



Australian Christian Book of the Year Awards  
**Winner 2008**

**GOD Next Door: Spirituality & Mission in the Neighbourhood**

by Simon Carey Holt  
ISBN 9780908284634  
Acorn Press

"God Next Door" brings to life Jesus' command to "love your neighbour as yourself" and explains how living Jesus' words will transform neighbourhoods. It is a timely and necessary challenge to all Australian Christians who are busy "doing church" and to churches where a program-focus may have inadvertently dulled ideas of mission. It shows how to understand Jesus' call on your life regardless of your context.

Holt shares practical wisdom on the "how to" of engaging neighbours and neighbourhoods, by thinking about the distinctives of one's own neighbourhood. He demonstrates the value of reclaiming the neighbourhood, in an era in which we retreat into homes with large TVs and small front yards. He shows a sound knowledge of typical Australian neighbourhoods and puts compellingly Jesus' call to mission in our own local neighbourhood.

"God Next Door" is a book which will provoke action: one judge found it life-changing!  
It is a book which churches could explore together with a view to living like Jesus in their neighbourhood.

Readers will gain a better understanding of their surroundings, a higher degree of engagement with their neighbours and a more authentic mission, by bringing Christianity and Jesus out of the church building and into the neighbourhood.

**2nd Prize**



**My Seventh Monsoon:**  
a Himalayan journey of faith and mission  
By Naomi Reed  
ISBN 9780980345827  
Ark House Press

A contemporary story written in a wonderfully refreshing and intensely personal style. This book encourages us to remember that the Lord journeys through every season with us; it is also a helpful reminder that obedience to God doesn't mean freedom from hardship and hurt.

An ordinary young Australian Christian couple were unexpectedly astonished at the call of God on their lives, a call which moved them from comfortable work as health care professionals in a Sydney hospital to steamy monsoonal Nepal. The heart-warming story provokes an understanding of modern Australian missionaries, and of our roles as supporters and partners

Having lived the extraordinary experiences of other cultures, Naomi Reed's analysis of Australian culture is helpful for Australians who can't see our cultural blind-spots. This honest account of their life and expectations is a challenge to comfortable Christian living in the west, which helps the reader to better understand missionaries, and also our own roles as potential supporters and partners - or perhaps, God's missionary to another culture.

**3rd Prize**



**666 And All That: The Truth About the Future**  
by John Dickson & Greg Clarke  
ISBN 9781921137808  
Aquila Press

Everybody wants to know how it's all going to end!

Tapping into the current interest in spirituality, heaven, and end times, Dickson & Clarke address a popular and controversial topic in a way that equips Christians by providing a solid biblical basis for future events.

It provides a helpful corrective to Christian popular fiction and pseudo-non-fiction by seeking to address the problems of poor theology learned through such unsound fiction and many movies.

Using a sensible, rather than a sensationalist approach, the authors seek to clarify and encourage, providing assurance in dealing with people's uncertainties and anxieties by highlighting the centrality of Jesus in God's promises.

The judges were pleased to note that Dickson & Clarke unpack the broader teaching of Scripture - not just Revelation - and that they deal seriously with the problem of sin and what a response to sin demands.

Balanced and comprehensive without being academic, this book clarifies Christian expectations of death and beyond; cuts through the fuzziness; and brings clarity to an area that has been muddied by the entertainment industry.

Christian Theological Writers Award  
**Winner 2008**

**Graham Cole**

for

**He Who Gives Life: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit**

Wheaton / Crossway, 2007

He Who Gives Life, while aimed as a textbook, was extremely well written, succinct, well-argued, thoughtful, and pastoral. Further, it does not follow the format of standard works on the Holy Spirit, but takes an independent approach. The author draws heavily from scholars of each era of church history. He guides us to the contributions both of the well-known exponents of pneumatology and the more obscure, but insightful nonetheless. A very important addition to expositions of the person and work of the 'shy member of the Trinity'. (ISBN 978-58134-792-0)

**Honourable Mentions**

**Paul Barnett**

for

Paul: Missionary of Jesus

Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2008.

The second of a proposed trilogy, Paul: Missionary of Jesus is a clear, balanced assessment of the 'missing years' of Paul, between his conversion and ministry recorded in Acts and reflected in his epistles. Paul Barnett's skill and expertise as both theologian and historian of the early church are evident throughout this helpful, stimulating book. (ISBN 978-0-8028-4891-9)

**Brian Rosner**

for

Greed as Idolatry: The Origin and Meaning of a Pauline Metaphor

Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 2008.

