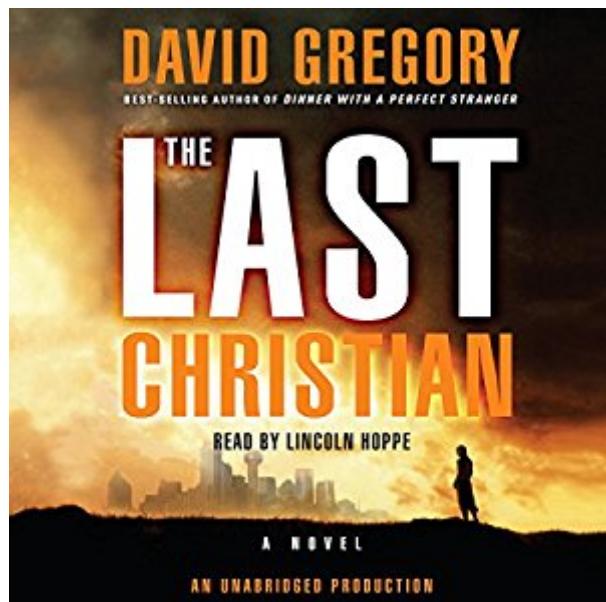


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The Last Christian: A Novel



Synopsis

In the future, itâ™s possible to live foreverâ "but at what cost?Â A.D. 2088. Â Missionary daughter Abigail Caldwell emerges from the jungle for the first time in her thirty-four years, the sole survivor of a mysterious disease that killed her village. Abby goes to America, only to discover a nation where Christianity has completely died out. A curious message from her grandfather assigns her a surprising mission: re-introduce the Christian faith in America, no matter how insurmountable the odds. Â But a larger threat looms. The world's leading artificial intelligence industrialist has perfected a technique for downloading the human brain into a silicon form. Brain transplants have begun, and with them comes the potential of eliminating physical death altogetherâ "but at what expense?Â Â As Abby navigates a society grown more addicted to stimulating the body than nurturing the soul, she and Creighton Daniels, a historian troubled by his father's unexpected death, become unwitting targets of powerful men who will stop at nothing to further their nefarious goals. Hanging in the balanceâ "the spiritual future of all humanity.Â In thisÂ fast-paced thriller, startling near-future science collides with thought-provoking religious themes to create a spell-binding "what-if?" novel. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

By 2088, America was a very different country. With rapid technological advances and remarkable scientific discoveries, people had slowly begun to forget their roots and the once Christian America ceased to exists. While most countries progressed similarly, there were some which had isolated

areas and were 'undeveloped'. American Abigail Caldwell grew up in one of these protected environments--the jungles of Papua New Guinea. For thirty-four years she had never left the jungle until a mysterious disease swept through her village. In an attempt to help them, she left her people and soon found herself in a modern world that she didn't understand. The fatal new illness was only the first of many mysteries for Abby. A sixteen year old message from her grandparents spoke of her being called by God to reintroduce America to the Christian faith. Feeling this was her calling she returned to America to discover a country where God was a myth. Furthermore, the latest medical advancements promised eternal life but at a steep spiritual cost. In a futurist setting, *The Last Christian* explores some difficult issues while gently reminding the reader, that our most precious relationship is the one we are privileged to share with God. I read the prologue of this book, set it down and walked away for awhile. It wasn't bad. I just realized I was diving into a pretty deep book. From the beginning I could tell this story was designed to immerse the reader into a future we might not like rather than awe them with imagination. So after taking a break and adjusting my expectations, I forged ahead and was rewarded with a well researched, though quite heavy, entertaining story. This book is heavy. It's not for those looking for a light, happy story. There is a healthy amount of imagination and development of a futuristic America, but ultimately this book is focused on the nation's spiritual state. As expected, Gregory presents impressive technology along with items that on the surface seem helpful, but ultimately have serious ethical and moral consequences. We're also granted some nice ideas as to how society could develop and how current technology could be further advanced. Additionally, good perspectives on evangelism and the need to adjust our presentation based on the audience are included. However, the gem in this book is the presentation of the elimination of Christianity. Sadly what is portrayed does not require imagination and is quite on target with trends we are currently seeing. While there is a lot of good reading, it's a bit overwhelming. Not only was there a large amount of detail in the technology, but also a great deal of spiritual and evangelism teaching. There were parts of the story that suffered because of an overload of information. It was good in that it added to the realism, but at times my brain hurt. I appreciate the amount of time that was spent planning, developing, and researching this story though. The results were worth the effort and it did make the story stronger even if it did require a bit more mental power to process. *The Last Christian* is a good book, but be prepared for it to be heavy, deep, and require some time to digest. I enjoyed it, but I was glad I took the time to adjust my expectations. It kept me from being totally depressed and overwhelmed. For those that like good speculative fiction that leaves the reader with something to contemplate, this is a definite.

