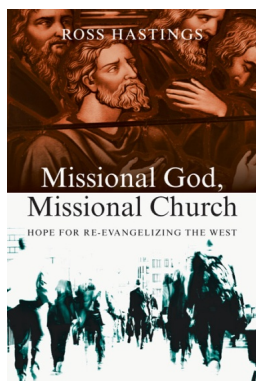


BOOK DETAILS



*Missional God,
Missional Church:
Hope for
Re-evangelizing
the West*

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Is there hope for the church in the West?

Despite concerns about the church's imminent demise, Ross Hastings remains hopeful.

Hastings, who serves as associate professor of pastoral theology at Regent College, presents a compelling call for churches to rediscover their missional identity in the missional God. Building on the work of missiologists such as Bosch, Newbigin and Guder, Hastings offers a trinitarian theology of the church and its mission that is both deep and wide. Structuring his argument around an exposition of John 20:19-23, Hastings presents insights gained from twenty years in pastoral ministry and offers a constructive balance to the ongoing missional conversation.

"What I wish to argue is that the concept of the missional church is not a fad but is theologically foundational for the church, and . . . I deem it important to persist with the term *missional* for the simple reason that the majority of Western churches still need awakening to this core identity," Hastings notes in the first chapter.

No missiology book would be complete without at least some discussion of the church's relationship with the surrounding culture, so Hastings begins by delineating the twin dangers of cultural disconnection on the one hand (failure to engage in appropriate inculturation) and indiscriminate enculturation on the other.

Hastings then presents a substantial explanation of "the missional Trinity," noting how this foundational doctrine informs not only mission but also core concepts such as personhood, creation and election.

The bulk of the book, however, focuses on the John 20:19-23 passage, where the risen Jesus commissions his disciples. "If there was hope for that motley crew of eleven disciples in John 20, there is hope for the church in the West," Hastings argues, insofar as the realities that transformed the early church can be reclaimed within the church today. Thus a study of John 20:19-23 frames the book as follows:

The church discovering shalom (chapters 5-8)

The church disseminating shalom (chapters 9-12)

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Ross Hastings is associate professor of pastoral theology at Regent College. He holds two Ph.D.s, one in chemistry from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and the other in theology from the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. An ordained minister with the Christian and Missionary Alliance and a sought-after conference speaker, he is widely published in the fields of chemistry and theology. His primary interests are in trinitarian theology and the practice of ministry and mission, pneumatology, the development of missional churches, theological ethics, and the interface between theology and science.

Throughout the text, Hastings works to chart a middle way through the various emphases within the missional conversation. His is a theology that seeks to integrate the biblical concepts of exile *and* royal priesthood, social justice *and* evangelism, and the work of the Spirit *and* mission, to name a few. Hastings also contends that as the church patterns itself after the nature of God, it will be both “centrifugal” and “centripetal,” with believers being sent out and believers bringing people in.

For all who desire to participate in Christ's mission to the world, this comprehensive theology of mission offers hope for the church grounded in the very nature of God.