

# The implications of ecclesiology's understanding of church and ἐκκλησία for the current missiology

Jan M de Beer<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

This introductory study was initiated by the observation that authors about the church differ in their understanding of and approach to church and ἐκκλησία. An analysis of some authors reveals at least three main trends of ecclesiological approach that have an important influence on church missiology. The study concludes with the definition of important areas of study in both ecclesiology and missiology that can lead to a productive interaction between the modern day church and contemporary forms of ἐκκλησία as described in the New Testament.

**Keywords:** Ekklesia, Ecclesiology, Missiology, Missional Church

## 1. Introduction

This research explores the implications of the usage and understanding of the biblical concept of ἐκκλησία for the emerging missional ecclesiology in the current missiology. Niemandt (2012:1-2), for example, highlighted the contours of a missional ecclesiology that developed since the late 1990's as a result of the work of Guder (1998) and the *Gospel in our Culture Network* (GOCN). The trends and emerging contours of missional ecclesiology that Niemandt identifies illustrates a movement from a "church-centric" missiology to becoming theocentric – referred to by the term *missio Dei*. This emphasis on *missio Dei*, calls for a re-evaluation of traditional "church-centric" ecclesiology.

Contributing to a re-evaluation of traditional ecclesiology, the research problem of our study can be defined as an inquiry into the usage and understanding of "C/church" and "ἐκκλησία" in ecclesiological publications in order to identify some implications for the current framework of an emerging missional ecclesiology. The hypothesis of this study is that the usage and understanding of the biblical concept of ἐκκλησία and the modern phenomenon of the "C/church" have important implications for the direction in which a missional ecclesiology is developed.

## 2. An important question: Church and ἐκκλησία

Is "the church" identical to the ἐκκλησία as described in the New Testament? How do these two concepts relate to each other? Does "church" and ἐκκλησία oppose each other or are they exactly the same?

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Jan M de Beer, is an Assistant Professor at the Woosong Language Institute at the Woosong University, Daejeon, South Korea. He can be contacted at jandebeer777@gmail.com

These questions arise from the debate around the emerging missional church and themes in ecumenical circles of the past decade since the theological focus is on “the mission of God, God as the agent of mission and the church’s participation in the *missio Dei*” (Niemandt 2012:2). The emerging church movement as described by Sweet (2009) and the so-called “free churches” are frequently not regarded as “churches,” yet, these communities often display “many features surprisingly similar to the original form of the Christian church” (Karkkainen:60). Because of this underlying contrast between the “C/church” and “faith communities,” this study makes the distinction between what is generally known and accepted to be “the C/church,” and faith communities that show remarkable resemblance to the *ἐκκλησία* as described in the New Testament, but that are not generally regarded as churches.

The way in which Van Gelder defines the missional church illustrates that the emerging ecclesiology does not view the established church as missional. In language similar to descriptions of the *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament, (Van Gelder, 2005:33) concludes that “Congregations are created by the Spirit and exist to engage the world missionally, bringing God’s redemptive work in Christ to bear on every dimension of life. In being true to their missional identity, they can never function primarily as an end in themselves—a tendency of the self-understanding of the established church.”

These recent developments in missional ecclesiology show that missiology and ecclesiology are continually interacting. The way a church meditates and speaks about itself ultimately determines what message it sends to the outside world. Church mission can be nothing more and will be nothing less than an extension of a church’s self-image. Church mission is exactly what the two words say: the mission or task a church undertakes to people, structures and institutions outside of itself, but many often forget that *that* mission is largely determined by the church’s self-understanding, which, in turn, is the result of the way it views and understands God.

The classical missiological approach was church duplication. A church would try to duplicate itself in another community. More recently the ideas of *missio Dei* (Bosch, 1991:378), emerging churches (Sweet, McLaren, & Haselmayer, 2003) and missional churches (Guder & Barrett, 1998) found its way into the discussions of church expansion, or, at times, church non-expansion. But even in these new trends, church mission seems to be continually determined by church ecclesiology.

