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The Relational Disciple: How God uses Community to Shape Followers of Jesus

Joel Comiskey

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Read table of contents, intro, first chapter, second chapter, and press release here: http://www.joelcomiskeygroup.com/relational.html You can also call: 1-888-344-2355 (Joel Comiskey Group). Jesus lived with His disciples for three years and taught them life lessons. He molded and shaped them through community. He traveled with them and taught them as they journeyed. After three years, Jesus told them to go and do likewise (Matthew 28:18-20). Christ's way of discipleship was through relationships. We in the west, on the other hand, prepare lone-ranger disciples based on our culture of individualism. This book will detail how our culture of individualism has now turned into isolationism and that social relationships are at an all-time low. The church of Jesus Christ has also been negatively impacted through a brand of individualism that promotes anonymity in the church. I will contrast this with how the early church made relational disciples. Like Jesus, they focused on the one-anothers of Scripture. They took the commands of Christ literally when he told them to love one another, serve one-another and care for one another. In fact, Jesus told His disciples that as a result of the love they practiced to one another, the world would believe in His existence (John 17). The Trinity is our example of pure community. God exists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The persons of the Godhead dwell together in perfect unity. God's very nature stirs His followers to live in unity with one another. And community is the crying need for those living in the west in the 21st century. So many are lonely, isolated and in need of loving relationships. This book will encourage Christ-followers to allow God to mold them through the natural relationships of life: family, friends, cells, church and mission. Section I: -The Problem of Isolation: the breakdown of American community in the 21st century and the immense pain and loneliness in society today. -- Relationship with the Trinity: true community stems from having a right relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit--the God who lives in perfect unity. -New Testament Community: what the Bible says about relational Christianity and the need for community. -How God uses conflict in our relationships with people to mold and shape us as His followers. SECTION II: I will cover four concentric circles: -inner circle: Spouse, family, children, close friends. Sadly, we in North America have often prioritized personal success over those closest to us. -organic church circle: I'm referring here to the cell or a small group and those discipleship relationships that form from the small group. -local church circle: God wants every believer to be part of a local church and under God-given authority -mission circle: Ultimately God wants to send us out to the ends of the earth as relational disciples to reach a lost world. My hope is that God will use this book to help readers see that He is using the natural relationships in their lives to mold and shape them into followers of Jesus.

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