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**Book Review II Park**

The blueprint I see in the book make a parallel between the city and New Jerusalem. The book reaching for the New Jerusalem by Seong Hyun Park's preface asks the question, "Can the 'blueprint plans' of New Jerusalem incorporate the theoretical frameworks that we formulate?"[1] This question demonstrates the desired impact the authors of the book intend on acquiring. This question addresses a challenge and introduces the needed reflection on the mission, role, and goal of the church. Developing a blueprint is part of theological formation as it is evident that God is the first urban planner.

The authors' purpose for writing the book is to study the theological meaning of the city and the church's mission in it. The main point that is transmitted is that urban ministry can help bring together communities to achieve one common goal. The authors' intention is also explained throughout the different chapters. Rebuilding the city of Enoch with the Blueprints of Christ by William David Spencer teaches the task of working together to transform ourselves into God's New Jerusalem. In this chapter, the author states, "If anything stands in our way of accomplishing the goal of helping rebuild the city of Enoch in the New Jerusalem, it is the attitude conditioned into us by living in this fallen world."[2] It should be the goal of the church/Christian communities to redeem communities of the world to the New Jerusalem. The

[1] Seong Hyun Park, "*Reaching for the New Jerusalem*": A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City, An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers. (Kindle Edition), 193.
[2] Seong Hyun Park, "*Reaching for the New Jerusalem*", 9.

chapter titled, “What city are we creating?” written by Aida Besancon Spencer provides a perspective on the concept of an earthly city. The question is asked, what is a city? What is Jerusalem? With those topics, the author can correlate the past and present understanding of these subjects and introduce the vision of the New Jerusalem.

The author in several chapters utilize social analysis to understand the urban context and its connection to theological reflection and formation. Theological reflection is important to review and understand issues that people face. In the chapter titled, a conceptual framework for counseling city people by Carlot D. Celestin it says, according to Park, “Just like every city of God, the church witnesses how people strive to overcome painful and sometimes horrific journeys to build a home, a culture (i.e a way of life); how they often live in horrific conditions to make money in order to create a better life for themselves, their children, and extended family members; how they work to procure this better life and often end up feeling abandoned by the very people they are striving to serve.”[3] This chapter is helpful in fundamentally understanding the importance of incorporating theological reflection as a tool to counsel individuals and communities. This section also speaks on topics of mental health, therapeutic needs, diagnostic assessment, and defining and applying to counsel. Because there are hurt individuals and communities, healing is needed.

The book expresses the authors’ theological implementation approach and practice as it correlates to the stated urban theological reflection and formation. The extent to which the book informs the process of urban theological reflection and formation is shown to directly impact urban theological implementation. According to Park, “...the church can change the social and economic conditions in a person’s environment in such a way that empowers individuals or

[3]Seong Hyun Park, “*Reaching for the New Jerusalem”*: A Biblical and Theological Framework for the City, An Imprint of Wipf and Stock Publishers. (Kindle Edition), 135.

families to achieve social and economic goals through various ministries."[4] According to the text, the use of theological approaches is used to promote individual, family, and community growth. Christians seek to attain wisdom. Reflection is a process used to explore the needs of people.

The clarity and effectiveness of the authors' urban theological reflection and formation and its relevance to the theological implementation described in the book express the main point that cities were built with God's intention. There are several implications that can be understood by the text. Christians are not to undervalue cities. There may be many aspects that are disliked. But a Christian is to consider the model of the New Jerusalem and reach for it.

The text rephrases the narrative of Nehemiah, according to Park, "Put everyone to work according to their abilities; deal with spiritual, economic, social, and political structures that must be realigned and, in the end, never stop our vigilance and discipline. But rebuilding is in the heart of God."[5] Nehemiah had an impact on the building of Jerusalem. This example is used to not only explain the physical impact of building the city but also the spiritual needs of the people.

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[4] Seong Hyun Park, "*Reaching for the New Jerusalem*", 60.
[5] Seong Hyun Park, 36.