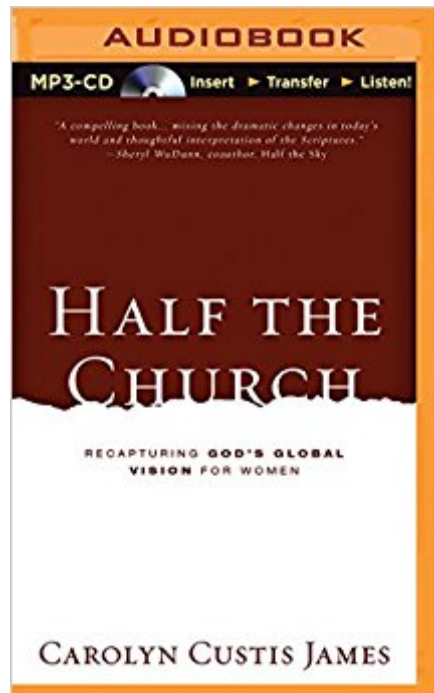




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# Half The Church: Recapturing God's Global Vision For Women



## Synopsis

The lives of twenty-first century women are varied and complex, ranging from seemingly limitless opportunities to grinding poverty and shocking atrocities. In a world that begs the question "Is God good for women?" the church must convey God's good news for all women in a robust and relevant way. But too often the church's message for women is not big enough to address the opportunities, changes, and contingencies of life in a fallen world. Dominant messages for women in our world today arise from the voices of radical feminism or fundamentalist Islam. God's Word offers an empowering and positive message that mobilizes all women, regardless of age, stage of life, social status, or country, and calls them to join their brothers in a Blessed Alliance to advance God's gracious kingdom on earth. Carolyn James unpacks three key biblical images of God's vision for women directly, clearly, and from a global perspective so that no woman or girl is left behind.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Carolyn Custis James has written an unusual and compelling book, mixing her personal story with the dramatic changes in today's world and her thoughtful interpretations of the Scriptures and how women can respond with greater fervor to the Bible's call for change and betterment of the world."

--Sheryl WuDunn, co-author of *Half the Sky* "Half the Church is a significant contribution to the current public discourse of the role and responsibility of the church in responding to the suffering of millions of women and girls due to oppressive cultural and traditional norms. In her excellent book, Carolyn James reminds us of the urgent need for action in order to protect girls and women from

gender-based violence and cultural practices such as trafficking, forced child-marriage, gang rapes, abduction, infanticide, and female genital mutilation." --Fatuma Hashi, Director, Gender and Development World Vision International "Carolyn Custis James combines passion for the suffering women of our world with rigorous biblical observation and exegesis. The result is a prophetic word that challenges both our apathy and ignorance in the face of terrifying facts, and our theological shallowness in the face of abundant biblical teaching. The title and subtitle only tell half the story. For this is a book for the whole church and urges us to see God's global vision for men and women. Half the church badly needs to think again about the message of this book. So does the other half. Otherwise both halves are the tragic losers." --Christopher J. H. Wright, International Director The Langham Partnership International "With the care of an experienced scout, Carolyn James has lined the fire pit with stones, then assembled the kindling and logs, and in the final chapters of this remarkable book has struck the match to ignite a blaze for God and his kingdom. No thoughtful Christian woman can walk away from this book unchallenged or unmoved, as she senses the glory of her ezer-warrior calling. Nor can any thoughtful Christian man remain unmoved by the vision of the Blessed Alliance so skillfully sketched in these pages. The challenge of Half the Church is to the whole church to fulfill God's purpose in creating all of us as iconoclastic bearers of the divine image in a broken world." --Alice Mathews, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary "Carolyn Custis James expertly weaves contemporary reality with biblical story. Reaching into the Old Testament as well as the New, Carolyn shows that God has always been and continues to be at work through women and girls. They are, like men and boys, His image bearers. This book should open the eyes of everyone who takes Jesus seriously to the horrendous injustices against women around the world and provoke within us a serious drive to do something about it. The day is near (and I believe this book will help usher it in) when the church will be a significant cultural catalyst for bringing equality and dignity to women and girls around the world by providing education, empowering women with microloans, and liberating them from oppressive regimes, sex trafficking circles, and secular philosophies that are ultimately degrading to them. It is time for the other half of the church, men, to be strong and courageous and do all we can with all we have to bring divine freedom to women and girls so they can be all that God created them to be." --Mark L. Russell, coauthor, Routes and Radishes "Once again Carolyn Custis James calls us to radical thinking and living. Half the Church opens our eyes to the global problems facing women, drives us to God as the only solution, and refreshes our passion that we can 'do something.' And the writer in me loves Carolyn's exquisite phrases and vibrant images. This book is a must-read and I will be giving it to many people." --Judy Douglass, Director of Women's Resources Campus Crusade "With hope, beauty, and clarity of

