**Understanding Jan Hatmaker**

According to a[***Christianity Today* article**](http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2016/october/lifeway-stops-selling-jen-hatmaker-books-lgbt-beliefs-chris.html), LifeWay Resources (the Southern Baptist Convention resource arm) has stopped selling products by Jen Hatmaker because of her promotion of same-sex marriage. The CT article stated:

Jen Hatmaker posted a 650-word response on her Facebook page Monday, saying she “wrestled with and through Scripture, not around it” before coming to a decision to affirm same-sex relationships, which recently led to LifeWay Christian Resources pulling her books from its stores.

Hatmaker has been the topic of Lighthouse Trails articles and Cedric Fisher’s booklet called*IF it is of God: Answering the Questions About IF: Gathering* as she is part of the group of women who head up the women’s movement called IF: Gathering. You can read that booklet by Fisher [**by clicking here.**](http://www.lighthousetrailsresearch.com/blog/?p=17334)In Fisher’s booklet, he says this about Jen Hatmaker:

In Jen Hatmaker’s book,*Interrupted: When Jesus Wreck Your Comfortable Christianity*, she makes it clear that she is influenced by a number of New Age/New Spirituality individuals. She quotes Catholic priest and contemplative activist Richard Rohr and emergent leader Shane Claiborne. On her blog, she promotes the book, *The Circle Maker*, by Mark Batterson, a book that encourages readers to draw circles around specific things in order to have more answered prayers. Batterson was inspired with this idea by an ancient sage.

In Hatmaker’s book,*7: An Experimental Mutiny Against Excess*, she reveals that her family takes part in a Roman Catholic ritual with mystical origins, the “Seven Sacred Pauses.” Hatmaker got her inspiration from*Seven Sacred Pauses*, a book by Macrina Wiederkehr who is a spiritual director in the contemplative prayer movement. In Wiederkehr’s retreats, seekers are guided through experiences of silence, contemplation and lectio divina (a contemplative practice where words and phrases from the Bible are repeated in mantra-like fashion). The “seven sacred pauses” are seven times a day to pause and pray, which Wiederkehr describes as “breathing spells for the soul.”

Consider Hatmaker’s statement concerning the preaching of God’s Word:

“I have spent half my life listening to someone else talk about God. Because of this history, I’ve developed something of an immunity to sermons.”

This is eerily similar to the sentiment of Sue Monk Kidd (author of*The Secret Life of Bees*), who once, as a conservative Southern Baptist Sunday school teacher, expressed her dissatisfaction (and eventual rejection) of the preaching of God’s Word. That led Monk Kidd down a path away from the Christian faith and straight into the New Age. Today, she worships the goddess Sophia.

This disgruntlement of God’s Word is so prevalent among leaders of the emerging New Spirituality church. If not preaching, then what? Is it emotionally charged conventions and books with flowering, poetic phrases that open up to spit out a toxic drop of heresy? If Hatmaker is immune to preaching, she has rejected God’s method in favor of her own. ([**source and footnotes**](http://www.lighthousetrailsresearch.com/blog/?p=17334))

While LifeWay did the right thing in dropping Hatmaker’s products, they still do not see the big picture as they keep a tight grasp on numerous problematic authors such as [**Sarah Young**](http://www.lifeway.com/Keyword/sarah%2Byoung) (and her cash-cow*Jesus Calling* books and Bibles), Richard Foster, Dallas Willard, Gary Thomas, Ruth Haley Barton, and many more contemplative, emergent authors.

The fact that LifeWay will remove books by someone promoting same-sex marriage but not remove books by authors who promote a mystical, panentheistic interspiritual prayer shows once again that Christian leaders and ministries just don’t get it. How is it that one is OK and the other is not? After all, they are both going in the same direction, and that is*away* from the Gospel and *away* from God’s Word. Where are the overseers of LifeWay and the Southern Baptist Convention? Surely, they are learned men who should be able to figure this out.