

People

News in the [April 5, 2005](#) issue

Stanley J. Grenz, 55, a Vancouver-based Baptist theologian and prolific author whose influence extended into the “emerging church network,” died suddenly March 12 from a massive brain hemorrhage. Grenz held an endowed chair in Baptist heritage at Carey Theological College in Vancouver from 1990 to 2002, then spent one year at Baylor University’s George W. Truett Seminary in Texas before returning to Carey. “He was a progressive evangelical theologian who was a bridge person between evangelicalism and mainline Protestantism,” said friend Roger Olson, professor of theology at Truett. Grenz’s 700-page magnum opus was *Theology for the Community of God*, “which meant for him working against individualism both in church and society,” Olson said. Grenz authored or co-authored 25 books and lectured widely. Brian McLaren, a leading pastor in the emerging church movement, said in tribute that “Stan’s theological work has always been bold and creative, and sometimes, he boldly broke with convention; for example, he was one of the very first to see in the postmodern turn in philosophy and culture great opportunities for the gospel [when] many other theologians only saw dangers.”

Charles Townes, a Nobel laureate who helped invent the laser and was an early pioneer in comparing scientific and religious thought, has won the \$1.5 million Templeton Prize for 2005. A South Carolina native who grew up as a progressive Baptist, the 89-year-old Townes said he would accept the award—the full title of which is the Templeton Prize for Progress Toward Research or Discoveries About Spiritual Realities—with humility. Townes shared the 1964 Nobel Prize in Physics with two Russian scientists. In 1964, while a professor at Columbia University in New York City, Townes delivered a talk at the city’s Riverside Church that became the basis for a groundbreaking article, “The Convergence of Science and Religion,” which appeared in an IBM journal and later in an MIT magazine. Townes will receive the prize May 4 in London’s Buckingham Palace.