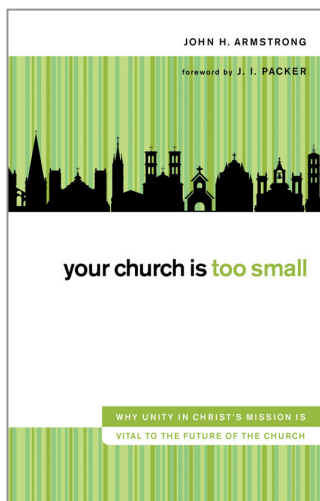


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## THEY WILL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS BY OUR ... DISUNITY

*"YOUR CHURCH IS TOO SMALL" PRESENTS A FRESH VISION FOR UNITY IN CHRIST'S MISSION*

(Waterloo, ON) For those outside the Christian faith, one of the most common obstacles to belief in Christ is the fact that Christians of different types often don't agree or get along. The perception is that Christianity is so fragmented. Sadly, this is an all too-common experience, yet (ironically) Jesus prays that as His body, the church will come to "complete unity" (John 17:23).



*Your Church Is Too Small: Why Unity in Christ's Mission Is Vital to the Future of the Church* (Zondervan, 9780310321149, hardcover, March 2010) addresses this disparity passionately and carefully. In *Your Church Is Too Small*, well-respected author and leader John Armstrong presents a vision of the unity possible for Christians across social, cultural, racial, and denominational lines. When Jesus' followers seek unity through participation in the kingdom of God and the mission of Christ, they demonstrate God's character to a watching world.

The purpose of the book is simple, Armstrong says: "I believe God wants to tear down walls that keep believers apart from other Christians. A small view of the church limits our ability to love as God loves and affects our ongoing witness to the watching world."

Jesus' words in John 17:20-21 may seem like an unreachable ideal, "I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you." But in *Your Church Is Too Small*, Armstrong's vision re-casting for the Church, offers hope for those hungering for the renewal of Christian unity and mission.

In the context of a culture of growing post-denominationalism and post-Christendom, Armstrong observes "a movement of bold, united prayer ...a growing movement of convergence...of learning from each other ...and shared involvement in the mission of Christ."

In *Your Church is Too Small*, he shares his own story and stories of the restoration of unity between other Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox Christians who are coming together in visible unity. Friendships and partnerships are forming that were not possible in previous generations. Believers in all three of the great Christian traditions are newly learning how to love and respect one another, finding out that what unites them is much greater than what divides them. Armstrong contends, "I believe this has to be the work of God's Spirit. This is all part of what I call missional-ecumenism."

Endorsed by such Christian teachers and leaders as Chuck Colson, J.I. Packer, Fr. Patrick Reardon, Steve Brown, Fr. Thomas Baima, and David Neff, *Your Church Is Too Small* provides those navigating ecumenism with material for deep thought, consideration and ultimately, kingdom vision.

**John H. Armstrong is available for interview. To schedule an interview, get video or audio clips, or receive more information on *Your Church is Too Small*, contact Tim Underwood, Graf-Martin Communications at 519-342-3703 ext. 2 or [tim@grafmartin.com](mailto:tim@grafmartin.com)**

### **About the Author**

Dr. John H. Armstrong is the president and founder of ACT 3 ([www.act3online.com](http://www.act3online.com)), a mission committed to equipping leaders for unity in Christ's mission since 1991. For twenty years he served as a pastor, the last sixteen in Wheaton, IL. John is the author/general editor of twelve books, including *Your Church is Too Small: Why Unity in Christ's Mission Is Vital to the Future of the Church* (Zondervan). He also serves as an adjunct professor of evangelism and leadership at the Wheaton College Graduate School. He is a prolific writer and regular blogger at: [www.johnharmstrong.com](http://www.johnharmstrong.com) and [www.yourchurchistoo.com](http://www.yourchurchistoo.com). He attended the University of Alabama, is a graduate of Wheaton College (B.A., M.A.) and Luther Rice Seminary (D.Min.) and an ordained minister in the Reformed Church in America. John has been married to his best friend, Anita, since 1970 and is the father of two married children (Matthew and Stacy) and the grandfather of two girls (Gracie and Abbie).

### **Suggested Interview Questions:**

1. Of the twelve books, why is this the “most important book” you have written?
2. What makes this book unique among other books on this topic?
3. You mention relational unity in the book. What is relational unity?
4. What thinking needs to change for Christians of different traditions do to foster relational unity?
5. What are some things that Christians can do together to make their church sphere larger?

