

Connections

The Journal of the WEA Missions Commission

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Connections

February 2004

The Journal of the WEA Missions Commission

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from the editor

Editorial - 1 ...

Mission, Missions, Going ‘Glocal’, Holism and Other Terms Dealing with missions jargon

by K. Rajendran

*Around the
world, there has
been much
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“Mission, Missions” – What or which is it?

Around the world, there has been much debate, awakening and vision for Christian “mission”¹. In the midst of all these enlightenment, there is a need to continuously re-refer to the meaning of “mission” and the way to go about. Christian “mission” in the context of Christianity is serving in obedience to fulfill the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The interpretation or definition of “mission” by diverse theologians, missiologists, and the practitioners do not tally. At times, the interpretation of “mission as the Great Commission of the Lord Jesus Christ” is done without understanding the contemporary context or the grounded realities, thus making it difficult for the actual practitioners of mission who carry out the task of communicating Christ to establish the “kingdom of God at hand”.

In the protestant era of mission, there has been much emphasis on “conversion”, especially as a reaction to the negative history of crusades and colonization. These negative histories of mission, combined with rejection of (even neutral and good) native cultures by both missionaries and mission organisations have warped the mission of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Even among the misunderstood colonial-minded people, there were divided opinions related to the process of conversion of the locals from heathenism, and the transformation of nation. All these were connected to

their understanding of mission and the extent to which they practiced the teaching of Christ. Many of the colonial occupiers understood more about mission compounds than the mission of Christ itself, making the compound almost equivalent to the fortresses of occupation.

Many such issues carried over from the past have even led to think of the mission of Christ as mere development of people, civilizing people, or just cross-cultural activities. Even the concept “holistic” is a reaction to some who communicated Christ only to the minds of people rather than applying the full teaching of Christ to the daily living of the peoples in different communities. The mission of Christ often was restricted to preaching, conversion and discipling people within the walls of the colonial-looking cathedrals than Christ’s teaching as practiced in the market places and the political decision making areas of the nations.

Furthermore, the narrow Protestant theology of holiness and contextualization, with its rightful apprehension of Christian syncretism, has kept Christian activities in a small mental box with narrow boundaries. This has crippled Christians, not allowing them to be involved in the total society and transformation of the nations. Even when some nations have become more or less “Christian”, so much of what they had was the importation of practices, church structures of the Christian church and its missionaries from overseas, including their and Western political systems. This did not allow opportunities for the indigenization of theology and the fuller applications of the teachings of Christ that would release the best of new structures.

In this context, to this day, too many times the mission agencies continue thinking of mission with imported cultures and traditions to their receptive nations, communities and societies. These receptive nations and communities are still discovering the meaning of the full transformation that comes from Christ. There is much to work on by the present Christian church in reflection and recovery of the effects of Christ’s teaching in each ethnic community by both churches and the mission organisations.

In this contemporary context, evangelicals have to reaffirm our commitment to and understanding of the true mission of Christ.

Going “Glocal” – What in the world does it mean?

The mission of Christ was not cross-cultural vs. local culture. His mission was not restricted to Jews or gentiles. His mission was not poor vs. rich, literate vs. illiterate, men vs. women; tribal vs. non-tribals, masters vs. slaves. His mission was not biased in anyway, shape or form. It was not biased by language, culture, people groups, economical standards, status quo and gender. This is reflected in the final command of Christ in Acts 1: 8² and also in Paul’s affirmation in Rom 1: 16.³

Thus our Lord’s mission was as much local as global. Thus it has to become “Glocal”. If local church is not motivated for local impact, if it is not missional in the true sense of the word, then it will have very little to offer to the rest of the world. The commitment to local impact provides the key in understanding the importance of missions further beyond, even as it helps us to understand and

rural, to the down trodden, to the weak, to the uncivilized and other odd species! This mindset has neglected a huge percentage of influential people in the communities and has sidetracked church, mission agencies and missionaries in the task of Gospel to all people which aim for transformation of lives, ethos, thought patterns, communities and the nations. This mindset also made church “laity” to feel that their only role in the mission of Christ is to contribute finances to mission agencies.

“Mission” is so much of the time cross-cultural even within the same geographic area-whether ethnic, generations, worldviews. In a sense “mission” is both a mental and geographical cross-cultural experience. Bill Taylor has further clarified some of these dimensions in his own editorial words following my reflections.

What he writes about the missional and “glocal” vision is very true in most of the countries, especially in the cities where communities are cosmopolitan and multiethnic. In the cases of North America and Europe, churches by and large have dealt with western audiences, but this has changed radically in recent years with the “nations” coming to them. In these predominantly western church congregations, consciousness must be brought about the multi ethnicity around them. Actions out of this consciousness will definitely prepare the local church to expand their vision and will help them to grow deeper in their own understanding of others and a growing openness to

reach out to other cultures and peoples. This may challenge them to accommodate the new peoples in their churches, even if as separate congregations due to different language, or leadership and worship style. These efforts also will have indirect results in the countries of these people where they originated.

Quoting Bill Taylor again: “Thus for us in the Missions Commission, mission and missions begin in the heart of the Triune God, and this is revealed from beginning to end of our Scripture. The Great Commissions must not be used simply as sloganizing motivators, and they must be restored in their fullness, richness and complexity.”

Tying it up!

Therefore, in the globalized world, with multiethnic peoples living under the doorsteps of Christ followers, the church and its mission structures must awake to re-orientate themselves and practice mission as cross-cultural and local, hence glocal. Sending bodies, the mission agencies, must rethink their focus. These actions will revolutionize the church and its mission, missions and missionaries. This will help church members to build new mindsets that mobilize all members into the glocal mission. The missions agencies also must reorder themselves relevantly to the present realities of the world in their doorsteps and to the people who are at a “stone-throw” distance, whether physically or electronically speaking. May the Lord give us his mind.



K. Rajendran is the General Secretary of the India Missions Association and the chair of WEA Missions Commission Global leadership Team. He can be contacted at rajendran@imaindia.org or connections@globalmission.org

from the editor

Editorial - 2 . . .

by William D. Taylor

We welcome our global readers to this fifth issue of Connections. From the creative cover, through the lead articles and reports of task forces and networks, you will find substance of a growing team of reflective practitioners who have gathered around this writer's roundtable for a frank discussion.

The prime focus of this issue affirms the missional heart of God in all that the MC does. What might this mean? “Mission is understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It [is] thus put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not, of ecclesiology or soteriology. The classical doctrine of the mission Dei as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit [is] expanded to include yet another “movement”: Father, Son and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world.” (David Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 1991, p. 390).

As Rose Dowsett writes: “Mission is not primarily a human task to be completed, a command to be obeyed. First and foremost, it is embedded in the very being and character of God himself. We who were made in his image, and then are being re-made in his image in our new-creation lives, engage in mission as an expression of our image-ness – reflecting the nature of our Creator, Saviour, and Life-Giver”.

Additionally, for us the concept of “missional” means that our faith by

definition is not only a sending faith, but it must also reflect a local as well as a global focus. Hence the coinage of “glocal”. A church cannot just have a missions program; it must be missional where it is and then radiate its influence in a Good News spiral of community, integrity, grace, salt and impact. Today by definition churches and mission agencies must be creatively cross-cultural—grappling with different generations, ethnicities and worldviews. The nations/ethnicities are fluid—coming and going, whether voluntarily (immigration) or involuntary (refugees—legal and illegal).

For us in the MC, mission and missions begin in the heart of the Triune God, and this is revealed from beginning to end of our Scripture. The Great Commissions must not be used simply as sloganizing motivators, and they must be restored in their fullness, richness and complexity.

As I survey this issue, note the six lead articles, meaty, diverse, rich. You will engage with reflections from our colleagues from the South and the North, women and men. Some of the writers are

known, but we have some new voices and for this we are thankful.

As usual, Rose Dowsett (Scotland), David Tai-Woong Lee (Korea) and Kang San Tan (Malaysia) will challenge you. Fasten your seat belt with Rob Hay's (UK) more personal and direct narrative, but don't turn him off. Regardless of our culture and country, there are at least three distinct generations in each one. Try to contextualize some of Hay's thoughts to your own geographic and mission situation.

Listen to the heart of David Stoner, representing God's community, the church, and an unusual church, not only for its youth and size (five years old, 10,000 in Sunday attendance). David's article is one of the clearest and most cogent presentations of what he calls "...a seamless missional community".

Alex Araujo (Brazil/USA) expands our understanding of strategic missional collaboration, i.e. partnership, with news of the creative network he is a part of. And Stan Nussbaum continues his creative presentation of missional proverbs. Note: if you have a proverb

from your own culture, send it to Stan for use in a future issue.

The section reporting on the MC task forces and networks is here to continue to inform you of some of the unique things God is doing around the world. Read them with care and connect with these missional teams.

We present four resources to you: two book reviews, information from Todd Johnson on a formidable and accessible data base, and the introduction of the new MC database-driven web site, <www.wearesources.org>, thanks to Jonathan Lewis.

We are grateful to Jarin Tadych, our younger colleague and gifted graphics artist, who has created our last three covers. Note her story and her serious approach to this marvelously textured cover. If you want to visit another of her creations, check out <www.hopearts.org>

Finally, we conclude *Connections* with Bryant Myers' provocative first chapter of his new book, *Exploring World Mission: Context and Challenges*, used by permission from World Vision.

A really final word. Write editors; disagree, agree, add or query. But write!



William Taylor is the Executive Director of the Missions Commissions, World Evangelical Alliance. Born in Latin America, he and his wife, Yvonne, served there for 17 years before a move to the USA. He is the father of three adult GenXers born in Guatemala. Send letters to the Editor at connections@globalmission.org, or to 1-300/118, Arul Colony, ECIL Post, Hyderabad -500 062, Andhra Pradesh, India.

From Jarin Tadych, our Graphics Artist

About Me

My great-grandmother, a Polish-American, USA-Depression-era woman opened the world to me at a young age. She talked funny, dressed funny, and cooked funny foods, like *kieszka* (blood sausage) and *czarnina* (blood soup). I loved it.

When I reached college, my memories of her-Polish lessons at the kitchen table, stories of communists and farm chickens-still exerted a powerful influence. They landed me in the Slavic studies department at the University of Texas (UT, Austin) then eastward to St. Petersburg, Russia, for a semester of study.

College mission trips further expanded my heart for culture. It started with spring break trips to Mexico and continued with a summer stint in Amsterdam. My most challenging “trip,” however, was a year-long outreach to the students of UT as a college ministry intern.

Post-ministry, I worked briefly in Australia, then joined an Israeli start-up founded in Austin, where I still am today.

I have recently been discovering my earthly loves: the Christian imagination and the arts. In 2003 I was privileged to serve the arts ministry at my local church, in a role which included designing our website and collateral, assisting with visual art exhibits, and reading lots of good books.

In my spare time I am growing my graphic

design business and learning to love the global, eclectic City of Austin together with the communion of saints.

About this Cover

“Digital collage” best describes my style of design. I like to build meaning through layers of line, text, color, and image. This month, two nineteenth-century maps of Protestant missions form the background of the cover. The red map is of India; the yellow is of the Middle East. I chose red for its association with the heart, blood, wine: archetypal symbols of Christian reality. Yellow hints at light and regeneration.

The passports play an ironic role in the design. God needs no passport. The Holy Spirit knows no ethnic or national boundaries. Man, however, moves within human and political limitations. Thus something as petty and bureaucratic (or personal and necessary) as a passport becomes a vital tool of his work. Like treasures in jars of clay, the mundane and the glorious co-exist in the missional task. Humble means to enable eternal outcomes.

People, God’s image bearers, are at the heart of the piece. Through diverse ages, ethnicities, and gender, their faces represent the superabundance of God in creation, as well as his mission to recreate his image in all the people of the earth.



WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE



Missions Commission Books

	Spanish	Portugues	Korean	French	Chinese	Arabic	Other	English
<p>Crisis and Hope in Latin America: An Evangelical Perspective Emilio A. Núñez and William D. Taylor. William Carey Library, 1996.</p>	○	○	⊗	○	○	○	○	⊗
<p>Doing Member Care Well: Perspectives and Practices from Around the World Kelly O'Donnell. William Carey Library, 2002.</p>	○	○	⊗	○	○	○	○	⊗
<p>Establishing Missionary Training: A Manual for Programme Developers Robert Ferris, Editor. William Carey Library, 1995.</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	⊗
<p>Internationalising Missionary Training: A Global Perspective William David Taylor, Editor. William Carey Library, 1991.</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	⊗
<p>Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions William David Taylor, Editor. William Carey Library, 1994.</p>	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	⊗
<p>Global Missiology for the 21st Century: The Iguassu Dialogue William David Taylor, Editor. William Carey Library, 2000.</p>	⊗	⊗	⊗	○	○	○	○	⊗
<p>Preparing to Serve: Training for Cross-Cultural Mission David Harley, Editor. William Carey Library, 1995.</p>	⊗	⊗	○	○	○	○	○	⊗
<p>Too Valuable to Lose: Exploring the Causes and Cures of Missionary Attrition William D. Taylor, Editor. William Carey Library, 1997.</p>	⊗	⊗	⊗	○	○	○	○	⊗

Spanish
Portugues
Korean
French
Chinese
Arabic
Other
English

Send Me! Your Journey to the Nations

Stephen Hoke and William Taylor, Editors, William Carey Library, 1999.



One World or Many: The Impact of Globalisation on World Mission

Richard Tiplady, Editor. 2003.



Training for Cross-Cultural Ministries,

Occasional bulletin of the International Missionary Training Fellowship, Jonathan Lewis, Editor. Electronic version only.



**Tuning God's New Instruments:
A Handbook for Missions From the
Two-Thirds World**

Denis Lane, WEF and OMF, 1990.



**Working Your Way to the Nations:
A Guide to Effective Tentmaking**

Revised Edition; Jonathan Lewis, Editor. 1996, Inter-Varsity Press.



**World Directory of Missionary
Training Centres**

Raymond V.J. Windsor, Editor., 1994.



**World Mission: An Analysis of the
World Christian Movement**

Jonathan Lewis Editor, William Carey Library, 1999.



Missions Commission Books

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Reaffirming the Missional Heart of God

by Rose Dowsett

*A passionate
and
compassionate
disciple-maker,
Jo was used by
God to bring
many people
into living faith
in Jesus Christ
and into
committed
Spirit-fired
discipleship.*

Yesterday a special family friend went to Glory following a massive stroke in Shillong, India. Jo was 73, a veteran missionary. Already turned 40 when he first went overseas, he served for 30 years in the Philippines, and then, at an age when most westerners would be enjoying retirement, he started all over again in India. He lived very simply, almost ascetically. He walked humbly with his God, and humbly with his brothers and sisters. He was greatly loved. A passionate and compassionate disciple-maker, Jo was used by God to bring many people into living faith in Jesus Christ and into committed Spirit-fired discipleship. He will be greatly missed.

But today, even though our family will miss him sorely, I cannot do other than be joyful for Jo. He so looked forward to seeing his Saviour face to face. And now he does. Despite a sense of loss (for separation through death, though temporary for the Lord's people, nonetheless always hurts), I am comforted that Jo is where he should be, in the presence of God, for eternity. One day, when it's my turn to die, there will be many joyous reunions, including one with Jo.

Does that sound presumptuous? It should not. For it is because our God is a missionary God, throughout history showing himself as the one who comes to seek and to save, that sin and death and separation can be swallowed up and dealt with, and eternity in his presence is secure for his people. Our God, because he is a missionary God - Father, Son and Spirit - seeks and saves for eternity as well as time.

Our God has a missional heart.

The Cross at the centre of the universe

At the very heart of our Christian faith stands the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The Incarnation, and the life and ministry of Christ are, as it were, the immediate prelude to the Cross; and the Resurrection, Ascension and Pentecost are the Father and Spirit's "Amen! It is done!" to the Son's standing in the sinner's place as sacrifice and atonement. It is the Cross which is the interpretative grid through which we must understand the whole of Scripture: everything before points forward to it, and everything afterwards points back to it. For it is the Cross which deals with the central problem for all humankind, and indeed for the whole of Creation, ever since Genesis 3; and, if I may say it reverently, it is the Cross that addresses the central problem for God himself since Genesis 3: how to deal with the sin that has so traumatically afflicted us all ever since Adam and Eve first aspired to be God's equals rather than his creatures.

But the Cross is no divine after-thought. Immediately following that first disobedience, God comes seeking Adam and Eve. "Where are you? Why are you hiding? Tell me about what you have done...", he says. There is no option but to banish them from his immediate presence and companionship, such is the enormity of what they have done. Yet, in the very act of banishing them, and explaining to them the consequences they have brought upon themselves, he provides for their immediate needs (clothes for their nakedness [consciousness of which is a direct result of their disobedience], as well as home for their homelessness) and promises to

deal with their far deeper needs: one day, the serpent will be crushed. Further, almost beyond human comprehension except that the Word declares it to be so, it is our Lord Jesus who will himself be crushed and bruised, identified with both sin and sinner (see for example Isaiah 53:10, Hebrews 2:13-15, Romans 16:20, Revelation 12:9 and 20:2), and who will become the Second Adam, the perfect image of God. Herein lies the gospel-Good-News: sin is real, its consequences deadly; but grace is yet more real, and its gift is eternal life. Father, Son and Spirit, with heart-yearning for men and women created in their image, ensure that there is a new and living way back to friendship with God, that death and decay have been dealt with decisively, and that there is the promise of eternal life within a new creation.

So far, so good. Most orthodox Christians would happily assent to the above. But what is most mind-blowingly peculiar is that many of those same Christians do not make the connection between the Cross at the heart of history, and world mission at the heart of God. That failure is an obscene contradiction, and a bankruptcy in grasping the nature of God, the truth about the Cross, the meaning of the gospel, and the calling of the Church. How badly we need to read the Scriptures with missional eyes; for only so can we read them in tune with the heart of the Trinity.

Mission flows from God's character

Mission is not primarily a human task to be completed, a command to be obeyed. First and foremost, it is embedded in the very being and character of God himself.

We who were made in his image, and then are being re-made in his image in our new-creation lives, engage in mission as an expression of our image-ness - reflecting the nature of our Creator, Saviour, and Life-Giver.

Genesis 3:8 gives us a marvellous picture of God's intention: 'walking in the garden in the cool of the evening' in satisfying companionship with Adam and Eve. He comes to them, not they to him. And, even despite the catastrophe of rebellion and the resultant banishment, over and over again we find that same pattern of divine initiative. He comes to Noah, and provides him with "a way of escape" from the devastating flood. He comes to Abram (Abraham-to-be), taking him on an extraordinary journey of faith, providing both son and sacrifice in order that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:3). All the way through the Old Testament, repeatedly he draws near through dreams and visions, through angelic messengers and direct words from heaven, through prophetic inspiration and sovereignly Master-minded events.

Over and over again, he pours out words of love and longing, and demonstrates the awesomeness of judgement and the insistent overtures of grace. What could be more poignant than the yearning love of God over an unfaithful 'bride' poured out through the book of Hosea? What could express more forcibly than the book of Jonah God's insistence that his people's calling is to reach the nations? What could be more tender than the story of his provision of a kinsman-redeemer for Ruth, the vulnerable widow from the despised Moabites, setting her instead right at the heart of the Son of God's ancestral line?

Not once, nor occasionally, but on page after page we read of the missionary God who comes seeking and wooing rebellious men and women, anguished as well as angered when they turn their backs on him, pouring out blessing when they respond to him.

Old Testament hints give way to New Testament revelation of the Trinitarian nature of God. Emmanuel, God with us and among us, the invisible made visible: this is the Son, who tells us on many occasions that the very reason for his coming is in order to seek and to save, through his death to draw men and women to the Father. It is no accident that some of the best-loved parables that Jesus told are about searching for the lost, whether it be a coin, a sheep, or a precious son; and in each case the search ends gloriously in finding. And then Pentecost. Why is the Spirit given to make his home within God's people? The very first response of the first disciples that amazing day is to praise God and bear witness to Christ in their own languages to the men and women from all over the world gathered in Jerusalem for the great festival. The Spirit's first gift is one of powerful communication of the facts about Jesus, so that thousands could be gathered into the Kingdom.

So, Father, Son and Holy Spirit - all three Persons of the Trinity demonstrate their total commitment to making possible the restoration of men and women to the fellowship with God for which they were designed. The Living God is most profoundly a missionary God.

Unless Christians grasp that mission is essentially rooted in the character of God,

their understanding and practice of mission, and their motivation for engagement in mission, will always be impoverished, distorted and defective. So there must always be an ongoing deeply theological task (in the truest sense of “theological”: devoted to the wisdom and knowledge of God) in the mobilisation of the church to mission. This must happen for each successive generation, so that as each new generation takes up the baton of discipleship and disciple-making, they have embraced and internalised the true well-spring of mission.

Praxis without biblical and theological reflection soon degenerates into “the energy of the flesh” and works-based service, a sort of baptised humanism, what we achieve rather than Whom we reflect. This

is why in the Missions Commission we give ourselves not only to passionate evangelism but also to Spirit-soaked theological reflection.

The Cross declares both love and judgement

Above all else, it is the Cross that declares the missional heart of God. This is the ultimate length to which God must go in order to deal with death, the wages of sin, and restore life and communion with himself. In the person of the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, God must himself bear the punishment of human rebellion, and the one without sin must become sin. The Lord and Creator of life must die, in order that those who are by nature dead because of sin may be born again into life without end.

What love! What seeking, saving love! But here is love that must be true to the whole nature of God, so that just judgement, divine wrath against sin, and yearning love go hand in hand. Had God been other than a missionary God, had he not loved the world beyond our comprehension, the Father would not have paid the agonising price of separation from his only beloved Son; the Son would not have paid the price of voluntarily leaving the glory of heaven for poverty, rejection, suffering and the

ultimate depths of his death; and the Spirit would not have come for the express purpose of empowering Christians to declare by word and life the truth about the Cross and Resurrection. This is no passive declaration of love. It is full of

movement, full of the initiatives of grace and of action that God alone could take. It reaches from eternity to eternity, embracing all of time and space and history, the whole of humankind and the whole creation, in its intended scope. So, the Father sends the Son, and the Father and the Son send the Spirit. And Father, Son and Spirit send God’s people out into the whole of God’s world, to bear witness to that seeking, saving God, through how we live, how we are being transformed, how we speak, how we make visible the Kingdom of God, and how we die.