Greed as Idolatry probes the background and function of the metaphor Paul employs in Eph 5:5 and Col 3:5 and assesses the history of its interpretation, with far-reaching implications for Christian life and proclamation in our contemporary situation. (ISBN 978-0-8028-3374-7)

**John Woodhouse**

for

1 Samuel: Looking for a Leader

Crossway: Wheaton, 2008.

This thorough and highly readable commentary ably combines thoughtful and original insights into the text of Scripture, clear critical engagement with scholarship, and appropriate application to the contemporary context. The writing is lucid and the commentator's pastoral heart is evident at every point. (ISBN 978-1-58134-873-6)

Young Australian Christian Writer of the Year Award  
**Winner 2008**

**Sarah Dunbar**

for her story

**Foreigner in Number 12**

Extract from the judges' report –

While belonging to a society addicted to comfort and increasingly afraid to love, Sarah convincingly reminds us that God intends that life be an adventure. There is no intimacy without courage. Courage ... and humour. Sarah is honest, wise and eloquent as she confronts her own exasperation and hatred for the very people she feels called to serve. We laugh with her and weep with her. We even feel inclined to follow her on the dangerous path that is growing intimacy with God.

Extracts from book –

"He is just another man with a gun. Twenty-four hours ago, he would have invoked fear and terror.

Now with apathetic exhaustion, we stare at each other and shrug silently ...

"Somebody should warn you about dangerous prayers. Somebody should shout before you pray:

'Stop! Do you REALLY want that?' ...

"I prayed my faith would grow. God stretched me like a rubber band until I thought I would snap.

Just when I thought I couldn't take it anymore, He would stretch just that little bit further.

My faith grew as a result ...

"I prayed God would take me to Romania to love the children.

He gave me the hardest children to love. Eventually, I loved them with His love ...

"I prayed for patience. God brought a thousand annoying people to my door.

I learnt to rely on Him for patience ...

"I prayed that I would trust God. He took away everything I relied on

until the only thing I could do was trust Him ...

"I prayed for a boyfriend. God made me single until I learnt about intimacy with him ...

"I prayed for joy. I found it on the other side of sadness ...

"I prayed my heart would break with the things which break God's heart. It did."

**Certificates of Commendation 2008**

**Luke Hopkins – Sitting on Ocean Waves**  
**Skye Parry-Jones – Tainted**  
**Emily Jordan – My Life as Katrina Collins**  
**Katherine Lazarus – My journey to the F Word**  
**Christopher Vaatstra – The Power of God Vol. 1- God Seeker**



