeter, and full of more love than the first.

Marriages and friendships face all sorts of difficulties. There is no silver bullet for a successful relationship. Nonetheless, God has revealed bedrock principles for relationships and one of them is found in Proverbs 17:9, "He who covers an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends."

The meaning is clear: we best serve others by overlooking their faults. We hurt others when we retaliate. Relationships easily and often end when we refuse to overlook the faults of others. Proverbs 17:9 is not a license to endure abuse. Nor should it keep us from the hard and important work of talking through problems. Still, we ought to be marked by a generous and forgiving spirit.

Marriage is a terrific example. There are so many times I say what I shouldn't say to my wife only to be humbled when she overlooks my word or my attitude. Her graciousness is just one more reason why I love her so much, but it is also a gentle rebuke. Though she does not bring up my sin, the Holy Spirit often brings my failure to mind.

This idea of covering over an offense by overlooking a fault should be no surprise to Christians. It is our Savior who said, "if someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also" (Matt. 5:39). In other words, Christians are to be marked by a willingness to endure being wronged. When slighted by another brother or sister, we are to forgive, and forgive, and forgive. When Jesus was asked by Peter how often he should forgive his brother, the Lord replied, "I tell

you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times" (Matt. 18:22).

Think to the cross and remember how much Christ endured for us. Can you, Christian, say that you have ever been treated the way you deserve? Did God give you justice? No, He gave you mercy. The forgiveness you have received was costly, but it was not a cost you bore. It was a cost born by Christ. You have been forgiven so very much; shouldn't you be willing to forgive others?

Do you want to end a friendship? Do you want to kill a marriage? Then "repeat the matter" (Prov. 17:9). In other words, pay back venom for venom, evil for evil, sin for sin. Instead of forgiving your spouse or your friend, treat him the way he treated you. This is a surefire way into relational disaster.



How easy this would have been for Peter and Catherine Marshall. They had many reasons to give up. No doubt, at times they felt like calling it quits. As Catherine put it, "No two lives are fused into perfect oneness without a certain amount of painful adjustment."<sup>1</sup> The reality is, for close friends and certainly for spouses, this "adjustment" takes place every day. In a fallen world, we never grow out of the need to adjust to one another, and we never stop needing to cover over each other's offenses.

Let's not lose sight of the power of personal forgiveness. The wisdom of forgiving others is found in Proverbs 17:9, but the fuel to forgive others is found in Christ's work on the cross. "He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sin and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed" (1 Peter 2:24). This is love; the foundation for every friendship. ■

~ Aaron Menikoff

<sup>1</sup> Catherine Marshall, *A Man Called Peter: The Story of Peter Marshall* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Publications, 1951), 131.



**Knowing MVBC: The Membership Class** is a four session course that introduces you to life at Mount Vernon, covering the following topics:

- Knowing Our Commitments: Church Covenant
- Knowing Our Beliefs: Statement of Faith
- Knowing Our Disciplines: Personal Discipleship
- Knowing Our Structure: Nuts & Bolts

Anyone interested in membership or knowing more about life at Mount Vernon is invited to **Knowing MVBC: The Membership Class**. There will be a different session each of the first four Sundays in May at 9:15 am in the Mount Vernon room. You may sign up on the edge of the bulletin or by contacting the church office at 404-255-3133.

# QUESTIONS FROM WEARY SAINTS

*Eight sermons through the book of Joshua*



*Come join us during the worship service on Sunday mornings as we discuss the book of Joshua. Sermon audio will be available online at [www.mvbcchurch.org](http://www.mvbcchurch.org), through the Mount Vernon Baptist Church podcast, and on CD for \$5. If you would like more information on this sermon series or past sermon series, contact the church office.*

# Deacon Recommendations

► due May 5

NOW IS THE TIME TO BE THINKING and praying about which men at Mount Vernon should serve us as deacons. Every year seven deacons rotate off the deacon body and we select seven men to take their place. As a member of MVBC, your input is needed. Who are the men at MVBC that you see living an exemplary Christian life, displaying faithfulness to this local church, and constantly serving wherever a need exists? These are the men you should recommend to the Deacon Nominating Committee.

The qualifications for a deacon can be found in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Every deacon must be:

Worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.

In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.

A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well.

Here are a few observations about these qualifications as you prayerfully consider who to recommend to the Deacon Nominating Committee.

*First, someone who is eligible to be a deacon must be known by the congregation.* That does not mean that every deacon must be known by every member of the congregation. It does mean that, generally speaking, this individual is present often enough to gain a reputation for faithfulness and service. So, when you are considering whom to nominate as a deacon, remember how important it is for this person to be known by the church.

*Second, Paul's list of qualifications is not meant to be exhaustive.* The main point is that a deacon must be godly. He should not be plagued by a moral scandal such as drunkenness or sexual immorality. Paul is saying that a deacon should be walking with Jesus in a faithful, observable way.

*Third, the qualification to be the husband of but one wife is an important one.* Married deacons are to be, literally, one-woman men. Does this mean a single man cannot be a deacon? No, it just means that if a man is married he must be faithful to his spouse. What about divorced men—can they serve as deacons? Let me just say that many churches disagree over this very question. I think the best way to answer is, "maybe." If a man has been divorced it may disqualify him for this kind of leadership in the church. This is especially the case if the divorce is a direct result of his poor leadership in the home. It has been the practice of Mount Vernon throughout the years to allow men who are divorced to serve as deacons so long as an examination of the reasons for the divorce are taken into account.

What now?

