

2024 Australian Christian Book of the Year

The Meaning of Singleness: Retrieving an Eschatological Vision for the Contemporary Church

Danielle Treweek
InterVarsity Press
9781514004852

This is a work of tremendous scholarship and intellectual acuity. By adopting the perspective of our destiny rather than origin, Treweek demonstrates that in church history, biblical exegesis and Christian theology, singleness has the same eternal significance as marriage. She takes on sacred cows and names Christian leaders who have veered away from the Bible to privilege marriage and devalue singleness. Treweek presents us with a vision of the church that is far more inclusive and faithful to Scripture. Taken seriously, this book will change the way churches operate, preachers preach, Christian organisations act, friends befriend, and crucially, how we love and are loved.

Judging criteria

The **Australian Christian Book of the Year Award** is given annually to a book written by an Australian citizen normally resident in Australia. The award recognises and celebrates excellence in Australian Christian writing. A shortlist is announced in July and the award is presented during August. The award carries a prize of \$3,000. Supplementary awards may be made. Entries are judged with an eye to the following:

Original nature of the work.

Literary style, including suitability for the target audience.

Competence and expertise displayed by the author in writing the book and examining the underlying thesis.

Design, layout, cover, text and illustrations.

Contribution that the book makes in meeting a need for Christian writing for the Australian situation and in the Australian market.

Judges

Greg Clarke has a doctorate in modern literature and long experience in publishing, academia and Christian mission. He is the CEO of Leprosy Mission Australia and the author of the 2014 Australian Christian Book of the Year, *The Great Bible Swindle*. Greg and his family are members of St Mark's Anglican Church in Darling Point, Sydney.

Miriam Wei Wei Lo is a writer intrigued by the intersection

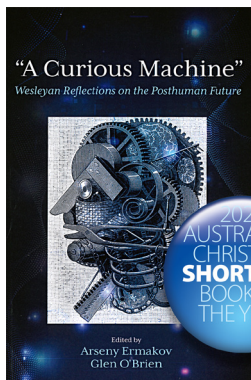
between faith, art and messy human lives. After eleven years in country ministry with her husband, she returned to academia in 2019 and currently lectures in creative writing at Sheridan Institute in Perth. Miriam and her family go to East Fremantle Baptist Church. Her latest poetry collection is *Who Comes Calling?*

Catherine Place started out as a secondary school teacher. Theological study added to the excitement of raising a family with her husband Dan. She has written

for a Catholic liturgical magazine, produced resources for teachers of Religious Education and Texts and Traditions in secondary schools and was a tutor at Corpus Christi Seminary and Catholic Theological College in Melbourne.

Awards Coordinator
Bei-En Zou



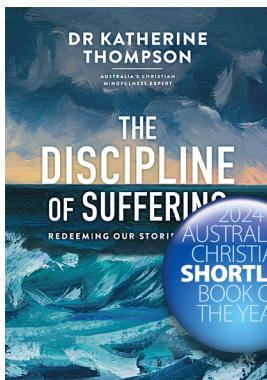


Shortlisted

"A Curious Machine"

Wesleyan Reflections on the Posthuman Future
Edited by Arseny Ermakov & Glen O'Brien
Wipf and Stock
9781666762594

This informed and nuanced collection of essays shows how Christians might advance a biblical understanding of humanity while embroiled in a tech tsunami and meeting the challenges posed by posthumanism and transhumanism. Are technologies good, bad or indifferent? How do digital technologies affect human agency, autonomy, decision-making and accountability? Ranging widely, the contributors explore John Wesley's openness to the new technologies of his time, the imagination of H. G. Wells and the ethics of sex with robots. The result is scholarly and challenging but also practical, pastoral and positive.

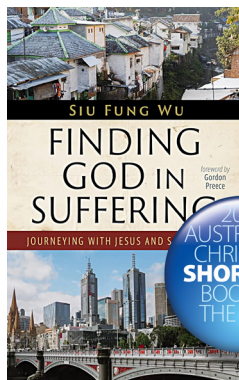


Shortlisted

The Discipline of Suffering: Redeeming Our Stories of Pain

Katherine Thompson
Acorn Press
9780647531792

Katherine Thompson shows how suffering can become a spiritual discipline. Because we can trust God with our pain, suffering can draw us closer to him. Thompson gently confronts unhelpful myths and platitudes and brings Scripture and the most useful tools psychology has to offer (like narrative therapy) to the task of embracing, reframing and processing life's most difficult experiences. She includes raw and frank confessions from a range of sufferers. Thompson is sensitive and empathetic and her book is accessible and engaging. A friendly textbook and workbook for people suffering and those supporting them. Self-help done well.