vision, Carolyn Custis James takes a megaphone to the biblical call to mobilize justice on behalf of those who suffer violent injustice in our world today. She argues that all in the Body of Christ are God's image bearers, called to be used by God in restoring His image in those who have been most deeply stripped of the freedom and dignity intended for them. We are more aware of the scope of violent injustice in our world today than in any other time of human history; brutal abuse is committed against our neighbors-- neighbors next door and neighbors across the globe. Carolyn calls the whole Church to see the opportunity at hand--to rise up, together, and make God's justice and restoration known." --Bethany H. Hoang, Director of the IJM Institute INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE MISSION "In Half the Church, Carolyn Custis James offers a striking theology as to why men and women are called to live and lead together. Her insightful, integrated and unapologetic plea leaves us with no option but to get on with it ... all of us ... men and women together urgently working for God's best in this world." --Elisa Morgan, author, speaker, and publisher of FullFill --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Carolyn Custis James (MA, Biblical Studies) thinks deeply about what it means to be a female follower of Jesus in a postmodern world. As a cancer survivor, she is grateful to be alive and determined to address the issues that matter most. She travels extensively both in the US and abroad as a speaker for churches, conferences, colleges, theological seminaries, and other Christian organizations. She is an adjunct professor at Biblical Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania, blogs on [www.whitbyforum.com](http://www.whitbyforum.com) and Huffington Post/Religion, and is a contributing editor for Leadership Journal. Her other books include *When Life and Beliefs Collide*, *Lost Women of the Bible*, *Understanding Purpose*, *The Gospel of Ruth*, and *Malestrom*. Carolyn and her husband live in Sellersville, Pennsylvania.

Wow. I'm egalitarian, and I started this book looking for further justifications for what I believe is right. But I found my attention drawn to a much bigger vision: men and women living in the Kingdom of God, giving 100% of themselves, sacrificing, taking risks, and not accepting that things in the world are just ok. James urges women to use the gifts God gave us to further his Kingdom and stop holding ourselves back because we're not exactly sure what our roles are. Jesus makes it perfectly clear what our roles are: preaching good news to the poor and oppressed. This book provided a deep realignment to my purpose and God's vision that I sorely needed.

A must-read by both women and men - to have a correct understanding of the empowerment of

women by God through the scriptures. James provides an passionate and scholarly examination of the female role of "ezer" - not just as a helper to man, but as an inextricable contributor to the family of God and His church. Many church fellowships open wide the door to women as leaders, pastors, teachers, evangelists and missionaries. However, many women around the world are restricted by poor theology. James takes a global look at women and digs deep in the scripture to offer hope to half the church. Thank you Carolyn Custis James!

I've read a couple of books by Carolyn Custis James. Her book, *The Gospel of Ruth: Loving God Enough to Break the Rules* is an unusual and inspiring look at the book of Ruth and how it communicates the truths of the gospel. *Half the Church: Recapturing God's Global Vision for Women* is another book on women, but from a different perspective. It covers two major areas: The loss that occurs when women believe there are limits on how God will use them. This loss isn't just to half the church whose vision of God's purposes for their lives is stifled, but also to the men who are carrying a weight of burden they were meant to share with us. God meant us to build his Kingdom together. A global tragedy is underway as women and girls are suffering the worst kinds of injustices. In *Half the Church*, Custis James examines some of the atrocities going on around the world toward women. What is the church doing about oppression and injustice to women? Apart from a few Christian organizations, most of the church is too busy and just ignores their plight. *Half the Church* challenges us to search for God's vision for his daughters. His plans for us are more far-reaching and life-expanding than we have yet experienced. God is calling us to engage in the world, to right injustices, to stand up for truth. If the other half of the church would fully engage, we can impact the world. This well-written and thought-provoking book resonates with truths that I believe the Holy Spirit is bringing to the attention of the body of Christ. I highly recommend it.

This book is a must read for anyone who knows a woman, is married to a woman or works with a woman in context of the local church. Thank you Custis James for elevating the position of woman, to it's God-Given place, and giving us all much fodder to think over. Read this book - you won't be disappointed (unless you are looking for lots of practical advice - she stays out of those thorny weeds but leaves each local church to wrestle with and apply these truths on their own)..

What can you say about this book?! Every person who is in ministry of any level, or just attends church needs to read this book. It is eye opening and enlightening.

The book is practical and real. It addresses the reality that the church must know today's women if they want to reach them. The world has changed and women's ministries address the real issues and needs of women today. James does not offer in depth hermeneutical or exegesis of the Bible but she does make a strong case for those who have already studied and are satisfied that a proper interpretation of the Scriptures calls for empowering women to lead.

Carolyn Custis James issues a clarion call to all women in the church to take their rightful place as warriors side by side with the men. I so appreciate her discovery and exposition of the term ezer in its fullness as pertains to women. This is a book not only for women to read but for men as well that they appreciate what God intends for His church to reflect to this broken world.

Carolyn James challenges the complacent, privileged Western church to awake to God's call for all of his image bearers to represent Him together in the earth, and especially for Christian brothers and sisters to be the Blessed Alliance for the greater glory of God and the greater good of their neighbors.

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