

Theology of the City Church/City Reaching Bibliography

Anonymous *The Church in this city* (Detroit, MI: Messiah Book Room)

I (Ron Thaxton) stumbled on this several years ago and it has been incredibly influential in our journey. It is a prophetic sword that cleaves with deadly accuracy removing “unclean areas or our ‘religious’ life we heretofore regarded as holy...which have estranged us in our very hearts from men and women who are meant to be flesh or our flesh and bone of our bone in the Body of the Lord.”

Aldrich, Joe. *Reunitus* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah Press, 1992).

An introduction to the Prayer Summit movement by its founder, Joe Aldrich, this book surveys biblical foundations for unified prayer and describes how prayer summits have powerfully brought these principles into action in many communities. Aldrich provides great introduction to give any pastor wondering about how to start a city-wide prayer movement.

Beckett, Bob. *Commitment to Conquer*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Chosen Books, 1997).

Beckett explores strategic-level spiritual warfare, spiritual mapping, and identificational repentance as he writes about city-reaching from the perspective of a local pastor. He also stresses the importance of making a commitment to the community God has called you to as a prerequisite for effective city-reaching.

Dawson, John. *Taking Our Cities for God*.. (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 1989).

One of the first books published on city-reaching, Dawson takes a spiritual warfare approach to winning our cities. He discusses the role of prayer, fasting, spiritual mapping and identificational repentance in city reaching.

Dennison, Jack. *City Reaching*.. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1999)

The most advanced book yet on city reaching strategy. Begins with a summary of city-reaching values, then describes how leaders can build a community transformation strategy. Includes a helpful chapter on building city-wide leadership teams by Jim Herrington.

Frangipane, Francis. *The House of the Lord*. (Lake Mary, FL: Creation House, 1991)

An early contribution to city-reaching literature, Frangipane describes the city-wide church as “the house of the Lord” and emphasizes the kind of renewing, purifying work believers must experience if we are to reach our cities. This book focuses on the spiritual heart of city reaching.

Haggard, Ted *Primary Purpose* (Orlando, FL: Creation House, 1995)

Ted Haggard has coined an oft repeated phrase in this book, “Making it hard for people to go to Hell from your city!” We can make this possible if we will work together toward the central aims of Jesus and not let our distinctives drive us apart.

Layton, Douglas. *Our Father’s Kingdom: The Church and the Nations* (Nashville TN: World Impact Press, 2000)

A challenge for the united Church to not only win souls but also impact the culture of nations with the Gospel. Layton is an experienced missionary with good insight into what the fulfillment of the great commission (discipling nations) might look like.

Lewis, Robert. “Joining with Other Churches” in *The Church of Irresistible Influence.* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 155-174.

Lewis describes how he caught the vision of a city-wide church and then describes how churches in Little Rock Arkansas have partnered together to meet community needs. Lewis describes how the Little Rock movement worked to blend prayer and compassion ministry together. A brief, practical summary of how one city is working together.

Koivisto, Rex. *One Faith, One Body* (Wheaton: Bridgepoint, 1993)

Koivisto carefully lays the theological foundation for working across denominational lines. He calls the church to unity around core orthodoxy while embracing diversity, and explains how to tell the difference between core orthodoxy and secondary orthodoxy. Koivisto concludes by calling for a return to the city-church as the best way to live out our unity in today’s culture. This is probably the most helpful book for leaders wondering, “Is this biblical”?

Linthicum, Robert. *City of God City of Satan: A Biblical Theology of the Urban Church.* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991)

Linthicum provides a theology of the city church that is both sensitive to spiritual warfare and to the “earthier” aspects of community transformation often emphasized in the community development literature. Possibly the deepest theological treatment of the city church in print.

Nee, Watchman. “The Church Founded by the Apostles” and “The Basis of Union and Division” in *The Normal Christian Church Life* (Washington: International Students Press, 1969), 45-72.

