At a time when the distance between church and state is narrowing and the teaching of intelligent design is being proposed for our classrooms, it is startling and provocative to hear the reasoned voice of a dissident from inside the church. For Carlene Cross, arriving at this shift in belief was a long and torturous journey.

In Fleeing Fundamentalism, Cross looks back at the life that led her to marry a charismatic young man who appeared destined for greatness as a minister within the fundamentalist church. Their marriage, which began with great hope and promise, started to crumble when she realized that her husband had fallen victim to the same demons that had plagued his youth. When efforts to hold their family together failed, she left the church and the marriage, despite the condemnation of the congregation and the anger of many she had considered friends. Once outside, she realized that the secular world was not the seething cauldron of corruption and sin she had believed, and found herself questioning the underpinnings of the fundamentalist faith.

Here is an eloquent and compelling story of faith lost and regained. Certain to be controversial, it is also a brave and hopeful plea for greater tolerance and understanding.

**Personal Review:** Fleeing Fundamentalism: A Ministers Wife Examines Faith by Carlene Cross
I too was hi-jacked by the book, and ended up reading it from cover-to-cover in one sitting.

I am a little upset by reviews that say this is book is mainly about a woman leaving her hypocritical minister husband. I really think they need to read it again, because I think it is pretty clear that this intelligent woman would have left the evangelical faith (and most American evangelicals today are fundamentalists) with or without the husband problems, tragic as they were.

She deeply read about the many many contradictions and problems within the evangelical theology and belief system, the same ones that for years, as a Bible College graduate and missionary, I suppressed and pretended did not exist. These are the educational parts of the book which most evangelicals will gloss over or explain away. That is a shame, because these are the questions that need to be asked within these churches.

One of the points she thought about was the same point that brought me out of this fundamentalist culture: This evangelical God - who is supposed to be infinitely loving and forgiving - does something to 95% of his children that none of us would ever do to our own children: condemns them to burn in infinite and eternal torture, for a failure to believe a certain way! Remember when we thought it was so horrible when the Catholic church burned, tortured and murdered people who didn't believe a certain way? And yet evangelicals belief in a God who is many times worse than that medieval church.

In the end, she could no longer believe in this kind of god.

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