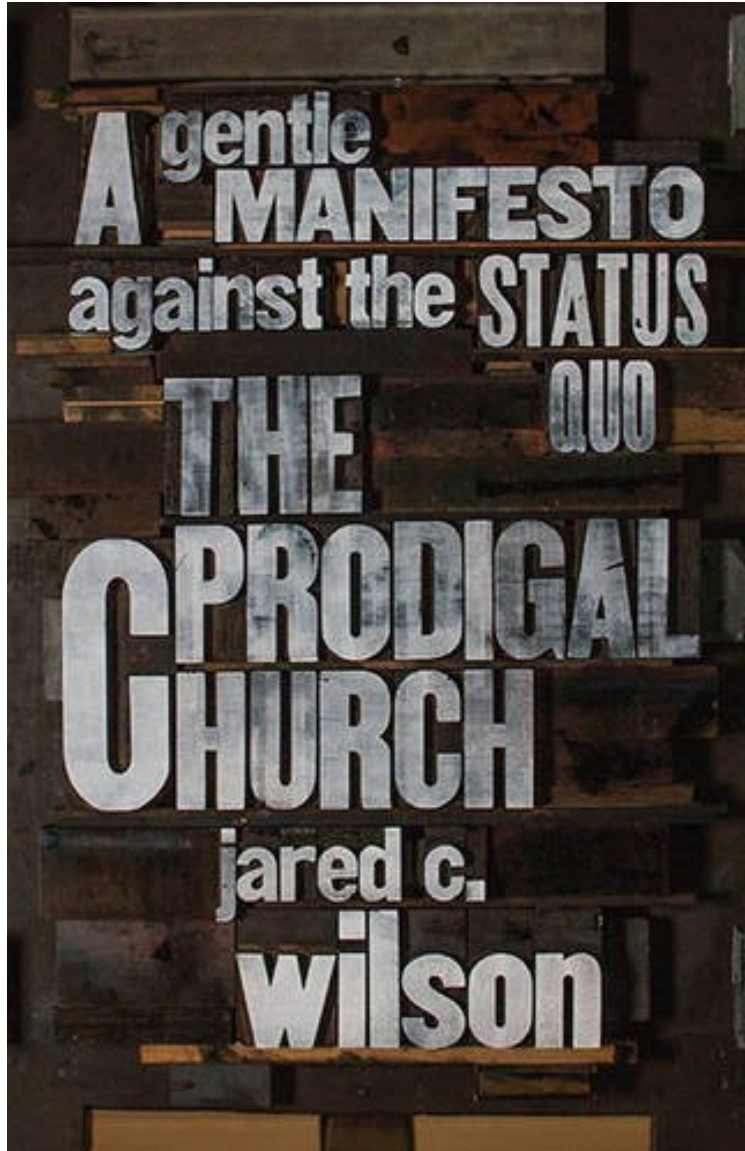


[Read free] The Prodigal Church: A Gentle Manifesto against the Status Quo

The Prodigal Church: A Gentle Manifesto against the Status Quo

Jared C. Wilson

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Jared C. Wilson : The Prodigal Church: A Gentle Manifesto against the Status Quo before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Prodigal Church: A Gentle Manifesto against the Status Quo:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Not just for those in the "Attractional Church"By DantheManThough Jared Wilson is writing this book for those who are primarily in the "attractional" or "seeker-

sensitive" churches, this book is a call for every church to remain in the gospel. It is human nature to overcorrect. Wilson uses the analogy of the man that falls off of his horse on the right side--only to get back on and fall off again on the left. The American church has done this with first legalistic fundamentalism (emphasizing the don'ts) and then over correcting to the attractional model (emphasizing dos). Wilson shows how both of these models are actually both legalism in the end, because they emphasize works and so often miss the incredible grace of God and what He has done. Wilson crushes two underlying motivators of the attractional church: pragmatism and consumerism. These are not only unbiblical in nature but incredibly poisonous to the Body of Christ. Pragmatism is the idea that everything the church does must yield results, and consumerism is of course the idea of giving people what they want. Every church is susceptible to these two dangers. Wilson also carefully evaluates how churches have typically measured success (numbers) and gives an alternative (heart change). This "gospel centered" model for church is not flashy or glamorous. It may not be loaded with programs or the most innovative services. It may not be celebrated by the world. It does not matter. We must stand with Paul as he says in 2 Corinthians 2:2, "I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus and Him crucified." The Christian message is the gospel. The gospel is the good news of what has already been done. It is not and has never been "good advice." May our churches all respond to Jared's heartfelt call to return again and remain in that precious gospel. The Bible is not an instruction manual for our lives, it is something far more. It is not about making bad people good, but making dead people alive. May our churches reflect that beautiful message.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. An excellent, insightful look at the problems associated with church ... By Farholme Fan