When “missional” churches attempt to be in the service of the *missio Dei*, the missional program is developed according to the (perceived) *missio Dei* purpose, which is easily tainted by the church agenda. However, only when the church is viewed as a community that spontaneously emerges in a new context under the guidance of the Spirit, the missiology can be in service of the *missio Dei*.

Consequently, since one cannot escape the interaction between ecclesiology and missiology, the starting point of this study is an analysis of publications about the

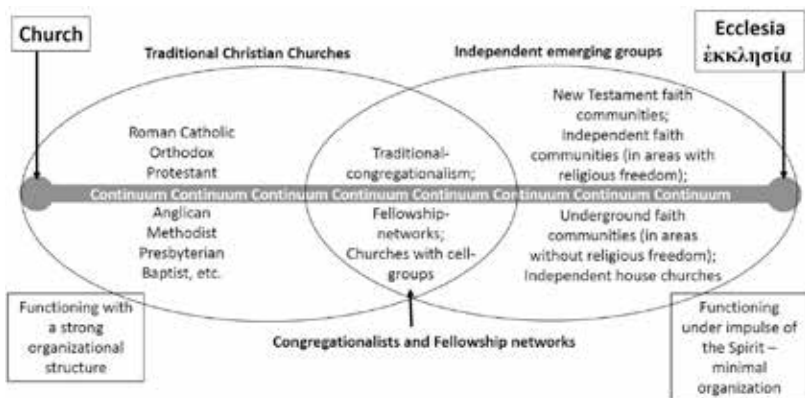


Figure 1: Church and Ecclesia

church. By gaining an understanding for the way church ecclesiology functions in connection with the concept of ἐκκλησία (*ecclesia*) as described in the New Testament, one can obtain an appreciation for the importance of the understanding, translation, and usage of the words ἐκκλησία and “church.” In other words, through an analysis of the way “church” and ἐκκλησία is perceived by ecclesiology (of any given church), we can engage in a meaningful discussion about the mission of the church today.

### 3. Defining Church And ἐκκλησία

An attempt to define “church” and “ἐκκλησία” will provide clarity in the way these concepts are understood and treated in this study. Our preferred approach is to view “the church” phenomenologically, as an entity that existed over centuries, and that still exists today. In the same way, “ἐκκλησία” is treated as an entity that is referred to in Scripture, but also existed over time, and can be viewed as a contemporary phenomenon. Confusingly, most, if not all, churches tend to identify themselves with the New Testament ἐκκλησία, while many faith communities that can be classified as “ἐκκλησία,” might refer to themselves as “the church.”

Kärkkäinen (2002:7-14) defines ecclesiologies in terms of different forms of churches. He uses terms like “the church,” “entities,” “organisms,” “Christian Church,” “Christendom,” “Christianity outside the West,” “non-traditional forms of the church,” “free churches,” “older churches,” “younger churches,” “traditional ‘Christian West.’” This illustrates how difficult it is to incorporate all faith communities under one umbrella term “C/church.” In order to make sense of the confusing tendency in the way faith communities view themselves, “Church” and “ἐκκλησία” are treated as two opposite ends of a continuum (see Figure 1).

#### 4. Publications about the church

There is such a multitude of publications about the “church” that it is impossible to cover even a small percentage in this study. The earliest publication after the New Testament came to a close, to be viewed as “Church History,” is probably Eusebius’ *EKKLHSIASTIKH ISTORI* (Maier, 1999). It remains a question whether “Church History” is a good translation of his title (see Maier, 1999:17) since he is speaking about the prehistory of the church rather than the history of the church itself. In fact, the word “church” is only found in *translations* of Eusebius’ work, he never made use of this term. His Greek work simply made use of the word *ἐκκλησία*.

