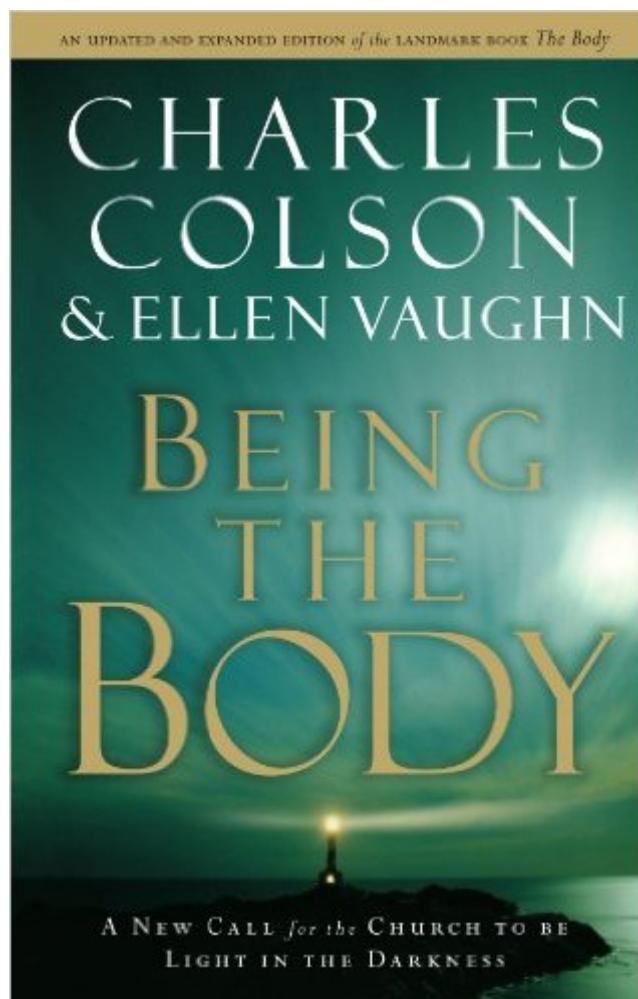


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Being The Body (Colson, Charles)



Synopsis

Charles Colson has been called, "one of the most important social reformers in a generation." Ten years ago in *The Body*, Colson turned his prophetic attention to the church and how it might break out of its cultural captivity and reassert its biblical identity. Today the book's classic truths have not changed. But the world we live in has. Christians in America have had their complacency shattered and their beliefs challenged. Around the world, the clash of world views has never been more strident. Before all of us, daily, are the realities of life and death, terror and hope, light and darkness, brokenness and healing. We cannot withdraw to the comfort of our sanctuaries...we must engage. For, if ever there was a time for Christians to be the Body of Christ in the world, it is now. In this new, revised and expanded edition of *The Body*, Charles Colson revisits the question, "What is the church and what is its relevance to contemporary culture at large?" Provocative and insightful, *Being the Body* inspires us to rise above a stunted "Jesus and me" faith to a nobler view of something bigger and grander than ourselves--the glorious, holy vision for which God created the church. Hardcover ISBN 0849917522

Book Information

Series: Colson, Charles

Paperback: 528 pages

Publisher: Thomas Nelson; Expanded edition (July 12, 2004)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0849945089

ISBN-13: 978-0849945083

Product Dimensions: 5.5 x 1.5 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.9 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (15 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #632,395 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #415 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Ecclesiology #12407 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Theology #13182 inÂ Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Sociology

Customer Reviews

With this book, Chuck Colson and Ellen Vaughn update their previous classic work about the Christian church (*The Body*). This version is even more powerful than the original, and it covers some new ground that is worth exploring. For instance, the event of 9/11 and how the Church reacted to them is described at length. Colson and Vaughn are right on when they argue that the

Church was truly fulfilling its mission after this tragic event by showing God's love in our modern world. As many Christians are well aware, somehow we have once again lost the momentum (and possibly our direction) of that season. This book looks at possible reasons why we have returned to a normal state despite the fact this country experienced events which "forever changed the face of our nation". Of course, the scope of the book goes well beyond the Christian church in the USA, and the events of 9/11. It looks at the Church around the globe, and covers how the church has succeeded or failed throughout history. In fact, some of the more interesting stories and examples come from outside the US, and deal with events from other eras (the reformation, and WWII). I also like the fact that the authors use many examples from the Catholic church to demonstrate that they too are members of the body, and have made an enormous impact throughout history, despite their challenges (to include the current crisis). Just like the original version, this book challenged me to take a hard look at my own faith, and my role within the local church. For those who feel that Christianity is only a personal experience, I challenge you to read this book, and discover why our participation at our local church is so vital to the Body of Christ.

Like his other book, *How Now Shall We Live?*, Colson argues brilliantly and convincingly for a Christian worldview. This book is not perfect and I have my disagreements with him on several issues, which I will voice later, but this was extremely edifying to the saints. He has divided the book into three parts: What is the Church? The Church against the World. The Church in the world. Interspersed between each theological/practical chapter is a chapter on how the church triumphed over Communism. In part one Colson gives a convicting definition of the Church, that is, the Church is the believers, not the pretty building down the street. Here he argues for unity between denominations and points how such unity enabled the Church to rise above her oppressors in the past and empowered them to proclaim a dynamic Christian witness. In part two he lays bare the nature of Truth. Truth is propositional. As Francis Schaeffer put it, "we must argue for 'True truth'", that is the truth that is found only in Jesus Christ. And in communicating this truth we must show the postmodern world that their worldview cannot match up to reality, only Christianity can. And when the Church proclaims this truth against the tide of the world, society is transformed (expressed brilliantly in chs. 19-20). In part three Colson gives an outline on when the church has properly equipped the saints in modern day times the surrounding community is transformed. Also of interest to the reader would be the new study guide and recommended reading list at the end of the book.

Final Analysis: This is one of the top five books I have ever read. Here are my faults with it. I am a thoroughly reformed protestant and I am very uncomfortable on the Evangelicals and

Catholics Together Doctrine.

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