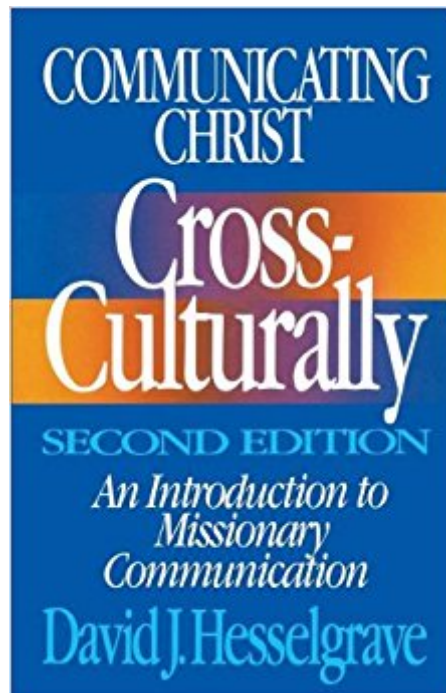




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Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally, Second Edition



Synopsis

This revised edition of Dr. David Hesselgrave's great work *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally* updates the original edition and interacts with the most recent literature on this increasingly important topic. The original edition went through fifteen printings and, very deservedly, has come to be one of the most widely used textbooks on Christian cross-cultural communications. The revisions in this new edition are extensive and carry on the high level of discussion maintained throughout the original edition, taking into account, for example, the current discussion on the relationship between form and function and the enormous body of literature that has sprung up recently on contextualization. To enhance the volume's usefulness for students, Dr. Hesselgrave has added an extensive bibliography of twenty-five pages on various aspects of cross-cultural communications. This revision of *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally* is superb. It raises a great book into a unique category, undoubtedly the finest book on this topic available today.

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Customer Reviews

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David J. Hesselgrave served as a missionary in Japan for twelve years. He is now professor of mission and director of the School of World Mission and Evangelism at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

This book is a great text book for the student of missions. I would not recommend for the casual reader, but for the person who is interested in the hows and whys of missionary methodology. A helpful book, no doubt, but not for everyone.

This is a wonderful book I recommend to every Christian.

NECESSARY FOR COURSE WORK.

Great tool for communicating Christ cross-culturally!

Excellent book!

Great read.

I recently completed a reading critique of David J. Hesselgrave's *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*. Here are a few of my observations: 1. The author's main purpose in writing this book is to reconnect the message of Christ with the reality of the culture (Hesselgrave, 26). He recognizes that Christ followers have been entrusted with the mission of reaching out to the world, that they can reach out, that they must reach out, and that they will reach out. However, the issue rarely raised is how they will reach out and what the responses of the recipients will be (24). Any strategy ought to rely heavily upon an allegiance to Christ, include the truths of the Bible, and embody one's very call to cross-cultural communication. 2. The author's instruction on the understanding of culture was helpful. He defines culture as methods of perception, emotion, and

judgment. Mores are determined at birth and developed through childhood, held in common with others, incorporated into much of society, and morph over time (Hesselgrave, 100). Cultural categories include innovation, interaction, and ideas (101). One of the missionary's greatest challenges is discovering the "deeper levels of values, beliefs, and worldviews" (102). Another item of instruction that was appreciated was the teaching on Chinese perspectives which were influenced by Lao-Tzu's stress upon the Tao and nature while Confucius' teachings focus upon humanity and community (Hesselgrave, 259). They view the supernatural as "a variety of deities, devils, and spirits," nature as the result "of the Tao acting through the principles of Yin and Yang," and humanity "by nature good and kept that way by being in touch with the Tao and education" (263).3. The most helpful part of the book was the instruction on assisting people on their search "for the pure spiritual milk, that by it [they] may grow up into salvation" (1 Peter 2:2, ESV). Every communicator has the responsibility to "speak that which must be heard, understood, and heeded" (Hesselgrave, 602). Each culture is looking for identity, leadership, purpose, and forgiveness (610). The ways in which given societies consistently and completely deal with each issue will vary greatly (604).4. The quotation that seemed particularly important was the description of going into "the uttermost parts of the world [as taking] on cultural as well as geographical significance. Yet numerous missionaries have entered cultures without any attention whatsoever to the social structures, evidently assuming that the culture would be a carbon copy of their own or that differences would prove to be unimportant" (Hesselgrave, 454). Two main aspects of communication include one's cultural worldviews and societal expectations. For example, the West has often mistaken their role with creation being that of domination rather than of dominion. Likewise, personal liberties have been overstressed at a great cost to corporate wellbeing (456).

I just started reading this, I just finished Part one. I'm reading this as an independent study over contextualization and missionary methodology. I like its discussion of communication theory so far. I think it's pretty well founded so far, although there are some things that I need a little bit more discussion on. For instance, Hesselgrave quotes two authors, Burke and Berlo who consider all communication to be persuasive. I understand his argument, and I can probably agree with this assessment, but I think I need just a little bit more convincing. Perhaps some examples would do well in this case. As I'm still reading this, I will withhold an absolute judgment of this book, but I do believe that I will thoroughly enjoy this book and find it very useful in my studies. I will try to update this as I continue in my book.

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