## Australian Christian Book of the Year Awards

Presented at the Awards Evening on Wednesday 27th August 2008

# 2008

### Complete list of entries submitted for 2008

<p><b>Acorn Press</b> <i>Escape from West Papua</i> Alan Nichols</p> <p><i>God Next Door</i> Simon Carey Holt</p> <p><i>I Heard Him Call</i> Margaret Thornton</p> <p><i>Please! No More Boring Sermons</i> Keith Weller</p> <p><b>Access Press</b> <i>A Remarkable Venture of Faith</i> Anthony F.B. Hall-Matthews</p> <p><i>Seasons and Seasonings in a Teapot</i> Sarah Evans</p> <p><b>Allen &amp; Unwin</b> <i>Battle Order 204</i> Christobel Mattingley</p> <p><i>Chenolla Green</i> Christobel Mattingley</p> <p><i>Creative Journal Writing</i> Stephanie Dowrick</p> <p><b>Aquila Press</b> <i>666 And All That</i> John Dickson and Greg Clarke</p> <p><i>Still Deadly: Ancient Cures for the Seven Deadly Sins</i> Edited by Andrew Cameron &amp; Brian Rosner</p> <p><b>Arise Publishing</b> <i>Back in Daddy's Arms</i> Sharon Hill</p> <p><b>Ark House Publishing</b> <i>My Seventh Monsoon</i> Naomi Reed</p> <p><i>Pro Hart</i> David Hart</p> <p><b>ATF Press</b> <i>Creation, Grace and Redemption</i> Neill Ormerod</p> <p><b>Authentic Media</b> <i>Celebrating Life</i> Graham Buxton</p> <p><b>Blue Bottle Books</b> <i>A Spectator's Guide to World Views</i> Edited by Simon Smart</p> <p><i>Men - Firing Through All of Life</i> Al Stewart</p> <p><b>Bolt Publishing Services</b> <i>Thomas Moore of Liverpool</i> Peter Bolt</p> <p><b>Clouds of Magellan</b> <i>Seduced by Grace</i> Michael Bernard Kelly</p> <p><b>Continuum</b> <i>Like Catching Water in a Net</i> Val Webb</p> <p><b>Crossway Books</b> <i>1 Samuel</i> John Woodhouse</p> <p><i>He Who Gives Life</i> Graham Cole</p>	<p><b>Eerdmans</b> <i>Greed as Idolatry</i> Brian Rosner</p> <p><i>Paul: Missionary of Jesus</i> Paul Barnett</p> <p><i>The New Testament with Imagination</i> William Loader</p> <p><i>Whisper of Spirit</i> Antony Campbell</p> <p><b>Evangelical Press</b> <i>Daniel</i> Allan Harman</p> <p><b>Gynea Media</b> <i>Just a Minute</i> Karl Faase</p> <p><b>Hawkins Ministry Resources</b> <i>Disciples Who Will Last</i> Tim Hawkins</p> <p><b>Haworth Pastoral Press</b> <i>Moving Towards Spiritual Maturity</i> Neil Pembroke</p> <p><b>House of Grace</b> <i>Heart of Stone: My Story</i> Hoa van Stone</p> <p><b>HSM Publishing</b> <i>Postcards on a Journey</i> John Mallison</p> <p><i>Psalmscapes</i> Matthew Jacoby &amp; Rod Allen</p> <p><i>The Gift of Values</i> Rosie Boom</p> <p><i>The Story of The Star, The Stable, and The Saviour</i> Cameron M Semmens &amp; Rod Allen</p> <p><i>The Theologast</i> Cameron M Semmens</p> <p><b>IVP</b> <i>Written For Us</i> Peter Adam</p> <p><b>Matthias Media</b> <i>Living with the Underworld</i> Peter Bolt</p> <p><i>Making the Most of the Rest of Your Life</i> John Chapman</p> <p><i>Nothing in My Hand I Bring</i> Ray Galea</p> <p><b>MediaCom Education Inc.</b> <i>A Bird's Eye View of the Bible</i> Doug Rowston</p> <p><b>National Institute for Christian Education</b> <i>Shocked by Blessing</i> Rod Thompson &amp; Carolyn Keshaw</p> <p><b>Oxford University Press</b> <i>Ratzinger's Faith: Theology of Pope Benedict XVI</i> Tracey Rowland</p> <p><b>Panographs Publishing Pty Ltd</b> <i>The Great South Land of the Holy Spirit</i> Ken Duncan</p> <p><b>Paratus Press</b> <i>Good Night &amp; God Bless</i> Trish Clark</p>	<p><b>Pardalote Press</b> <i>So Much Light</i> James Charlton</p> <p><b>Penguin</b> <i>Black Water</i> David Metzenthen</p> <p><i>The Ghost's Child</i> Sonya Hartnett</p> <p><i>The Peasant Prince</i> Cunxin Li</p> <p><i>Ziba Came on a Boat</i> Liz Lofthouse</p> <p><b>Peter Lang</b> <i>More than a Passover</i> Fergus J. King</p> <p><b>Peters Press</b> <i>Suffering and Salvation</i> Aloysius Rego</p> <p><b>Phares</b> <i>The Singing Silence</i> Anne Hamilton</p> <p><b>Poetica Christi Press</b> <i>Earth Works</i> Edited by Janette Fernando</p> <p><b>Poseidon Books</b> <i>Ever Feel Like an Ant in a Landslip?</i> Christelle Withers-Mayne</p> <p><b>Set Free Ministries</b> <i>What's Eating You?</i> Ken Legg</p> <p><b>Sid Eavis</b> <i>A Healing Ministry</i> Sid Eavis</p> <p><b>Signs Publishing Company</b> <i>Bill's Bush Adventures</i> Errol Wright</p> <p><i>Can We Still Believe the Bible?</i> Bryan Ball</p> <p><i>Ordinary People - Faithful God</i> Compiled and edited by Nathan Brown</p> <p><b>Strand</b> <i>An Aussie Christmas Carol</i> Kel Richards</p> <p><i>Australian Stories to Bless the Soul</i> Multiple</p> <p><b>Structural Integrity</b> <i>Wake Up and Smell the Glory</i> Matthew Smith</p> <p><b>Toowoomba City Women</b> <i>A Slice of Life</i> Multiple</p> <p><b>Trinity College</b> <i>Frank Woods: Archbishop of Melbourne 1957-1977</i> Brian Porter</p> <p><b>UNSW Publishing</b> <i>Anglicans in Australia</i> Tom Frame</p> <p><i>Science and Soul</i> Charles Birch</p>
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Judges' Comments on other short-listed titles

