



*Giving Church Another Chance: Finding New Meaning in Spiritual Practices*, 176 pages, hardcover, 978-0-8308-3748-9, \$18  
**March 2010**

## From Churched to Dechurched to Rechurched

Each of these places where I met God in the past—the United Methodist Church, Calvary Chapel, the Vineyard, emerging churches and my present home in the Anglican Church—have become the seedbed for a new way to approach the spiritual practices of church. I am seeking to bring the best of all of them—Word, Spirit, liturgy (with calendar and offices), and spiritual disciplines—to bear on this new work.

At this point in my life, I essentially have positive memories and appreciation for everything each tradition and each group gave me. The message here is *not* that everything and everyone in my past was wrong, and now I have found the right church: the Anglican Church. I know better.

The real message is that finding a way to repractice faith of any denominational brand is mostly about each of us. The focus here is on our ability to engage with the spiritual practices of church for the purpose of our own spiritual transformation first, with being Christ’s ambassador for the sake of others a close second.

I am a better person today because of all the people and events of those various eras of my life. As I look back, all the pros and cons of my life were simply opportunities to learn to walk with God as a leader for the sake of others. I blew it a lot. I only tell the story to give the context from which my need to repractice church surfaced. You need to know my background and biases so we can do good work together in this book. While I am sincere in writing, you need to be alert to any blind bias I unintentionally hold. As Rob Bell likes to say, “God has spoken; everything else is commentary—right?”

During the period I did not regularly attend church I realized that a big ingredient in my search for a repracticed faith does not come from things external to me, like eras of my life, segments of the church or denominations, but things internal to me—slices of my heart, portions of my soul. Somehow, though, during my “dark night of the church,” I realized that I could not simply stay away from church. Staying away, I found, had no constructive power. What I needed was an affirmative way to reengage *the spiritual practices of church*.

We will explore how we might find the common and often rejected elements of church life that can become gold in the hands of those seeking to repractice their faith.

—Adapted from “Preface: From Churched to Dechurched to Rechurched”