



2015

Petherbridge's "One-Hundred and One Tips for the Smart Stepmom: Expert Advice from One Stepmom to Another" (Book Review)

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Recommended Citation

Fuller, Lisa (2015) "Petherbridge's "One-Hundred and One Tips for the Smart Stepmom: Expert Advice from One Stepmom to Another" (Book Review)," *The Christian Librarian*: Vol. 58 : Iss. 2 , Article 69.
Available at: <http://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/tcl/vol58/iss2/69>

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One God,

by Michael Stephakoff. Seattle, WA: CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2015.
188 pp. \$14.99. ISBN 9781508425656

*Reviewed by Tami Echavarria Robinson, Coordinator of Instructional Services,
Whitworth University, Spokane, WA*

Written by a Messianic Jewish Rabbi, this book details how we need to make communication with God and develop a personal relationship with Him that goes beyond the salvation experience. His perspective is based on the Jewish tradition that there is one God and this is the witness of the nation of Israel to the world. Although this perspective can be mistaken for amillennialism, Messianic Jewish belief in the Messiah does not deny or reject the belief that Jesus will have a literal, thousand-year-long, physical reign on the earth. It simply focuses on Jesus' message that the kingdom of God is "at hand" or "within us." The Jewish teaching is that God has placed eternal life within us. We need to become conscious of the living God, the one invisible God whose presence is living and breathing right before our spiritual eyes, and has been from the beginning. Every generation needs to personally know the one true God to bring us into a personal witness of the Messiah. As a result of the fall, all of mankind is under a state of delusion in which we do not know God. We are born into this state of unconsciousness in which we cannot see the kingdom of God. How we find a God we have not known is the calling of Messianic Jews. The true secret which man must unravel is the "mystery" of the one, invisible God who is right here, right now – and always has been. The book would have been improved by a careful editing of spellings and specific citations to the Scriptures quoted. It is self-published but is nonetheless of high quality.

One-Hundred and One Tips for the Smart Stepmom: Expert Advice from One Stepmom to Another,

by Laura Petherbridge, Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 2014. 160 pp.
\$12.99. ISBN 9780764212215

*Reviewed by Lisa Fuller, E-Learning & Instruction Librarian, Brackett Library,
Harding University, Searcy, AR*

Although many books address the role of marriage within the Christian community, there are few that offer assistance to people of faith who are navigating the often murky waters of creating a stepfamily. Laura Petherbridge works to fill that void. As a frequent speaker for Smart Stepfamilies, Petherbridge brings wisdom and personal experience to those who are new to the role of stepmom. Her previous work, *The Smart Stepmom*, was co-authored with Ron Deal and provides an in-depth look

at the challenges facing women who step in to help raise other people's children. This newer, shorter work provides specific, targeted advice and should be used as a complementary text rather than a stand-alone reading project.

Petheridge writes clearly and lovingly to women in a challenging position. She addresses the need for parents in blended families to communicate and set boundaries and offers suggestions for effective methods to meet those goals. Prayers and scriptures are provided for encouragement and support. Through sharing stories of other stepmoms, Petheridge allows her readers to know they are not alone; stepparenting is a challenge, but others have succeeded in creating healthy families under similar circumstances.

101 Tips for the Smart Stepmom provides a quick reference for women who hope to create a positive environment for their stepfamily. By addressing issues ranging from dating to finding our ultimate fulfillment in our faith, Ms. Petheridge's newest book would be an excellent addition to any church or home library. Universities offering counseling degrees would also benefit from including resources from *Smart Stepfamilies* in their holdings.

Onward: Engaging the Culture Without Losing the Gospel,

by Russell Moore. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2015. 208 pp. \$24.99.

ISBN 9781433686184

*Reviewed by Charles Huckaby, Assistant, Technical Services Department,
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX*

In the two years that he has been president of the Southern Baptist Convention's Ethics and Religious Liberties Commission, Russell Moore has faced a whirlwind of issues for which many American Christians were not prepared. Same-sex marriage has been legalized by the United States Supreme Court and with that decision seems to come the clear and present danger of the loss of religious liberty. The atrocity of abortion has been painfully reintroduced to the forefront of our minds. Gender seems to have transformed from an assignment at birth to a fluid choice. And all of this has occurred in the time since Moore's book went to press. In the midst of cultural chaos, Moore's message to the church is *Onward!*

Moore's book is timely and critical for the average churchgoer and seminarian alike to grasp in the wake of the moral revolution currently taking place in America. I found myself underlining and making notes about more things in *Onward* than I do in most other books. Perhaps that's because I grew up in the cultural Christianity-laden South that Moore addresses so often. However, it is more than just a geographical