

Pray for an Atheist Starts Important Conversations on Facebook

Moody Publishers' Fan Page Challenges Christians to Pray and Atheists Respond



With the release of two Moody Publishers books on atheism in early 2010, *The Making of an Atheist* by James Spiegel and *Not God's Type: A Rational Academic Finds a Radical Faith* by Holly Ordway, the Moody Publishers Marketing Department was convicted to provide readers with a tool for applying the principles found in the books to their everyday lives. The staff was struck by two main themes from the books: the importance of prayer in bringing atheists to Christ and the need for Christians to be good witnesses in the lives of nonbelievers.

“Our team was lead to use Facebook as a ministry tool for encouraging Christians to commit to the principles James and Holly have found to be effective in reaching atheists,” said Duane Sherman, publicity and media specialist at Moody Publishers. “We asked believers to choose an atheist friend or relative and pray for them by name every day during the month of April. And, through Facebook, we sought to provide them with both a supportive community and the resources needed to be winsome witnesses to atheists.”

As the team prepared to launch the page, they spent a number of sessions in prayer and sought the counsel of Spiegel and Ordway. When the *Pray for an Atheist* Facebook fan page launched during the first week of March, the same week Atheist Week launched on Facebook, the response was overwhelming and unexpected. Immediately, hundreds of Christians joined the group and committed to prayer. In turn, nearly as many atheists joined the page and posted on the discussion board. Conversations began to develop about proving God's existence, becoming

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new Employees



Dave Hastey

Field Representative, Stewardship

Previously served as Office Manager/ Client Service Coordinator for The Elderlaw Practice of David L. McGuffey, Dalton, Ga.



Deborah Keiser

Acquisitions Editor, Moody Publishers

Previously served as a Marketing Manager for InterVarsity Press, Westmont, Ill.



Joshua Klos

Program Engineer, Moody Radio

Previously served as a part-time Production Assistant for Moody Radio, Chicago, Ill.



Bryan Young

Web Content Specialist, Web Communications

Previously served as Copy Editor/Webmaster for Harvest Bible Chapel, Elgin, Ill.

May

spring classes end	7
undergraduate study/reading days	11-14
spring final examinations	13-14
trustee board meetings	15
chicago commencement	15
summer recess begins	15
mts summer courses begin	17
undergraduate summer courses begin	17
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saved, understanding truth, navigating relationships between atheists and Christians, and finding morality. While some of the conversations were full of spiritual fruit, many atheists expressed anger, annoyance and disbelief towards Christians and God.

“In the page’s first week of existence, we experienced an influx of derogatory and hostile comments from atheists, which was unexpected because the page was intended for Christians,” said Sherman. “However, after we created posting guidelines, conversations about real spiritual issues began to develop between the two communities. It was then that we knew God had a greater purpose for this initiative than we originally thought.”

While the page is not censored, a staff member manages the site and works to ensure that participants are following proper posting etiquette. Posters have been asked to refrain from hateful, profane or irrelevant posts, and the majority of participants have respected the requests of the administrator.

Currently, the page has more than 2,000 “fans” and features almost constant postings between Christians and atheists. More

than 160 conversations have been posted on the discussion board and some discussion threads have more than 200 comments. In fact, the *Pray for an Atheist* page was covered in *The Christian Post* and on apologist Dinesh D’souza’s website, *To the Source*.

The *Pray for an Atheist* administrator often posts to stir and steer discussion, but much of the evangelizing has been done by Christians who have a burden for reaching atheists. What was first a social media effort to reach Christians has now

“... a few atheists have recently asked Christians on the page to pray for them and their faith journeys”

turned into “digital incarnational ministry,” where Christians are given an opportunity to communicate the love of Christ to people they do not usually encounter, but who desperately need God. “How God is using this ministry has far exceeded our expectations. In fact, a few atheists have recently asked Christians on the page to pray for them and their faith journeys.”

said Sherman. “We would like to encourage others from the Moody community to not only pray for this initiative, but to visit the fan page and engage the conversation. More Christians need to be part of these important conversations and this is the perfect place to start.”



IN SIGHT

by Greg Thornton Vice President, Moody Publishers



Moody author Nicole Bromley recently returned from a ministry trip to Nairobi, Kenya and Uganda. The television stations and newspapers in these countries featured daily stories about Nicole, her book, and the topic of child sexual abuse and human trafficking. Nicole conducted 15 individual interviews and became friends with the Ugandan Chief Justice and first lady. What connection does Nicole’s trip have to the Moody Publishers Strategic Planning Process? Everything!

A few years ago, Nicole was brought to our attention by a former Moody dean, Carol Harding. Nicole spoke at a student chapel and Carol thought there might be a book in Nicole’s stirring story. In 2007, we published *Hush: Moving from Silence to Healing after Childhood Sexual Abuse*. The message of this book soon caught the attention of Kenyan publisher David Waweru, who licensed the rights to reprint it in East Africa. He also invited Nicole and her husband on the recent speaking/book-signing tour. The results have been stunning.

Publishing provides a platform for and credibility to authors like Nicole who have life-changing messages to share. Books go places people often cannot. And, although

Moody has been publishing books for more than 115 years, recent changes in technology, such as e-Books and digital printing, are allowing us to dream about bringing solid biblical messages to audiences worldwide in powerful new ways.

