

Ministering Cross-Culturally is a helpful resource for all who minister.--Octavio J. Esqueda, *Southwestern Journal of Theology*. [Read more.](#) [About the Author.](#)

Posted on January 26, For example; the distinctive characteristics of worship in North America are very different from the characteristics of worship in other parts of the world. Culture, then, is the definition by which people order their lives, interpret their experience, and evaluate the behavior of others. For example, the distinctive characteristics of worship in North America are very different from the characteristics of worship in other parts of the world. We develop personal lifestyles and a set of standards and values by which to order and organize our lives. There is also shared culture within the church, because culture is always learned and shared with others. Many have wondered how it was possible to spend eighteen years as missionaries in a country like Pakistan, as my wife and I "along with our family" did. We learned to love the people to whom we were called to minister so much that we were willing to enter their culture to the best of our ability. Thus, we earned their respect and admiration. The advantage that we have in North America is that we are reaching these people in the context of our culture with the majority of them wanting desperately to enter our culture. In many countries, a person arriving an hour late for church services is still not late. In Pakistan, the people would find my anger because of their tardiness unacceptable and puzzling. Most North Americans begin to experience tension when others are fifteen minutes late. I will never forget the wedding ceremony I attended in Pakistan that was seven hours late. No one seemed to get upset "no one except the missionaries. Many cultures are event-oriented, while the North American culture is time-oriented. We are concerned about punctuality, the length of time expended, and the use of time to its maximum potential. Event-oriented people want an activity to be completed regardless of the length of time required, and they emphasize unscheduled participation rather than carefully structured activities. Event-oriented people are concerned more about the details of what is going to happen than about when it begins and when it ends. For them, the present is more important than the past or the future. This is true in every aspect of their life, from building highways and houses to visiting relatives. In order to keep my sanity, I adjusted my thinking to go to the service one or two hours after the announced time to start. I would usually arrive just in time. Segmental thinkers demand clear-cut, black-and-white issues, insist on universal application of principle, and cannot feel secure unless their perceptions are recognized as being correct. Often people in other cultures see most issues as gray and open for debate, rather than black and white and closed. They want to examine the total circumstances. They believe that each situation is unique, and they are uncomfortable with standardized procedures and rigid rules. They resist being pinned down to a particular position on an issue or to a particular social role. Most of us in North America have learned to be crisis-oriented, rather than non-crisis oriented. Strange as it may seem to us in North America, the majority of people in Third World cultures are non-crisis oriented. We tend to examine every activity for potential flaws or problems while these gracious people see that as being pessimistic. Non-crisis oriented people have an abundance of new ideas and interests, but do not have a clue how to get them accomplished. They ignore potential and real problems and often refuse to seek advice. They downplay the possibility of crisis, often avoiding taking action or making a decision. We North Americans run around shaking our heads in dismay at their lack of planning and predictability. These tensions will eventually cause frustration and anxiety, as well as a serious communication breakdown and a loss of support. My experience in working with people of a diverse cultural background was that my sense of urgency was not always shared by others. I had to ask myself the following questions: Is the problem as critical as we believe it to be? How much damage will occur, even if the job is not done? What options are open to us should the expected crisis occur? A common error in cross-cultural ministry is to assume that people understand us when they hear our words. An even more common error made by us who minister cross-culturally here in North America is to assume that just because people speak English, they understand what we are saying. We fail to see that different personal cultures can prevent mutual understanding. We feel that our way of decision-making and crisis management is best. We must ask ourselves whether it is more important to do it our way or to work with the

