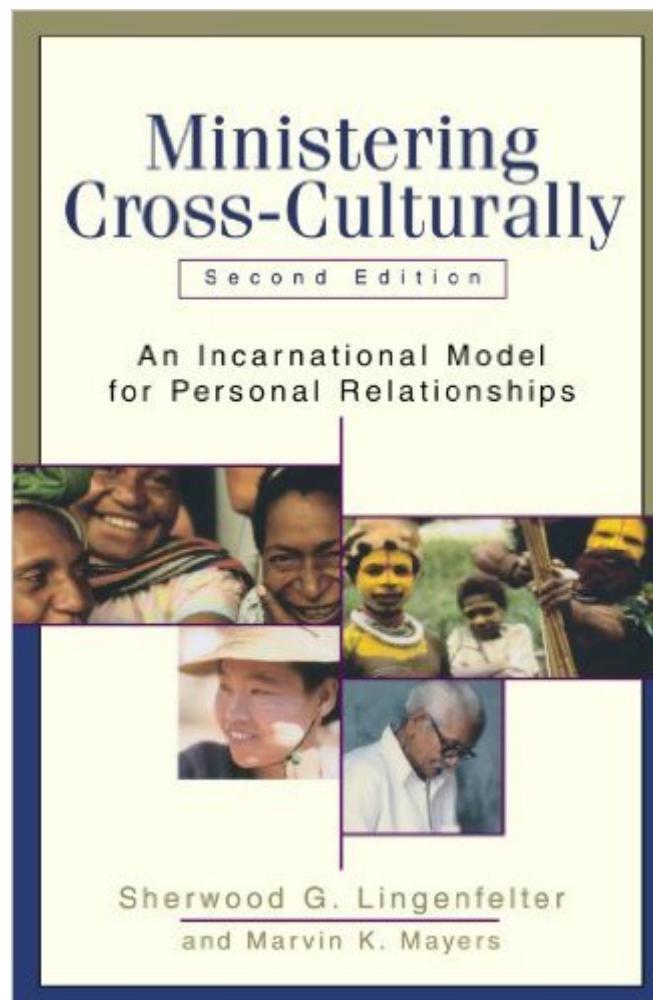


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Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model For Personal Relationships



Synopsis

In Ministering Cross-Culturally, the authors demonstrate that Jesus needed to learn and understand the culture in which he lived before he could undertake his public ministry. The authors examine how this can help us better understand what it means to establish relationships of grace with those from different cultural and social backgrounds. With more than 70,000 copies of the first edition in print, this incarnational model of ministry has proven successful for many people. Several sections in this second edition have been rewritten, and the entire book has been updated to reflect development in the authors' thinking. Drawing from the authors' rich experience on the mission field, this book will benefit anyone who wants to be salt and light in a multicultural and multiethnic world.

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Customer Reviews

This text is one of the better guides for cross-cultural ministry that I have found. In its relatively few pages (only 120 pages), it contains a wealth of information based on some easily-remembered and applied principles. Increasingly in the world today, no matter what profession one chooses, there will be people from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures -- even in the smallest of towns, people from different social strata will interact and come together in certain venues, and church and chaplaincy settings are among those. Cross-cultural ministry is not something reserved to those going off in foreign mission fields, but has an impact right here at home, wherever home may be. One of the key concepts here is the dealing with conversation and conflict. The way people interact differently can lead to conflict -- not necessarily open violence (although sometimes that can

happen), but rather the kind of tension that is caused when people don't understand each other. What we sometimes fail to forget is that people attribute importance and moral force to their actions and those of others, and will react not only to what is being said and done, but to their own interpretations of the meanings of those words and actions. This is derived from cultural influences -- shared culture as well as personal and family culture. Lingenfelter and Mayer look at key concepts -- differences in the way we look at time, judgement, crisis management, goals, self-valuation, and vulnerabilities. For example, in urban cultures, people tend to lead fast-paced lives more frequently than those in small-town cultures; a person moving from one setting to another may find it irritating to be in such a setting, and perhaps not even know why.

"Ministering Cross-Culturally" is a practical book useful for all Christians, but intended specifically for those who minister among people of another culture. Cultural differences often lead to misunderstandings and conflict as a person of one culture does not behave as a person from another culture expects. To avoid prolonged conflict, Sherwood Lingenfelter, provost and senior vice president of Fuller Theological Seminary, presents the anthropological work of Marvin Mayers and applies it to cross cultural ministry. Marvin Mayers work analyzes cultural values and divides them into twelve dimensions. Each of these dimensions has a contrasting value, making six competing value pairs that can be plotted on a grid. Lingenfelter provides a simple test so that the reader might plot himself on each of the six grids, and determine his personal/cultural values. These pairs of values are as follows: Time (time conscious and punctual versus event-oriented) Judgment (seeing the world in "black & white" versus "shades of grey") Handling Crises (focus on preparation versus comfort thinking on your feet) Goals (task orientation versus relationship orientation) Individual Worth (is honor achieved by works or bestowed at birth) Vulnerability (is it OK to show weakness?) Lingenfelter then analyzes the six pairs of values to illustrate the similarities and differences between Western values, Yapese (from the Island of Yap, where Lingenfelter did most of his doctoral/mission work), and the values displayed by Jesus. This knowledge of our own Western values and the often-contrasting values of others is necessary to achieve the purpose Lingenfelter advances for the reader.

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