Shortlisted

Finding God in Suffering: Journeying with Jesus and Scriptures

Siu Fung Wu
Wipf and Stock
9781666758672

Siu Fung Wu reads the Epistle to the Romans in the light of his own experience of disadvantage, prejudice, violence and injustice: first as an impoverished child in Hong Kong, then as a lonely student in Britain and a struggling immigrant in Australia. For an affluent and comfortable church, Wu's insights are as valuable as they are uncomfortable. He gently questions readings of Scripture that ignore the fact that the original readers and hearers were most likely poor and marginalised. He also calls out the suffering Christians inflict on each other through discrimination and exclusive and patronising practices. Let's listen and learn.



Shortlisted

Growth and Change: The Danger and Necessity of Passion for Church Growth

Andrew Heard with
Geoff Robson
Matthias Media
9781922980137

Without change there can be no growth. In this call to action, Andrew Heard urges church leaders to be confident in the unchanging truth of the gospel but pragmatic, entrepreneurial and adventurous when it comes to strategy, structure and methods. Heard is forceful but also cautious, compassionate and wise. He warns against traps, temptations, and false expectations and measures of success. A timely reminder of the gravity and significance of the ministry of proclamation. Every church needs a pastor who is enthusiastic about evangelism.



Shortlisted

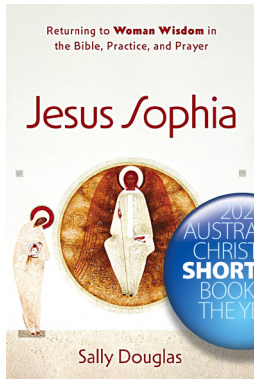
In the Midst of Much-Doing: Cultivating a Missionary Spirituality

Charles R. Ringma
Langham Global Library
9781839732430

This generous compilation is a long life spent in contemplation, teaching and practising Christianity. The enterprise is at the head, heart (intellectual rigour, love and practical application) and hands. Ringma is meticulous in scope and execution. The book is engaging in nature. It explores movements and ministries throughout the church and its denominations. The insights are both the writing is both and personal. A sourcebook on strategy and global Christianity.



Much-Doing
of Spirituality
NGMA
2024 AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN SHORTLIST BOOK OF THE YEAR

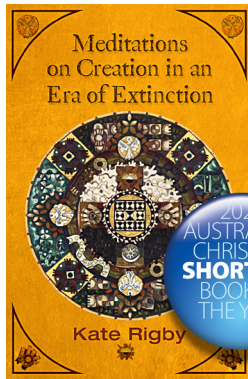


Returning to **Woman Wisdom** in the Bible, Practice, and Prayer
Jesus Sophia
Sally Douglas
2024 AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN SHORTLIST BOOK OF THE YEAR

Shortlisted

Jesus Sophia:
Returning to Woman Wisdom in the Bible, Practice, and Prayer
Sally Douglas
Cascade Books
9781666735796

If God is beyond gender why do Christians feel at ease with images of God as male, but awkward about images of God as female? This thought-provoking and unsettling book explores such questions and examines the strand of wisdom literature which identifies the feminine figure Wisdom in the Old Testament with the Word made flesh, Jesus Christ. Study of the evidence for this in Scripture and in the writings of the early church is followed by an invitation to consider how an understanding of Jesus as Sophia might enable us to become more Christ-like.



