

Following this, the author discusses the most debated issues about the covenants. The relationship between Love and Law is examined in chapter 8. MacCarty denies the claim that whereas the Old Covenant was based upon Law, the New Covenant was founded on Love. He argues that Love has always been the basis of the Law and finds many arguments supporting his position. For example, there are plenty of references to God's love in the book of Deuteronomy, the book, which has traditionally been considered as a collection of laws (145-146). On the other hand, as MacCarty observes, in spite of the fact that the New Covenant is the Covenant of Love, there are many commandments in the New Testament and some of them imply very severe punishment in case of violations (155-158). Thus, the author shows that it is wrong to speak about one covenant as the Covenant of Love and about another as the Covenant of Law.

The question about the signs of the covenants is considered in the chapter 9. Special attention is paid to circumcision and the Sabbath as covenant signs. MacCarty believes that circumcision in the New Covenant era was replaced with the ceremony of the baptism (176). He draws this conclusion from the fact that both ceremonies are initiation rituals for entering God's covenant. The Sabbath in the New Covenant era, according to the author, is still as valid as in Old Testament times because it remains the sign of the covenant rest (219). The author finishes his work with a discussion of practical issues as to how believers can internalize either the Old or New covenant experiences in daily life (chapter 12).

This book is a great contribution to the understanding of the relationship between the Old and New covenants. The author not only seeks to explain some embarrassing questions, but he seeks to build a theory which could be applied to many difficult issues related to the doctrine of the covenant(s). The question, which remains unclear is this: if the Old Testament covenant was already the "New Covenant" why do we need the New Testament New Covenant? The Bible rather portrays the Old Covenant as contrasting with the New Covenant (Heb 8:13), instead as "one unified, developing covenant" (41). But, probably this is a theme for another book.

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Communicating Christ in Asian Cities, by Paul De Neui, editor. William Carey Library, 2009. Pp. x + 297. ISBN 978-0-87808-007-6. Paperback. \$18.00.

Paul De Neui is the editor of this book and currently serves as the Associate Professor of Mission and Director of the Center for World Christian Studies at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago. He holds a PhD degree in Intercultural Studies and has spent eighteen years working with indigenous groups to grow culturally relevant ministries within a folk Buddhist county in Southeast Asia.

According to the preface written by the editor, this is the sixth volume in a series produced from the annual SEANET Missiological Forum held in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The conference attracted over one hundred participants from fifteen countries. Nine of the conference presentations are presented here in three sections. Section one deals with the foundational factors and focus on the influence Asian urban areas have on rural populations (pp. 1–39) and the role the media has played in shaping the values of today's urban Buddhist (pp. 41–71).

Section two discusses the contextual issues inherent in the tension between different ethnic groups and Christianity in Buddhist cities (pp. 75–94); the understanding of Urban Buddhists in Sri Lanka (pp. 95–110); reaching the Neo-Buddhist in Urban India (pp. 111–134) and how urbanization has affected Buddhism and Christianity in Sri Lanka (pp. 135–159). Section three looks at the strategy of reaching the nations by reaching the cities (pp. 163–199); of mission to urban Buddhists in the Philippines (pp. 201–223) and how to contextualize the gospel in a holistic way for urban Buddhists in Thailand (pp. 225–259). A bibliographic list of references for the whole volume and an index complete the work.

After a general introduction into the growth of urbanization, Alex G. Smith outlines the development of Thai cities in Asia over the last three millennia and specifically looks at the changing demographic of Bangkok from 1854 to 1920 (p. 9). He laments that although work for the slum areas has not been lacking, their remains the challenge of "finding more effective ways to access and reach the families of the majority population that hold influence and power within these nations" (p. 17). I agree with this tenet wholeheartedly and also with his insight that "mobility provides an open door to increased receptivity" as a vital principle for reaching people in urban areas (p. 25).

A. Stephens Nevins writes an excellent article on the effects of globalization on the third world Buddhist culture. Citing good sources, he successfully shows that culture is one of the West's main exports (p. 45) and relates how this has impacted the Thai, Cambodian and Sri Lankan culture. He also deals with the power of story to convey meaning and truth in modern culture (pp. 58–64).

