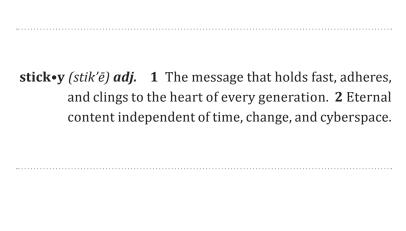
@stickyJesus

how to live out your faith online

@tami**heim**

@toni**birdsong**



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Tami Heim, Toni Birdsong

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For J. C.

The Famous One

"His dominion is an eternal dominion;
his kingdom endures from generation to generation."

endorsements

I loved @stickyJesus. It's a must-read for anyone who wants to better understand how to use the massive platform of social media to communicate the hope of Jesus Christ in today's world. Tami Heim and Toni Birdsong obviously know their stuff and you will too if you take the time to digest this incredible tool they've put together.

Pete Wilson Senior Pastor, Cross Point Church, Nashville, Tennessee Author, *Plan B*

Church leaders are getting a vision for the power of the Internet and social media to advance their reach both inside and outside the church. @stickyJesus is the first book of its kind to guide Christ followers and equip them to be effective online in their circles of influence. This book keeps it real, focuses on the heart, and inspires each of us to make a difference on this new mission field.

Greg Ligon Vice President and Publisher, Leadership Network

The new communication technologies of the past two decades have shrunk our world. With so many ways of staying connected that were previously unimaginable, Tami and Toni show us how to engage the world online for Christ. While nothing takes the place of face-to-face relationship, I was excited to read @stickyJesus as it opened up a whole world of possibilities and it's written by authors who are savvy in the field of communication.

Rebecca Pippert Founder, Salt Shaker Ministries Best-Selling Author, *Out of the Salt Shaker* @stickyJesus is a must-read for every believer born to this age when the world is literally at our fingertips. This book challenges us to be intentional about engaging the world online—not for the building up of ourselves, but for the building up of the Kingdom. @stickyJesus will sharpen your focus, move you to self-examination, and motivate you to interact online in a whole new sticky way. I loved this book. I needed this book!

Kim Cash Tate Speaker, Women of Faith Author, *Faithful*

When I first saw the title, @stickyJesus, I had no idea what to expect! I was delighted to discover a book filled with profound truth and practical applications. This book is a Christian's field guide for how to use social media to advance the gospel. As the founder of Women in Christian Media, I believe this is a must-read for all Christian media professionals, as well as for every believer who wants to use social media platforms to reach the world for Christ.

Suellen Roberts Founder & President, Women in Christian Media

Imagine if we lived at a hinge in history when ordinary people like you could be mobilized as witnesses—as if Jesus Himself were making new nets for many to fish with? Tami and Toni make the convincing case that this is no fantasy. And they are savvy, credible, and flat-out devoted-to-Jesus witnesses, perfectly suited to help us humbly bear the transforming presence of Jesus into this new, networked place called the Internet.

Ken Wilson Senior Pastor, Vineyard Church, Ann Arbor, Michigan Author, Mystically Wired: Exploring New Realms in Prayer Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit had come upon us we would be His witnesses to Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). The Internet and the exponential growth of social media is the new "ends of the earth." Tami and Toni's clear and readable new book, @stickyJesus, is the Christian handbook for understanding how best to navigate this new place.

Rev. Fr. James Coles Pastor, St. Ignatius of Antioch Antiochian Orthodox Christian Church, Mesa, Arizona

The world we live in has changed. The days of sitting on the front porch with our neighbors are mostly over and a new day of Tweeting, Facebook, and texting has arrived. We can resist culture all we want but it is the world in which we live. How will the church respond? Authors Tami Heim and Toni Birdsong want to help the church navigate through the challenges of social media with their new book @stickyJesus. This is a helpful and thought-changing book with the potential to help pastors and church leaders become more Kingdomminded and achieve greater results in reaching people for Christ.

Ron Edmondson Co-Pastor, Grace Community Church, Clarksville, Tennessee

This book had me from page one—I could not put it down! The new Roman Road is indeed at our fingertips and its reach is incredible. @stickyJesus will compel you to go from observing the social media phenomenon at hand to boldly injecting Christ into the midst of it and radically changing the eternal conversation.

