




The Keller Center

for **CULTURAL APOLOGETICS**

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

An aerial photograph of New York City, showing the dense Manhattan skyline with numerous skyscrapers and the green expanse of Central Park in the foreground. The image is dimmed to serve as a background for text.

The Keller Center for Cultural
Apologetics helps Christians share
the truth, goodness, and beauty of the
gospel as the only hope that fulfills
our deepest longings.

THEKELLERCENTER.ORG

When we started *The Keller Center for Cultural Apologetics* this year, we recognized a new challenge—a big challenge. We’re living amid the largest religious transformation in American history. Forty million Americans have left the church in the last 25 years. Many other Western countries have already seen similar declines. The back door of so many churches is wide open.

But that’s not the only challenge. After the fall of Christendom, believers in Western countries now face a strange mixture of apathy and antagonism toward the gospel. Many of our neighbors view Christianity as yesterday’s news but also as the source of today’s problems. That’s a daunting challenge for anyone working to welcome visitors through our churches’ front doors. And it feels a bit more daunting in our launch year after we lost our namesake. We dearly miss him. But we carry on with what he taught us in word and example.

We have a lot of work ahead. But we know God is faithful to build his church. And we struggle with the energy God supplies (Col. 1:29). Thank you for beginning this long journey with us. We’re grateful to God for countless answered prayers. Above all we ask that you continue to pray that our work will be faithful and fruitful as we equip the next generation of church leaders in evangelism and apologetics. If you can support our work with a financial gift, please do so as the Lord leads.

Collin Hansen



Collin Hansen
Executive Director
The Keller Center for Cultural Apologetics





To meet the challenge of this
post-Christendom era, we
want to help church leaders
around the world through three
approaches: our **convening**, our
cohorts, and our **content**.

CONVENING

This year we met in person for the first time with all 24 of our inaugural fellows. They completed an application and progressed through a vetting process of multiple interviews with the center's staff and in consultation with Tim Keller. They bring the center wisdom, experience, and skill in multiple dimensions of evangelism and cultural apologetics.

During our April retreat in New York, we grew in our relationships, in our structures for working together, and in our focus on several projects. An evening with donors yielded enough support to cover our first year of operations. Via Zoom our fellows asked Tim Keller questions and received his vision for the center's priorities. We didn't realize that within a month he'd be with the Lord.

One of Tim Keller's ardent hopes was that we could raise and distribute funds to support worthy projects outside the center.

Due to the support of generous donors in 2023 we award four grants to our fellows:

- **Dan Strange** helps local churches develop “front porches” that facilitate better interaction with their non-Christian neighbors.
- **Sam Chan** provides hands-on, intentional training for evangelists with gifting as speakers.
- **Glen Scrivener** develops video based resources to help equip Christians for evangelism.
- **Sam Allberry, Rebecca McLaughlin, and Rachel Gilson** hosted a regional conference on sexuality and gender with plans to expand beyond New England.



We're planning a return to New York for April 2024. We've booked guest speakers who will provoke conversation among our fellows on some of the greatest challenges and opportunities currently before the church. We also plan to work in groups on curriculum that we believe will not only edify Christians but also evangelize non-Christians who struggle to connect their world to the gospel.

COHORTS

Our online learning cohorts offer continuing education for any learning level, whether you've never studied apologetics or earned a graduate degree and served for years in ministry. The digital format offers flexibility for students and connects them with like-minded Christians around the world. They also receive access to follow up with our fellows, their teachers.

Even with an affordable rate for participants, our cohorts also generate ongoing income that sustains the center's operations. These inaugural four cohorts trained more than 600 participants from all 50 U.S. states, and from 13 total countries on 6 continents.



Cultural Apologetics 101

Next year we add our cornerstone *Cultural Apologetics 101* cohort featuring fellows including Rebecca McLaughlin, Joshua Chatraw, and Gavin Ortlund. Others in the works will cover sexuality, preaching, neo-Calvinism, and classical apologetic arguments.

TGCW 24

You can also [sign up](#) to learn from and [meet](#) several Keller Center leaders at The Gospel Coalition 2024 Women's Conference, June 20-22 in Indianapolis.

