

Book Review

**Mark Tabb, *Mission to Oz: Reaching Postmoderns Without Losing Your Way*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishing, 2004).
153 pages.**

Reviewed by Randy C. Walls, D.Min.

Director of Continuing Education,
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary.

Using Frank L. Baum's *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* as his metaphor, Mark Tabb, veteran pastor (First Baptist Church in Knightstown, IN) and author, challenges the reader to engage in the mission to contemporary culture while maintaining fidelity to Christian faith. Written in an easy to read format, the book explores the basics of postmodernity without overloading the reader with technical jargon or esoteric concepts. Tabb provides enough understanding to help the average person recognize the challenge of ministry in a centerless culture by centering in on the authentic truth of the gospel.

What this reviewer found most refreshing was Tabb's steadfast commitment to a radical, Cross-centered gospel that demands complete obedience to the spiritual, moral and ethical implications of following Christ. This radical edge often is watered

down in contemporary authors' attempt to be relevant. Not so with Tabb. He lays it out about as straight as any author writing on postmodernity and ministry today: "The Cross reveals the world to a land that doesn't believe reality exists" (93).

Perhaps just as refreshing is Tabb's insistence that the only way to affect culture is to engage it. He recommends using contemporary culture's images and words as it attempts to define its god in movies and music. He equates this methodology with that of Paul in Athens (Acts 17). "Ideas and questions about God and sin and the Bible and salvation permeate expressions of popular culture...[but]...[w]e must be careful that we do not use the prospects of engaging in dialogue with the culture as an excuse to indulge our flesh" (131). In this statement, Tabb's missional and pastoral concerns arise. Being in

the world means participating in the lives of people bound by its culture as we faithfully live out our lives with Christ.

The appendix provides several resources for further study and a great cultural exegesis tool suggests we should ask of our culture that will serve as the bridge to presenting the gospel. I highly recommend this book for its simple exposition of a challenging topic and its passionate call for missionaries to a postmodern world.