An excellent, insightful look at the problems associated with church models focused on the 'seeker,' or the unchurched. Wilson identifies the driving tendencies of the seeker churches into "consumerist" and "pragmatic" and discusses the shortcomings of such an approach. He calls churches back to a gospel centered, Christ exalting approach that shuns tricks and gimmicks and relies on the sovereignty and grace of God. I would highly recommend this book to pastors, elders and laymen alike concerned for the trajectory of evangelical churches today away from the gospel and toward treating the felt needs of people without addressing their real need: a Savior.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Surprisingly Refreshing View of Church Problems By William L. Brown

I approached this book thinking it would be a rehashing of the Traditional/Contemporary church service wars. Should we sing the old hymns or the more modern worship songs? Should preachers extol scriptures or discuss current events? I was surprised to find that the author addressed these issues, but in a refreshing manner. He is an experienced minister, and he has worked in a number of traditional and contemporary settings. He does not support or oppose any strategy in a judgmental fashion. His main issue is, does the church preach the gospel as the source of help for the needs of the congregation? I encourage all church leaders to read this volume and give it prayerful thought.

This book is not a tired rant. This book is not a reactionary diatribe. This book is a gentle manifesto against the status quo. In *The Prodigal Church*, Jared Wilson challenges church leaders to reconsider their priorities when it comes to how they do church and reach people in their communities, arguing that we too often rely on loud music, flashy lights, and skinny jeans to get people in the door. Writing with the grace and kindness of a trusted friend, Wilson encourages readers to reexamine the Bible's teaching, not simply return to a traditional model for traditions sake. He then sets forth an alternative to both the attractional and the traditional models: an explicitly biblical approach that is gospel focused, grace based, and fruit oriented.

Jared Wilson provides a stern warning against the excesses of pragmatic approaches to church growth while reminding us that if the power of the gospel is not driving our ministries, we may build a crowd, but we are not building a church.

Thom S. Rainer, President and CEO, LifeWay Christian Resources

Jared Wilson paints a vivid picture of the grievous outcome of church centered on programmatic pragmatism instead of the life-changing gospel of Jesus Christ. His critical analysis and probing confrontation, coupled with his personal encounter with grace, has the potential to bring the church to her senses and usher her back to our Fathers restorative embrace. *The Prodigal Church* is a desperately needed wake-up call.

Jeff Vanderstelt, Visionary Leader, Soma; Pastor, Doxa Church, Bellevue, Washington; author, *Saturate*

The Prodigal Church is indeed a gentle manifesto against the status quo. Wilson writes with humility, urgency, and true pastoral concern for God's people. He pushes back against the consumerism and pragmatism so prevalent in twenty-first-century congregations, and points the church to something far superior: the gospel of Jesus Christ. All who love the local church will benefit from reading this book.

Jason K. Allen, president, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and College

Jared Wilson writes that we've forgotten who the church is for. He rightly, and with a kind spirit, questions the status quo in this book. The church is not a consumer experience. It's not supposed to be a volunteer-draining, CEO-driven business. No, it's much bigger, better, and more beautiful than that.

Brant Hansen, CURE International; storyteller; radio host; author, *Unoffendable*

Although I don't agree with all of the conclusions Jared comes to, he asks penetrating questions and lovingly argues as a man who deeply loves Jesus, the gospel, the church, and pastors. I am fully confident that what he has written here will save some weary pastors from burning out and will make *The Village Church* a healthier place.

Matt Chandler, lead pastor, *The Village Church*, Dallas, Texas; president, *Acts 29 Church Planting Network*; author, *The Mingling of Souls* and *The Explicit*

GospelAbout the AuthorJared C. Wilson is the director of content strategy at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri, and managing editor of the seminary's website for gospel-centered resources, For the Church. He is a popular author and conference speaker, and also blogs regularly at Gospel Driven Church hosted by the Gospel Coalition. His books include *Your Jesus Is Too Safe*, *Gospel Wakefulness*, *Gospel Deeps*, *The Pastors Justification*, *The Storytelling God*, and *The Wonder-Working God*.