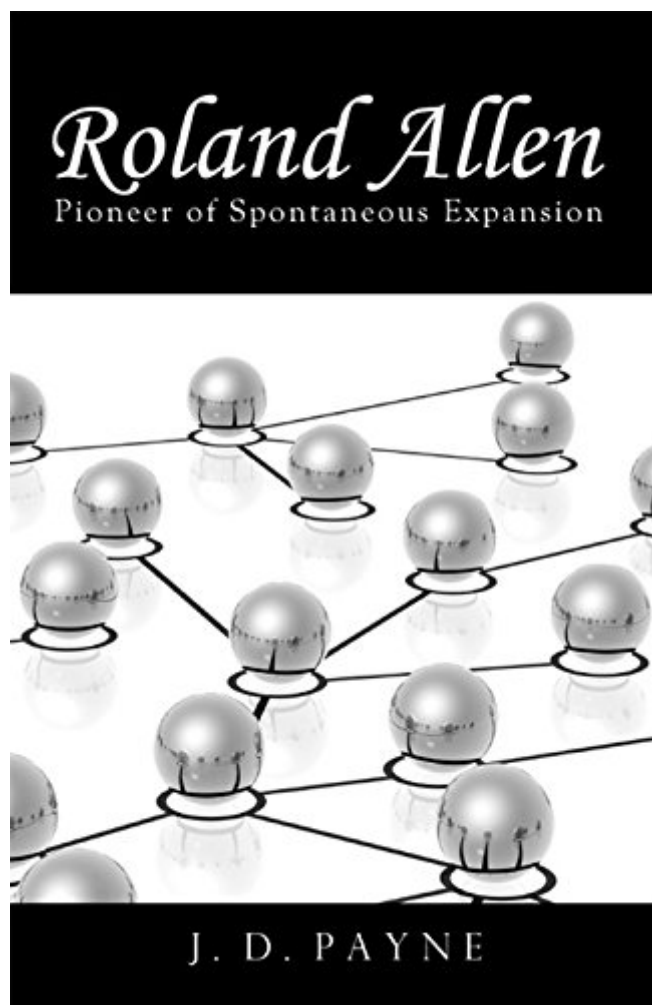


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Roland Allen: Pioneer Of Spontaneous Expansion



Synopsis

Roland Allen: Pioneer of Spontaneous Expansion examines the life of Allen and his convictions regarding the missionary work of the Church. Drawing extensively from Allen's publications, Payne weaves together a concise explanation of Allen's thinking that provided the foundation for what he came to describe as the "spontaneous expansion of the Church." This well-documented work addresses Allen's views on the way of Jesus and the Apostles, indigenous churches, the Holy Spirit, the role and faith of the missionary, devolution, leadership development, voluntary clergy, and non-professional missionaries. This book will be of interest to church leaders, missionaries, and other mission-minded thinkers who wish to explore the radical missiology of one of the most influential Christian writers of the twentieth century.

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Customer Reviews

Here is a much needed study of the missiology of the missionary writer Roland Allen (1868-1947) whose writings have had a great influence on present day church planting movements around the world. Payne starts by telling the story of Allen in the first chapter. He then deals with what he has previously called the "four main components of Allen's missiological foundation" in chapters two to

five. These four elements have to do with Christ's preparation of the apostles, the way the apostles ministered, their view of the church, and the work of the Holy Spirit. Chapters six and eight deal with the role of missionaries in seeing spontaneous expansion and how they are to manifest missionary faith. Chapter seven deals with a false "devolution" that went against the apostolic approach. Chapter nine challenges the false philosophy of training leaders in such a way that this training takes "the place of the Holy Spirit..." (83). My own experience has shown me that institutional training does not give spiritual gifts, the Holy Spirit does. So that only gifted leaders truly profit from such training and in some cases such training can hinder rather than help. Chapters ten and eleven deal with bi-vocational ministry and what is often called today "tent-making" and show how Allen was ahead of his time. Payne's "Conclusion" at the end of the book speaks to the concern of many who want to control what happens in movements that expand spontaneously. He also develops a three-fold equation for seeing true spontaneous expansion. This reviewer finds that Payne's book fills a needed analysis of Allen's view of the spontaneous expansion of the church. It also helps as we seek to think seminarily about what can be done to encourage church planting movements and to avoid hindering their development. May this book be a means of thinking more clearly and missiologically how God works by his Spirit.

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