

# Challenges for missions

By [Debra Bendis](#)

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## In Review

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DISPATCHES FROM THE FAULT LINE  
BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

# THE TENTH PARALLEL



ELIZA GRISWOLD

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## The Tenth Parallel

By Eliza Griswold

Farrar, Straus and Giroux

I'd like to see this award-winning journalist's book read by all Christians--from evangelicals who believe that their life's calling is to save souls to those Christians who, while denouncing proselytizing, feel called to offer compassionate, practical aid to those who need help. For either of the above missionary types, Griswold dispels illusions. She is fearless in following a story into the most remote village, and wise in her understanding of how religions collide and inflame and exacerbate volatile situations. (Read her recent [article](#) for the *Century*.)

In these narratives of religious confrontation on or near the 10<sup>th</sup> latitude (Sudan, Malaysia, Somalia, the Philippines), the causes of violence and tension include lack of arable land, fights over oil rights, the rule of odious human rights violators.

The book is doubly intriguing when the reader learns that Griswold is the daughter of Frank Griswold, former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. In the middle of reporting on Franklin Graham's visit to Sudanese president Omar al-Bashir, she is pressed by a member of Graham's staff to reveal her own background. Reluctantly, she tells Graham who she is. What emerges is her skepticism of Graham's efforts, her challenging of her own faith background and her insatiable curiosity for the global religious dramas that she's documenting.

The book asks, but doesn't answer, this: how do those of us who have religious convictions share (or not share) them in societies that are reeling from religious tugs-of-war?