



# Point of View

Dear Marketplace Friend,

Most folks have an “in-basket” somewhere in their office, with correspondence and files stacked to demonstrate task overload. *My office is a bit different...*

There is no *basket*, but there is a *stack*. Instead of correspondence and files, my stack consists of books - mostly hardback - accumulated during the course of the first two quarters (*January-June*). Some were gifts; some were sent by authors or publishers for me to review; some were my own acquisitions, stimulated by a pithy offer or endorsement, regarding a subject of interest. I'm working through the stack...

This week, the author is Stephen Mansfield, billed as a New York Times Bestselling Author because of his prior works, which include *The Extraordinary Character of Winston Churchill, The Faith of George W. Bush, The Faith of the American Soldier, God and Guinness*, and *The Faith of Barack Obama*. None of those are this week's read, however. I want to tell you about his newest release: *ReChurch: Healing Your Way Back to the*

*People of God*  
(Barna/Tyndale,  
2010).

I confess that I sifted the stack, and chose this



book to review, next. Reason: *I am continually troubled by a sustained statistic concerning American Christians.*

George Barna has found that half of the professed “born again” Christians in America are not connected in a local church. In the foreword to *ReChurch*, Barna writes that “37% of unchurched people in the United States avoid church life because of bad past experiences in a church or in relation to church people.” That catches my attention. Though I'm anything *but* “unchurched,” I've certainly had “bad past experiences in a church or in relation to church people.” *The 166 pages that followed were compelling.*

I suspect that my **Point of View** readers are unlikely to be born again/unchurched/bad past *et al*. But, I would wager that you have

friends who are among that group: even if they're in attendance on Sunday - occasionally, at least - they're back row, anonymous, holding back from engagement. *They've been burned... and they say that they now "know better."*

Get *ReChurch* for them, but read it - first - for yourself. If you are in church and passionate about it, great; you should still understand the pathology of those who aren't sitting next to you.

Additionally, you'll learn a ton in the chapter called, "The Throne Room of Your Mind" about how the Evil One creates centers of influence in your inner life. Also, the chapter, "Coming Home" will be an incredibly valuable assessment tool concerning your church affiliation, both now and in the future. How do you select a healthy home church, based on the biblical criterion set down in the New Testament? Many (*most?*) modern American Christians are prone to use secondary measures rather than the primary prerequisites.

Who better than Stephen Mansfield, to consider this subject? Seminary trained, with decades of service as a senior pastor, he was "chewed up, and spit out" from his last church leadership role. His influence exploded after he left the church, but the nature of his expulsion from the church left deep wounds that were not healed through literary success.

*ReChurch* recounts his journey to resolution...

It's an easy read, on a hard subject. You may buy it to preview for a needy friend, but you'll gain great value for yourself, in the process. *May the 37% find their way back home; we need them around the Lord's Table...*

Bob Shank

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