The “church” only gained official status as a religion since Eusebius’ era with Constantine, through his mother’s encouragement, declaring the Vatican the state religion of his victorious Roman Empire that fought under a cross as a divine sign. The Caesar is hailed as a hero for the Christians by Eusebius since his declaration of Christianity as the primary religion of his empire brought an end to the early Christian persecution. Whether this would have an altogether positive impact on the *ἐκκλησία* as described in the bible remained to be seen.

The writings of the Reformation about the church of its time are enough proof that the Vatican Church religion failed the true *ἐκκλησία*. Luther and Calvin (see Institutes, Book IV, Chapter 2), for example, went to great lengths to show the difference between the true and the false “church” or *ecclesia* (Latin). In fact, the Reformers portray these two as opposites and the last (false *ecclesia*) as the enemy of the first. Of course, Luther did not make use of the word “church,” or even “Kirche,” in his Latin writings, since the Greek *ἐκκλησία* was not translated in Latin, but simply rendered as *ecclesia*. The word “church” is used for the first time in an official translation by 1611 with the publishing of the King James Authorized Version of the Bible.

A visit to the website of the worldwide book distributor, Amazon, reveals 301,144 books with the word “church” in its title. Although this number includes novels and songbooks, it still gives one an indication of the vast field of publications available today related to “church.” How many books about the “church” have been published from Eusebius to Amazon? This number is certainly impossible to establish, but a good guess will be more than half a million.

#### 5. Identifying trends in church publications

Without attempting to make a study of each book available on the church, we can, however, observe some commonalities in a literature study of books on this topic. The first observation is that it is widely accepted today that the Greek word *ἐκκλησία* is mostly translated into English as “church.” In some instances the word “congregation” is used, but “congregation” today means, in essence, the

same as “church.” Looking at publications about “the church” or “churches”, three common trends are observed:

- 5.1 The ἐκκλησία in the New Testament is discussed and called the “Church” without any real connection to modern day churches;
- 5.2 Attributes of ἐκκλησία in the New Testament are used to evaluate and criticize the modern church;
- 5.3 The modern church is discussed without a real connection to the ἐκκλησία in the New Testament.

Let us look at some examples of these trends:

### 5.1 Discussing ἐκκλησία in the New Testament without a real connection to the modern church

Books with this kind of approach are abundantly found in publications during the end of the 1800’s and the early 1900’s. Whether this is the result of a very idealistic view of the church, or simply an academic approach that is removed from everyday life, we cannot say. One example of this trend is found in Van Oosterzee’s *The Theology of the New Testament* (Van Oosterzee, 1871). He describes the church in Pauline thought as follows:

Where God has mediately wrought this faith, there is received, as the fruit of believing, the Holy Ghost (Eph. 1, 13 ; Gal. 3, 5), who dwells not only in the whole Church (1 Cor. 3, 16), but also in each of its members individually (1 Cor. 6, 19), and unites them most intimately with God in Christ. This Spirit is at the same time Himself a Spirit of faith (2 Cor. 4, 13): every special measure or every special gift of this faith which manifests itself in the Church is His work (1 Cor. 12, 9; Gal. 5, 22); and on that account His abiding communion (2 Cor. 13, 14) is for all Christians the blessing most to be desired. (Van Oosterzee 1871:194)

Can one say of all modern churches or congregations that “the Holy Ghost” (Holy Spirit) “dwells...in the whole Church...[and] in each of its members individually...and unites them most intimately with God in Christ”? Do all contemporary churches not wrestle with the problem of member participation and involvement in spiritual growth? Can any congregation truly state that all its members are filled with the Holy Spirit? In other words, Van Oosterzee is not speaking about “church” as we know church organizations today, he is speaking about an entity that the New Testament refers to by the Greek word ἐκκλησία, as is clear from the Scriptures he quotes. His intention is not to speak about any modern church organization. This is confirmed by his capitalization of the word “Church.”

