



BIBLE URBANITY

LISA WRIGHT



URBAN THEOLOGY
Jose Carlos Monte

Urban Mission in the 21st century is a series of monographs that addresses key issues facing those involved in urban ministry whether it be in the slums, squatter communities, favelas, or in immigrant neighborhoods. It is our goal to bring fresh ideas, a theological basis, and best practices in urban mission as we reflect on our changing urban world. The contributors to this series bring a wide range of ideas, experiences, education, international perspectives, and insight into the study of the growing field of urban ministry.

These contributions fall into four very general areas: 1- the Biblical and theological basis for urban ministry; 2-best practices currently in use and anticipated in the future by urban scholars/activities who are living, working, and studying in the context of cities; 3-personal experiences and observations based on urban ministry as it is currently being practiced; and 4-a forward view toward where we are headed in the decades ahead in the expanding and developing field of urban of urban mission.

(P7)[CITATION Sea89 \l 1033]

More than anything, these contributions are creative attempts to help Christians strategically and creatively think about how we can better reach our world that is now more urban than rural. We do not see theology and practice as separate and distinct. Rather, we see sound practice growing out of a healthy

vibrant theology that seeks to understand God's world as we move further into the twenty first century.

Now in the early 21st century, the tide has turned on the public perception of the city. For young gentrified and hipsters moving into lofts in postindustrial neighborhoods, the city has become a desirable locale to live in. Churches seeking to court them, have also moved into formerly struggling inner-city communities. But, often out of the newcomer's sight, former reside who are unable to join the former flight out of cities because of their socioeconomic standing are being displaced, making room for coffee shops and quirky coteries. (P 12)

[CITATION Sea89 \l 1033]

Globalization and its attendant migration patterns have also brought flood of new immigrants from every corner of the world into the cities-endowing the urban communities' transnational identities. I the midst of these great urban transitions, we wonder whether God's people have developed a robust urban theology that will sufficiently shape and invigorate their witness among the nations in the city. There is much to catch up on and learn about how the Lord is moving his mission forward in our global, urban world, and how his church is called to witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our new urban setting. (P.12)

[CITATION Sea89 \l 1033]

The church, since its inception in the 1st century, has always been about extending both arms of grace to the watching world. At times we have done remarkably well and at other times we have failed miserably, but I believe the impetus comes from this sense of mission and calling to be salt and light to the world. As a result, we are compelled to do something about human suffering, we respond in the face of global and local calamities and have a history of setting up schools (from elementary schools to universities), orphanages, and hospitals. If our primary mission were to simply be about evangelism and discipleship, then many of these society-shaping institutions would never be birthed. (P.180)[CITATION Sea89 \l 1033]

What is needed is to find that in-between place where we come to grips with God's sovereign plan for the *missio Dei* apart from us while also acknowledging that God invites us in as participants. In fact, multiple time we are commissioned to "go and tell" about all that God has done. We are the sent ones proclaiming this Gospel and embodying the reality of the in-breaking Kingdom of God

We are in the city. The church since its birth has been and is at home to the city. Now the questions come down to how are we going to live out the *missio Dei in the city*? (P.186)[CITATION Sea89 \l 1033]

Bibliography

Benesh, Sean. *The Urbanity of the Bible*. Oregon: Urban LoftPublishers, 1989.