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Wilson's "More: Find your personal calling and live life to the fullest measure" (Book Review)

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Fox, M. (2015). *A message from the great king: Reading Malachi in light of ancient Persian Royal Messenger texts from the time of Xerxes*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns. 170 pp. \$42.50. ISBN 9781575063948

This book has a laser fine focus. The audience of this book are those who are scholars in the area of Malachi. This is written much like a dissertation. He starts with the history of research on the book of Malachi. In the next chapter, the author discusses his methodology using Michael Ward's donegality. Fox gives an excellent overview of how this technique was used on the *Narnia Series*, and how he will use that technique. Next, the book discusses the history and the use of royal messengers. He then shows how these two areas influenced the writing of Malachi. Fox ends with a conclusion and what he believes should be future research. The book has no real literary flow and it is written specifically to scholars studying the book of Malachi. Due to purpose and audience of this book, I can only recommend this book to libraries that support graduate degree programs in the Old Testament.

Reviewer

Gary R. Averill, Spiritual Life Bible College

Wilson, T. (2016). *More: Find your personal calling and live life to the fullest measure*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 223 pp. \$15.99. ISBN 9780310524250

With a foreword by Rick Warren, author of *The Purpose Driven Life*, it should come as no surprise that *More* addresses vocation and God's call. Todd Wilson, who left a job in engineering to start a nonprofit church planting organization, divides his book into two sections. In part one, he illustrates the ways calling involves both a mandate to everyone in the Church and a specific personal calling for each person. According to Wilson, the Church's calling is to "carry the fullness of Jesus into every corner of society" (p. 60), and an individual's calling should be fostered within a faith community and discerned through the Holy Spirit. Churches should be "incubators of calling" (p. 71). Wilson asks three fundamental questions: "Who am I created to BE?" "What am I created to DO?" and "Where am I created to GO?" The first question is related to each person's identity as one of God's children. The second question is related to Jesus' Great Commission: to make disciples. The third question is related to each individual's particular gifting and location in which the person can be the most effective. Many times, Wilson argues, the place a person can be most effective is where he or she already is (p. 95). Part two is a workbook of sorts that will help a person discern how she or he can answer these three questions in order to discern God's specific calling of her or his life in the context of the more general calling to make disciples. *More* can be used by an individual or in a small

group setting. At the end of each chapter is a summary and a set of questions that help each reader digest and take action on what Wilson writes in the chapter. This is a good complement to any collection concerned with vocation and calling, and its approach is fresh enough to sit among other works on vocation.

Reviewer

Amy C. Rice, Northwest Nazarene University

Hawkins, G. L., & Parkinson, C. (2011). *Move: What 1,000 churches reveal about spiritual growth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 286 pp. \$18.99. ISBN 9780310325253

The Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois conducted a congregational survey in 2004 to determine which church programs and activities were most effective in promoting spiritual growth. The results were expected to be useful in making key ministries even more effective. However, the results revealed a disconnect between what the church thought it was accomplishing and what the members stated. The survey was later expanded to include one thousand churches over a period from 2008 to 2010. The results confirmed the findings at Willow Creek and are analyzed in this book by Hawkins, executive pastor of Willow Creek and co-creator of the REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey, and Parkinson, brand manager for REVEAL (<http://revealforchurch.com>).

The book is arranged in three parts including a spiritual growth framework, an explanation of how that framework promotes development from early believers to mature Christians, and strategies used by church leaders who have successfully nurtured that development among their congregants. One of the most surprising findings of this survey was that participation in church activities does not necessarily drive spiritual growth. An individual's spiritual growth was found to be more closely aligned with a growing relationship with Christ. The survey results suggest that spiritual growth moves along a continuum and that various catalysts, from church activities to personal spiritual practices, impact how people move along that pathway. The authors identify four stages in this continuum and the characteristics of people at each stage, including those who have a basic belief in God, those who are growing in a personal relationship with Christ, those who have integrated Christ into their daily lives, and those whose lives are completely Christ-centered and for whom that relationship is central.

The second part of the book identifies a number of catalysts that promote movement from one stage to the next across the spiritual continuum. According to the data, personal spiritual practices, such as prayer, scripture study, and solitude, are the most