Wade Mikels Senior Pastor, Village Church, Burbank, California As a ministry leader I am always looking for new ways to show and share the saving power of Jesus Christ. @stickyJesus has opened my mind and heart to all that God is making possible through social media. We were born for such a time as this and this is our chance to claim the World Wide Web for the glory of God.

Robin M. Bertram Founder, Robin Bertram Ministries

The widespread ways we as human beings create to connect with one another points to our deep need for relationship. @stickyJesus provides a roadmap for helping believers navigate the online environment in a way that helps build relationships that point to a relationship with God. This is relationship evangelism for a new place and a new time!

Dwayne Reece Vice President and General Manager, Community Chaplains of America

This book explores the new frontier of "techno-evangelism." People are scrambling to be relevant with trendy Websites, podcasts, blogs, and online tithing. Leveraging technology to reach the virtual mission field enables a believer to share the gospel instantly. @stickyJesus provides great insight on how to be intentional for Christ in our online communities.

Celeste LaReau Founder & President, Tennessee Christian Chamber of Commerce

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file introduction: what's sticky got to do with it?

@stickyJesus My message clings to people's hearts—forever.

Share

Hey! Just wanted to share a quick note with you...since we've become Facebook friends I really look to you for inspiration. I have been through a lot in the last three years. Some days are better than others. When I read your posts I realize that life is a journey and God has a plan. Some days I actually feel like He is working through you to talk to me. Anyway, I did something crazy tonight...I found a church with a ladies' Bible study near my house and actually went! I feel really, really good. Actually, I can't wait to go back. I can't explain it. I wanted you to be the first to know.

This post, sent to us from our Facebook friend Melissa Paolo-Corcoran, is just one of the twenty-five *billion* pieces of content exchanged on Facebook each month by the five hundred million people (to date) now connecting daily on the largest social networking site on the planet.

The sheer volume of human connection and conversation taking place on social networking sites daily is mind-blowing. But what's more awesome is that at the heart of the digital note you just read is the *sticky* love of Jesus Christ.

Sticky. It means different things to different people. To marketers, sticky is the Holy Grail, what it's all about. It's the secret sauce in an advertising message that helps it hit the mark, get attention, and move people to act. A "sticky message" stays around longer than most.

But we define sticky in a whole new way—a way that relates to Jesus and His message. Sticky holds fast, adheres, and clings to the heart of every generation. Sticky is an eternal message independent of time, change, and cyberspace. It's the supernatural movement of God unaffected by Wi-Fi, bandwidth, or gigabytes. A sticky message is unyielding to cultural fodder or trends. It's a holy whisper in a noisy land.

Of all the messages the world has ever heard, the gospel is still the stickiest. The good news is that God's message is *your* message, which makes your presence and voice online wholly (and holy) indispensable!

This book is for every Christ follower residing on this side of heaven. It's for those who realize—and those who have yet to understand—the awesome moment into which we've been born. It's for technology novices, casual surfers, and those already folded comfortably into the online world.

Wherever you are in your skill level, it's time to direct your heart toward the sticky things of God.

We challenge you as a Christ follower to change your mind-set of the way you spend your time online. We challenge believers around the world to forgo denomination, sit in the same pew, and write this ongoing story *together* and share new ways to reach a fragmented world for Christ.

Together, we can light up the online space. We can "go" and we can "tell" as Jesus asked each of us to do. And we can change absolutely *everything*.

Changing the world doesn't begin with knowing technology; it begins with knowing Christ. In *Sticky Jesus* we will equip you for the online world by looking to the Equipper, Jesus. We will show you how He connected, created community, and ignited a buzz the world has yet to replicate. We will look at His character, His process, and His priorities and how you can echo His heart online.

In these pages we will do the following:

- Explore how Christ honored and built relationships and how you can do the same online.
- Give you a practical understanding of the marketing-driven culture online.
- ✓ Point to the Holy Spirit as your Power Source.

- Provide personal stories that show God moving and transforming lives through social networking channels.
- Summarize each file with a download and a prayer that are 100 percent retweetable.
- ✓ Alert you to the danger zones.
- Demystify the world of social networking with easy instruction on getting started on Facebook, Twitter, blogging, and content gathering (RSS).
- Provide ongoing resources to help you grow beyond this book at http://www.stickyjesus.com/.
- Include a glossary in the back of the book to help you along the way.

