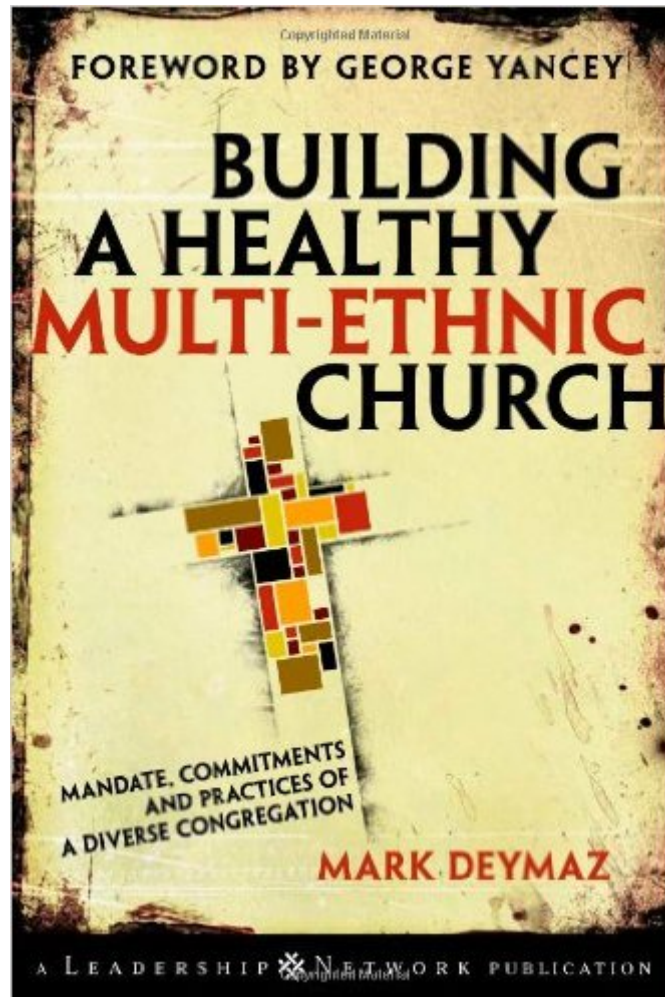


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Building A Healthy Multi-ethnic Church: Mandate, Commitments And Practices Of A Diverse Congregation



Synopsis

Through personal stories, proven experience and a thorough analysis of the biblical text, *Building a Healthy Multi-ethnic Church* illustrates both the biblical mandate for the multi-ethnic church as well as the seven core commitments required to bring it about. Mark DeYmaz, pastor of one of the most proven multi-ethnic churches in the country, writes both from his experience and his extensive study of how to plant, grow, and encourage more ethnically diverse churches. He argues that the "homogenous unit principle" will soon become irrelevant and that the most effective way to spread the Gospel in an increasingly diverse world is through strong and vital multi-ethnic churches.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Divided into three understandable sections Deymaz provokes the reader into re-thinking how the church can be healthy in a multi-ethnic environment. The first section is theological examining Jesus and his prayer found in John chapter seventeen, the church in Antioch and Paul's teaching, creating a case for multi-ethnicity in church. The second section addresses seven core commitments, or steps, a church will have to make. Thirdly each of the seven commitments is examined through three lenses of planting, revitalizing and transformation. Deymaz sets his thought out very well for the reader to comprehend. The threefold combination of Jesus, Antioch and Paul are uniquely designed in Deymaz's work to assist the reader from the priestly prayer of Jesus to a real-time church with all its ethnic issues and the theological teachings of Paul (who was a master at intellectual argument). This method of thought helped the reader to grasp the principle in Jesus, the

practice in the church and the doctrinal understanding behind it all. I would add that it fits uniquely into Jesus' statement that he is the 'way, truth and life' for a multi-ethnic church environment.

Deymanz's own church consists of thirty nations which has to be the filter he interprets scripture through. Although I found no contradiction to classical interpretation, it left me thinking about churches where only two or three nations are represented? Even so, the first section was a good foundation for what follows. Section two changes pace and style to a practical application of the biblical foundation. He suggests that multi-ethnicity in church has to be intentional and therefore does not happen by accident - or according to how the Spirit leads - which is usually an excuse for inaction.

Being in leadership at a multi-ethnic church I have read most of the books that are considered landmarks in terms of coming to grips with the 'race' issue in the local church. Mark DeYmaz's book is unique in terms of what it offers. It is unique because it does not focus on issues of racial reconciliation. It does not focus on issues of cultural anthropology and sociology. This book starts with theology and finishes with practice. Many of us have started multi-ethnic churches because it was the 'right thing to do' - and it is the right thing to do. Many of us have started multi-ethnic churches out of a sense of calling or leading from God. What Mark has done is show that this sense of calling corresponds to a mandate from God that is thoroughly biblical. It is the heartbeat of God. Mark does not ignore issues of power or the very real stench of systemic racism within the church. He challenges these issues head on. It is neither the untested musings of a seminary theologian nor the pragmatic response of a frustrated practitioner. This is a book written from the perspective of deep theological insights and strong exegesis backed by years of practical involvement in multi-ethnic ministry. This book is theology in practice. As such there are stories and examples that inspire any in multi-ethnic ministry and resonate for others involved in similar ministries. This book is not a how-to book although there are basic principles and guidelines in the second section of the book. These simply reflect the difficult path that you walk down when you are involved in multi-ethnic church. This book rightly challenges all of us who are involved in the local church.

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