people around us, building mutual understanding and cooperating to make decisions and solve crises in a manner acceptable and beneficial to all. There must be an attitude of mutual understanding, acceptance, and respect. This hurts, but I must be honest. I am so task-oriented that I tend to make life miserable for everyone around me. People who are task-oriented find satisfaction in reaching objectives and completing projects; their lives are motivated and directed by an unending succession of objectives. They take on a frenetic pace that is filled with activities because they aspire to complete a greater number of tasks than is possible in the time they allocate. Tasks dominate their lives, and people are viewed merely as part of their work schedule. Social life usually becomes an extension of work activity. Conversation at social gatherings is limited primarily to problems. Casual conversation can be difficult, with the task-oriented person outwardly appearing to be listening but thinking of all the things he could be doing. Other subjects bore him, and social activities are often seen as a drain on productivity, or as an interruption of his time of working alone. Achieving is more important than building relationships. Most of us in the ministry are well equipped for administrative responsibilities, teaching, or preaching. As long as we can schedule our own activities and work independently of others, we will be effective in our service. However, frustration often lies with fellow workers. We become intolerant of others who show less commitment to the task at hand than we do. We are impatient with those who spend so much time in apparent frivolous conversation, and whose lives are not organized around a list of objectives. We can become extremely judgmental of our coworkers, as tensions arise over goals. Here is the bottom line: Our ultimate goal must be to reach people for Jesus Christ. We have no greater goal or task than to live in such a way that we respect, love, and share our very lives with those to whom we seek to minister. Respect is given to individuals on the basis of their social position. Everything within my spirit cries out against a status-focused society. This is distasteful to me. But Jesus had it in His clay. People who find their identity and self-worth in the prestige that is ascribed to them, enjoy playing the role, and relish the titles bestowed upon them. It is important for those ministering cross-culturally to understand this and to work with it. We do see this more and more in our own society and culture. It is manifested when people buy homes in certain neighborhoods or join country clubs that reflect their ascribed prestige. But for the most part, in the North American culture, individual identity and self-worth are bound up with personal performance. People are quickly forgotten, and respect is given to success that is current and continuing. People who have achieved prestige often develop a highly critical attitude about self and toward others. They quickly forget past achievements and strive to accomplish new goals. I have noticed that achievers enjoy and respect other achievers. North Americans love successful people. However, we must recognize that self-worth comes through neither ascribed nor achieved prestige, and that one must be a servant in the pattern set by Christ. In most cultures, losing face is perceived as a weakness. These people try to avoid failure and error at all cost. They would rather not take an exam than take it and fail, or would prefer not to turn in a written assignment rather than demonstrate an inability to write. They simply do not want to make mistakes, and when they do, they try hard to cover up their errors or to excuse them. In a few cultures, children will commit suicide rather than return home with a failing grade in school. I set out to expose the liar. I am still waiting to find out who it was! While living in Pakistan, I also was faced with the unpleasant task of firing one of the domestic workers whom I was trying to win to Jesus Christ. I made the mistake of going directly to the worker. I was very polite, hoping to help the young man save face and to maintain a positive relationship with him. But he took it hard, lost face, and from that time on, no matter what I tried, he refused to have anything to do with me. I learned quickly that whenever I had to discipline a Pakistani to send someone else to talk to them. In that culture, to tell a man to his face that he has failed is to treat him like an insignificant child. Sending a messenger to the second man meant that I considered him as my equal, or superior and that I could not rebuke or expose his weakness to his face. This pattern of avoiding confrontation is characteristic in many cultures. Mediators are essential to build relationships or to repair the breaches that conflict has torn in the fabric of social relations. My Canadian upbringing denies the validity of such mediation. As a leader, I should accept the unpleasant obligation to reprimand in person.

Chapter 2 : Ministering Cross-Culturally by Lingenfelter and Mayers – ReNew Partnerships

Ministering Cross-Culturally is a sweeping view of how cultures approach different areas of life, forcing the reader to self-evaluate and get ready to be flexible. When I first read this book I'd already had the benefit of learning from mentors and reading on this topic.