How wide is the heart of God?

The Bible absolutely negates the possibility of universalism or of pluralism being acceptable in the eyes of our compassionate Lord. All religions,

This is why in the Missions Commission we give ourselves not only to passionate evangelism but also to Spirit-soaked theological reflection.

however sincerely held, do not lead to God. There is only one true and living God, the Trinitarian God of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And there is only one way of reconciliation with him: through the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

It was the greatest tragedy imaginable that the Old Testament people of God so deeply misunderstood their responsibility to the surrounding nations. Yes, there must be destruction of all foreign gods, and relentless denunciation of them and of the worship of them. But, as God made so vividly clear to Abraham, this special people were to bring blessing to all the nations of the earth. They were so to live, and so to worship, that those who were “outside” would be able to see embodied - incarnated - what the true God was like, what he demanded of his creatures, what true faith and obedience looked like. The Temple was to be not only the place of sacrifice, but also the place where Gentiles could be prayed for and welcomed and gathered in, shown and taught what true worship was all about. Grace was for Jew and Gentile alike.

Tragically, the Jews lost sight of this most fundamental truth about their role in God’s plan for the world, and diminished God to a tribal god, a god for their people alone. Even after Pentecost, and then later the extraordinary events connected with first the Samaritans coming to faith, then Peter’s encounter with Cornelius, the early Christians found it almost impossible to believe that God could really want to save Gentiles. This fusion of Jewish and

Gentile believers into one family of God proved too high a barrier for many to accept, so that within a very few decades the church was virtually entirely Gentile, and its Jewish strands faded away. That first century story has become so familiar that we easily lose sight of the way we too easily fall into the same failure to grasp the grace of God as did those Jewish believers who could not believe God’s favour could rest on Gentiles. How often do we want people to become like us before we can believe they are following Jesus? How often do we want to hoard the gospel for those like ourselves rather than share it prodigally with those on the margins of society or of cultures wildly different from our own? Do we, like those early Jews, try to domesticate God, consciously or unconsciously?

Do we, like those early Jews, try to domesticate God, consciously or unconsciously?

The church has always ebbed and flowed, but whenever it has become preoccupied with itself and lost sight of its missionary calling, it has lost its way. Sometimes it has disappeared from view, as with the North

African churches in the early years of the rapid expansion of Islam. Sometimes it has become a hollow and spiritually powerless institution, as with some of the European churches in the past two hundred years. On the other hand, whenever it has turned out towards the world with a missionary heart, seeking to bring the gospel of Christ to those outside the church’s boundaries, it has recovered its meaning for being. For in reaching out in love and longing, it has begun to beat again with the heart of God, it has begun once again to reflect the character of the God in whose name it

stands. The church that is not missional is no church at all. Our seeking and finding is a mirror reflection of God doing just the same - and ahead of us. We seek and find, because God first sought and found.

Reflecting the wholeness of God

What will authentic discipleship and disciple-making look like, if we are reflecting the missionary heart of God?

To be sure, there must be consistent, urgent, reasoned and winsome declaration of the facts: the facts about the Being of God, about sin and judgement, about the Lord Jesus and his death and resurrection, about new life in the Spirit. The Lord's own parting instruction, immediately before his ascension into heaven, was that we must, as we go, wherever we go, make disciples - committed learner-followers - baptising them and teaching them. This is not the kind of instruction that leads to passing an examination in theory, but the teaching and mentoring and shaping that leads to lived-out, three-dimensional, ongoing obedience to all that Jesus taught. The depth and breadth and scope of this are breath-taking. This is no minimalist half dozen statements to assent to, nor the work of a passing encounter. Of course, there will be times when that's all that's possible, a small link in a chain where one can only trust God to organise the other links in the chain that leads to faith. But overwhelmingly Jesus is talking about something far more demanding and profound.

And we need to grasp that the Kingdom of God is not just about words but about showing in every dimension of life that we live under God's authority and in the

reality of the transforming power of the Spirit. Often, I think, we have a very shrunken view of the implications of the Cross. We reduce it to a message of the need for individuals to 'make a decision for Christ'. While it is undoubtedly true that God calls men and women and children to himself individually and by name, and that a response of growing repentance and faith is necessary, the Cross achieved far more even than this. For not only did Christ deal with sin as it affects us individually, but he also vanquished the principalities and powers of darkness. He created a new community, the community of the family of God, with new relationships between his children as well as between each one and himself. This new community will be credible when it displays a passionate concern for justice and mercy, for truth and generosity, for watchful care for the orphan and widow and refugee, for love and service. It will be a community of men and women and children reconciled across every barrier that keeps our world fragmented into a thousand broken pieces. How else will a watching world even begin to understand what the God of whom we speak is like? We are to be visual aids of the Kingdom.

Drawing to a close

We continue to struggle, still living in the in-between time, where we experience the tension between what we can already enter into, and the not-yet of what still lies ahead. The book of Revelation, difficult though it is to understand in many respects, nonetheless brings into clear focus what centuries before Isaiah had already seen in vision: that new heaven and new earth, where the cosmic impact of sin will be rolled back, and all shall be as the Creator first intended. At

the centre of it all, the enthroned Lamb, and around him, the nations of the whole world, bringing their tribute and worship and love.

Just as in the here and now, we have to struggle against sin and Satan's defiant attempt to keep us entangled, seeking to show that different way of life that God originally intended and intends again, so also we need to demonstrate wherever we can what that different way of life looks like when the rule of God breaks in. This is why, from time to time, God will grant miracles of healing or victories of deliverance. Ethical commands are not arbitrary: they describe life that reflects the character of God himself. So we are to be truthful because he is Truth, to be faithful because he is faithful, generous because he is the supremely generous and grace-filled Giver, committed to justice because he is. And because he is Creator and created - and will re-create - a perfect world, we will seek to steward our world in such a way as to honour him, and make it easier for those who look at it to recognise his creative hand.

The God who is Trinity is nonetheless indivisible, and it is for this reason that as we reflect his image in his world, we will

not only speak a message of salvation in the narrower sense, but we will also reflect our God as Creator and sustainer, as life-bringer and reconciler, as healer and light, as source of justice and mercy. All these and more are part and parcel of what it means to stand at the frontiers between faith and unbelief, and demonstrate what it means to belong to the Most High, so that the nations may be drawn to know and love him.

We are sent out into the world in great weakness, and yet with divine authority. We are sent, as our Lord Jesus was sent, into hostility and rejection, as well as welcome and response. Like him, we must hold the life of the Cross at the heart of it all, willing to suffer, willing to die, if only that may open the doorway to life for others. He sends us, whoever we are, from every corner of the globe, to love and woo his precious world, whether the world of our own homes and families and neighbourhoods, or the world of alien cultures and distant peoples. For this whole world is his by right of creation and by right of redemption, and until our Lord Jesus comes again we are sent to do our Father's business. And that means having hearts that beat with his heartbeat.



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Rethinking Missional Structures in the Globalized Mission Context, Both Church and Mission Societies

by David Tai Woong Lee

With the globalization of the Christian church and mission, mission is no longer as simple as it used to be in the beginning of the modern missionary movement.

Introduction

With the globalization of the Christian church and mission, mission is no longer as simple as it used to be in the beginning of the modern missionary movement. Then there was virtually no church other than that of the West. Today there are churches in nearly every country of the world if we move out of an “unreached people group” framework that almost dominated a number of missiological strategy camps for the past three decades. According to this missiological thinking the world is neatly divided between “reached” and “unreached” when coming to strategizing. This way of looking at the world is no longer possible with the globalization of both the churches and its mission societies. We now have sending churches as well as receiving churches all over the world. The Two-Thirds World, once a mission field, has not only become missionary sending block as well as the West, but also both the West and the Two-Thirds World are all senders and receivers of missionaries simultaneously. Therefore relationship between the church and mission societies must be reexamined to suit the new context of the 21st century. I will first provide a historical overview, followed by a biblical and critical analysis of the current dominant theory. Third, I will attempt to examine the topic in relation to the globalization of the church and mission societies. Finally there will be some suggestion for application of the findings.

Historical Overview

As we survey missiological literatures, regrettably little has been published about the church and mission relationship, let alone about missional structures of both the church and mission societies. One of the reasons

may be because our missiologizing so far has focused on church and mission societies with the field perspective, trying to find appropriate relationships between the mission as sent (by the West) and the church as planted (in the Two-Thirds World). Even those that were written only paid a lip service when coming to the theme of missional structures of both the church and mission societies and how they apply in doing mission. We need to move on to include both the sending aspect of the church and her mission societies as the missional structures for our discussions. This would not only force us to look at the church and mission societies pragmatically and strategically, but also theologically and ontologically. The discussion will inevitably take us back to the Bible and we will be required to determine what the Bible has to say about missional structures of both the church and mission societies.

Perhaps the most popular theory in relation to missional structures of both the church and mission societies, was the “two structure theory” so eloquently presented by Ralph Winter. It seems that this view of sodality and modality has helped shape Western mission, particularly from North America, since World War II. It fitted conveniently with the western worldview and the nature of missionary outreach since the modern missionary movement began, when mission was almost synonymous with “overseas” ministry. Despite a danger of creating a caricature, I mention only a few

possible reasons that led the western missionary community to embrace this theory wholeheartedly.

First, neatly dividing the role of mission societies and church probably was easier for the western worldview than that of the non-West. It was natural and convenient for the churches to be engaged in ministering to her own people, while the mission societies were concerned with so called “overseas” ministries. In many of the Two-Thirds World contexts such a clear and neat division of the roles is not possible, for they tend to think more wholistically. Geographically, they are closer to the mission field. All of these factors will demand a greater integration of church and mission societies as missional structures. Second, the modeling after the missionary teams sent out by the Church of Antioch in Acts 13 was the closest to the form that the West conveniently adopted at the time of the Western hegemony of mission. This was

the missional structure known to some as the “Antioch model.”

Throughout the last half century a number of studies have been undertaken and missiologizing efforts were made in relation to ecclesiology and mission. In practice,

though, the Western model of mission followed the Antioch model without too much criticism until perhaps 1985 or so, when the Western churches began to raise greater concern over a dichotomist nature of the missionary work. It may sound oversimplistic, but according to this theory

Throughout the last half century a number of studies have been undertaken and missiologizing efforts were made in relation to ecclesiology and mission.

churches usually give personnel and money while the mission societies do the actual mission, in many cases independently from the church, thus conveniently dividing the roles. A number of the Two-Thirds World mission structures have also been built under the same rubrics. This is seen especially in countries that have to send their missionaries “overseas,” over against working in their own localities.

By the end of the twentieth century the so-called mission fields did not only have churches but also began to engage in their own mission expression. As a result of globalization there are now churches and mission societies actively engaged in missions globally. It is in fact happening all over the globe without a fixed direction. Consequently the missionary task is no longer neatly divided between the church and mission societies structures. This is true not only for multi-cultural context such as some parts of Central Asian nations. It is also true for a mono-lingual and mono-cultural context like Korea where the cultural gap between age groups is becoming bigger and bigger, and the context in which the church finds herself is rapidly changing socially and culturally with the glocalization effect. In this context it would be appropriate to look afresh at the relationship between the church and mission, especially from the viewpoint of structural function.

Biblical and Critical Analysis

Now we need to go back to the Bible and take a fresh look at it to find some clues for missional structures in light of the globalization of the church and mission society. Because of our space, it will be limited to analyzing only pre and post-

Acts 13 passages. If we can establish the authenticity of mission by the church before any other missional structures were founded, including sending of missionary team by the Antioch church, it will help us to see that the local church is also intended by the Holy Spirit to be a missional structure.

Pre-Acts 13 Passages

There is much evidence of passages that reveal the church as receiver of the Great Commission. Almost all of the studies that deal with the biblical basis of mission agree on the following points: (1) Mission is not simply based on Mathew 28:18-20. It is based on the whole Bible, including the Old Testament. Jesus succinctly summarizes this in Luke 24:43-48 in His resurrection teachings. (2) The church has the central place in God’s entire mission. The church has never been permanently relieved of its obligation to carry out the Great Commission, despite the fact that it might have been enthusiastic groups rather than the churches that formed the missionary teams that God used to launch modern missionary movement. Even then, while the essential nature of the church had not changed, the fact is that the church failed to act upon it. In this globalized context, it is no longer affordable for the church to be sitting idly by while mission is done in the same way as it has been done in the last two centuries.

Perhaps no other author has made so clear of the progressive nature as well as the continuity of the whole plan of world mission of God than Luke in his two books. The founding of the church in Acts 2 is no accident. It was in the heart of God from the foundation of the world. Even the coming of Jesus, the training of twelve,

cross and resurrection anticipated the birth of the church. This church was to be the recipient of the Great Commission. The coming of the Holy Spirit made the church in Jerusalem fulfill her responsibility of doing mission. David Bosch has stated this fact very succinctly when he said:

The classical doctrine of the mission Dei as God the Father sending the Son and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit (is) expanded to include yet another movement: Father, Son and Holy Spirit sending the church (emphasis mine) into the world.

Luke gives Acts 1:8 as the thematic verse for his book and consequently for the entire missional program of church of God. The Holy Spirit used the newly founded church to spread the kingdom of God “in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and the ends of the earth.” If not in principle, then in practice, Western missiology has grossly overlooked the mission of God in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria by the Jerusalem church. Instead it has jumped to the post-Acts 13 for its basis. In so doing it has conveniently built its missiology largely upon the missionary team as its main structure at the cost of the church as the missional structure. There is an urgent need to explore the Jerusalem church model as a legitimate missional structure for the globalized 21st century without dismantling the concept of the missionary team. As Harry Boer had rightly argued, by being filled with the Holy Spirit the Jerusalem church did more than its share of mission as it spread the good news simultaneously in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria until the Jerusalem church extended its parameter to the

Antioch and beyond. Lausanne II in Manila, 1989, captured this idea well when it used the catch phrase the “whole church, the whole Gospel and the whole world.

Post-Acts 13 as the biblical basis for the missional structure

We see in Acts 13 that the church at Antioch was planted and nurtured by the missional work of the Jerusalem church, in the context of persecution. It was the church at Antioch that sent out missionary teams to extend its horizon even farther. While Luke focuses his emphasis on traveling missionary teams in the rest of the Book of Acts, there is no warrant to claim that mission is from then on the sole responsibility of the missionary team. The church has never been excused in doing the missionary work even as it sends the missionary team. One must go beyond Acts to the Epistles in the New Testament such as Corinthians and Thessalonians to prove this. It will be omitted in this paper, as it will take another paper to include all of the evidences. Bruce K. Camp, however, has helped us to put the status of the missionary teams in right perspective.

In regard to the belief that church structures must be primarily nurture-oriented, and agency structures must be primarily outreach-oriented, the historical and didactic portions of the Scriptures do not support this position...Pragmatically speaking, agencies (independent or denominational) are a gift from God and should be utilized by congregations... Legitimacy ascribed to mission agencies stems from their service with churches, not from usurping the local church's biblical mandate.

Meanwhile, the missional structures from the West were mainly built upon this model with little exceptions, thus neatly dividing mission as done “overseas” while evangelism at “home.” We admit that the missional structure based on this passage of the Scriptures has served world missions, particularly in the beginning of the modern missionary movement when the established church of the 18th century did little to send out missionary teams. We acknowledge that this structure was used effectively and has filled the gap for several centuries since then. At the same time we must admit that any reductionistic view of the missional structures will not be able to provide sufficient basis for the globalized context of 21st century mission.

Prior to the rise of the Two-Thirds World missionary movement in the 1970’s, when there were very little missional activities taking place other than from the West, the emphasis on the missional structures based on the “Antioch Model” seemed bearable. In this global era, when missional activities take place in a global scale, we must reclaim the Jerusalem church model with the local church as a legitimate missional structure without neglecting the Antioch model.

What then is the relationship between the two models? Is it one of equals or of one being dispensable, as some missiologists seems to suggest? It is true that God can use anything, and some churches have been bypassed when they shut themselves out of the will of God. But it is also true that God did not remove the responsibility of carrying out the Great Commission from the church throughout the ages. Even while the missionary team

was being sent out, both the Jerusalem and Antioch churches had a central role in mission: nurturing, preparing, interceding, sending and keeping the missionaries accountable to the church. Missionary teams reporting back to the church in Acts are one of the strong evidences of this phenomenon. As in Acts 15, whenever a major decision was needed, the church was consulted. In this regard, those who are in the missional church movement, which began with the inspiration of the late Lesslie Newbigen, have done us a valuable service. They have helped us to revive the church as the legitimate missional structure in the western context. Bill Taylor has said the same thing succinctly:

A church cannot just have a missions program; it must be missional where it is and then radiate its influence in a Good News spiral of community, integrity, grace, salt and impact. Today by definition churches must be cross-cultural grappling with different generations, ethnicities and worldviews. The nations/ethnicities are fluid-coming and going, whether voluntarily (immigration) or involuntary (refugees - legal and illegal).

Having entered the new millennium, we must look at the Scripture afresh and declare loudly and clearly to the world that the church is missional both theologically as well as practically. The missionary team is also missional, used by God in the early church even in its primitive structural forms, and will be used continually as directed and overseen by the church. More sophisticated structures of the latter model have been used extensively in the last two centuries during the modern

missionary movement. This understanding is probably not new to many. Yet to understand this theologically as well as applying it on a practical level is another thing. It is a matter of great importance for the 21st century. We shall see the reasons in the next section on globalization and missional structures.

Globalization and Missional Structures

With the coming of the modern technological development of the mid twentieth century the world became a global village. The world is now more interconnected than ever before in the history of the mankind. This face of globalization has had a tremendous impact upon all sectors of society globally, particularly social-cultural-commercially, but no less religiously. Christian church and mission have to be done differently than before. It has to take the new context into consideration. Unless we take globality and its implications for the mission seriously, we will be swept over by the secular force of globalization. We need to globalize Christianly with kingdom of God values throughout our world evangelization. Christianity is by nature global. The Bible never once advocated a regional or a tribal religion. Its doctrines such as God, the Savior, the church, the Kingdom of God are all global in orientation.

We are now living witnesses of the globalization of the church and mission since the late twentieth century. As Patrick Johnstone suggests in, *The Church is*

Bigger Than You Think, we have churches initially planted by the mission societies and since than self-propagated in many Two-Thirds World countries. In many cases they are facing similar situations as the New Testament times. The churches are usually surrounded by cultures that are antagonistic to the Christians, animistic in worldview (closer to a Biblical reality than not) often requiring cross-cultural workers in their own locale to be thoughtfully effective. Countries like India, parts of Africa and Latin America would be the classic examples. But they are not the only places that require workers trained in cross-cultural ministry in their own locale.

Mono-lingual-cultural countries such as Korea, Japan and parts of China are also in need of this type of ministry.

In this regard, it is critical for the 21st century missional vision that the church recovers its missional identity as well

as its function, especially when there are churches scattered globally. Missionaries alone, for instance, cannot reach China. The Chinese church, whether it open or house churches in form can, however, make a tremendous difference. The missional church movement has done us a great service in claiming this theologically by their writings in the last decade or so in the western context. There is a fear, though, that the West might neglect the sending of the missionaries through the missional structure consist of missionary teams as the environment turns more and more hostile to Americans after the September

With the coming of the modern technological development of the mid twentieth century the world became a global village.

11, 2001 attack, and only concentrate on the church doing mission in her own immediate world.

The ongoing sending of missionary teams through similar structures, as the West has done, must not be minimized either in the West or the Two-Thirds World. It will take no less than the two structures to do the task of reaching the world in this 21st century. However, if mission is done in the same way that was done in the last two centuries since the beginning of the modern missionary movement began, the world will never be reached even after another millennium.

Practical Implications for Both Church and Mission Structures

There are at least two dangers that we must guard against in missiologizing both the church and mission as legitimate missional structures. The first is a possibility of missionary work lapsing back into local affairs. This is also true of the “missional church movement.” In emphasizing the missional church, the focus of the church may shift from sending global missionary teams to fulfilling its mission duty right where they are, namely the West in this case. It is one thing to reinstate the church its original nature as missional. It is another thing to neglect its duty to other parts of the world where pioneering work is still to be done amongst unreached people groups. The churches in the Two-Thirds World can fall into the same error. While there are unprecedented opportunities for the churches to serve right where they are, it is also true that there are still many places where only the sending of the cross-cultural missionaries can do the job. This must be done not with one simple variable,

though, as we have done in the latter part of the twentieth century. More and more we must look at multi-variables and multi-locations in sending missionaries. We must not overlook nor weaken the sending of the missionaries.

The second item offers the other side of the coin. The global church must not simply send missionaries as she has been doing for several centuries and say that she has done her duty in mission. For one thing it is not biblical, as we have seen above, for the church to relegate mission to missionary teams and go about doing her own things. The other thing is that more and more, the church will have to face the fact that her own back and front yards are cross-cultural setting. This has been the case for the most of the Two-Thirds World contexts except a few areas where the evangelization has had unusual success. Otherwise it is more like a first century context in doing mission. Mission must take place simultaneously both by the church and the missionary teams as in the Book of Acts. The West is no exception when coming to this point, for some parts of the West long since have entered the post-Christian era similar to that of the Two-Thirds World.

As we enter the 21st century of the globalized mission context, we face unprecedented odds that work against Christian mission. There was the September 11, 2001 incident, then the war between the United States and Iraq, with all of its implications. The globalization of major missionary minded religions such as Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism poses no small threat to the cause of the Christian mission throughout the world, particularly the West as the vast numbers

of immigrants with their own religions already occupy many parts of Europe. Yet, if we consider churches that have a global perspective, capable of functioning as missional structures in their own right in their own context, we have a totally different outlook. If we add to this the potential that the churches with such a perspective will send out missionary teams both to the West and the Two-Thirds World, we face unprecedented opportunity to complete the evangelization of the world in the near future.

