

The Relational Soul: Moving from False Self to Deep Connection

Available September 2014

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978-0-8308-3587-4

- Coauthored by a professional counselor and a spiritual director who bring together their knowledge in each field from over fifty years combined experience
- Shows how deepened psychological understanding contributes to our spiritual growth
- Includes questions for reflection and discussion

Our Relational Reality

The goal of *The Relational Soul* is to help all of us engage in relationships in more life-giving ways, to foster a journey that moves our souls from relational disconnection and loneliness to connection and communion. To that end we will investigate the impact of early relationships (both healthy and unhealthy), the attachment patterns they fostered, and how the resulting learned level of intimacy plays out in relationships as adults. We will look at the challenges we all face and offer practical ways of changing how we relate.

We have coauthored this book in part because we are seeking to live what we write – that life is done best in community (even writing a book). We have very different stories that helped us think through relational realities from different perspectives. My (Rich’s) dad was orphaned when he was less than a year old and was on his own at age fourteen. He married a woman from an immigrant family at a young age. They had five kids and worked hard to provide for us. They took us to church regularly but found it difficult to engage in deep relational conversation or connection with each other or with me. We lived more functionally than relationally. Even so, when my mother died when I was twenty-four it rocked my world. And consequent years as a pastor as well as some deep relational heartaches forced me to think deeply about what it takes to relate well.

My (Jim’s) parents served in churches and on the mission field as far back as I can remember. I had many opportunities to learn and grow in my faith. I followed in my dad’s footsteps and entered full-time pastoral ministry after Bible college and seminary. From all appearances I had far more advantages than Rich did. But that simply made my relational challenges more difficult to see and acknowledge. In my late forties my mom’s death touched me so deeply that I could no longer hide from my pain. The wheels came off my relational wagon.

So both of us have our baggage. We are wounded writers. It is our conviction that no one enters life ready-made for communion with God or others. Certainly neither of us did. Much of what we have learned has come by way of much relational pain. But we have tried to be honest with ourselves and with you because we are convinced that living from a deeply relational perspective (modality) is what all of us must do if we are to thrive in life. And we share what we have learned from a posture of humility and gratitude.

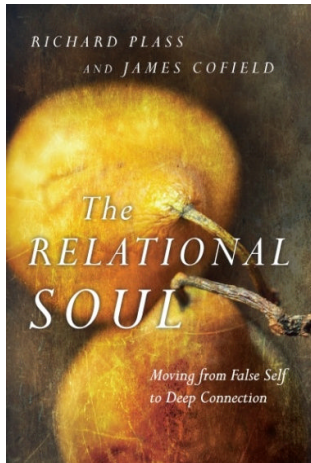
– Taken from chapter one, “Our Relational Reality”

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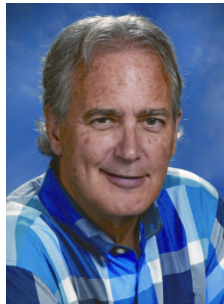
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"Be it chronic or acute, slight or significant, loneliness is proof of our relational design. At the core of our being is this truth – we are designed for and defined by our relationships," former pastors Dr. Richard Plass and James Cofield write. "We were born with a relentless longing to participate in the lives of others. Fundamentally, we are relational souls."

Counselor and Spiritual Director Combine Expertise in *The Relational Soul*



Dr. Richard Plass is president of CrossPoint Ministry in Jeffersonville, Indiana. He grew up in upstate New York, attended college at Northwestern College in Orange City, Iowa, and continued his education at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. After serving as a youth pastor and pastor of a college-focused church in Iowa, Rich planted Peace Church in Frankfort, Illinois. In 1995 Rich left twenty-five years of pastoral ministry to pursue a doctorate degree in counseling. His desire was to help leaders not simply survive but thrive in the challenges of ministry. He founded CrossPoint Ministry and for fifteen years has focused on spiritual formation in the lives of leaders. Rich is married to Sallie and they have six children.



James Cofield is codirector of CrossPoint Ministry. Jim served as a church planter and pastor for over fifteen years before joining CrossPoint where he offers spiritual direction and retreat leadership. Jim grew up in Chattanooga but spent most of his years before college in northern Canada where his parents served as missionaries to native Americans who lived in remote villages accessible only by small plane (he learned to fly at 16 on skis and floats). After finishing high school by correspondence he graduated from Tennessee Temple University and taught in the communications department there. Jim then earned a ThM from Dallas Theological Seminary and taught Greek there for three years. In the mid-1980s he left teaching to plant a church in southern Virginia. After nine years he accepted the senior pastor position at a church in the Chicago area, where he served eight years before joining CrossPoint.

For more information visit crosspointministry.com

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