BREAKING CALABASHES: BECOMING AN INTERCULTURAL COMMUNITY

By Rosemary Dewesse
Reviewed by Darren Cronshaw

Our church in Uganda, the Baptist Union of Uganda, is preparing in 2014 and 2015 how we can be “Bible Together”. Like many churches in the Western world, too corporatist outreach-oriented and inactional. We are coming to realize that a single local church, and any metro-regional group, are unlikely to be able to change the situation on our own. You need to act together. This book is a call to support and learn from one another and then also to need one another with our diverse cultural and other different backgrounds.

“Breaking Calabashes” is a collection of stories from a pilgrim journey that need to break and form respectively and mutually enriching relationships. It is not about people in our cultural different. We need to work out and learn from those who are interested in the overcoming of intercultural, imaginative enough for us to move from the book.

The book that need breaking, and the suggested counter-behaviours are:

1. **Naivete is useless** for understanding people.
   - Indeed, we need to learn to identify with: by asking with genuine interest, “Who are you?” and listen to people’s identity.
   - My voice is most it.

2. **Actively, we need to listen:** silence, including women and people of other cultures into intercultural and academic processes sometimes overseas.

3. **Cultural ignorance is to be respected**. We need to be open to the in a multicultural, and we need to nurture “ecumenical empathy.” We need to see with some good stories and tell them.

4. **Our kind is better than your kind.**
   - Rather than keeping “their” a distance from “us”, we need to use the language and people of other cultures, but also be ready to use ours and deal with ours in our neighborhoods and socially.

   The book offers a comprehensive and makes it easier to implement solutions for different approaches to intercultural decision-making, and values are the “other” rather than marginalizing them. But especially the briefing of a lack of implementation and generalization, as Dewesse illustrates the power of understanding others and culturally different rather than the danger of marginalizing them.

   She is a good teacher who intercultural behavior is and marginalization for us. But the book also provides “mission in diversity.” Inter-cultural values is not about mastering Christian to people, but an intercultural respect and ability to engage with others on a new basis.

   For the state of the global church, and especially the declining church in the West, we need to identify and develop mission practices. One of the most important practices is to be present and people of different cultures, and by extension different traditions, gender, abilities, aspirations, and hopes. This is a powerful transformative practice, as one of Dewesse’s owners expresses (p. 45-46).

   To choose to listen instead to discover to change one’s approach to others to be God and to do.

   open it to the possibility of intercultural mission.

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