Another example is the well known late South African theologian, Johan Heyns. Heyns approaches his ecclesiology in exactly the same way in *Dogmatiek* (Heyns, 1981). Because of this, he came to the conclusion that the church is a “sign of the Kingdom of God,” a notion that is often accepted and used by other South African writers (e.g. Nel, 1994). The idea of the church as a “sign of the Kingdom of God” is foreign to the Bible, and can only be considered if one defines the church according to the references to ἐκκλησία in the New Testament. Is this conclusion at all possible if one identifies ἐκκλησία phenomenological with the modern churches today?

Another example is the work of the well known Chinese preachers, Watchman Nee and Witness Lee. The following excerpt illustrates their approach well:

The church is just Christ. Oh, there are many people who think that the church is the coming together of the „people“ who believe in the Lord and who are saved. No, this is not true! Then who constitutes the church? The church is only that portion which has been taken out of Christ. In other words, it is the man which God has made by using Christ as the material. It is not a man made of clay. The material of the church is Christ. Without Christ, the church has no position, no life, no living, and no existence. The church comes out of Christ. (<<http://www.ministrysamples.org...> >)

Nee is not speaking of a church denomination or church organization. He defines the church purely using New Testament references to ἐκκλησία. In fact, he stresses this definition so much that his ecclesiology rejects any kind of denominational plurality and disunity between congregations at the same location. Nee's disciple, Witness Lee, continued with the same ecclesiology.

These examples illustrate an approach that describes and identifies the “church” with ἐκκλησία in the New Testament but does not make a real connection with the modern church, except, implicitly or explicitly in the form of criticism. In other words, Nee and Lee use the word “church” to describe ἐκκλησία, but they are not speaking of the modern church at all. They have some other entity in mind, defined by their New Testament study of ἐκκλησία, and their contemporary experience of faith communities in Communist China.

## 5.2 Evaluating, directing and criticizing the modern church with attributes of ἐκκλησία.

This approach does not make a distinction between ἐκκλησία in the New Testament and the church today. The modern church is simply seen as a present-day form of ἐκκλησία. The only way ignore the vast difference between the New Testa-

ment faith community and the current church phenomenon, is with a historical approach. In such an approach the difference between churches in different eras is viewed as different historical forms of the same essence.

Probably the best-known book with this kind of approach is Rick Warren's *Purpose Driven Church* (Warren, 1995). In his book, Warren explains attributes of the ἐκκλησία in the New Testament and develops programs and other ways to apply it to the modern church. One can ask whether the success of this book should be credited to the way in which Warren simply ignores the bridge between the ἐκκλησία in the New Testament and the modern church as an institution, and brilliantly invents ways in which church programs can give the impression that the two concepts are identical. He does not try to replicate the New Testament ἐκκλησία for today. He also does not try to reform the modern church to comply with the image of ἐκκλησία in the New Testament. He simply takes attributes of the New Testament ἐκκλησία and applies it to the modern church reality by proposing a new approach to typical church actions, with the added advantage that "principles" from the New Testament ἐκκλησία are applied to the church. For example, how can fellowship be practiced today? Warren's answer is to create small house groups where people get to know each other and pray for each other, all as part of the small group program of the church.

Does this mean that small groups are wrong? We are analyzing the ecclesiology behind his practical approach. In reality, Warren is not working with the New Testament ἐκκλησία. His main focus is the modern day church and how it can be made more successful. His choice of making use of New Testament ἐκκλησία concepts to develop working programs for the church proved to be quite popular and gave the impression that he is honestly showing the church a way out of its modern crisis. With this analysis, we by no means make a value judgment for or against Warren. We merely observe that his focus is not the New Testament ἐκκλησία, but the modern day church, and, as this study will show, these two entities are not to be equated.

Another example of this trend in books about the church can be found in the book of Joseph Hellerman *When the church was a family* (Hellerman, 2009). Hellerman succeeds to link many modern day church practices to the New Testament, but also diplomatically criticizes the modern church on the grounds of the New Testament ἐκκλησία in order for the church to make the necessary adjustments to their programs.