This book of messages given by Nee in China in 1938 is a fascinating look at the city-church from a non-western culture. Nee argues that the only legitimate dividing line in the New Testament church is locality. He then takes this argument to its radical end by

arguing that any division in a city is wrong. He further argues that there is no case in scripture for any organizational structure overseeing churches beyond the leaders of a city church. Nees discussion is very enlightening even if difficult to fully apply in our day and time.

Lesslie Newbigin, “What is ‘a local church truly united’”? in *In Each Place* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1977), 14-29.

Writing in an era where much discussion focused on high-level unity among different denominations, Newbigin calls for a “concliarly” model of fellowship among local churches. The model emphasizes the diversity and individuality of local churches but calls them to work together as a council of churches in a given city, sharing resources and opening worship to one another. The article is difficult to read but the current city-reaching movement would do well to listen to what those who have gone before have already said about the city-wide church.

Marshall, Rich *God @ Work* (Shippensburg, PA: Destiny Image, 2000)

This book introduces the concept of kings and priests (Rev. 1:6) in that God has called both business leaders (kings) and pastors (priests) and anointed them to minister in their relative spheres of influence.

Otis, George. *Informed Intercession*. (Ventura, CA: Renew/Gospel Light, 1999)

Otis distills basic community transformation principles gleaned from his global study of cities that are well-along in the city-reaching process. The opening chapter tells transformation stories his Transformations I video. Otis then identifies five common factors at work in all of his transformation case studies. The rest of the book offers practical advice regarding spiritual mapping, research, and drawing conclusions.

Pier, Mac and Sweeting, Kathy. *The Power of a City at Prayer – What happens when churches unite and for renewal* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002)

The story of the growing movement of prayer in New York City and how the church responded to the tragedy of 9/11/01.

Ruibal, Ruth *Unity in the Spirit* (Lynnwood, WA: Transformations Media, 2002)

This book paints the panorama of the transformational process of Cali, Colombia. Refreshingly, Ruth Ruibal introduces us to the blessings as well as some of the pathological elements encountered in their saga.

Silvoso, Ed *Anointed for Business* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2002)

This is quickly becoming a definitive work in the process of societal transformation. “How Christians can use their influence in the marketplace to change the world.”

Silvoso, Ed *Prayer Evangelism* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2000)

How to change the spiritual climate over your home, neighborhood and city. As with all Ed’s writings you will read his revelations from Scripture and wonder, “Why didn’t I see that, it is so obvious?”

Silvoso, Ed. *That None Should Perish*. (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1994)

Silvoso helped introduce the idea of reaching whole cities for Christ to the evangelical world. His strategy focuses on prayer evangelism and cooperation within the body of Christ. The book is illustrated with his first-hand reports of how the strategy worked in Argentina.

Tenney, Tommy *God's Dream Team* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 1999)

From the book, “The heavenly Groom saw His Bride arrayed in splendor—not scattered by segregation, splintered by factions or torn by ruthless power struggles. He saw a church victorious, a mighty army that marched *together! That was, and still is, His dream.*”

Wagner, C. Peter. *Apostles of the City*. (Colorado Springs, CO: Wagner Publications, 2000)

Wagner, a veteran church-watcher, looks back on ten years of city-reaching efforts and concludes that the movement has stalled out. He believes the root cause is a lack of leadership, and calls for city-wide apostles to lead the way.

White, Randy. *Journey to the Center of the City – Making a difference in an Urban Neighborhood*. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996)

The story of the White family being convicted to value the city of Fresno, CA. how they responded and the results God produced.

White, Tom. *City-Wide Prayer Movements*. (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 2001).

White, a leader in the world prayer movement, calls the church to a passionate pursuit of God that attracts God’s blessing and results in unity and revival across the body of Christ. The book focuses on what this kind of pursuit looks like in a city-wide movement and ends with several appendixes addressing practical questions.

Winter, Bruce. *Seek the Welfare of the City*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994)

This scholarly work examines the ways the early Christians served their cities. Drawing from numerous ancient literary sources, Winter counters the belief that early Christians withdrew from society and argues that the early Christians made many positive contributions to their communities.