A Theological Critique of the Multi-Ethnic Church Movement: 2000-2013

Abstract
This dissertation attempts to answer the following question: Does Scripture call all churches to be as ethnically diverse as their communities? Chapter 1 introduces the "multi-ethnic mandate," the belief the Scripture instructs all churches to be ethnically diverse. Chapter 2 isolates seven arguments in favor of the multi-ethnic mandate: the Babel/Pentecost argument, the hospitality/love argument, the argument based on Christ's ministry, the unity argument, the Jew/Gentile argument, the heaven argument, and the argument based on NT examples. Chapter 3 argues that these seven reasons do not provide compelling proof for the multi-ethnic mandate. Chapter 4 highlights four biblical values that mono-ethnic churches support: God cares about preserving culture, Christians retain their ethnic identities, contextualization can make ministry more effective, and God uses the natural connectedness of people to expand his kingdom. Chapter 5 summarizes the thesis, warns of some potential dangers of affirming the multi-ethnic mandate, and points to possible areas of further research. The over-arching point of the dissertation is to demonstrate that churches need to reach out to all ethnicities to the best of their abilities, but if the natural byproduct of such ministry is a mono-ethnic church, then such a church is not unbiblical or unhealthy.
Overview of the Multisite Church Phenomenon. One in three multisites added a campus through a merger with an existing congregation or acquisition of a site from a recently closed congregation. Multisites have a 90 percent success rate. Fifteen percent of the responding churches are other than white. Most of those describe themselves as multi-ethnic, defined as a context in which no single group comprises 80 percent or more of the church’s population. Nearly a quarter of the churches are now offering worship services in languages other than the one spoken at the first campus. In-Person or Video Preaching. Nearly half of multisites report that “almost all” preaching (often called teaching in multisites) is in-person. Fourth, the biblical and theological foundations needed to critique and assess specific tenets of word of faith theology are explored. Fifth, the major implications of word of faith theology for pastoral ministry within the Church of God are suggested. Here, practical recommendations are offered as correctives for the various cited implications. Chapter 3: contextual analysis: an evaluation of the faith tradition of the church of god. 3.1 Introduction 3.2 A historical and contemporary assessment of the Church of God 3.2.1 The historical origins of the Church of God 3.2.2 The contemporary perspective of the Church of God 3.2.3 The Church of God in the broader Christian community 3.2.4 Relevance to this research 3.3 An evaluation of specific tenets.