For this to actually happen we will need to include the church in our missiologizing as never before, especially when missionary team was the main focus of missiology. Further, we need to discuss what are the implications when both the church and mission societies function as the missional structures. For example, it does not necessary mean that churches and mission societies compete with each other, operate independently of each as they send out missionary teams. The church must, at all times, fulfill her

missional duties locally as well as globally. Preferably, it will mean that both church and mission societies work in harmony, where the church engages in mission locally as well as sending teams globally in corroboration with mission societies.

How is this different from the old form of missiologizing on the church and mission? Functionally there seems to be not much difference. Ontologically, though, the church is missionary by nature, and by its mission to its own context and also by sending teams to remote areas, it becomes an equal-value missional structure. There will be fewer dichotomies between the church as missional and the sent missionary team as missional. We will need no less than the whole church in all her facets to actually complete the Great Commission given by the risen Lord. It is unthinkable that the Lord would give us an impossible task. But it will be impossible without both missional structures, the church and mission societies respectively, with the church being the official heirs of the divine command to disciple the whole world.

We will need no less than the whole church in all her facets to actually complete the Great Commission given



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Reflections on Mission and the Great Commission:

Are we dysfunctional, difficult or just different - considering Xers.

by Rob Hay

Some initial thoughts

Perhaps I should start with the clarification that my point of reference on “generations” is as a younger mission leader from the UK. Some of my statements may apply to other parts of the West, but just as I suggest later that everyone is a child of their time, so I must recognise that I still wear the cultural lenses of my background and upbringing. Each culture, however, has at least three generations, and they will have their particular points of view. The second clarification is that whilst I believe these views to be reasonably representative of my generation, diversity is a characteristic of our time and I argue later against generalisations so the bottom line is that these are my views so like the warning label on certain products, “Apply with care”.

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It is often said that Xers are contradictory and seem to live with unresolved tension in their lives. I would agree, but there is a tension or contradiction that most Xers cannot stand, and that is an incomplete life. What do I mean when I say an incomplete life? Mission for the Xer is a life commitment. It will last for the whole of our lives, it will be life encompassing but will be worked out in all sorts of ways and, most likely, settings too. We cannot follow Jesus just on Sundays, or in just one geographical setting. We may not be as good at following Jesus on Sundays as our forefathers but hopefully we are much more likely to follow through on the other days of the week. We have never had a sacred-secular divide in our lives. By the time we came of age, the sacred canopy had long since been blown off by the howling gale of scientific modernity. It was never un-cool to be into spiritual things. Spirituality is trendy. There has never

been the pressure to divide up our lives for different audiences-the one we spend Sunday with and the one we spend the rest of our lives with.

We are different - but so are you

Accepting that we are children of our time

Another thing I am conscious of being accused of is that Gen Xers are cynical. If by cynical you mean that I am cautious of people's motives and their ability to deliver, I would have to say yes, I am cynical.

The time of the Boomers (the generation above us), with whom we often stand in a contrasting position on so many things, was an age of expectation, hope and discovery. An example: Boomers grew up in an age where they watched man travel to and then walk on the moon (1969). Ask them who the first astronauts were to walk on the moon and they will tell you Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin. They will probably remember watching the landing on TV, albeit in black and white.

Xers grew up in a time and a world that was very different. If you ask me as an Xer what I remember watching on TV, I remember the first space shuttle launch. I can tell you the names of Aldrin and Armstrong, but that is from legend and answering quiz questions. Ask me which names come to mind? Space Shuttle Challenger and Christa McAuliffe. Who? I hear you say. She was to be the first teacher in space. It was the realisation of the dream talked about in the fifties, sixties and seventies - space flight for the common man/woman. Something that would become regular, easy and commonplace. She did not make it. Challenger blew up on take off. That is my memory

of space exploration.

I could give numerous other examples. The free love of Boomers became the AIDS epidemic of Xers. The shorter working week and early retirement has become the long hours and worthless investment plans.

"Cynicism is lack of optimism" say our elders. *"It is realism"* we reply.

Add to this the fact that we grew up at the peak of the cold-war. I was talking to a friend recently about the UK children's news programme, Newsround. This is a 5pm show that does a summary of news for children just home from school. The overwhelming theme we remember from the years we watched as children was the cold war stand off and the nuclear arms race. There was a real imminent expectancy of nuclear conflict and the resultant world destruction. We genuinely felt it was unlikely we would make it to forty! Given this childhood is it any wonder that we are sometimes accused of being short-termist?

Tolerance on "truth"

Our primary school mantra

Another area we generally find difficult is straight apologetics. We have grown up from childhood being taught that the only intolerable thing is intolerance. It was fine for us to be into spiritual things. Everyone else was. But it was not fine for us to claim that ours was right and theirs was wrong. Why? Because we did not have a monopoly on the truth. In England I grew up with a Prince who, knowing he was destined, as King, to become the Head of the Church of England, had declared he wanted to be "defender of faiths" not "defender of *the* faith".

Integrity

The antidote to an incomplete life

The definition of integrity is “The quality or condition of being whole or undivided; completeness” A divided life as I said at the start is a tension too far. Given the importance of integrity I find, for example, any underhandedness in mission quite distasteful. For instance, the “work” visas for creative access countries that are never *worked* for! In the same way with witnessing (even in the light of what I have just said on tolerance), I find myself happier to reveal my true colours and nail these to the mast, than kid myself for the sake of a pseudo tolerance. If I genuinely believe that Jesus is the best thing that can happen to somebody, I must want my Muslim, Hindu or Atheist friend to meet him and interact with him as Saviour and Lord. Therefore the bottom line is that I do have a conversionist agenda and for the sake of my integrity I need to own that. When tolerance meets integrity I have to be honest with myself and with others therefore integrity wins out.

Children of The Word [Logos]

Strap lines, sound bytes and the character of God

When Bill Taylor first asked me to write something on Xers and the Great Commission my reply was “Ok, so long as you don’t just mean Matthew 28:19”. Why? Because that passage is primarily used by too many as a slogan....a good slogan but a slogan all the same. And it

was more than just the strap line that Jesus used to sum up thirty years of work and three years of training. Unfortunately in these days of sound bytes you could sometimes be mistaken for thinking that it is the Bible’s first and last word on mission. When every other book on the top ten Christian best seller book list is “The _____ steps to spiritual _____.” (Insert a number below 8 in the first space, insert almost anything desired in the second one, e.g. success, diet, high) is it any wonder that mission is popular only when it is simple and easy?

For me mission is seen first with Genesis 12 (and there are pointers to mission even before this) and runs right through to the end of Revelation. Scripture helps me see God, the source of mission, and understand the world (the beautiful creation, now fallen and broken, one world not two) which is our context for mission. I cannot ever hope to understand the diversity and complexity of either God or his World and therefore mission is something I can never hope to pin down. Mission is the character of God.

Perhaps this is another reason I find apologetics difficult. There is a part of me that knows fundamentally I have no interest in giving my time, life and worship to a God I can understand. If I can, he is not big enough to warrant my effort and my response. Any kind of attempt to reduce mission to a slogan, a target to be met by hard work and human resources, leaves me cold. Much of the ongoing

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effort to segment and strategise the mission task ends up looking so Babel-like as we build, strive and stretch to reach our goals.

Don't get me wrong. I trained in strategic management, am experienced in project management and have spent the last couple of years in research. I believe in strategy. I believe in research. I believe in planning. We need to be the best strategists and the best planners we can be, working with the most robust research data we can get. Anything else is not worthy of my God. But we also need to have complete faith that we can't do it. That's right; we need to believe that we cannot do it! When asking our supporters to pray for us I say "Pray that our work will be as good as it can be and pray that we will never think it is enough."

I am not advocating becoming a workaholic (we have enough of those already in mission). I am advocating realism. For instance, mission requires relationships, but often the structures, strategies and programmes leave scant room for such nebulous and intangible things. I have a friend who, when working as a church planter in Europe, reached a point where he was so busy with door-to-door and other evangelistic efforts, he had no non-Christian friends and no time to make them. He quit traditional mission, started a business and found time for coffee shops and wine bars. It had little strategy but at least he had some non-Christian friends to relate to. When we come to the work of mission there seems to be a fine balance between "let go and let God" and "we can win the world for

Jesus". For us, as for every generation, the key is finding the balance.

"Friends™" and Philosophy

Descartes was called the father of modern philosophy and is best known for his phrase "I think, therefore I am." If we had a father of post-modern philosophy perhaps he would say "I relate, therefore I am." Certainly Xers have been called the "Friends™" generation (the USA TV show) for their need to relate. Relationships take time and energy. From my years in Asia I learnt much about what a society is like when it places relating as a higher priority than time keeping and structure. It is messy to a Westerner, particularly to an Englishman! It is rarely tidy, organised or indeed having any appearance of efficiency, at least as we describe it in the West. But there is a depth to their relationships and a functioning of community that we in the West do not begin to understand. Perhaps this is why we do not understand how the non-Western Church is so effective in its missional endeavours, how the centre of the church has shifted southwards when they don't seem to have

many (sometimes any) of the structures, resources and size we think are so essential to "do mission".

This emphasis in my generation on the need to relate is, I believe, a God-event. It is appropriate and God's provision for the time. Still, in missions I regularly hear people talk about "worldviews" to describe the outlook of a people group, country and even a continent. And yet it is so seldom that one can speak of a collective worldview.

For us, as for every generation, the key is finding the balance.

We live in a solipsistic world where for many people the only thing that can truly be known is the self. The experiences of individuals are increasingly shaped and diversified by the forces of globalisation. Even in the remote parts of the Himalayas, people's worldview is not common to their village or valley anymore. They have travelled and seen and experienced at first hand, or at least vicariously through satellite TV, the world beyond their locale. Therefore there is a diversity of experience and consequently thinking and perspective not known before. For myself I find even now I have more in common with my software programmer friend in Kathmandu (who falls in an Asian or Nepali worldview) who I can email or call on his cell phone, than I do with the unemployed miner I met in North East England (with whom I supposedly share a Western, British or English worldview). In a diverse world where generalisations apply less meaningfully than before, and ease of travel and communication has transformed daily life, relating seems to be something I can do, something that I am *meant* to do. Now my only problem is to find time.

Work Life Balance

I remember a comment from one of my team in Asia when another colleague was leaving: "I don't think we will get someone to do his job, it will need at least three people" (said with a slight tone of awe in his voice). I said "Yes, he's amazing. I don't know how he manages to do so much" (the tone of weariness evident in mine). Recently, I thought back to this colleague who left the field with children in their early teens. My wife had just returned from a workshop on eating disorders-it was run for mission agencies! It highlighted some early research that

seems to indicate an apparently higher level of eating disorders amongst the children of mission partners than amongst the general population. Unbelievable? Then she told me a story of a girl who had explained that during a furlough she had joined the queue of people waiting to talk to the mission speakers after a church meeting. She had a long wait, they were popular speakers, but she waited because she really wanted to talk to them-she wanted to share a major life event with them. They were her parents! This was the only way that she could get their attention in the busyness of their furlough. As I thought back to my old team member a cold chill ran down my spine.

Work/life balance is not a sound byte for me, or I believe for most Xers. Nor is it coming out of a self-centredness. In a recent survey, 91% of Xers wanted to have a family. Work-life balance is another aspect of a whole life. We want to be good missionaries and good parents. Good children to our own parents and good friends to others. We recognise that this means we probably cannot be the "best missionary" that ever lived. Balance by its nature requires elements of compromise. If that is slack, if that is not sacrificial enough, then we must agree to differ and I will accept the title of "slacker"! For me, I would rather answer to God about why I was only an OK missionary and an OK Dad who did his best at both, rather than hiding my screwed-up kids behind all the churches I had planted. That's the only conclusion my exegesis of Matthew 15 allows.

Something distinct to say

Beyond the fact that a healthy work-life balance might mean my kids are not sacrificed on the altar of my work, I also

believe that my message can be more meaningful. We live in a time (at least in the West) where the search for the spiritual is probably greater than at any time since the beginning of the Enlightenment and yet we seem to have succeeded in making the church irrelevant to answering so many people's heart questions. Shoot me down if you will, but my experience is that most non-Christian friends don't care whether their local church has a male or female minister, or even a homosexual one. They certainly aren't aware of our eschatological issues. They are trying to hold their marriages together when they have to work 60 hour weeks to provide for their family's lifestyle. They want to know why, when they have all the possessions, they don't also possess the happiness advertised with the products. These are the issues I hear people talking about when they go to the bars, coffee shops and gyms. I don't hear them saying these things at church because they don't even consider coming to church to find the answers. I am not sure we have the answers in church! Perhaps we have less of a clue. The protestant work ethic that equates service to God with hours worked has made us a bunch of workaholics. In the UK, the rate of marriage break up is about the same between Christians and non-Christians. The hours Christians spend away from their family between work and church meetings is often far more than non-Christians. And then there are possessions. If I am honest, I see little difference between the way most Christians and non-Christians spend. For both, obsolescence has come to mean when we don't like the look of something, the fashion has changed or the colour is different

Xers, and increasingly others too, discard

words that don't match actions and therefore until we have something distinctive to offer, the meaningfulness of mission will be limited and the message discarded as lacking authenticity. And yet I take hope because I see in Xers the potential to be different here. Increasingly I find friends who have chosen to work flexibly or part-time. Because of pressure at work they end up doing a forty hour week in four days so rather than make it fifty or more they don't work the fifth day and spend a long weekend with their kids. Or one partner works three days and the other three days so that the kids are only in day care one day a week. They are prepared to put their money where their mouth is and take the drop in income that this entails. We should and maybe do applaud them, but I wonder what most missions would say to the idea!

Xers lack commitment

"No-one wants to serve long term anymore". "I actually had a long-term applicant the other day. Hadn't had one of those for about 4 years"

These are just two comments from numerous ones on the same theme that I have had from mission directors and personnel managers as I have visited missions around the UK. This puzzled me because it was not what I heard talking to individuals, both those on the field and those preparing to go. I did some limited research on this last year. I gathered some Xers together in focus groups and interviewed others. I asked:

How long do you feel called to serve in mission?

The shortest answer was 10 years and most were 20 years, to a lifetime.

Then I asked:

If asked at interview how long you would

commit to with an organisation, what would you say?

Almost unanimously the answer was 2-3 years.

I explored the difference. Two key things came out: Trust and Integrity. Trusting an organisation was hard. This is a trait of Xers, one developed for good reasons. We grew up in a time of organisations failing. Entire industries collapsed and left our parents out of work-out of their “job for life”. The churches faced scandal-their failures exposed. Pensions in companies had been diverted and disappeared. The organisations themselves failed but they also failed those they were expected to help. One of my friends was made redundant five times in his first five years of work. It was not his incompetence - he now has his own successful company, it was just “bad luck”. But think how he feels about organisations now. Is it any wonder that he is slightly suspicious? How can loyalty to an organisation be expected when someone’s experience is that no organisation they have worked for has ever shown them any loyalty? I am not saying that loyalty is impossible, just that it needs to be earned and built up. In the focus groups, one guy had done five short-term mission trips with one agency. He knew them a bit and his experience had been that so far he had found them trustworthy: he was prepared to commit to two terms, five or six years. Hardly a career commitment or a card carrying mission partner but he has the potential.

The ability to develop longer term commitments was reinforced by ReMAP II (The WEA Missions Commission 20 nation study on missionary retention) findings recently that showed that even for the worst retaining agencies, the

average length of mission service was seven years and the best retaining agencies averaged seventeen years. Xers see mission as long term. They will go with the agencies that allow them in the front door perhaps without a long-term commitment but with the potential to develop in the long term a trusting and meaningful loyalty on both sides.

“I have been waiting for you Xers to seize power from us Boomers as we did with the Veterans 20 years ago, but you haven’t done it yet”. - A Boomer

Xers have a self-confidence issue. This affects our commitment as well as our actions. The second reason people would only commit to 2-3 years initially was because they did not want to commit to something they could not fulfil. They did not know how they would cope with the organisation, the work, the climate, the language. How would their family cope? To them committing long-term at the outset was not enthusiastic, good or spiritual, it was naïve. Getting Xers into leadership is equally hard. We often doubt our ability to do something well and have seen the dangers of leadership. Those that have failed in their role or held on with grim determination and elements of despotism to a job they should never have been given and were never skilled for. We will only respect and follow those that lead with competence, integrity and authenticity so why should we expect others to follow us if we cannot, or at least feel we do not, measure up?

Conclusion

1. We Xers are committed to long-term mission (20 years plus) - but it is unlikely to be with one organisation

- and if it is to be with your organisation you have to be prepared to build trust not just expect to have it from day one.
2. We are wanting (and attempting) to do it wholistically - meeting peoples physical and spiritual needs. One without the other is only half the gospel for us.
 3. We want to be authentic. Following Christ means having a good ministry and a good marriage; or if not married, having a good ministry and a life of wholeness.
 4. We are attempting to contextualise and be true to ourselves as we seek to do mission.
 5. We are not over-confident. This means there is little danger of triumphalism in our approach but we do need encouragement to step out in new roles, particularly in leadership.
 6. We believe in *missio dei*; otherwise we are not interested. If it is seven steps to anything, we see it as a marketing ploy, it's too easy and won't work. If God and his work is not beyond our understanding he is not worthy of our worship.
 7. We will give up material things and sacrifice if the situation demands it. "He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." makes sense to Xers - why have a safe job for 40 years to pay into the pension plan when it will probably be worthless anyway!
 8. We are passionate - not for a slick, polished strategy for an evangelised world with ticked off target groups designed by a professional marketing executive. Rather for the reality of the Kingdom that a carpenter from Nazareth talked about. The reality that a messy, complicated and broken world looks for.

If you want a passage of scripture for my missional vision as an Xer, try Isaiah 58; my strap line (if I have one):

"Those from among you shall build the old waste places; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; And you shall be called Repairer of the Breach, The Restorer of streets to dwell in."



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Revisiting Strategic Collaboration in Mission

by Alex Araujo

A review of our missional history will portray us more like the cutthroat world of business competition than a people of peace bringing the good news of peace to a conflicted world.

During the long and painful Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, tribal warlords who seemed unable to agree on anything except that they wanted the Soviets out waged opposition. What united them was the negative motivation to rid their land of the occupiers. They were united against the Soviet puppet government, but could not agree on what to replace them with. As a result, once the Soviets left Afghanistan, what followed was a period of internal strife that led eventually to the success of the young Taliban, and the beginning of a new brutal dictatorship. Yet, when compared to our fragmented Evangelical missions movement, the Afghan warlords seem to be one step ahead. After all, they do indeed have diverse cultural and clan loyalties to protect. We Evangelicals, on the other hand, are one people, having “one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all.” (Ep. 4:4-6). In fact, oneness in Christ is at the very essence of our missionary message to the world. Collaboration should be the norm for us.

A review of our missional history will portray us more like the cutthroat world of business competition than a people of peace bringing the good news of peace to a conflicted world. It is, indeed, the nature and mandate of the gospel to bring enemies together as one single people of God, to reconcile all to God through Christ. Christ himself prayed earnestly for our unity in him (Jn 17), and his apostles proclaimed this same objective: “Consequently you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people, and members of God’s household, ...” (Ep. 2:19). Why, then is it so hard for us to model this unity in our mission effort? Lest we judge ourselves harshly, it is good to remember that the seed of discord was present amidst the apostles themselves. Differences concerning Jewish rituals

caused division in the early church; relational differences led to the breaking up of the earliest missionary team (Paul and Barnabas concerning John Mark).

I do not intend to discuss the diverse nature of religious institutions within Christendom. Since the church manifests itself locally, it must be flexible and adaptable to the local realities. This, over time, leads to growing diversification and differentiation in form and even doctrine and theology. And since the church is, by nature and mandate, missional, it will to some degree export its diversity beyond its local context as it seeks to bring the gospel to those who are distant. In this alone we can already see the multiplication of differences within the one people of God. Not all diversity is contrary to the oneness of the gospel, and there are historical, cultural and practical factors behind the development of different Evangelical denominations. The diversity of Christian expressions need not be a curse, but rather a blessing, as it enables the one people of God to minister effectively to diverse cultures and peoples.

Valiant Efforts In The Right Direction

Much can be said about the fragmented and embarrassing side of the missions movement. But that would obscure the fact that some valiant efforts have been made over the years to bring us into effective cooperation with each other for the sake of missions.

I was taking my baby steps in missions when I heard of “comity”, and I heard of it in disparaging terms. The term referred to an arrangement occasionally made

between different Christian denominations whereby they agreed, in their missionary efforts, to avoid working in each other’s geographical area. The disparaging tone used by my peers concerning comity was due to their sense that it was merely an agreement on how to preserve peace by staying out of each other’s way. It did not illustrate oneness and mutual help, but simply a way of preserving the differences without open clashes. Yet, comity may have been a possible beginning, a truce among feuding denominations that made possible an evolution toward eventual more active cooperation.

In the mid 1980s, an organization named CNEC chose to change its name to Partners International. It was under this US-based agency that I was sent to Brazil in 1986 to help give focus to the emerging Latin American mission movement. CNEC’s choice of the name Partners International did not happen in a vacuum. It reflected, if it was not actually motivated by, a growing trend among businesses toward partnerships, and a growing sense among Christians in the USA that cooperation rather than division was the desirable mode of operation for churches and Christian agencies. It was a time in which books were being written about great corporate mergers, and emphasized the mutual benefits that corporations gained by cooperation, joint ventures, and partnerships. The benefits of good stewardship were not lost on the Evangelical missions movement. Collaboration was not only good for business, but it meant better, more effective use of the Lord’s resources given to his church.

It is also true that, by the mid-80s, the tension between Charismatics and traditional Protestants had begun to resolve itself in creative ways. The Charismatic movement was cross denominational, and it brought believers from various denominations together around common themes. When the traditional Protestant-Evangelical church began to soften toward Charismatic presence and certain forms of worship, it brought with it, initially grudging acceptance, then a growing openness to fellowship. The Latin missions movement, known as COMIBAM, might not have emerged when it did without this *rapprochement* between Charismatics and traditionals. The steering committee of COMIBAM-Brazil, as well as of its continent-wide counterpart, was composed of delegates from both camps. The continent-wide missions congress held in S. Paulo in 1987, with over 3000 delegates, included both groups, and most major denominations on both sides. The plenary speakers and seminar presenters also represented the full Evangelical spectrum. Emerging missions agencies were also, for the most part, open to candidates from different groups and denominations.

