

Harvest

Awareness Foundation: healing communities through education

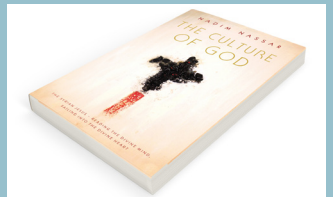
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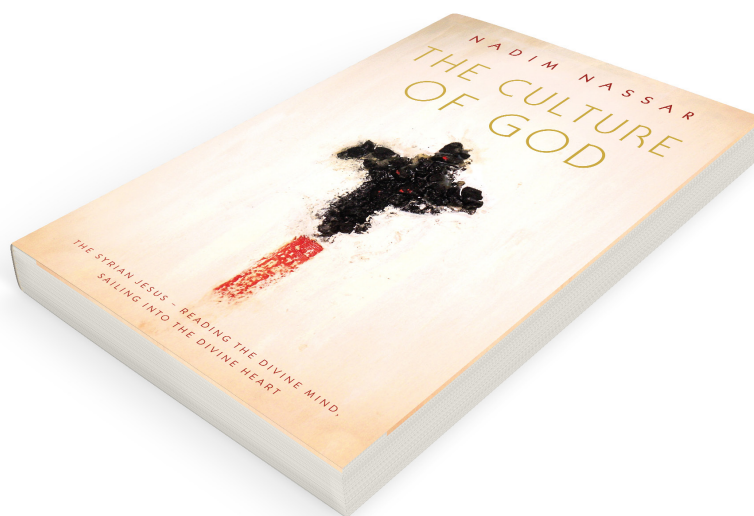
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The Culture of God

by The Revd Nadim Nassar

We are thrilled to announce that Nadim Nassar's first book will be published by Hodder & Stoughton this year.



"The Culture of God" will be available in paperback and electronic formats from the 6th September 2018.

The book is described by Hodder & Stoughton as *"a fresh look at how understanding Jesus in his Middle-Eastern context transforms our understanding of God."*

The Culture of God has been an essential theme of Nadim's theology since his studies in Beirut during the Lebanese Civil War. This book takes the reader on a journey with Nadim, through significant moments in his life, as he developed a unique insight into the heart of God.

The book features three crucial cultures that Christians need to understand:

- the culture of the Bible
- our own culture, and
- the culture of God.

The first step we must take is to understand Jesus in his own earthly culture. Nadim shows how only Jesus had direct access to the culture of God, and how Jesus revealed precious glimpses of the culture of God in his life and teachings.

The book also looks at the people Jesus chose to accompany him, and how he dealt with some of those he met on the way, and how the culture of God can be seen colouring every relationship. The message for the reader is that we must allow the culture of God to enter into our lives and to reflect this in everything we do.

The staff, trustees and volunteers congratulate Nadim on his tremendous accomplishment!

Where to buy the book?

The Culture of God is available in all good bookshops, as well as online retailers.

Fundraising Gala Dinner 2018

This year, our annual Gala Dinner will be the opening event for our international conference

Please mark the date in your diaries: our Fundraising Gala Dinner will take place on the evening of Tuesday 6th November.

There will be plenty of time for relaxed conversations as the evening develops, catching up with old friends and making new ones over an excellent three course dinner in the heart of London.

Our Fundraising Gala Dinner is our most prestigious annual event. Last year our special guest was HRH The Countess of Wessex GCVO. This year promises to be just as special, as we welcome civic and religious leaders from around the world who are taking part in our International Conference, which begins the following day.

Last year's Fundraising Gala Dinner was our most successful dinner yet, with over 150 amazing guests and a whopping 'profit' of £15,000 raised to help children and young people in Syria and Iraq, as well as many in the UK who seek to build community harmony through faith. This year, we aim to raise £50,000 so that we can reach more children and young people, especially in the Middle East.

We were astonished by the generosity of everyone who attended, so we're even more excited for this year's dinner which we hope to be even bigger and better!

We are delighted to confirm that our Fundraising Gala Dinner will be held at the Copthorne Tara Hotel, Scarsdale Place, London W8 5SY.

