

*Crossing Cultures with Jesus:  
Sharing Good News with  
Sensitivity and Grace*  
Available December 2015  
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978-0-8308-4438-8

## Ministry Expert Provides Resources for Crosscultural Evangelism

Katie J. Rawson, an expert in international student ministry, takes the guesswork out of sharing the gospel with other cultures in her book *Crossing Cultures with Jesus*. Rawson engagingly explicates differences among cultures and teaches specific ways to incorporate newfound crosscultural knowledge into presentations of the gospel.

With stories from Rawson's personal experience and numerous cultural and evangelistic resources, *Crossing Cultures with Jesus* guides readers to meaningfully share the gospel. This book includes

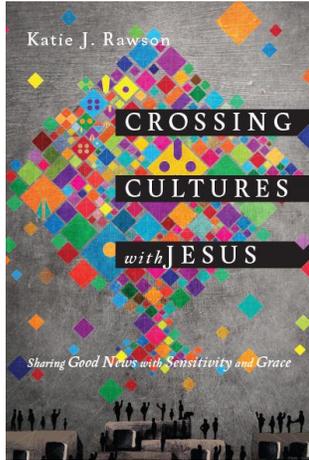
- diagrams, sidebars and step-by-step approaches for sharing the gospel with people from different cultures
- real-life stories of using cultural knowledge to get to know others and to share the gospel in appropriate ways
- chapters on topics including understanding worldview and values, approaching differences, and being a welcoming community
- separate, detailed appendices of resources and suggestions for ministry among Chinese, Muslims and Hindus

Rawson also emphasizes that how we act and what we say must align with what we actually do. For this reason, Rawson follows each chapter with resources for personal growth:

- biblical texts for personal meditation
- group discussion questions and application exercises
- additional resources, including websites, videos and books

Rawson (DMiss, Fuller Theological Seminary; PhD, University of North Carolina) has ministered among international students with InterVarsity for over three decades, serving at North Carolina State University and UCLA and leading an ISM staff team in the Carolinas and Virginia. She is senior resource developer with International Student Ministry (ISM) at InterVarsity Christian Fellowship in Raleigh, NC.

"Combining her extensive experience, great stories, disciplines of spiritual formation and thought-provoking reflection exercises, Katie Rawson has given us a go-to guide for training in crosscultural understanding, friendships and outreach," says Paul Borthwick, senior consultant at Development Associates International and author of *Great Commission, Great Compassion*.



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## “The crosscultural part of crosscultural evangelism must not be ignored.”

I strolled slowly around the tables at the fall international fair at North Carolina State University. It was my first semester as an international student specialist with InterVarsity, and I hoped to meet international students interested in learning about God. Soon a young Asian man responded to my friendly greeting, and we found seats in a quiet corner of the exhibit hall. Tao, from Thailand, seemed excited about talking with me. He wanted to practice his English, but I was bent on sharing the gospel. Tao paid close attention to every word I spoke, and his face demonstrated great eagerness when I shared an invitation to invite Jesus into his life. Overjoyed, I coached him to repeat after me as I prayed a prayer of commitment.

But the next time we met I noticed no change in his life, no desire to know God, only an interest in continuing the relationship with me. Tao had not become a Christian when we prayed earlier. I had mistaken eagerness to understand my words and a desire not to embarrass either one of us for spiritual readiness. When I later learned about cultures like his, I realized that I had put my new acquaintance in a situation of not wanting to say no, forcing him to say a prayer that had no meaning for him. These blunders occurred because I had assumed that Tao was like me and the international students I had interacted with previously. . . .

As we reach out crossculturally, how do we avoid mistakes like the one I made with Tao? We certainly need knowledge about crosscultural differences, but knowledge is not enough. We also need a companion, guide and model. We find all these in Jesus, the greatest culture-crosser. He desires to accompany, empower and transform us through the Spirit as we live in union with him. In John 20:21-22 Jesus tells us how he plans to reach the world: “‘Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.’ And with that he breathed on them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’”

We are sent into the world by Jesus just as he was sent by the Father. With the Spirit of the Father and Jesus inside us, we display Jesus to the world, just as he embodied and displayed the Father. As Jesus entered our world and drew us into his world – the community of Father, Son and Spirit – we are to enter the worlds of those around us and draw them into the community of Jesus. God is already carrying out his mission in the world through the Spirit, and we are to go out as participants in his mission, led by the Spirit, just as Jesus was. And our motive is the same motive Jesus had: to display the glory of the Father to all the peoples of the world so that every people group might join in never-ending worship of the Trinity. . . .

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**Why I Wrote the Book**

During the years that separated my encounter with Tao and my meeting with the Chinese middle school student, I ministered in both North Carolina and California. While studying missions at the Fuller School of Intercultural Studies in California, I researched conversion patterns among East Asian students in the United States. Some of the testimonies of the twenty-eight converts I interviewed disturbed me. Their conversions seemed shallow; these students had not changed at the worldview level. Additional years of observation led to the conclusion that helping people understand how the gospel affects them culturally is critical for conversions to be deep and transformative. The crosscultural part of crosscultural evangelism must not be ignored.

Additionally, during the years between these two encounters I learned to live and do ministry with and in Jesus, not just for Jesus. Jesus, through the Spirit, is still crossing cultures. By listening to and depending on him, I can join in the work he is already doing, and receive guidance from the Spirit in understanding cultures. This approach, abiding in and depending on Jesus to produce fruit in us, takes the stress out of crosscultural evangelism (see John 15:1-8). The fruit of the Spirit enables us to be good news, and sharing our faith becomes a normal part of living in union with Christ.

*– Taken from chapter one, “The Challenge and Opportunity of Crosscultural Evangelism”*