

ship building almost always involves some conflict. Utilizing culturally appropriate conflict-resolution strategies (often indirect, requiring a mediator) will help to build trust.

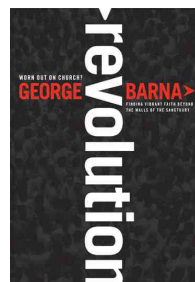
The ability to *learn* about, from, and with others comprises the fourth step to servanthood. God's common grace gives every person dignity and worth. Cross-cultural workers can only be servants if they affirm others' worth by learning from and with them, acting and teaching in ways that save face and preserve relationships. Cross-cultural *understanding* requires the ability to take the other's perspective, to see the good in the local culture, and to stop comparing in ethnocentric ways. Finally, *service* is "becoming like Christ to others" (144), willing to serve with empowering humility. When cross-cultural workers are open, accepting and trustworthy, able to learn from and understand others, then the ability to serve can become a reality in their lives. Elmer emphasizes that each of these steps and practices are *abilities*, thus can be chosen and developed.

While this book is written in a very accessible style, it is not a particularly easy book to read if one absorbs it deeply. To truly become a servant as Elmer describes requires a willingness to critique oneself, humbly and radically relinquishing cherished attitudes and hidden beliefs. Ethnocentrism is deeply rooted and insidious in every human

heart. The book attempts to speak to all cross-cultural workers yet seems focused largely on a North American audience. Although understandable from the author's perspective (one can only responsibly give negative illustrations about one's own culture), I fear this might encourage other cultural groups to see these teachings as mostly applicable to Americans.

Because the message of the book strikes at the bitter root of ethnocentrism found in every culture, I would hope that in future editions a broader range of applications and illustrations might "internationalize" the important teachings found here. For this is a book all who work in multi-cultural or cross-cultural settings need to read, absorb, and prayerfully apply.

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Barna, George. 2005. *Revolution: Finding vibrant faith beyond the walls of the sanctuary*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale. 160 pp. Hardcover. \$17.99.

George Barna is a widely-known and highly-respected researcher and pollster. Much of his work focuses on current trends in Christianity within North America. In this book Barna examines the state of

the Church today and makes thought-provoking assertions regarding its future. What he sees is the groundswell of devout revolutionaries who are abandoning the local church building and its infrastructure while attempting to become the Church that Christ commissioned believers to be.

Barna summarizes seven spiritual passions: intimate worship, faith-based conversations, intentional spiritual growth, servanthood, resource investment, spiritual friendships and family faith that are typical of the new brand of Christians. It is Barna's conviction that the role of the local church will experience dramatic changes. "As we entered the twenty-first century, the local church was the focus

of most people's spiritual lives. . . . By the year 2025 . . . only one-third of the population will rely upon a local congregation as the primary or exclusive means for experiencing and expressing their faith; one-third will do so through alternative forms of faith-based community; and one-third will realize their faith through the media, the arts and other cultural institutions."

This volume has drawn considerable criticism from several denominations. Some of its assertions may be debatable. But Barna's reputation as a researcher gives many people the uneasy feeling that he is right.

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