

Review

Contagious Disciple Making: Leading Others on a Journey of Discovery

David Watson, Paul Watson
Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2014

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Introduction

Contagious Disciple Making: Leading Others on a Journey of Discovery is a brilliant and a necessary addition to the practical and theoretical literature designed to disciple the massive Muslim and Hindu blocks of unreached peoples. It is also, I might add, one of several antidotes to an increasingly irrelevant evangelical movement in North America in a post-modern and post-Christian West. Yet it is also at the same time has some deep real flaws – dangerous if the imbalances are taken to their logical extent. I will recommend several needed corrections from both a theological and missiological perspective. Having introduced the book in such a manner, I would still highly recommend believers with a passion to see the earth filled with His glory read it with both enthusiasm and discernment. I believe one quote summarizes this valuable volume, “Discipleship is not taught but caught.”

Contagious Disciple Making is the third in a series of volumes on Disciple Making Movements by Thomas Nelson: *Miraculous Movements: How Hundreds of Thousands of Muslims Are Falling in Love with Jesus* by Jerry Trousdale and *The Father Glorified: True Stories of God's Power Through Ordinary People* by Patrick Robertson and David Robertson. They are not academic but motivational, extremely exciting yet blemished by the same imbalance promoted by father and son team of David and Paul Watson in this volume. The Watsons come out of the International Mission Board (IMB) though no longer with them. I tend to identify with the IMB's vanguard missiological practitioners, who are a refreshing, forward looking phalanx of flexible engagers such as researcher, David Garrison¹ and practitioner, David Watson.

Summary and Critique of Positive Features

I agree with the Watson's concern² with the slow conversion growth of the evangelical movement in resistant ethno-religious block of the earth. I too grieve its institutional focus focusing on single pastors and buildings, but not upon equipping the whole body of Christ to disciple the peoples. I agree: “Teachings that focus on the exclusive leadership role of the pastor have

¹ See, e.g., (1) David Garrison. 2014. *The Wind of God in the House of Islam*. Monument, CO WigTake Resources, and (2) David Garrison. 2014. *Church Planting Movements: Church Planting Movements, How God Is Redeeming a Lost World*. Monument, CO: WigTake Resources.

² Mark Kreitzer has served cross-culturally on four continents including North America, ordained in good standing in a conservative confessional denomination.

damaged the church” (Watson and Watson 2014, 52). I also long to see the power of the whole-Bible-Gospel³ disciple all the peoples of earth. In addition, I agree with their implicit assertion that evangelical movement has few developed plans to see the Kingdom substantially grow in every square foot of the populated sections of earth. This applies especially to my biblical faith-family, the Reformed. I long to see not only the Reformed and Presbyterian but all of us in the evangelical movement regain a dynamic vision and successful practice of truly engaging the lost to win the “many” of “certain, targeted”⁴ groups of people (1 Cor 9:19, 22) so that the Abrahamic covenant would be fulfilled (Rom 4; Gal 3). To do so, we need new biblical insights. This book provides – with correction – a good push in that direction.

David Garrison as Church Planting Movements (CPM’s) and the Watsons as Disciple Making Movements (DMM’s) promoted this latest generation of church planting strategy.⁵ Each generation has built upon the insights of the previous generations. David Watson, the primary author, shares how he discovered his fresh strategy from Scripture⁶ in outline form in the teaching of Jesus (Lk 9:1-5, 10:1-12) and Paul (2 Tim 2:2). He was seeking the Lord’s wisdom to reach the very resistant north Indian Bojapuri people.

In short, the strategy is to train several key, strategic people to train others to be people of prayer, who in turn train others in an endless chain until the task is finished when Jesus comes. In this review, I will summarize Watson’s strategy and then discuss each part of its five parts in order. “Disciple Makers” or what the father-son team later terms, “Disciple Making Movement catalysts” emphasize not so much “knowledge” (though that comes through Bible study) but “obedience,” not doctrine but doing.⁷ Second, as the Lord commanded, Watson mentored those he was training to immediately reproduce what he was sharing with them by finding a “man/son of peace” as the Lord mentions (Lk 10:6). From the very beginning, each person in the group is

³I assume that the Gospel is clothed in Scripture by the doctrines of the Trinity, *sola Scriptura*, covenant, whole Bible ethics, and a restorative eschatology. Christ’s one Kingdom reigns over all and He has commanded us to disciple – not just to reach – all peoples.

