

Boyd, David. *You Don't Have to Cross the Ocean to Reach the World: The Power of Local Cross-Cultural Ministry*. Grand Rapids: Chosen, 2008. 197pp. \$13.99.

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Urbanization and immigration has changed the face of evangelism and church planting in the West. One of the recent developments in North American missiology has been an increased focus on cross-cultural ministry. For example, the North American Mission Board recently published an entire magazine devoted to new strategies for ethnic missions in the United States and Canada. Even as we send missionaries to the ends of the earth, the world is coming to North America.

David Boyd's book *You Don't Have to Cross the Ocean to Reach the World* is an attempt to address important questions related to local church involvement in cross-cultural missions. Boyd, originally from New Zealand, is the senior pastor of Jesus Family Centre, a multi-cultural congregation in Cabramatta, Australia. This book reflects Boyd's conviction that churches are called to cross-cultural evangelism but that most are not approaching that task with proper strategy or vigor.

The heart of Boyd's thesis is that churches in the twenty-first century must concentrate less on *sending* missionaries out of their congregation and more on *welcoming* strangers into their midst. These "bi-cultural" people, as Boyd calls them, will be more effective in taking the Gospel to the peoples of the world than the "monocultural" missionaries now found on the international field. "It is my contention," he writes, "that in the 21st century, the measure of a mission-minded church will not be in the number of people it has going overseas on long- or short-term trips, but in how easily the stranger feels accepted in the home church" (23).

Immigration has changed the face of cities in the West, a fact that Boyd sees as key to accomplishing the Great Commission. Multi-cultural churches who welcome strangers to their communities become incubators for those who will return to their home countries with the Gospel. These strangers become "bi-cultural," meaning that they live in two cultures: their own original culture and the culture of their new home.

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The fruit of multi-cultural churches that welcome and nurture immigrants and ethnic groups is two-fold. First, all of those within the church become adept at working in two cultures: their own and the culture of their new city and church. Second, the Gospel finds its way more easily back into the immigrant people group along family and cultural lines. The impact on mission strategies is two-fold, as well. The difficulties of contextualization and translation take place within the local church, where relationships of discipleship and accountability can guide the process. The bi-cultural believers can then take the Gospel back into their home countries and people groups.

The bulk of Boyd's book provides biblical support for his ideas. His conclusions are strong. Rising immigration, urbanization, and globalization provide the church unprecedented opportunities in the history of Christianity. There is little question that the very best people to take the Gospel into unreached people groups are believers from the people group itself. Boyd is correct to argue that the local church is an ideal place for new believers to learn how to communicate the Gospel to their own culture.

The limitations of this book are not Boyd's ideas, but rather the path he takes to reach his conclusions. The author rests his arguments on the role of Hellenistic Jews in the early spread of the Gospel and on his understanding of the contrast between the churches at Jerusalem and Antioch as described in the New Testament. Too many churches today, he argues, are more like Jerusalem than Antioch—a ready explanation for what Boyd believes is the failure of modern missions.

For Boyd, the Jerusalem Christians became the epitome of a stagnant,

inwardly-focused church. First, the church was monocultural, which for Boyd is inexcusable. Second, the leaders of the Jerusalem church, especially Peter, were inwardly focused and afraid to move outside of their own comfort zones to fulfill Christ's command to carry the Good News beyond Jerusalem to Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. He describes the church as being inflexible (69) and ethnically divided (71), as well as having a "rulership mentality" (59). Boyd criticizes Peter's encounter with Cornelius as "a quick excursion out of his comfort zone, after which he ran like a squirrel back to the safety of his hole" (52). The Hellenistic Jews in Jerusalem, Boyd's ideal bi-cultural people, had no opportunity for leadership and were the only ones to suffer persecution.

The Christians at Antioch, on the other hand, became the model of a kingdom-focused community. The church's leadership was multicultural, and it became the base for church planting among all of the empire's ethnic groups. Boyd describes Antioch as harvest-focused (77), flexible (78), and united (80).

Students of the book of Acts will recognize some truth to the contrast between Jerusalem and Antioch, but Boyd's characterization of the Jerusalem church is extreme. Jerusalem and Antioch were two very different contexts, and the churches reflected the realities in those cities. The city of Jerusalem was certainly not monocultural, but Hebraic Jews made up the bulk of the population. Antioch, on the other hand, was home to a multitude of cultural groups. Jesus set the leadership of the Jerusalem church in place when he called the apostles. Acts 6 describes conflict between Hebraic and Hellenistic Jews, but it also describes the quick resolution of that conflict with the election to leadership of seven men from among the latter group. Peter certainly made mistakes, as reflected in Paul's criticism in Galatians 2:11–14, but cultural pressures in Jerusalem were very different than in Antioch.

Boyd compares Peter and Paul in much the same way as he contrasts Jerusalem and Antioch. For him, Paul is the image of a bi-cultural person. Boyd argues that Paul was not in any true sense a cross-cultural missionary because he worked only in the Roman Empire. In this conclusion, Boyd falls prey to the idea that the Greco-Roman world (which Boyd argues is an ethnic group) was one culture, which could not have been the case. Roman dominion eased the movement of the Gospel throughout the empire, but it did not erase cultural differences among its peoples.

Careful readers will also note that Boyd does not cite sources of important statistical data he uses to support his arguments. In fact, citations of any kind are notably absent from the book. Boyd does lean heavily on Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours* for his understanding of Paul's missionary

strategy. In the introduction, he also mentions three other commentaries dating from the sixteenth to the early twentieth centuries.

Boyd believes very strongly that churches in the twenty-first century must change the way they approach missions. The last two chapters of the book are case studies of his own churches as models of his teaching. Boyd is correct to assert that one way to change is by nurturing and discipling men and women from the ethnic groups who are moving to our cities. He is absolutely correct to argue that the very best people to take the Gospel to unreached groups are believers from those people groups, but he overstates his case that bi-cultural people are the only valid strategy for the new millennium. The author oversteps in his assertion that the need for missionaries to cross cultures in order to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ is past. Boyd's conclusions are valuable material for pastors and missions leaders, even if his overstatements cast a shadow over the book in general.

Hammett, Edward H. with James R. Pierce. *Reaching People Under 40 While Keeping People Over 60: Being Church for All Generations*. St. Louis, Missouri: Chalice Press, 2007. 192 pp. \$24.99.

Reviewed by Mark Platt. Mark serves God as a transitional interim pastor helping churches renew, re-tool, and re-focus after their permanent pastor has resigned. Mark is a veteran pastor who helps churches who need an interim pastor. He is a passionate encourager, leader, and speaker. Over the years, Mark has been a youth pastor, an associate pastor, a church planter, a senior pastor and a pastor of pastors. He has served in country churches and suburban churches, in large churches and small churches around the country. Mark is with Next Chapter Transitions, www.nextchaptertransitions.org.

According to Edward H. Hammett, major differences exist among the living generations of Christians regarding their understandings of the world, church, and values. Such differences produced the worship wars, power struggles, and disenfranchised certain constituencies in churches. Since a great number of churches were started in the 1950s, such generational differences pose a pervasive problem that confronts many churches today. Just as the "Generation Gap" has been impacting secular culture for several decades, it was been affecting the church as well. This book is written to help "Builder" (born between 1920 and 1945) and "Boomer" leaders (born between 1946 and 1962) understand younger generations.

Hammett discusses the incredible stressors that affect churches when attempting to target people over the age of sixty or those under the age of forty. On the one hand, if a church targets the over sixty crowd, the church will decline