

# AlbertMohler.com

## TIME Magazine on “10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now”

Wednesday, March 18, 2009

*TIME* magazine’s current cover story is “[10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now](#).” The March 23, 2009 issue of the magazine is supertitled, “Annual Special Issue.” As the contents page describes the edition, the focus is on “ten new ideas for our times.”

Looking at the “world right now,” *TIME* identified ten ideas that are making a difference. The list is fascinating. The ideas range from politics to the economy, and from biomedical technology to theology. Consider *TIME*’s list of the ten ideas “happening now:”

- [Jobs are the New Assets](#)
- [Recycling the Suburbs](#)
- [The New Calvinism](#)
- [Reinstating the Interstate](#)
- [Amortality](#)
- [Africa, Business Destination](#)
- [The Rent-a-Country](#)
- [Biobanks](#)
- [Survival Stores](#)
- [Ecological Intelligence](#)



This is an eclectic list, which makes it all the more interesting. According to *TIME*, “we’ll start looking at our jobs differently.” As Barbara Kiviat explains, “If that thing you do at the office every day is suddenly your sole financial lifeline, you’ll approach it more cautiously. When you’ve got only one chip left, you’re much less willing to put it on the table.” That article is a helpful reminder that we need to rethink the place of work in our lives. For Christians, work is never just about a job, but a vocation that includes far more than what the secular world calls work.

For decades, the cultural mavens have expressed little but disgust for the suburbs, but *TIME* sees a retrofitting and “recycling” of the suburbs as a major new trend. America’s metropolitan centers can hardly afford to leap over vast suburban tracts needing attention. Bryan Walsh’s article acknowledges that millions of Americans steadfastly prefer to live in the suburbs, and he points to innovative models. Some suburbs, he concedes, won’t make it.

Many readers will no doubt be surprised by the third idea *TIME* says is “changing the world right now” — “[The New Calvinism](#).” David van Biema points to a shift in evangelical worship music and explains, “Calvinism is back, and not just musically. John Calvin’s 16th century reply to medieval Catholicism’s buy-your-way-out-of-purgatory excesses is Evangelicalism’s latest success story.”

More:

*Neo-Calvinist ministers and authors don’t operate quite on a Rick Warren scale. But, notes Ted Olsen, a managing editor at Christianity Today, “everyone knows where the energy and the passion are in the Evangelical world” — with the pioneering new-Calvinist John Piper of Minneapolis, Seattle’s pugnacious Mark Driscoll and Albert Mohler, head of*

*the Southern Seminary of the huge Southern Baptist Convention. The Calvinist-flavored ESV Study Bible sold out its first printing, and Reformed blogs like Between Two Worlds are among cyber-Christendom's hottest links.*

David van Biema interviewed me for the article, and, when explaining why so many younger evangelicals are turning in this direction wrote: "Mohler says, 'The moment someone begins to define God's [being or actions] biblically, that person is drawn to conclusions that are traditionally classified as Calvinist.'" Biema then offers some good and fair observations.

Considering the entire list of "[10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now](#)," the appearance of "[The New Calvinism](#)" as number three will no doubt surprise many. *TIME*'s attention to theological issues and the importance of worldview is to be admired and appreciated here.

Looking at the next big idea, Richard Lacayo points to the U.S. Interstate highway system and calls for a rethinking of this culture-shaping American phenomenon. He suggests that the established highway corridors could well serve other purposes as well, even as millions of cars make their way on these highways every day.

Catherine Mayer writes about the emergence of "amortality" — a worldview "created by the intersection of that trend [Baby Boomer resistance to aging] with a massive increase in life expectancy and a deep decline in the influence of organized religion — all viewed through the blue haze of Viagra." Her article points to a secular society's confusion about death, and our modern attempts to defy death.

Alex Perry points to a surprising development in recent years, the rise of Africa as a business destination. Africa is undeniably rising as an economic force, and this is a promising sign of its potential liberation from dependence on other nations and regions. As Perry comments, "Though it rarely occurs to Westerners who've been instructed that Africa needs their help, charity is humiliating." The article ends with a reminder that Africa's economic growth rate now exceeds that of the Western economies.

Another "big idea" of our time is described by Krista Mahr as "the rent-a-country." She takes a look at innovative arrangements between nations. Some nations have millions of people to feed but lack land for growing crops. Other nations have plenty of land and an agricultural base to share. Thus . . . rent-a-country. The global food economy is off the minds of most people each day, but not off of their plates. As Mahr reminds us, "chances are that some — if not all — of your morning meal came from a country you don't live in."

What about biobanks? Alice Park writes about the rise of a new kind of bank, one which is best described as "a safe house for tissue samples, tumor cells, DNA and, yes, even blood — that would be used for research into new treatments for diseases." As she wryly notes, the development of such banks "will certainly change what you leave behind each time you visit the doctor."

By "survival stores," Sean Gregory refers to a new concept of consumer marketing coined by Simon Graj — a store fitted for the new consumer age in our new economic times. "It's suddenly hip to save money," Gregory notes, and the store that combines quality with cost is a potential big winner in a new economy. "Sensible" may be the winning word for the new age.

Finally, Bryan Walsh writes of the necessity of bringing a sense of ecological impact into everyday decision making. Picking up on the idea of multiple intelligences, he suggests the development of "ecological intelligence" for corporations, families, and individuals.

*TIME*'s list of "[10 Ideas Changing the World Right Now](#)" is not only a collection of interesting articles, it is, in itself, a sign of our cultural times. The presence of such a serious theological "idea" among the ten is a sign that *TIME* takes religion and its coverage of American Christianity with seriousness. The presence of "[The New Calvinism](#)" alongside "[Amortality](#)" is a sign of our times — and one we do well to ponder.



---

Content Copyright © 2002-2010, R. Albert Mohler, Jr.