Out of the Nest: A Conversation for Parents and Teens About Preparing for Life in a Secular World and Why We Need Women in Ministry

Michael Kruger

Divided Families: How to Talk About Politics in an Election Year

Collin Hansen, Rebecca McLaughlin, and Kori Porter

Relational Wholeness: How Jesus Helps Us Love People Rather Than Crave or Worship Them

Rachel Gilson

The Wisdom of Wrinkles: Aging in a Culture Obsessed with Youth

Vanessa Hawkins

Hope and Help for the Doubting and Deconstructing

Collin Hansen and Rebecca McLaughlin

Why Are People Leaving Church and What Can We Do About It?

Jim Davis and Michael Graham

Why Diversity Matters

Kori Porter

TGC 23

It's not too late to [review several talks](#) by Keller Center fellows and staff from The Gospel Coalition 2023 National Conference. Speakers included Josh Chatraw, Vanessa Hawkins, Rebecca McLaughlin, Alan Noble, Gavin Ortlund, Kori Porter, Christopher Watkin, and Trevin Wax. The center also hosted an encouraging evening session on how the center aims to help church leaders.

CONTENT

Our essays, books, and podcasts aim to take Christians deeper than what most media can provide. Christians often receive the equivalent of weather reports, on what's happening in the moment or immediate future. Given the size and scale of the changes in our culture today, however, Christians need to think more like climatologists. We need to go further back in history and deeper in data—so that with God's guidance we might anticipate what's next. Essays published by our fellows and staff this year include:

New 'Gospel' Manuscript Discovered? (What It Is and Why It Matters.)

MICHAEL KRUGER

Tim Keller Memorial Sermon: 'Jesus Came to Serve and Die'

SAM ALLBERRY

Apple's Mother Nature Ad: It's Protestant Paganism

GLEN SCRIVENER

Apologetics in an Age of Despair

GAVIN ORTLUND

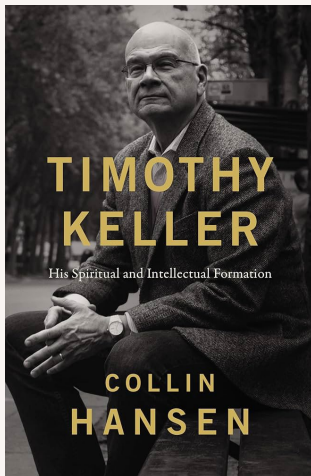
4 Realities in Jakarta That Expose Western Judgments of Christianity

N. GRAY SUTANTO

5 Misconceptions About Dechurching in America

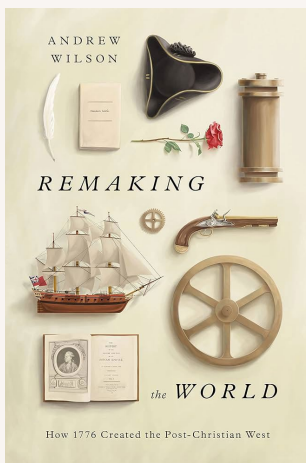
JIM DAVIS AND MICHAEL GRAHAM

The Keller Center was also instrumental in the development, publication, and distribution of several books, including:



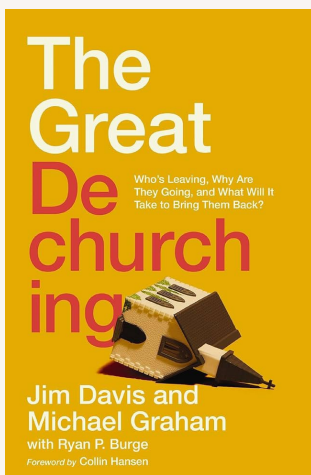
Timothy Keller: His Intellectual and Spiritual Formation

Collin Hansen



Remaking the World: How 1776 Created the Post-Christian West

Andrew Wilson

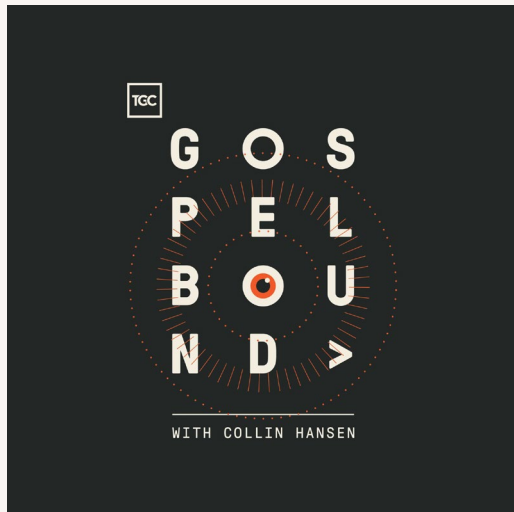


The Great Dechurching: Who's Leaving, Why Are They Going, and What Will It Take to Bring Them Back?

