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Kimble's "40 questions about church membership and discipline" (book review)

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Book Reviews



Kimble, J. M. (2017). *40 questions about church membership and discipline*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic. 272 pp. \$18.99. ISBN 9780825444456

The writer of this practical, yet scholarly, guidebook to church membership and discipline is a well-liked theology professor who has served in pastoral ministry and is currently an elder at his church. Notwithstanding its practical nature, the author supports his answers with hundreds of credible and relevant resources. Each chapter treats a question and answer in approximately six pages and concludes with five reflection questions, but the book also contains a selected bibliography and scripture index at the back of the book for further study. While ten of the 40 chapters are derived from the author's previously published book, i.e. *That His Spirit May Be Saved: Church Discipline as a Means to Repentance and Perseverance*, it is put in a very usable format with the new material.

This book has four parts of which the first answers questions about the motivation and definitions of membership and discipline, and the fourth answers questions about the significance of membership and discipline for theology and the Christian life. The second and third parts make up the bulk of the book. Part two answers questions about church membership, such as: Is church membership biblical? Does membership look the same in every culture and context? What kind of church should someone join? and What are the benefits of being a church member? The third part is about church discipline and answers such questions as: How has the church practiced discipline throughout its history? Who is in charge of administering discipline? and What kinds of sins require church discipline?

I heartily recommend this book to pastors and church leaders. I know the author personally (he teaches at the same institution where I serve), and can vouch for his credible scholarship and passion for the local church.

Reviewer

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