

David J. Hesselgrave

Communicating Christ Cross—Culturally

(An Introduction to Missionary Communication)

Allahabad : St. Paul Publications, 1981, 511pp. Rs.40

This encyclopedic work of Dr. Hesselgrave with a foreword by Kenneth S. Kantzer, Editor of *Christianity Today*, is a handbook and guide for all who communicate about Christ to alien cultures. The book has a comprehensive introduction to missionary communication and in this he makes use of not only his practical experience of 12 years as a missionary in Japan, but also the contribution of other related disciplines.

This work is divided into 45 chapters under nine parts, of which the first two parts comprise eleven chapters serving as a long introduction to the whole work. These two parts deal with mission and culture. Though communication is basic to man, effective communication is a problem for all. So the author introduces the readers to a scientific framework in which they may find many useful technical terms and figures which they can use profitably in their method of communication. Thanks to the advancement of science, the physical barriers of communication is nil, but cultural barriers still exist. A missionary needs a biblical view not only of Christ but also of culture. The Christian message is made meaningful to a people in and through their culture and that is called inculturation. A second system of hermeneutics must take into account the cultural context in which the message was originally communicated. Proper exegesis is the beginning of missionary responsibility [p. 76]. A meaningful communication entails 3 things: knowledge of God, knowledge of oneself and knowledge of others' culture.

Part III deals with world views, which are characteristic of each culture. Every world-view is a culturally determined one. It is a must on the part of the missionary to know the world-view of the respondent culture. No culture or groupings should be excluded from the right of hearing the word of God. Why missionaries are not successful in communicating Christ in cultures where Hinduism and Buddhism dominate? The author feels that, it is due to the failure of the missionary to understand their world-views.