Denominational mission boards have tended, naturally, to retain their distinctives in recruitment of missionaries. Yet, even they began to open to informal cooperation with others. I well remember the rejoicing that accompanied the

decision by the International Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention of the USA to release the results of its extensive missions research to other denominations and mission bodies. It has become one of the most valuable and used resources for missions planning and strategy, along with Patrick Johnstone's "Operation World".

History also has had a major part to play in bringing a change of attitude among Evangelical missions toward collaboration. I refer in particular to the fall of the Soviet empire and consequent openness to missionary activity in former soviet territory. Ironically, the initial impact

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of this historic event was to strengthen divisions and fragmentation in the missions movement. All at once, mission boards and agencies saw an opportunity to move in to a much-prized territory, one that had been in the prayers of the church worldwide for

decades. There was also a fear that the iron curtain might once more be draped across Europe and a brief window of opportunity would be lost. Under the pressure of time and the excitement of the moment, there seemed to be no time to pursue cooperation, rather, each agency moved quickly and individually to walk through the gap. Long-lived and tested mission groups as well as new and inexperienced initiatives met and squeezed each other through the new openings in the curtain. But competition, duplication, and a bad testimony led to much disappointment and frustration. I remember in the early 90s listening to an

Eastern European pastor speaking to a group of North Americans. He told of how he was reduced to preaching once every ten Sundays in his church, because there were so many Western visitors asking to have the pulpit, and he wanted to be hospitable and welcome the long hoped for fellowship with the worldwide church. Yet, all these visits were random, uncoordinated, and weakened rather than helped the long-suffering church in those places.

The ugliness of what was happening did not go unnoticed, and soon mission leaders began to discuss ways to repair the damage and collaborate with each other. One such initiative was the formation of the CO-MISSION which brought several western agencies and churches into a joint plan to work with the Russian Ministry of Education to develop a religious education curriculum for the country. Another significant example is the Alliance for Saturation Church Planting in Eastern Europe (ASCP). This alliance, still very active today, gathers over 60 churches and mission agencies for the specific purpose of collaboration in mission among the countries formerly under the control of the Soviet empire.

Even as the traditional, Western mission boards and agencies were beginning to more fully collaborate in missions, new participants entered the scene in the form of Koreans, Latin Americans, Filipinos and others. This brought fresh perspectives and fresh challenges to cooperation in missions. The historic mission agents were predominantly from Protestant countries, and shared not only cultural

perspectives on evangelization but also more similar levels of material resource. The new participants brought new challenges. While the earlier group could function naturally in their mother tongue, English, the new comers were not so comfortable outside their mother tongue. They also introduced a vast disparity with their Western colleagues in material living standards and mission assets and equipment. Attempts to form multicultural teams met with major challenges, which are still in process of being resolved.

The Turning Tide

My colleague Gary Walsh, formerly of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada and then of Interdev, has put it succinctly and accurately: “We have managed to change the mind of the church toward partnership; now we must change its behavior”. When Phill Butler began the ministry of Interdev over 20 years ago, he and his team needed to focus considerable effort merely to persuade Christians that collaboration was not only biblical but also beneficial to their task. The 1980s and 90s were times of exploding mission initiatives, fueled by economic growth in the West and by fast growth in numbers and evangelistic zeal in the non-western churches. At the same time, the predominant North American missions model was being influenced by business trends toward frugal, highly professional and results-oriented enterprise. Oddly, while the trend toward mergers in the business world encouraged openness to partnerships in missions, the drive toward frugality and effectiveness in producing quick results led to obstacles to

partnership and collaboration.

Collaboration requires extended periods of time dedicated to communication, meetings, review and revision of plans in order to develop common strategies and projects. Joint planning introduced new expenses, not directly and immediately applicable to result-generating field activities. So, while on the one hand words like partnership and collaboration became increasingly dominant in missions vocabulary, the practice of collaboration itself lagged significantly behind. It seemed that, as Walsh had suggested, the mind of the church was indeed changing toward collaboration while its behavior was restrained by predominant philosophical and structural barriers. A mindset of urgency and numeric effectiveness in missions encouraged isolated strategies more easily controllable by mission executives, even while they began to recognize that the gospel of peace and oneness in Christ for which they work so hard was being undercut by lack of collaboration. To resolve this tension, we mission leaders must face significant changes in our behavior as well as in the numerical effectiveness model that has so shaped our missions behavior. This is the current challenge to the Evangelical missions movement.

What on earth is Collaboration?

The term “partnership” has become very popular in mission circles as well as among the individuals, foundations and churches that help fund the missions movement. They are frustrated with the duplication and competition that characterize the missions industry, and want to find ways to change it. Our conferences, congresses and consultations have given dominant place in their agenda to issues of collaboration. As early as 1992, the Missions Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance sponsored a consultation in Manila to address this topic. Its papers and outcomes were published as “Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions”, Ed. William Taylor. The AD 2000 and Beyond movement sought to generate worldwide cooperation to complete the task of world evangelization, and sponsored several regional and global consultations to that purpose.

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Yet, with all this attention to and interest in collaboration, the movement has suffered from a lack of clear and commonly shared vocabulary regarding what it means. The term “partnership” had become the universal term for any form of cooperation imaginable. It was used to describe the Trinity, at one end of the spectrum, and to the coming together of two friends for a time of prayer, at the other end. At the Missions Commission Manila consultation in 1992 I became more fully

aware that we were using the same term to describe different things, and that this lack of adequate vocabulary would hamper our efforts to grow in collaboration.

In consultation with Timothy Halls, then with OC International in Guatemala, I developed a discussion paper proposing a series of words describing different points in a continuum of cooperation. Though a continuum is by definition a sequence of an infinite number of points, I selected four points along that continuum as the most applicable to the question of collaboration in missions.

Fellowship, Cooperation, Partnership and Merger.

My intention here was to focus on “Partnership” as the place in the continuum that indicates practical collaboration in missions. These terms are chosen because they are familiar to our generation, but I will give them my own definitions. The important thing is not the terms themselves, but the ability to differentiate between forms of collaboration, so that we can better understand each other when discussing the subject.

Fellowship describes the fundamental relationship we share in the body of Christ. It binds us together in the Spirit through time and space, and it is true even if we live in different centuries and continents and never meet on this earth. (See Hb.11) It is the oneness whereby our identity with Christ identifies us also with one another. We share in the agenda established by Jesus Christ in the Great

Commission, even though we may not be involved in the same specific task.

This fellowship is initiated by the Lord and predisposes us to love one another. It opens us to cooperation with one another whenever we meet. Yet, this fellowship in the body of Christ worldwide, real as it surely is, does not in itself provide the opportunity for practical partnership. For that to happen it is necessary that our paths cross in space and time, our realms of activity come in contact.

Cooperation - As those of us who have fellowship in Christ encounter each other on this earth, we have opportunity to express our spiritual fellowship in practical cooperation. I am using the term “cooperation” to mean a voluntary involvement in what each other is doing. It is given and received voluntarily, without obligation. There is little or no expectation imposed on each other and we each are grateful for whatever cooperation we can get. It is a spontaneous good will response to each other when we meet, and we should not feel obligated to turn every cooperative relationship into a structured partnership. I happen to be in your region, and you would like me to give a hand with a teaching seminar, or I see you working on your fence and pick a tool and begin helping you.

Partnership takes us to the next stop on the continuum, where cooperation takes on a more intentional, planned and repeatable character. Here we don’t just happen to meet each other, but purposefully seek each other out for cooperation around a common project or objective. In a partnership there is intent,

commitment, and contribution from each partner toward a common goal. Two or more agencies might partner to produce the Bible in a given language. Though each retains its separate identity, they adopt a common objective and make themselves accountable to each other concerning that objective.

Merger becomes advisable when two or more entities have such an overlap of purposes and principles that they effectively duplicate each other's work. If there is no significant distinctive to justify their separate existence, it may be well to consider coming together structurally and making better use of resources.

No doubt there are other ways to distinguish between various types of collaboration. I find these definitions to be practically helpful to me when discussing mission collaboration. They make it easier to establish mutual understanding about what it is we are trying to do.

Is Missional Collaboration In Our Future?

The trend toward collaboration in missions began before globalization and the popularization of the Internet, and of the new, so-called virtual organization. At first collaboration centered on formal agency-to-agency structural collaboration. But commercial, social and cultural globalization has weakened organizational boundaries, as it has state and country

borders. Today, we are in frequent and professional contact with people of other agencies and nations. We share similar concerns about the same events or circumstances. HIV/AIDS in Africa draws the attention of thoughtful Christians everywhere; we belong to email forums and web-based interest groups regardless of our mission agency or denominational affiliation. In this environment, collaboration is happening without formal agreement at the top organizational level of mission agencies.

“Seconding” is nothing new. It is the practice whereby one mission agency permits one of its missionaries to dedicate himself/herself to the objectives of another agency, while remaining formally a member of the original agency. This is often done by agreement or a memorandum of understanding between the two mission agencies. Interdev, the agency of which I have been a part, has benefited from this seconding arrangement. Several of our Partnership Facilitators on the field were seconded to Interdev by their agencies. Yet, Interdev up until last year, retained its own central office with dedicated administrative and management staff. In November of 2003 it became clear that Interdev would not be able to sustain itself

financially, and its board decided to close down its USA and UK offices. Meanwhile our Partnership Facilitators felt that their fieldwork was vital and

These are voluntary, consensus-based collaborative arrangements that bring together the various agencies and mission resources in a given field, for mutual help and sharing of resources.

needs to continue. Over the years we have been helping missions personnel from different agencies to form partnerships for greater effectiveness and stronger testimony on the field. These are voluntary, consensus-based collaborative arrangements that bring together the various agencies and mission resources in a given field, for mutual help and sharing of resources. Members appoint a facilitation team from among themselves to keep the partnership together from year to year, and gather the partners annually to review the state and progress of their collaborative work. As we faced the drastic changes in Interdev, those of us who are field staff have agreed to form an association of partnership facilitators to continue the work of Interdev. Yet, without a central organization to hold us together, we determined that we would use the same model of partnership that we have been promoting throughout the missions world. In practice, this means that each of us has needed to find another agency willing to provide platforms from which to operate. Each of us also must find our own sources of financial support. Yet, we will maintain the objectives of our association, which we have embodied in a covenant among ourselves and others who would like to join us (see Appendix). Thus, through the practice of secondment, several agencies are in effect collaborating to make a specialized ministry possible. Our current members represent 8 nationalities, working from bases in Indonesia, Philippines, India, Mali, Senegal, Ivory Coast, USA, Canada, and United Kingdom.

We see great possibilities for this kind of arrangement. Rather than creating new agencies, other such associations might be created for specific purposes with full

agreement from seconding agencies. Our association, which we are calling Interdev Partnership Associates (IPA), is taking its first baby steps, and it will be a year before we can evaluate its effectiveness as a method of collaboration. We are eager to test the model, revise and perfect it, and perhaps help other similar efforts take shape for greater effectiveness on the field and greater unity of testimony to a divided world.

Appendix:

Interdev Partnership Associates - Covenant

Introduction:

On 4 November 2003, the Board of Trustees of Interdev announced it was passing the baton of partnership development ministry to Interdev Partnership Associates (IPA). A transition is now underway. IPA will continue to facilitate and develop partnering as a key strategy to bring the Gospel to the world's least-reached peoples. This responds to the continuing widespread need and demand for help in partnering for mission. We Partnership Advisors, who formerly served Interdev's field ministry, have a strong commitment to each other as a Team, and have determined to carry on partnership ministry through a covenant-based Association.

We anticipate that we will be joined by others with the same commitment to partnering in mission. As soon as we have established our Association we will seek to expand it.

We all have our own support bases. For most these are mission agencies that bless

and release us into partnership ministry through IPA. Our bases are dispersed regionally across India, Indonesia, Africa, Philippines, USA, Canada, and UK.

We give thanks to God for the organization Interdev that served a strategic role in planting the partnership mindset in the mission movement, and in facilitating the formation of many partnerships during the past 17 years. IPA will now model what Interdev has taught and continue this ministry as a partnership, a voluntary association, rather than a traditional organization.

Covenant:

We describe our Passion, Purpose, Plan and Values which drive the relational reality already present among us. We affirm that IPA seeks no other strength than that which comes from our deep individual and corporate communion with God and our maturing relationships among and beyond us. Together, may we serve Christ's Church for partnership in mission!

Our Common Passion:

Christ's Church, present, unified and ministering effectively among all peoples.

Our Common Purpose:

To serve the Church in its mission to the least-reached peoples by equipping, encouraging, and catalyzing the partnership movement.

Our Common Plan:

- * Promote the formation and maturing of strategic mission partnerships
- * Provide training for exploring, forming and operating strategic mission

partnerships

- * Recruit, equip, and release for service new generations of partnership advisors.
- * Develop and promote standards of best practice for strategic mission partnerships.
- * Meet together annually.

Our Common Values:

- * Rooted in the evangelical Christianity as expressed in the WEA Statement of Faith.
- * Communion with God, community with others as we obey Christ's commission
- * Godly relationships, integrity, accountability, transparency, mutual submission.
- * Collaboration and partnership for Christ's commission to and among the unreached peoples of our generation.
- * Intentional: deepening personal relationships, expressing truth in love

Our Diversity:

- * International: we are diverse, yet unified under Christ.
- * Inter-dependent: we help each other and work together where possible and appropriate.
- * Inter-denominational: the Lausanne Covenant defines our common praxis.
- * Inclusive: we will act to include more partnering people in IPA as soon as practicable.

Our Common Constituency: those we serve

- * Our Lord
- * Our families
- * Our home & sending/supporting congregations
- * One another
- * Our regions and peoples of Great

Commission focus

- * Our sending agencies/societies.
- * Our supporters (prayer, finances, resources).

Our Function (the role of IPA):

- * Provide an international communication and coordination center
- * Provide mechanisms to resource one another
- * Provide a forum for mutual accountability
- * Convene meetings of partnership people

Our Structure (what we look like, and how we operate):

We are an international, voluntary association, which makes/takes decisions based on the consensus of members. The IPA provides no organizational support such as employments and control. Our Associates in various countries or regions are free to organize themselves as they deem best. Our structure will be defined by necessary functions. We are primarily a partnership of intentional relationships united around a common passion, purpose, and plan. We are all accountable to our respective sending agencies, we will make ourselves mutually accountable

in our common partnership work, and we will form relationships with senior leaders in our respective regions for consultation and accountability.

Our Resources (how we will achieve and fund our operations):

- * We bring together our corporate experience in collaboration for mission.
- * We look first to Christ and His Church to provide our financial needs.
- * We affirm the presence of a coordination office, wherever our Team Coordinator is based.
- * All IPA members raise salary and ministry expenses commensurate with need, and affirmed by their sending mission structure in consultation with IPA Team Coordinator. We will help each other in this.

We affirm a **facilitation team** for a period of 18 months (through 4 May 2005):

- Alex Araujo**, Team Coordinator. (US)
- Reg Reimer**, Facilitation Team Member (Canada)
- Prem James**, Facilitation Team Member (India)
- Mike Roemmele**, Facilitation Team Member (UK)



Alex Araujo coordinates the field team of INTERDEV under the new structure, Interdev Partnership Associates (IPA). Interdev, and now IPA, promote strategic mission partnerships among the least reached peoples of the world. Alex, born and raised in Brazil, has served with IFES in Portugal, COMIBAM in Brazil, and Partners International in the USA. Married to Katy, Alex has three adult children and one grandchild. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org

The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ in the Missional Heart of God: *A Kingdom-Oriented Framework for Encountering Buddhist Worldviews*

by Kang San Tan

Christianity's relationship with other religions is a key missiological inquiry for Evangelicals concerned with the Great Commission.

The Need for Christian-Buddhist Encounters

Christianity's relationship with non-Christian religions is a key missiological inquiry for Evangelicals concerned with the Great Commission. Traditionally, Evangelical missions have concentrated on proclamation of the gospel and avoided interfaith approaches (John Stott, 1975). Increasingly, most missionaries in Asia work within restrictive environments which prohibit direct evangelism. Do we have a theology of witness for genuine encounter with Buddhists? In the West, the privatization of religious faith in increasingly making direct evangelism socially unacceptable. Globally, rising ethnic-religious tensions threaten peace and racial harmony in many countries in Africa, India, Indonesia and the Middle East, to name a few places. Even in seemingly "peaceful" Buddhist countries, Christian proselytization efforts are problematic. Another concern is the partial conversion of people groups in Asia, where Church growth is not accompanied by worldview transformation. From a variety of perspectives then, wherever the gospel is preached, there is a need for deeper encounter with traditional Buddhist worldviews. The purpose is not to compromise the gospel but to confront underlying belief systems at their deepest level.

Some key questions for this study are: What theological implications does the kingdom of God have for the interfaith encounter with Buddhists? In particular, can conservative Evangelical theology provide an adequate and creative foundation for a genuine interfaith encounter with other truth claims such as Buddhism? How will a distinctive Evangelical encounter be different from pluralist models?

I define interfaith encounter as an inter-religious conversation whereby both the Christian and the Buddhists desire to witness to their faiths as well as listen and learn from the neighbour's faith. Worldview can be said to be "a set of shared framework of ideas of a particular society concerning how they perceive the world" (Burnett 1990, 13)

The article begins by outlining a brief survey of the Buddhist scriptures which influenced East Asian worldviews, followed by an outline of a distinctive Evangelical theology of the kingdom of God that places Jesus as the unique King over the nations. My goal is to illustrate the theological framework of an Asian Evangelical living in multifaith community who by nature of his or her commitment to Christ, is required to live out his faith without ghettoism. However, interfaith conversations in the context of friendship, and living multi-culturally need not require a reductionism of other religions nor of one's personal faith in Christ. Instead, one is challenged to live out the authentic Christian life in the context of full religious pluralism

Scriptures in Buddhist Traditions

Although we do not have good historical evidence on the life of Buddha, Christians must be willing to engage with the Buddhist scriptures because these are the sources of their religious beliefs. While it is true that the extant versions of Buddha's life were created long after his death by his followers, our purpose in religious encounters is to understand what Buddhists believe and how the Christian gospel addresses those belief systems.

The words of the Buddha, which became the Buddhist scriptures, are stories of how he seeks after truth and finally achieves

Nirvana. The words he spoke were intended to exhort others to enter into the same experience of release. These words were new and different from the handed down Hindu Vedas:

That this was the noble truth concerning sorrow, was not, O Bhikkhus, among the doctrines handed down (i.e., the Vedas), but there arose within me the eye (to perceive it), there arose the knowledge (of its nature), there arose the understanding (of its cause), there arose wisdom (to guide in the path of tranquility), there arose the light (to dispel darkness from it). (Harold Coward 2000, 140)

Buddhists hold that the authority of Buddhist scriptures arose out of Buddha's enlightenment experience. Unlike the Christian position on the Bible as divinely revealed and inspired, Buddhists are open to subsequent scriptures from "other Buddhas." Tradition records that within the year that Buddha died (c483 BC), 500 monks gathered and agreed to codify the Rule of the Monastic Order. Ananda, Buddha's closest follower and relative, was reported to recite all the "remembered words" which were then approved by the world community (*Sangha*). Ananda is said to have recited the original five *Nikayas* (also called *Agama*) in the *Sutra Pitaka*, or the *Basket of Discourses*." Centuries later, these were compiled into *Sutras* (Buddha's teachings) as part of the Buddhist canon. In addition, the School of Elders (*Theravada*) expanded texts (*Abhidharma*) were judged necessary part of the *Dharma*. Consequently, we have the *tripitaka* or "three baskets of scripture": *sutra* (Buddha's teachings), *vinaya* (monastic rules) and *Abhidharma* (philosophic treatise). Many Theravada Buddhists felt that only these transmitted

sayings of the Buddha could be part of the scriptures while others take a more open view of the Buddhist canon. These more open groups accepted the same general *sutras and vinayas* but developed their own *Abhidharma or sastra* (philosophic literatures). The Mahayanas also add many new *sutras* such as *Prajnaparamita Sutras* and the *Lotus Sutras*. Later, other devotional texts such as *Tantras* (inspired words of Buddhas) and *Jatakas* (popular stories or fables about Buddha) were developed.

Although folk Buddhists may not be literate in Buddhist scriptures, it is arguable that the teachings of Buddha shape the worldviews of Asian societies. There is certainly more to Buddhist religious life than their doctrines, but with the revivals of Buddhist intellectualism and the complexities of various streams of Buddhism, it will be very difficult for the Christian missionary to gain an appreciation of what Buddhists really believe without a good grounding of Buddhist doctrines as found in these scriptures.

God's Kingship as the Basis For the Christian-Buddhist Encounter

Central to the above Buddhist scriptures requires that genuine Buddhists will ultimately negate the existence of a Creator God or a supreme personal Being, although in some streams of Buddhism, they do believe in the existences of divine beings and deities (Paul Williams 2002, 25). In this regard, the Christian who holds to the divinity of Jesus needs to address the atheistic viewpoint of his Buddhist friends. At some point, it will be necessary

to introduce the ontological argument for God. Buddha is an ordinary human being who discovered the true way that brings release from an infinite series of sufferings and rebirths. The remedy to our sufferings lies in letting go of our attachments to things or beliefs (including God). While Christians cannot prove that God exists beyond reasonable doubt, we can begin with the humble confession that we believe in a creator God, as revealed in the Christian scriptures.

Three theological implications from God's sovereign kingship may be highlighted as providing foundations for a kingdom-oriented theology of religious Encounters. First, God's character and his sovereign dealings with humankind provide the

basis for engagement with humans. As a righteous and holy God, Yahweh cannot tolerate sin. Because humanity has sinned and continually rebels against God's kingship, God intervenes in history as judge.