⁴Notice Paul’s twin goals in two purpose oriented hina [[na] clauses: “for the purpose [[na] of winning many/more” and “for the purpose of saving certain ones [hina pantōs tinas sōsō [[na pantjw thaj w’ Paul is not contradicting himself as most English translations imply by translating the last by “some.” Instead, the term points to the “certain, targeted groups” that Paul mentioned in the context.

⁵I would like to see this present volume as the Third Generation of modern church planting strategy. The first generation was that of Venn and Anderson’s Three Self Churches (see, a) Wilbert R. Shenk. 2006. *Henry Venn Missionary Statesman* (American Society of Missiology). With a Foreword by R. Pierce Beaver Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock. b) R. Pierce Beaver. 1967. *To advance the Gospel: Selections from the Writings of Rufus Anderson*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans). This first generation was developed by Presbyterian John Nevius used with great success in Korea and then by Roland Allen, mightily blessed in somewhat modified form in the Pentecostal movement in Latin American.

The second generation was an ethno-culturally sensitive direction taken by the Summer Institute of Linguistics lead by Cameron Townsend, Eugene Nida and Kenneth Pike and developed further by Church Growth School pioneered by J. W. Pickett, D. McGavran, C. P. Wagner, R. Winter, and C. Kraft.

⁶He implicitly contrasts DMM with the CPM strategy summarized by 1) David Garrison *Church Planting Movements, How God Is Redeeming a Lost World* and analyzed 2) in Steve Smith and Ying Kai. 2011. *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution: The story behind the world’s fastest growing church planting movement and how it can happen in your community!* With a Foreword by David Garrison. Monument, CO: WigTake Resources.

⁷In this third generation, the Watsons seem to be following the lead a few decades ago of George Patterson’s trend setting, *Church Planting Through Obedience Oriented Teaching* though in a more biblically systematic manner. Unfortunately, it is out of print. (George Patterson. 1981. *Church Planting Through Obedience Oriented Teaching*. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library). He has updated and amplified this teaching in George Patterson and Richard Scoggins. 2002. *Church Multiplication Guide: The Miracle of Church Reproduction*. 2d ed. Pasadena: William Carey.

encouraged to start groups of their own to reproduce what they are discovering in Scripture – even before they become a believer. (This is certainly controversial). The goal as a chapter title states: “Disciple-makers make disciples, not converts” (Watson and Watson 2014, 47). Disciples then make disciples.

Third, and the heart of the strategy, is to teach trainees the art of deep, intercessory prayer (chapter 12), engaging lost people (chapter 13), finding a key “person of peace,” and then facilitating “Discovery Bible Studies.” This then leads to the Watson’s definition of church:

The church is a group of baptized believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who meet regularly to worship, nurture one another (feed and grow one another), and fellowship (practice the “one another” statements of the Bible, and depart these gatherings endeavoring to obey all the commands of Christ in order to transform individuals, families, and communities. (Watson and Watson 2014, 160)

The Discovery Bible Studies are a key to the total strategy. These are a series of discussions on the whole story of the Scripture from Genesis to Revelation. They address

the group’s worldview and cultural gateways and barriers. It leads them to discover a holy and loving God, face their own sin, find God’s provision from their sin through Jesus Christ, come into a grace/faith relationship with Jesus, and commit to a life of faith that obeys His commands regardless of consequences. (Watson and Watson 2014, 169)

Then as the group comes to Christ (often together in People Movement type activity as McGavran emphasized), the DMM catalyst helps them move through baptism to becoming a church/assembly. In the whole process, the facilitator/catalyst mentors the “person of peace” for months through the process but does not do it for him or her.

Furthermore, in the whole process, “Disciple Making Movement catalysts” should, first, decontextualize, yet, at the same time, not try to contextualize the Gospel because that is the task of the people themselves. DMM facilitators accomplish this by planting the necessary core of the Gospel into a culture through Discovery Bible Studies, but not through the missionary’s complete denominational system. Second, catalysts need to realize that denominational “branded” religious systems will defeat the completing of the Great Commission. Third, catalysts should build a disciple-making movement on a community’s social structures, which they carefully need to take into account (again as the School of World Mission accentuated). Fourth, a successful DMM catalyst ought to make careful allowances for their own religious and cultural biases to be successful. Last, a DMM catalyst must seek to reproduce obedient disciples not mere converts while emphasizing the priesthood of all believers. I will look at each of these five principles in depth.