Meditations on Creation in an Era of Extinction
Kate Rigby
Orbis Books
9781626985506
2024 AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN SHORTLIST BOOK OF THE YEAR

Shortlisted

Meditations on Creation in an Era of Extinction
Kate Rigby
Orbis Books
9781626985506
To address urgent contemporary environmental concerns, Kate Rigby revives the Hexameron—an ancient Christian practice of meditating on the six days of Creation. However, by adding a seventh meditation, she moves the focus from human dominion to God’s enjoyment and celebration of creation, so that we might see the world as God sees it and then rejoice and look after it. Rigby’s thoughts run deep and range widely. She draws on Scripture, early Christian writing, recent scientific research and her own experience. The result is at once devotional, serious, entertaining and personal.



MICHAEL FROST
MISSION IS THE SHAPE OF WATER
LEARNING FROM THE PAST TO INFORM OUR ROLE IN THE WORLD TODAY
2024 AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN SHORTLIST BOOK OF THE YEAR

Shortlisted

Mission is the Shape of Water:
Learning from the Past to Inform our Role in the World Today
Michael Frost
100 Movements
9781955142403
So that we might be agile, flexible and sensitive to the needs and opportunities around us, Michael Frost tells the story of ten distinct movements in the history of Christian mission. While the gospel message is unchanging, the form that mission takes is fluid—like water. The metaphor serves not just to show how mission is shaped by context but also how movements advance with the humble contribution of ordinary Christians; there is a part for every Christian to play. A compelling and encouraging introduction to the history and theory of mission.



A Story of Chiefs, Gangs, Prime Ministers, and the God beyond the Clouds
Searching for PARADISE
Charles Nombo Lapa & Janet Dickson
2024 AUSTRALIAN CHRISTIAN SHORTLIST BOOK OF THE YEAR

Shortlisted

Searching for Paradise:
A Story of Chiefs, Gangs, Prime Ministers, and the God Beyond the Clouds
Charles Nombo Lapa & Janet Dickson
Resource Publications
9798385207008
An extraordinary life. Charles Nombo Lapa has witnessed Papua New Guinea’s transition from a mosaic of tribes to a parliamentary democracy. This vivid yarn takes us from his Highlands village to Parliament House in Port Moresby. Lapa’s experience of colonisation and Christian mission together with his response to the gospel is instructive and challenges popular stereotypes. In both the old ways and the new, he must discern what to honour and retain and what to reject. Lapa’s sacrificial and faithful service to God and his people is moving and inspiring.