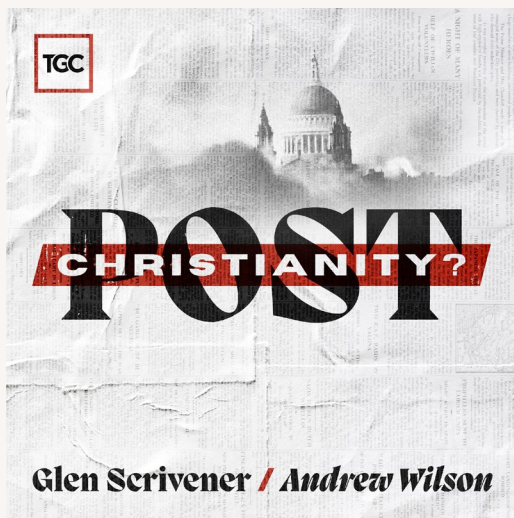
Jim Davis and Michael Graham



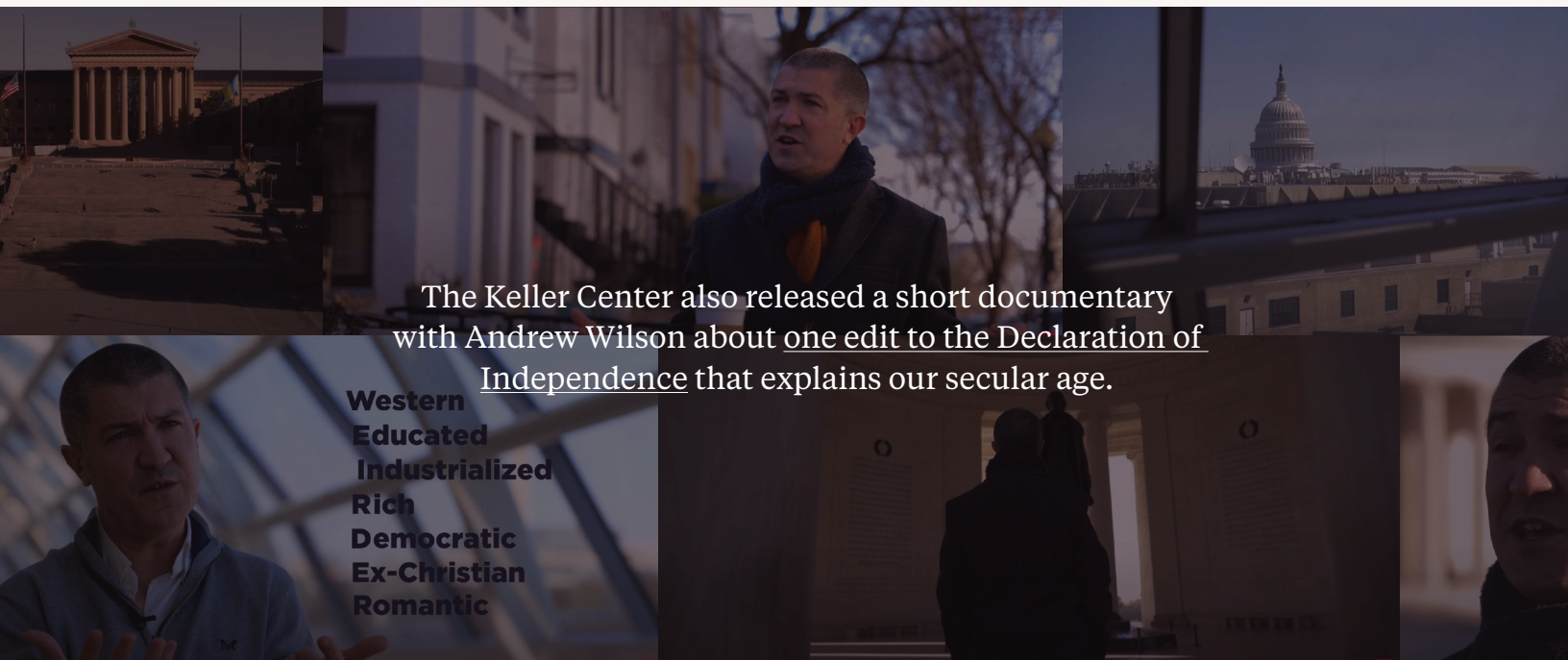
The book by Davis and Graham has sparked a national conversation about the tens of millions of Americans who have left through the back door of our churches in the last 25 years. Their work, based on the largest and most comprehensive study of dechurched in America, has provoked interest from the New York Times, Washington Post, The Atlantic, and National Review, among others. The *As in Heaven* podcast—another initiative of The Keller Center—devoted season 3 to dechurched and has been downloaded more than 1 million times in 2023. We're hopeful about this attention as we seek to spread the good news that more than half of the people who have left evangelical churches indicate they are willing to return.