First, the Watsons encourage catalyzers to decontextualize the Gospel. Catalyzers accomplished this by carefully analyzing the elements of Scripture that are necessary to the core of the Gospel and then stripping off every other external form. The targeted people then are to contextualize the Word themselves. Here how David Watson puts it:

How can I ever know another culture well enough to dress Jesus up to meet their expectations, wants, or needs? I cannot. But I know my own culture, and if I am honest with Scripture and critical in my thinking and planning. I can present Jesus in a near-acultural way that can be assimilated and transformed into a cultural model by the ones God has chosen and prepared. (Watson and Watson 2014, 13)

Watson then specifies worship as one of “the most obvious areas” to begin external stripping away of the forms of Western culture, specifically: Prayer, music, teaching, and preaching. This is excellent advice with which I agree wholeheartedly. This type of de-contextualization and indigenous re-contextualization is necessary as the Gospel begins to impact especially the least-reached peoples who have had little input from Western forms of ecclesial tradition.

However, when Watson goes on to mention church leadership, doctrine and obedience I begin to feel a greater measure of concern. He writes, “When I introduced church leadership, I asked them how they would lead a group in their community. The results were different from the congregational approach I would have taken, but it fit them and their way of doing things” (Watson and Watson 2014, 14). I agree here especially since most Baptists would emphasize a single senior Pastor, a board of lay deacons, and an exclusively dedicated building. However, I disagree with an implication of the de-branding thesis that no universally valid form for the structure of Christ’s local assemblies exists. For example, Paul tells believers to follow his model for church planting.⁸ He founded in Christ-following communities in prominent cities then a year or so later ordained multiple elders-overseers to shepherd them (1 Pet 5:1-4; Acts 14:23). Each of the city communities of Christ most likely possessed many house churches.⁹ However, and quite importantly, the Watsons scarcely mention elder training, which is crucial for the universal form that Paul established in the book of Acts and exhibited in the Epistles.¹⁰ Last, Paul did teach a decentralized form of ecclesial connectionalism with a common biblical creed and practice (Eph 4:1-10; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Cor 11:16; Php 4:9; see Jas 1:20-21; 1 Pet 3:18-22), something again which the Watsons neglect.¹¹ If one derives the creeds directly from Scripture, I find little wrong with this ancient practice.

Second, the Watsons are wise to eschew what they term “branded Christianity” (Watson and Watson 2014, 23).¹² They correctly realize that “branded” denominational systems will defeat completing the Great Commission. This is a huge pill to swallow for many denominational

⁸An example is Philippians 4:9: “The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you,” see also one of Paul’s universally valid “trustworthy statements” concerning over-seers (1 Tim 3:1).

⁹See e.g., the many house assemblies Paul mentions in Romans 16 that are all part of the “church of Rome”; or the elders of the house-based assemblies of Ephesus mentioned in Acts 20, whom Paul called together and mentioned that he taught from home to home. Everywhere Paul planted such communities and then returned to ordain multiple elders over the many home assemblies.

¹⁰Here I agree with Roland Allen and his more recent interpreters: 1) Eckhard Schnabel. 2008. *Paul the Missionary: Realities, Strategies and Methods*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic. 2) Robert L. Plummer and John Mark Terry, eds. 2012. *Paul's Missionary Methods: In His Time and Ours*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

¹¹Paul even spoke of the churches of provinces, who elected representatives, some of whom accompanied Paul carrying their generous gifts to the saints in Jerusalem (Rom 15:26; Gal 1:22; 1 Cor 16:1; 2 Cor 8:1-4, 19-20, 9:2, 1 Thes 2:14; et al).