### **Endorsements for Your Church is Too Small**

“Every once in a while, I read a book that I wish every Christian I know would read. This is that kind of book. *Your Church Is Too Small* is clear, prophetic, practical ... and true. If you pray for reformation, renewal, and revival in America and the world (and I do daily), this book is the place to put legs on those prayers. You will be shocked, irritated, and stirred deeply ... and then you'll rise up and call John Armstrong blessed for having had the courage and call to write it.”

— Steve Brown, president and teacher, Key Life Network, Inc.

“If the late Lesslie Newbigin could offer today's church an exhortation—a reminder from the past, an assessment of the present, and encouragement for the future—what would the old bishop say? In what he terms ‘missional ecumenism,’ John Armstrong proposes an answer that confronts readers with the universal shape of Christian identity.”

— Chris Castaldo, author of *Holy Ground: Walking with Jesus as a Former Catholic*

“The Apostle Paul wrote that ‘maintaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ among the followers of Jesus Christ is ‘hard work’ (Eph. 4:3). Few people know that better than John Armstrong. In a day when everything about the contemporary church militates against oneness, John Armstrong is struggling to break down the walls we've built up so that the world can see Jesus in all his variegated richness, in the fullness of the one body of Christ. *Your Church Is Too Small* provides the blueprints and marching orders for a new generation of Church-builders from among those who are building local churches in all the communions of the body of Christ.”

— T. M. Moore, Dean of the Centurions, Prison Fellowship

“This book maps out the painful yet liberating trek from sectarian isolation to the spirit of orthodox unity. In opening oneself to fellow believers, there is no escaping the tension between purity and embrace. No one can sort out that puzzle this side of the second coming. But Armstrong’s book gives courage and strength for the journey. Read this book, take heart, and go forth.”

— David Neff, editor in chief and vice president, Christianity Today

“A growing appreciation for catholicism—the whole church, spread across the whole world—is one of the most hopeful signs emerging within recent evangelicalism. John Armstrong’s astute, heartfelt book provides excellent guidance for the twenty-first-century evangelical rediscovery of the classical church and its rich tradition.”

— Rodney Clapp, author of *Tortured Wonders* and *A Peculiar People*

“Your Church Is Too Small is the narrative of one man’s discovery of a profound spiritual truth, and a sustained argument for a foundational change in thinking for the sake of mission. Dr. John Armstrong offers a narrative of his own conversion to belief in the necessity of working for the restoration of Christian unity, then uses his personal discoveries as the basis for a clear and thoughtful call to action.

Dr. Armstrong’s irenic approach should make it easy for Christians—whether Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant—to engage the challenging thesis of the book, while recognizing that there remain points of doctrine between them which will require further clarification. Anyone concerned about either evangelism or Christian unity should read this book and take seriously its call for both mission and ecumenism.”

— Fr. Thomas A. Baima, provost, University of Saint Mary of the Lake

“Protestant, Catholic, and Orthodox Christians who call Jesus Lord are obligated to fulfill his Great Commission and his new commandment to love one another. Our lack of visible unity and ecumenical charity hinders our mission. John Armstrong’s *Your Church Is Too Small* is a humble, honest, and openhearted summons to ‘re-size’ our churches (and our hearts) by taking seriously the prayer Jesus prayed for us on the eve of his crucifixion. May this encouraging, provocative, and practical book not only be read widely, but also be acted upon out of love for the One who saves us all.”

— James M. Kushiner, executive editor, *Touchstone: A Journal of Mere Christianity*

“With attention to his own pilgrimage and growth in ecclesial awareness, John Armstrong explores here the evangelical heart and ecumenical breadth of churchly Christianity. I am encouraged by his explorations and commend this study to all believers who pray and labor for the unity for which our Savior prayed.”

— Timothy George, founding dean, Beeson Divinity School of Samford University; and senior editor, Christianity Today

“John Armstrong is one of those Evangelical theologians who know that full obedience to Christ embraces the historical transmission through which we know him. This book refuses to scale down the bearer of that tradition—the historical church, that is—or reduce the authority of its voice.”

— Fr. Patrick Henry Reardon, senior editor, *Touchstone*

“John Armstrong has spent his entire ministry working to build the Church, and he has sometimes paid a dear price for insisting that true believers in every communion must work together to re-assert the unity of Christ’s Body. This book is John’s story and manifesto for the much-needed work of building bridges, forging alliances, and renewing oneness across all the various expressions of the Church of our Lord Jesus Christ. It’s a must for anyone who has grown weary with Christian divisiveness and schism and longs to discover ways of strengthening the bonds that unite us in the Spirit of Christ.”

— Chuck Colson