This year’s finalists for the Christian Book of the Year Award have been announced this morning by SparkTree, an organization which aims to empower Christian writers, publishers and distributors.

Publisher Bible Society Australia has been shortlisted twice in with Craig Chalmers’ Great Bible Stories, and Roy Williams’ In God They Trust.

The finalists, which are in the running for $2,500 each:

**Eating Heavens** by Simon Holt, Acorn Press
Sitting down at a table to eat is an act so granted in the ordinary, so basic to the daily routines of life, it rarely_border, it bounded the simple inquiry, “What’s for dinner?” However scratch a little deeper and you discover eating one of the most meaningful bodily activities of our lives, one so immersed in human living and fundamental to the very sustenance of our existence.

A trained chef, research scientist, medical researcher and hempemaker, Simon Corey Holt draws upon experience and research to explore the theology of eating in our current food-crazed and community. To do so, he invites us to sit at the tables of daily life—from kitchen tables to backyard barbecues, from café tables to the beautifully appointed tables of Melbourne’s finest restaurants—and consider how our life at these tables interacts with our deepest values and commitments.

Read our review of *Eating Heavens* here. Read our interview with Simon Holt here.

**C.S. Lewis and the Body in the Basement** by Joel Richards, Stand Publishing
It’s the summer of 1933, and Oxford don C.S. Lewis bemoans his tomes as Jack, an ex-con working holiday with his brother Warnie and friend Tom Mort. When Jack’s work is accidentally destroyed, they visit a bank to replenish their funds—and walk straight into an imposter murder.

A fun, new detective novel by Joel Richards, where the crime is C.S. Lewis, a tale with many twists and turns, and with Jack’s unique Aussie humour.

Read our review of *C.S. Lewis and the Body in the Basement* here.

**In God They Trust** by Roy Williams, Bible Society
Not of Australia’s leaders seemed Federation believed in God. Some were convinced Christianity was no more irrelevant towards religion. In this timely and original book, Roy Williams analyses the spiritual landscape from our Prime Minister to Edmund Barton to Julia Gillard. He explores the ways in which—by good and ill—they believe (or not) shaped the history and development of the nation. Featuring extensive interviews with John Howard and Kevin Rudd, and pulling no punches, in *God They Trust* we will appeal to voters across party lines and write plenty of bulletins among believers and non-believers alike. "Williams is considering redrawing at its most complex but perhaps deepest source"— (Kim Beazley).

Read Roy Williams’ profile of Tony Abbott and Kevin Rudd in these exclusive excerpts from the book.

**Great Bible Stories** by Craig Chalmers, Bible Society
The Bible’s publishing success story. This introductory book is written especially for those who believe that they really should understand something about the world’s most influential text, but may have been afraid to, put off by the church or just never got around to it. Your friend was to ask questions about the Bible, this is the ideal book to give them.

**Love is the New Black**, 3rd ed. — Cameron Semmens, Crooked Noise Wisdom
The Third and much larger edition of this "creative Christian resource". A collection of poems and prayers based on inspirational Bible passages, including 25 versions of Psalm 23, fresh reworkings of the Christmas story, classic Bible texts playfully alliterative, big questions in the form of little prayers, and prayers for wanderers and wanderers. With BIBLEapps: how to Perform Stunts From This Book.

**On the Way to Faith: Personal Encounters with Jesus in John’s Gospel** — Kim Maney, Merklin Press
The personal encounters between Jesus and various individuals as recorded in John's Gospel have long fascinated and inspired readers. The Evangelist tells how Jesus met with different types of people includingPharaoh, a religious leader, a marginalised and unhappy woman, a condemned woman, a blind man, a glowing family, and even a Roman governor. In each case he gently but powerfully challenged them to begin a personal journey, to move forward in the way of faith. In this series of stories which originated at summer's Hex Hamlin/m influences reflective reflection on these gospel stories as a peaceful way for modern readers to begin or move forward on their own journeys on the way to faith, not only to learn about Jesus but transformed by him.

**Sorry We Have No Space — Joseph Waring, Corner Court**
Joseph Waring is a Lebanese Christian who founded the Australian Arabic Council and Australia’s first Arab Festival. He was awarded the Vienna Peace Award by Commonwealth Heads of Government in 1984 from the Order of Australia Medal for public campaigns to reduce the costs of racism in 2001. "Sorry We Have No Space is the story of Howard from social worker to New columnist, writing over 500 opinion pieces and becoming a voice for the Arabic community.

**Factory for Teen Ministry** — Scott Petti, Youthworks
Tactics for Teen Ministry is a go-to resource for building a vibrant youth ministry that is focused on growing disciples of Jesus. Designed by ministry leaders for the grounds, this book will help you set up solid systems and practices which can be easily evaluated, refined and replicated. Experienced practitioner Scott Petti details how to achieve real and steady growth in your youth ministry.

The winner will be announced at the Australian Christian Literature Awards on August 14 at St Andrew’s Anglican Church, Blackburn in Melbourne. Centre for Public Christianity’s Simon Spreadsheet and performance poet, Jessica Sartini will be presentning on the night.