Interfaith relations cannot ignore humanity's persistent rebellion against God's kingship.

Second, in the midst of judgement, God provides salvation due to his mercy. Yahweh is not only a God of wrath, but also a God of mercy and boundless grace. This pattern of "sin-judgement-salvation" provides a paradigmatic approach to all religions. The emphasis is on salvation as the goal of the kingdom, although judgement is also clearly communicated as an inevitable consequence on those who continually reject God's kingship.

Third, an encounter that is firmly rooted in God's sovereign character must hold

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both aspects of God's righteous judgement and loving kindness in creative tension. Without such "biblical realism," Christianity's approach to other religions is bound to fall into reductionism. Christopher Wright comments:

The fallen duplicity of man is that he simultaneously seeks after God his Maker and flees from God his Judge. Man's religions, therefore, simultaneously manifest both these human tendencies. This is what makes a simplistic verdict on other religions—whether blandly positive or negative—so unsatisfactory and indeed, unbiblical. (1984, 5)

Thus Christians who are the recipients of God's mercy and who are worshippers of the righteous and holy God, have an epistemic and ethical duty to engage in dialogue with Buddhist people, even if they are atheistic or agnostic. In a stimulating and intensely personal book, *The Unexpected Way: On Converting from Buddhism to Catholicism*, Professor Paul William, Professor of Indian and Tibetan Philosophy at University of Bristol, among other things, presented the arguments for the existence of a God. After over 20 years as a Buddhist, William was profoundly challenged by Thomas Aquinas writings in seeking after the question: "Why is there something rather than nothing?" He struggled over two viable alternatives:

The Buddhist position: The fact that there is something rather than nothing, and the way things are, in terms of causal processes and so on, as discovered by the Buddha, just *is* how it is. End of the matter.

The Christian position: The reason why

there is something rather than nothing, and things are the way they are, is because they are grounded on a necessary being who has in some sense brought it about. (William 2002, 33)

Beyond William's philosophical arguments, a kingdom-oriented theology of religion moves on to the affirmation that God's kingship is universal. God's universal kingship in the Old Testament is reflected in the repeated accounts of God's ruling activities over Israel and the nations. In particular, God is often depicted as exercising his power over foreign nations in the following examples: his concern for Nineveh in the book of Jonah, his use of the Assyrians and Babylonians as instruments of judgment on Israel, his sovereign rule over Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1-4), his use of Cyrus as agent of restoring his kingdom (Isa 44:28, 45:1, 13), and his providential use of Xerxes as agent of preservation of Israel in the book of Esther. Believing that God is actively at work among unbelievers, Christians can approach non-Christians looking for evidences of his work.

God's kingship is not only universal, but also covenantal.

God's kingship is not only universal, but also covenantal. This is where the uniqueness of Jesus as the Kingdom bearer of God's redemptive plan for the nations becomes central in any religious conversation that is authentically Christian. God's redemptive action is expressed and exercised through successive covenants: Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and culminating in the New Covenant (Dumbrell 1984). In the Old Testament, God's kingship is associated most closely with Israel, a particular people with whom God has chosen to establish a covenantal

relationship. In the New Testament, God's covenant people are identified with the Church of Jesus Christ. Membership in the kingdom is predicated upon the "new birth" (John 3) which is possible today only through faith in Jesus Christ. The theological implication for interfaith relations is that, at some point in the dialogical process, kingdom-oriented dialogue will issue the call for a covenant relationship with God through faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour.

In summary, God's sovereignty as expressed in his kingship provides the basis for a missionary encounter with Buddhists. God, who is already the Heavenly King, must become king in the hearts of people. Therefore, those who are already subjected to God are obligated to persuade others to submit themselves to God. This is the philosophical basis for interfaith relations. It is based on the fact that there are others who do not acknowledge God's kingship and that their search for truth has something to teach us about God and His Kingdom.

Yet, why should the interfaith encounter be utilized instead of simply relying on proclamation as the means of propagating the gospel? The primary reason is that God's rulership must be brought to bear on the existing faith-commitments, presuppositions and worldviews of our Buddhist friends. However, in order to be genuine, their submission to God cannot be coerced or manipulated. Therefore, Christians need to enter into dialogue in order to witness effectively and persuade others regarding the challenge of God's kingship.

The Kingdom-Oriented Encounter is Christ-Centred

Salvation is accomplished through the

unique person and work of Christ. Commitment to Christ is the precondition for the kingdom-oriented encounter, after which Christ becomes the model for approaching Buddhists. Although God's salvation plan begins with the call of Abraham and the nation Israel, it ultimately looks forward to Christ, the seed of Abraham. Due to Israel's failure to be a faithful instrument of the kingdom, God has invaded human history through the work and person of Jesus. In contrast to Israel's misguided ethnocentrism, Jesus makes it clear that all people are welcome into God's kingdom, with special attention being shown to the poor, the oppressed and the marginalized. Not only is Jesus the embodiment of the kingdom, he alone ushers in the kingdom of God. No one enters into a relationship with the Father except through Jesus Christ.

What are the implications of a Kingdom-oriented Encounter where Jesus is confessed as Lord? First, Jesus is both the ultimate judge of all truth and the criterion against which conflicting truth-claims are evaluated. "Jesus is for the believer the source from whom his understanding of the totality of experience is drawn and therefore the criterion by which other ways of understanding are judged" (Newbigin 1981, 4). More specifically, a distinctive Evangelical theology of religion (in contrast to an Ecumenical perspective) holds a high Christology that does not compromise the truth of the supremacy of Christ over all the world's religions. Christ is the only way to the Father, and without him as King there is no kingdom of God. Evangelical encounters with other religions, therefore, reject any form of relativism that undermines the unique person and work of Christ in bringing salvation to the world.

High Christology need not mean rejection of the truth of other religions such as Buddha's teaching on morality, or that Christians cannot learn anything new from Buddhists, truths which the philosophical riches of Mahayana Buddhism may bring to Christian views of life, purity, disciplines and meaning of sufferings. Buddhist background Evangelicals have a tendency to degrade everything about Buddhism as idolatry and pagan. I think it is possible to retain a high level of sympathy and even admiration for Buddha's compassion and his teachings, if only one ventures with love for Christ and the Buddhists He so loved.

In a Christ-centred encounter, Jesus becomes the model for approaching unbelievers. His preaching and teaching methods, lifestyle and his commitments are the way that Christians should approach unbelievers. In particular, Christ's incarnational model provides the key toward meaningful dialogue. Jesus radicalized the law of love, "that we love God by loving our neighbour as we love ourselves, with neighbour unlimited, as the only measure of membership in God's reign" (Groome 1991, 16). Such an approach to Buddhists needs to be shaped by Jesus' total mission. And his total mission encompasses the challenge of discipleship, the confrontation with demonic powers and religious authorities, a compassion for the broken and the lost, and the creation of a new society. The implications for interfaith encounters are profound. In particular, Christians are not merely to be interested in sharing the gospel, but also to be seeking the total transformation of the person and society. Finally, Jesus is the message. In interfaith

In a Christ-centred encounter, Jesus becomes the model for approaching unbelievers.

encounters, the Christian makes accessible the gospel story about the Christ who brings salvation to the world. However, our message must be presented with humility and grace. "The cross is not merely the centre of the message of salvation; it is crucial for Christian living and ministry" (Ralph Covell 1993, 169). Therefore, commitment to Christ is both a prerequisite and a goal for an Evangelical engagement with Buddhists. With a deep commitment to Christ, Christians will naturally and logically enter into missionary encounters for the purpose of persuading their dialogical partners about the truth of the gospel.

The Trinity and the Interfaith Encounter

Johannes Verkuyl proposes that a kingdom-centred theology of our faith must be thoroughly Trinitarian in nature, "It is a theology that has God the Creator, the Redeemer and the Comforter at its very heart" (Verkuyl 1993, 72). Within a Trinitarian perspective of Interfaith Encounters, one needs to take into account the role of the Holy Spirit in the world and in the Church. George Peters insightfully distinguishes a pre-Pentecost ministry and an extra-Pentecost ministry of the Holy Spirit,

The pre-Pentecost ministry is fully exposed in the Old Testament and in the gospels, while the extra-Pentecost ministry relates to world missions. We may speak of it as the general or universal ministry of the Holy Spirit, keeping in mind that the Holy Spirit is the presence of God and is omnipresence. (1972, 76)

A more recent attempt was made by Amos Yong in his article, “Discerning the Spirit(s) in the World of Religions” (ed. John Stackhouse, 2001). Yong sought to make a methodological claim that “a pneumatological theology of religions not only commits but also enables Christians to engage empirically the world’s religions in a truly substantive manner with theological questions and concerns” (Yong 2001, 38).

What implications can we draw from the universal work of the Holy Spirit for Christian Encounters with Buddhists? First, Christian-Buddhist encounters are possible because the Holy Spirit is the one who reveals the mystery of the kingdom, and has been active before Christ’s earthly ministry and continues to reveal God’s truths to all people, Thais and Japanese included. Evidences of the hidden work of the Spirit include revealing truths about Christ in dreams to unbelievers, planting in the minds of unbelievers an irresistible desire to worship the Creator and convicting unbelievers of their sins through their conscience that was created in the image of God.

Second, the active work of the Holy Spirit assures Christians that despite the rebellion of humanity and the depravity of certain practices within other religions, humanity has not been totally left alone (John 16:7-8). “There was total depravity but not total destitute and deprivation” (Peters 1972, 79). The element of mystery coupled with the ongoing role of the Holy Spirit points to

the place of prayer and spiritual discernment in Christian engagements. Recognizing the hiddenness of God’s working in people’s minds and hearts, the role of the Christian in interfaith encounters is to explain truth in an intelligible fashion and to help unbelievers discern God’s work in their lives. God’s part is to make that truth effective. In the process of encounter, God can open the spiritual eyes of unbelievers. God can also open the spiritual perceptions of his children. Therefore, the interfaith encounter is a discovery process about God for Christians and Buddhists alike.

Third, a pneumatological engagement also reminds the Christian of the spiritual battle of the kingdom (Eph 6:10-18). The real enemy is Satan, who blinds the eyes of unbelievers, and not unbelievers themselves (2 Cor 4:4). The interfaith encounter proceeds with a combined attitude of prayer and spiritual warfare against the powers of darkness as well as reconciliation and compassion toward unbelievers. Prayer that centres on the real enemy will generate within believers an attitude of dependence upon the Lord as well as an attitude of humility and compassion in relation to people of other faiths.

The Asian church today is a pilgrim community that continues in this continuing story of redemption.

Drawing to a Close

In conclusion, the ultimate uniqueness of Jesus Christ in the heart of God began since the salvation history of Israel of God establishing His kingship over the nations through Israel. The Asian church today is a pilgrim community that continues in this continuing story of redemption. At the heart of God’s kingdom is a King named Jesus. Without naming the King as Jesus, no community

of the King can claim to usher in the biblical kingdom! Therefore, real encounter can only be undertaken when the Christian is committed to the Lord Jesus but then seeks to allow God to teach and reveal Himself within a penultimate framework of understanding. He is open for Buddhists to teach Him about God. This is possible due to his willingness to submit to the Lordship of Christ, who is bigger than his traditions and his church, and then to allow the Holy

Spirit of the inspired scriptures to be his guide. In encountering Buddhists, the Christian must belong to a real rather than fictitious community of faith. Therefore, syncretism will eventually be guarded by scriptures, the Holy Spirit and a local Evangelical community of faith. Ultimately, the Christian needs to possess a theological framework that places Jesus Christ as the Saviour and Lord, a framework that the theology of Jesus' total kingship demands.



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The Missional Church is Passionately “Glocal”

by David W. Stoner

The reality of massive global people movements continues to reshape the demographic contours of every urban population center in the world. This surge in ethnic diversity is not only being showcased in the historic world class cities of our time. Increasingly, smaller scale reflections of the same cultural mosaic are now on display in almost every small city and town across both rural and urban landscape of North America, with some differences between the United States and Canada.

The Nations: now showing at a neighborhood near you

Thankfully, a fresh breeze of the Spirit is awakening all of us to a new missional agenda for our times

It is an indictment of the North American Church that this increase in multiculturalism where we live has caught so many Christian communities by surprise. What is even more unfortunate is that a troubling number among them continue to operate in a state of complete bewilderment or even denial. Uncertain of how to respond, most of these local churches continue to go through the motions of *doing missions* as usual.

Thankfully, a fresh breeze of the Spirit is awakening all of us to a new missional agenda for our times. Every local church that shares God’s heart for the nations is wrestling with the unique implications of these global human highways for the places where we live and serve.

Compelled by the millions of migrating and displaced peoples in the world today, the Mars Hill church community that we are a part of has been asking the following kinds of questions: how should this reality influence the way we are defining the focus and scope of our global outreach efforts? (For the purposes of this article, *global outreach* is being defined as used by our Mars Hill community: “...the intentional advance of the

gospel across cultural and language barriers beyond our church’s normal boundaries of influence.”)

What effect should the new cultural complexities impacting our city have on the way we realign our missional vision and strategy?

The “glocal” missional church

Every slogan and catch phrase is cursed with a surprisingly short half-life. Though the use of *glocal* (the creative merger of *global* and *local*) in secular and missional circles is of fairly recent origin, it may be quickly wearing out its welcome.

Nevertheless, we are all indebted to its creator—advocates for the contribution they have made to our missional vocabulary. The addition of *glocal* to our discourse has brought into much clearer focus the potential disconnect and distortion that can so easily cripple a mission-minded church’s best intentions.

This missional idea not only rebukes our ignorance and neglect of the growing presence of the *ethne* (nations) in our own backyards. *Glocal* also critiques the flawed architecture that undermines the integrity of countless local church missions efforts.

Too many Christian communities have organized their obedience to the Great Commission around inadequate missional definitions and models. Over time, the unique meaning of *missions* (the historic

sending activity of the church in service of God’s advancing kingdom across ethnic and language barriers) has become a blurred and indistinguishable dimension of many local church evangelism or general ministry programs.

The introduction of the *glocal* concept forces all of us to reexamine our missional grounding, inviting us to realign our local outreach strategies in a way that reflects the same cross-cultural intentionality of our global outreach initiatives.

More directly, *glocal* also brings our faulty church missions structures under some desperately needed scrutiny. It is not uncommon for a local church to operate separate local and international (the farther away from the church the move valid) outreach programs, often under the oversight of different ministry divisions.

At the very least, this built-in dichotomy in a local church’s outreach

strategy saps the vitality and strength of its overall missional impact. And in more cases than we’ll ever admit to, it has also degenerated into something far more destructive: competing missional agendas and ministry turf wars.

A seamless missional community

We are grateful for the way that the missional values inherent in the *glocal* concept are informing Global Outreach (GO) at Mars Hill. Not only has it helped us clarify the intentional cross-cultural

At the very least, this built-in dichotomy in a local church’s outreach strategy saps the vitality and strength of its overall missional impact.

identity of our GO vision, it has strengthened the focus of our strategy on the least evangelized peoples of the world, regardless of their geographical proximity to our community.

Glocal has also affirmed the integrated organizational model we are pursuing in our community's missions efforts. Our GO ministries are structured into two major arenas: local and international. Led by gifted teams of volunteer servants and pastoral staff, both local (LO) and international outreach (GO) answer to the same Lead GO Pastor. And all of them together are under the spiritual authority and oversight of a group of servant representatives of the Mars Hill community known as the "GO Lead Team."

In these definitional and structural ways, we are purposefully moving our GO model away from compartmentalization and the competing interests it can breed, toward greater complementarity and cohesion. This is the ethos that drives our vision of "the new kind of church in the world" we feel called to fulfill: *a seamless missional community*.

We have observed that in the brief history of our community's GO efforts, few words seem to have power over us the way that *seamless* does. It has evoked our dream of the kind of missional church we long to become: one that regardless of age, gender or gifting, shares the same passionate pursuit of God's heart for the nations.

But the idea of *seamlessness* not only describes what we are dreaming; it also influences how we are pursuing that

dream. This concept emphasizes our commitment to the kind of interdependence and synergy in our GO vision and strategy that overcomes the usual barriers that divide and separate the various ministry arenas of a local church.

While we recognize the unique "missional guidance system" that the GO ministry team provides for Mars Hill, we are convinced that God never intended our missionary identity and calling to be the exclusive interest of only a portion of the church. We, together with every spiritual leader in our spiritual community, are compelled by a shared sense of responsibility that the full measure of all the spiritual, human and financial resources entrusted to us must be stewarded wisely in service of God's advancing kingdom.

For that reason, regardless of the principal ministry arena in which someone may be serving at Mars Hill (whether Children's, Counseling, Student's, Teaching, House Churches, Administrative Services, Student's or Worship Ministries), whether paid staff or volunteer servants, we desire to see each person's kingdom capacities released so that the full measure of their *glocal* disciple making potential is realized.

The *seamless missional community* is caught up in a transcendent vision of the unique local and international purposes of God for which it has been created, a vision that moves us beyond ourselves and across the barriers that can isolate us, whether they are inside or outside of the church.

Seamlessness not only reclaims a picture of the kind of organic, interactive, “fluid state” that we are aspiring to in all of our community’s GO activities, it specifically focuses our attention on continuity vs. discontinuity in the relationship between our local and international strategies. This *glocal seamlessness* has not only shaped the ways that our LO and GO initiatives intersect and overlap, it is central to our understanding or how men and women are best prepared for cross-cultural service and nurtured toward life-long learning as global disciple makers.

There is no more obvious or natural laboratory for training and testing the capacities of a GO ministry candidate than in the multiethnic neighborhoods of our own North American cities. Our local outreach urban platforms provide us with ideal classrooms in which to expose and prove the ministry capacities and trustworthiness of a person expressing interest in international service.

Ultimately, we envision this *glocal* synergy of experiential equipping and serving opportunities to be both the point of departure and destination for every Mars Hill GO servant. A *seamless* local and international developmental process suggests the promise of a learning cycle in which global disciple makers are expected to both receive and give back, where our previous missional understandings are being continually enriched by the new experiences and insights of our GO community as it goes and comes from our city and world.

Bringing local and global together again

Someone once said, “There are no God-forsaken places in the world...just church-forsaken.” We have found that statement to be so convicting and compelling, that its language has been recast in the Mars Hill GO vision statement we’ve felt led by the Spirit to embrace:

To join God where he is already at work among some of the most “church-forsaken” peoples, places and issues of our city and world.

As a young church, Mars Hill is discovering the practical ways in which God intends this vision to be explored. Nevertheless, a beautiful convergence between international and local outreach is already evident in the following examples of current GO relationships and service opportunities:

Global: Ministry partnerships among several people groups of North Africa

Local: “Loving our Muslim Neighbors” (in our city and state)

Global: North African initiatives among the Saharawi people of Western Sahara

Local: “Hosting Saharawi Students” (summer visits with Mars Hill families)

Global: Strategic Focus Regions of Sub-Saharan Africa, SE China and North Africa

Local: “Befriending International Students” (university campus)

Global: HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa

Local: “Engaging AIDS” (hospice care, Hispanic and African-American partnerships)

Global: The Refugee Highway Partnership (With the WEA Missions Commission)

Local: “Welcoming Strangers” (refugee mentoring and care ministries) and “Teaching English as a Second

Language”

Our community’s GO story has just begun. Nevertheless, we hope that these early reflections from our journey thus far might be useful in stirring the passion with which you and your community are seeking to become a *glocal missional church*



David Stoner has served the Mars Hill community (a church 5 years old with an average attendance of 10,000) as the Lead Global Outreach (GO) Pastor since 2000. He spent his childhood in Chile and Spain, returning to Spain with his family to work in urban ministry for 12 years. After two years of teaching at a graduate school, he now leads a gifted GO Staff and volunteer Lead Team that oversee all of our community’s local and international outreach efforts. David has a passion for the global church, and loves to explore the unique ways God is inviting Mars Hill to join him and what he is doing in the world. David and his wife Wendy live in Eastown, Grand Rapids. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org

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The WEA Missions Commission has launched a database-driven website for use by the entire WEA family of affiliates. Its purpose is to enable timely distribution of electronic books, magazines, articles and other resources for ministry training around the globe. Designated Language Coordinators upload resources to a management site, which appear seamlessly on the public site for free downloading. The site currently displays titles in Spanish, English, Dutch, and French, and will eventually feature dozens of language pages. Adding specific language pages is as easy as translating a document template.

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Proverbial Perspectives on the *Missio Dei*

by Stan Nussbaum

A mission-minded God is the God who is always telling people what time it is in his cosmic plan.

Here are some Lugbara proverbs from Uganda to stimulate your thought and action as you consider the other articles in this issue about God's mission.

"People do not erect a house on water." A house needs a solid foundation. So does a theology of mission. We cannot build our understanding of God's purpose on just one or two favorite mission texts or slogans. We need the whole Scripture and the whole heart of God as our basis. (See Isaiah 42:5-7 for a connection between creation, God's loving plan and our mission.)

"The crow of the cock is its characteristic." A mission-minded God is the God who is always telling people what time it is in his cosmic plan. That is what Jesus did. He brought the good news of the end of human night and the dawning of God's day. Our God is not a God who has to be sought through a religious quest like a secretive animal of the night. Our God parades noisily in plain sight. He wants to be found (Is. 60:1-3).

"The owner of things is the soul of things." When we speak of the *missio Dei* (mission of God), we remind ourselves that God owns mission. He is the soul of mission. We may be the visible body of mission, but the body without the spirit/soul is a corpse. (See Job 38:4 for a reminder of who is in charge.)

"The satisfaction of a pregnant woman is a child." God's mind is pregnant with the idea of the mission of transforming the world. His satisfaction comes when that idea is born into reality. The baptism of Jesus was an especially satisfying moment for his Father (Mt. 3:17).

"Millet does not sow itself." God's good news is like seed. It can produce a great crop but not if it remains in

storage. The gospel has to be embodied and announced by transformed human beings and groups (Mt. 28:19-20).

“The cricket chirps by its hole.” This is the opposite of mission. The cricket thinks like a coward, not a missionary. While it makes noise, it stays close to its hole so it can quickly dart back inside in case of danger. Jesus walked far from home down the road of danger, rejection and sacrifice. If we follow him, we will have to be on the same road he was (Acts 4:31).

