

In Others' Words

Editor's Note: In this department, we highlight resources outside of the IJFM: other journals, print resources, DVDs, web sites, blogs, videos, etc. Standard disclaimers on content apply. Due to the length of many web addresses, we sometimes give just the title of the resource, the main web address, or a suggested search phrase. Finally, please note that this October–December 2016 issue is partly composed of material created later in 2016 and 2017. We apologize in advance for any inconvenience caused by such anachronisms.

Warrick Farah on *Insider Jesus*

In our last issue, we mentioned Warrick Farah's blog posts reviewing chapters 1–3 of William Dyrness' *Insider Jesus* (see Darren Duerksen's review of this book in this issue, p. 184). Since then, Farah has blogged about the last three chapters <http://muslimministry.blogspot.com/>. In his *Insider Jesus 5* post, Farah takes up what he calls Dyrness' "meatiest" chapter on the subject of religion. Quoting Dyrness:

what if we thought of religion, or religions, including Christianity, not as fixed entities with clearly defined borders but as fluid spaces that reflect particular cultural situations, where people have developed various ways of responding to God (or gods or the spirits)? Further, what if we understood those spaces as places where people are working out the possible meaning of God's presence there, "so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him" (Acts 17: 27), as Paul puts it—that is, as hermeneutical spaces where people are not only open to God's voice but also prepared (by the Spirit) for that word? (Kindle 1955–1959)

Farah concludes:

I agree that the gospel must be incarnated into local contexts so that it feels like home, at least [with] both the pilgrim and indigenous principles (Walls) in play[;] (there must be some discontinuity as Dyrness also states). But religion is really conflated with cultural practices in Dyrness' framework. Or perhaps in my framework they are too easily separated? These assumptions/presuppositions on the difference between religion and culture are probably [at] the heart of evangelical disagreements on insider movements.

Victoria Emily Jones on Martin Palmer's *The Jesus Sutras*

Jones' ten posts on "The Jesus Question" blog both review and illustrate (with beautiful photographs and Chinese art) the main theses of Martin Palmer's *The Jesus Sutras: Rediscovering the Lost Scrolls of Taoist Christianity*. Her posts nicely supplement David Cashin's article (pp. 175–182, this issue), which looks at early Nestorian Christianity in China as a prototype of (in his opinion) what eventually became a syncretistic insider movement.

Jones is clearly intrigued by these truly remarkable sutras. She begins by introducing [the Stone Stela](#), a 12-foot by 3 1/2 foot

by 1 foot engraved stone found in 1623 near Xi'an at what was known as the Da Qin pagoda. The Chinese officials who found this enormous stone took rubbings of it and sent them off to the Jesuit priests in Beijing (almost certainly Jesuits who had worked with Mateo Ricci.) As she goes through these sutras one-by-one, extensively quoting from the newly translated documents themselves, she attempts to explain how these sutras teach Christian theology garbed in Chinese worldviews (whether Buddhist or Taoist). For example, she quotes from First Sutra on the death and crucifixion of Jesus:

As a lamb goes silently to be slaughtered so he was silent, not proclaiming what he had done, for he had to bear in his body the punishment of the Law. Out of love he suffered so that what Adam had caused should be changed by this. (4:18-19)

For exact quotations from the most theologically orthodox sutras, see "[Orthodoxy Established](#)" (search terms: "thejesusquestion orthodoxy established"). Does the incarnation make more sense to a Chinese—Buddhist or Taoist—mind if it incorporates the five skandhas (or attributes) as part of Jesus' humanity? See [The Jesus Sutras' account of the incarnation in Jones' Part V](#) (search terms: "thejesusquestion five skandhas").

69% of Yemenis Don't Know Where Their Next Meal is Coming From

Yemen is facing a [colossal humanitarian disaster](#) (*New York Times*, Aug 23, 2017). More than [ten million people](#) "urgently require immediate life-saving assistance." Failing sewage systems and lack of clean water mean

the world's worst cholera outbreak in the midst of the world's largest humanitarian crisis. . . . [Yemen] is on the brink of famine, with over 60 per cent of the population not knowing where their next meal will come from. ([From a joint statement by the World Food Programme, UNICEF, and the WHO.](#))

Advice from a Chinese Christian

On China Source, there is a useful column that routinely translates Chinese Christian blogs and articles into English. A recent article translated from the *Gospel Times* came from a Chinese Christian in Fujian province after the devastating 7.0 earthquake on August 8 in Jiuzhaigou, Sichuan province. He brings a timely piece of advice to Westerners about [how to pray and what not to say when disaster strikes](#): <http://www.chinasource.org/blog/posts/what-not-to-say-when-disaster-strikes>.

EMQ to Continue Publication

[Justin Long](#), in his free Weekly Roundup Newsletter (Aug 25, 2017), under New Data and Resources, mentions some wonderful news for all of us in the missions world: [EMQ will not cease publication after 2017](#), but will now be published by MissioNexus. **IJFM**