

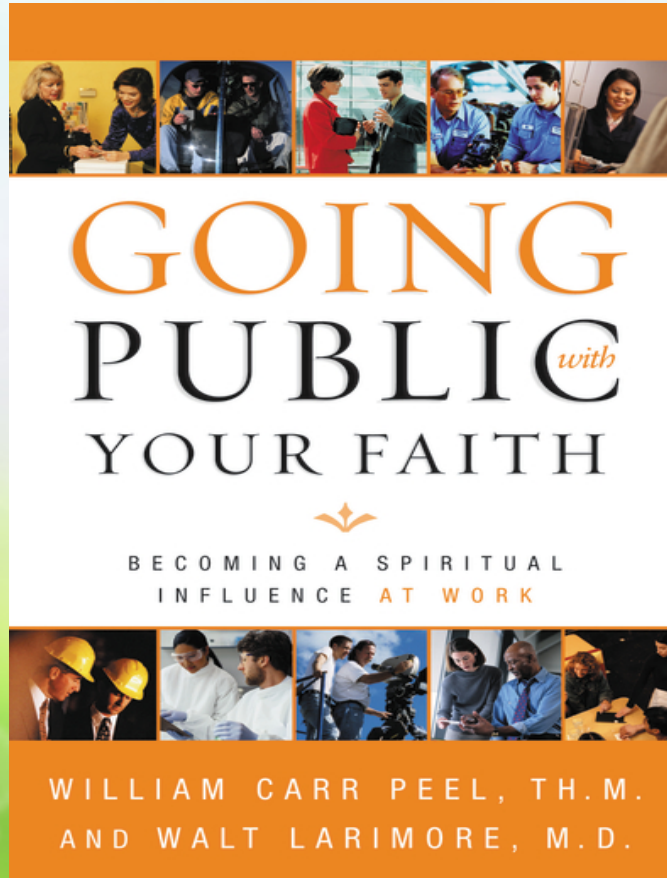
Taking Your Faith Private



Part 1 - Stigma

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Why Take On This Series?



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1. As Christians, we are called to speak (about) the Truth.
2. As Christians, we are called to live as witnesses to Christ, ambassadors to the world, and to remain distinct from culture.
3. We feel the pressure to remain silent, or to live out our faith privately, but we are largely unaware of the reasons for this pressure, or why it is happening.
4. Many of us have come to accept the premises (ideas) that contribute to our silence.

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There is a growing pressure in society for Christians to remain silent and hide their faith. While some of us occasionally encounter this pressure, many of us are unaware of just how far it has spread or how deeply it is engrained in our culture. Some of us have unconsciously bought into the belief that we should keep our faith to ourselves, and most would mistakenly conclude that they came to this belief on their own. This pressure is not accidental nor naturally evolving. It is not something new. It is and has been carefully planned and has its roots going back over six decades. But its greatest effects have yet to be felt. This pressure to take our faith underground will only increase during our lifetime.

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Social Stigma

- Stigma - An attribute, behavior or reputation which is socially discrediting, causing an individual to be labeled as a deviant from the norm.
- Stigma is societally enforced.*
- Prejudice - A preconceived (often unfounded) judgment towards persons because of gender, social class, race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, etc.
- Passing - A cultural performance where a member of a stigmatized group acts in a way to avoid the stigma associated with that group, including: (1) fabrication, (2) concealment, (3) avoidance.

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