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A CHALLENGE FOR PASTORS: PREACH THROUGH THE ENTIRETY OF THE BIBLE

WHEATON, Ill.—Today’s Christians have access to the Bible like never before. The Bible is accessible on iPhones, in multiple translations, in numerous languages; and those numbers are constantly growing. But even with unrestricted access to God’s word, many Bible-believing Christians simply do not know their Bibles. While some people simply do not spend enough time reading Scripture to know it, could part of the problem be that churchgoers receive limited biblical teaching in their churches week after week?

In their new book, The Whole Counsel of God: Why and How to Preach the Entire Bible (Crossway, March 2020), Tim Patrick and Andrew Reid challenge pastors to help their congregations in their biblical literacy by preaching through the entirety of the Bible, not just certain parts or specific themes.

“The core conviction of this book is the need for God’s people to hear the whole Scriptures read and explained continues today,” write Patrick and Reid. “A light, thin, hotchpotch diet of Scripture—even well-taught Scripture—is not what God wants for his people, and yet this is all that too many churches offer. This book is written to help pastors and teachers of God’s word make the fullness of that word known to their people over a lifetime of preaching.”

Patrick and Reid encourage pastors to set a goal to preach through the entire Bible, because the whole Bible is the word of God for his people, every chapter and verse is important. The Whole Counsel of God outlines a number of paradigms and practical advice to help pastors make this goal a reality over the course of their preaching ministry. The book also considers how the challenge to preach the entirety of the Bible relates to the real-world issues that face the busy pastor.

“The people of God need to know God and his ways, but they cannot know God and his ways without knowing his word. This raises a critical question: How can God’s people know the fullness of God’s word unless it is constantly held up before them and systematically explained to them?” asks Patrick and Reid. “In many places throughout the Bible, we see that this kind of commitment to the Scriptures—the entirety of the Scriptures—is indeed meant to characterize the people of God and to shape their activities.”
ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Tim Patrick (PhD, Macquarie University) is principal of the Bible College of South Australia, an affiliated college of the Australian College of Theology, where he lectures in theology and practical ministry. Before moving into theological education and ministry formation, Tim served in local church ministry for ten years. He worked with a number of congregations and led a number of revitalization projects.

Andrew Reid (ThD, Ridley College) is the inaugural principal of the Evangelical Theological College of Asia. He previously served as the lead pastor of several churches in Australia and as lecturer in Old Testament, hermeneutics, and Hebrew at Ridley College Melbourne. He was one of the founding council members of the Gospel Coalition Australia and continues to serve as the editorial director of the ministry, training, and leadership channel of TGCA’s website.

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