The point of the book is to help you understand your preferences and to assess the overall preference of the culture you are living in. Hopefully, some of your frustrations and conflicts with people will be better understood and you will be able to adjust to the society you are living in a little bit easier. My results were pretty much as expected, but I was surprised by two things. First, I am much more strongly task oriented than I would have thought I was five years ago. On reflection, my experiences over the last five years have probably cemented this orientation further in my personality. I hope I can become less task oriented and more people oriented over the next couple of years. Second, I came out as more concerned to conceal vulnerability than to expose it; although only slightly more so and neither response was particularly strong. Although I am able to discuss my weaknesses, I do like to choose when and where I do so. I would be uncomfortable talking about my vulnerabilities to just anyone, or in a setting where it is forced on me to do so. This was a valuable learning about myself. But enough about me; time to look at the book in more detail. Ministering Cross Culturally compares and contrasts each pair of values over several chapters. I am not going to discuss the topics of attitudes towards time because it is probably the single most talked about difference between the West and the rest. Instead, I want to focus on a couple of the other value pairs: This experience provides the background to his cultural insights and the source of many illustrations in the book. He relates the story of a hurricane hitting the coastal village where he lived. He received 3 days warning of the hurricane via radio and tried to warn his neighbours of the approaching storm. The local Yap people continued life as normal until the moment the storm arrived, then they sought to save what they could. A few men had been working on milling timber on a portable mill set up on the beach. As the waves pounded the beach, the mill and the timber, they desperately tried to get the mill off the beach, abandoning several days worth of milled timber to the storm. Lingenfelter explains these differences according to how people have a crisis orientation, or a non-crisis orientation. People with a crisis orientation anticipate and prepare for crises, while those with a non-crisis orientation tend to think that most things we worry about never actually happen and it's better just to adjust to present circumstances rather than worry ourselves sick. He explains that the Yap people had lived through many hurricanes and learnt that the damage from each individual storm could be quite different. This storm drove heavy waves up the beach and flooded the area inland, while other storms severe winds that ripped roofs of many buildings and toppled trees. They reasoned that it was best to wait and see what kind of difficulty each storm brought and then react accordingly. Lingenfelter summarises the two perspectives in the following table: Lingenfelter says that non-crisis oriented people do not expect or look for problems. He does not provide an explanation for this; in my experience I think there are two contributing factors. The first is the fear of speaking something negative into being; for this reason it is better to not mention, or look for, potential problems. The second reason is that this would bring a lot of shame on you to be the source of negative things, difficulties and failure. For an achievement focus person, prestige is acquired through recent accomplishments. Jesus prescribes servanthood as the normal way of life for his followers. For people who are status focused, having to serve other people is very uncomfortable. Similarly, Jesus told the Rich Young Ruler to sell all that he has accumulated in his life and to follow Jesus. In both cases, Jesus demands that we give that thing that gives us status in society and security. Personally, I find that my value comes from the fact that God created me and cared enough about me to die on the cross for me. My status, then, comes from being made in the image of God and redeemed by him. It does not come from my social position relative to other people, or from my accomplishments in life in comparison to others. This point of view frees me from the expectations of others and from the tyranny of my own standards for myself.

Chapter 3 : Ministering Cross-Culturally | Apostolic Information Service

In "Ministering Cross-Culturally," Sherwood Lingenfelter deals with the tension and conflict that is experienced in cross-cultural ministry by using the incarnation as a model. He points out how Jesus came as an infant and a learner suggesting that this too is how believers ought to approach culture.

