

The Hole in Our Gospel

by Richard Stearns, President, World Vision US
Evangelical Christian Publishers Association 2010 Book of the Year

Suggestions and Resources for Use in your Church

In giving *The Hole in Our Gospel* his highest endorsement, pastor and author Bill Hybels summed up by saying that this book “will call you to a higher level of discipleship.” Echoing this comment, Madeline Albright’s noted that it “inspires us as individuals to reconsider our basic decisions about life.” As speaker, pastor, and author John Ortberg observed, “It is a prophetic and hope-filled word for our day. If enough people read it, and do it, the world will change.”

The Hole in Our Gospel is an excellent choice for church leaders wishing to help their congregations build or revitalize a focus on external ministry – and in the process, provide a unifying, actionable rallying point for a congregation. The book’s powerfully relevant message is also an effective way to invite the next generation of believers into the faith conversation. The most common word used by pastors commenting on their use of *The Hole in Our Gospel* within their congregations was “transforming.”

Here are some suggestions and resources to help you get started in considering how to most effectively use *The Hole in Our Gospel* with your congregation.

- The Book Summary (free) at <http://www.giversbydesign.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Book-Summary-The-Hole-in-Our-Gospel.pdf> was developed to allow busy church leaders to preview the book’s message with a minimal investment of time.
- Discounted books are available for small group or congregational book study, direct from World Vision Resources for just \$3.92 per copy (paperback), *no quantity restrictions*. For discount code and ordering information, see <http://www.giversbydesign.org/resources/books-and-studies/coupon/>
- A best in class teaching DVD is available at <http://thegospelquest.biz/sixweek-quest-study-dvd.html>. Six remarkable 15 minute segments are powerfully engaging, developing relevant scriptural and personal insights while posing penetrating questions. Though the DVD was developed for use with the Six Week Quest (below), it stands well on its own; many have found it to be useful in a variety of applications and contexts. Recommended.
- A participant’s guide for an excellent study called the Six Week Qwest, designed to go with the DVD (above) is available at <http://thegospelquest.biz/sixweek-study-guide.html>. Study can be done with or without the book.
- A Personal Action guide is also available from the makers of the Six Week Quest. This experiential exercise is particularly useful in engaging young adults, and works well independently of the study. These can be purchased at <http://thegospelquest.biz/personal-action-journal-with-bonus-dvd.html>. Alternatively, an online version is available (free) at <http://sixweekquest.com/>.
- A “kit” containing the book, participant’s study guide, personal action guide, and teaching DVD (all described above) is available for \$15.00 at <http://www.worldvisionresources.com/hole-gospel-curriculum-gospel-quest-p-530.html>.... well worth the nominal price -- Recommended.
- Fully developed sermon notes are available for free download at <http://thegospelquest.com/downloads>
- A stand-alone study by Richard Stearns, complete with excerpts from the book, is available (free) at <http://richstearns.org/sites/default/files/pdf/THIOG%206%20week%20study%20guide-free%20download.pdf>
- An outstanding dramatic reading is available via Youtube; this powerful video, developed by LifeCenter WPA, powerfully captures the essence of the book, and makes an excellent introduction or wrap-up piece. You can find this video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q2KOLuWrjU8>

Series’ and studies are, of course, not the end; you will find the question “What do we do now?” to be foremost on your congregation’s hearts and minds. Effective follow-up strategies have run the gamut from simply refocusing on existing missions programs, to child sponsorship events, full-blown church partnerships with struggling communities, or whole-congregation brainstorming sessions aimed at developing new programs both locally and abroad. What will your church do? http://www.mendingthehole.org/main/page_testimonials_church_leaders.html.