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## Nowell's "Dirty Faith: Bringing the Love of Christ to the Least of These" (Book Review)

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Because the book does not give a recommended age level, this reviewer entered a sample of the text into a readability consensus calculator to determine the average grade level, reading age, and difficulty. The Text Readability Consensus Calculator used is available at: <http://www.readabilityformulas.com/freetests/six-readability-formulas.php>. The resulting score is a compilation of eight different readability formulas. The independent reading level was calculated to be at the sixth grade level; however, it is advertised by Amazon to be appropriate for five- to seven-year-olds. This younger age group will be interested in the stories, but will need assistance with biblical names and places, and also with some vocabulary words they will encounter, such as “descendants,” “covenant,” and “tabernacle.” The adaptations seem hampered at times by the attempt to mold them into a day by day format. Introductory material with suggestions to parents or teachers on how to use the book might have been helpful.

The *Day by Day Bible: Children’s Bible Stories for Every Day* is recommended for libraries with collections of children’s Bible stories; however, it seems better suited for personal collections since it is designed to be used as a children’s daily devotional book.

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**Dirty Faith: Bringing the Love of Christ to the Least of These,**

by David Z. Nowell. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 2014. 188 pp. \$13.99.

ISBN 9780764212130

*Reviewed by Amy C. Rice, Access Services Librarian,  
Northwest Nazarene University, Nampa, ID*

*Dirty Faith* is an impassioned challenge for American Christians to embrace Jesus’ call to minister to the “least of these,” specifically orphans. David Nowell, the president of Hope International for Children, tells stories of Hope International’s ministry to the orphans of Brazil. He challenges Christians to take care of orphans wherever they are, whether through fostering or adopting children individually, or as a larger project of an entire congregation. Lest one may conclude a community-wide effort to provide and care for the “least of these” among us is impossible, Nowell provides examples of real churches and communities doing this very thing. He also tells stories of those he has encountered in Brazil: orphans and victims of sex trafficking. He tells stories of heartbreak, hope, failure, and God’s provision. Ministering to orphans is putting into practice what Nowell calls “dirty faith”: a faith that goes beyond merely sitting in a clean church on Sundays, or only ministering to people who look and act the same as he does. Practicing dirty faith means finding those who are considered lost causes, unlovable, and even deserving of their lot in life, and loving them as Christ would; dirty faith means moving beyond pity to genuine, Christ-like love.

One of the most important things he learns from those at Hope International serves as an inspiration for the hard work of practicing dirty faith: “Mas Deus” (but God). When Nowell encounters a child who seems so broken that he is not sure she would survive, a Hope International volunteer reminds him: “Mas Deus” (But God). But God can work miracles. But God can transform – not only the orphans of the world, but those who practice “dirty faith.” Highly recommended for all readers, *Dirty Faith* is a spiritually challenging read, and Nowell is a compelling author.

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**Effective Intercultural Communication: A Christian Perspective,**

by A. Scott Moreau, Evvy Hay Campbell, and Susan Greener. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014. 405 pp. \$27.99. ISBN 9780801026638 (Paperback); ISBN 9781441245939 (E-Book)

*Reviewed by Paul B. Drake, Library Director, Pacific Islands University, Mangilao, Guam*

*Effective Intercultural Communication: A Christian Perspective* is written by mission scholars as part of the Encountering Missions series by Baker Publisher Group. The authors demonstrate how the discipline of intercultural communication relates to mission and church work across cultures. An understanding of a culture is a key factor in successful communication of the gospel amongst diverse peoples.

The book is divided into four parts. The first three are an introduction to the discipline of intercultural communication, its foundations, and the patterns of communication between cultures. The largest and fourth part discusses putting these principles into practice to develop expertise and competence in another culture. Among the topics included are adjusting to living in another culture, cultural learning, relationship development, evangelism, discipleship, church planting, teaching and learning, team ministry, and a look at issues that will affect intercultural Christian ministry in the future.

The book is well documented with notable Scripture references. A number of case studies discuss churches in intercultural settings around the world followed by reflection and discussion questions. Sidebars augment the narrative; for example Sidebar 5.2 provides “Steps in Language Learning” in the discussion of Language Learning (pp. 79-80). The reference list is extensive, but there are few internet sources cited. The organization and layout of the book works well as a textbook, but will also be valuable for professional reading and personal learning.