

LET'S START TALKING ...

Here are some topics where I can offer my unique satirical yet spiritual perspective. These themes can be tailored to an organization's specific needs.

Jesus Died for This?

As we approach the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, I've been searching for signs of Jesus in the 21st century despite the presence of such biblical brands like Americana Christianity©, Emergent Church™ and Progressive Power®. In this quest, I discovered communities of faith hidden beneath the biblical bunk. Through their seemingly ordinary activities, they are changing the world through the love of Christ. If possible, I'd love to interact with local grassroots groups and faith leaders in this dialogue of how we deconstruct our misperceptions of Jesus in order to reveal glimpses of the Risen Christ. Such a dialogue would create a living room discussion where we can all learn from each other what it means to be a Christ follower in a post 9-11 world.

Connecting as Christians

Just as the printing press helped launch the Reformation, how is technology helping us get out our message in the 21st century? This conversation would cover the rapidly changing shifts in print and online publishing, social networking and other means that we use to communicate our message to a global world. Ideally, I'd like to have a roundtable with tech savvy Christians, who can help guide us all in an open sourced discussion.

The New Atheist Crusaders and Their Unholy Grail

I offer a satirical analysis of the four Horsemen of the Atheist Apocalypse (Dawkins, Hitchens, Harris and Dennett) and their misguided quest to rid the world of religion. As I deconstruct their Monty Pythonesque moves, I will reflect on how the Christian community gives these faithless fools ample fodder. If possible, I would like to open up a dialogue with Christians and humanists on how we can turn down the white noise caused by the extremists on both sides so we can explore where we can find common ground in our shared humanity on topics such as the intersection of science and religion, concern for the environment, and the separation of church and state.

A Peculiar People

A historical romp of those seminal church figures such as Mary Magdalene, St. Francis of Assisi, William Wilberforce and Mother Teresa reveals that those who choose to follow Christ have always found themselves drawn to the margins of society. Also, these stories demonstrate to those who feel they are crazy for following Christ that they are indeed in excellent company.

Rising from the Ashes: Rethinking Church

The alternative worship/emerging church movement has been underway in various incarnations throughout the UK for over twenty years, and has impacted the U.S. evangelical community since the 1990s. However, these influences are just now beginning to emerge within the mainline liturgical churches. In my role as a scribe, I've been gathering oral history-style interviews with people who are at the forefront of exploring what it means to "be" the church in the 21st century. I welcome the opportunity to engage in interactive discussions with other religious leaders and activists interested in this dialogue.

The Spiritual Discipline of Religious Satire: A holy and yet heretical quest.

From 1995 to 2006 I served as Senior Contributing Editor for *The Wittenburg Door*, the world's largest, oldest and only religious satire magazine and continue to pen satirical pieces for outlets such as *Killing the Buddha*, *The Jesus Manifesto* and *Geez*. I can offer my reflections on how this old and honorable tradition practiced by religious leaders ranging from Jesus to Jonathan Swift can keep spiritual seekers sane. Thanks to daily application of this discipline, I will reflect how I can still remain a follower of Jesus despite living in Christianized America.

Vote for MY Jesus? An exploration of how the role of faith in the public square.

Drawing upon the research for my book *Red and Blue God, Black and Blue Church* and my continued postings for outlets such as *Sojourners/God's Politics blog*, *Religion Dispatches*, *Geez*, *The Jesus Manifesto*, and *Killing the Buddha*, I will critique those who chose politics over piety, while exploring what it means to follow the rule breaking, troublemaking, love making radical Christ. This talk will be revised as needed to keep abreast of the current religious-political debates.

What Crisis?

In our quest to establish the church of the 21st century, we seem to keep misplacing the set of keys that can help us unlock the roadmaps taken by those countless pilgrims, who served as faithful witnesses through such monumental church catastrophes like the Great Schism and the Reformation. Whenever I find myself wandering in the wilderness, it's usually because I went off on my own direction instead of continuing along this ancient pilgrim path. Here I seek to explore what we we can learn from our past moving forward by delving into the teachings of historians such as Phyllis Tickle, Brian McLaren, Philip Jenkins and Brian McLaren. A slide show highlighting their teachings can be provided.

LOGISTICS

In the keeping with the spirit of creating spaces where we're all travelers on the journey rather than "experts," I don't ask a set fee for services rendered. Rather, those interested can contribute what they can so that these conversations can continue. While I enjoy meeting people face-to-face, I welcome the opportunity to connect with people virtually via Skype and other webcasting services.

When possible, I try to take a pilgrim approach to travel by not jet hopping but staying and exploring the area a bit and try to make multiple connections. Along those lines, I prefer not to stay at hotels, looking instead to join people in their homes or if that's not possible, then I look for religious retreat centers or hostels. To keep my carbon footprint down, I try not to rent a car and take public transportation or share rides when possible.

If folks would like to have audio and video available, then I will need a slide projector with a screen and audio speakers that can connect using USB cables.

Contact me at JesusDied4This@gmail.com to start chatting.

Peace,

Becky Garrison