Wednesday, April 11, Ministering Cross-Culturally Well I just returned from another successful short-term mission trip to Mexico with my two daughters. Thank you to all of you who took the time to pray for us. God did many amazing things! In light of our most recent experience, I wanted to share with you a review and teaching about ministering cross-culturally. Let me give you some examples: A White-collar office professional exists within a different culture than a blue-collar factory professional. Now add to that, differences in race, religion, gender, and nationality and you have the ingredients for a cross-cultural encounter. Nevertheless, missions work in another country is by definition cross-cultural. In their book, *Ministering Cross-Culturally*, Lingenfelter and Mayers attempt to identify and resolve the tensions and conflicts typically associated with cross cultural missions in different cultural and social contexts. Lingenfelter insists that until we understand the culture to which we have been sent to serve and share the Good News of Jesus Christ, we will be unable to properly implement the method he identifies as the means by which cross-cultural ministry will be most effective. That method, according to Lingenfelter, is to become incarnate within the cultural context where we have been sent. Lingenfelter makes a compelling argument for his incarnational model through his application of Philippians 2: We become incarnate within our own culture through the natural process of life. However, the values learned within our own context do not necessarily translate to other cultures. These social arrangements become an important part of our shared culture. We include those people who reaffirm our values and relationships, and we exclude those who in some way do not measure up to our standards or do not fit within our prescribed sphere of social relationships. This pattern of inclusion and exclusion often prompts us to fear and even reject the very people we are sent to serve. For the last thirteen years I have traveled, along with my two daughters, to Juarez and Tijuana, Mexico to build houses in some of the poorer rural communities. Because my girls and I have participated in this particular missionary venture for so long, we are inevitably in a position of working with groups who have never been outside their particular cultural context. The most common misconception of these first-timers is the belief that local Mexicans are simply uneducated and lazy which is why they are poor and destitute. Clearly, this is a gross over-generalization. No doubt there are always those in every culture who lack personal initiative. However, it is ignorant to assume that there are no political or socio-economic factors that contribute to poverty in any culture. Thankfully, however, first-timers are usually able to reorient their way of thinking to at least consider that there is a different value system at work in the Mexican culture. Because of the limitation of time in short-term mission ventures, becoming significantly incarnate in a new culture is not truly possible. However, for most, the process begins to take place by the end of the trip. Missionaries, by the nature of their task, must become personally immersed with people who are different. To follow the example of Christ, that of incarnation, means undergoing drastic personal reorientation. They must be socialized all over again into a new cultural context. They must enter a culture as if they are children—ignorant of everything, from customs of eating and talking to the patterns of work, play and worship. As a general rule for some mission ventures to Mexico, participants are instructed to avoid consuming local food or drink that is not pre-packaged and conversely not to share their food or drink with the local community. This particular instruction has some very real and practical medical implications. Nevertheless, during one particular year, the family for which we were building a home prepared a complete meal for everyone in our group. The group was at a crossroad. The group leader instructed us to participate in the meal based on conscience. Some were fearful of the real possibility of becoming ill and graciously declined while others took a risk and accepted the meal. Additionally, the family, who regularly interacted with everyone in our group earlier in the week, no longer interacted with those who refused their meal offer. Although none of us who ate the meal got sick, the possibility was very real and it is difficult to harshly judge those who refused to participate in the meal. If you were to travel to Mexico, it

would become immediately obvious how important the game of soccer is. In some places of the city, you will see field after field after field filled with locals playing soccer. Coming from a family of soccer players and having two daughters who play soccer, it was natural to get involved in whatever game happened to be going on in the community where we were building. The game put everyone on equal footing because it is played the same way everywhere and transcends all language and social barriers. During one particular evening, some of the locals who worked for the mission agency who sponsored and organized the mission effort invited their extended families to our camp for dinner. Initially, participation ranged from six year olds to sixty year olds. However, when the Mexicans realized that the Americans could hold their own, those younger and those older dropped off as the intensity of the game grew. There was no lack of banter, posturing and good natured pushing and shoving. We implored him for more time to finish the game as the score was tied. To our dismay, the request for additional time was denied and we had to leave the game as it stood. We thanked our opponents and left for the meeting. They were completely dumbfounded. There was no way they would ever leave a game unfinished. Certainly, meetings and worship are important. However, I doubt it impressed those to whom we were sent to serve. I put my car keys, wallet and cell phone in the same place every day when I walk in from work so I know where they are when I need them. In the early years of our marriage, I often thought that her life would be much better if she did more things and valued things the way I did. Now, after twenty-seven years of marriage, I realize her values make her the person she is and why I love her so much. We do not accept one another in love; rather, we try to remake those around us into our own image. This tendency is the negation of the principle of incarnation, which requires that we learn to think in the style of our neighbor. However, with the passage of time and the opportunity to observe those attitudes and practices, I have come to understand that the real motivation is to exclude those who look and act differently from the accepted norm of the inner circle. In short, some are worthy of being accepted into the flock while others are not. Instead of serving one another, unnecessary divisions are created and impenetrable barriers erected. Not losing ourselves but becoming more fully incarnate within the cultures to which we have been sent to serve.