To book tickets - or tables - please go to:

<https://www.awareness-foundation.com/events/gala-dinner>





A moment to relax...Dr. Filfli leads the hard-working Ambassadors in a short therapeutic exercise.

Ambassadors for Peace

Syria, February 2018



In February 2018, we met with our 35 Ambassador for Peace "Project Managers" in Lattakia, Syria, to continue their training.

Over three days, the young people learned more about how to prepare and plan their peace-building projects in preparation for launching them later this year. This time, the project managers learned about:

- how to write proposals and fund raise
- how to build relationships with sponsors
- formulating project documents
- new methods & techniques for developing and sharing ideas.

There was also time to look at some of the concepts which had been introduced in previous training sessions, including:

- the project life cycle
- project management methodology stages, including monitoring and evaluation
- logical frameworks

As before, this training was led by Dr. Pierre Filfli, an expert from Lebanon.

Again, we were so impressed by their dedication and commitment, as well as a powerful sense of renewed hope for the future.

Special thanks go to Father Amer, Revd Salam Hana, Eid b Eid, Lina Khashow and Raneem Basna for helping to make this Ambassadors for Peace programme such a success.

I would like also to thank Bishop Nicola Sawaf, Fr Habib Danial and Fr Atef Falah for their support and for their faith in the mission of the Awareness Foundation.

The Project Leaders' training will continue in 2018.

Thank you Ambassadors. You were amazing. We are very proud of you. Well done. Keep your faith alive.

Huda



For "An Abundant Life"

Daniel, one of the Ambassadors, presents his group's project on education for healthier families.



Daniel is a member of Eid'b'Eid, an ecumenical group in Lattakia. He is an engineer.

Our work in the Middle East

Plans for 2018 and beyond

The war continues to rage in Syria and Iraq, and we still have hope: hope in our future, hope to challenge the world to turn its back on warfare and violence, hope that the children and young people can make peace.



Little Heroes 2018

Jul/Aug Bringing hope to the children, and a smile to their faces

This year, we plan to help 500 children around Lattakia and Safita in Syria.

Our focus this year will be on "who is the King" and "who are the children of the King?" We shall be teaching the children that Jesus loves and helps us, and that we must love and help each other as his children.

- "But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God" (John 1:12)



Ambassadors for Peace: Syria

Jul/Oct Empowering young Syrians to become Ambassadors for Peace

We shall be holding 2 Project Manager training events in Syria this year, as well as training 50 Ambassadors.

The 35 Project Managers will complete their training this year, enabling them to launch their peace-building projects into their communities. This is the culmination of a programme begun in 2014 to enable young people to become peace-makers and reconcilers in society.



Ambassadors for Peace: Iraq

2018/19 Empowering young Iraqis to become Ambassadors for Peace

For the first time, we are beginning our Project Manager training in Iraq.

The training will take place over four separate events, totalling 14 days, beginning in 2018. We shall be based in Erbil, in Iraqi Kurdistan.

- "We must work the works of him who sent me while it is day; night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." (John 9:4-5)

Your support makes our mission achievable

We can do nothing without the support of friends old and new. Please consider making a gift to the young people of Syria and Iraq.

We promise that every donation, large or small, will make a difference to the lives of children and young people.

To donate to Little Heroes, please go to:
<https://www.awareness-foundation.com/little-heroes>

To donate to Ambassadors for Peace, please go to:
<https://www.awareness-foundation.com/ambassadors>

4th International Conference, London 2018

"The Future of the Near East: The Role of Christians in Building Peace and Healing Communities"

Our 4th International Conference will take place in London on 7th and 8th November 2018 at Copthorne Tara Hotel, Kensington, London. Delegates from the Near East, Canada, USA, the EU and the UK will be working to find ways for Christians to contribute to making a difference and building peace in their communities.

At the end of the Conference, delegates will reassemble at the House of Lords so that their final statement can be presented to members of both Houses and representatives of major media and charitable organisations.

If you would like to learn more, please contact Huda Nassar at middleeast@awareness-foundation.com or on 020 7730 8830.

Welcoming our friends to Lodge House

Every year, we host events to thank our supporters for their love and kindness.