So who are we to author this book? We are professional communicators by trade and passionate practitioners of all things social media. More importantly, we are Christ followers who understand the power of the gospel and how it can radically change the game online if—and only if—we get in the game. And by the way, God connected our two hearts through the power of a single tweet.

We've seen the amazing, eternal fruit that honestly sharing our lives with others—and listening—online produces. So, we've stepped off-line to share that knowledge with you.

Pssst! We'd also like to let you in on a little secret: if we can do this, so can you!

Yes, the online culture is full of strange language (Plaxo, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube, and the like). But don't let that scare you. This is easy stuff. Really easy. And we'll prove it.

Take up your charge, believer. This is your time. You are the light of the world. God has entrusted you with circles of influence online filled with people—all kinds of people—whom He loves deeply. We pray that you grow in your desire to know Christ and explore the special way He's calling you to shine in this new digital land. So, let's get started—together.

file you: born for such a time as this

@stickyJesus The land is shiny, but you are My light.

Share

Welcome to the Land of Shiny Things. Your citizenship was not overtly solicited, but gradually you made your way here. You are an unwitting but active, dues-paying resident. The Land of Shiny Things is a finely manicured mental, spiritual, and physical subdivision of our universal domain. It is the cookiecutter context that wraps itself around your mind daily, and for lack of an intuitive escape route, you fall into it...way too easily.

The Land of Shiny Things begins to define itself when you hit the snooze on the digital alarm in the morning. Without waking up fully you point the remote at the television, and an impersonal, albeit strangely comforting hum paints a layer over the room...and over your thoughts.

The morning sun rises in supernatural splendor but fails to compete with the shiny box that has reeled in your gaze. Your need to know far outweighs your need for much else. Amid the stream of shiny things coursing through your mind, you hope to catch a glimpse or deduct a rational prediction, based on your library of shiny apps, reliable resources, and mobile reports, of what the unopened day ahead might hold. The shiny coffeepot is programmed to perk. You punch the shiny toaster and poke the shiny blender. You pet your shiny dog that now has a shiny chip surgically implanted so he can't get lost in the Land of Shiny Things.

You kiss your shiny kids good-bye as they get on a bus where all the shiny kids blindly slide into their seats, careful not to interrupt an intense texting tango, blowing out the next game level, or snagging a hot song download.

Rather than swap stories or baseball cards, they peer into their shiny Game Boys, PSPs, cell phones, and iPods.

Meanwhile, you get in your shiny car, complete with a shiny GPS that gives you a 0.2 percent margin of error that you will make it to your destination within 0.6 percent of the estimated time without wasting a moment on a wrong turn or inefficient route. Stop! Go back! You almost left your shiny cell phone, which would render you unreachable and unconnected—the equivalent of being among society's electronically disabled.

At the office you ache to skip the pleasantries. Cordial people move soooo slowly, you think. Chitchat and office banter exist to delay the euphoric cliff dive into the shiny stream of e-mails and other online destinations corralled on the other side of your shiny laptop screen. Ahhhhhh! Finally one with the Wi-Fi, you are officially powered up and a contributor to a world fueled by batteries, power cords, and chargers. You are persuaded of your unique presence as you join the other 1.9 billion people on the planet who inhabit the Internet daily.¹

You need to know and be known, and there's little room for God in this shiny equation.

what time is it anyway?

We live in a time when information and the access to it are more powerful than ever. Armed with the right content (information), you become (or feel) more in control of the world around you. The right information helps you make better decisions about how to live, interact, and succeed. You seek information to help with purchasing, investing, staying healthy, being successful in a career, parenting, traveling, buying real estate, maintaining relationships, voting, eating, doing business, and if you're on such a quest...finding God.

Google has wooed the world. But who woos the hearts of men and women? The Bible says the Holy Spirit. But these days it's easier to get more personal with Google than with God and other people. Increasingly, people search Google for information about personal issues such as marriage, depression, parenting, addiction, finances, disease, sexuality, loneliness, and eating disorders. And people do it often without a thought of reaching out to one another or to God.