Chapter 4 : Book Review: Ministering Cross-Culturally - To Win Some

Ministering Cross-Culturally will help many missionaries on the foreign mission fields to navigate through the tensions they face as they try to adapt to a host culture. However, this book will also be beneficial for students of missions because it will prepare them for cross-cultural relationships."

This book is one of them. An incarnational model for personal relationships By Sherwood Lingenfelter and Marvin Mayers Originally published in , pages After seeing the title listed a few times I picked it up and read it before moving overseas. Ministering Cross-Culturally is a sweeping view of how cultures approach different areas of life, forcing the reader to self-evaluate and get ready to be flexible. But having re-read the book recently, I realize how helpful its content actually is. Jesus is our model for incarnational ministry because he did it perfectly: We must love the people to whom we minister so much that we are willing to enter their culture as children, to learn how to speak as they speak, play as they play, eat what they eat, sleep where they sleep, study what they study, and thus earn their respect and admiration. Moving towards a new culture in some ways separates us from our previous life. These losses are actually the way we make room in our thinking and our identities to embrace a new context. We end with more than we were before " cultural experiences shaping and adding to us. Where do cultural tensions come from? The bulk of the book hangs on the premise that the culture-stress we feel as we enter another culture primarily stems from a clash of deeply-held cultural values. And we many not even be aware of many of these values. We can be quick to assign wrong motives to someone, when the real issue is a fundamentally different approach. Chapter 2 begins with a questionnaire. Some people find these kind of self-inventories annoying " I love them! Lingenfelter pairs 12 values, creating 6 different spectrum, and then spends a chapter exploring each tension: Event Judgment Dichotomistic vs. Task orientation Self-Worth Status vs. Achievement focus Vulnerability Concealment vs. Willingness to show vulnerability Each chapter explores the values at different ends of the spectrum, how the Bible speaks to that tension, and finally a section on implications for cross-cultural ministry. The chapter on tensions about time, for example, pits the values of Time orientation and Event orientation against each other. A crowd starts to gather at 8: An hour later mostly everyone is there, and the movie finally starts around 10pm, because it would have been discourteous to start before everyone had arrived. Starting the movie includes getting the generator running, which could include about 30 minutes of taking the whole thing apart and making adjustments. Then the workers load the film into the projector slowly, socializing all the while. Often the generator breaks during the movie, which becomes a socializing break with drinks and snacks while it is repaired. If the generator could not be restarted, everyone gradually drifts home, considering the evening a successful social event. How did this anecdote effect you? An entire evening to see the first 20 minutes? What a waste of my time! If watching the movie was the goal. But if spending time with people was your goal, the time was well-spent! Unearthing this kind of angst is exactly what Lingenfelter was aiming for. The bottom line Book in a nutshell: You should read this book if: Also a great reminder for those who have been living cross-culturally. Connect with her on Twitter:

Chapter 5 : A Pastor's Thoughts: Ministering Cross-Culturally

In Ministering Cross-Culturally, the authors demonstrate that Jesus needed to learn and understand the culture in which he lived before he could undertake his public ministry.

