

Dissident Discipleship

By David Augsburg
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Hate-work: Working through the Pain and Pleasure of Hate

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In *Dissident Discipleship*, David Augsburg discerns two dominant strains of spirituality in the modern church. The first is focused on self-growth and self-enlightenment, and the second is focused on

Augsburger points out that this robust form of Christian spirituality has implications that extend well beyond the walls of the church. An active love of God and neighbor, one that is deeply Christian, provides unique and needed answers to contemporary issues such as loneliness and world poverty while helping believers better balance this-worldly and other-worldly horizons. *Dissident Discipleship* will be a valuable resource to pastors, students, counselors, and all Christians interested in spiritual formation.

Endorsements

"Augsburger has done a great service to the church by marking out clearly the dimensions of a wholistic spirituality that embraces the desire for personal transformation and couples it with the longing to know God, but then takes the next step by declaring that it must also be radically committed to the other. *Dissident Discipleship* is theologically astute, rich, and nuanced. I suspect that it will soon become the standard reference on spirituality for those who are committed to the missional church or the emergent church. I hope that it will serve to expand and enrich the understanding of discipleship and spirituality for all of us. *Dissident Discipleship* is one of those rare books that moves us into new territory by giving us a bigger, richer vision of God's complex relationship with this world and with us."—Richard V. Peace, Fuller Theological Seminary

"If you thought 'spirituality' was mostly vague fluff and feathers, get this book. Building upon his cruciform Anabaptist tradition, David Augsburg gives us a substantial, faithful look at lives formed by Christ."—William H. Willimon, coauthor of *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony*
"With *Dissident Discipleship*, David Augsburg provides a wonderful gift to the twenty-first-century American church: no flabby, empty 'spirituality,' but a practiced, concrete spirituality that reflects his own deeply personal and communal experience of the gospel. This is a gem."—Lee Camp, author of *Mere Discipleship*

"In a graceful and creative style, Augsburg takes us to the heart of the gospel. He offers a delightful and compelling call to discipleship in an age of cheap grace."—Donald B. Kraybill, author of *The Upside-Down Kingdom*

"Spirituality, worship, evangelism, service, and discipleship have become shibboleths in our religious vocabulary, but how are they related to each other in our everyday Christian experience? With his unusual ability to flesh out the inner essential meanings of our religious vocabulary, David Augsburg, both a pastoral counselor and theologian, depicts a 'tripolar' concept of spiritual discipleship that relates to God, our fellow humans, and the world. The great strength of his work is its encompassing definition of discipleship that includes worship, witness, and service; attitude, belief, and behavior; piety, personal values, and ethical response."—C. Norman Kraus, author of *Jesus Christ Our Lord: Christology from a Disciple's Perspective*

"This ringing call to faithful discipleship forces the contemporary church to make a hard choice: either obedience or apostasy."—Ron Sider, author of *The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience: Why Are Christians Living Just Like the Rest of the World?*

"Because David Augsburg teaches and practices pastoral care, he writes of our spiritual growth with intimate knowledge. Because he knows Anabaptist spirituality firsthand, he writes of triple-threat spirituality with at-home comfort. Because he does what he writes, he speaks with true credibility of the holistic spirituality that we need. I find real depth and wisdom in his wonderful stories, humor, and attachment to the way of Jesus. I especially like his chapter on *Gelassenheit* as surrender with stubbornness, serenity with tenacity, patience with endurance. I love his concluding each chapter with a meditation from the *Ausbund*."—Glen Harold Stassen, author of *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context*

"David Augsburg has brought together a rich blend of wisdom from his Christian faith, biblical scholarship, academic acumen, pastoral counseling/psychological expertise, and pastoral/spiritual experiences to empower readers to navigate into a deeper understanding and practice of spirituality. He develops a tripolar spirituality that connects God/Jesus Christ, others, and self in a unifying manner of participatory action that is subversive in terms of transforming common spiritualities into more authentic witness revealed in everyday sharing and serving others through communities and as individuals. His *Dissident Discipleship* builds a compelling case for communities to manifest authentic spirituality through participation and action. Through his poignant stories, illustrations, and discussion he holds hands with academicians, pastors, professionals, and laity in a most intriguing manner that challenges readers to move together through communities to transform authentic spirituality into dissident discipleship."—Sandra R. Brown, retired director of the Lloyd Center Pastoral Counseling Service at San Francisco Theological Seminary

"Augsburger's tripolar approach provides a much-needed theological framework for developing robust spirituality that enhances our commitment and experience of the gospel—to love God and neighbor as self. This is an excellent expression of spirituality from an Anabaptist perspective."—Marcus Smucker, Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary

Reviews

"Augsburger explores what spirituality looks like when it imitates Jesus and is directed outward in service to the world, instead of inward on the self. This is not the usual all-about-me-spirituality book; nor does it focus solely on community to the exclusion of the individual, but it balances the needs of people and communities as they try to imitate the ways of Jesus. In clear and accessible language, Augsburg recommends and explores eight practices... Each chapter begins with several stories and ends with meditations that make what might otherwise be strictly theoretical into practices readers can imagine emulating. Those who are tired of the same old spirituality books will find surprises... Augsburg has written a book that is challenging but still pastoral; it is realistic and honest about the cost of true discipleship even as it encourages readers to embrace that path."—Publishers Weekly

"[An] important work.... This book is an essential read. It challenges all Christians/persons to consider their faith in the context of community. In so doing we can no longer look into the face of the other without beholding God; we can no longer continue to ignore the poverty and the hatred that surround us."—Roy Barsness, Prism

"Augsburger describes with passion and thoughtfulness eight practices that characterize the life of a disciple of Jesus.... In all the chapters on the practices, Augsburg begins with excellent quotes and then flesh-and-blood illustrations of the practices.... Augsburg intersperses insightful comments from his extensive experience in the field of pastoral counseling.... [This book] is inspirational, thoughtful, meaty, accessible and responsible. Mature Christians involved in the church, academy and the marketplace will find this book thought-provoking and convicting. However, we would miss the point of the book if it was only read by individuals. This is a book that demands to be read with a group. Faculty members, church small groups, church staff, parachurch boards and Christian business groups will want to read selections from this book and discuss them together. Faculty should assign this book in social work, pre-med, New Testament, Gospels, ethics, political science, and education classes and devise ways to facilitate thoughtful interaction with it.... Even freshman undergraduates could digest this material.... This book is practical, thoughtful and challenging."—Andrew D. Rowell, Christian Scholar's Review

"With its precise description of what embodied spirituality looks like, *Dissident Discipleship* calls clergy and laity alike to self-examination. One cannot escape from this book without feeling convicted about affluence, privilege, participation in unjust systems, failure to love the enemy, or any of a host of other compromisers of Christian witness. Those engaged in social ministries may find the lexicon associated with tripolar spirituality valuable in putting words to the grace they receive, and in discerning—and perhaps even repenting of—the inner motives for the service they render.... Augsburg gifts his readers with a 'radical alternative' that confronts and challenges, as well as affirms and instructs those who seek to deepen and balance their spiritual lives."—Sherry A. Johnson, Congregations

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