Please pray about the nomination process and the seven men whom you will recommend as candidates for deacon. As you do, keep this list of qualifications in mind. Remember we are looking for men who are known by the body, exemplary Christians in the body, and have a proven track record of service to the body. A deacon nomination ballot will be provided for all MVBC members at the morning service on May 2. In addition, if you will be absent from MVBC on these three Sunday's, you can pick up a nomination ballot at the church office. A deacon nomination ballot will also be included as an attachment in the May 3 edition of *The Courier*, the MVBC weekly e-newsletter. You can turn in your deacon nomination ballot in the offering plate on May 2, or at the church office by May 5. If you turn in your nomination ballot at the church office, please place the ballot in a sealed envelope marked "Deacon Nominating Committee." As a reminder, only MVBC members should complete nomination ballots and you are required to sign your nomination ballot.

Please pray for the Deacon Nominating Committee. It consists of me, Pat Knowles (the deacon chair), Troy Kubes (the deacon vice-chair), Connie Heiskell, Bill Timmons, Brian Ferguson, and Larry Norwood. Pray that we would have wisdom as we consider your recommendations and then, finally, make a recommendation back to you. Our goal is to bring a list of seven men's names to be affirmed by a vote of our active deacons on June 28. If these men are affirmed by the deacon body, we will let you know immediately of the results so that you have several weeks to pray over these recommendations. Lord willing, on July 18, we will have a specially-called Church-in-Conference for MVBC members to ask any questions about the proposed new deacons. After the Q&A session, MVBC members will have a chance to vote and affirm these men as newly appointed deacons.

Please thank God for the leadership that He has given Mount Vernon. I am so thankful to see how so many individuals in this church sacrificially give of their money and their time for the spread of the Gospel and the growth of the believers in our community. So many individuals serve Mount Vernon on the Leadership Team, in the Deacon body, on committees, and in ministry teams. God has provided for us well—we should thank Him.

Please speak to me or a member of the Deacon Nominating Committee if you have any other questions about this process. It is certainly my prayer that in the weeks and months ahead you will be encouraged by the leadership provided for our body. ■

~ Aaron Menikoff

# May 2010

1						
2	9:15 am Knowing MVBC: Session 1 10:30 am Guest Preacher: Jim Sproull 12:00 pm Heroes Among Us 6:00 pm Lord's Supper	3		4		5
6		7		8		9
10		11		12		13
14		15		16		17
18		19		20		21
22		23		24		25
26		27		28		29
30		31	Memorial Day Office Closed			

6:30 pm "And Can it Be?"

10:00 am Change of Seasons

12:00 pm RW&A Luncheon

7:00 pm Manchester College Concert

## EVENTS

### Churchwide

May 2 12:00 pm *Heroes Among Us*  
This event will be a time to honor the WWII veterans of MVBC. Tickets are sold out.

May 2 6:00 pm *Lord's Supper*  
We will celebrate the Lord's Supper during the evening service. We encourage members to examine their hearts and relationships with one another in preparation for this celebration of Christ's death and resurrection.

May 25 7:00 pm *Manchester College Concert*  
(See ad to the right.)

### Adult

May 17 12:00 pm *RW&A Luncheon*

### New Members

May 2, 9, 16, 23 9:15 am *Knowing MVBC*  
(See ad at the top of pg. 6)

### Elementary

May 5 7:00 pm "And Can It Be?"  
Everyone is invited to the Elementary Ministry's production of "And Can it Be?" in the youth room. This will be in lieu of all Bible Studies regularly scheduled for that time.

### Women

May 15 10:00 am *A Change of Seasons*  
(See ad to the bottom-right.)

## BIRTHDAYS

- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| 2 Mary Duncan          | 16 Josh Bradford   |
| 3 Chis Yancey          | Danielle Rasmussen |
| 3 George Camp          | 17 Hank Sturgess   |
| Bob Seifert            | Doug Padgett       |
| 4 April McClung        | 18 Mike Montemayor |
| Glenn Austin           | 19 Bill Warren     |
| Eric Rasmussen         | 20 Bill Hayes      |
| Kathryn Voyles         | Jon Duncan         |
| 5 Caroline Pattillo    | Robert Nagel       |
| Michael Dawkins        | 21 Roy Payne       |
| 6 Mike Wilkinson       | George Hynds       |
| 7 Pam Groslimond       | Don Roden          |
| Jonathan Ludwikowski   | 22 Tom Ashworth    |
| 8 Wayne Elliott        | Matt Reid          |
| Jennifer Galloway      | 23 Sue Houser      |
| 9 Fred Boynton         | 25 Hubert McLellan |
| Ron Korthals           | Lana Ball          |
| 10 Roh Wareham         | Emily Yancey       |
| Kevin Bemiss           | 26 Kristine Harris |
| Berkley Gryder         | 27 Joan Herdt      |
| 11 Jan Chastain        | Dave Salzman       |
| 12 Peg Wharton         | Beth Matz          |
| Greg Ford              | 28 Chuck Stone     |
| Brook Henze            | 30 Julie Pamplin   |
| 13 Jessi Lowman        | Alice Wareham      |
| 14 Alice Faye Ashworth | 31 Jean McLellan   |
| Marshall Dawkins       | Charlotte Boynton  |
| 15 Al Herdt            | Susan Boynton      |
| Linda Sexton           |                    |

Manchester College

# ACROSS THE SPECTRUM

The Manchester College Music Department presents *Across the Spectrum*, a concert featuring the array of styles and genres that musicians at Manchester College learn, perform, and experience. The concert is May 25, at 7:00 pm. It will be a 90 minute program and will include a short intermission. There is no admission charge, but a free will offering will be taken to help defray touring costs.

## A CHANGE OF SEASONS

"BEING A TITUS 2 WOMAN"

SATURDAY, MAY 15  
10:00-12:00 IN ROOM 211

SIGN UP IS AVAILABLE  
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS  
DURING DINNER AND AT  
CONNECTIONS CORNER.



850 Mount Vernon Highway NW  
Sandy Springs, GA 30327