¹²In my experience after living in Korea for six years, the biblical Gospel among many Korean Presbyterians seems chained to keep it from infecting a pragmatic, American Church Growth ideology refracted through the eyeglasses of a dualist and Confucian worldview and Korean can-do mentality. That chaining has unleashed a hybrid-beast into Korea – mega-churches, massive building programs, powerful centralized Pastor-controlled institutions, massive debt, and a Confucian-syncretized world mission movement. The resulting Korean paternalism – nothing new in the missions movement – has been Korean, cookie-cutter churches in, for example, Russia, Philippines, and Africa, which they have so zealously planted (though, I might add, much good is being done). At the same time their youth back home, as is happening among Millennials in the USA, are bleeding out rapidly from a massive slit in the carotid artery in Christ’s visible body. Similar to what is happening among American evangelical, this is caused by the idolatrous love of education, passion to get rich and escape the dirty world of physical work, and lots of K-pop fueled promiscuous sexuality, rampant abortion hidden under a Buddhist-serene exterior, and a cultural conspiracy to keep everything silent and orderly on the surface.

and non-denominational mission boards as well. Missionaries, the author's claim, most often impose on new believers their "brand" of congregational and denominational life. In other words, missionaries tend to dictate the only correct manner to do church – "the way we do it back home." Ironically, however, while rightly eschewing "branded" Christianity, the Watsons very form of baptism of believers by immersion with the explicit/implicit theology behind it, is a distinct, and not so ancient, "brand" of Christianity.

Another important example is that many other denominations try to maintain a necessary distinction between a single lead-pastor (called a "teaching elder" in most North American Presbyterian brands) and multiple lay ruling elders (or "deacons" in Congregationalist and Baptist tradition). Only the "pastor" has exclusive rights to "word and sacrament/ordinance" (and now even must possess a BD or an MDiv degree to be ordained). In my opinion, no one can biblically establish this distinction between a lay ruling elder¹³ and an ordained teaching elder. Both, along with evangelists and teachers are essential in the body of Christ (Eph 4).¹⁴

¹³In the Pauline and Petrine tradition, the office of elder is the same as that of "overseer/bishop" and "shepherd/pastor" and all must be able to teach, proclaim, and rule (see 1 Pet 5:1-4; Acts 20:17, 28; compare Tit 1:5-9 with 1 Tim 3:1-7, see also 1 Tim 5:17). Elders/overseers, it seems, are also equivalent to "leaders" in Hebrews 13:17, who believers are to "submit" to because "they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account."

In addition, 1 Timothy 5:17 is often used as an illegitimate proof text for this position of "teaching elder" or "senior pastor" in my opinion: "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching." In this passage, Paul explicitly states that both the "affairs directing" (i.e., ruling) and "teaching/preaching" elders can share "double honor" – possibly meaning "full-time payment." Hence the word "especially" [emph] can't be pressed into meaning that two completely distinct ruling offices exist. The catalyst should not try to support the alternative perspective that an elder-office exists but with two totally distinct classifications so that churches allow only a teaching/preaching sub-class of elder to administer sacraments and the Word. To the contrary, what the passage seems to teach in context is that all elders must be able to teach and rule (2 Tim 2:24), yet some while also ruling are created and motivated by the Spirit to exercise "prophecy" (now means "preaching the already revealed Word), "teaching," and "encouragement" (see e.g., Rom 12:4-6). Thus these three word-oriented gifts are more fruitful in preaching and teaching than the other more service oriented gifts such as "serving," "leadership" or "giving." Both the elders who specialize in ruling (with some preaching) and those who specialize in preaching (with some ruling functions) are worthy of "double honor" thought ruling/preaching elders can be given special consideration for "double honor." All elders then should administer and supervise the ministry of the ordinances/sacraments.

My conclusion: Disciple-making movement catalysts must train elders to rule/supervise and teach a burgeoning DMM/CPM without destroying the spontaneous growth.

¹⁴After the eyewitness Apostles and the revelatory Prophets laid the foundation for Christ's movement and died off, Evangelists such as Timothy, elder/shepherds, and teachers (Eph 4:10-11) eventually became the prime trainers for the trainers (T4T) as 2 Timothy 2:2 and its context explains.

Hence, I would think that as long as a trained evangelist, shepherd-elder, [licensed] teacher, or even a deacon is supervising the growth of the body of Christ in an area, is watching over the people coming into the kingdom, and is visiting them, such sacraments/ordinances are valid. Moreover, pourers, sprinklers, and immersionists would disagree on proper mode (hence making a brandless Christianity virtually impossible) but why can't we agree to disagree and accept the validity of all three modes if administered in the single name of the Triune God? Hence I conclude that all evangelists, elders ("overseers-leaders-shepherds") – including those termed in my denominational brand as "ruling elders" – can oversee the administration of the sacraments/ordinances. Does this imply that ordinances/sacraments administered even by teachers and deacons as in the case of Philip under the Apostles (Acts 8:36-38; see 1 Cor 1:14-17) are also valid? I believe so, at least in the case of deacons as the case of Philip demonstrates. Therefore, no special, distinct office of "minister of word and sacrament" in Scripture exists that alone can exclusively exercise the ordinances/sacraments. Denominations that enforce this stricture, the Watsons imply, impede the spontaneous expansion of the Christian movement as Roland Allen a century ago warned. Furthermore, it seems, then that an ordinance properly administered in the authority of the Triune God and in a biblical manner is valid even if an elder-leader-shepherd-overseer is not physically present.

