

Review: The Church in Dark Times

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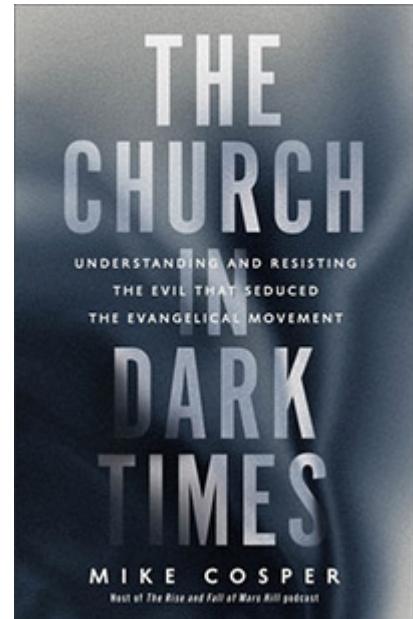
The Church in Dark Times

By Mike Cosper (Brazos Press)

The church publicly humiliated one of its own members, called his salvation into question, stripped him of his livelihood and compelled others in the church to cut ties with him—all because he spoke truth that made church authorities uncomfortable.

That's what happened to Galileo in the early 1600s, when he dared teach the Earth was not the center of the universe.

It also happened much more recently to some members of Mars Hill Church when they dared question the authority of Pastor Mark Driscoll, who had become—in the eyes of many in the church—the center of their universe.



It also has happened countless other times in evangelical churches, big and small, when members offered dissenting views on varied topics, from hot-

button social issues to matters of biblical interpretation. And it most certainly has happened in churches where leaders have been credibly accused of abusive behavior and the powers-that-be failed to see what should have been obvious.

In *The Church in Dark Times*, author Mike Cosper, host of *The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill* podcast, explores factors that have made otherwise-moral people in churches complicit in enabling abuse and other moral failures of church leaders.

Casper draws deeply from the insights of German-American historian and political theorist Hannah Arendt. In the aftermath of World War II, she sought to explain how ordinary, seemingly decent people supported the evil perpetrated by totalitarian systems. Little by little, increasingly corrupt and immoral practices became accepted as the norm when they were carried out to fulfill the vision cast by a charismatic figure.

The Church in Dark Times does not just identify the problem. In the second half of the book, Casper offers helpful ideas and guiding principles to equip Christians to resist the darkness. Instead of surrendering to ironclad ideology and grandiose movements centered on celebrities, Casper encourages Christians to embrace shared life together—praying, worshipping and bearing each other's burdens.

Ken Camp, managing editor

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