The Publishing Strategic Planning Team* now meets weekly. We have moved from the brainstorming stage—in which we considered many scenarios of what the future for publishing could be under the mission set forth by Dr. Nyquist—to the heavy planning stage. We are now crafting specific plans that will make us a more effective and efficient publisher during the next few years, while still keeping our eyes on the globe. We are passionate about growing in our knowledge of and love for the audiences we will be serving, and plan to use every means possible to listen to, engage and encourage these friends. Driving us is a vision only God can fulfill.

Please pray that we will honor Christ in all of our work, that the favor of the Lord will be upon us, and that He will continue to confirm the work of our hands.

**To view a full list of the Publishing Strategic Planning Team, please visit my.moody.edu.*

Moody Radio Web Team

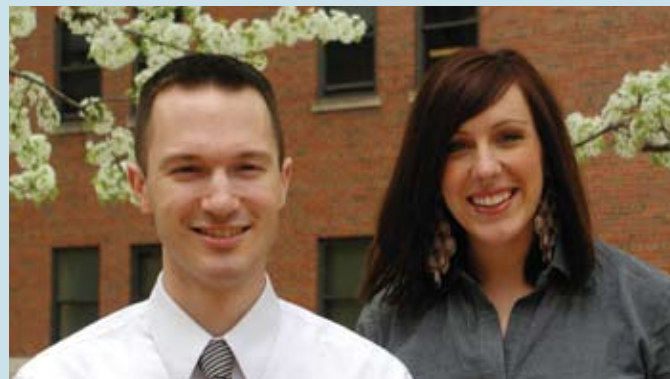
Chicago, Ill.

The Moody Radio Web Team is one of the newest teams at Moody Bible Institute—Adam Grandy, web administrator, has been at Moody for 12 months and Courtney Gaines, web content specialist, has been with the team for eight months—and is one of the most spirited teams on the Chicago campus. Together, they work to keep a positive work environment, team building and constant communication as their top priorities.

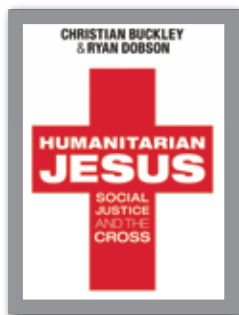
They are not afraid to challenge each other to create optimal solutions for the many audiences they serve. “Despite almost always ending up in consensus,” said Grandy. “We almost never start in agreement. We get along really well, and I think our disagreements are productive because we appreciate each other’s perspectives.”

The team serves Moody Radio’s owned and operated (O/O) stations as well as its many network programs

by publishing local and network program content; developing local station promotions and community events, and extending the equipping ministry of Moody Radio through the Internet. Over the past year, they have been coordinating the design of new websites for Moody Radio’s O/O stations as well as redesigning and repopulating the content for 13 existing sites. And, Courtney has been very busy as she became a new mom to baby Kingston on March 7!



Adam Grandy and Courtney Gaines



Read

Humanitarian Jesus: Social Justice and the Cross

Christian Buckley and Ryan Dobson
224 pages • \$14.99

In *Humanitarian Jesus*, Christian Buckley and Ryan Dobson explain that their goal is for readers to “begin to reconsider how you should engage human need in the light of your faith and understanding of God’s call on your life.” Throughout the book, they explore the biblical evidence for why and how Christ called his followers to serve the disadvantaged. They challenge readers to reexamine their views on humanitarian service; focus on serving people, not solving problems; serve God as He desires, and realize that love is an action.

Additionally, the authors outline how the call to service can be lived-out in today’s world through a series of interviews with leaders of evangelical humanitarian organizations. The relevant and in-depth insights of leaders, such as Franklin Graham of Samaritan’s Purse and Francis Chan of Cornerstone Church, ensure that readers walk away with tangible ideas for reflecting Christ’s love.

Every day, people witness disease, poverty, natural disaster and war; however, with a blueprint for service found in the life of Jesus Christ, we are readily equipped to work at meeting the spiritual and physical needs of the hurting.

employeeSpotlight



Josie Scott

Office Administrator; Sports Ministry/
Lifetime Fitness and Athletic Departments

While many would agree that the students and employees of Moody Bible Institute benefit greatly from the facilities and programs offered at the Solheim Center, Josie Scott would argue that the community surrounding the Chicago campus also reaps many advantages from it. “One of my favorite things is hearing from our affiliate members that they see a difference in the atmosphere at our facilities and in the attitudes of our staff compared to other athletic organizations,” said Scott, who has been the full-time office administrator for the Sports Ministry/Lifetime Fitness and Athletic departments since 1988.

Affiliate members are people from the community who pay to exercise at Solheim. “Many affiliate members are not Christians, and this provides us with opportunities to be the love of Christ in their lives,” she said. Scott, a lifetime Chicagoan, works closely with Moody’s athletic director and the chair of the Sports Ministry/Lifetime Fitness department. She is responsible for communicating athletic events to the Moody community, organizing logistics for athletic games, processing membership applications, scheduling classes and managing clerical work, among many other things.

On the weekend she enjoys spending time with her husband of 34 years, David, and their four children, four grandchildren and three dogs.

The *Moody Memo* is published during the first week of each month. Please submit material two weeks before publication; all material is subject to editorial discretion and review. E-mail questions, comments and submissions to memo@moody.edu.