



DETAILS

IVP Books

In Search of the Common Good *Christian Fidelity in a Fractured World*

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Jake Meador is vice president of the Davenant Institute and the editor in chief of *Mere Orthodoxy*, an online magazine covering Christian faith in the public sphere. He lives with his wife and children in his hometown of Lincoln, Nebraska.

A Call to Thrive in Fractured Times

Common life in our society is in decline: the loss of meaningful work and the breakdown of the family leave us anxious and alone, and according to studies, half of all Americans report daily feelings of loneliness. Public discourse is polarized, ethnic minorities face systemic injustices and the ever-present fear of violence and deportation, economic inequalities are widening, and the list continues.

“There is real uncertainty and fear among American Christians about what the future of the church in America will look like,” says Jake Meador, author of *In Search of the Common Good: Christian Fidelity in a Fractured World*. “I wanted to talk to people feeling that anxiety about the nature of the problem before us and also legitimate grounds for hope that can sustain us as we work to address the problem.”

In his new book, Meador diagnoses our society’s decline as the failure of a particular story we’ve told about ourselves: the story of modern liberalism. He shows us how that story has led to our collective loss of meaning, wonder, and good work, and then recovers each of these by grounding them in a different story—a story rooted in the deep tradition of the Christian faith.

“The anxiety that Christians are feeling is a subset of a broader societal anxiety,” says Meador. “The great poet W. H. Auden called ours the age of anxiety. It’s not just that Christians are nervous because they don’t know what the American church’s future will be. It’s that many people are anxious because they don’t know what the future of life together in the United States will be.”

Our story doesn’t have to end in loneliness and despair. There are reasons for hope—reasons grounded in a different, better story. *In Search of the Common Good* reclaims a vision of common life for our fractured times: a vision that doesn’t depend on the destinies of our economies or our political institutions, but on our citizenship in a heavenly city. Only through that vision—and that citizenship—can we truly work together for the common good.

Meador’s book outlines that common life in the west is in decline and the American church has two options: the church can go down with the west by fashioning itself as little more than a political tribe whose chief goal is to protect its own private existence, or it can try to recapture a vision of life together that assumes there are natural common goods that all people share by virtue of being made by God and in his image.

As he writes in the introduction, there is hope for the American Church. “The force that holds the cosmos together is love. And if that is true, then we can ask questions not only about the universe, but about ourselves, about the nature of the good life and about work and membership. And we can answer those questions in ways that agree with that natural love that animates the world. As we live in this world we can discern within it something deeper, something that speaks to the hidden longings of our hearts and tells us that those desires will one day find satisfaction.”



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