This means, then, and supplies a key reason why this is so important for the Watsons' methodology, baptism performed by a Hindu background believer, who desired to baptize his own wife, is valid if properly done (and in the case mentioned in the book, supervised by David Watson, the missionary-evangelist himself). Watson accepted this practice because of the Indian cultural sensitivity to having another male touch a person's wife. By implication the Watsons, and I dare say even Paul himself, would allow eighteenth generation leaders in a rapidly growing movement to baptize new believers as long as there is supervision by evangelists and/or elders.¹⁵ The Watsons, then, make a strong point that the Discipler/Trainer needs to be flexible in these kinds of external practices.¹⁶ "The structure of the church required to self-replicate in India is determined by Indian cultural and community structures, not by the structure of church with which I am comfortable" is David Watson's pragmatic approach (Watson and Watson 2014, 31). It has definite merits.

This leads me, however, to a point that contrasts somewhat with the Watson's strongly pragmatic DMM methodology. I would suggest that CPM/DMM catalysts should be leading their apprentices into discovery of the universal though quite flexible form of doctrine¹⁷ and ecclesial practice for all assemblies everywhere on the earth as Paul seems to enjoin in 2 Timothy 2:2 (see Rom 6:17; 1 Cor 11:16; Php 3:17; Col 2:7). Paul indicates that his trainers/trainers (TRT's) are then to teach their apprentices to be *both* good rulers (emphasizing sound ethics and discipline) and teachers/preachers emphasizing doctrine, which also includes ethics. This is exactly what Paul does in every one of his ecclesial letters (e.g., Romans, Ephesians, and Colossians), as many have noted. Principled pragmatism is necessary as Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 9, but it does have some parameters but a tremendous amount of freedom within those framework norms.

Furthermore, it is difficult, if not impossible, to completely present an unbranded core of Christianity. Each denominational system has a deep vested interest in the status quo – witness Roland Allen's battle with the Anglicans in China who wanted to import their "brand," their total system there.¹⁸ Having said that, however, I believe the Watson's basic point is correct. DMM catalysts ought to decontextualize as much as possible, presenting only the foundational biblical story from creation to the consummation together with the core worldview principles that metanarrative presents (i.e., the Trinity, the Person and Work of Christ as Victor and substitutionary atonement, the Holy Spirit, justification by faith, etc.). Within the story, give as much freedom to the believers to contextualize the Gospel in their own cultural forms. I have experienced denominational "brandedness" first hand while a missionary in Europe and South Africa so I am quite sympathetic.¹⁹ In summary, then, I greatly appreciate the authors' attempt at radical, biblical correction to denominational branding.

¹⁵After all, Paul took at least a year to ordain elders in each community he planted and the Gospel was growing rapidly before and after that time. There is no mention that Paul (Apostle) or his Evangelist associates baptized the new believers. The growth was so great that in a one to three year period whole provinces had communities planted throughout (see e.g., Acts 19:10, 26; Rom 1:8; 1 Thes 1:8).

¹⁶In my Church Planting classes, I term this kind of flexibility "principled pragmatism."

¹⁷Doctrine must be flexible in because the order and importance of true doctrines can vary cross-culturally. For example, some shame-honor cultures will possibly prioritize a Christus Victor over a substitutionary view of the atonement in proclaiming the Gospel, while not neglecting the theme of guilt-justification that the substitutionary view addresses.

¹⁸See e.g., Roland Allen. 2006. *The Ministry of the Spirit: Selected Writings*. Ed. by David M. Paton; with a Foreword by Lamin Sanneh. Cambridge: Lutterworth.

