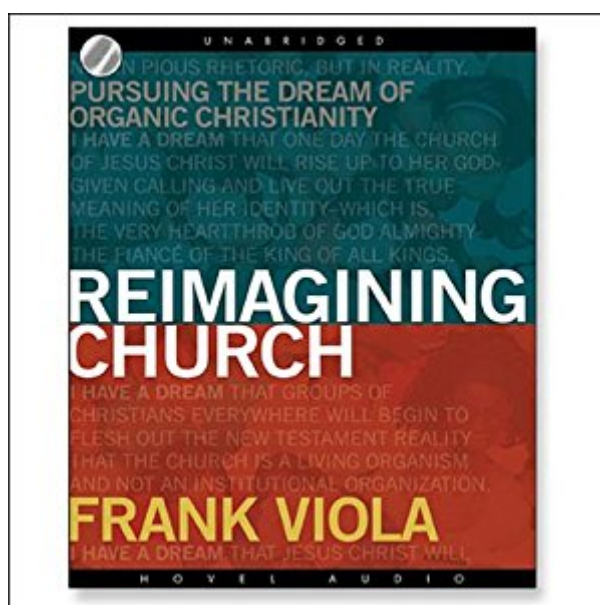


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Reimagining Church



Synopsis

FRANK VIOLA is a popular conference speaker and the bestselling author of numerous books on the deeper Christian life, including *From Eternity to Here*, *Revise Us Again*, and *Jesus Manifesto* (co-authored with Leonard Sweet). His blog "Beyond Evangelical" is rated as one of the most popular in Christian circles today: frankviola.org.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Three years ago, I too "pulled the plug" and stopped attending institutional church. I know the real deal. I've youth pastored, done missions in four continents, and gone to Bible college. Sorry, but I can't fake it any longer. I've struggled, however, in knowing how to be part of the solution, and so I picked up Viola's book in hopes of finding some direction. "Reimagining Church" doesn't have the bitter edge I expected, but neither does it get as practical as I'd hoped. What it does is establish the biblical description of a New Testament church, minus the clergy system and the church polity that have grown up around that. It points out the way western Christianity has become a reflection of its society, basing church structure on secular business systems. I can verify this, having gone through four years of Bible college, during which I grew sick of hearing CEO terminology applied to the vibrant life of organic church. Viola does a great job of driving home his points about the church's purpose, its headship (under Christ alone), and its ability to function without sinking millions into building projects while the poor among us remain unfed. I've seen the things he exposes here, and he does not exaggerate. He also tries to point out the errors of recent church movements (mega-churches, emergent churches, etc.) while underlining the good they've set out to do. I sense

a heart of love behind this strident call back to biblical, organic church through homes. I'm with Viola one hundred percent. In studying Scripture, I'd come to many of the same conclusions about fellowship, accountability, and such, but a few questions remained unanswered. I hope Viola addresses some of these in his next book, already in the works.

"Reimagining Church: Pursuing the Dream of Organic Christianity" by Frank Viola, is sure to send every "clergy-laity" member scratching around for a biblical defense to the claims made against the 1700 year old institutional form of church. And according to Viola, they will not find a "shred of biblical warrant" to support its existence. At last, the sequel to the highly controversial book, "Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices," has arrived! And it is for certain that not all will applaud its arrival to the bookstore. No doubt, many readers are still trying to grapple with the favorable recognition and popularity of the first book to this series of 4 books (2 not yet released) on organic Christianity. The first time, Viola had the help of George Barna and Tyndale in gaining a few listening ears. Now that he has the attention of no small number of readers... he has set off to propose serious answers to an audience that is filled with sincere questions. And "Reimagining Church" will not leave readers dissatisfied in their quest for the normal Christian church life. In fact, it will leave them hungering for authenticity in the New Testament fashion. As the saying goes, "You can't judge a book by its cover." Many readers have learned that from PC. So let the reader first understand the title. Viola states, "it's the present practices of the church that I'm seeking to reimagine, not the church itself" (p.13). He clearly outlines his purpose so that there is no misunderstanding. He writes that the purpose of the book is: "to articulate a biblical, spiritual, theological, and practical answer to the question, Is there a viable way of doing church outside the institutional church experience, and if so, what does it look like" (p.12)?

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