I wholeheartedly agree that becoming culturally competent is a wonderful way o Tom Law Each of us live in and are part of a culture in which we have been raised and which we think as normative. Mayers postulated that culture is made up of six different continuums: It is the collection of these continuums and their interactions that we understand to be culture. As groups of people coalesce around commonalities in these continuums we identify t Megan Knippenberg I really appreciated this book. If you ever go on a short or long-term missions trip or move to another country, this book is a must-read. It helped me understand a little bit more about American culture and my orientation in different areas. We can adapt ourselves to fit two differe Sarah I actually read this book twice, and the first time I was blown away. The second time it seemed a bit repetitive overall message: Adam This was the second or third time I read this book first time over 12 years ago. The basic premise is that different cultures can be understood as promoting different values, and tho He argues that without the redemptive power of Christ, all cultures naturally lead us to judge, exclude, an John JP This book invites you to examine yourself from the viewpoint of being an alien in a new culture. The subject of the books the tensioning conflicts people experience when they try to work with people from a different cultural and social backgrounds. While the intended audience of this book is for those doing Christian missionary work in foreign countries, the principles discussed can be universally applied by anyone assigned to work abroad. The book gave me a few new categories for understanding cultural differences. It was short and to the point. The discussion was fairly shallow. I appreciate that his exploration is not at all technical, making this book an easy read and very approachable by a wide audience. The brief sections on biblical perspective and reflections from the life of Jesus are okay, but not He points out how Jesus came as an infant and a learner suggesting that this too is how believers ought to approach culture. Lingenfelter defines incarnational ministry as a willingness to learn as if we were helpless infants, and claims that the essence of the incarna Of course one might want to signore the purely religious parts of a book written by and for mission workers, but this is a quite small inconvenience in comparison to the depth of the insights. Besides, practically all books have, so to speak, filler in addition to the meat. This particular book juxtaposes Wester Andrew Husen This is a great book. And it is short which is nice. I recommend it to any Christian living in a city and any person living as an expat. The rest of the chapters all had valid foundations especially time, self-worth, and vulnerability! The main disagreement that I have with this book is its comparison of culture to language as an imperfect, but Elysha I read this book for an upcoming mission trip and combined with my other readings for this trip, this book gave me insights for both my daily life and my upcoming trip. In this book, you complete an inventory and measure where you fall within certain spectrums. Tory I read this book several years ago at a time when I was beginning my cross-cultural experiences, so I was expecting the information to be useful eventually and practical ultimately. Andy Volk I liked this book. It talks about the many tensions of interpersonal relationships in a cross-cultural context. I feel like I learned a lot from this book. I learned plenty about my own personality and realized many ways which I misunderstood Spaniards during my time in Las Palmas. I would recomend this book to anyone spending even a brief period in another culture. It has also affected how I view and interact those within my own culture. Paul Kelly Good primer for folks who are preparing to do ministry across cultures. The author deals with issues such as event time v. His call to "sit at the feet of the culture" is inspiring. The author seems to talk a lot about his experience in Yap; he does not do much discussion about the variety of cultures, but perhaps that is not the purpose of the book. Daniel I found this book to be very helpful. The main emphasis of the book is that when ministering cross-culturally we need to try and see things from the perspective of those we are ministering instead of assuming they see everything from our perspective. We must discern the difference Jocelyn Another book to challenge my cultural and Christian viewpoint. Also I think the survey to reach our own spot on the scales was a little inaccurate. I do not think a lot of the questions accurately gauged the orientation. As I read the explanations I felt my personal

leaning was really quite different from what the limited survey showed me to be. Melissa Oliver This book was so interesting! I loved the ideas and insights. Some of it was just too wordy or complex. Cheryl An introduction to cross-cultural understanding based on traits model of culture. Stephanie Nannen I found this book helpful in the way it identifies and names competing values across cultures. I appreciate the way the author affirms non-Western values, and shows how two values can appear to be in tension or even be opposites, and yet both can be biblical. Author speaks from his experience living among the Yapese, contrasting their culture with the Caucasian-American culture he grew up with in several aspects: Bro Pretty good book and there are some things here about teaching crossculturally that I liked and found helpful. It is worth the read if you read it all. Some things did not have a "wow" impact, but I did not waste my time or money on this book. There are so many non-issues he raises which I see believers blowing out of proportion in our culture. Belinda One of my reads in Africa. Matthew Melville Awesome book! Perfect read while on the Student Fusion DR trip. Joshua A wonderful book that looks at Jesus as the great example of the first contextually concerned missionary. Walking with the Poor: Observations from Africa Cross-Cultural Conflict:

Chapter 6 : Ministering Cross-Culturally | the art of constructing

In Ministering Cross-Culturally, the authors demonstrate that Jesus needed to learn and understand the culture in which he lived before he could undertake his public ministry. The authors examine how this can help us better understand what it mean.