In January, we invited our friends and supporters to come to a small celebration to mark the beginning of our 15th Anniversary.

His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos, our Patron, prayed for the work of the Foundation and for all who contributed in so many ways to its continued growth.



Nadim speaks at Lodge House

Faith Education

An important part of our mission is to help Christians deepen their understanding of their own faith.

Easter Lecture 2018: The Finger of Thomas

The Revd Nadim Nassar discussed faith and doubt, Thomas' confession, and why Thomas did not actually touch Jesus after all.

At our Easter Lecture, Nadim told a packed room that the challenge for us today is to believe without having seen Jesus in his physical form: 'blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed (v. 29)'

He explained that, *"the witness of the disciples of the living Lord has given us faith through a living relationship with the risen Lord. That faith made the faithful see the living one. Believing is seeing!"*

Faith is a journey, and in order to grow in our faith we need to seek understanding, including questioning. We can only do this if we study the scriptures and live a life of prayer.

Nadim said, *"Faith is like love, it makes us vulnerable and comes with a great responsibility. It is the responsibility to witness which Thomas took extremely seriously. It took him as far as India where he died as a martyr. Witnessing is the natural consequence of faith. After the disciples barricaded themselves behind closed doors in great fear, they received the Holy Spirit. Then no doors could have kept them in because faith became an enormous power, the power which made them face the world and eventually martyrdom. That faith enabled them to change the face of history and humanity."*

"'Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed' is not only a wonderful reason for great joy, but also a statement of hope for us. This answer included all believers, generation after generation. 'Although you have not seen-him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.'" (1 Peter 1:8-9).



Awareness Foundation America

In the United States, the many volunteers at Awareness Foundation America work to raise awareness of our work and raise funds for us.



(L to R) Rear: Steve Taber, Valerie Aji, St. John Wright, Reem Issa, Christopher Bunting

Front: Stuart Auchincloss, Amin Al-Laty, The Revd Susan Auchincloss, The Revd Donald Fishburne

Photo: Nadim Nassar

Francisco and South Carolina, together with The Revd Nadim Nassar and St. John Wright from the Awareness Foundation, discussed exciting plans for promoting the work of the Foundation in North America over the next twelve months.

The meeting was led by Christopher Bunting (Chair, Awareness Foundation America) and Reem Issa, (Chief Executive Officer, Awareness Foundation).

Key recommendations included the development of a new fundraising strategy, increased communication between the Foundation and its many fundraisers/supporters, and a new emphasis on storytelling - communicating our successes and the genuine impact they have on people's lives.



The Board of Awareness Foundation America meets with Reem Issa, our CEO.

New York 2018

We meet together each year for strategy and fundraising planning

The Directors of Awareness Foundation America, our sister organisation, met in New York in May 2018 to dedicate themselves to another year of fundraising for the work of the Awareness Foundation.

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dedicate themselves to another year of fundraising for the work of the Awareness Foundation.

Meeting at the House of The Redeemer on the Upper East Side, the Directors, who are skilled volunteers from Toronto and Ottawa (Canada), New York, Philadelphia, San

2nd Awareness Retreat

"Rediscovering the power of prayer in our daily life", led by The Revd Philippa Boardman MBE



Staff, volunteers and supporters of the Awareness Foundation gathered together in June 2018 for a special retreat at Minster Abbey in Kent.

"But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." (Luke 5:16)

The retreat was led by our newest Trustee, The Revd Philippa Boardman MBE. Over two full days, we took a journey of prayer and contemplation as we considered the power that prayer can and should have in our daily lives. The retreat was a very fulfilling experience, a great spiritual and mental support for all who took part. We should like to thank Philippa for leading the retreat so expertly, and the Sisters and community at Minster Abbey for their wonderful hospitality.



PAX

Our growing online collection of short & challenging faith-based videos

Videos

All our videos are available on YouTube and are grouped into playlists by topic. Here are a few highlights from 2018 so far – give them a watch and tell us what you think!

