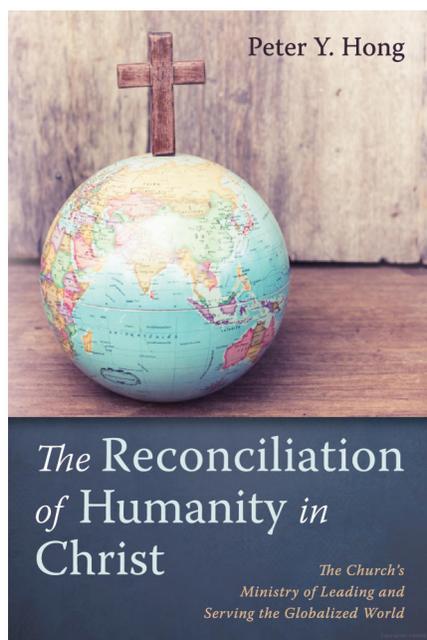


# REVIEW: The Reconciliation of Humanity in Christ: The Church's Ministry of Leading and Serving the Globalized World by Peter Y. Hong

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REVIEWED BY  
SEAN CHRISTENSEN

Hong, Peter Y. *The Reconciliation of Humanity in Christ: The Church's Ministry of Leading and Serving the Globalized World*. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2024. 302 pp, ISBN: 979-8385217779. \$37.00 paperback.



In *The Reconciliation of Humanity in Christ: The Church's Ministry of Leading and Serving the Globalized World*, Peter Hong offers a strong vision and exhortation for the twenty-first century church to faithfully engage the deep problems produced by globalization and to participate in developing the social structures of a globalized world. His propositions are informed by a solid evangelical theology and an ecumenically-leaning missiology. Hong portrays a realistic view of a pluralistic society both enjoying the benefits of globalization and suffering from its failures, as well as the inadequate solutions secularism presents.

Chapter 1 describes globalization as an integration of all the domains of human life across the globe. Hong gives examples from economics, politics, and technology in a way that helps readers frame their own experiences within a global context. He introduces the ethical questions that pluralism raises, as well as an optimistic response—that the unique qualities of Christianity can provide the influential leadership to redeem globalization for God's purposes. Chapter 2 traces the history of societal advancements that have contributed to our current globalized milieu. From his own East Asian lens, Hong provides historical perspectives from the major societies east of the Mediterranean Basin. Such contributions are often lacking in Western histories and cultural analyses. Chapter 3 explains the West's hegemony over the homogenizing forces of globalization today. Hong provides an eye-opening assessment of the failures of Western secularism to resolve the problems produced by globalization, such as the marginalization of religion and widening income disparity. He views the forces of

fragmentation resulting from these problems—fundamentalism, nationalism, and racism—as working against God’s redemptive purposes in globalization.

With the problems and opportunities of globalization established, Chapters 4-6 present the solution: the church must not ignore the world’s problems, nor withdraw, nor seek to dominate the forces of globalization. Rather, the church, as salt and light in this world, must manifest true religion with a commitment to human flourishing while evangelizing the nations with the gospel of Christ. Hong encourages empathy that drives Christians to understand, care, and act. He equally encourages religious dialogue with a humble spirit, without abandoning our convictions rooted in divine revelation.

Hong’s eschatology informs his missiology, in that he sees globalization as the revealed plan of God to bring all things under Christ’s dominion. As such, the church must express Christ’s kingdom through holistic ministry, and influence individuals and societal structures in a Christ-like way to prepare humanity for Christ’s return. Hong views the church’s active involvement toward human flourishing as a living witness that may open hearts to Christ’s reign.

Hong cites theologians, sociologists, and journalists from every continent and with competing viewpoints. He charitably explains differing positions on the roles of religion in general, and the church in particular, in solving humanity’s problems. He calls the church to committed engagement in every sphere of human society, with the love and truth of God manifest in our actions, and the gospel explained through our witness.

Despite the subtitle, *The Church’s Ministry of Leading and Serving the Globalized World*, Hong gives very little space to the role of local churches in this holistic witness to the kingdom of God. While his principles are compelling, he gives little guidance on how churches or mission organizations can apply them in concrete, practical ways.

Hong’s writing style is engaging and easy to follow. Missions professors, denominational leaders, and mission leaders will find his assessment of globalization and the church’s missional role in our globalized environment to be worth the read. His extensive bibliography is useful for those wishing to explore this topic further.

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