

Eunjoo Mary Kim. *Preaching Jesus: Postcolonial Approaches*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2024. 162 pages. \$22.00.

Offering a groundbreaking exploration of fresh theological insights and practical homiletical strategies, *Preaching Jesus: Postcolonial Approaches* encourages readers to reorient their understanding of Jesus in sermons and interpretations, thereby dismantling traditional colonial depictions of Jesus. In five chapters, Kim showcases five dazzling images of Jesus, including postcolonial self, song, child, body, and friend. She uses postcolonial hermeneutical and homiletical methods that connect with biblical, historical, literary, and cultural studies.

In the first chapter, Kim presents Jesus as a postcolonial self who is “a boundary-breaker, boundary-connector, and boundary-transcended” (17). Examining the dialogue between Jesus and the Samaritan woman in John 4:5-42 through postcolonial approaches based on Asian American women’s experiences, Kim introduces Jesus as a model of postcolonial self who invites people to a new identity and encourages them to live in a complicated world as postcolonial selves. Emphasizing listening to marginalized voices and utilizing dialogue as a crucial homiletical strategy, Kim empowers preachers to reconsider Jesus’ identity as a postcolonial self as the active agent of God’s reconciling work.

In the second chapter, “Preaching Jesus as Postcolonial Song,” Kim delves into the meaning of the postcolonial imagination in order to recognize its contributions to postcolonial preaching practice. Evaluating Luke’s account of Mary’s pregnancy through a postcolonial imagination, Kim invites readers to hear Mary’s eschatological song of an unborn Jesus as “a proleptical sign of God’s humanizing activity” (34). Kim highlights that preaching Jesus as a postcolonial song is rather a communal prayer invoking the Holy Spirit who envisions revolutions in our actions, not merely in words and melodies.

The third chapter, “Preaching Jesus as Postcolonial Child” focuses on Jesus as a colonized Jew of the Roman empire. Underscoring global migration as a complex and serious phenomenon which calls preachers to engage, Kim scrutinizes Matthew’s account of Jesus’ escape to Egypt. Engaging in concurrent global issues of immigrants, foreigners, and refugees, Kim presents Jesus as a postcolonial child who has a hybrid identity shaped by colonial and postcolonial environments, resisting and reconciling the world. Kim encourages preachers to remember that preaching Jesus is both advocating for the marginalized and reconciling between victims and the privileged.

In the fourth chapter, “Preaching Jesus as Postcolonial Body,” Kim emphasizes decolonizing traditional interpretations of biblical texts as a primary task of postcolonial preaching. Decolonizing the conventional reading of the Easter message narrated in John chapter 20, Kim proposes a new image of Jesus as a postcolonial body based on colonial experiences of African Americans and Native Americans. Introducing a postcolonial cultural reading of the text, Kim perceives Jesus as a postcolonial body embracing brokenness of the world in the divine presence for healing and reconciliation. Postcolonial preaching, argues Kim, should create a Third Space where the divine Spirit and people cooperate in an optative mood for complete reconciliation (76).

The final chapter, “Preaching Jesus as Postcolonial Friend” overhauls the traditional colonialist interpretation of the Great Commission in Mathew 28:16-20. Examining the text through a postcolonial intertextual reading, Kim characterizes the risen Jesus as a postcolonial friend instead of an authoritarian teacher or a commander. Christian mission pursues building friendship—which is Trinitarian, inclusive, and communal—highlighted in cross-cultural

relationships. Kim introduces “meta preaching,” (96) a way of preaching Jesus as a postcolonial friend, which highlights a self-reflective personal conversation for building friendship.

So, after all things are considered, what now? What does preaching Jesus through postcolonial approaches sound like and look like? In concluding her book, Kim offers us an exemplary sermon titled “A Letter to Mary and Elizabeth” based on Luke 1:39–45. In this sermon, Kim demonstrates how the biblical narrative of Mary’s encounter with baby Jesus resonates with the current context and congregation and challenges the unjust world by preaching Jesus.

By challenging the colonial Christology that homiletics has centered, Kim provides readers a crucial guide for reimagining an unprecedented way of preaching Jesus. Throughout the book, Kim encourages readers, particularly those with colonized experiences and their descendants, to engage in an active dialogue with Jesus who resists yet reconciles the world. This book echoes Audre Lorde’s powerful sentiment, quoted by Kim at the Academy of Homiletics 2023 annual meeting: “For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house.” If you aim to equip yourself with postcolonial preaching tools, put this book on your must-have list. For those wanting to expand their understanding of Jesus and improve their preaching ministry, *Preaching Jesus: Postcolonial Approaches* is an indispensable resource. I highly recommend this book to both preachers and scholars, advocating for a reimagined, revolutionary approach to preaching Jesus.

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