
RECENT READS

Holy Discontent by Bill Hybels, Zondervan, 2007.

Hybels challenges his readers to discover their God-given area of holy discontent which serves as the driving force to accomplish God's purposes. He refers to this primal motivation as "firestorms of frustration" or our "Popeye moments" when we declare with the cartoon character: "That's all I can stand, and I can't stand no more!"

He offers three steps to cultivating our inner sense of "divine oughtness":

1. Feed it. We need to move toward our holy discontent and embrace it through direct exposure and proactive involvement.
2. Fight for it. Doing something about our area of discontent will often require some risk which we must courageously push through. The author uses the example of Eleanor Josaitis who has fought tirelessly for racial reconciliation and empowerment of the poor in inner city Detroit.
3. Follow it. Over time our area of holy discontent may shift or morph. We need to follow this God-prompted evolution with a thousand-watt commitment.

Those who have attended Willow Creek's Leadership Summit in recent years will recognize the genesis of this book. Though lacking in substantive content, it oozes with classic Hybels' inspirational passion.

The Irresistible Revolution by Shane Claiborne, Zondervan, 2006.

This book messed with my mind BIG time. It forced me to re-examine my unintended attachment to WASPY values which run counter to Jesus and his kingdom. Shane Claiborne's book exposes the cultural captivity of Christianity in North America. He invites us to become "ordinary radicals" who show the world an alternative way of living. Rather than complaining about the flaws of the Evangelical church, he challenges us to become the kind of church Jesus dreamed of.

This is a book of stories. Claiborne weaves together counter-culture truths as he tells of his own journey which includes:

- Standing in solidarity with a group of forty homeless people who moved into an abandoned cathedral in North Philadelphia as he rediscovered that Jesus himself was homeless;
- Spending a summer in Calcutta with Mother Teresa, realizing the need for each of us to find our own Calcutta and learn to do "small things with great love";
- Experiencing a one-year internship at Willow Creek, emerging with an intense desire for the Calcutta slums to meet the Chicago suburbs. "I had come to realize that the great tragedy in the church is not that rich Christians do not care about the

poor but that rich Christians do not know the poor. When the worlds of poverty and wealth collide, the resulting fusion can change the world.”

- Traveling to Iraq on a peacemaking mission, where he pledged allegiance to the cross rather than the sword, demonstrating that it takes more courage to love our enemies than to kill them.
- Founding an “intentional community” called The Simple Way which seeks to live out the following commitments:
 1. Relocation to the abandoned places of empire.
 2. Sharing economic resources with fellow community members and the needy among us.
 3. Hospitality to strangers.
 4. Lament for racial divisions within the church and our communities, combined with the active pursuit of a just reconciliation.
 5. Humble submission to Christ’s body, the church.
 6. Intentional formation in the way of Christ and the rule of the community.
 7. Nurturing common life among members of an intentional community.
 8. Support for celibate singles alongside monogamous couples and their children.
 9. Care for the plot of God’s earth given to us, along with support of local economies.
 10. Peacemaking in the midst of violence, and conflict resolution within communities.
 11. Commitment to a disciplined contemplative life.

Communicating for a Change by Andy Stanley and Lane Jones, Multnomah Publishers, 2006.