The well-known theologian Hans Kung follows the same trend in his approach to *The Church* (Küng, 1968). He uses ἐκκλησία and church as synonyms. He has a historical approach and understanding of the church and therefore speaks of "the fact that the 'essence' of the Church is expressed in changing historical forms". This is how he explains his approach:

Rather than talking about an ideal Church situated in the abstract celestial spheres of theological theory, we shall consider the *real* Church as it exists in our world, and in human history. The New Testament itself does not begin by laying down a doctrine of the Church which has then to be worked out in practice; it starts with the Church as *reality*, and reflection upon it comes later. The real Church is first and foremost a happening, a fact, a historical event. *The real essence of the real Church is expressed in historical form.* (Kung 1968:5)

A report on Küng's recent book "Can the Church still be saved?" (from the German: *Ist die Kirche noch zu retten?*) illustrates that today, almost fifty years after the publication of "The Church," he is not so optimistic about the Church's current historical reality. The real Church he encounters today, obviously is on the wrong track, for why else would he ask such a question?

The report states:

At the end of the book, Kung returns to the question: "Can the church still be saved?" He said he has not lost his vision of a church that would meet the expectations of millions of Christians, but certain conditions have to be met. In their reforms, this Church should show Christian radicalism, constancy, and coherency, he said. "I have not given up the hope that it will survive," Kung ended, to applause. (<<https://www.christiancentury.org...>>)

In other words, even though Kung uses church and *ἐκκλησία* as synonyms, he still has to make clear that there is a certain uncomfortable relation between what is described in the Bible and the broken reality of church we experience today.

Many more examples of this trend can be given, but these three are sufficient to illustrate the method of writers who use attributes of the *ἐκκλησία* to direct and evaluate the church as a modern-day expression of *ἐκκλησία* in the Bible.

### 5.3 Discussing the modern church without a real connection to the *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament

Books that focus mostly on the modern church without a real connection with the *ἐκκλησία* of the New Testament are the smallest group of the three described here. These books are not without any references to the Bible. However, they describe the state of the modern church today and mostly show that there is something wrong, something missing. A good example of this kind of publication is *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive* by Thomas S Rainer (Rainer, 2014). This book describes how the church has become a "preference-driven church," how the pastoral tenure has decreased, how prayer has diminished, how it has no clear purpose and how the church became obsessed with facilities. Even though



this is not a true picture of all modern day churches, many churches today will find similarities with the realities Rainer discusses.

Another good example of this approach is found in the work of Frank Viola and George Barna, especially in their publication *Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices* (Barna & Viola, 2002). Viola writes:

I believe the first-century church was the church in its present form before it was tainted or corrupted. That's not to say the early church didn't have problems—Paul's epistles make clear that it did. However, the conflicts Paul addresses are inevitable when a fallen people seek to be part of a close-knit community. The church in the first century was an organic entity. It was a living, breathing organism that expressed itself far differently from the institutional church today. And that expression revealed Jesus Christ on this planet through His every-member functioning body. In this book, we intend to show how that organism was devoid of so many things that we embrace today. (Barna & Viola 2002:xxii-xxiii)

There is much similarity between Barna and Viola's approach and that of Nee and Lee. The main difference is that first mentioned ventured to foster a church outside of the institutional church in the form of an organic body of believers, while last-mentioned experienced a body of believers without an institutionalized church in the context of a communist state. This means that Barna and Viola discussed the modern church to show that it is disconnected to *ἐκκλησία*, while Nee and Lee talked about *ἐκκλησία* and expected the church to become more like it.

The importance of this trend is that it illustrates how the modern day church cannot possibly be equated with the *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament. There is a vast ravine separating the *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament and the churches described in this kind of publications. Any realistic observation can come to no other conclusion but that the modern day church is very different from the entity described as *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament. The inevitable result for believers with this approach is to leave the institutionalized church.