“The sun does not miss a day.” This is genuine mission. The sun was created by God for a purpose and it serves that purpose without fail. Because the sun is faithful, everyone benefits from its light. Let us greet the sunrise tomorrow with thanks to God for giving us such a wonderful, obvious reminder of what mission is all about. He who lit the fire of the sun can surely light the fire in us (Gen. 1:14-15).



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Taking Mission Mobilisation on the Road

Chacko Thomas

Backed by many people's prayers, even fasting, I found myself blessed "out of my shoes", to use a George Verwer expression, in my mission mobilisation efforts. In November 2003 I travelled to two cities, Sacramento, USA and San Salvador in El Salvador, Central America where I had a total of 26 meetings in two weeks. Most were small gatherings. Meeting with individuals after the meetings or over lunch or dinner was just as fruitful.

From the USA

Dr. L. Mualchin is a big supporter of the mission movement among the Mizo Christian people in Mizoram State, India. This is the smallest state in India with only 860,000 people but they have already sent out 2000 missionaries, an unprecedented sending rate. This brother overwhelmed me when he said that "the leadership's vision is to multiply it ten times to 20,000 missionaries, and into many more nations." How can I help this vision? Well, I have started in a small way by sending him books such as "Which way forward for Indian Missions?" by Dr. K. Rajendran.

After one meeting I came across a man whose activities include constructing church buildings in developing countries. I happen to know a brother in a developing nation whose vision is to see

places of worship for churches meeting in houses which have outgrown their facilities. His method can buy land and put up a building in a small town for around £7,000 (about US \$11,000). This makes the congregation legal as well as giving police protection for the worshippers. I hope these two men will be able to work together.

My hosts in Sacramento are helping their church to put together a mission programme for a congregation of about 300 people. I was able to put my two cents worth into it. Among other things the church's embryonic missions committee has agreed to promote outreach to immigrants in the area (among them, Sikhs, Iranians, Afghans) as part of mission. At the same time they want to focus on two unreached places of the world in their prayer, finance, short term missions and supporting nationals. My hosts, the Dietz', have spent most of their adult life in Asia, Europe and Latin America and are well able to equip the church to do cross-cultural work both at home and abroad.

Then there was the dinner meeting with a retired couple who are preparing to go to India just to get to know the country. They hope to return home with details of many projects for Christians to pray and support, through an organisation they are linked with.

My preparation for the US visit has shown me something of the immense role American Christians have played and continue to play in missions all over the world. Just as I was leaving for the States, in a Trans World Radio newsletter I read that through this radio ministry 650 churches have been planted in India as a result of listener follow-up. I realise most of the workers in India are Indians. But I would be a fool to think that all the leadership or money came from within India. We all know radio broadcasting is not cheap. The world has been blessed by the generosity of American Christians. Praise God!

I am glad to see such partnership, indeed mission is working together. The USA entry in "Operation World" tells me of the significant way they are blessing Christian missions around the world. We need to see a huge work force released from this nation in short term, tent making and other forms of missions, including a renewed focus on Europe.

From San Salvador, El Salvador

The four-day San Salvador event was organised by 13 churches with 850 participants from about 30 nations, mostly within Latin America. I am sure I am not the only one who had to repent of my wrong notions about the Latin Church. I have never been to a better organised and co-ordinated conference anywhere in the world. The Latin American Church is a mature partner in world missions on an

equal footing with the rest of the Church around the world.

What made the conference very special to me was that there were many Latins there who are or were missionaries, some short-term, others serving longer. Praise

God! A friend who attended a major COMIBAM conference prior to this, wrote to me saying that there are 6,500 Latin missionaries out there in almost every country of the world, including my own beloved country, India. My friend reminded me of the time when a Brazilian missionary

died in India of cancer and how he thought this is the end of missions for Brazilians. Obviously not!

It was a joy for me to spend an afternoon and evening after the conference with two couples who are about to leave their jobs to go to a tough mission field, one of them taking their two children with them. I was able to relate from my three years working in that nation with my Singaporean wife and young family, which included much sickness and other kinds of struggles and stress. May God give them their visas and help them to settle down and find their place in serving Him and the people there.

I met with a Latin dentist whose ministry includes taking short-term teams to needy countries to provide medical and spiritual services. He had plans to go to a particular difficult country and I was able to answer many of his questions and make suggestions, possibly making his visit easier and removing some of the fear

The Latin American Church is a mature partner in world missions on an equal footing with the rest of the Church around the world.

of the unknown. In one of the meetings I met a lady, a dentist from El Salvador who had been to India with a medical team. Wow, praise God!

Perhaps the most encouraging word I heard from the conference was that several pastors are returning to their churches now to encourage the people whom they had previously discouraged from going into missions. One of the specific cases I heard was a pastor who had hindered four of his members from going to India. He has now returned to his congregation to help them realise their visions and call. Thank you, Lord Jesus.

I am glad to know that dozens of Latins will be serving the Lord among the most unreached following this conference. An email I just got from a young lady asked for advice in becoming a Bible translator among people who do not have the Lord's word in their language. She

mentioned her 16-year-old brother who has missions as his goal when the time come. Pray for parents who have to cope with the decisions many youngsters and even adults have taken. A lady told me that her parents are upset that they will not be able to see their grandchildren as often as they used to.

The conference was mission enthusiasm with real substance. Yes, there was the normal Latin excitement about missions but the realism and having "been there, done that and learned from it" was also

evident on many faces and in their language. I have learnt not to write off Latin mission excitement as some kind of enthusiasm with no substance to it. Even ten years ago, when I last spent about 2 years in the region, I was tempted to think that. But even though for some it took ten years to reach their field, they have done it. I was there in the late 70's and early 80's when Latin America was still considered a mission field. But there has been a major change in the role of these and similar nations in missions. It is a different world today.

Returning home to reflect

While the UK is still one of the leading missionary sending countries, there are people in this nation who will be only be reached by missionaries who will come here.

It is a different UK or USA for that matter. While the UK is still one of the leading missionary sending countries, there are people in this nation who will be only be reached by missionaries who will come here. My Korean friend who pioneered a church plant in the UK now has a

congregation of about 100 white British people, most of were formerly un-churched. Oh yes, missionaries will be needed in Latin America but they are also missionary sending nations. I had to remind myself of that when I first went to Argentina in 1979; one of the churches where I preached had a pastor who was formerly a missionary to India with the Nazarene church.

Being an Indian, everywhere people were asking me what is going on there. It amazed people to discover that there are

at least 43,000 cross cultural Indian missionaries, most of serving within our borders, but the church is growing under much opposition and even persecution. Yet a nation this large, with 1 billion of God's lost children, with the largest number of unreached people groups in any country (some numbering many

millions), it is wonderful that the church world-wide is paying attention to it in prayer, going, sending, giving and every other way. I am glad to know that there will be thousands in Sacramento and Latin America encouraged to believe God for India to turn to Him. Amen!



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The Impact of an African Regional Missions Movement

by Bayo Famonure

Africa! A continent of immense contradictions!

So rich, so poor! So much available in the area of human resource, yet this vast treasure is largely ignored within the continent.

Africa! A continent of immense contradictions! So rich, so poor! So much available in the area of human resource, yet this vast treasure is largely ignored within the continent. The awareness of the vast potentials of the continent and what it can offer the entire world, if tapped and sharpened in the right way, caused African evangelicals to come together in 1966 to launch the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA). One of the early things the AEA did was to set up the commission on Theology (TC), and the commission on Evangelism and Missions (EMC).

Rev. (Dr.) Panya Baba was appointed the Executive Secretary of the EMC and he did a good job of setting up the first National Missions Movement in the continent - the Nigerian Evangelical Missions Association (NEMA). He tried to move around other countries but was hampered by low finances and the fact that he was also the Executive Director of the largest mission organisation in the continent - the Evangelical Missionary Society of ECWA.

A full time executive secretary was appointed for the EMC in 1989. At the time, there were very few mission agencies in the continent, so there was no reason or possibility for National Missions movements. The schools of missions were in only about 4 countries and there was an abysmal ignorance about missions and missionaries.

Of course, there had always been some mission movement right from the time the Apostles came to preach in Africa. This movement was not a mass movement but it was there. For example, Samuel Ajayi Crowther, a slave boy from Nigeria, rescued from a slave

ship by a British boat in Sierra Leone, rapidly became an evangelist and a missionary soon after his conversion. In 1842 through the help of the Church Missionary Society of the Church of England, Crowther was taken to England for theological education. There he was ordained as a pastor in the Anglican Church and later returned to Nigeria where he served as a great church leader, a theologian and a missionary statesman. In order to hasten the missionary endeavour of the Church, Bishop Ajayi Crowther single-handedly translated the whole Bible into his mother-tongue, Yoruba in 1864 AD.

In 1880, Edward Blyden, an African-American in a speech before the American Colonisation Society said:

“Africa may yet prove to be the spiritual conservatory of the world. Just as in past times Egypt proved a stronghold of Christianity after Jerusalem fell, and just as the noblest and greatest of the Fathers of the Christian Church came out of Egypt, so it may be, when the civilised nation, in consequence of their wonderful material development, shall have had their spiritual perceptions darkened and their spiritual susceptibilities blunted through the agency of a captivating and absorbing materialism, it may be that they may have to resort to Africa to recover some of the simple elements of faith; for the promise of the land is that she shall stretch forth her hands unto God”. (Edward Blyden, 1880:124)

It was the presence of these patches of revival that helped to inflame the missionary vision we have now in Africa. Many of us got converted through the

revivals of the late sixties. The Scripture Union of Nigeria for example was instrumental in helping many of us come to Christ. That was how I, for example, got converted. It was a very serious issue to repent of sins those days. It meant a total break from the old ways and a determination to go all the way with Jesus. There was much teaching on holiness and sacrifice for God. These led us to the movement in the universities. In West Africa, the Christian groups in the campuses went by the same Christian Union, while in the East, they were called FOCUS - Fellowship of Christian Unions. Village outreaches were a trade mark of these groups and many of the students got involved in going out to where the sinners were! It was not difficult for their zeal to translate into missionary vision.

Since I came into EMC as a full time Executive Secretary, much has been done to impact the continent, Africans in diaspora, and some effort beyond the continent. Whereas there were only 4 countries with missions training in any form, now there are about 23 countries with viable missions training programmes. Some of the trainers and teachers were trained through a Missions Leaders Training Course (MLTC) organised by EMC, and there are other training programmes for those who will equip the African mission force.

The first journal of missions from Africa is receiving much interest from missions trainers, theological schools and pastors. This journal also is part of the EMC vision.

So where are we? Permit me to quote Dr Tokunboh Adeyemo, the immediate past General Secretary of the AEA. “Since

independence largely in the sixties, missions initiative by the African church has reached exponential dimension. Numerous indigenous missions agencies have sprung up all over sub-Sahara Africa with Nigeria taking the lead with over 135 independent indigenous mission societies and over 4,500 Nigerian missionaries serving at home and abroad. Today, the most vibrant and dynamic assembly in Belgrade was

started and is pastored by a Nigerian missionary”.

In closing, it is helpful to note that much more can be achieved through unity. The African regional missions movement is committed to uniting and sensitising Churches all over the continent to tackle the task of the great commission in great earnest, complete this task job even as we face the world beyond our continent.



‘Bayo Famonure, a long-term Nigerian missions leader, leads the Evangelism and Missions Commission of the Association of Evangelicals of Africa. Based in Jos, Nigeria, he also is Editor-in-Chief of “Missionafric: A Journal of Mission Practice in and from Africa”, the EMS journal, published three times a year. He serves on the Global Leadership Team of the WEA Missions Commission. He is married to Naomi, a mission leader in her own right and founder director of Messiah College, a full-service boarding school for African missionary kids. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org.

Doing It Right: Great Commandment Key to Great Commission

by Dave Pollock

*Seeking to
obey the Great
Commission in
the post
modern world,
as it has been
for 2000 years,
requires
obedience to
the Master.*

The cover story for December 8, 2003 edition of *U.S. News and World Report* was entitled “The New Evangelicals.” In response I wrote a letter to the editor expressing my appreciation for the fair, kind, insightful work done by the reporter AND how deeply pained and convicted I felt as a result. Terms such as “strongly personalist,” “therapeutic,” “theological fuzziness” and “market-savvy” used to describe us caused me to thank the editor for the necessary wake up call for us. The conviction came because of the characteristics their writers had not seen in us. The article made no reference to the Great Commandment that our Lord said would be “The Mark of the Christian.”¹ No reference was made to a demonstration in obedience to the “one another” admonishments of the epistles. He referred to this christianity changing America but there was no apparent evidence that this influence produces a deep commitment to justice or compassion or humility as Micah indicated is a requirement of a virtuous nation. Seeking to obey the Great Commission in the post modern world, as it has been for 2000 years, requires obedience to the Master. He clearly instructed us, at the most important Passover celebration in history, that the Great Commission cannot be fulfilled without obeying the Great Commandment.

After washing the disciples feet Jesus said, “You call me Teacher and Lord and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you should wash one another’s feet...” After Jesus predicts his betrayal, breaks bread with the disciples and dismisses Judas to betray Him, he speaks of being Glorified - of having His character demonstrated. Significantly, He prays about this very issue² as He moves from Demonstration³ and

Proclamation⁴ of His love to Supplication⁵. The Scripture repeatedly reminds us that the motivating factor in the God of Creation is Love (John 3:16; Rom. 5:8). It follows that at the heart of the Proclamation is the **Great Commandment** - "A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples if you love one another."

Sadly, it may be no accident that Peter's non sequitur in this passage seems to deflect the impact of the command of Jesus when He asks "Where are you going?" We, all too often, tend to emphasize the prediction of Peter's denial in this passage rather than Jesus' command. Could it be that our sinful nature, coupled with the attempted distraction of the Prince of this world, prevents us from seeing the seriousness, the pivotal factor of this command? Why do we find it so difficult to take this seriously! In 50 plus years of being a Christian, I am yet to hear a missionary speaker, attend a mission conference, or participate in a mission strategy session where there was full recognition that the fulfillment of the Great Commission is dependent upon obedience to the Great Commandment. Could this explain what may go wrong with the Harvest or perhaps what could go right with it?

The Great Commandment is first and foremost a **Mandate** with all of the significance and authority of the Law given to Moses. When Jesus was asked by the Pharisees "which is the greatest commandment in the Law"⁶ He said, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul and mind." Interesting, is it

not, that Jesus - God in flesh - says to His disciples "If you love me, keep my commandments"⁷. He proceeds in Matthew 22, that "the second is like the first: "Love your neighbor as yourself"...and in John 13 "my commandment is that you love one another."

Since it is a command to obey, love must be defined not as a feeling but rather as a choice to act on behalf of another for that person's good and God's glory. This is the force of the 10 commandments. It is the leverage for loving one's enemy⁸. This love is projected in the parable of the "Good Samaritan."⁹ It is the heart beat for the proper response to the "one anothers" of the New Testament. It is the key to submission.¹⁰ It is central to the mind of Christ.¹¹

Second, it is the key **Method** of evangelism as it demonstrates to a world that the Divine has invaded us and performed the miraculous in individuals that in turn impacts the whole - "By this shall all men know that you are My disciples." Josh McDowell, in his book "The New Tolerance", points out that the apologetic for the post modern mind is the demonstration of Christ's love in and through us. It should be no surprise that in John 13 Jesus ties the Great Commission inseparably to the Great Commandment. How we respond to one another is the testimony of reconciliation. John's first epistle indicates that being in Christ is revealed in three ways. First, has his mind been affected? Does he believe that Jesus is the Christ?¹² Has his will been affected? Does he desire to be obedient to Christ's commands?¹³ Has his love been

affected? Does he love his brother?¹⁴. His letter explodes with the development of John 13:34. Peter also reflects on this same theme when he says “Be clear minded, self-controlled so you can pray and love one another deeply...”¹⁵ Fulfilling the Great Commission is clear as Peter, echoing Jesus¹⁶ instructs believers so that “they may see your good deeds and glorify God”¹⁷ which leads naturally from **Demonstration to Proclamation** as we “give an answer to everyone who asks a reason for the **Hope** that we have.”¹⁸

Third, the Great Commandment fulfilled is, in fact, the *Message* incarnated. Our commitment to incarnational evangelism is not simply the mastering of cross cultural skills but the message lived in the presence of a watching world. John 13 through 17 must be seen as a whole. What Jesus demonstrated in John 13 and proclaims in John 13-16 flows into His supplication to the Father, apparently in the hearing of John, James and Peter who went with Him in the garden¹⁹. Jesus prays in regard to Himself that He will continue to demonstrate (glorify) the character of the Father and then He defines Eternal Life, “That they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.” Is it not startling that as He prays for us, “those who will believe in Me through their (disciples’) message” that He prays that we might be brought to complete unity to show the world that you (the Father) sent me (the Son)? It is the essence of Eternal Life. But how does such a prayer discover its

answer? Simply it is produced by obedience to the Great Commandment... love one another... and the product is unity... the message is incarnational first in Him and then in those who are His.

Finally, obedience to the commandment is our **Motivation** to fulfill the Great Commission. Paul, whose persistent message is that we are called to obedience and such obedience brews unity as the product of our love²⁰ acknowledges that the key to our investment in the Kingdom is that “the love of Christ compels us.”²¹

No other motivation is powerful enough to press us to truly fulfill the Great Commission. One might be motivated to develop a church organization for pride of accomplishment, or position of power or even financial gain but to truly fulfill

the Great Commission requires the power of the Great Commandment. “Go make disciples... baptize... teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.” The sufficient motivation to endure through the process of discipling is only His love in us, and key to this

kind of shepherding is living it, being “an example to the flock”²². The Great Commission states that the indication of its fulfillment is that the disciple obeys whatsoever He has commanded. The Great Commission is not really fulfilled until the Great Commandment is obeyed.

Whether it be evangelism, discipleship, service, member care, proper administration or any other exercise of our giftedness²³, the Great Commandment is

The Great Commission is not really fulfilled until the Great Commandment is obeyed.

our Mandate, our Methodology, our Message incarnate, our Motivation and He is our Model of what we as individual believers and we as the Church should

be before a watching world. Anything short of obedience to the Great Commandment is failure to fulfill the Great Commission.



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Endnotes:

¹ Book by Francis Schaeffer

² John 17:1-5

³ John 13:1-11

⁴ John 13:12-16,33

⁵ John 17

⁶ Matt. 22:34-40

⁷ John 14:15,21,23; 15:9-10,12-14,17

⁸ Matt. 5:44

⁹ Luke 10:33

¹⁰ Eph. 5:21f

¹¹ Phil. 2:5f; Rom. 5:1-8

¹² I John 2:30f

¹³ I John 2:3-6

¹⁴ I John 3:11-24; 4:7-21

¹⁵ I Peter 4:7

¹⁶ I Peter 2:11,12

¹⁷ Matt. 5:13-16

¹⁸ I Peter 3:15

¹⁹ Matt. 26:36-38

²⁰ Rom. 12:1-21; I Cor. 12:12-16; I Cor. 13; I Cor. 16:1-4; II Cor.1:3-7; 8:1-9; Gal. 5:22; 6:1-10; Eph. 4:6; Phil. 1:9-11; 2:5-18; 4:2-3

²¹ II Cor. 5:14

²² I Peter 5:3

²³ Eph. 4:11-16; Rom. 12:1-21; 13:8-10

Raising Up the New Breed of Missionaries in the Philippines

by Bob López

The Almighty is orchestrating the dispersal of Filipinos in over 200 countries in the world as contract laborers and professionals. With about 500,000 believers among the nearly 8 million Filipinos living and working overseas, the potential of bringing the witness of Christ to the tens of millions of people is there.

In the challenging task of raising up world-changers for the global marketplace, owning a paradigm of excellence is non-negotiable.

The year 2003 saw stepped-up activities in Global InTent, the Tentmakers mobilization ministry of the Philippine Missions Association. With the goal of deploying 200,000 tentmakers by the year 2010, significant strides were made in mobilization, training and strategic intercession in the Filipino global church.

In the challenging task of raising up world-changers for the global marketplace, owning a paradigm of excellence is non-negotiable. Over the last twelve months, approximately 1,500 people and over 400 pastors in various parts of the country have been challenged with the tentmakers vision. Several dozen more underwent trainings to further hone their ministry skills as well as gain much needed insight about the issues in the global spiritual arena that they would be facing in the future as tentmakers. Another spiritually significant event was the signing of the covenant of support of the Filipino tentmakers vision by dozens of national, regional and local church leaders during the Global InTent 2003 Tentmakers' Congress last March 23, 2003. A song entitled the OFW (Our Faithful Witness) Song was composed for the said event and has since become the Filipino tentmakers anthem.

As a result of these activities, a sense of ownership of the vision has taken root. As of this time, regional movements have been formed in different parts of the country. Individuals took the initiative to organize themselves to so that they can effectively mobilize local

churches, arrange and conduct training, set up an intercessory network and tap committed and qualified people to provide member care. Prominent denominations like the Conservative Baptists, the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Luzon Convention of Southern Baptists, and even two different wings of the Methodists have already begun taking a serious look at how they can re-invent their mission departments in order to be at the cutting edge of world evangelization. Many smaller denominations and local churches have started commissioning their tentmakers to the 10/40 Window.

Vision casting has not been limited to churches in the Philippines. Filipino pastors and lay workers serving as expatriate contract workers in Asia and the Middle East have also been inspired to use their occupations as platforms for cross-cultural witness and ministry. More and more leaders are beginning to realize the redemptive design of the Almighty in orchestrating the dispersal of Filipinos in over 200 countries in the world as contract laborers and professionals. With about 500,000 believers among the nearly 8 million Filipinos living and working overseas, the potential of bringing the witness of Christ to the tens of millions of people is there. Initial steps to

establish a global database of Filipino churches and Christians have been taken by PMA to harness the potential of this awesome army of the Lord.

