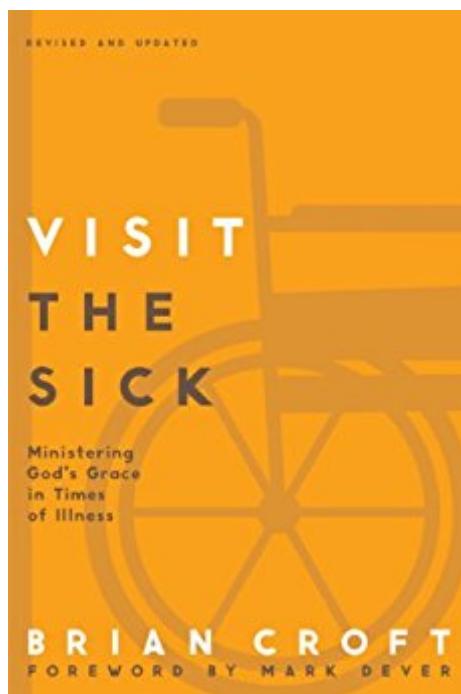


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Visit The Sick: Ministering God's Grace In Times Of Illness (Practical Shepherding Series)



Synopsis

How Do You Care for the Sick? Here's How. One of the marks of the ministry of Jesus is his compassionate care for the sick. Jesus brought healing and hope to individuals struggling with life-debilitating illnesses. Ministry to the sick should also be a mark of his followers, but in many churches today it is neglected or pushed to the periphery of ministry concerns. To counter our modern tendency to minimize or ignore sickness, pastor Brian Croft looks to paradigms of the past and examines historical models of care that honor God, obey the teachings of Scripture, and communicate loving care to those who are struggling with sickness and disease. Part of the Practical Shepherding series of resources, *Visit the Sick* provides pastors and ministry leaders with real-world help to do the work of pastoral ministry in a local church. *Visit the Sick* gives pastors, church leaders, and caregivers the biblical, theological, pastoral, and practical tools they need to navigate through both the spiritual and physical care of the sick and dying.

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Customer Reviews

Brian Croft provides a powerful little book in *Visit the Sick: Ministering God's Grace in Times of Illness*, published by DayOne in 2009. Croft has been the Pastor of Auburndale Baptist Church, in Louisville Kentucky for nearly 20 years, and brings some slivers of gold from a mine of experience to his fellow pastors in his 90-page work. Mark Dever writes the Foreword to this work, with a self-deprecating look at some of the apprehensions he experienced in his early years of ministry. Both his remembrance of inexperience and delight in Croft's work provided an encouraging warning that those in ministry need be familiar with the contents of the book. This reviewer appreciated the logical flow of information presented in *Visit*. From the created order, Croft builds his theology of ministry into one that includes a view of sickness that keeps the gospel in view. He peppers readers with quotes from Spurgeon and Ryle to bolster the historical case for his position, that ministry to the sick and dying is indeed a high calling for a precious time when individuals consider their mortality. The practical proviso for the gospel was a very compelling aspect for this reviewer, as Croft introduces the fact that impenitence may only be broken, by an illness. As an aspiring pastor, this reader had never considered that aspect of hospital visitations to the level presented in the book. Of immense help, were elements from the sections on Theological, Pastoral and Practical Considerations. The preparations for a hospital visit taught a level of preparation for theological discussion, physical countenance and physical communication that will prove very helpful in considering the first visit. The forethought of each section will mandate that the book be at the ready for reference prior to this student's first hospital visits. Historical perspective from authors and pastors such as, Ryle, Spurgeon, Baxter and others allowed readers to gain a historical perspective as well. Imagining the potentially lethal implications of clergy visits to people in centuries past, also provided clarity as this reviewer's mindset is formed regarding the care of a congregation one day. The only negative experienced with the book, was that it seemed to end rather abruptly. It would have been helpful to have some testimonies of both good and bad interactions from patients, hospital staff and other emergency response personnel. The one doctor's perspective (supplied by Pastor Croft's Father) was helpful, but somewhat stilted. Overall, the book was very helpful. It will, by God's Grace, be a much-used resource on this aspiring pastor's shelf for many years to come.

If you are looking for a concise, theologically grounded handbook on hospital visitation, this is the one. Unlike any pastoral "how-to" manual I have read, Croft begins by giving readers the proper

foundation for visiting the sick. As a matter of fact, over half the book is spent dealing with biblical and theological considerations. While task oriented people might be tempted to skim through those pages and get to the "practical" advice, by doing so, they would miss this book's richest value. So-called practical handbooks are plentiful, but a book that succinctly combines orthodoxy and orthopraxy in the specific area of hospital visitation is rare--so rare that I know of none besides this one. Croft has created a doctrinally sound, intensely practical and wonderfully brief guide for pastors to train and equip their deacons or care teams in this important area of ministry.

The book is written in a practical manner which I like. Suggestions such as how to present yourself in appearance and amount of time to spend during visitation are much appreciated. Also, the ministry of visiting the sick is framed within the theology of the gospel.

Well written book that offers a compelling reminder of the importance of visiting the sick. This is a helpful book for both pastors and churchmen.

This should be a required book for all pastoral majors, it is tremendously practical and useful book that every Christian should read

It met all of my expectations and really enjoy reading it.

Excellent resource. Simple yet highly practical advice based on solid theological foundations. A good, quick, helpful read.

Great information.

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