

Eunjo Mary Kim. *Christian Preaching and Worship in Multicultural Contexts: A Practical Theological Approach*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2017. 227 pages. \$29.95.

Eunjo Mary Kim, a leading Asian-American homiletician, presents this unique book as a liturgically and practical-theologically expanded discussion of her previous work, *Preaching in an Age of Globalization*. In the earlier book she thoroughly engaged with globalized contexts and provided her trans-contextual homiletic as a solution. In this volume, Kim argues that while we are all living in locally and/or globally *multicultural* contexts, most churches still stick to a conventional, monocultural preaching and worship style, along racial, ethnic and cultural lines. Therefore, it is crucial to bring about a paradigm shift to the ministry of preaching and worship in order to make them more relevant to culturally diverse contexts by seeking “theological, and biblical wisdom and homiletical and liturgical insight” (xv).

This book is comprised of four parts, with seven chapters, followed by appendices with sample sermons and liturgies. The first chapter provides her definition of multiculturalism as “a socio-cultural movement to transform our multicultural society into a better world” (5) and presents her theology of diversity as the foundation for preaching and worship in multicultural contexts. Its three core understandings are: 1) humans are created as communal being according to the image of God, 2) the *perichoretic* relationship of the Trinity is the prototype of the human community, and 3) God still continues the work of creation (*creatio continua*) and humans are invited to work together with their imagination of, and passion for, a new world in which racially and culturally different people live together in justice and peace (7-18).

In chapter 2, Kim argues that it is required to find a common focus of engagement for preaching and worship in multicultural contexts. This focus is elaborated in a threefold way: “the divine invitation to the community of friends, the human response to the invitation through praying and doing justice, and the eschatological celebration here and now” (29).

For the interpretation of Christian scripture in our multicultural world, the third chapter presents multicultural hermeneutics as an alternative to the Christocentric approach to *sola scriptura*, seeking in the scripture the wisdom of God as a way of life, through dialogue with other religions’ sacred texts (intertextuality). While providing four hermeneutical principles for the actual practice of multicultural hermeneutics in this chapter, the author, in chapter 4, as a test case for multicultural hermeneutics, deals with the miracle story in Luke 7:11-17 through the intertextual dialogue with the Buddhist story, “The Parable of the Mustard Seed.”

In chapter 5, Kim further expands her discussion by exploring how to bring about liturgical renewal from a multicultural perspective through interdisciplinary studies with ritual theories and church history. While renewal is always provisional, contingent, and contextual, she presents some practical suggestions which can be summarized as follows: by making preaching and worship more relational and participatory, renewal should move the worshippers’ heart so that they can make meaning of complex realities in a multicultural world (108-109).

The sixth chapter introduces five cultural images (the melting pot, the salad bowl, the mosaic, the kaleidoscope, and the metamorphosis) in order to develop liturgical models of multicultural worship. The author advises preachers and worship leaders to examine which image fits their worship and try to move to their next level of worship by considering the strengths and weaknesses of each model.

The final chapter proposes the reflective practical-theological method, in which theory and practice relate to each other dialectically through the spiral movement of four stages: empathetic imagination, prayerful and contemplative imagination, creative imagination, and

visionary imagination. In this way preachers and worship leaders can discern and communicate practical wisdom (*phronesis*) for the renewal of preaching and worship, facing racial and cultural diversity (136-138).

Kim's has made unique contributions in this book. First, I highly value the remarkable thematic continuity between her previous book and this book, in terms of globalization and multiculturalism. For Kim they are not mutually exclusive but closely intertwined. Whereas the former book is solely focused on the field of homiletics, the latter broadens its scope beyond homiletics toward liturgy and practical theology, critically engaging with the issue of multiculturalism. Therefore, I hope readers can read both books side by side in order to gain a fuller understanding of Kim's suggestions. Second, seeking the wisdom of God as a way of life (through multicultural hermeneutics) opens a new vista for possible fruitful dialogues with other racial and cultural groups within and beyond the Christian church, in order to fully understand and embody the wisdom of God as God's *creatio continua* in our racially and culturally diverse world. Third, I find the sermons and worship orders in the appendix extremely helpful for anyone who wants to learn how to apply her multicultural suggestions to the actual practices of preaching and worship in a multicultural congregation.

There are also a couple of minor issues to be named. First, the current structure of this book is a little uneven for those who do not have knowledge about homiletics, liturgy and/or practical theology, perhaps making them difficult to fully grasp Kim's fascinating vision for the renewal of preaching and worship in multicultural contexts. Second, while some practical theologians may not agree with her definition of *phronesis* as infused/acquired prudence taken from Thomas Aquinas, I personally wondered if "the wisdom of God as a way of life" and "practical wisdom" in multicultural preaching and worship can be used interchangeably. As they can denote two distinct scopes of wisdom, further clarification of the terms at the earlier stage would be necessary to avoid any confusion.

Despite these minor issues, I would highly recommend this book for any preachers or worship leaders, knowingly or unknowingly ministering at multicultural congregations, as it proposes a paradigm shift for preaching and worship, seriously taking into account multicultural contexts. I hope this book will have a ripple effect on future homiletical and liturgical discourses.

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