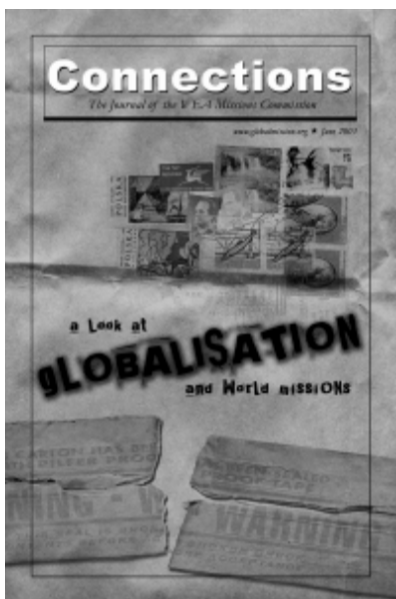
Short and practical training modules have been developed by various Philippine-based missions training organizations with the Christian Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) in mind. Training modules will be reproducible and transferable in order to using mass media and in order to equip as many as possible in the shortest time at the least expense. Several training events have already been conducted within several countries where Filipino churches are operating. The existence of Filipino ministerial fellowships like the Filipino International Network and the Pinag-ISA is making all of this feasible. All over the world, Filipino churches have been attracting people of various ethnic backgrounds to join in worship and fellowship. We are in the process of trying to document the number of Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists that are being touched through the witness of the Filipino tentmaker.

Yes, we are anticipating even more glorious days ahead as the impact of strategic global outreach is realized through our hundreds of thousands of OFWs (Outstanding Filipino Witnesses)!



Currently serving as the National Director of the Philippine Missions Association, the missions commission of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches and is a Board member of Tentmakers International Exchange (TIE). Formerly served as the Chief Operating Officer of the Asian Center for Missions, the largest missions training organization in the Philippines. Bob considers mobilizing Christian overseas contract workers to share the gospel cross-culturally as the most strategic work that can be done for Filipinos on a global scale. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org

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Effective Equipping Of the Cross-Cultural Worker

by Rob Brynjolfson

I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do. Jesus of Nazareth (John 17:4)

The effective equipping of cross-cultural workers is a monumental task on a scale too grand for one entity, organism or institution alone to achieve.

The effective equipping of cross-cultural workers is a monumental task on a scale too grand for one entity, organism or institution alone to achieve. It requires a synergistic delivery of training by a spectrum of providers strategically targeting desired outcomes at the points of greatest need over the life of the individual missionary. The purpose of this article is to explore the need for cross-cultural training to be delivered over a ministry life cycle through a diversity of educators and equippers. No other approach can accurately be described as whole person or holistic.

What is the ministry life cycle? What are the institutions, organisms, entities that can be identified as providers of learning and training over the span of a ministry life cycle? How significant is this training perspective in relation to the task of world evangelization? What role does the Church play? Where does the dedicated missionary training centre fit in this spectrum? These compelling questions are summarized by the admission that training is critically important and impossible to achieve without a holistic and long term outlook. This article is divided into two portions. The first examines the ministry life cycle training concept from a perspective of life long learning. The second considers the kinds of training needed to meet the needs of today's missionaries.

Life Cycle and Life Long Learning in Ministry

One could claim, in contradiction to the first paragraph, that there is an example of one entity, a person actually, who achieved the impossible dream and effectively trained people for cross-cultural ministry. Jesus rises above all others when we think of effective training. When he emitted those words *"I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do"* (John 17:4), remember that the resurrection lay before Him, the passion was still to be endured, but his task of training the 12 was finished. It was this finished task that brought glory to God. However, before one assumes that Jesus alone could miraculously achieve the impossible task of training 12 men for the premiere inauguration of the global cross-cultural mission, remember only a short time prior he also admitted that more learning was needed, and to that end he was sending the Comforter (John 14:26). The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to lead us into a life long pilgrimage of growth. We sojourn in the land of long term learning.

The Master Teacher/Trainer established a principle that missionary trainers repeatedly affirm: learning for life requires life long learning. The cradle-to-grave approach to missionary training is the perspective of delivering needed information, facilitating understanding, achieving proficiency in skills and abilities and developing character qualities and attitudes over the ministry life cycle of the cross-

cultural worker. Unlike our Lord, we do not have the luxury of ever saying the work is completed. There is always more to learn. More specifically, it is not our place to assume the task can be finished by ourselves, in one stage or by one institution or one generation. Graduated does not mean finished. The front-end loading of academic degrees prior to overseas service mediates against worker effectiveness on two planes. First, it postpones language learning and culture adaptation at the peril of achieving functionality in these critical skills. A twenty year old has a better chance of excelling in Arabic than a 28 year old. Second, the actual needs of a field or team may differ and if a young missionary can learn the language and adapt to the culture before choosing a career path, he or she will be able to make a wiser choice in the long run. In other words, wait and see what you really need to learn to be more effective on the field.

The ministry life cycle includes the home, where the vast majority of all learning takes place; the Church; and a variety of educational experiences including vocational/professional, biblical/theological, formal/nonformal, pre-field missionary equipping, on-field and in service training, specialization training, up-grading, or retooling. The following diagram, though published over 12 years ago, outlines the cycles of learning throughout the career of a missionary. The various spokes of this training wheel, as it has been called, reflect possible points of input from a diversity of training entities or institutions. It is possible that one entity

might cover a number of spokes. Feasibly, the church or agency could also be a provider of formal, non-formal

Biblical/Theological and cross-cultural studies. An additional spoke could be added: vocational/professional education.



From William Taylor¹, ed., Internationalizing Missionary Training.

Different Strokes for Different Spokes

In this section, we begin to see the need to adapt the training “strokes” to fit the different spokes of the missionary training wheel. One of the other questions to ask is how significant is this training perspective in relation to the task of world

evangelization? This could be restated by asking what role does training play in light of the urgency and monumental scale of the task before the Church? My ears still burn at the thought of a well-meaning and zealous brother who told me “don’t waste time going to school, brother. Souls are being lost even as you read your books.” A more transcendent view perceives not only

the long-term benefits of adequate training but also the necessity of obedience to the will of God, and if obeying God means going through a missionary training centre, one had better do it.

For this discussion, it is imperative to understand how the right kind of training helps the Church achieve the goal of reaching the world. The right kind of training, for instance, will increase the work force. My short sighted friend believed that rushing off to the field would increase the work force and shorten the task of world evangelization. Unfortunately, the opposite is true. Ill prepared missionaries do not remain on the field. Although the WEA Missions Commission ReMAP I study of attrition demonstrated that one of three factors contributing to longevity was pre-field dedicated missionary training, the ReMAP II project, focusing on missionary retention, is determining that pre-field missionary training makes a significant impact on the longevity of workers overseas.² Longevity equals more workers. I recall a missionary candidate in his impetuous zeal to get to the field telling me he didn't need pre-field training and if he wanted conflict management skills he could get them at the Justice Institute. He returned within a year from his assignment, his church is now unwilling to send him back, but I fear the lesson was never learned.

The right kind of training will also increase a worker's effectiveness. Frankly, little is known regarding the

effectiveness of field missionaries. Missiologist Don K. Smith estimates that only 10% of all western missionaries are really effective.³ The added stress and instability due to maladjustment and culture shock produce an ineffectiveness that can be alleviated by adequate pre-field training. Myron Loss believes that 75% of missionaries do not function adequately in their field assignments. He writes,

Based upon personal experience, numerous contacts with missionaries representing many missions and many fields, and extensive reading of relevant literature, I estimate that only about one out of four missionaries function at a level near to that which was normal in their home culture.⁴

Finally, the right kind of training will also increase an entire group's effectiveness. Interpersonal relationship issues continue to hamper the effectiveness of today's multicultural teams. More than ever, missionaries need adequate training to ensure that they already enjoy the needed skills, such as conflict management or interpersonal communication, in order to deal with character and attitude issues that inhibit the work of a team.

So what is the right kind of training? Where does one go to find such training? It should be obvious by now that the right kind of training cannot be encapsulated within one organization, institution, agency, school

or church. This is why we need a commitment to training throughout the ministry life cycle of the cross-cultural worker. Perhaps, we can ask where do the various institutions, organisms and agencies enter into the picture of training for effective ministry?

The primary institutions working in this synergistic life-span training include the home, the church, missionary agencies, formal schools and dedicated missionary training centres. Whether or not ministry life cycle training is the issue, the point of all of this is to end up with an effectively equipped person. The only way to be certain that this end is achieved is to develop training programs that are

Adapting to another culture and learning another language will require transferring of needed information, observing modelled behaviour and practicing the desired skill until proficient.

outcomes driven, because they begin with the end in mind. An outcome driven program will begin by asking what does a trained cross-cultural servant look like? Normally, key interested parties would provide descriptions that could be tabulated and organized into categories including cognitive (mental/intellectual), affective (character and attitude) and skill (abilities) outcomes.

The acquisition of some of these outcomes will be straightforward. Cognitive, outcomes require transferring or acquiring knowledge and understanding, and our schools

excel in achieving these outcomes. Skills, on the other hand, require development and practice. A cross-cultural trainee cannot normally gain the needed cross-cultural skills in the context of home, church or school. Adapting to another culture and learning another language will require transferring of needed information, observing modelled behaviour and

practicing the desired skill until proficient. The agency can facilitate the process by providing on-field and in-service training that includes language acquisition and orientation during initial cultural adjustments, but this is where a dedicated missionary training program can deliver practical training to ensure skills are honed before

departing for the field.

The third area of needed outcomes is in the affective domain. Desirable character traits and attitudes need to be identified, but the greater challenge is ensuring that these are actually achieved. During the WEA Missions Commission global consultation last year, the International Missionary Training Network team strongly expressed the need to address character and attitude outcomes in missionary training. In fact, a look at the ReMAP 1 findings demonstrates that this is the area of greatest training need. Bill Taylor wrote:

Perhaps a better way to state the case for training is to address the top five causes of OSC “preventable” attrition and realize that these causes have to do primarily with issues of character and relationships. Then we can ask the question: In what ways do our formal and non-formal training equip

missionaries in these two crucial dimensions?⁵

If we take the findings of ReMAP I and adjust them to reflect reasons for leaving that relate to character and attitude traits, we find the following list and percentages:

WEIGHTED CHARACTER & ATTITUDE REASONS FOR LEAVING MISSIONARY SERVICE						
Reasons	ALL %	OSC %	NSC %	RANK ORDER		
				ALL	OSC	NSC
Problems with peers	5.9	6.0	5.7	6	5	5
Personal concerns	4.9	5.2	4.5	7	6	9=
Disagreement with agency	4.7	3.9	6.1	8	8	4
Inadequate commitment	4.4	2.7	7.3	9	14	3
Lack of call	4.1	1.8	8.0	10	19	2
Immature spiritual life	3.3	2.5	4.5	12=	15	9=
Marriage/family conflict	3.3	3.6	2.8	12=	10	16=
Poor cultural adaptation	3.1	3.2	3.0	14	12	15
Problems with local leaders	2.9	2.2	4.0	15=	16=	12=
Inappropriate training	2.7	1.6	4.5	17	20	9=
Dismissal by agency	1.6	1.0	2.5	21=	23=	18
Immoral lifestyle	1.4	0.9	1.5	23	25	20=
Attrition percentage for reasons involving character and attitude trait ^s .	42.3	34.6	54.4			
Calculated number of returning missionaries per year for reasons involving character and attitude traits.	3,236					

Bob Ferris writes in his paper on *Standards of Training Excellence*⁷ that training for character is one of the hallmarks of excellence in missionary training centres. The second characteristic he mentions is training in community. There is an implicit link between character and community. Our behaviour, our Christian walk, is a reflection of the values we hold. The same is true of attitudes. For example, racial pride produces prejudice. Both are attitudes formed by the values we hold, normally in our subconscious mind, and were acquired through the significant communities in which we have spent time, such as our homes, communities, schools, even churches.

So, how can missionary candidates achieve the desired outcomes? We need to understand that it is only through gaining new experiences in significant communities that we can adjust and change our attitudes or develop the character traits needed to succeed on the field. Which communities best serve to facilitate the development of desired character and attitude traits? Those communities intentionally focused on achieving needed character and attitude traits will be most effective at producing these outcomes.

The home generates tremendous amounts of social learning, but few homes are suited to produce the character traits and attitudes missionaries need. The church is where we can expect more intentional character formation in generic Christian terms. In this sense,

churches are the primary institution for character and attitude formation in the ministry life cycle of the cross-cultural worker. Unfortunately, few churches are well suited to facilitate character growth and attitude adjustment when it comes to those traits more directly relating to life overseas. Flexibility, adaptability, patience and long suffering in the face of cultural differences are not the kind of character and attitude outcomes churches normally strive to produce in their members. Furthermore, our churches are not always intimate communities. Our church relationships too frequently lack openness, vulnerability and accountability.

This is why one of the needed spokes on the missionary training wheel should be a community experience in a dedicated missionary training centre. More importantly, this is why our dedicated missionary training communities need to take greater strides at becoming the kind of learning community where character is moulded and attitudes are adjusted through intentional interventions using diverse methods and are not left to chance or spontaneity. After all, if the formation of needed character qualities and attitudes is such a significant need in ministry training it requires a more intentional effort.

Drawing to a close

As such, since there is no feasible means of providing a complete training package without this approach, we need cross-cultural training to be

intentionally delivered over the entire ministry life cycle of the worker. Upon adopting a ministry life cycle approach to training we can encourage schools to excel in developing understanding and building theoretical foundations. Furthermore, we can encourage training centres and agencies to work in conjunction towards the development of needed cross-cultural skills. Finally, and most significantly, we can begin to develop training programs in churches,

agencies and missionary training centres that intentionally use communities to foster growth in needed character qualities and adjust attitudes for field effectiveness. In this way, we can provide the synergistic delivery of specialized training by a spectrum of gifted providers and equippers strategically targeting desired outcomes in the intellectual, emotional and skills domains of the cross-cultural mission force.



Rob's first term of service was in South America where he was involved in church planting with International Teams. Married to Silvia from Argentina, they served together with WEC International in South America, Europe and Equatorial Guinea, and were involved primarily in leadership development. Rob was the founding director of Gateway Missionary Training Centre, Langley, BC. and presently, is the pastor of Esperanza Multicultural Church, Burnaby, BC and the program director for Gateway Missionary Training Centre. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org.

(End notes)

¹William Taylor, ed., *Internationalizing Missionary Training*, (<http://www.wearesources.org>, accessed Dec. 18, 2003), p. 4.

²Detlef Bloecher, *Missionary Training Makes Missionaries Resilient – Lessons from ReMAP II*, (<http://www.wearesources.org>) ReMAP I & II Articles and Files, accessed Dec. 18, 2003), p.

³Don K. Smith, from a telephone interview conducted by Peter Duyzer, January, 2001.

⁴Myron Loss, *Culture Shock: Dealing with Stress in Cross-Cultural Living*, (Winona Lake, Indiana: Light and Life press, 1983), p. 3.

⁵William Taylor, ed., *Too Valuable To Lose: Exploring the Causes and Cures of Missionary Attrition* Pasadena, CA: William Carey, 1997. p. 13.

⁶Data taken from the table "Total Weighted Reasons For Leaving Missionary Service" William Taylor, ed., *Too Valuable To Lose*, p. 92.

⁷Robert Ferris, *Standards of Training Excellence*, (<http://www.wearesources.org>) accessed Dec. 18, 2003), pp. 2-3.

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, USA, has launched a new Center for the Study of Global Christianity and unveiled a web version of the *World Christian Database (WCD)*

by Todd Johnson

The director of the new center is Dr. Todd M. Johnson, co-author with Dr. David B. Barrett of the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, Second Edition, published in 2001 by Oxford University Press. Dr. Barrett, editor of the first edition, and Australian missiologist Peter F. Crossing are also working with the center.

The *World Christian Database (WCD)*, the new electronic version of the data behind the *World Christian Encyclopedia* and *World Christian Trends*, makes massive amounts of information easily accessible online. Users can log onto a website hosted by **G o r d o n - C o n w e l l**, <www.globalchristianity.org>, for data and numerous summary tables, and can also download information into Excel to create graphs or charts, or into word processing and desktop publishing programs, with the proper attribution.

About the World Christian Database

The World Christian Database transforms current religious statistics into a real-time analysis tool that takes just minutes to perform even detailed research. This comprehensive database brings together a fully updated and cohesive religious dataset with a world-class database

architecture. The result is a simple, yet powerful database tool that enables users to customize reports and download data for in use in charts, tables, and graphs.

Find data on:

World religions
34,000 denominations
13,000 ethnolinguistic peoples
7,000 cities
3,000 provinces
238 countries

Clear, Comprehensive, Customized.

The World Christian Database (WCD) is based on the 2,600-page award-winning *World Christian Encyclopedia* and *World Christian Trends*, first published in 1982 and revised in 2001. This extensive work on world religion is now completely updated and integrated into the WCD online database. Designed for both the casual user and research scholar, information is readily available on religious activities, growth rates, religious literature, worker activity, and demographic statistics. Additional secular data is incorporated on population, health, education, and communications.

Supported by Top Scholars

A full-time staff is dedicated to updating and maintaining the World Christian Database. New information from thousands of sources is reviewed on a weekly basis to continually refine and improve the WCD. Most importantly, the staff at WCD derives much of their information from multiple cross-correlated sources and presents their final statistics such that they conform to data definitions and are consistent with related information throughout the database. This cohesive database enables users to quickly correlate variables or compare entity groups across multiple fields without spending hours to confirm consistency of measurement across data sources.

Detailed religious & demographic statistics including:

- *Population (for 2000, 2025, 2050, ...)*
- *Demographics (birth rate, adult %, life expectancy)*
- *Health (HIV rates, access to water, mortality, ...)*
- *Education (% literacy, schools, universities, ...)*
- *Communication, (scripture access, religious freedom)*
- *Christian personnel & evangelism rates*
- *Status of missions work*
- *And more!!!*

Easy to Use

The World Christian Database features a simple keyword search to find information quickly. Information is conveniently displayed by category allowing the user to drill down to detailed information at their leisure. For those that prefer to browse, several pre-formatted directories guide users through the information on country, peoples, religions, and denominations. Sophisticated users can customize their searches using advanced Field and Criteria sorting routines. This enables users to find and organize exactly the data they need and format it the way they want.

The World Christian Database (WCD) represents the core data from the *World Christian Encyclopedia* (WCE) and *World Christian Trends* (WCT). The WCD includes detailed information on 34,000 Christian denominations and on religions in every country of the world. Extensive data are available on 238 countries and 13,000 ethnolinguistic peoples, as well as data on 7,000 cities and 3,000 provinces. Statistics in the WCD represent a significant update of the data published in *WCE/WCT* in 2001. WCD is an initiative of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.



Todd M. Johnson is the director of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon – Conwell Theological Seminary, South Hamilton, Massachusetts. He can be contacted at ToddMJohnson@globalchristianity.org or connections@globalmision.org

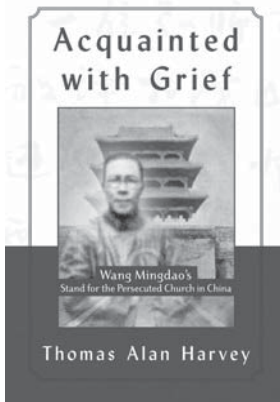
Acquainted with Grief

by Rev. Samuel E. Chiang

Wang Mingdao's Stand for the Persecuted Church in China, Thomas Alan Harvey

Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2002, 190 pages, ISBN 1-58743-0592-2

Lit-up ornaments, Christmas trees, and lilting Christmas music greet visitors to any hotel in any large city in China. In fact, the selection of the piped music as diverse as “Joy to the World”, to the surprising inclusion of “Thine Is The Glory” delights one’s auditory senses. Visitors can be excused to think there is a normalcy of Christianity in China, and that Christmas is celebrated. Elsewhere on university campuses, Bible studies are flourishing and authorities choose to look the other way. At the very same time, the harassment of large groups of house churches continues throughout China. How does one make sense of this paradox?



Students and servants who are assisting the Church in China have benefited from a fresh body of literature that has bloomed from both within China and the diaspora mainland Chinese, as well as those who are China watchers.¹ Similarly, books on Christianity and the Church in China have also gained space on bookshelves.² However, what is lacking are definitive books from a historical perspective. With two “lost” decades in China due to the Cultural Revolution that only ended in 1976, the Church has similarly lost personnel and voice. It is difficult for students and servants of the contemporary Church in China to grapple with complex issues. For example:

1. How do we understand the divide between the “Three-Self Patriotic Movement” churches and the house churches without getting emotionally entangled in draining arguments?

2. Are there theological templates whereby one can appreciate God's hand on His Bride in China? Can we avoid imposing a theological lens or template onto a healthy preserving indigenous Church?

3. How do we assess the long-term needs in China and make an enduring contribution to Kingdom partnerships?

Consistent with church history of the last two millennia, God has provided gifts to local churches, communities, cities, and countries in every generation with His chosen vessels, and God has provided to China, among others, Mr. Wang Mingdao.

Wang Mingdao is no stranger to the international arena. Over the last six decades, much has been written about him by the Christian body, encompassing both Chinese and non-Chinese from various ecclesiological backgrounds. Thus, here is yet another book on Wang Mingdao. What contribution would it bring to the Church in China, and the evangelical body at large? Would this be a timely or timeless book? Would the author, Thomas Alan Harvey, assist students and servants to the Church in China in grappling with the complex issues? Would this be a revisionist approach in looking at the Church, or would the author respect the hand of God and His chosen path for the indigenous Church? Finally, how would the author navigate the perilous attempts made by many to reconcile the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Churches to those of the house churches?

Church leaders in China can generally cite the year, month, and sometimes to the date (and hour) in which Christianity arrived in their village. They can recount the miracles or the spiritual encounter which brought about repentance. But this birthing of the indigenous Church has a deeper history. Thomas Harvey brilliantly pulls together strands of political upheaval, social instability, and the religious fabric of a century ago so as to provide the milieu, and the cultural shapers of Mr. Wang Mingdao.

