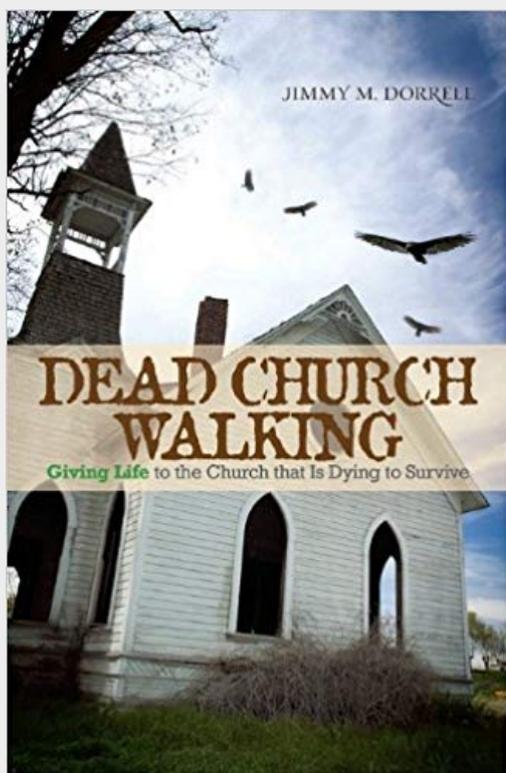


Dead Church Walking: Giving Life to the Church That is Dying to Survive by Jimmy M. Dorrell



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Author: Jimmy M. Dorrell

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Most everyone recognizes that the traditional Western way of doing church is in deep trouble and has been struggling for years to survive. While the successful rise of some new, non-traditional churches often take the sting out of the demise of the average church, the truth is that God still can renew congregations that have a rich history but are struggling to adjust in today's postmodern culture. In his new book, *Dead Church Walking: Giving Life to the Church that is Dying to Live*, author Jimmy Dorrell offers both Biblical and social principles with clear suggestions for congregations willing to significantly change to become a body of believers that proclaims God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. While there are no easy fixes, this book addresses underlying symptoms of broken models that often perpetuate terminal illness stopping the church from doing God's work on earth. Dorrell says our churches don't need new missions statements or re-structuring but a fresh wind of God's spirit. We don't need charismatic leaders but compassionate, Christ centered leaders. He shows us how to embrace change, overcome the obstacles to change, and focus on kingdom growth instead of church growth. This book is hopeful and encouraging, bringing fresh ideas to ignite the fire of churches and put them on the road to recovery.



Reviews of the **Dead Church Walking: Giving Life to the Church That is Dying to Survive** by Jimmy M. Dorrell

1. GawelleN

Great Read!

2. anonymous

Dead Church Walking is an insightful analysis of the contemporary church in America.

To many concerned observers, today's church lurches between Las Vegas style mini-mall, super churches led by mega-star televangelists or crumbling cathedrals with only a handful of aging members.

Well-grounded in Pew and Barna statistics, author Jimmy Dorrell makes a strong case for how to understand that what is plaguing America's Christian churches is also the same malady of Western religious culture which is in serious decline, particularly in Europe, but alarmingly more so across the nation which once considered itself a "Christian" country.

Dorrell makes a straightforward case: believers don't want churchianity - they want the real experience with God and to belong to the body of Christ as a living organism, not a dying body on life support. Most communities have tidy church buildings surrounded by well-trimmed lawns, but a cross on the top does not make it a church.

From a growing interest in home churches, to gatherings in any number of under-the-bridge, open-air, storefront and out-of-way locales, Dorrell's thesis is that the Spirit of God in a gathering of true believers is where the true church begins; his idea of a "Theology of Place," reminds readers that God's presence animating seekers, who are transformed into believers and then empowered to go forth as ministers of God's love and forgiveness is where the church has always resided - not just in the brick building on the corner.

Dead Church Walking is a lucid, hopeful book that people would do well to place in their pastor's hands.

3. GoodLike

What can ants teach us about the Church? Edward Wilson, in his study of ants, wondered how ants knew if one of their number was dead. He discovered that when an ant dies it releases oleic acid. So Wilson took out a live ant, put oleic acid on it and put it back in the colony, other ants smelling death carried the ant to the compost pile. The live ant walked back to the colony and was promptly carried back to the compost pile because it gave off the smell of death. Wilson eventually cleaned the ant up and it went about its business. But how many churches are releasing the scent of death and don't know it? Maybe a quick trip to the compost pile will stir up the church and revive it and one of the tools that may help is this book: Dead Church Walking

I found the book very encouraging and practical. Jimmy Dorrell is not standing over the church performing last rites he is trying to hook the church up to the life giver, Jesus.

He gives, then develops, eight principles of change. If I have any thing negative to say it would be that trying to begin each chapter with a "P" word may be somewhat forced but the book is helpful in leading a church to change then through change.

The last chapter of the book includes a 16 question survey so churches can gauge their readiness for change. I used this survey at the church I pastor and though I was not surprised by the results I certainly hoped our scores would have indicated we would be in a better position to change.

I highly recommend the book but I must add the disclosure that I was

given a copy of the ebook by Biblica Publishing to review. The only proviso was that I write a review and there was no expectation that it be positive.

4. Marad

As I have traveled the country over the last few years speaking at churches I have noticed that there are serious problems in the American Church. I have been a pastor since 1983 and have pastored in more than one state so I can see the changes that have taken place. The difficulty is that as I speak with pastors and congregations about what it is I see; they disagree with me. So it reminds me of the film "Sixth Sense" when the little boy is speaking to Bruce Willis and says, "I see dead people, and sometimes they do not know they are dead."

Many churches now equate cool with real, high business marketing with a work of the Holy Spirit, and numbers and success with real Christianity. It is very difficult to see, especially when so many are refusing to recognize the realities of what is happening right in front of their eyes because it has become acceptable in mainstream Evangelicalism. There is little thought for the future and what today's choices are going to be creating in the next ten to twenty years.

So for me, it is good to see a book like this. Whether you agree with all of the premises of the book or the suggested plans of action to make some changes, at least consider that something is broken and we (the Church) must turn to repair the breaks.

5. Rindyt

Jimmy Dorrell, the author of the book, *Dead Church Walking, Giving Life to the Church That is Dying to Survive*, has written a book that speaks to churches that need to make changes in order to survive, changes that could help a dying church go beyond dying to thriving again, and one that would be helpful to any church that is thinking about making changes.

He doesn't offer "easy solutions" to problems. In fact, he says that change will be painful. However, the book is very helpful and includes:

A list of principles that a church needs to consider before undertaking change

A look at the purpose of the church

Rethinking where church can exist

A candid discussion of power in the church

Realizing all change involves pain

Pitfalls of which to be aware

Possibilities for churches

Questionnaire in the Appendix to give to your church members to see if your church needs to change

Six-page Bibliography for other resources to consider

A quote I like from the book, which I believe sums up the overall theme of the book: "The church is God's plan for the world. To believe anything less is to deny God himself. So, let us hold to the hope that God isn't finished with us yet. There remains work to be done, and we are the ones being called to do it."

Disclaimer: I received a review copy of this book from the publisher.

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