

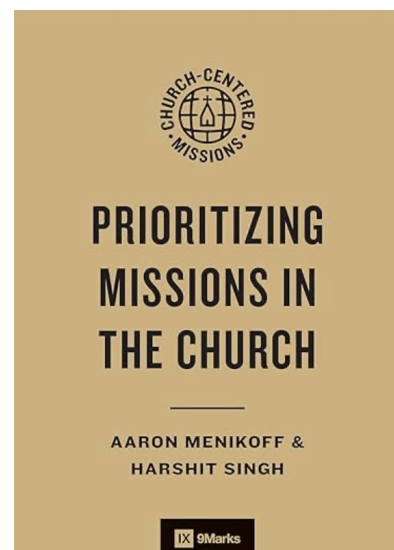
**Menikoff, Aaron & Singh, Harshit. *Prioritizing Missions in the Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2025.**

Reviewed by Dean Polk, IMB Personnel, Central Asia

Everything that *Prioritizing Missions in the Church* teaches and urges is built on the conviction that, “only one institution in the world is called to steward the gospel message: the local church. Only the gospel has the power to save sinners from everlasting destruction...And that gospel is the stewardship of churches.” (4). Menikoff and Singh don’t merely argue for the truthfulness of this claim. They also offer positive, practical counsel to local churches about how they can become missions-centered.

The book’s strength is its blend of principled argument with practical application. For example, the authors argue that “if a focus on taking the gospel abroad precedes applying the gospel at home, churches will not only be malnourished—they will wind up exporting principles and practices that hinder the spread of the gospel” (27). From this concern for the preservation of the gospel, the authors offer five questions churches should be able to respond positively to before sending out missionaries. The fourth of those, by way of example is, “Is depth as important to your church as breadth?” (38).

Later Menikoff and Singh write, “churches that faithfully teach Scripture will find their members longing for and laboring toward planting churches across the globe,” (49) and they then go on to give a concise biblical theology of God’s missions heart in all of Scripture. This concise treatment of the topic



could serve as a practical tool for pastors seeking to lead their congregations well as they teach the Word week after week. In this section I was particularly helped to consider how the *Imago Dei* has a missions impulse—what the authors call our ‘Stand and Show’ function in the world. (51)

Operating from the conviction that healthy churches “identify men and women uniquely suited for cross-cultural work,” (121) the authors offer 6 Loves (e.g., Love for hospitality) and 4 Questions (e.g., Are You Willing and Able to Do the Hard Work of Contextualization?) that local churches can use as filters to find qualified missionary candidates (125-146).

The authors also write, “God will use the regular rhythm of corporate worship to plant an impulse in regular church members to long for and labor toward the planting of churches across the globe” (85). From this conviction, they helpfully and practically tease out how the preaching, praying, and singing of local congregations will cultivate a missions passion among their members.

Very little in this monograph invites serious criticism. Given the chance, I would only want to make a small modification to Chapter 1 where Menikoff and Singh are burdened to point out that unhealthy churches tend to export unhealthy missionaries who carry unhealthy doctrine and practice with them where they go. In a broad sense, I heartily agree, but I would rush to say that many a not-yet-mature or fully healthy church has sent out excellent missionaries who have borne fruit to the glory of God, and themselves planted healthy churches in hard places.

In case the reader assumes that this book is mainly for church leaders in the West, please note that Singh pastors a church in an extraordinarily hostile environment in India. The wisdom of these pages is useful for those who labor in non-Western contexts. In fact, anywhere believers are working alongside nationals in the areas of leadership development or exit to partnership, I commend this work as resource to be consulted. In Central Asia, we are just beginning to see local churches consider their responsibility not only to receive missionaries but also send them. As these churches think

about cooperating in the missions endeavor, I hope they will build churches and church associations on the strength of the ideas in this book.

*Prioritizing Missions in the Church* is the first in a new series from Crossway and 9 Marks titled, “Church Centered Missions.” In the same way that 9 Marks’ “Building Healthy Churches” series impacted ecclesiological thinking and practice throughout the world for good, I anticipate this new series will impact the practice and implementation of the missionary task throughout the world for good. Therefore, I commend the positive vision of this book with hope that it’s a sign of good things to come in the series.