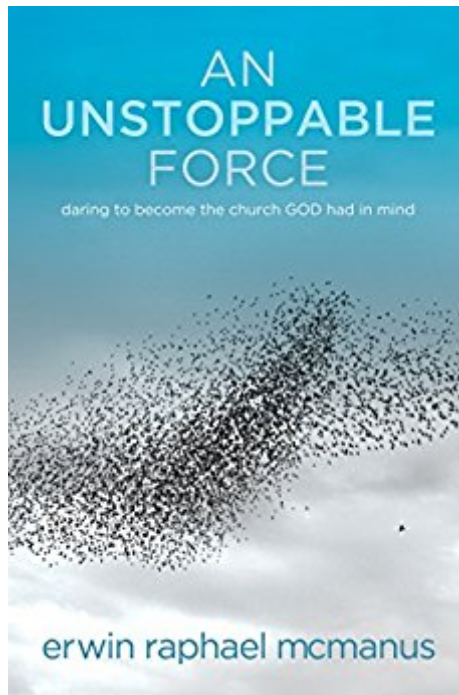




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An Unstoppable Force: Daring To Become The Church God Had In Mind



Synopsis

As the world around us changes at record-speed, *An Unstoppable Force* imagines a church that embraces change by remaining fully committed to its apostolic calling. Church leaders will discover new ways of engaging communities through vibrant, relevant ministries and clear, innovative communication. *An Unstoppable Force* challenges churches to cast aside methods that are broken or atrophied and embrace the future of the Church with vigor. McManus's prophetic voice outlines a church that is not a refuge from the world, but a refuge to the world. Christians on the forefront of the church movement must be ready to let go of the past and move forward.

Book Information

File Size: 2385 KB

Print Length: 354 pages

Page Numbers Source ISBN: 1434703215

Publisher: David C. Cook; Reprint edition (June 1, 2013)

Publication Date: June 1, 2013

Sold by: Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00BLVGPSI

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #146,519 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #22

in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion & Spirituality > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Ecclesiology #95 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Religion &

Spirituality > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Church Leadership

#105 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Churches & Church Leadership > Ecclesiology

Customer Reviews

I love Erwin McManus's sermons as the pastor of Mosaic in Los Angeles. He is an incredible speaker and visionary. While his other books often mirror his messages, I think this book is written solely as a book, albeit with many ideas commonly covered in his messages. I was pleasantly

surprised by the bold and unique vision that this book presents. Armed with the usual relevant stories, McManus illustrates a powerful vision on how to build a church that will deeply impact not just the community within but the world outside. I just love how much love Erwin has for his church and the lost at the same time. While I love the Purpose-Driven Church by Rick Warren, I feel like An Unstoppable Force is much more than the usual contrived (not that they should be) pictures of what a healthy church should look like. It really challenges me as a lay leader rather than the usual refresher/reminder of many other church-building books.

Our church has a fine record of training Christian soldiers for God's army but fell well short of committing them to battle. This is typical of many churches today. Mr. McManus identifies a great many reasons why the church creates a safe haven for retired Christians but fails to carry out our great commission. Our church, led by our pastor, recognized this short coming and suggested that we devise a course to help solve the problem. I was searching for a suitable text I came across this book on our surplus book table. Now I do not believe in coincidence in the Kingdom of God so I gave this special attention. After the contents of this book I found it to be more than suitable for our class. I found that, to make a course more effective, you need to replace many of the personal examples with those related to your own churches special needs. For example the McManus church and its congregation are far different than our church in Ohio.

This book is a gold-mine for church leaders who desire to cast a forward looking vision to their staff and church body. In one of my favorite chapters, McManus does a masterful job of challenging, encouraging, and even shaking the reader by pointing out the difference between friction and traction. Friction stops forward moment while traction propels it. Every struggle a church faces has the opportunity to become either friction or traction. The distinction is made by how the people in the church approach the situation. Do they see an opportunity for God to bring transformation, or do they see barriers they can't overcome? I highly recommend this book!

