

any local church that is willing to take them seriously. The reflection questions and assessment tool will help leaders reflect and brainstorm new ways to implement the nine practices. I recommend this book to other pastors and leaders because of the power of the reflective questions and the ministry assessment.

Another great aspect of this book was from a section of chapter thirteen describing the traits of a missional leader. All leaders are not created equal, but they are created to be effective. The author presents an exhaustive list of leadership traits that can help all leaders be more effective.

The one critique I have of the book is the uncertainty of knowing how the author came to his conclusions. In the introduction, the author claims that the insights for this book come from “a pragmatic observation of actual churches on mission, learning, and growing, taking chances, being a new kind of church” (xviii). The reader is never told how many churches were observed and what types of churches were represented. Without such information, some important questions must be raised. Were the reported insights represented in all the churches that were observed or just the majority of the churches? How were these practices determined to be the most essential practices of a missional church? By answering those questions, the author will gain more credibility, and the local pastor will be more open to implementing the suggestions and practices presented in this book.

We are currently in a post-Christian culture; therefore, the local church must come to the conclusion that the practices and structures of the past are no longer effective today. Milfred Minatrea presents a new model for ministry, one that emerges from the heart of God and pushes the local church once again to minister effectively in a secular, ever-changing culture. For that reason, I would recommend this book to pastors and lay leaders that are no longer content with the status quo but long to see God use their church as a change agent in this world.

Driscoll, Mark, and Gerry Breshears. *Vintage Church: Timeless Truths and Timely Methods*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2008. 335 pp. \$21.99.

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“Vintage (*adj.*)—classic, typical, traditional.” Although Mark Driscoll and Gerry Breshears write that *Vintage Church* is a “book about the church of Jesus Christ,”¹ the book is actually an ecclesiological apology of the church of Jesus Christ at Mars Hill Church, Seattle, which is definitely not a classic, typical, or

traditional church. Driscoll is the founding pastor of Mars Hill Church, which is one of the fastest growing and most prolific churches in America. He is also the author of several books.

Vintage Church consists of twelve chapters, including an appendix containing the church covenant of Mars Hill. The first chapter titled “What is the Christian Life?” provides an explanation of the doctrines of salvation and sanctification. The second chapter responds to the question, “What is a Christian Church?” and contrasts Driscoll’s definition with historical and contemporary views of the church. The third chapter called “Who is Supposed to Lead a Church?” offers a defense for a plurality of elders. Chapter four responds to the question, “Why is Preaching Important?” and includes Driscoll’s advice for becoming a good preacher. The fifth chapter offers an answer to the question, “What are Baptism and Communion?” The sixth chapter is “How can a Church be Unified?” and argues that a church must be unified theologically, relationally, philosophically, missionally, and organizationally.

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The seventh chapter entitled “What is Church Discipline?” gives the biblical reasons and methods of church discipline as well as what to do with an unrepentant church member. The eighth chapter responds to the question, “How is Love Expressed in a Church?” Chapter nine addresses the question, “What is a Missional Church?” by tracing the history of the missional movement, giving special attention to contextualization. Chapter ten named “What is a Multi-Campus Church?” uses Mars Hill as a case study for a multi-campus model. The eleventh chapter is “How Can a Church Utilize Technology?” and gives a defense of the use of technology in worship services. The final chapter responds to the question, “How Could the Church Help Transform the World?”

At least five strengths to this work are evident. First, Driscoll and Breshears offer a sound interpretation to the biblical passages referenced. An example of such sound interpretation is the first chapter wherein the authors accurately describe the Christian life and salvation. Second, the book is well organized and gives a contemporary feel with an “Answers to Common Questions” section at the end of each chapter. A reader can obtain an excellent overview of the book from these sections. Third, Driscoll’s writing style is entertaining and filled with hilarious stories which make the work a delight to read. Fourth, the evangelistic passion throughout the book gives evidence of the authors’ own evangelistic zeal. Fifth, the authors’ humility and desire to glorify God is apparent throughout this work, despite a few statements that may appear to be manifestations of arrogance.

The following are a few of the limitations of this work. First, though the authors' interpretation of some of the biblical passages is excellent, there are a few times when their hermeneutic is questionable. An example of this matter concerns their definition of "preachers" and "preaching." They note only elders are considered "preachers" and do the "preaching" (85–109). The Scriptures, however, make it clear all believers are preachers and must preach (Acts 8:4, 11:19–21).

Second, although the thesis of the book is related to the church of Jesus Christ, it is easily identified as a book about Jesus' church known as Mars Hill Church in Seattle, Washington.

Third, the chapter addressing the multi-site movement had little biblical support, and the overarching argument in the chapter was not incredibly convincing. All of the chapters, except this particular chapter and the one regarding the use of technology included support from many biblical passages. The only biblical support for a multi-site model included a reference to 1 Corinthians 9:22, noting that churches should use "all means" to reach others.

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Fourth, the chapter on the use of technology seems to deride the emphasis on the Gospel as the means of attracting people. The authors note two actions that need to occur for people to be attracted to a church: "First, you need to generate some name recognition in your community. . . . Second, once your name is out, people need to be invited to your church" (275–76). The authors believe name recognition comes through catching the eye of the media while invitations come through personal relationships. Such a method of attracting people is improperly inverted. The early church is a great example of how empowered witnesses preaching the Gospel was the main method of attracting people to the church body.

Fifth, although I am in agreement with the authors' emphasis on urban church planting, I am in disagreement with the stated mission and method. The mission seems to be to "transform the world," and the method is to gain the favor from the leaders who make the culture (290–96). The authors condone a "top down" method of shaping the culture, saying that churches that become a "city within a city" are the most equipped to do "good for the whole city to make it the best city possible" (301). The problem with this mission and method is that it lacks biblical support. The mission of the church is not to transform a culture or the world, but to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18). The method is not to win the wise, but to win the foolish. The early church was not birthed among the nobles of society, but among the "lowly" of the world (1 Corinthians 2:27). It did not influence culture through becoming a mega-church "city within a city," popular

with the media or senate. Rather, it influenced the empire through the planting of churches, large or small, throughout the empire. Further, the early church became so pervasive through the planting of churches all over the Roman Empire that Tertullian commented:

. . . we have filled every place among you-cities, islands, fortresses, towns, market-places, the very camp, tribes, companies, palace, senate, forum; we have left nothing to you but the temples of your gods . . . For if such multitudes of men were to break away from you . . . you would be horror-struck at the solitude in which you would find yourselves.¹

Vintage Church is another book from a mega-church pastor advising other pastors how to do “church.” If readers desire a book regarding ecclesiology (or “timeless truths”), perhaps they should read *A Theology for the Church*, edited by Danny Akin. If readers desire a book concerning “timeless methods,” there is a plethora of books authored by pastors that relate how they “do church.” Let the reader beware: less than three percent of all the churches in the United States are mega-churches, while many churches average less than one hundred in attendance. Perhaps it would be enlightening to read of a church that has averaged less than one hundred people for ten years, baptized an estimated twenty people per year, planted five churches, and sent five families to overseas missions. Such a church may truly be “vintage.”

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¹ Steven A. McKinion, ed, *Life and Practice in the Early Church* (New York: New York University Press, 2001), 120.