

How can we present the truth about Jesus to a world that rejects all truth claims as arbitrary? Can we find ways to engage in meaningful conversation without appearing arrogant or manipulative? Can we witness to the gospel without simply enlisting in the ongoing culture wars? Curtis Chang has found a unique way to address these pressing questions of our age. He argues that similar challenges confronted Christians at two key moments in church history and stimulated creative responses by two monumental thinkers. Augustine (A.D. 413) faced a fragmenting society where pagans accused Christians of causing the mounting social ills afflicting Rome; Thomas Aquinas (A.D. 1259) pondered the disorienting Muslim challenge that provoked most medieval Christians to crusade rather than converse. Through a careful study of Augustine's City of God and Aquinas's Summa Contra Gentiles, Chang argues that both followed a brilliant rhetorical strategy for engaging unbelief. Such a captivating strategy is critical in our cultural context where Christian witness seems as difficult as ever. Connecting these ancient writers to the contemporary analysis of thinkers like Alasdair MacIntyre, James Davison Hunter, Lesslie Newbigin and Stanley Hauerwas, Chang puts forth his own bold recommendations for Christian rhetoric in the twenty-first century. This book will be of vital interest to a wide audience. Scholars will find a fresh reading of these important texts; pastors and teachers of evangelism and apologetics will discover crucial resources from our Christian past; and all thoughtful Christians seeking a faithful strategy for communicating the gospel will receive inspiration and hope for today. Engaging Unbelief maps a clear strategy for engaging our postmodern world. Chang is an excellent interpreter of Augustine and Aquinas, and his practical analysis of their two major apologetic works should not be missed by any Christian interested in broad cultural influence today. Thoughtful Christians will find much here to fuel and inform their passion for witness. Dr. Stephen A. Hayner, president of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship/USA There is no question about it: this is a brilliant work. But it does not depend on sheer brilliance. It is massively and punctiliously researched. Mr. Chang's proposed rhetorical strategy for our epoch, paradoxically harking back to Augustine and St. Thomas, presents a case to be energetically pondered by any thinking Christian believer in the odd intellectual milieu which we call contemporaneity. Tom Howard, chairman (ret.), department of English, St. Johns Seminary College, Boston

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