## 6. The three trends as a point of departure for further study

The three trends in defining and speaking about the church as outlined above indicate an important area of research that is perhaps more necessary today than in any other era of church history. The burning ecclesiological topic today is neither *church and state*, nor *true or false church*. These belong to and dominated previous centuries.

Since the turn of the millennium issues like *the emerging church* and *post-modern church life* indicated that the ecclesiological question, and with it the mis-

siological, has shifted into a different dimension. While churches still continue to operate as before, people become aware of some believers functioning in house churches and others functioning without any church at all. Others find respected, decent, good people without any explicit Christian affiliation, but often they live lives that display the life of Christ better than the average church member. People who leave their congregation in our postmodern societies are more than often not the unbelievers and scoffers. We often see the devoted church members become disillusioned. In his formal ministry of seventeen years as a reverend, the author often found people filled with the Holy Spirit, seeking intensely for a deeper relationship with God, disconnected with any kind of denomination, congregation or church.

If one approaches ecclesiology from the first mentioned trend above, where the church is equated with *ἐκκλησία* in Scripture, this phenomenon would be impossible, since the Spirit-filled believers *are* the church (according to that trend). Part of the mission of the church will then be to invite ex-members of the church back to its pews.

With the second trend above, these believers should not have left the church, they should instead have toiled to change the church to what it is supposed to be. The mission of the church will then include a self-directed program, with the purpose of changing the irregularities and non-biblical customs into something else. The problem of such an approach is that not everybody in the church is in agreement about the changes that need to be implemented, with the result that reformers and change agents are often regarded as a threat to the unity of the church and eventually rejected.

The third trend gives ample reason for any believer to leave the church immediately and distance him- or herself from any congregation, never to return. No ecclesiology or missiology can alter this situation and the result is a continued multiplication of church denominations, leading to increasing church disunity.

## 7. The need for future studies

Considering the three trends as outlined above, one should ask, "Are these three options (trends) the only ones available?" Is it possible that one can acknowledge the existence of two different entities, the modern church and the *ἐκκλησία* of the New Testament, not separated by history, but existing side-by-side in our current era? In other words, can one acknowledge that the modern church is not simply different from the Biblical *ἐκκλησία* because they are essentially the same entity in a different historical form (in keeping with the socio-historical approach), but the present-day church differs from contemporary forms of *ἐκκλησία*?

If this idea is accepted, new possibilities open up for future research. It raises questions like:

- Can church and *ἐκκλησία* exist and function as partners? In other words, is it necessary for the church to view the *ἐκκλησία* as a rival, or can the church be of service to the *ἐκκλησία*, and *vice versa*?
- Does this idea pose a threat to the church, or can it be in a way liberating?
- How will such a distinction influence the church's self-perception, its organization, its programs, and, ultimately, its mission?
- Is the translation of *ἐκκλησία* (in the Bible and elsewhere) with the English word "church" desirable or confusing in this matter?
- What kind of ecclesiology can allow a balance between the institutionalized church and the *ἐκκλησία* as an informal body of believers? How should the church react to such an ecclesiology, and how does it influence the other theological disciplines?
- More important to our investigation, what missional approaches will apply to a context where church and *ἐκκλησία* are not viewed as identical? Should church mission include or exclude the establishment and nourishment of *ἐκκλησία* communities outside the confines of the church? If the church can be aware of its differences with the *ἐκκλησία*, can the church develop missionary strategies that allow members to participate in *ἐκκλησία* activities that are not part of a church program?

These questions define some important ecclesiological and missiological research areas that, in our opinion, urgently need attention. In subsequent studies, the Author aims to address some of the questions posed in this introductory analysis, but also extends an invitation to the theological community to participate in such an important project.