¹⁹I recently returned to the States after teaching theology and missions for six years to majority world students in a Korean Presbyterian seminary. It was at the flagship school of a denominational university, but was pro-

Third, throughout the book, the authors sincerely desire that that a DMM catalyst should take a cultural-community's social structures into account. Chapter 13 especially underscored this necessity. Furthermore, the Watson's re-conceptualize McGavran and Wagner's Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP),²⁰ using a sociological metaphor, "silos" to describe each homogeneous unit. (I have described this phenomenon using the terms Ethnic Solidarity Principle (ESOP) and Family-and-Friendship Webs (FFW) in my dissertation and class syllabi).²¹ Traditional church planting "pulls people out of their silos to create a new silo that we call church," Watson states, following McGavran's teaching on extraction versus people movement strategy (Watson and Watson 2014, 107). In its place, "Gospel Planting focuses on planting the Gospel into every existing community rather than creating a new silo" (Watson and Watson 2014, 111). This means that when groups receive the Spirit, confess Jesus as Messiah and Lord, and are baptized "like Cornelius's household (Acts 10:47-48), they continue to meet as a family or affinity group within the solo" Watson and Watson 2014, 111).²² Many such groups can form within a single silo. Furthermore, since silos are interrelated, one group in a silo often starts a group in another silo (Watson and Watson 2014, 112).

Fourth, the Watson's teach that to be successful DMM catalysts must make careful allowances for their own religious and cultural biases. It can quite negatively affect their attempts "at disciple-making, unless they are very careful" (Watson and Watson 2014, 35). In other words, the Gospel itself and I would add, in the power of the Spirit as Roland Allen emphasized, is the source of power: "We insist that the role of any believer is to be obedient to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and allow it to redeem self, family, community, and culture" (Watson and Watson 2014, 37). We do that with the eyes on four generations of trainer/leaders from the very beginning (chapters 6,17).

Fifth, the Watsons strongly emphasize that DMM catalysts must seek to reproduce obedient disciples and not mere converts, while emphasizing the priesthood of all believers (chapters 7-9). In this emphasis, they correctly focus on the difference between management and leadership (chapter 17). Managers, the Watsons state, are "about the task, getting results, reaching the goals, fulfilling the mission, and resources required to fulfill the vision" (Watson and Watson 2014, 181). These are what Paul calls, in my thinking, "he who leads," that is one who "stands before" (literal Greek) the people to get things done (see Rom 12:8). A manager, thus, stands before to get the task done.

moting what I came to consider to a syncretized, Korean form of "branded Christianity." This is not something abnormal as my own North American denomination does the same in its plants overseas – rubber stamping the congregational structure, translating the Confession of Faith, replicating the educational requirements, cultural music styles, liturgy, and polity of the mother denomination even in Muslim majority areas. We Presbyterians stamped our brand onto Korea, but we received our stamp in turn from Scotland and England and modified it according to our culture. Korea Presbyterians in turn put their unique Korean culture stamp upon the Euro-American and Australian "brand" that came to them. Therefore, in the process, the Koreans are the third generation. They, in turn, stamp their unique brand upon their own cross-cultural church plants. Most Southern Baptist church planters and many Pentecostal denominations traditionally do something similar, so no one can unjustly criticize.

²⁰Here the authors are building, I believe, upon the teachings of the Church Growth School of Missiology, pioneered primarily by Pickett and McGavran (see, Donald McGavran. 1990. *Understanding Church Growth*. 3d ed. Revised and edited by C. Peter Wagner. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

²¹See Mark R. Kreitzer. 2009. *The Concept of Ethnicity in the Bible: A Theological Analysis*. Lewiston, NY: The Edward Mellen Press. See also, Mark R. Kreitzer. 2015. *Principles of Church Planting and Church Growth*. Unpublished class notes, Kosin University, Busan, South Korea.

²²Here, of course, as a covenant theologian, I would hold that household baptisms fit better within that stream of teaching than individualistic, extractionist versions out of which the Watsons come.