Now in its fourth year, *Gospelbound* was downloaded nearly 1.3 million times in 2023, including an especially memorable conversation with recent convert Molly Worthen of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Several Keller Center fellows appeared as guests in this show hosted by Collin Hansen. The most popular episode featured James Eglinton explaining why Tim Keller thought everyone should be reading Herman Bavinck.



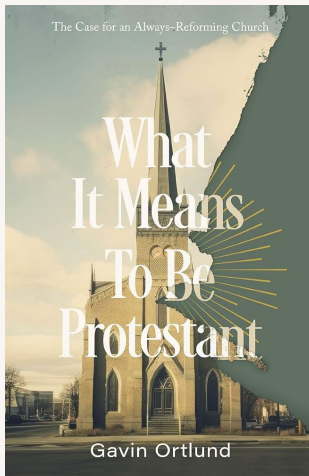
The new *Post-Christianity?* podcast, hosted by Andrew Wilson and Glen Scrivener, built a loyal audience in its first seven-episode season. In keeping with the priorities of The Keller Center, Wilson and Scrivener explore the complexities of the post-Christian West that remains so obviously indebted to Christianity despite the decline of the church. Guests such as Carl Trueman and Kyle Harper helped the hosts diagnose the cultural dynamics and suggest a constructive agenda for the church moving forward.



The Keller Center also released a short documentary with Andrew Wilson about one edit to the Declaration of Independence that explains our secular age.

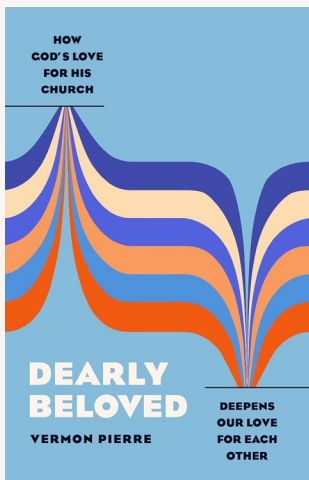
**Western
Educated
Industrialized
Rich
Democratic
Ex-Christian
Romantic**

In 2024 leaders can look forward to new books by Keller Center fellows, including:



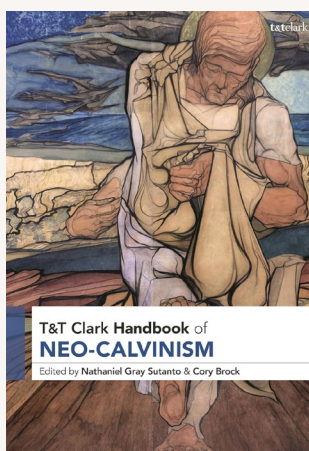
What It Means to Be Protestant:
The Case for an Always
Reforming Church

Gavin Ortlund



Dearly Beloved: How God's Love
for His Church Deepens our
Love for Each Other

Vernon Pierre



T&T Clark Handbook of
Neo-Calvinism

N. Gray Sutanto (ed.)



“I’m so grateful for the ministry of The Keller Center. A major part of what I’ve tried to accomplish in recent years is to encourage younger writers, scholars, and ministers who are doing exactly what the church in the United States needs to do in order to reach people for Christ. There are many such men and women out there, and they need lots of support. I’m delighted that The Keller Center will carry this work on for me.”

TIMOTHY KELLER

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