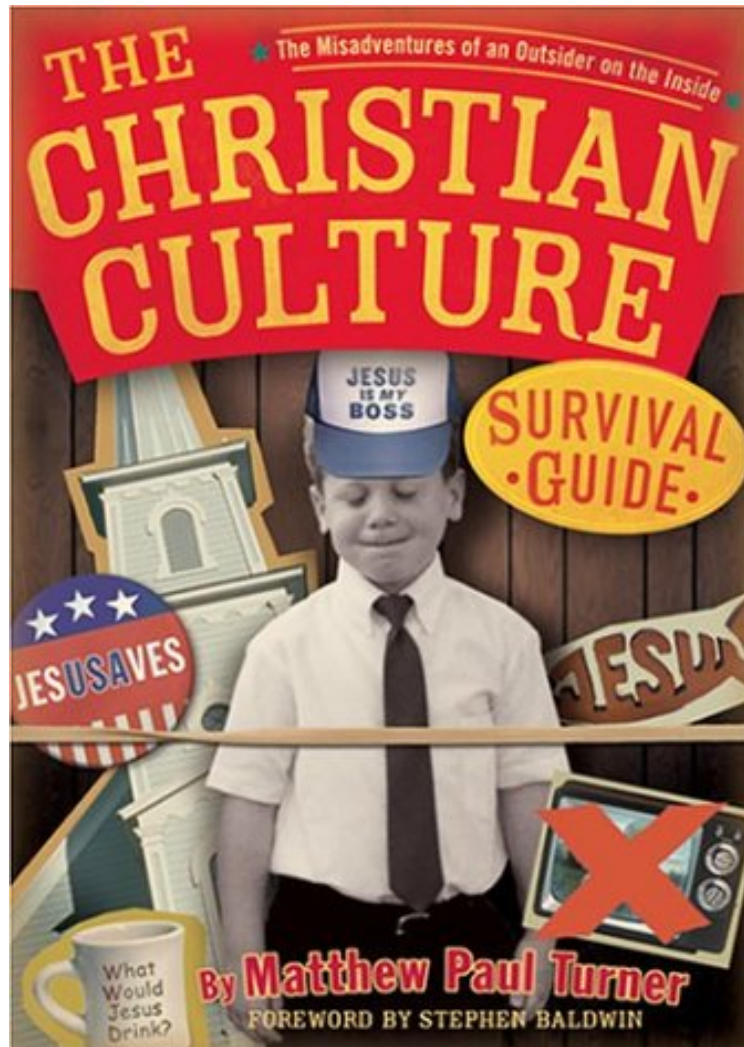


The Christian Culture Survival Guide: The Misadventures of an Outsider on the Inside

Matthew Paul Turner

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Matthew Paul Turner : The Christian Culture Survival Guide: The Misadventures of an Outsider on the Inside before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Christian Culture Survival Guide: The Misadventures of an Outsider on the Inside:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. We Want More!By tvtv3Matthew Paul Turner's THE CHRISTIAN CULTURE SURVIVAL GUIDE is a book that lampoons the subculture of America that I like to refer to as the Christian ghetto. People who are raised in Christian culture have access to a whole world that the rest of the world really doesn't even know exists. In some ways, this culture is a good thing because it augments a believers' life by

providing means of fellowship they need and might not otherwise have. However, though the constant struggle in a Christian's life is to be "in the world, but not of the world" American Christians have gone way to far and are trying to be in the world without actually being in the world and have cut themselves off from humanity. It is this idea that Turner parodies so brilliantly in THE CHRISTIAN CULTURE SURVIVAL GUIDE. The book is written in the format of a real survival guide and projects an image that this book is a must have for anyone new to Christianity in America or perhaps a nonbeliever or outsider who might have to have interactions with people inside of the Christian culture. Turner tells all kinds of funny and interesting stories in a satirical way. He often starts a chapter or section very seriously. These statements are insightful and in some cases profound. But just a few lines later, Turner turns the tables and throws in a joke or funny story. For instance, in the Chapter on The Worship Service he begins by saying, "Even with the strides modern Christian culture has made in the last couple of decades to improve its reputation among mainstream society, churches still fight being stereotyped as stuffy, pretentious, and lacking in originality and vision." Very insightful observation, but one paragraph later he gives the 7 Church Cliches that need to go (such as visitor time). I thoroughly enjoyed this book. However, I did feel that it was lacking. The book isn't a total parody, nor is it a completely serious work interspaced with moments of humor. Instead it is some weird hybrid in between. It almost reads like a piece of literary schizophrenia. Turner seems to be a funny guy. He also has some very keen and insightful insights about Christianity and following Jesus. However, because of the way the book is written, those who most need to hear his insights never will (they'll be offended by his humor) or they'll fail to recognize the serious moments because of the humor. I would like to see Turner write a "serious" work (interlaced with humor, of course) about Christianity. This man has a lot of great things to say and should he choose he could have a great impact not only in Christian culture, but in the world in general. If so, we can have this handy Survival Guide to help us journey along.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Lighten up and be amused! By Dave Licklider I found this to be amusing because I am also a survivor. Some reviewers seem to be a little uptight about his sarcasm/wit. Lighten up--if we can't laugh at ourselves, maybe we aren't being real. If we can laugh at ourselves it's probably because we see how messed up we really are without Jesus being the complete center of all we "do."