## 8. Conclusion

In conclusion, three trends are observed in the way authors approach the difference between the modern-day church and *ἐκκλησία* as described in the New Testament.

- The *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament is discussed and called the "Church" without any real connection to modern day churches. This poses a problem because two different entities are called by the same name, "church," with the result that people are being confused about what they are actually talking about.
- Attributes of *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament are used to evaluate and criticize the modern church. This places the writers in the position where they have to evaluate, direct, and criticize the modern church with attributes of *ἐκκλησία*. The upside of this ecclesiology is that it incorporates much of the Biblical *ἐκκλησία* in its theological reflection. The downside of this ecclesiology is that an attempt to identify current congregations with the *ἐκκλησία* makes the distinction between *ἐκκλησία* and the modern church difficult to recognize.

- The modern church is discussed without a real connection to the *ἐκκλησία* in the New Testament. This trend gives ample reason for any believer to leave the church immediately and distance him- or herself from any congregation, never to return. No ecclesiology or missiology can alter this situation and the result is either a multiplication of faith communities or a breakdown or disintegration of the institutionalized church.

These trends illustrate that:

- When authors write and reflect on the biblical concept of *ἐκκλησία*, while making use of the word “church” (instead of explicitly distinguishing between the biblical *ἐκκλησία* and the modern phenomenon called “C/church”), results in confusion rather than clarification (as in trend 1).
- An insistence that the modern church is essentially the *ἐκκλησία* (as described in the Bible) in a different historical form does not only ignore the present realities but also limits new possibilities in research (as in trend 2).
- The same can be said for an insistence on criticizing the church for not displaying enough characteristics of the New Testament *ἐκκλησία* (trend 3).

By acknowledging that many modern-day “C/churches” are essentially different from the New Testament *ἐκκλησία* in form, function, and purpose, new possibilities are introduced for both the traditional church and the so-called “informal faith communities,” “free churches,” and “non-church” movements – the emerging missional *ἐκκλησία*. Within this framework, *missio Dei* is extended beyond the confinements of the commonly acknowledged C/church, and the emerging missional *ἐκκλησία* can be appreciated in a new and constructive way.

## References

- Adventist Responses to Cross-Cultural Mission: Global Mission Issues Committee Papers 1998-2005. (2005) (p. 165).
- Barna, G., & Viola, F. (2002). *Pagan Christianity?: Exploring the Roots of Our Church Practices* (Revised an). USA: Tyndale Momentum.
- Bosch, D. J. (1991). *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*. New York: Orbis.
- Douglas, R. C. (n.d.). Missional Communities and Community Formation: What does the New Testament have to say? In *Ongoing Strategy Debate in Muslim Missions*.
- Guder, D. L., & Barrett, L. (1998). *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.
- Hellerman, J. (2009). *When the Church was a Family: Recapturing Jesus' Vision for Authentic Christian Community*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Academic.
- Heyns, J. A. (1981). *Dogmatiek*. Pretoria: NG Kerkboekhandel.
- Küng, H. (1968). *The Church*. New York: Burns and Oates.

- Maier, P. L. (1999). *Eusebius: The Church History*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications.
- Nel, M. (1994). *Gemeentebou*. Pretoria: Orion.
- Niemandt, C. J. P. (2012). Trends in missional ecclesiology. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 68(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v68i1.1198>
- Rainer, T. (2014). *Autopsy of a Deceased Church: 12 Ways to Keep Yours Alive*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Books.
- Sweet, L. I., McLaren, B. D., & Haselmayer, J. (2003). *“A” is for Abductive: The Language of the Emerging Church*. HarperCollins Christian Publishing.
- Van Gelder, C. (2005). Rethinking denominations and denominationalism in light of a missional ecclesiology. *Word & World*, 25(1), 23–33.
- Van Oosterzee, J. (1871). *The Theology of the New Testament*. New Haven: Judd & White.
- Warren, R. (1995). *The Purpose Driven Church*. Zondervan.