Has Google replaced the belief that God is omnipresent and all-knowing, and can even answer prayers? As absurd as it may sound, a generation

that has grown up as digital natives communicating in real time via instant messages might shock you with a resounding "yes."

Relax. There's no need to renounce your residency in the Land of Shiny Things or mask the evidence of your connected life. There's no shame. This is the hour to which you've been born—so by all means, power up! Just power up the way God wants you to. That means with a God-breathed strategy, Holy Spirit power, and divine discernment.

Christians are just as immersed in digital technologies and social networks as anyone else.

A 2008 study by George Barna indicates that matters of faith play a small role in differentiating people's technological habits. The study found that Christians are just as immersed in (and dependent on) digital technologies and social networks as anyone else. Christians emerged as statistically "on par" with national norms.

David Kinnaman, the lead researcher on the project, gives the research context and warns church leaders to strike a balance between the spiritual and the cultural potential of today's technology. While technology allows us to reach the masses, it's no substitute for the human impact of life-on-life discipleship, says Kinnaman. He adds, "whether or not you welcome it, technology creates an entirely new calculus of influence and independence. The stewardship of technology as a force for good in culture is an important role for technologists, entrepreneurs, educators, and Christian leaders."²

For you, a Christ follower, the discussion around technology and its impact for good cannot be left to chance. It's a conversation that must be an ongoing priority. It must become part of the writings, readings, and teachings that communicate faith to this and future generations. And if businesses, motivated by profitability and survival, continue to generate effective content marketing solutions and new ways to engage the public, the body of Christ should be alert—and teachable—to use those same strategies.

How much more critical is the message of salvation than communicating the benefits of the latest fat-free soup or the faster running shoe? *Exactly*.

We live and communicate in awesome times. And we live in one of *the most exciting* windows for sharing the gospel since the Gutenberg press was invented in 1440, making Bibles accessible to the masses.

Until that time books, including the Bible, were painstakingly copied

by hand and available only to the wealthiest and most educated people. German-born Johannes Gutenberg died without knowing that his invention would spark the Renaissance, the Industrial Revolution, and the Reformation and catapult the spread of Christianity.

Multiple media, including literature, art, television, film, and radio, have collectively transmitted the gospel message over time. Although their impact has been great, nothing can compare to the mind-blowing—and ever-evolving—impact of the Internet, namely, the content-sharing side called Web 2.0 and the spin-off industry of (and obsession with) social networking. No doubt, a monumental shift is taking place around the world politically, socially, and economically. Social networking is consuming the collective psyche and redefining the understanding of words as traditional as *community* and *friends*.

a snapshot of influence

The speed of change and the numbers are staggering when you consider what is happening around you. Perhaps you are familiar with some of these statistics.³ If not, be prepared to have your thinking rocked.

- It took radio thirty-eight years to reach fifty million users; television, thirteen years; the Internet, four years; and the iPod, three years. In just a nine-month period, Facebook added one hundred million users, and downloads of iPhone applications reached one billion. (That's billion with a b.)
- Print newspaper circulation is down seven million over the last twenty-five years. But in the last five years, unique readers of online newspapers have increased thirty million.
- Collectively, the television networks ABC, NBC, and CBS get ten million unique visitors every month, and these businesses have been around for a combined two hundred years. YouTube, Facebook, and MySpace got 250 million unique visitors each month after being launched for only six years.
- In 2008, Barack Obama leveraged online social networks to raise \$500 million and mobilized young voters via social networking at unprecedented numbers. He outpaced opponent John McCain in fundraising online by five times.⁴

- Ninety-six percent of people born between 1980 and 1994 have joined a social network.
- Nielsen research reveals that Americans spend a quarter of their time online; a third of that time is spent communicating across social networks, blogs, personal e-mail, and instant messaging. The world now spends over 110 billion minutes on social networks and blog sites.
- One out of every eight couples married in 2008 in the U.S. met via social networking.

Still think using social media is a fad or a waste of time? You may soon join the ranks of these leading, albeit, well-meaning thinkers:⁵

"Everyone acquainted with the subject will recognize it as a conspicuous failure."

-Henry Morton, president of the Stevens Institute of Technology, on Thomas Edison's light bulb, 1880

"We have reached the limits of what is possible with computers."

