



Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

What a great evening. Michael and Synthia Baynes have become wonderful friends through their three year journey in The Master's Program. Tuesday evening, they referred to us as their "spiritual parents." During their time in TMP, God infused them with a sense of calling that is taking them elsewhere: less than a month from now, they will move from Southern California to the south of France. Why make such a life-changing move?

Michael has shifted his real estate career connections from Orange County to Bordeaux; a casual but uninformed observer would say that this family is just transplanting themselves for business, moving from a recession to a recovery; trading Dollars for Euros. Is there more?

Sure is. They're moving from highly-evangelized Southern California to virtually-pagan Southwest France. Their plan: enable conversions, make disciples... and plant churches. Real Estate is their "cover." Kingdom expansion is their mission...

Wednesday, Cheri and I were still talking about our time with the Baynes when we boarded our Qantas 747 at LAX, headed for Auckland. In my bag was Randy Alcorn's 2004 book, *Heaven* (Tyndale). On my list of summer books to review, this 476 page primer on our eternal home was along for the reread.



The first time through it - four years ago - it got my "skim." This time was going to be a word-for-word.

Our 747 didn't lose its skin over the Pacific the way another Qantas 747 did, the same day. But within hours of our arrival, we were no less shaken than those passengers who made an unscheduled landing in the Philippines. My assistant called with the tragic news that our dear friends Greg and Cathie Laurie - known for their leadership at Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside, and Greg's broader ministry to the world - had lost their older son, Christopher, in an automobile accident in Southern California.

Thank God for superintending my packing. Heaven is open in front of me, and it has just what I needed as I process the unexpected departure of a 33 year old son of a colleague - a husband and father in his own life, but the up-and-coming progeny to our friends - from this present world. Christopher

has arrived in Heaven...

What a parallel, for me. In the same way that Cheri and I bid farewell on Tuesday to our "virtual" children, en route to France... Greg and Cathie bid farewell on Thursday to their son, en route to Heaven.

Randy Alcorn is one of my most respected authors. In fact, if I could recommend two books that expose subjects about which most Christians are regrettably uninformed, they would both be Randy's: *The Law of Rewards...* and *Heaven*.

Life has become far too "cushy" in 21st Century America. We are deluded to believe that we live in Paradise... and that the best opportunities for personal gain are found here. Randy uses the Bible to recalibrate our view of the future: your ultimate "dream home" is on the New Earth - your eternal destination - and your greatest opportunities for personal benefit surround your Kingdom service here, leading to Eternal Rewards. If you only read one book this summer, make it *Heaven*...

Bob Shank

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