During the early 20th century when the idea of "state-nation" and nationality began to take shape in the minds of Chinese leaders, they saw powerful models: Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and the United States. Or, in contrast, they also saw these great powers with which China compared unfavorably. By interweaving these elements in making sense of Mr. Wang's life, in the first two chapters the larger milieu of the birthing of China is vital, especially within the context of role of the foreign missionary and the emerging theology.

The author does not plunge the reader into a deep theological morass, and does well to disarm the reader from thinking that this is a book giving a theological template of the kingdom "now", or "deferred". Furthermore, tempting as it may be to apply the Anglican triangle (Scripture, Tradition, Reasoning), or the Wesleyan quadrilateral (Scripture, Tradition, Reasoning, and Experience), or other lenses, the audience is drawn into the story of Mr. Wang Mingdao by willingly laying aside one's theological

lenses and simply ask us to read the story. One instructive side note to what evangelicals are relearning in recent years, is that holistic or “integral” living is vital to the demonstration of the Gospel, and this has always been at the root of Chinese society. The wholeness of the social/religious fabric has been severed in the West, but in Chinese society it is “one” piece.

Harvey does an extremely good job of presenting the root of the issue between the Three-Self Patriotic Movement and the house churches. With clarity, chapters three and four deal with Wang’s position that Scripture is the inspired Word of God. Interestingly, this issue continues even today. An article by Bishop Ting in the recent official publication of Tien Feng³, already has raised not only eye-brows overseas, but also among official churches in China. Many church leaders in China (of the official church) have repudiated the official line of “theological construction of society”, and continue to embrace “justification by faith”, and the authority of the Word of God.

The issues Mr. Wang Mingdao stood for have not gone and will not go away in contemporary China. Interestingly, in the tension filled review of the body of literature on Mr. Wang Mingdao, the author is tough on the now deceased, but much appreciated, Leslie Lyall. One can be excused in thinking that the author might have overplayed his hand by passing comments on one of the great missionary statesmen for China in the last century. However, the author is equally

hard, if not harder, by skillfully and sharply dissecting Philip Wickeri’s unwavering position in supporting the government. Mr. Wickeri, still alive, will find himself in an untenable position.

The author does not lead his readers to his own conclusions on key positions (though it is not difficult to guess); but, he does seek out parallel contemporary church history to further enlighten the reader as to what the evangelical response ought to be. Hence, in chapter seven he presents the Barmen Declaration and its parallel to the Church in China. This is masterful! This puts into context Mr. Wang Mingdao’s stand, providing a sound understanding to the foundation of the indigenous Church in China.

Like many ambitious authors, Harvey tries to reconcile differences, or at least bring some potential future functions for the Three-Self Patriotic Movement into the evangelical theological arena. This is a distraction. The author could also have interacted more with a book by Stephen Wang (of no relation to Wang Mingdao)⁴, who put together the post prison diaries of Mr. Wang Mingdao.

Books on Mr. Wang Mingdao, continue to challenge and inspire. This one is no different. It causes us to deeply contemplate the nature of the Christian walk, the authority of the Bible, and the martyrs who have stood for Christ.

Thomas Harvey has made a significant scholarly contribution to the knowledge of the Church history of China (the notes and bibliography are rich). I believe there

will be further reprints of this book, and at that time, the author may wish to consider editorial changes, with a full

inclusion of the Barmen Declaration. Furthermore, this book should also be translated into Chinese.



Rev. Samuel E. Chiang serves with Trans World Radio as the International Director for Planning, Strategies and Partnerships. He has been working with the Church in China since 1991. He and his family currently lives in Hong Kong. He has written and published variously on God's work in China. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org.

(Endnotes)

¹ Some examples of this body of literature ranges from the reissued “To Change China: Western Advisers in China 1620-1960” by Jonathan Spence, to “China Wakes: The Struggle for the Soul of the Rising Power” by Sheryl Wudunn and Nicholas D. Kristof; “Wild Swans: The Three Daughters of China” by Jung Chang; “The Good Women of China: Hidden Voices” by Xinran.

² As an example, a delightful book that is having an influential effect among the intellectuals within China — “Song of a Wanderer: Beckoned by Eternity”, by Li Cheng.

³ Tian Feng Magazine, Issue No. 249, September 1, 2003, pages 4—7, 20 —23.

⁴ Wang, Stephen C.H. Wang Ming Dao: Yu Si Shi Nian (The last Forty Years). Scarborough, Ontario.: Canada Gospel Publishing House. 1997.

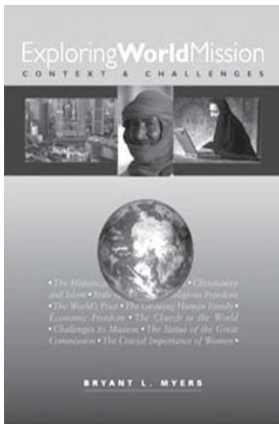
Exploring World Mission: Context and Challenges

by William D. Taylor

By Bryant L. Myers, World Vision, 2003.

If a picture is worth a thousand words, between full colour graphs and pictures, this book's 87 pages and graphics have generated 72000 words. But they are all worth it!

We are profoundly grateful to Bryant Myers, the veteran global missiologist with World Vision USA, for this thoughtful and total re-envisioning of the 1996 "The New Context of World Mission" (also published by MARC, World Vision). But this one not only updates us, but it walks us much further into the complex world of human and spiritual needs. In Myers own words,



“This is a book about God’s call for us to embrace and love a good and tragic world. Images, glimpses and patterns are presented in an effort to stretch us beyond the world as secular media and cynics too often present it. This book attempts to portray the world in a wide variety of ways, looking at it through many different lenses. Some of the patterns simply describe what is. Others show how the world is changing. Still other patterns try to provide a correction for common perceptions of the world. The hope is that we can see the world a little more as God sees it: As a treasure worthy of the death of God’s Son.”

We are challenged to “...think holistically, comprehensively and inclusively”. With Myers characteristic skill (Would that we all had such graphically-gifted teams!) we are introduced to a massive yet manageable panorama of numbers and pictures, statistics and people. Some people are numbed by numbers, but many years ago I developed the capacity

to superimpose pictures of real pictures on top of the data and countless statistics. Try it as you read this provocative and accessible book.

Myers constantly superimposes images on all the global categories presented. Many of us appreciate that he does not use the reductionistic 10/40 Window image; rather, his architecture favors of a much more accurate representation of the vast non-under-less evangelised world. It's a complex map!. And this outline shows up throughout the book, making it impossible to forget the vastness of the task before the global and missional church with all of its interceding and mobilizing, screening and funding, training, sending and shepherding stakeholders.

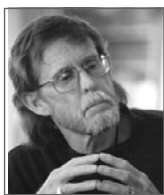
A unique gift that accompanies the book (at a slight extra cost) is a CD Rom with a beautiful and useful Power Point presentation for us to show from a computer or projected on a screen.

A few wishes regarding the book. It would be nice to see a more affordable price for our colleagues in the Majority World churches and mission movements; or perhaps a Internet downloadable pdf file that preserves the integrity of the book but makes it available worldwide.

One little item for me. I wonder when our missional reflective practitioners, writers and publishers will finally re-declare Europe one of the massive “least-evangelized world” blocks? It's about time.

So enjoy Myers' “Introduction” to this thoughtful, graphics-packed new resource, one of the chapters of our fifth issue of *Connections*.

And if you wish to order copies of the book for your own reading, libraries and ministry, World Vision is giving us a discount if you mention “Connections” with your order. Place your order directly to World Vision using the contact information we give you.



William Taylor is the Executive Director of the Missions Commissions, World Evangelical Alliance. Born in Latin America, he and his wife, Yvonne, served there for 17 years before a move to the USA. He is the father of three adult GenXers born in Guatemala. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org.

Welcome to a new creation: the WEA Missions Commission new database- driven web site: <www.WEAresources.org>

by Jon Lewis

The WEA Missions Commission has launched a database driven web site for use by the entire WEA family of affiliates. Its purpose is to enable timely distribution of electronic books, magazines, articles and other resources for ministry training around the globe. Designated *Language Coordinators* upload resources to a management site, which appear seamlessly on the public site for free downloading. The site currently displays titles in Spanish, English, Dutch, and French, and will eventually feature dozens of language pages. Adding specific language pages is as easy as translating a document template.

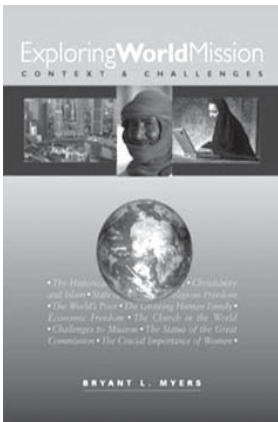
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Exploring World Mission: *An Introduction*

by Bryant Myers

This is a book about God’s call for us to embrace and love a good and tragic world. Images, glimpses and patterns are presented in an effort to stretch us beyond the world as secular media and cynics too often present it. This book attempts to portray the world in a wide variety of ways, looking at it through many different lenses. Some of the patterns simply describe what is. Others show how the world is changing. Still other patterns try to provide a correction for common perceptions of the world. The hope is that we can see the world a little more as God sees it: As a treasure worthy of the death of God’s Son.



The purpose of this book is to help broaden and challenge our thinking about Christian mission. God’s world is more than a collection of saved believers and lost souls. There is much that God loves in this world and that reflects God’s will. There is much that God hates.

We need to learn to think holistically, comprehensively and inclusively. While mission strategy necessarily focuses our efforts, mission research must do the opposite. We need to embrace the complexity, diversity and inconsistency of God’s world. By opening up our minds and perceptions, the Holy Spirit gains an opportunity to show us new things and to call for improvement in old ways.

The evangelical mission movement of the last century was brilliantly focused on evangelism, but was not so good at seeing and responding to the racism, genocide and marginalization that were characteristic of that era. Christian mission was trapped in a worldview that

focused almost solely on the spiritual and the saving of souls, both very good and necessary concerns of Christian mission. But we missed the emergence of evil on a colossal scale. In addition to two world wars and a cold war that killed tens of millions, eight genocides took place in the 20th century. Were it not for a few brave prophets from the developing world at Lausanne 1974, these issues might not have made it onto the mission agenda at all.

But this book is more than numbers and maps. I also hope that the reader will find this a manual for prayer. This book describes the world that Jesus died for. Even as you see the sad things that make up today's world, remember that Jesus' response to disheartening events, such as the impending fall of Jerusalem, was tears.

The world you are about to see is God's. Every good and tragic person and situation in today's world belongs to God and is the object of his loving concern. As you read this book, please pray. Take some time in silence from time to time. Listen for the quiet word of the Spirit of God. Somewhere in these pages there may be a word for you from God.

The good news

There is good news in God's world, although we don't hear much news about this from the media and the "experts." Child mortality is down over 100% since 1960. Life expectancy is on the rise everywhere except in parts of Africa, where AIDS is reversing these increases. Fertility rates have declined in all regions since 1945, except in Africa.

There has been an increase in human development, measured by income, education and life expectancy, in all the world's regions since 1960. There have been sharp increases in primary school attendance and in adult literacy, especially among women. Access to safe water has increased from 36% of the world's children in 1965 to 77% today. Christian mission is now global and universal. Missionaries come from everywhere and go to everywhere. The liberalism of the church in the North is being corrected by the biblical faithfulness of the church in the South. More people are praying strategically than at any other time in human history.

At the same time, God's world is in a period of rapid change. Communications and information technology are creating rapid and deep-seated shifts in many areas of life. Internet usage is increasing at a rate twenty times faster than radio and television did in their day. Science is making discovery after discovery. Country after country is moving away from the rule of the big man or the military toward embryonic democracies.

The not so good news

The first decade of the 21st century reflects the chaotic aftermath of the breakdown of a world order that had been in place since the end of World War II. Sadly, early expectations that the post-cold war period would see reduced levels of conflict and broader economic prosperity have been disappointed. Warlords exploit ethnicity and religion for power and personal economic gain in private little wars, while the international

community struggles to find a framework for global leadership and peace building.

There are wars and rumors of wars. Parts of the world are suffering in chaotic vacuums as conflicts, failed governments and non-existent economies make peace and rule of law impossible. Other parts of the world are struggling to recover from the economic excesses of the 1990s and are struggling with materialism. Everywhere terrorism, criminalized states and fundamentalism are creating fear and uncertainty.

The poverty in which so many of the world's children live remains intractable and growing. While the percentage of people living in extreme poverty—defined as less than US\$1 a day—has fallen somewhat from 1987 to 1998, the number of people living on less than US\$1 a day remains unacceptably high at 1.2 billion. Every day, diseases largely preventable in the West kill 30,500 children under the age of five in the less developed areas of the world. Everyone agrees that children are our future, and yet, since children are not a political constituency, children still too often remain invisible to governments and many others.

Deep ironies and fundamental changes are multiplying. The fastest growing group of malnourished people are those 1.2 billion who are eating too much of the wrong kind of food, a number that almost matches the number of underfed and malnourished in the developing world. The three richest people in the world have assets exceeding the combined gross domestic product of the 48 least-developed countries. Too many countries

pay more to debt service than they do for public services.

The Christian church

The center of gravity of the Christian church has moved to the South, where more than 50% of today's Christians and 70% of today's evangelicals live. Latin America is the largest continent of Christians, with dramatic shifts taking place between historic Roman Catholic dominance and free-wheeling Pentecostalism. Africa has the fastest-growing church. The churches of Asia are experiencing significant growth and, although still a minority religion, are becoming centers of missionary sending and compassionate giving.

This good news of church growth has been accompanied by some profound contradictions. The growth of the church in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and the continuing strength of the church in the United States, has not been accompanied by widespread changes in social, economic and political behavior reflecting the values of the kingdom of God. On the contrary, we see more poverty, injustice, immoral and unethical behavior, materialism and violence. Everywhere, and for every church, the critical question is what kind of Christians are we making?

The poor and the lost are often invisible to the Christian church. Within a band reaching across North Africa, including most of the Sahel, through the Middle East, and into central Asia, the northern part of the Indian subcontinent, Southeast Asia and western China, live 1.6 billion people who have little chance to hear the good news of Jesus Christ

unless someone goes to tell them. Eighty-five percent of the world's poorest countries are located in this same part of the world.

Driving Forces

“Driving forces” is a phrase intended to name the major forces shaping human history. Driving forces cannot be controlled or ignored, but they can be used. An effective mission strategy or organization recognizes these forces and positions itself so that the driving forces push the organization toward its mission and future well-being.

The Holy Spirit of God

As Christians, we know that human history is going somewhere and that it has a purpose. The most fundamental driving force at work in the world is the Holy Spirit. As Christians, we believe in a king who has come and whose kingdom is both established and is yet coming. As Christians, we are part of this kingdom and our mission is derived from our desire to be obedient to this call in our lives. No driving force or global trend can ultimately divert God from what God has chosen to do. Yet God does not work alone in human history. There is clear evidence of an Evil One, who is also at work in the form of conflict, pain, suffering, injustice and idolatry, one whose mission is to demean and to destroy life.

People have changed

One of the most profound changes in the last century is the degree to which

ordinary people changed terms of their self-understanding. Ordinary people today are more involved, less ignorant concerning how their world works, more demanding of their social institutions and less easily controlled by the powerful. This change in people's self-understanding combines with the technology and communications revolution in a way that sharply increases the power of ordinary people. The value of local participation and ownership in ministry derives its success from this profound change in people's self-understanding. In Europe and North America, there is a clear shift in values from an earlier focus on economic growth and material success in favor of values focusing on maximizing well-being, such as more say in government, protection of free speech, more say in jobs and greater demands for beautiful cities and countryside, a more humane society and inclusiveness. It is deeply ironic that this shift in values has been accompanied by decreasing Christian commitment or a shallow gospel heavily captive to culture.

Global economy, technology and communications

Global communications, the technology revolution and success of free markets across the world have created a driving force called globalization. The world is open for business 24 hours a day and information is available virtually anywhere at any time. Transnational corporations promote, and often create, economic integration as they make investment decisions, move their money among multiple currencies, minimize their risk and make money by taking advantage of the gaps and

inconsistencies between national markets. The internationalization of capital markets means countries are losing control of their currencies, commodity pricing and capital markets. Being large, international and technologically advanced is a competitive advantage in this kind of world. Being small, poor or technologically underdeveloped leaves you outside the field of play. The global reach of communications and the power of the technology revolution mean that the media and advertising are able to become more local and personal. Magazines arrive with your address printed on the cover, or even arrive custom made to your e-mail address. The Internet allows highly personalized donor relations management, often to the point of raising concerns for privacy. Access to the Internet means news, knowledge, and sadly, pornography. Using technology to manipulate information and to innovate is the engine of the new global economy. Those who have the skill, education and intelligence to create value with information will be the core workers of tomorrow. Governance has also become globalized. The United Nations struggles to function as the focal point of the “international community.” Democracy is assumed to be a universal good. Human rights are becoming normative. Humanitarian intervention supersedes national sovereignty.

The power of identity and the need for meaning

Everyone needs an identity that is rooted locally. No one feels at home in a global world. Global communications, technology and economic integration

draw things toward a center, integrating them into a global matrix. Identity, in the form of ethnicity or religion, is a counteracting force, working to disperse power, making things more personal and local. As the poor find themselves with no place in the global economy, the attractiveness of their ethnic and religious identity will increase. This leads to a fundamentalism expressed in ethnic and religious violence and social turbulence. Throughout the world, there is a resurgence of interest in spiritual matters. The hunger for meaning in the human heart remains unmet by economics or technology. The world no longer believes blindly in the self-sufficiency of science or human reason nor in the inevitability of human progress. Cyberspace is not human space and virtual reality does not provide a substitute for the purpose and identity that people need. People are searching for spirituality, although in this post-modern world, any spirituality will do. Religious pluralism is increasingly normative.

Vision of a better future

A vision of a better future drives people and institutions. For the international community, the preferred human future is peaceful, materially prosperous and democratic. Such a vision supports peacekeeping and eradication of material poverty through globalization. This is the dominant agenda of most Western governments, the UN system, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization. The market system promotes the belief that the better human future is a product of self-interest and limited greed. The market tolerates poverty in that poverty is

acceptable as long as it does not affect me. Sadly, the Christian community seems unable to proclaim a compelling vision of the best human future as being one in which human beings love God and their neighbor.

Changing demographics.

The world's population growth rate is decreasing, yet the total population is growing in many countries in the South. The North is experiencing close to zero population growth and is struggling to find social policies that make sense in face of aging populations. The single largest human migration in the 20th century has been the one from the countryside to the cities—47 percent of the world's population is now urban and this growth is primarily in Third World cities. While the West, China and Japan are graying, much of the rest of the world is young. One-third of the world's population is under the age of 15, and 85 percent of these young people live in the Third World. These children need an

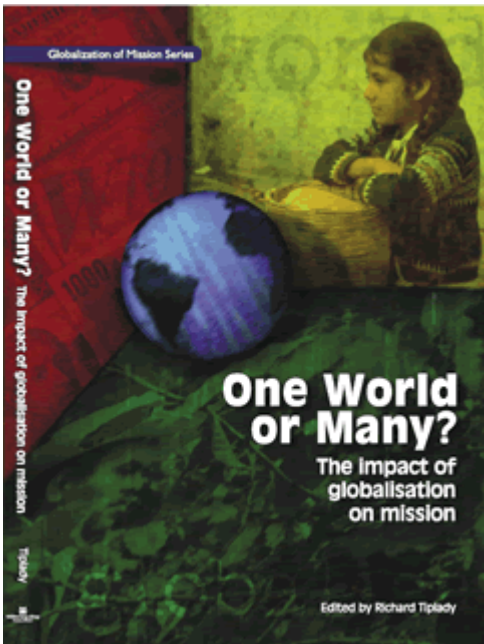
education, a place in society and a way to become productive. Without this, these young people will be a powerful force for violence and social unrest. A new generation or cohort group of teens and young people in their early twenties has emerged and, for the first time in history, it is global. These young people are connected by MTV, the Internet and a global youth culture. There are 2 billion young people in this population cohort. Several scenario-planning groups argue that the global young person is a new driving force in the making. We've just looked at six drivers that are shaping God's world. Five of them are largely human inventions and, thus, flawed and distorted by sin. Then there is the Holy Spirit of God, who nonetheless faithfully and unchangingly moves human history toward its ultimate culmination. Our mission call is to join God's Spirit and give ourselves to the emergence of God's kingdom in a world that seems unwelcoming and bent on going its own way.

Let's take a look at this world.

Editors note: This Introduction to Bryant Myer's excellent book is made with the author's permission. Note the review of the book and how to order it at the end of this issue of "Connections".



Dr. Bryant L. Myers is a vice president for World Vision, and author of "Reflections" in the MARC Newsletter. He also wrote *The New Context of World Mission* (MARC), *Walking with the Poor* (Orbis Books) and is one of the editors of the four part MARC series *Serving with the Poor: Case Studies in Holistic Mission*. He is an adjunct professor at Fuller Theological Seminary and Eastern University and serves on the board of the Viva Network. He can be contacted at connections@globalmission.org.



“This book is a sign of hope and a promise of what a carefully planned experience of global dialogue may mean for the future of evangelical mission work and missiological reflection. The authors’ diversity explains the rich variety of styles, sources, and examples used in their writing about globalization as the new context of mission in the world today. However, at the same time you will find a common thread of commitment to biblical truth and a passion for its communication and application.”

-Samuel Escobar

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Contemporary discussions about globalisation tend to emphasise its political and economic aspects. But the social and cultural changes globalisation is causing are pervasive, often unexamined, and, for that reason, all the more influential. It is also sometimes (wrongly) assumed that globalisation is simply about the export of Western values and products worldwide. This book considers in detail the key drivers of globalisation, its contemporary shape, and the implications for world mission. It also looks at the impact of globalisation on different contemporary issues affecting mission, such as ethnicity, the environment, and global health, as well as globalisation’s effect on more traditional “missionary” questions of the world religions, contextualization, theology, and the church.

WCL451-7 William Carey Library, 2003 Retail: ~~\$16.99~~ \$12.72 each or Wholesale: \$10.17* (3 or more of this title). Prices do not include shipping costs and are subject to change without notice. Checks must be US dollars drawn on US bank.