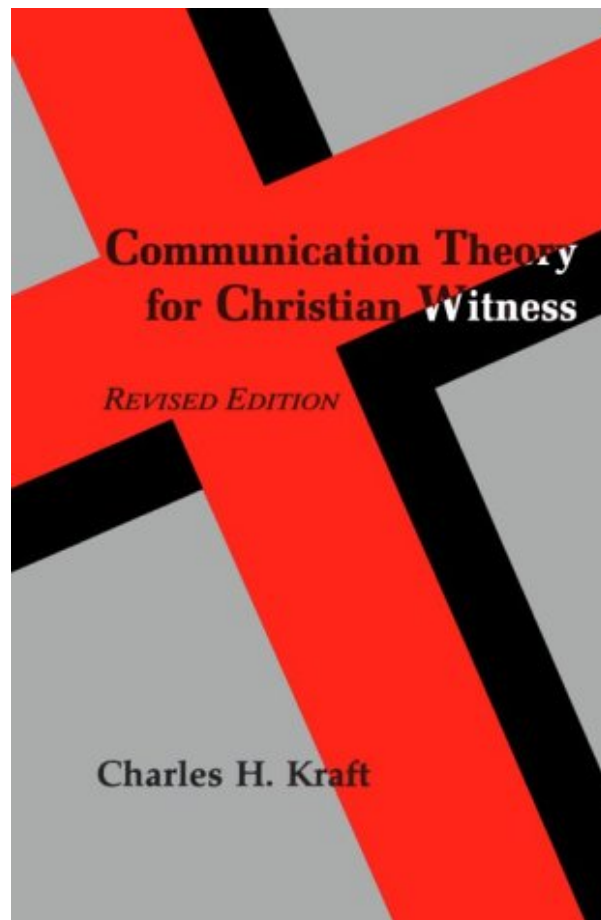
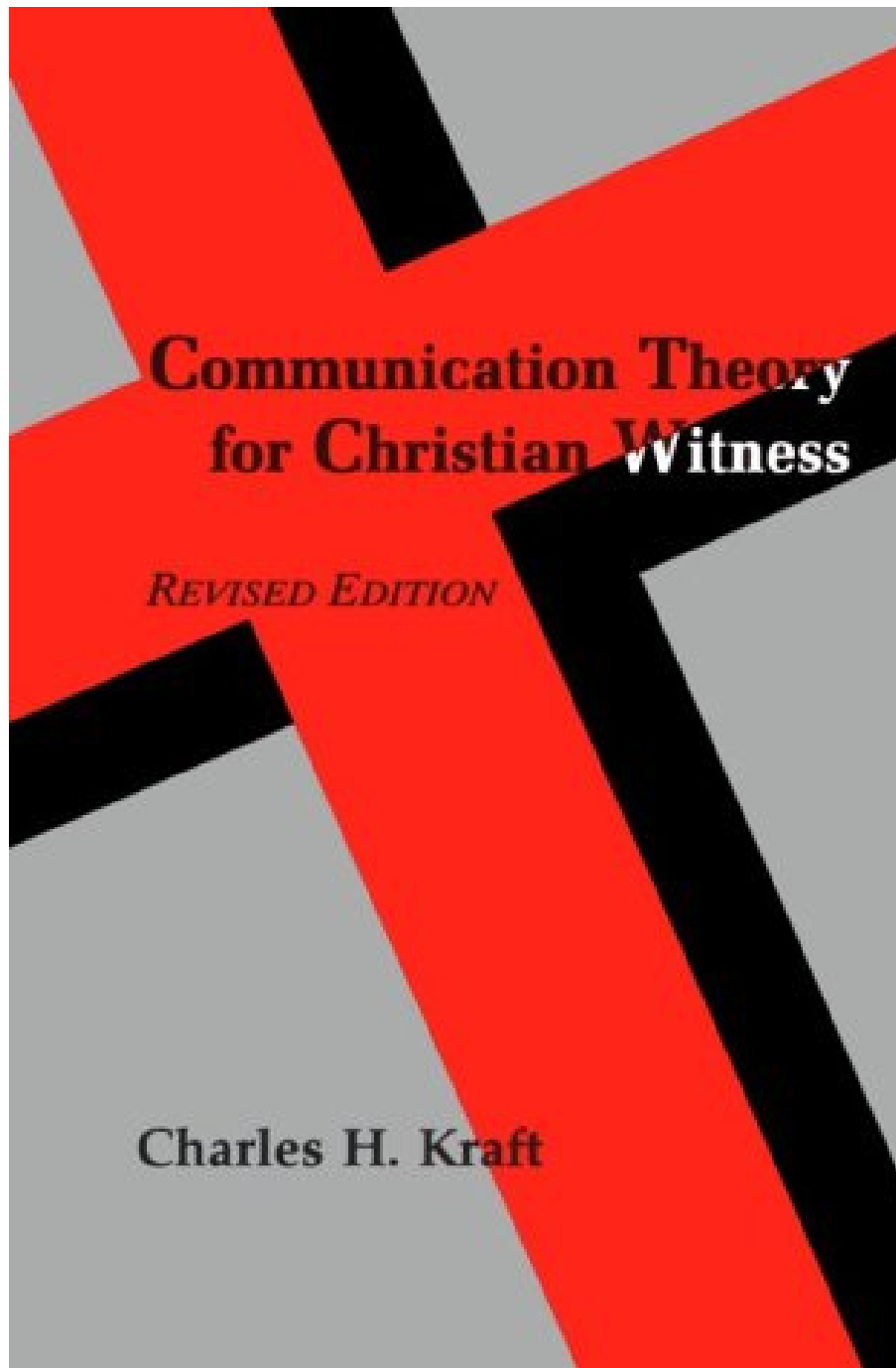