-John von Neumann,

infamous mathematician and pioneer of quantum mechanics, 1949

"The horse is here to stay but the automobile is only a novelty—a fad."

—The president of the Michigan Savings Bank advising Henry Ford's lawyer not to invest in the Ford Motor Co., 1903

"Remote shopping, while entirely feasible, will flop-because women like to get out of the house, like to handle merchandise, like to be able to change their minds."

-Time, 1966

"While theoretically and technically television may be feasible, commercially and financially it is an impossibility, a development of which we need waste little time dreaming."

-Lee DeForest,

American radio pioneer and inventor of the vacuum tube, 1926

"Transmission of documents via telephone wires is possible in principle, but the apparatus required is so expensive that it will never become a practical proposition."

-Dennis Gabor, British physicist, 1962

what does it all mean?

It means anyone with an imperative message to communicate has to think bigger. People are migrating online. And as they continue to build niche communities, a significant window is open that should have every person who is concerned with the things of Christ sitting upright and being fully engaged.

The Web has a culture all its own.

This dramatic shift in communication and the growing hunger for human connection online have spawned a new mission field unlike any the church has ever seen.

This mission field has a language and culture all its own. You haven't trained for it. You're not exactly sure how it works. Its velocity can be intimidating. The reference books and mission training programs tailored to impact a Web-based world...well, they simply don't exist.

You stand here as a Christ follower in a definitive moment in time; you are an ordinary person called to usher a holy Kingdom into an increasingly fragmented world. It's the perfect scenario for God to move in big ways, just as He always has. Just as God called Esther, Joseph, and Paul to go before the world's kings at appointed times to alter history, He now calls you to log on and upload what's critical to today's conversation.

While everything changes at warp speed, the holy mandate remains: to communicate the gospel in the most relevant channels available here, there, and everywhere…even if "everywhere" includes foreign lands with peculiar names like Twitter, Facebook, Google, and Plaxo.

the lay of the land

What does this new mission field look like, and who dwells there? It's unique, a place where increasingly "connected" people can easily become more spiritually disconnected. Amid the urban sprawl of technology, they congregate, shop, work, share, play, and live online. It's a shiny terrain, indeed.

In *The World Is Flat*, author Thomas L. Friedman asserts that there's no turning back from this "mobile me" era; that the cheap availability of software and broadband Internet has leveled the global landscape, rendering the world more "flat" than round. Connectivity and collaboration have opened the global political, economic, and cultural playing field to everyone previously excluded from circles of wealth and power. The future will not resemble the past; to succeed from this point forward, individuals and companies must develop strategies that fit the global realities.⁶

So how do you influence this 24/7 streaming global conversation? By doing what you do best—and what human beings have been doing since God established the twelve tribes of Israel—you reconnect to and mobilize the tribe.

In his groundbreaking book *Tribes*, Seth Godin reconnects us to our human tendency to create tribes. A tribe, says Godin, is a "group of people connected to one another, connected to a leader, and connected to an idea. For millions of years, human beings have been part of one tribe or another. A group needs only two things to be a tribe: a shared interest and a way to communicate." The Internet provides the communication channel for the world. Jesus provides the channel and the leadership to you, the Christ follower. Can you hear your Tribal Leader over the noise?

• let's go there...

It's midday in Galilee. The sun is hot; a blanket of dust covers the weary traveler who comes into town by way of Judea. The townspeople have heard of Him and knew He was coming. Word traveled quickly of miracles, prophecies, and outlandish claims made by this very peculiar, humble carpenter from Nazareth.

"His name is Jesus. Says He's the Messiah," they whisper as He passes. "Son of God He claims...but we all know nothing good comes out of Nazareth." He meets their critical eyes with an expression that lacks both worry and offense. They whisper, unaware that He can hear their hearts. While they are entangled in their quiet chatter, this Tribal Leader hears only their overwhelming need.

The Scripture provides the first lesson in social networking and the importance of community. It points to Jesus as one of history's first influencers to say, "Follow me."

"As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his
brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen.
'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will make you fishers of men.'
At once they left their nets and followed him."
Mark 1:16–18, NIV

then and now

That day in Galilee, Andrew and Simon dropped their nets and followed Jesus. Since that day, millions have decided to do the same. Jesus promised before He ascended to heaven that He would send His Holy Spirit (the Power Source) to enable His followers to do *greater things* than even He had done (John 14:12). Give yourself a minute and reread that sentence.

