

## Random Thoughts on Fixing the World

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Anyone who's seen my office knows I like books. I can spend hours at used book stores or library sales. I don't read as much as I'd like, but still read a book every month or two. Those who think reading a book is a thing of the past should pick one up. Television and movies have captivated us, but we are the losers if we don't read. Like the grandpa in the movie *Princess Bride* tells his grandson: "When I was your age, television was called books." What book(s) will you read this year? I hope one you pick up is the Bible!

Now after that ringing endorsement of books, let me give a warning. Just because something is written in a book doesn't make it true, or safe. Books that get publicity and win awards aren't always worth reading. Someone has said we should read with our 'skeptical on': Beware of books filled with an ideology or philosophy that is against what God says and what is good for you. Yes, there's a lot of that out there.



'Exhibit A' is a book that has been honored as a 'best book of 2017' by the Washington Post, Los Angeles Times, New York Times, San Francisco Chronicle, Entertainment Weekly, NPR, and Barack Obama – all representing a 'liberal progressive' view of culture and values. The book is a novel called *The Power* by English author Naomi Alderman. It imagines a world in which women have the power to electrocute men with their hands. Frankly, this might be a handy form of self-defense...but you probably guessed that's not where this author was going. In a 'novel' twist, this liberating feminine 'power' forces patriarchal Christians to reinterpret the Gospels, set aside the doctrines of God the Father and God the Son, and honor the "supremacy of the Mother." One reviewer gushed that this book destroys the "internal ribs of [male] power that we have tolerated, honored and romanticized for centuries."

I love and honor mothers. My mother has had more of an impact on my life, my values, and my priorities than anyone else. She impacted many lives herself, but she has impacted thousands more through her children. And she didn't need the power to electrocute men to do it. Instead, she submitted herself to the Word of God and lived life by what it taught (including submitting to my dad). It was never a gender issue.

History is strewn with men and women, many of them authors, who have sought to deconstruct what the Bible says (or add their own ideas to it). Many of them started cults or isms. They all have one thing in common: They imagine they can 'fix' the problems of humanity, sometimes with (as Alderman suggests) super powers, or by the government telling us how to live (George Orwell's dystopian novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four* shows where this leads), or by getting us to withdraw into our own make-believe world.

Ironically, most of these efforts seek to give hope and meaning to life by escaping into the make-believe. Instead of helping people find truth and a transcendent purpose in life, they leave us empty. Millions turn to drugs or alcohol to escape the burdens of life. The downward spiral is never-ending. That is, unless, there really is an out-of-this-world solution to our problems.

There is...and wouldn't you know it, it involves God the Father and God the Son. *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners* (1 Timothy 1.15). *And the Word (Jesus) became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth* (John 1.14). *God has given us eternal life...He who has the Son has the life* (1 John 5.11-12).

We are living in a world filled with delusion and desperation. The fabric of society is unravelling around us. But instead of abandoning God, we should be running back to Him. He alone offers a truly life-changing 'fix' to the disease that infects all of us, sin.

