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Smith's "Mind the gap: Reflections from Luke's gospel on the divided city" (book review)

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Book Review



Smith, C. (2015) *Mind the gap: Reflections from Luke's gospel on the divided city*. Portland, OR: Urban Loft Publishers. 188 pp. \$14.99 ISBN 9780692491744

Colin Smith, Dean of Mission Education at the Church Mission Society in Oxford, draws upon his years of urban ministry experience in Nairobi, specifically Kibera, as well as experiences in other urban areas to provide a new and nuanced viewpoint on the gospel of Luke in the book *Mind the Gap*. Noting that the culture and community found in the slums of Nairobi is more similar to that of the New Testament, Smith opens readers' eyes to connections and insights that would not be apparent to most western readers. As such, Smith moves between stories reflective of his experiences and those of individuals he knew and insights from the biblical text. Smith does not downplay or glorify the realities of life in the slums.

Readers must be aware that *Mind the Gap* is not a commentary and is so much more than a devotional book. Smith does not attempt to provide a verse by verse exegesis of Luke or even to approach every chapter. As the title indicates, *Mind the Gap* contains reflections on Luke. Smith approaches Luke in a thematic fashion with his focus primarily on parables and spends considerable time specifically on the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16. Readers are well advised to keep their Bibles handy to reference the Bible passages while reading. A large number of parenthetical references to substantiate the insights are included demonstrating Smith's scholarly background. However, the number of references are not overwhelming and do not keep the book from being accessible to a general audience.

Mind the Gap is recommended for libraries that support curriculums with emphases in missions and urban ministry. Readers with interests in social justice topics as well as individuals preparing a sermon or study series on the book of Luke will benefit from having this book available.

Reviewer

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