8 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Disappointing. Just know what to expect. By geek-chic I was hoping this book would be along the vein of my favorite blog, Stuff Christian Culture Likes, which is also written by a pastor's kid and is open-minded and edgy. I soon discovered my expectations were misguided, however. Though Turner seems to think his observations and opinions are refreshing and edgy, they would only really appear that way to someone who is still very much a part of baptist/evangelical culture and has never ventured outside of it. When Turner switches from teasing about a silly Christian culture norm to sharing advice, that is when you realize that his belief system and theology still falls squarely in the conservative, most likely Calvinist, camp. He doesn't explain why certain cultural practices or beliefs are misguided; rather, he just points them out and concludes with a "that's ridiculous!" Most of the time I was left confused as to what he was actually trying to do, and what message he was trying to get across. For example, when he makes fun of the audience at a Rebecca St. James concert for cheering her decision to save herself for marriage, he then goes on to say that he also made that decision and is committed to that principle. So there are a lot of mixed messages in the book. I think the person who would most enjoy this is someone who is very much on the inside and shares the evangelical/fundamental/baptist worldview, but wants to be able to laugh at the culture they live in. For anyone from outside--whether you're of a different type of Christian denomination, a person who has "escaped" that kind of Christianity but still has faith, or if you are a non-Christian looking for a humorous inside look at evangelical Christian culture--you will not find what you are looking for here. Based on other reviews, it looks like most readers of this book (myself included) had a different preconceived notion of what they wanted this book to be. In fairness to Turner, that's not his fault and he can't please everyone. My primary goal in writing this review is to clarify what the reader should expect so to prevent others from making the same mistake I did. Based on the descriptions of his books, I excitedly bought 3 of them. I read this one first, was disappointed, but still hopeful that the next would be good. I got a couple of pages into "Churched" before I decided I didn't want to read any more (it was the jab at infant baptism that turned me off). As a Lutheran Christian who spent 4 years at a Christian Bible college with strong Baptist leanings, I was much more of an "outsider living on the inside" than Turner probably ever will be. I was hoping his books would be comforting, but instead I felt I was reliving the pain.

The Christian Culture Survival Guide is about the author's humorous experiences growing up in the Christian subculture and what he's learned along the way. From overcoming the temptation to wear W.W.J.D. bracelets to the disparaging experience of witnessing to a gay man at a bar, Matthew Paul Turner offers a fun read that's packed with profound insight and truth.

"I found myself laughing, shaking my head, sighing and smiling all because I could relate." -- Owen Thomas, The Elms
"If you're ready for a new, honest and even hilarious take on Christianity and today's culture, this is your book." -- Christa Farris, Editor of CCM Magazine and CCM Magazine.com
"The Christian Culture Survival Guide is a must-read for anyone who has ever walked through the doors of a church." -- Andy Argyrakis, Chicago Tribune

contributing writer "The Christian Culture Survival Guide is one of the most hilarious books I have ever read!" -- Jaci Velasquez, singer "Witty, insightful, edgy, cynical, hopeful, faithful, disturbing, indicting, and provocative. You won't come away from it with a neutral response." -- Will Penner, speaker, author and editor of Youthworker Journal

About the Author

THE AUTHORS

Chris Seay is pastor of Ecclesia, a progressive Christian community in Houston, Texas, and is author of *The Gospel According to Tony Soprano* (Relevant Books). Seay lives in Houston with his wife, Lisa, who is a marriage and family counselor. They have three children. Chad Karger, the community pastor at Ecclesia, holds an M.A. in counseling and has worked with countless couples over the last ten years. He is part of Better Days, an organization that provides intensive spiritual direction and personal coaching to individuals throughout Houston. He has been married to Meeka for thirteen years and has three children.