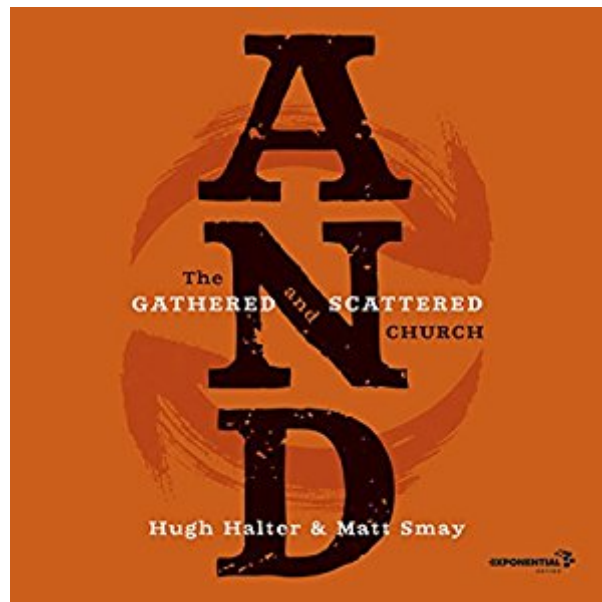


The book was found

AND: The Gathered And Scattered Church



Synopsis

AND, by Hugh Halter and Matt Smay, asks and provides an answer for one of the most important questions for church leaders today: What is happening to the church in America? By all appearances, it looks like we are doing church better than we ever have. In the past thirty years the number of mega-churches has increased from under 100 to over 7,500. In the past ten years the number of multi-site churches has increased from under 100 to over 2,000. By the numbers, these church movements enjoy the national platform, the national voice, and the resources to profoundly impact the Kingdom. In spite of the rapid growth of these prevailing church movements, why is the Western church still in massive decline? Numerous books have been written documenting the flight of members from the institutional church. This is not another book about how to do church better or how to just get people back into the pews. AND helps you—whether you are a mega-church, traditional, contemporary, or organic church leader—focus on the vast majority of unchurched Christians and non-believers who are not moving toward any form of church. You will learn how to value existing church forms—attracting people to a physical church and releasing people into hands-on ministry—bringing together the very best of the attractional and missional models for church ministry. AND will equip you and all church leaders to value existing church forms while catalyzing a missional movement of incarnational people into the world for Jesus Christ. AND is the second book in the Exponential Series—a partnership between Exponential Network, Leadership Network, and Zondervan featuring several signature books each year to tell the reproducing church story, celebrate the diversity of models and approaches God is using to reproduce healthy congregations, and highlight the innovative practices of healthy reproducing churches. --This text refers to the Paperback edition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I was quite eager to read AND: The Gathered and Scattered Church. AND discusses a question that is important for churches - what are the benefits of an attractional approach (draw people into the church to hear the gospel, find fellowship and build them up as disciples) versus a missional/incarnational approach (sending our people out into the lives of others directly to witness and grow as disciples). The book makes a strong case that the answer is Both-And, not Either-Or. After a solid introduction, Chapter Two was for me the most powerful section of the book "Starting the AND... wherever you are". The authors jumped right in with a key question: how can you take a church that is strongly attractional, perhaps even inward focused, and help its people better understand what it means to live missionally and to see new avenues for ministry outside the walls of the church. It had some great discussion about how you can reach the same essential core of incarnational communities coming either from a gathered perspective or from a scattered perspective. Those coming from a gathered church might well consider a pilot group of about 10% of the church (a tithe of members) to receive training and support on developing incarnational communities. One of the tough challenges in the book is really understanding what Halter means by the term 'Incarnational Community'. Is it a small group living missionally, a community ministry team, a home cell group, or something else? Is it something we've seen in a larger church, or something altogether different?

I just finished reading AND. Realizing that many of you will not either have or take the time to read it for yourself, I thought I would do a quick summary so you can get some of the blessing I received. So here goes... The authors really have no dog in the fight between micro and macro versions of the church. They are not pushing for mega or house church or anything in between. The purpose of this book is to help the reader see that no matter what expression of "church" with which you are affiliated, there must be both the gathering of God's people for encouragement, edification and vision impartation as well as the scattering or sending of the people of God into mission. In fact, it is our involvement in mission that increases our need and desire for gathering. The authors accidentally found themselves pastoring a missional church when a young lady from a group they were discipling (unofficially) asked them, "Are we a church?" Trying to avoid getting back into what

had been a very painful and disappointing church experience, Hugh said, "No, we are a faith community." After being pressed further on the matter, he explained that a church is a group of people who do mission together. That answer crystallized his understanding of what God wants for "church." The book examines how Christians can avoid the fruitless expressions of "consumer churchianity" that are what most of us have given our lives to. Instead he looks for ways for groups of believers to become "incarnational communities" in their personal contexts, becoming a safe haven where people can gather to experience kingdom Christianity and progress on their spiritual journey without having to navigate the obstacles presented by some of the more negative cultural forms of churchianity.

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