

## InterVarsity Press to Publish Alabaster Devotional Series: Study Bibles for an Instagram Generation

Brian Chung and Bryan Ye-Chung of [Alabaster Co.](#) have signed a contract to partner with InterVarsity Press (IVP) on the Alabaster Devotional series, a version of their widely praised Alabaster Bible set, originally launched through a Kickstarter campaign in 2016.

Chung and Ye-Chung got their start in ministry with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVP's parent organization) and were inspired by fellow staffer and author James Choung, whose book *Real Life* predicted that the spiritual question of the next generation is *What is beautiful?* Chung and Ye-Chung leaned into that question when they started Alabaster Co.

"We have become a culture that values design, consumes large amounts of visual media, and has given everyone access to a camera and tools for making," said Chung and Ye-Chung. "We are all creatives. In the midst of this reality, we ask, How do we show that the gospel is beautiful?"

*The Gospels* was the first release of Alabaster Co. They integrated visual imagery and thoughtful design in the four biblical texts, interested in seeing how it could give readers a more beautiful reading experience. The Kickstarter campaign immediately took off and nearly doubled their fundraising goal. Since then they've launched more books of the Bible, including *Psalms*, *Romans*, and *Proverbs*.

Alabaster Co. has received coverage from numerous outlets for this project. The *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Huffington Post*, and others have called their books "the Bible for millennials." In a piece with *Vox*, Chavie Lieber wrote, "These are no ordinary religious books. They have that Kinfolk-inspired, vaguely Scandinavian vibe that has taken over coffee shops, fashion boutiques, and interior design Instagram. Their pages are clean and spacious, and the religious texts are placed next to photos that are solemn yet alluring: forests of trees, mysterious caves, a de-petaled rose, mist above the ocean, a woman holding a candle."

The IVP Alabaster Devotional series will initially release with volumes for each the four Gospels and two volumes for *Psalms*, beginning in the spring of 2020. These books have lectio divina and visio divina study material throughout, authored by Jan Johnson (*John*, *Matthew*, and *Luke*), Tracey Gee (*Mark*), and Kathy Khang (*Psalms*, volumes one and two). The books use the New Living Translation.

"This project combines the Alabaster Bible's modern, reader-friendly design with lectio divina studies rooted in the ancient tradition of the church," said Ethan McCarthy, editor for the project. "Part of our DNA at IVP has always been to invite readers into the Bible in fresh and life-giving ways—and this series promises to do just that."

IVP, which is approaching its seventy-fifth year of publishing in 2022, has a long history of producing Bible study content. The first book published by InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, written by Jane Hollingsworth, was titled *Discovering the Gospel of Mark*. Since then IVP has produced countless Bible studies, including their expansive series of LifeGuide Bible Studies.

"We look forward to partnering with IVP on the Alabaster Devotional series," added Chung and Ye-Chung. "In many ways, the Alabaster journey began with InterVarsity, through the spiritual foundation it built for the founding team members during their time in college. To partner with IVP is to go full circle as a company."



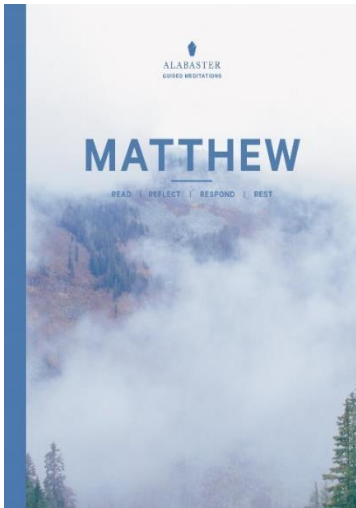
---

Tara Burns, print and online publicity  
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or [tburns@ivpress.com](mailto:tburns@ivpress.com)

Krista Clayton, author interviews  
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or [kclayton@ivpress.com](mailto:kclayton@ivpress.com)



[ivpress.com/media](http://ivpress.com/media)



## Q & A



### **Alabaster Guided Meditations**

*Matthew* | May 12, 2020 | \$20, 134 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4893-5  
*John* | May 12, 2020 | \$20, 116 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4895-9

The volumes in the Alabaster Guided Meditations offer the full text of a biblical book in the New Living Translation presented alongside beautiful full-color photographs that invite the reader into deeper reflection. The Scripture passages and photography are interspersed with guided meditations, incorporating lectio divina and visio divina studies.

## Alabaster Helps Others Experience God as Beautiful

How did this unique project between Alabaster Co. and InterVarsity Press (IVP) come together?