Titles submitted for the 2024 Australian Christian Book of the Year Award

100 Movements

Acts and the Movement of God, Steve Addison

Mission is the Shape of Water, Michael Frost

598 Press

Travels of a Wimpy Mum, Vanessa Foran

Acorn Press

My Father's Son, Wayne Alcorn

The Discipline of Suffering, Katherine Thompson

AnnMarie Skinner

Life with Rough Edges, AnnMarie Skinner

Ark House Press

Christ's Passion, Heide L. Wright

Daddy Will Carry Me, Barbara Ireland

Faith of a Maker, Phillip McKerrow

Father-Life, Darryl Krause

The 'B' Word, Katrina Wilkie

The Cross and the Railway, John Wyndham

Australian Heart Publishing

Jesus, Kurt Mahlburg & Warwick Marsh

Authentic Media

Swansong, Jo-Anne Berthelsen

Bethany House

Good Catastrophe, Benjamin Windle

Brightmettle Press

The Blood Miles, Andrew Moody

Cascade Books

Jerusalem to Illyricum, Paul W. Barnett

Jesus Sophia, Sally Douglas

Christian Focus

10 Dead Gals You Should Know, Rachel Ciano & Ian J. Maddock

Coffee Table Discussions

God's Duty, Alan Ansic

Deror Books

Double-Minded, Mark Durie

Eerdmans

Recruiting the Ancients for the Creation Debate, Andrew J. Brown

Eider Books

Light Overcoming Darkness, Jason Summers

Fifty Days Press

A Bully Named Nightmare! Danny Graham

We're Just Shooting Stars, Peter Hallett

Gahae Huh

My Story, My Blessing, Christa Yang & Jessie Huh

The Ring of Solomon, J. Ceders

Garratt

Authentic Christian Living, Gavin Brown

Deep Governance Matters, Kathleen Donnellon

In Her Voice, Various
Struggling to Believe? Tony Doherty

Witness, Specialist, Moderator, Bernadette Mercieca & Ann Rennie

Green Hill

Shedding Light, Malcolm Woolrich

Time Warp, May Waller

Growing Faith

Footsteps for Future Generations, Ian Barnett

Heart Hope

Be Held by Him, Karen Brough

Take a Breath with Him, Karen Brough

Take a Step with Him, Karen Brough

Hill of Grace

Living Your Best Life, Noni Potter

Judy Douglas

Satisfied, Judy I. K. Douglas

InterVarsity Press

Improvising Church, Mark R. Glanville

The Meaning of Singleness, Danielle Treweek

Walk His Way, Andrew G. Shead

Kharis Media

Renovated, Matt Aroney

Langham Global Library

In the Midst of Much-Doing, Charles R. Ringma

MAF Australia

Aero Grace, Ron Watts

Master Books

Who Am I? Martyn Iles

Matthias Media

Forgiven Forever, Rory Shiner

Growth and Change, Andrew Heard with Geoff Robson

I Am What I Do, Andrew Laird

The Gender Revolution, Patricia Weerakoon

The Life of Faith, Peter F. Jensen

Truth Be Told, Lionel Windsor

Mim Ellis

Refining Gold, A Restored Survivor

New Growth Press

You Are Still a Mother, Jackie Gibson

Orbis Books

Meditations on Creation in an Era of Extinction, Kate Rigby

Pickwick

No Sense of Entitlement, Heather Thomson

Union with Christ, Sung Rual Choi

Resource Publications

Father Horse, William Lewis

St. Patrick and the Helicopter, William Loader

The Bonds of Brotherhood, Bob Mitchell

Pastor Served Al Dente, Edgar Stubbersfield

Searching for Paradise, Charles Nombo Lapa & Janet Dickson

Routledge

Resurrection Remembered, David Graieg

Samantha Jansen Publishing

Scarred for Christ, Nico Theart

Seedbeds Communications

No Wastelands, Ash Barker

Set Free Ministries

Firm Foundations, Ken Legg

St Paul's Publications

Why the Risen Jesus Matters, Charles Waddell

Star Label Publishing

Where Rivers Flow, Rebecca Moore

The Good Book Company

Futureproof, Stephen McAlpine

Faithfully Present, Adam Ramsey

WA Poets Publishing

Infinite Ends, Amy Lin

Wipf and Stock

A Conversation Between a Muslim and a Christian, Peter Barnes & Mohamad Younes

"A Curious Machine", Arseny Ermakov & Glen O'Brien

Balanced Discipleship, Justin Campbell

Being Christian after Christendom, David Rietveld

Environmental Education, Matthew Etherington

Finding God in Suffering, Siu Fung Wu

Many Believed Because of Her Testimony, Robert A. Derrenbacker Jr., Christopher A. Porter & Muriel Porter

Salvific Intentionality in 1 Corinthians, Scott Goode

Youth for Christ International

Intimacy, Intercession and Increase, Lyndal J. Walker



The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia Incorporated. A member of Missions Interlink and registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission. PO Box 198, Forest Hill, Victoria. 3131 Telephone 1300 13 7725 admin@sparklit.org www.sparklit.org



2024 Australian Christian Teen Writer Award

Winner



Evannah Stark
The Nightmares.
The Torment. The Peace.

How should we deal with feelings of isolation and worthlessness? In this collection of short

stories and poems, a young writer wrestles with the challenges and difficulties encountered in the Christian walk and teaches us to weigh the lies we tell ourselves against the truth of the gospel.

Extract from *The Nightmares.*
The Torment. The Peace.

They are here again.

I thought it was a one-off, but lately it appears that these visits are more frequent. Shadowy fingers emerge from the gap in the door and wind their way around the door frame. Long contorted limbs stalk the walls and ceiling. I can make out their figures in the dark and watch wide-eyed as they climb over the furniture and poke at my belongings.

Their hands come up out of the floor tiles, out from under the bed. I shut my eyes. I tuck my legs up, forming a tight ball out of fear that they will grasp my ankles and drag me down with them. Drag me away

from this world and all that is in it, and never let me see the light of day again. Take me down to their abode that is so easy to get into yet impossible to ever get out of. The path there is easy and wide, and they entice so many earthly beings to follow in their destructive ways, causing them to stumble and fall over the edge into a great void of fire.

