

Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church

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The United States is currently undergoing the most rapid demographic shift in its history. By 2050, white Americans will no longer comprise a majority of the population. Instead, they'll be the largest minority group in a country made up entirely of minorities, followed by Hispanic Americans, African Americans, and Asian Americans. Past shifts in America's demographics always reshaped the country's religious landscape. This shift will be no different. Soong-Chan Rah's book is intended to equip evangelicals for ministry and outreach in our changing nation. Borrowing from the business concept of "cultural intelligence," he explores how God's people can become more multiculturally adept. From discussions about cultural and racial histories, to reviews of case-study churches and Christian groups that are succeeding in bridging ethnic divides, Rah provides a practical and hopeful guidebook for Christians wanting to minister more effectively in diverse settings.

Without guilt trips or browbeating, the book will spur individuals, churches, and parachurch ministries toward more effectively bearing witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Good News for people of every racial and cultural background. Its message is positive; its potential impact, transformative.

Soong-Chan Rah is Milton B. Engebretson Associate Professor of Church Growth and Evangelism at North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago, IL. He is the author of *The Next Evangelicalism* (IVP Books, 2009). Prior to coming to North Park, Soong-Chan was the founding and senior pastor of Cambridge Community Fellowship Church, a multi-ethnic, urban church in Cambridge, MA. Soong-Chan has a B.A. from Columbia University, a M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, a Th.M. from Harvard University, and a D.Min. from Gordon-Conwell. Soong-Chan serves on the boards of Sojourners, the Christian Community Development Association, World Vision, and the Catalyst Leadership Center. He lives in Chicago with his wife Sue, a special educator and his two children, Annah and Elijah.

INSIDE PAGES

In the past decade something new and important has emerged: Readers are now able to wade through a huge pool of books on multiethnicity/multiculturalism and the church. If you have been waiting for the handbook needed to navigate these new waters, this is it! Soong-Chan Rah's *Many Colors* will become the standard for Christians who want to understand and practice cross-cultural intelligence. The church desperately needed a book reflecting the depth and breadth of this defining work. Soong-Chan has delivered!

Randy Woodley, distinguished associate professor of faith and culture, George Fox University, and author of *Living in Color: Embracing God's Passion for Ethnic Diversity*

Many Colors is a must-read for those who are serious about being the church in practice and not just theory. Dr. Rah skillfully integrates theological, psychological, sociological, and practical information concerning cultural understanding needed for a church that is increasingly becoming multiethnic and multicultural. Finally, a book on cultural understanding for the church that is not sociology sprinkled with some Scriptures, but is solidly built first on the foundation of Scripture which reveals God's priorities for our relationships.

Rodney Cooper, professor of discipleship and leadership development, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

This is a must-read for anyone in cross-cultural ministry, as well as all who wish to engage the new multiethnic America. Rah challenges us to pursue culturally intelligent leadership, while providing a convincing biblical-theological framework and practical suggestions to help us move forward in this most important journey.

Tom Lin, vice president of missions, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and director of the Urbana student missions conference

BACK COVER

"From experiential knowledge and with anthropological precision, Soong-Chan Rah has provided a thorough explanation of cross-cultural competence, one of the core commitments required for effective multi-ethnic ministry. Many Colors will accelerate the coming integration of the local church and is therefore a much-welcomed, greatly needed resource for those of us pursuing the dream."

Dr. Mark DeYmaz, Founding pastor of Mosaic Church (AR) and author of Ethnic Blends: Mixing Diversity into Your Local Church

"Many Colors is a desperately needed resource for those of us who love Christ and are engaged as agents of change and justice in our society, where a new mestizo reality is becoming the norm and not an exception."

Noel Castellanos
CEO, Christian Community Development Association

"In recent years, many leaders have been inspired with a vision for multiethnic ministry. But while their spirits may be willing, their flesh is often weak. Many simply lack the knowledge and 'cultural intelligence' to cultivate multiethnic Christian communities, and the results are churches with a veneer of diversity without any real change. This is why Dr. Rah's book is so vital. He offers a framework for understanding culture that is rooted in Scripture, history, and the practical realities of pastoral ministry. Many Colors is a must-read for anyone sensing a call into multiethnic ministry."

Skye Jethani, author of The Divine Commodity: Discovering a Faith Beyond Consumer Christianity
EXTRAS

"Dr. Rah has the ability to stretch your faith while stretching your mind. Gratefully, this book offers no simplistic answers but in being honest about the challenges also gives us honest hope. Society questions whether real unity is possible. In Christ, the Church can show that it is; this book helps point the way with insight, dimensionality, and challenge."

Gary Walter, president of the Evangelical Covenant Church

"Using the incredible power of story, Dr. Soong-Chan Rah weaves together a tapestry that gives a clear picture of what "cultural intelligence" requires. This book takes you on a reconciliation journey that will move you from simplistic formulas to substantive solutions that produce lasting systemic and social change."

Rev. Dr. Brenda Salter McNeil, President, Salter McNeil & Associates, LLC

Other Books

Saved by Faith and Hospitality, Too few Christians today, says Joshua Jipp, understand hospitality to strangers and the marginalized as an essential part of the church's identity. In this book Jipp argues that God's relationship to his people is fundamentally an act of hospitality to strangers, and that divine and human hospitality together are thus at the very heart of Christian faith. Jipp first provides a thorough interpretation of the major biblical texts related to the practice of hospitality to strangers, considering especially how these texts portray Christ as the divine host who extends God's welcome to all people. Jipp then invites readers to consider how God's hospitality sets the pattern for human hospitality, offering suggestions on how the practice of welcoming strangers can guide the church in its engagement with current social challenges—immigration, incarceration, racism, and more.

9. ... of Race in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 135-51. 9. Emerson and Smith, *Divided by Faith*, 145-46. 10. Christina Cleveland, *Disunity in Christ: Uncovering the Hidden Forces That Keep Us Apart* (Downers Grove, ..."