**Brian Chung and Bryan Ye-Chung, cofounders of Alabaster Co:** The team at Alabaster Co. has strong ties with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. For many of us, our faith journeys began in college with InterVarsity. It seems right, and full circle, to now partner with IVP on this new series of Alabaster Devotionals. This series will take images and design elements from the Alabaster Bible and merge them with devotional reflections and questions from authors Jan Johnson, Kathy Khang, and Tracy Gee.

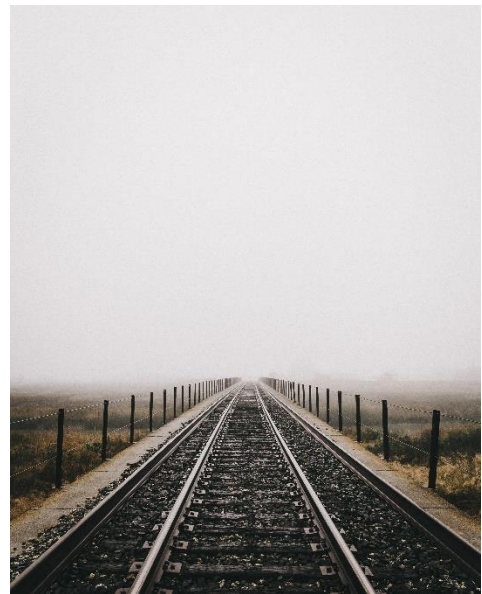
What has been your hope for Alabaster Co.?

**Brian and Bryan:** Since the beginning of the brand, Alabaster Co.'s mission has been to help others experience God as good and beautiful. This new book series will help continue this purpose. Through the design, images, and aesthetic sensibilities, we hope to assist readers in experiencing God as beautiful. We hope the addition of devotional writings adds a new, exciting layer for readers to hear from God in new ways.

What is the story behind Alabaster Co.?

**Brian Chung:** I didn't grow up Christian. I grew up in a Buddhist household, and I remember the first time I got a Bible when I became a Christian. It was a black leather Bible that was really un motivating to read. The first couple of pages didn't even begin with the story of the Bible. The text was packed and condensed, some words were in red, others were in black, and it was on super thin paper. The design was like nothing I had ever experienced before.

We live in an increasingly visual culture. Everyone has a smartphone with a camera, we consume lots of visual-based media, and we judge websites based on how well they're designed. Instead of shying away from these realities, we thought, how could we bring this to a faith-based context? We are interested in seeing how art and design change the way you experience an ancient text like the Bible. Bible design and devotional design has relatively stayed



---

**Tara Burns**, print and online publicity  
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or [tburns@ivpress.com](mailto:tburns@ivpress.com)

**Krista Clayton**, author interviews  
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or [kclayton@ivpress.com](mailto:kclayton@ivpress.com)



[ivpress.com/media](http://ivpress.com/media)



## Q & A



### **Alabaster Guided Meditations**

*Matthew* | May 12, 2020 | \$20, 134 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4893-5  
*John* | May 12, 2020 | \$20, 116 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4895-9

the same over the years. There have been few attempts to engage the biblical text in a way that addresses our rapidly growing visual culture.

**Bryan Ye-Chung:** It was toward the end of my senior year of college. I was studying art and film and was also part of a Christian group on campus. And honestly, those two parts of me always felt separate. I would lead a Bible study and then head to art studio afterwards, but my faith practice and creative practice never really came into contact with one another. I was longing for ways to experience art and faith together.



It was then that I began to read a book by a pastor here in Los Angeles. He makes an argument that each generation asks a spiritual question that leads them to meaning, purpose, and ultimately, God. He explains that in the past, these questions have been: *What is true, what is real, and what is good?*

As I read further, the pastor predicted that the next spiritual question younger generations will be asking is *What is beautiful?* And it felt so true. We live in a world that is driven and influenced by images. We are a generation that cares about design, and art, and beauty. And as we ask what is beautiful in culture, we need to ask, well, how does that show that the gospel is beautiful?

And so I talked to my mentor, Brian, and we just began to dream about what a brand exploring creativity, beauty, and faith could look like. And it was then, Brian said, "What if we started with the Bible?"



**What do you want readers to take away from the Alabaster devotionals?**

We want people to experience God as good and beautiful. We want the devotionals to help people experience God in new ways. We want people to have a beautiful Bible devotional experience.



---

Tara Burns, print and online publicity  
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or [tburns@ivpress.com](mailto:tburns@ivpress.com)

Krista Clayton, author interviews  
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or [kclayton@ivpress.com](mailto:kclayton@ivpress.com)



[ivpress.com/media](http://ivpress.com/media)