

and humility. Theological anthropology will become a key consideration when thinking missionally or evangelizing. Readership will be limited, however, mainly to US contexts. The book's illustrations focus on such histories as the Civil War and Jim Crow laws. Racism is presented and considered as "America's Original Sin." Thus, readers from other Western nations will need to contextualize the book's illustrations, while appropriating its ideas and concerns. Further, readers will want to challenge, at points, Robinson's anthropology for its orthodoxy. Of course, such challenging is not of Robinson's anthropology, but of the anthropologies Robinson accesses. For example, Robinson notes the Native American theological anthropology that blurs the lines between human and non-human so that "people" might be considered as a category beyond human beings (39). Readers may also question the methodology of Robinson's sources for theological anthropology, for instance, whether starting with dehumanization, even before Scripture and tradition, is appropriate (42). Such concerns, when framed as questions, will push conversation and deepen mutual understanding, even if there is not consensus. One gets the idea that Robinson would consider such conscientization a helpful development and a theological corrective to racism and its effects.

Race and Theology will be best utilized in US courses on evangelism and cross-cultural ministry, and in church groups with appropriate guides for understanding and implementing theologically rooted, redemptive practices for our day.

McIntosh, Gary L. *Growing God's Church: How People Are Actually Coming to Faith Today*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016. 187 pp. \$15.99.

Reviewed by Garrett R. Eaglin. Eaglin is an undergraduate student at Biola University. He has served as a leader in youth ministry. He is currently earning a BA in Biblical & Theological Studies and a minor in Great Books of the Western Tradition from the Torrey Honors Institute.

In the present-day church, it is often difficult to determine its unified mission, priority, role, focus, and context. It is equally difficult to articulate the relationship between the gathering of the faithful community of believers and its proclamation of the gospel to those outside of that gathering (i.e., the relationship between church attendance and evangelism). Gary McIntosh (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) has written *Growing God's Church: How People Are Actually Coming to Faith Today* as an attempt to discover and outline the true relationship between faith, evangelism, and the modern church.

McIntosh notes that the church has lost its connection between missional thinking and evangelism. He hopes to offer a corrective in this book by engaging in the biblical and practical questions pertinent to evangelism

in a case study on new converts connected to local churches. This is all purposed to relocate evangelism to the core of local church ministry, or rather, to reveal that every aspect of the local church ministry is actually within the scope of evangelism. McIntosh then closes with practical advice and principles to maximize the local church's effectiveness in facilitating the integration of new converts within its walls.

McIntosh's main thesis is that evangelism has historically held the highest priority in the church's mission and practice. He accomplishes this by integrating a rich theology of the incarnation and kingdom with the local church; by way of this connection, we learn that God's economy is always one of revealing and accomplishing his salvation purposes, and evangelism is one image of that dynamic. McIntosh uses a trichotomous view of evangelism to outline how doing things in the name of the Lord (presence), presenting the gospel message and facilitating in its reception (proclamation), and facilitating discipleship (persuasion) are all unified levels of evangelism and are not disparate. Evangelism defined thusly then becomes the primary mission of the local church—spiritual, moral, and academic formation all take place in this evangelistic dynamism for the sake of preparing the church for the coming King and kingdom.

McIntosh further demonstrates his thesis of the centrality of evangelism to the life of the local church by conducting a survey analyzing the means by which people are led to faith in Christ. McIntosh compares his survey with a survey conducted by Arn's Institute for American Church Growth in 1980. McIntosh's survey discovered that friends and family members are the categories with the highest percentages (McIntosh 58.9%; Arn 75–90%), with the pastor and church staff as the second highest (McIntosh 17.3%; Arn 5–6%), and a crusade in third place (McIntosh 12.5%; Arn 0.25–0.5%). The disparity in the percentages demonstrates a significant change in how the means of effective evangelism have undergone a significant shift from the family to the church in the last three decades. McIntosh then recommends specific principles to apply in the church that aim toward three accomplishments: (1) the worshipers' personal investment in the lost, (2) an atmosphere in the local church that is conducive to evangelism, and (3) worshipers sufficiently trained in evangelism.

McIntosh then focuses on the retention of new converts in local churches. He discovers six principles common to churches that have high retention rates among all generations; these principles are arranged around four key tenets: (1) connection/integration (small groups, service, etc.), (2) clarity (defined mission, vision, intention, etc.), (3) instruction (Sunday school, church school, doctrine, etc.), and (4) relevance (applicable, passionate, and well-delivered sermons, culturally relevant atmosphere, etc.). McIntosh's practical principles at the end of this section clearly reflect that. The book ends with a list of ten principles of effective evangelism that seek to sum up the conclusions of McIntosh's study in an easily applicable format.

Although McIntosh clearly articulates the problem throughout the book while offering helpful solutions, he fails to provide sufficient support for the thesis that social justice, the proclamation of the gospel, and discipleship are all forms of evangelism. Describing the connection of social justice and discipleship with the word preached would seem to be a better-suited analogy. The three-tiered nature of it (social justice, then proclamation, then discipleship) seems ad hoc, as well. This places discipleship at a greater importance than social justice without a clear justification. If my church has the option of sending a doctor on a medical mission to Ramadi, should I tell him that his work is a lower level (but still necessary) form of evangelism than my Sunday morning message? This is where I think it would be helpful if McIntosh restricted this dynamic so that evangelism only refers to the verbal proclamation of the gospel, while social justice and discipleship are distinct from, yet intimately related to, evangelism. This would emphasize McIntosh's main points while avoiding the ad hoc hierarchical dynamic.

Despite this weakness, McIntosh still accomplishes his goal of relocating the gospel and its proclamation to the center of the life of the church. The principles at the end of each section are extremely applicable for pastors, church staff, and laypersons alike. They illustrate specific examples and give particular advice—avoiding the common trap of offering overly broad advice that somehow simultaneously applies to everything and nothing.

McIntosh's *Growing God's Church* accomplishes the retrieval of evangelism from the realm of ancillary, optional activity and returns it to the core of the life of the local church, and his method is convincing. Anyone who reads this and applies the principles to his church will likely see results due to the specific, practical, gospel-centered, and relevant nature of the advice. This is equally relevant to pastors, church staff, and laypersons, but the bulk of its applicability will resonate with a pastor and evangelist.

Dreher, Rod. *The Benedict Option: A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation*. New York: Sentinel, 2017. 262 pp. \$15.00.

Reviewed by April Berg. April is an MA in Missiology student at the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. She seeks to see peoples across the continent of Asia come to know Christ as Savior and Lord and to be taught the Scriptures within the community of faith, both present and past. She earned her BA from North Greenville University.

Due to technological innovations and globalization, the world today is in constant flux. U.S. culture in particular is shifting, becoming more relativistic and anarchistic. How are Christians to respond to the culture? How are we to maintain our Christian identity, raise up the next generation, and engage the lost, all at the same time? Dreher proposes that Christians learn from the Rule of Saint Benedict, applying his principles in Christ-focused communities