I try to calm my rapid breathing. I open my eyes, and everything seems quiet. No one is here, they are gone. Sucked back into their world.

But then, I see her. Bony hands on pointed hips, her lean and gangly figure swaying slightly. Her black hair flows down her shadowed body, cascading over her shoulders and coiling around her waist. She mumbles unintelligible words in a calloused voice.

Then she shouts, stunning me with the single word she howls before vanishing completely: "Magdalene!"

The ringing in my ears grows louder. The pounding of my heart racks my entire body. She knows my name. How does she know my name?

Second Prize



Alvoli Anderson
Reflections on Rain
and Reason

Looking for purpose, Alvoli Anderson pokes, probes and ponders history, Scripture and

popular culture. Her instinct and curiosity are rewarded with some pleasing connections.

Extract from *Reflections*
on Rain and Reason

It's May of Twenty-Twenty-Four
Four hundredth time hearing

"What Was I Made For?"
Not once of my own accord
A subtle search for our creator
I wonder what the people thought
In May of Nineteen-Twenty-Four
Stuck between the two world wars
In a brief and blissful roar
Around the ring of history,
Repeating every century
Tracing before B-C-E,
Taking from the knowledge tree
A first abuse of opportunity
Starts a spiral called humanity
A twist that brought about gravity
It's only now that I can see
The interwoven irony
An ignorance we've always known
Since what wasn't ours to own
Fell from a branch we were supposed
To nurture, though we did not grow
And since then, all we ever learnt
Was, despite every repeated turn
And the Everything we did not earn,
To neglect the One who, not even
For a moment, thought before
He spoke "I AM" for our "therefore"
Descartes Declares, or Billie sings
In breathy notes like that of
Which brought us into being;
Into Twenty-Twenty-Four
Still pondering this Everything
"What Was I Made For?"

Third Prize

Hannah Leigh
Worlds Collide



2024 Young Australian Christian Writer Award

Winner



Shannae Ku *Dusty Wings*

This engaging allegory explores the role of the church in reaching the lost. The author has created convincing

characters and a coherent fantasy world that comfortably and naturally hosts big theological and missiological themes.

Extract from *Dusty Wings*

Zoe found Faith sitting on the floor of the bathroom, a large wooden box on her lap. Her face drained of colour. With the limited storage space in the apartment, the unused bathtub had been the only place big enough to contain the box.

The lid was secured shut by a latch, but the pane of glass set in its middle revealed the contents within. Zoe's wings fluttered, beating weakly against its confines.

Faith raised her head. "I thought you were just hiding them with your hair, like before."

Zoe knelt in front of her, feeling the ache in her back more keenly than before.

"Why is the box locked?" Faith whispered.

"They broke out of every other kind of containment we tried."

"But they're trapped!" Faith's eyes were glistening now.

Zoe shifted uncomfortably. "I guess that's one way of looking at it, but it's only temporary."

"But why?"

Zoe chewed the inside of her cheek. How to explain this to a child?

"Are you scared people will get mad at you again?"

"Well, that's part of it," Zoe said carefully. "Sometimes, people get scared of things they don't understand. When my sister and I came here, we wanted to help the Grounded City. But there are a lot of people who don't want us here, so I removed my wings so that I look more normal. That way, they can see we're not so different to everyone else. Eventually, they might listen."

Judging criteria

The **Australian Christian Teen Writer Award** carries a prize of \$1,000 and is offered annually for the best unpublished manuscript written by an Australian citizen under 18 years of age.

The **Young Australian Christian Writer Award** carries a prize of \$2,500 and is given annually for the best unpublished manuscript written by an Australian citizen under 30 years of age.

Supplementary awards may be made.

The winning works will explore a Christian perspective or theme and incorporate, explain or encourage Christian life and values. Entries are judged with an eye to the following:

Original nature and content of the work.

Literary style, including suitability for the target audience.

Contribution that the work makes in meeting a need for Christian writing in Australia.

The 2024 Australian Christian Literature Awards were announced and prizes presented on Thursday 22 August 2024.

The Australian Christian Literature Awards are administered by SparkLit (The Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge Australia Incorporated and the Australian Christian Literature Society).

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