

George Yancey, *One Body One Spirit*, Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2003.

There is a myth among Baptists in America that most churches are predominantly white. America is home to numerous cultures and people groups. Hopefully these people will look for a church body to worship with. Church planters should desire to start churches comprised of diverse cultures. George Yancey writes *One Body One Spirit* to detail how multi-ethnic churches can look in the evangelical world. Yancey is an African American who is married to a white American woman. He shows that people of various races can and have always worked together.

Since early in America's history, individuals have eaten, worked, and shared homes together, regardless of race. Yancey argues that multi-racial churches "are desirable and worth the effort it takes to create them" (28). He gives readers and potential church planters seven principles for building multi-racial churches.

Inclusive worship is Yancey's first principle. For the most part, he speaks of the musical side of worship. Music style is a significant factor for most churchgoers as they choose a place to worship. Yancey challenges churches to have music representative of a variety of cultures in each service. While this is a good idea, planters should beware of going overboard, for example, singing a song in Spanish in a predominantly English congregation. Worship is not only music, but the inclusion of styles represented in our congregations is apart of worship as well.

The second principle is diverse leadership. With this in mind, hiring diverse leadership must not come at the expense of good theology (95). Furthermore, intentionality when sharing the Gospel should be a staple even when creating a more multi-racial congregation. Church leaders should intentionally reach everyone.

Another principle that should be not only pertinent to multi-racial churches, but also all churches together is the need of personal skills. Encompassed within this idea, Yancey says, "Church leaders need to develop the ability to adjust to the various cultures and customs that new racial groups bring to an existing church" (121). Readers may say this sounds quite simple, but it takes a large amount of love and compassion to reach a multiplicity of cultures well. Obviously, personal skills coupled with skills in patience and approachability, will lead to people joining church from diverse backgrounds. Concerning multi-cultural discipleship, Yancey says, "The goal is not merely to have productive interpersonal interaction with the members of the church" (125). Let the church love one another and preach the Gospel to each other as well.

The remaining two principles go hand-in-hand, location and adaptability. When choosing a location, church plants must adapt to their context, both geographically and demographically. Issues that churches will need to adapt to include language barriers and making minority groups feel at home (141). A simple way to begin adaptation is to be aware of the people groups in the area to which a church may go.

Yancey does well to detail principles that help church planters when starting a multi-racial church. Some principles speak to the entire church, but the majority remain specific to these church plants. Is this book worthwhile? It should be on the bookshelf of all church planters, and at the top of the list for church planters who plan to reach many different people groups. Let us reach the world, not just those who are convenient.