**COMMUNICATION THEORY FOR
CHRISTIAN WITNESS BY CHARLES H.
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Review

Crucial insights for preachers, pastors, missionaries, and educators on communicating the Gospel in different cultural settings. "Valuable"--Virginia Seminary Journal

About the Author

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4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Communication (<http://justinfarley.blogspot.com/2009/05/communication.html>)

By Justin Farley

I recently completed a reading critique of Charles H. Kraft's *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*. Here are a few of my observations:

1. The author's main purpose is his belief that the Bible presents systems to be directed by and an example to emulate. Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21, ESV). By drawing from the Scriptures, one might expand his knowledge of various situations, perceive how God has utilized these principles, and grow overall in the discipline of successful communication (Kraft, viii).

2. The author's instruction about guiding an audience was helpful (Kraft, 143). One's responsibility is to carefully select his recipients. Jesus was intentional with who, where, and when he was with people. He chose a mountain to renew the Law and the Sabbath to heal the sick. He functioned within their general context. An effective communicator maximizes different mediums (Kraft, 148). He also purposefully chose the language, sayings, and methods that best connected with his audience. Christ strived to achieve, preserve, and utilize his integrity and influence (Kraft, 149).

Another item of instruction that was appreciated was the focus on one's "frame of reference" (Kraft, 16). Recipients are expected to conform to norms, terms, and environment before being accepted. This motive has less to do with holiness as with protecting one's power base. Judaizers made the mistake of expecting gentiles to follow rituals instead of focusing upon grace. They expected converts to change outward actions while they themselves had not changed inwardly. Jesus chose instead to take "the form of a servant" (Philippians 2:7, ESV). He was reliant and transparent in sharing humanity's necessities, difficulties, and meanings (Kraft, 16).

3. The most helpful part of the book was the author's instruction concerning the natural connotations of the gospel's essence (Kraft, 40). God entered into the world of humanity with the intent of transforming it. His life, death, and resurrection were incredibly relational in nature. The gospel can never be reduced to mere words and concepts but rather to always be centered on the language and lifestyle of Christ. Recipients should be challenged in their beliefs to the point where their behavior changes as well (Kraft, 42). The goal is to redirect them on their spiritual journey.

4. The quotation that seemed particularly important was, "What we seek is the kind of Christianity that is equivalent in its dynamics in today's society to the Christianity we see in the pages of the New Testament" (Kraft, 172). Christ's message should transform the unchurched and the outcast as well as those who are over-churched and ingrown. The church can respond to humanism with a Christ-centered perspective, to personal gratification with an unwavering devotion to God, to personal liberties with corporate responsibility, and to capitalism with service and generosity (Kraft, 174).

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful.

Good start, but a bit unbalanced

By Jacob S. Brothers

Communication Theory for Christian Witness, by Charles Kraft is a great book for the field of communication from a Christian perspective. It is one of the only books on the subject that begins not with modern psychology or pragmatic pinings, rather with God's Word. At the start of the book, Kraft uses much ink to detail God's communication to man as a basis of how we can most effectively communicate to others. Kraft spends many pages speaking of God becoming flesh in Jesus, to relay His message of hope and Salvation... and in the same way we must meet people as they are to share the message with them. The first

few chapters are filled with delightful challenges for us to emulate God communicationally. Then things quickly digress into questionable territory.

After such a solid start, Kraft quickly turns his Biblically based thesis into one of opinion and often contradictory statements. Toward the end, even the solid tangible application turns into mostly unrealistic theory. Statements almost bashing modern "preaching" in favor of laid back "talking" as well as a push away from more literal Bible translations in favor of paraphrases make me question the validity of Kraft's scholasticism. Contradictions such as Kraft's angst against those who use flowery, expressive language and large vocabulary to communicate- (as he rants in very flowery language with many 5 dollar words) made the last few chapters hard to follow. In all, I found the book to be a bit unbalanced. While the first few chapters were groundbreaking in helping us emulate God's communication, the rest of the book was frustrating and hard to follow. Considering it is one of the only books of its kind, I would still recommend this book. If you read it... do yourself a favor and skim the back half.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Following the communication model of Jesus

By C. Starr

The "Communication Theory for Christian Witness" attempts to present the principles that can be garnished from how Jesus Himself communicated. Charles H. Kraft has written a pioneering book on communication theory; looking at the methodology Jesus employed. Kraft approaches the book with the premise that not only can we learn from the message Jesus proclaimed, but as the master teacher we can also benefit from how He communicated and delivered His message. Being the only book (I know of) on the market dissecting communication from this perspective it make the book worthwhile to read.

The book begins solely on the premise of Christ's methodology but slowly degrades. As the book progresses it subtly shifts to a secular dynamic; leaving its original purpose. This leaving of the stated purpose was the main weakness I found in the book; but again is still a worthwhile read.

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