I read this book several years ago now. When the digital version became available, I snatched it up. This book is jam packed with memorable perspectives and insights that I have repeatedly returned to. Finding those in a paper copy was constantly an exercise in frustration. I recommend this to anyone trying to make sense of the challenges that confront today's church.

As soon as I knew that Erwin's first book was available I ordered it. Erwin McManus leads a church

in Los Angeles that is unlike any church I have ever encountered. This book goes through much of the foundational patterns of the church, Mosaic, and Erwin's personal vision for church in the 21st Century. The work begins with some of the things that have gone wrong with church in the modern era. The author mentions that church is treated as an organization instead of a living organism. He argues that church must be treated as a living organism to awaken an apostolic ethos, which unleashed the movement of God. I can say with great certainty that not too many churches are thinking this way. Every church that I involved myself with, whether as a volunteer, or paid ministry professional, treated church as a business for God. Business systems are fine for the business world, but what the author argues for is that church be treated as a living organism, a species, that must adapt and change to remain culturally relevant. He argues that when church is a living organism, its members will reproduce new believers, small groups will reproduce communities of faith, and the church will unleash the apostolic movement of God. The author next moves us towards how the church has become stagnant. He rails us to not be stuck in a safe theology, rather for us to move towards engaging what Christ envisioned as a dangerous faith. One of the more interesting pieces of this work is when the author notes that the only storm that can sink a church is the storm that rages from within. From my own experience, joining a church after it had split over a small issue, this rings completely true and close to home. How many times have churches split over issues ranging from what color the carpet will be to what to do with the missions' budget for the following year. It seems to me that God is looking down upon us and grabbing his hair in frustration. This book became even more important to me personally in wake of the recent tragedies in New York City and Washington, D.C. The author informs us that Globalization and a mass urbanization is taking place all around us whether we like it or not, and churches need to do something to handle this new change, risk extinction. Time and time again I see churches near the city whose neighborhoods have changed, and they have done nothing about it. The so-called transitional communities, change, and become ethnically diverse, and the original church members move to the newer suburbs, and there is no shift in what the church looks like. The new people in the neighborhood have no place to attend worship; they simply are not going to attend a church where they are not represented in leadership. The author commands us to change, to be a living organism as a church, to move past being purpose driven, and being alive. Many church models over the past two decades focus on get the new people in, train them up, and send them out. This model was fine in a more ethnically stagnant climate which we dwelt in during the modern era. What the author commands us to do is to move back to the past, so we can see the future. Other authors, such as Robert Webber, and Leonard Sweet echo what Erwin calls us to do, have a radical new vision for

church in the postmodern era. To emulate the apostles and how 12 men and their followers changed the face of the world. The author challenges us to find, or to ourselves be catalytic leaders who are not afraid to move fast and move others quickly with us. While not everyone will be a catalytic movement leader, when the church or body of believers finds a catalytic movement leader, let us not snuff them out. To many times churches that refuse to change, whose feet are stuck in spiritual cement, refuse to identify, and then develop leaders who will awaken the church from the slumber of decline. This needs to change. While this author's work definitely does not provide a ten step plan to improve your church, he does more. Erwin McManus calls us to reexamine everything about how we do church. If we hope to survive and thrive in an era where Islam is the fastest growing religion in the United States, we all should take heed to what Erwin is saying to us in the important work.

Pastor McManus has done it again! This book challenges the mundane, average, lazy attitude of most churches today (my words not his). As a pastor, I find it easy to take the low road, to get into a rut with my personal walk and my messages. Pastor McManus challenges those habits and forces the reader to rise up and meet the enemy head-on. Only buy this book if you are tired of being whipped and defeated by Satan and his friends.

The book is okay. If you are a great reader and can follow it. The book seems like The Purpose Drive Church (Rick Warren) and The Forgotten Ways (Alan Hirsch) had a baby book. If you have read these two books then nothing new will be added.

this is still his best work - although the first part is far more captivating than the second. McManus is a visionary poet thief. I love his words - but feel sometimes he loses himself in what others think or worrying about the elusive cool. I wish his hair would just get wild and wooly - stop wearing the v-necks, and just be a dude.

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