Lingenfelter Author , Marvin K. One of the central thesis of the book is that bible speaks to all, Jesus Christ is the only perfect example in relationships - God became flesh, as an infant as a learner " to learn language culture. He defines culture as the sum of distinctive characteristics of a peoples way of life " is the conceptual design, the definition by which people order their lives interpret their experiences and evaluate the behaviour of others. He talks about personal culture and Shared culture. In the shared culture we include people from our own groups and exclude people outside our own groups. The authors see Incarnation as the answer to exclusion. A questionnaire is given aimed at placing you on a 6 contrasting value pairs scale. But like the other questionnaires even some MBTI questionnaires sometimes the questions are somewhat ambiguous about what they indicate. He could very well be a task- oriented person who just wants to solve the problem somehow. And you can be an introvert and still be a person oriented person. However these are debateable issues. As there are only two variables. I do not think we can understand anyone culture with just one variable. And some of these factors could be interrelated too. For example, an achievement- oriented person would rarely be a people oriented person. So just like the MBTI personality types, they could have developed a matrix like that: And only when the variables are put together it makes sense. In the next chapters the authors explain in detail each of the 6 contrasting pairs. Here is a brief summary: Achievement oriented people get it be their achievements. Those who are willing to expose their vulnerability would accept their faults and be open to criticism. The last chapter talks a little about becoming the person. Really a good concept. It was a bit of an anti-climax to come to the end and find there is only a little about that all-important concept. Application All in all a wonderful book and good value for the time you spend " since it is a short book. I learnt about different ways to define culture and variables. We have to become less of what we are in order to become part of the other culture. When we minister among others, we tend to judge them with our own standards. But the incarnational model demands that we become like them. The word became flesh.

Ministering Cross-Culturally examines the significance of the Incarnation for effective cross-cultural ministry. The authors demonstrate that Jesus needed to learn and understand the culture in which he lived before he could undertake his public ministry.

Endorsements Praise for the Previous Edition "With vivid insight, lively narrative, and down-to-earth practicality, this book, by leading Christian anthropologists, is essential reading for anyone interested in ministering cross-culturally. I have used this text for years in the preparation of undergraduate and graduate students for cross-cultural service, and it remains a student favorite. The model is simple and straightforward yet profoundly helpful in assisting cross-cultural sojourners to recognize value differences, assess and modify their behavior, and build trust in cross-cultural relationships. No book more incisively and creatively invites learners to evaluate themselves as they analyze other cultures. He is the author of *Transforming Culture, Agents of Transformation*, Continue reading about Sherwood G. Reviews Praise for the Previous Edition "This volume is a very helpful book that provides guiding principles for cross cultural life. The book can be used as a text for an introductory course at the college and seminary level. It can also provide basic evangelical anthropological insights to lay persons, pastoral leaders, and missionaries interested in ministering to persons of other cultures, [whether] at home or abroad. *Ministering Cross-Culturally* is a helpful resource for all who minister. Esqueda, *Southwestern Journal of Theology* "Christians who minister cross-culturally or hope to do so in the future should read this book. Leading Christian anthropologists Mayers and Lingenfelter share their ideas based on years of cross-cultural missions. *Ministering Cross-Culturally* will help many missionaries on the foreign mission fields to navigate through the tensions they face as they try to adapt to a host culture. However, this book will also be beneficial for students of missions because it will prepare them for cross-cultural relationships. Lingenfelter brings many examples and applications from his missionary experience that make the narrative vivid, insightful, and practical. This book will help readers to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and of the people with whom they interact, which can help to ease the tensions inherent in communicating across cultures. Hartwig, *Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary* "These authors capture spiritual insights borne out of personal experiences in living in a foreign culture. Lingenfelter, the primary author, shares insights that can transform not only how we can become more effective in ministering to people from other cultures but understand more clearly how we must become like Jesus. The authors present a powerful picture of how Christian missionaries and others who work and serve in different cultures need an understanding of the culture in which they choose to serve. This book represents an excellent resource for anyone considering ministry in any culture different from the one in which a person was raised. The same concept can apply within our own churches. Lingenfelter and Mayers will challenge you to understand yourself as you try to understand those with whom God may place you to minister.