Section two, which deals with contextualization. Three out of the four articles focus on the challenges Christians face in reaching out to the Buddhists in Sri Lanka. M.S. Vasanthakumar states that "in the history of Sri Lanka, South Indian and European invasions have created negative images about Tamils and Christians in the minds of the Buddhists" (p. 81). Traditionally Sri Lankan Buddhists have believed that the Buddha visited their country three times in order to designate it as a sacred land where the religion would flourish and spread to the rest of the world. These historical and other factors are impediments to the spread of the gospel there.

Santa Lal De Alwis argues in chapter four that in order to contextualize properly we should get to "know the worldview of the neighbour in order to communicate the Gospel effectively" (p. 109). He gives a helpful overview of the historical, religious and cultural dimensions of Sri Lankan Buddhists in both the urban and rural settings. In chapter six G.P.V. Somaratna gives a good overview on how Buddhism has been affected by urbanization. He writes very clearly on how Buddhism has adapted to urban and Christian influences including the use of urban facilities, the role of the monk in urban society, the adoption of preaching as a means of communication, the taking up of social work, the development of missionary monks and several other cultural items.

In chapter five, J.N. Monokaran has researched the challenge of reaching the Neo-Buddhist in urban India. He reports that although Buddhism began in India, its Hindu counterpart eventually stymied the religion until recently when several mass movements towards Buddhism have occurred. He argues that several social factors such as the rigidity of the Hindu caste system, exploitation and victimization have contributed to Buddhism's new appeal. He relates practical incidences where respect for the downtrodden, the attractiveness of the person of Jesus, deliverance ministry, friendship evangelism, the influence of relatives, counseling, summer youth camps have been effective in reaching the Neo Buddhist for Christ in urban India.

Section three deals with the strategic means of mission and begins with a comprehensive article by Stephen M. Spaulding, which attempts to give a solid Biblical foundation for the church's mission to reach the nations. After raising the issue of just how to define the "nations," Spaulding concisely shows how the Old Testament prophets tended to combine together "the interrelationship between 'peoples,' 'nations,' 'cities,' 'lands,' and 'kings'" (p. 169). He then provides both an Old Testament (pp. 171-178) and New Testament (pp. 178-190) survey of the

nations and its related concepts. The article ends with the Biblical material applied to missiology to both the city and the Buddhist world.

In chapter eight David S. Lim has written a much-needed fact-filled article about the number and influence of Filipino Overseas Contract Workers (OCW) who are seeking to provide a Christian influence in a Buddhist context. He cites "low pay at home" and good "people skills (p. 202) as two important factors that motivate the more than 7.5 million Filipinos who are currently working overseas. After citing the fact that the Philippines is "the one major Asian nation with a Christian majority" (p. 203), he reports that the Philippine Missions Mobilization Movement (PM3) is the main coordinating body among the Evangelical (pp. 206-207), Charismatic/Full Gospel (pp. 208-210), Transformational (pp. 210-214) and the Diasporal (pp. 214-216) groups. The chapter ends with a detailed listing of the Filipino Urban Missions by Country and People Group.

The last chapter details the experiences and observations of David Von Stroh who has lived in two slums in Bangkok from 2003 until the writing of the book in 2008. His thesis is "that to the extent we access the fullness of the holistic message of Jesus and to the extent that we access the fundamentals of what Buddha himself put forth, we find a large common ground and opportunity for fruitful ministry together" (p. 226). The author gives his first-hand observations about addictions, family breakdown and fatalism within the slum dwellers as well as trying to find how common ground could be found between Jesus, Buddha and the concept of "Tamma" (otherwise known as Dharma which is the force behind the universe which he acquaints with the Greek concept of Logos).

I would highly recommend this book to missiologists and others who are either doing research or practicing ministry in the Buddhist context. The book provides very readable and excellent information for the layperson as well as the academic. The level of the articles is of a consistent high caliber and the editor has done a very good job of providing a focused view of the subject without overlapping the material. I know there has been a call for many years that local peoples develop their own contextualized theologies to aid the church in its understanding and mission. The current volume of the SEANET Forum goes a long way in answering that call. May its tribe increase!

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