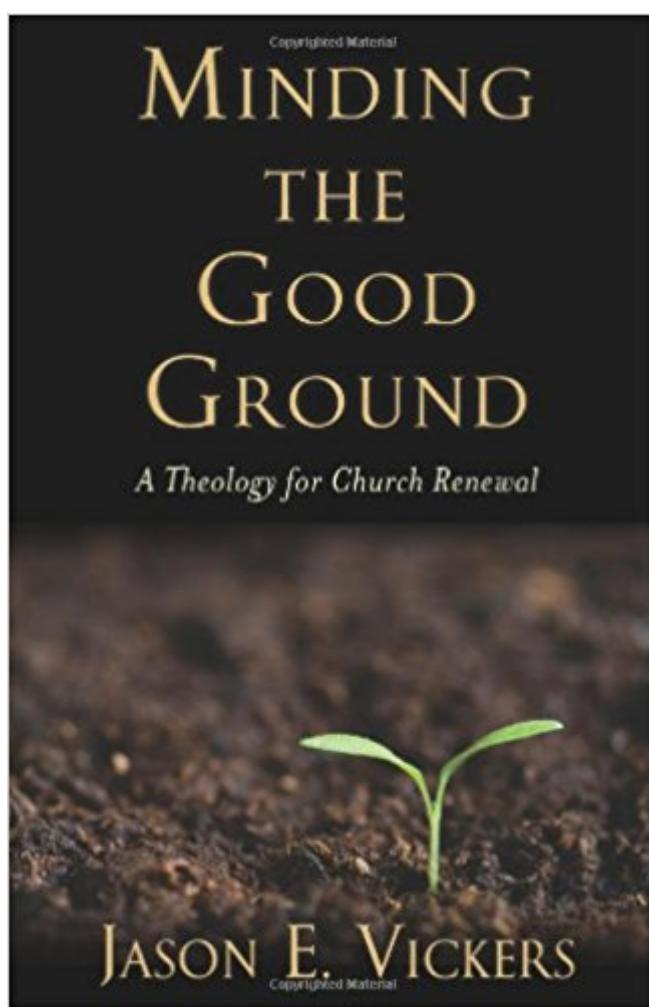


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# Minding The Good Ground: A Theology For Church Renewal



## Synopsis

Declining memberships. Pastoral scandals. A fear of secularism and the New Atheism. Christians are worried about the church's future. Despite such despair, Jason Vickers believes the church also sits upon the cusp of renewal. Some emerging voices promise to lead the church out of decay but focus only upon its structure, while others encourage the Spirit's work to the exclusion of all else. *Minding the Good Ground* organizes the multitude of voices and proposes a new way forward—rooting these renewal movements in a robust historical theology. Moving beyond quick-fix solutions, this new theological vision grounds renewal in the good and life-giving work of the Holy Spirit.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Vickers' theology of church renewal will no doubt prove inspiring and invigorating for church leaders and seminarians of many different traditions." — Taylor Worley, Union University, *Theological Book Review* "[Vickers] provides a substantial theological interpretation of church renewal that needs to be read and pondered by all concerned for the renewal of the church." — David N. Field, Methodist e-Academy, Wesley and Methodist Studies "Minding the Good Ground is a thoroughly engaging work on the cutting-edge of debates about the church and renewal. Vickers' treatment of the nature, mission, and sacramental life of the church catches the heart of ecumenical and theological conversations today. The deceptively simple structure of the book is shaken to the core by a fundamental concern for renewal in, through, and beyond the church that is as foundational as it is challenging." — Wolfgang Vonney, Associate Professor

of Systematic Theology and Director of the Center for Renewal Studies, Regent University "We need balance between Spirit and structure whereas there is now a tendency to exalt the charismatic, the spontaneous, and condemn the ecclesial structures. As Vickers says, it is the Spirit that has inspired and guided the structures in the first place. I highly recommend this book." *Ben Witherington, III, Amos Professor of New Testament for Doctoral Studies, Asbury Theological Seminary* "This is the best book on renewal I have read. Minding the Good Ground cuts through the pious clap trap and romantic hocus pocus and provides precisely the kind of sharp, substantial theological analysis we need. Vickers represents the work of a new generation who are coming on board to carry the torch of renewal into the future." *William J. Abraham, Outler Professor of Wesley Studies, Altshuler Distinguished Teaching Professor, Perkins School of Theology, Southern Methodist University* "Vickers is one of the brightest, most helpful young theologians working in our church today. And, he is surely right—renewal is primarily God's self-assigned task, not ours. This wonderful book calls us to renewed theological accountability." *Will Willimon, Bishop, North Alabama Conference of the United Methodist Church and Professor of the Practice of Christian Ministry, Duke Divinity School* "An insightful and prayerfully crafted theological vision." *Lacey Warner, Associate Professor of the Practice of Evangelism and Methodist Studies, and Royce and Jane Reynolds Teaching Fellow, Duke Divinity School*

Jason E. Vickers is Associate Professor of Theology and Wesleyan Studies at United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. He is the author or editor of numerous books, including most recently *The Cambridge Companion to John Wesley*, *Wesley: A Guide for the Perplexed*, and *Invocation and Assent: The Making and Remaking of Trinitarian Theology*.

Insightful and theologically rich in describing the church's nature, mission and purpose. Beyond evangelical, liberal or denominational a church as a sacrament for salvation and a work of the Holy Spirit to honor the Triune God.

It seems to me that the author has done an incredible amount of thought and research into what he has written. Not only strategic in thinking but a theme heard again this morning as the Pope preached in Assisi. We need to return to the roots of Christendom, We need to return to the principles of what makes us Christian. It is not the dogmatic language of the past but the working of the Holy Spirit despite our human intentions.

This book is easy to read and deals with the purpose for why the church exists, and how we can get back to where we started. Really enjoyable read.

This book speaks to a wonderful cross section of Christians in a way many books with less information are able to do.

A must read for those who would follow Christ by the Spirit and who would know what the Church is about going forward in the 21st century!

I think Professor Vickers wrote a well founded argument with regard to the spiritual problem in many mainline churches today. However, like so many writers who are trying to find a way to re-ignite the church, he is short on details. What would be helpful is more sharing of ideas that might stop the outflow of church participants and talk about how to generate interest within the congregation on how to "sell" his ideas to church members. In many ways, these sort of books are preaching to the choir. But I encourage anyone who really cares to speak out. The more we all talk about the problem of the declining church, the more likely solutions will be generated.,

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