Ministering Cross-Culturally, Sherwood G Lingenfelter and Marvin K Mayers, This book draws attention to several "basic values" and how they can differ between cultures.

Every person makes decisions that are largely convergent from these cultural biases. Conflict arises from situations where cultural norms are violated. Understanding the expectations of other cultures is essential to relating well. This can be communicated in a number of ways: Grasping these fundamental elements can help one comprehend the values of the culture. With the exception of Jesus , nobody can fully embody another culture. We may come very close to being totally acculturated, but we are often so shaped by our own culture that we never fully embrace the foreign culture in which we minister. Despite this fact, Lingenfelter asserts that we are to adapt to other cultures so that we might be able to communicate the Gospel in ways that will be received. Much of the miscommunication and tension that is experienced in cross-cultural ministry results from a lack of understanding our own culture and that of the culture we are trying to reach. For instance, in America we are very time-conscious whereas other parts of the world are event-oriented. The result can be frustration due to differing value systems at play. That is typically why the number one rule for mission trips is always: We are there to serve, not be served. This inevitably means that we must adapt. Lingenfelter incorporates a number of sources in his work. Primarily, the author uses personal experience to begin the discussion concerning cross-cultural ministry and interpersonal relationships. This is a valuable and pertinent way to form and assess the validity of various theories of intercultural ministry. If the model does not hold up to observable tests, then it is a faulty or incomplete theory. Although I do not feel Lingenfelter is unfair in his assessment of things, it might be the case that my own cultural bias is too similar to his own to not be persuaded by the underlying logic. The sources were fairly recent material. However, the material on cross-cultural ministry and psychology are a bit dated. It would have been appropriate to have more sources to back up the substantial claims that are being made. For one, psychology and our approach to cross-cultural ministry has drastically changed even within the previous decade! The theology resources were fairly recent and were written by notable names in their field. However, the scarce few resources used suggest that this particular work may be limited in its Biblical scope. But, that does not necessarily entail that it is a well informed argument and is less likely prone to eisegesis otherwise avoidable. The first possible cultural conflict revolves around the issue of time. Some cultures are time-oriented and others are event-oriented. Time-oriented is concerned with punctuality, efficient use of time, goal-directed activities, and dates and history. Event-oriented is concerned with details of the event, full consideration of problems until resolved, relaxed on time constraints to complete something, completing an event is the reward, and focused on the present rather than past or future. Judgment is the second tension point discussed. Dichotomistic thinkers see things in absolute categories, emphasizes being right, and are concerned with patterns and systematic organization of information and experiences. Crisis orientation and Noncrisis orientation is the next tension described. Crisis orientation expects crisis, plans accordingly, seeks quick resolution, follows a pre-planned procedure, and looks for experts for solutions. Tension concerning goals occupies the following chapter. Task orientation versus person orientation can cause great distress. Task orientation, which is our typical modus operandi, focuses on task completion. Person orientation tends to value the people or groups who are working together over the completion of tasks. Tensions concerning self-worth stem from achievement focus against status focus. Achievement deals with accomplishments attained by a person. There are two ways to potentially deal with vulnerability: It is difficult for these individuals to receive criticism or risk failure. Quality of performance is essential for such individuals. The other side of the spectrum is just the opposite. They are willing to risk failure, work to complete an event, and are open to alternative points of view and criticism. The book demonstrates the proposed thesis. Furthermore, it is generally true between people that are working together and experience conflict or tension due to opposing values, even within the same or similar cultures. The author states that cultures are either moral or immoral. I would argue a slightly different understanding. It seeks to create order within the world, which is a Divine imperative for Creation.

"The model of basic values outlined in Ministering Cross-Culturally is one of the clearest and most helpful anthropological tools ever created for Christian workers. I have used this text for years in the preparation of undergraduate and graduate students for cross-cultural service, and it remains a student favorite.