- A four part series featuring David L'Herroux, CEO of United Christian Broadcasters, sharing his wisdom on: prayer, conflict, faith and the grace of God
- Two interviews with Madeleine Davies, Deputy News Editor for the Church Times, about what Christians in the UK can do about the crisis in Syria (*pictured above*)
- Nadim's Easter message: 'Why Christians should rethink the Resurrection'

Blogs

PAX is growing! Since the beginning of the year we have launched the Awareness Blog featuring short 2-3 minute pieces to accompany our videos. This gives our viewers an opportunity to reflect more deeply on topics covered, provides a space for discussion, and very importantly, encourages them to tell us what they think!

We've covered topics such as 'Why Christianity is NOT a religion', 'Three common misconceptions about interfaith' and 'Jesus was radical... and we should be radical like him', all available to read for free on our website at www.awareness-foundation.com/blog

We love publishing blogs from our fantastic volunteers and supporters. Would you like to write for the Awareness blog? If so, please get in touch via social, or email pax@awareness-foundation.com

Arabic subtitles

In honour of our growing Arabic-speaking audience, you can now watch our videos with English and Arabic subtitles across all our platforms. We hope that this makes our videos even more accessible to as wide an audience as possible.

How to get involved with PAX

Connect on social

We are active on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. Please support us by following and subscribing!

Volunteer

We are looking for a range of volunteers in digital marketing, fundraising, editing, blogging, social media, and more! If you are interested, please email pax@awareness-foundation.com

Donate

PAX exists because of the generosity of our wonderful friends and supporters. Each gift contributes to creating another video or blog which encourages Christians everywhere to live an active, informed, and confident faith, and to make a difference in our fractured world. If you believe in the power of free online education, as we do, please donate at www.awareness-foundation.com/donate-1

Friends

Nadim and Josie were excited to join our friends from Global Horizons at the TBN studios in London. It was a fantastic day filming Nadim in interview with our Trustee Alan Scotland (*below*), discussing the culture of God. Nadim will be delivering a seminar on this topic at the Global Horizons conference in August. Watch out for his video with Alan, coming out on TBN soon.

Exciting upcoming featured guests

Over the summer, we will be interviewing Professor John Bryant, former Head of Biosciences at Exeter University, about a range of fascinating ethical and science-faith issues. In July, we will be collaborating with students of faith and organisations involved in tackling extremism to produce a documentary. We will also be interviewing His Eminence Archbishop Angaelos.



Upcoming video releases

Here's just a few of our exciting upcoming releases:

- An exclusive two-part documentary with a Vietnam war veteran and Hollywood cameraman, who worked on the original Star Wars trilogy and has a fascinating story to tell
- Nadim in interview with the High Commissioner of Cyprus to the UK, Euripides Evriviades (*below*), speaking about his faith in his role as a diplomat and figure of influence
- A mini-series about the Middle Eastern roots of the Bible and how this is often misunderstood by Western audiences, discussed using three important stories from the Gospels.



Our 15th Anniversary

To celebrate our fifteenth anniversary, we should like to invite all of our friends and supporters to join us for a special concert at **St. Mary Magdalene Church, Wandsworth Common, on 20th October 2018.**



We shall be holding a special concert of secular and sacred music at St. Mary Magdalene Church, Wandsworth Common, at 7.30pm on Saturday 20th October.

The concert, by Occasional Voices, will raise funds for our life-changing Little Heroes programme in Syria.

We should like to invite all of our friends and supporters to join us. This event will mark our fifteenth anniversary, celebrate our achievements, and thank our many friends and supporters.

We are especially grateful to The Revd Philippa Boardman MBE, Vicar of St Mary Magdalene, for hosting us on this very special occasion and to Nick Hughes for arranging the concert.

15 Years

Thanksgiving Service at ORNC

Please note that the Thanksgiving Service due to take place at the Old Royal Naval College Chapel has been **cancelled** due to circumstances beyond our control.



How to support us

Please visit <https://www.awareness-foundation.com/donate-1> to donate through our website or to find details on how to transfer funds to us.

Please send cheques, made payable to "Awareness Foundation", to the address of the Main Office, below.

United States

In the US, please post checks, made payable to "Awareness Foundation America", to Steve Taber, 1170 Green Street, San Francisco CA 94109



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