

devoted to addressing leadership issues, prayer, and potential challenges for comeback churches.

The authors call the reader to renew his or her belief in the foundational aspects of Christian theology. While growing deeply in love with Jesus, the brothers and sisters, and the lost in the community are areas of the Christian life that many take for granted, Stetzer and Dodson call the reader to focus on these areas.

I was very encouraged with the authors' emphasis on the Scriptures and the careful organization of the book. The surveys of the over three hundred churches gave authority to the conclusions. The numerous practical insights from individual churches studied provided some very helpful material.

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Smith, Efrem and Phil Jackson. *The Hip Hop Church: Connecting With the Movement Shaping Our Culture*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005. 227 pp. \$15.00.

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Reviewed by Robert W. Strong. Robert is the Executive Director of Edification at Ecclesia Christian Fellowship in San Bernardino, California. He is presently working on a D. Min. at Talbot School of Theology.

Smith and Jackson have collaborated on this book with the purpose being to identify the mission opportunity for the church to reach a generation of youth who are less and less attracted to the church of their parents. The authors write with a sense of urgency and conviction, challenging the status quo, as they address the realities of reaching the younger generation.

In the first section of the book, "Church and Hip-Hop," Jackson develops four points of significance: 1) the influence of hip-hop is strong and rapidly increasing; 2) the church seems to be in denial of this fact; 3) parents do not know what to do about this influence; and 4) the youth who are being influenced do not recognize the strength of the influence they are under. It is necessary for the church to establish points of connection with youth, both in the church and outside of the church.

Such points of connection as peace, love, community, dance, rap, and art are shared interests between the church and the hip-hop culture. Jackson asks a pertinent question: "Can these connections lead us to the development of a theology or missiology of hip-hop culture?" (35). In order for effective ministry to take place, the church must engage in meaningful conversation with such youth to first understand and then address their issues from a biblically relevant perspective. The church must address the current reality from the perspective of the youth who are influenced by hip-hop culture, and not from her own perspective.

In section two, “What Is Hip Hop?” Smith defines hip-hop as a means of fulfilling an innate need in the lives of many who struggle in life, the need to feel that their voice matters. In that sense, the many facets of hip-hop (e.g., rap, dance, art, unity, and community) provide value to the life of an individual. For many, life has been relentless in destroying any ideas of progress and success. Many people have suffered the ills of society: “a corrupt system, poor education, and economic troubles” (77). They feel perpetually trapped in their realities and see no way out. Hip-hop speaks to their realities and develops their sense of community. The lyrics themselves may provide no answers. However, identification of the issues is enough to help make it through another day. For example, Jackson says of Tupac and Biggie Smalls, “These two emcees made people ‘feel their existence most powerfully’” (66). While the hip-hop culture believes the church has abandoned the needy (e.g., widows and the fatherless), Smith and Jackson encourage the church to reclaim its mission and be the voice to this generation.

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Section three, “Bringing Hip-Hop into the Church,” addresses incorporating “Holy Hip-Hop” in the worship experience. Holy Hip-Hop is defined as “rap music created specifically to glorify Jesus Christ and bring the good news of Jesus Christ to those who are living in and influenced by hip-hop culture” (131). Holy Hip-Hop is necessary because this generation will listen to some form of hip-hop. The church needs to pay attention to this music that is shaping the values and ideals of this generation.

Also within this section, the authors challenge the church to send missionaries to this subculture, and they offer some practical suggestions, as well. They write, “When missionaries go to the country they are going to serve, they study the culture, language, religion, school system, and overall way of life of the targeted people group without any judgment” (116). They make the argument that the hip-hop subculture is a mission field, with its own language, cultural elements, and values, requiring effective missionary understanding and practices.

The authors make an interesting comparison between the elements of hip-hop and the leaders of a worship service. They equate the roles of the preacher and worship leader as those who likewise move the crowd at a party or dance. With some infusion of hip-hop language and cultural elements, the church crowd, desirably consisting of both hip-hoppers and other generations, can be moved to glorify God.

While the authors’ conviction to engage the culture is worthy of praise, the question arises how much of the art form (clothing, language, and near pornographic videos) can a missionary be exposed to from this subculture before the subculture itself becomes hazardous to the person’s spiritual health? Smith and

Jackson are to be commended for their thoughtfulness, insight, and commitment to educate the church on this most crucial segment of society, the hip-hop culture.

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Muck, Terry, and Frances S. Adeney. *Christianity Encountering World Religions: The Practice of Mission in the Twenty-first Century*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009. 416 pp. \$26.99.

Reviewed by Will Brooks. Will is the senior pastor of Thompsonville Baptist Church in Springfield, Kentucky. He is a former missionary to East Asia and is currently working on his Ph. D. at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

How should Christians interact with adherents of other world religions? In former generations, this question would be reserved for those living in the faraway mission fields of the world. In today's world, however, this question is one that must be faced by all believers, even those in the West. Globalization, ease of travel, and enhanced communication capabilities have substantially increased the amount of contact that believers have with other religions and make the question a more urgent one for this generation.

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In their book *Christianity Encountering World Religions*, Terry Muck and Frances Adeney have sought to provide an answer to this pressing question. Muck is Dean of the School of World Missions and Evangelism at Asbury Theological Seminary. He has written extensively on issues related to world religions, missions, and global theological concerns. Adeney is a Professor of Evangelism and Global Mission at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. She has authored numerous books and is a former missionary to Indonesia.

The thesis of the book is that mission efforts to adherents of major world religions would be more productive if they were understood as “giftive” mission. Unlike traditional mission efforts that have utilized the imagery of harvesting souls or conquering peoples, the authors argue that the metaphor of gift giving better personifies the missionary task. This new way of understanding mission as the bringing of gifts to the world is especially relevant in the unique world context of the twenty-first century.

In a potentially controversial section, the authors argue that given the current world conditions, the goal of missions and evangelism is best understood as cooperation and competition instead of conversion. The authors are quick to explain that in no way are they anticonversionist, but that the complex dynamics of interreligious interaction have created a new situation in which conversionist language is unhelpful. The authors emphasize that cooperation with other