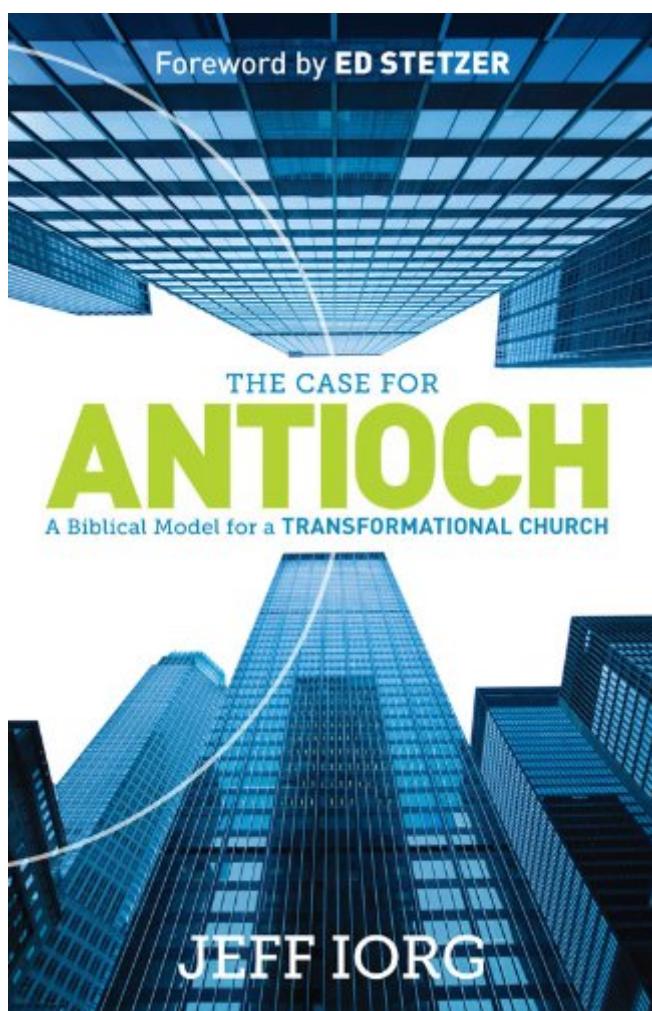


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# The Case For Antioch: A Biblical Model For A Transformational Church



## **Synopsis**

Seminary president Jeff Iorg looks back at the New Testament church in Antioch to find a biblical model of what healthy churches should look like today. Advising a principled approach in the context of this comparison, he shares methods for measuring church health that are based on hard data as well as discernable spiritual realities. Key areas of discussion include a church's need to emphasize the empowering of the Holy Spirit, advancing the gospel, changing lives, maintaining doctrinal integrity, resolving conflicts, strong leadership, and sacrificial living.

## **Book Information**

File Size: 568 KB

Print Length: 211 pages

Publisher: B&H Publishing Group (May 3, 2011)

Publication Date: May 3, 2011

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1433673568

ISBN-13: 978-1433673566

ASIN: B004Z7SE52

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #94,327 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #28 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Growth #81 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Growth #25685 in Books > Religion & Spirituality

## **Customer Reviews**

Iorg has presented an excellent study of the first century church at Antioch. It reveals a healthy and biblical model for today's church. Don't overlook this book or underestimate the need for church leaders to have a clear theology of guiding the "Bride of Christ!"

great book

I have read the other two books in the series, "Transformational Church" and "Transformational Discipleship" and both were good. Taking it a step further, using the church at Antioch as a pattern, it shows a church of spiritual power, that is entrepreneurial, disciple making, with convictions, but able to manage conflict, a church of GREAT leaders and wonderful followers who are all willing to make the sacrifices needed to reach their world. I think you'll appreciate it and benefit from it.

One of the book's strengths is its ability to see the imperfections and daring moves of the Antioch Church. I read it with profit but also with a dose of healthy theological suspicion, a wariness that started for me on page 5. Here, five pages into the book, Dr. Iorg started his synopsis of several problems found within New Testament churches. How could a president of a theological seminary not mention the Jew and Gentile struggle that was going on in Rome? This was one of many other glaring theological oversights for me. Certainly, the book was stronger in the tactical and application side of things. On a more positive note, this book allows its reader a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the church at Antioch and what kind of an example it leaves us for the American church of today. Jeff certainly presented me with some ideas I had not thought of before, reinforced some existing thoughts, and gave me an opportunity, within myself, to debate some of his convictions.

Maybe you've heard someone say, "I wish the church today could be like the early church". Which one? Corinth? Galatia? Laodicea? Nearly every one of the early churches had significant problems. The Corinthians were sleeping with each other and suing one another. The Galatians were seriously confused about the gospel. The Laodiceans were the only ones Jesus said made him want to vomit. There never has been any "golden" age of Christianity. But, there have been good churches. Antioch was one of them. The church of Antioch was the first established congregation of Gentile believers among the predominantly Jewish early church. They were a consistently mature, growing, sending and giving church. Their model is one to follow today. That's the premise of Jeff Iorg's book The Case for Antioch. Jeff Iorg is President of Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary just outside San Francisco, California. He has also been a pastor and church planter. It is that experience which he draws on while reflecting on the Antioch church in Acts. I believe that there were several strengths to this book: First, a healthy church is a spirit-equipped church. Iorg promotes the idea that the church works best when its leaders serve according to their gifts. Preachers should

preach, administrators should administrate, teachers should teach, servants should serve. This is a powerful correction to the contemporary church. Many churches follow a model akin to modern business practice than a biblical model. The results can be impotence or shallowness. It's is an incarnation of David and Saul. Saul was tall, handsome, strong...and a failure as king. David was the youngest son and an afterthought...but he was Israel's greatest king. We need churches to have their leaders serve according to their gifts. Second, a healthy church is the goal. A healthy church is one that's growing; where it's people are serving the community and sharing the gospel; where the preaching is strong and pastoral; where the saints are equipped for ministry. That's the goal. All of those qualities are good, but not when they're the goal. When the parts become the whole then the whole is lopsided. The Antioch model is a healthy model for contemporary pastors and elders to follow. Third, a healthy church is possible. The church in Antioch was filled with redeemed sinners just like any contemporary church today. Yet, they did some incredible things for the kingdom in its earliest days. I want healthy churches. I don't care if God places me at small churches or large churches. I want to develop and lead healthy churches. It's possible. There is much more in this great book that could be explored. Here's the bottom line with "The Case for Antioch": It was practical and encouraging. That's exactly what I needed. I imagine that it's also what many other pastors need as well. Pick this up for yourself or your pastor today. NOTE: In accordance with the regulations of the Federal Trade Commission I would like to state that I received a complementary copy of the aforementioned text for the purposes of review. I was not required to furnish a positive review.

excellent

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