Do you *really believe* you can do greater things empowered by the Holy Spirit than even Christ did while He walked the earth? Perhaps if you did—if we all did—things might look differently around us.

Jesus charged His believers to get up and go, to share the truth about Him with the world. He called those believers, and He's calling you, a "light."

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden."

Matthew 5:14, NIV

What does light do? It makes things visible and more easily understood. God's light helps others see what they didn't see—or couldn't see—when the lights were out. Your presence as a believer in social networking circles "sheds light on" cultural, social, and political issues, world events, personal struggles, and issues of morality that a global culture all but shrouds.

You will find in this new frontier that influence, persuasion, marketing, vanity, and jockeying for position are the universal currency. Your presence is to be monetized; your message is to be marginalized, to make room for the next, best thing in the Land of Shiny Things.

But your job is to illuminate and celebrate truth in a whole different way.

"Remember, our Message is not about ourselves; we're proclaiming
Jesus Christ, the Master. All we are is messengers, errand runners
from Jesus for you. It started when God said, 'Light up the darkness!'
and our lives filled up with light as we saw and understood God in
the face of Christ, all bright and beautiful."

2 Corinthians 4:5-6, THE MESSAGE

In this passage, Paul tells us that light isn't content to simply shine on itself; it must inform and proclaim a higher message. It sees, understands, shares, and illuminates for others the face of God, that is, Christ.

So in such a time as this—the predetermined time to which you were born how do you follow Jesus in a Web-based world and lead others to do the same? How do you deliver the only message that matters? How do you make it stick?

Odownload

- Light trumps shiny every time. 17
- "You are the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14, NIV). 17
- 17 God planned for you to be born in this time.
- Social networks are the communication channels 17 vou can travel with Him and for Him.
- 17 The newest mission field is at your fingertips. No passport needed.
- 17 Jesus is still the greatest influencer and community builder of all time.
- Jesus said, "Follow Me." 17
- The mandate hasn't changed: spread the gospel 17 here, there, and everywhere.

n upload

Dear Lord.

With one word You spoke the world into being. You spoke light. You spoke man. And You spoke love with Your Son, Jesus. You fashioned me long ago to live and move in this time, and I will man my post with Your authority and Your power. I will speak Your name in the Land of Shiny Things, knowing that only Your *Light can interrupt the world's gaze and turn it back to heaven.*

All things were created by You, for You, and for Your glory—including the many tools of technology. Help me master those tools to bring Your Kingdom to this earth.

I will go and I will do just as so many have done before me with the tools they were given. Open my mind and open my understanding—for my deepest desire is to follow You and make You known as I log online each day. Amen.

"I loved @stickyJesus. It's a must-read for anyone who wants to better understand how to use the massive platform of social media to communicate the hope of Jesus Christ in today's world."

Pete Wilson

Pastor, Cross Point Church, Nashville & Author of Plan B

People are talking. A lot.

In fact, they spend over 110 *billion* minutes a month on social networking sites like Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter.

Some are ranting. Some are raving. Almost all are revealing their hearts and minds as never before. This historic social shift is a dream come true for big brand marketers, political parties, and just about anyone who has something to say.

So how do you—a Christ follower—navigate the noise, dodge the danger, talk the tech, *and* speak hope into the online space?

You get sticky. Just like Jesus.

The gospel is the stickiest message ever spoken. It's outlived and outlasted man's best ideas. It can radically change everything—if we share it.

@stickyJesus equips you to:

- Build and honor relationships the way Jesus did.
- Understand the marketing-driven culture of social networks and how to navigate them.
- Influence, engage, serve, and lead online—like Jesus.
- Use dozens of tools, tricks, tips, and resources to grow your online reach.
- Identify and avoid the danger zones.
- Learn the basics of Facebook, Twitter, blogging, and content gathering.

@sticky/esus is a unique blend of solid biblical truth and practical social media knowhow. It inspires with true stories of people influencing their online communities for Christ. Conversational and practical, @sticky/esus demystifies the technology side of social networks and awakens us to the astonishing mission field now at our fingertips.



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