**A Spectator's Guide to World-Views** Ed. Simon Smart (Blue Bottle Books)  
**God Next Door** Simon Carey Holt (Acorn Press)  
**Heart of Stone** Hoa van Stone (House of Grace)  
**Men, Firing Through All of Life** Al Stewart (Blue Bottle Books)  
**My Seventh Monsoon** Naomi Reed (Ark House Press)  
**Psalmscapes** Mal Austin & Matthew Jacoby (HSM Publishing)  
**Please! No More Boring Sermons** Ed Keith Weller (Acorn Press)  
**Shocked by Blessing** Rod Thompson & Carolyn Kershaw (National Institute for Christian Education)  
**666 and all that** John Dickson and Greg Clarke (Aquila Press)

Everyone knows people who operate within the worldviews outlined in this book, not to mention the extent to which we ourselves absorb these worldviews unknowingly. A good range of well-respected contributors, has worked coherently towards a common goal of providing the reader with a reliable overview of contemporary Australian belief systems.

**Heart of Stone** (Hoa van Stone) (House of Grace)  
 A positive, dramatic, Australian story with a foreword by Tim Costello. This well-designed self-published account of the life of a Vietnamese orphan brought into an Australian Christian family, shows the power of God in the midst of multiple adversities.

A harrowing exploration of early life in a Vietnamese orphanage during the Vietnamese war, is followed by a realistic portrayal of our contemporary Australian drug culture. The title is a clever but appropriate reminder of God's transforming power in the lives of his children. Reading **Heart of Stone** will encourage faith in the face of seemingly hopeless situations. A personal, contemporary, Australian immigrant story, which needs to be told.

**Men, Firing Through All of Life** (Al Stewart) (Blue Bottle Books)  
 Refreshing, accessible and stimulating. This book addresses a whole range of issues which are important to men, but which they don't usually get to talk about. It uses a wide range of illustrative material - from Bertrand Russell to Bob Carr! Useful reading for men of all ages, it particularly addresses those in mid-life. A helpful discussion of the wisdom of Ecclesiastes in relation to real and pressing issues for 21st century Australian men.

**Psalmscapes** (Mal Austin & Matthew Jacoby) (HSM Publishing)  
 The thoughtful text makes this book stand out from others in the genre. Jacoby's reflections effectively unpack the Scripture verses on each page in a way that draws the reader into the Psalms. The quality of the photos is consistently high. A commendably ambitious project with a pleasing result.

**Please! No More Boring Sermons** (Ed Keith Weller) (Acorn Press)  
 Although designed for a small target audience, this book has potentially significant benefit to the Christian community if it is read, taken to heart and applied by preachers. Well suited for the primary target audience - preachers; both new and experienced - this is also good reading for the person sitting in the pew, so that we know what we're supposed to be hearing! Excellent practical advice from an eminent range of preachers, including sample sermons.

**Shocked by Blessing** (Rod Thompson & Carolyn Kershaw) (National Institute for Christian Education)  
 The judges appreciated the layout and design of this book which unpacks Old Testament stories as context for the Beatitudes and brings them to bear on 21st Century life. Shocked by Blessing challenges our desire for a pain-free existence where comfort is king. It uses the Scriptures interwoven with real stories, to demonstrate the sovereignty of God and the supremacy of Jesus Christ. This book opens the reader's eyes to God's purposes.

### The following books were short-listed for final judging

**A Spectator's Guide to World-Views** Ed. Simon Smart (Blue Bottle Books)  
**God Next Door** Simon Carey Holt (Acorn Press)  
**Heart of Stone** Hoa van Stone (House of Grace)  
**Men, Firing Through All of Life** Al Stewart (Blue Bottle Books)  
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### Judging

Entries were read and judged with an eye to:  
 The original nature of the work,  
 The literary style, including suitability for the target audience,  
 The competence and expertise displayed by the author in writing the book and examining the underlying thesis,  
 The overall design, layout, cover, text and illustrations,  
 The contribution that the book makes in meeting a need in Christian writing for the Australian situation.

### Judges 2008

Nancy Kroeger – Finance officer of Ridley College Bookshop, Melbourne, & Presbyterian pastor's wife and church planter.  
 Sally Smith – Editor and author whose writing has been published in Australia and overseas- currently also writes for Baptist churches in NSW & ACT  
 Clayton Fopp – lectures theological students and is Associate Pastor at Trinity Hills Church (Adelaide) and serves on the executive of Re-Definition Youth Ministries.

### Co-ordinator