The Last Christian by author David Gregory is a book that you need to reserve time for. Why? Because you won't want to put it down! The opening chapter had me hooked and it just kept getting better. The year is 2088 and missionary daughter Abigail Caldwell has emerged from the jungles of Papua New Guinea for the first time in 34 years. Her entire village has died of a mysterious disease and she is the only survivor. Circumstances lead her to America where Christianity has completely died out. After receiving a 16 year old message from her grandfather she realizes that it is up to her to re-introduce Christianity to a country that was founded on it. An interesting premise isn't it? It gets better. The advances in technology in this future America allows everyone to access The Grid (a more sophisticated version of the Internet), through neural implants. The implants also allow them to spend almost their entire lives in VR (virtual reality). No one nurtures the Spirit anymore, they are more intent on entertaining themselves. On top of that, a man named Bryson Nichols has created a synthetic brain. Perfect for those with brain disease or damage. They simply pop out your old brain and pop in a new one that is as powerful as a computer could be in 2088. Problem is, something happens to those who get the brain and Abby Caldwell and her friend Creighton Daniels, have discovered what it is and throughout the book they are running from a killer. This is a top-notch sci-fi thriller with an incredible message throughout the book, that I cannot share because it would spoil it for you, so do yourself a favour and go out and buy this book! Or, leave a message on my blog and you could win one for free! Visit [...] for details

I don't read very many contemporary Christian novels, but I decided to give The Last Christian a try because the premise sounded more interesting and original than much of the religious fiction that's hitting the shelves today. Reading this book turned out to be an experience with some real highs, but just as many low points. Other reviewers have adequately summarized the novel - here is my list of what I found appealing and disagreeable:

Pros:

- * A highly original story idea, and mostly well-written. The futuristic technology is believable, and the author manages to explain how things work, without either trying to impress the reader by getting too technical, or making every machine a "black box" that just works.
- * Some great impromptu discussions of apologetics and spirituality. The book would have benefited from more of these.
- * A compelling contrast of eternal values vs. a culture addicted to personal pleasure. Doesn't fall into the trap that a lot of religious novels do, where God or angels intervene directly all too often.

Cons:

- * The book is about 20% longer than it should have been. There are too many predictable plot points which you see coming a mile away, and dragging out their discovery doesn't build suspense, it just makes the story wordy.
- * The world of the future isn't advanced enough. I could accept this as a picture of 25-30 years from now, but not

70. Also, no matter how interested we are in finding out about the changes in society, technology, government, the environment, the geopolitical situation, we're just never given enough information to create this world in our minds.* The one big risk taken in Christian science fiction is dealing with the return of Christ. In this story, Jesus has not returned, and the doctrine of His return is never even mentioned.* The U.S., which has supposedly outlawed Christianity, doesn't actually seem that hostile to it. And yet the church has disappeared completely. If 2,000 years of church history has shown us anything, it is that in times of opposition and persecution, the church goes underground, and church leaders and individuals will risk their lives and freedom to continue to follow Christ.* Too many mixed feelings about Abby. As the "last Christian" of the title, who is supposed to restart Christianity in America, you want to sympathize with her. But all too often, she seems completely clueless - about how to communicate the Gospel cross-culturally, about how to live the Christian life, about starting a romantic relationship ...This is a good effort, and Mr. Gregory is a very talented writer. However, I opened this novel expecting more of a message - about how to stand firm in faith in the midst of opposition, about finding ways to share the Gospel in a totally alien culture, about how the teachings of Christianity will satisfy in ways that high technology and extraordinary devices can't. The book may get the reader started in thinking those thoughts, but it never gets around to finishing the job.

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