

“Mission Possible: Called 2 B Uncool”
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□ **The Herd**

- N. D. Wilson: “Cows like to turn their backs to the wind. At least, all the cows I know do. Slowly, awkwardly, eventually, all that beef will run parallel to the breeze.”

“People aren’t too different. We align ourselves safely in herds, comforted by the hot breath of others breaking on the backs of our necks and ears. Then we huff and we puff and we blow at the fools turned in the wrong direction.”

“Is there anything more compelling to us than the heavy synchronized breathing of a mob, especially when combined with cocked eyebrows of disdain and curled lips of disgust? This is the zeitgeist, inside the church and out, and it will judge you until you conform or commune. This is cool-shaming, and it will make you squirm and itch to turn your back to the wind, to stand with all the other cows.”

(“Called to Be Uncool,” *Christianity Today* June 2014 p 32)

□ **The Birth**

- Luke 1:11-17
- E. G. White: “John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, received his early training from his parents. . . . The words of the angel to Zacharias had been often repeated to John by his God-fearing parents. From his childhood his mission had been kept before him, and he accepted the holy trust.” (*Testimonies to the Church* 8:221)
- E. G. White: “Even the babe in its mother’s arms may dwell as under the shadow of the Almighty through the faith of the praying mother. John the Baptist was filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth. If we [as parents] will live in communion with God, we too may expect the divine Spirit to mold our little ones, even from their earliest moments.” (*Desire of Ages* 512)
- E. G. White: “The greater portion of [John’s] life was spent in the wilderness. . . . It was John’s choice to forgo the enjoyments and luxuries of city life for the stern discipline of the wilderness. Here his surroundings were favorable to habits of simplicity and self-denial. Uninterrupted by the clamor of the world [zeitgeist], he could here study the lessons of nature, of revelation, and of providence.” (*Testimonies to the Church* 8:221)

□ **The Word**

- Matthew 11:7-10
- N. D. Wilson: “But for the rest of us, the single greatest factor in our decision-making is simple *compliance*. We turn with the crowd because we want the awkwardness to stop. We want them all to stop looking at us like that. We want to feel the wind of opinion at our backs.”
“How did otherwise intelligent people go along with the Third Reich, the invasion of Poland, the extermination of the Jews? We may assume they were evil, brainwashed, or a bit of both, and in part we’re right. But when was the last time you hedged on an opinion because of the hot breathing of those around you? When did you last choose your words more on the politics of a situation than on truth?”
“The zeitgeist is a fickle master, because the zeitgeist is us.” (Ibid)

- E. G. White: “[John] distrusted his own power to withstand temptation, and shrank from constant contact with sin, lest he should lose the sense of its exceeding sinfulness. . . . So far as possible, he closed every avenue by which Satan could enter, yet he was still assailed by the tempter. But his spiritual perceptions were clear; he had developed strength and decision of character, and through the aid of the Holy Spirit he was able to detect Satan’s approaches, and to resist his power.” (*Desire of Ages* 101-102)
- N. D. Wilson: “Prophets must be fearless, immune to the pressures of kings and crowds, aligned only with the breath of God.”
 “We are in need of prophets now. Christians are scattered, but the world’s wind is heavy and unified.”
 “Truth and ultimate glory may be in the hands of our Maker, but the keys of earthly shame are in the hands of the mob. Prophets must be immune to floggings on Facebook and Twitter. They must be fearless before friends and tenure committees and stadiums filled with the priests of Baal. The world is busy applying pressure on ‘social issues,’ and Christians are busy caving left and right, trying to accept fresh cultural dogma simply so that they might be accepted.”
 (Ibid)
- Jesus: “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.” (Matthew 16:24)

Stand up—stand out—for Him