On the other hand, “leadership is about people ... about helping people reach their capacity as individuals and as teams. ... Leaders ... always draw others into their circles of influence and management” (Watson and Watson 2014, 181-182) – they are gatherers. A bit later, he speaks about leaders “having a vision and having the capacity to help others move from not understanding the vision to adopting the vision. As evangelists for the vision, leaders help people move from not knowing how to accomplish the vision to taking the steps necessary to fulfill the vision” – they are visionaries and vision-givers. Last, he adds, “leadership measures success in terms of people development” (Watson and Watson 2014, 181) – they are disciple-makers and trainers. This gifting, I would believe, is what Paul calls “prophetic” instead of “leadership” See, for example, Romans 12:6: “If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.” Faith, vision, and prophetic leadership are what Paul and Peter possessed as the vision giving leaders of the Christian movement. That gift (without new revelation) exists today. Thus, the distinction between management leadership and prophetic leadership is valuable, both gift types are necessary, and could be discovered through a carefully led Discovery Bible Study. For further information, see links in note below.²³

Needs for Improvement

Notwithstanding these strengths, as I intimated earlier, there are some strong weaknesses to this volume, which the authors should correct in a second edition. Most importantly, it neglects Pauline church planting strategy that builds upon Paul’s doctrinal and ethical emphasis upon faith as the surrender of trust. I would love the authors to have a chapter on the Pauline Cycle propounded by Roland Allen and summarized by Hesselgrave.²⁴

Second, trust is central theme to Paul’s Gospel and the Watsons need to emphasize these much more than they do, in my opinion. Now by this I agree with the Watsons that the Christian life is one of obedience (see chapter 7). However, according to the whole of the Scripture, obedience is first *listening* to the voice of the Good Shepherd through the Word, trusting/believing in the words and person of the Shepherd, and then inevitably following him unconditionally (Listen, Trust, Follow) (e.g., Dt 13:4; Jer 11:4; Jn 10:25-27; Col 2:6-7; Heb 3:7-19). Therefore, I again agree that as the Discovery Bible Study proceeds “everyone is trained to ask the question, ‘In this situation, how will I [or we] be obedient to the Word of God?’” He continues: “Faith is defined as the continuous act of choosing to be obedient to God’s word regardless of what it may cost, even our lives” (Watson and Watson 2014, 37). This is without doubt true but remains somewhat reductionist. First faith is trust that is relying on and putting complete confidence in the person of God in Christ by the Spirit. Only then are we able out of that strength stepping out and following him, “taking up the cross daily” and not “loving our lives until death” (Lk 9:23; Rev 12:11). This may seem to be a small quibble but it is deeply important if we want disciples who are biblical Christians.

Next, I would like him to underline how to do Discovery Bible Studies on whole Bible ethics, doctrine, and an optimistic, forward looking eschatology based on the Abrahamic covenant. Here the ethical and missiological work of Walter Kaiser on the Old Testament is extreme-

²³See these two websites: 1) To understand the three types of gifts: <http://spiritualgiftsworkbook.com/>. 2) To take an inventory quiz: <http://www.timshen.truepath.com/inventory.htm>.

²⁴David J. Hesselgrave. 2000. *Planting Church Cross-Culturally: North America and Beyond*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.

ly insightful.²⁵ In addition, the Watsons could add a chapter on gifts and the whole body working together to their important chapter on the priesthood of the believer (chapter 9). Last, the authors neglect in the whole strategy the gift of teaching (often through helping a target culture self-theologize) though Scripture speaks about a motivation gift of teaching and prophetic preaching. How these two gifts (see e.g., Rom 12:6-7) can fit into the small group orientation of the DMM strategy is important and David Watson, for one, has begun to address it in his blogs.²⁶

Overall, this is an outstanding and needed addition to missiological literature. I strongly recommend all pastors, missionaries, bi-vocational church planters, and church leaders to read, study, believe, and put these truths into action so that the goal of the earth being filled with the Father's glory, as the waters cover the sea would be accomplished much sooner.

²⁵See the Globalmissiology.org review [here](#).

²⁶DavidLWatson.org; <https://www.contagiousdisciplemaking.com>.

In an important, and hard-hitting passage, Watson addresses this issue somewhat but still emphasizes the single lead pastor in seeming contradiction to all he had been sharing before and after: The “pastor should be a champion of evangelism and disciple-making. He needs to encourage people to start and facilitate new groups, teach, witness, baptize new believers, serve the Lord’s Supper, and minister to the needs of the community and the body of Christ. The pastor should be equipping his people for every ministry in life and pushing them out into the lost world to make a difference rather than locking them behind the doors of contrived doctrines designed to weaken the believer” (Watson and Watson 2014, 53).

Better to have written, in my opinion, that the elders/overseers/shepherds (plural) should be “equipping Christ’s people” to do the work of service. But then again that goes against my own “brand” of church as well.