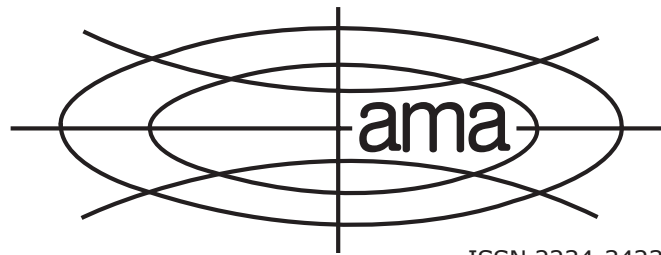




# asian missions advance

# 33



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## NEED OF PARTNERSHIP IN MINISTRY

The Movement for African National Initiatives (MANI) held a continental consultation in Abuja, Nigeria on September 4-10, 2011 under the theme AFRICA: THE BLESSINGS, THE CHALLENGES, THE OPPORTUNITIES. I was privileged to attend the consultation on behalf of Asia Missions Association (AMA). African church and missions leaders from all regions of Africa, with the exception of Northern Africa (where Islam is the dominant religion), came together with missions leaders from Europe, North America, Latin-America and Asia. The consultation reviewed what God has done in and through the African people. The attendees celebrated God's faithfulness and identified the challenges the African people and African Church currently face. They also explored the various opportunities for them to make unique contributions to the implementation of the Great Commission.

I came away from the conference with a great impression of African missions leaders, who held serious discussions about the current status of world evangelization and how to tackle the remaining task. It was beautiful to see the African leaders take initiative with western mission leaders working alongside them, assisting them behind the scenes with prayer, finances, and accumulated knowledge and experiences.

My one regret was that I did not see much of an Asian missionary presence at the conference, despite the thousands of Asian missionaries currently serving the African continent. I wonder if this was due to a lack of communication, or if it evidences a need for better partnership. During a meeting with global missions leaders, I suggested that we create an organization to facilitate a partnership ministry between missions groups. Other leaders, however, felt that it would be better to improve fellowship instead of creating a new organization. On the last day of the consultation, I was given an opportunity to greet African brothers and sisters on behalf of Asia Missions Association, and I addressed the need of cooperation and partnership between the churches in every continent for the accomplishment of the remaining task of evangelization of the world.

With the Asian Missions Advance resuming publication, words of encouragement have flooded in from different missions leaders and individuals around the world. We have also received subscriptions from theological seminaries including Fuller, Princeton and Pittsburg, as well as a variety of mission organizations and individuals. I am very pleased that we have resumed publication of Asian Missions Advance and hope that this bulletin will make a beautiful contribution to the evangelization of Asia and the world by facilitating cooperation and partnership ministries between Asian churches.

The October 2011 Asian Missions Advance edition will

cover the articles of Asian missions leaders and friends of Asia Missions Association. They include: 'Mission: The Transformation of Church and Community' by Dr. Reynaldo S. Taniajura from Philippine Missions Association, 'Church Mission Relationship' by Rev. John Kirubakaran of Friends Missionary Prayer Band, 'Church's Missional Task in Postmodernist Situation' by Dr. Peter Beyerhaeus of Tuebingen University, 'Towards Closure: Imperial or Incarnational Missions?' by Dr. David S. Lim of Philippine Missions Association, 'Effective Cross-Cultural Leadership Development' by Dr. Dale W. Kietzman, and 'The Role of Churches on Spiritual Awakening in Christian Mission' by Dr. Won Sang Lee of SEED International.

My sincere hope is that readers will gain insight by reading the current edition of Asian Missions Advance. Glory to God! Blessings to All!

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# MISSION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF CHURCH AND COMMUNITY

Reynaldo S. Taniajura

## INTRODUCTION

Is there a connection between mission and the transformation of communities and nations? Should the Church of Jesus Christ engage herself in such “earthly concerns” as the development of communities or nations? Should the Church just limit herself on “soul saving”, and carry out missions with the goal of “reaping the harvest” for heaven? Or, perhaps a more important question to ask is, has the Church correctly interpreted the true meaning of the Great Commission?

These are but some of the more fundamental questions that have confronted the Church in the past and perhaps more so at present, as she diligently obey her calling to disciple the nations, through mission. While the Church has had good success in the task of converting souls, it seems that she has not had the same success in the aspect of transforming communities. We see a lot of churches established or planted, but we see very little transformation taking place among the communities and nations where those churches had been planted. What happened in Rwanda several years back is a good case in point.

This is one fundamental question asked by Darrow Miller and Bob Moffitt, co-founders of Disciple Nations Alliance movement concerning mission, “With so many Christian churches, why don’t we see so much transformation?”

## THE JOURNEY: ON MISSION WITH GOD

The leaders and members of the Body of Christ, as a whole, have agreed that we are on mission with God. The Great Commission has always been central to the life of the Church. And mission has always been a motivation for the Church since the outpouring of the Holy Spirit during Pentecost in Acts 2. Since then, mission became a part of the church after the sending of her first so-named cross-cultural missionaries, Barnabas and Paul in Acts 13.

John Piper introduces the subject. In his book “Let the Nations Be Glad! The Supremacy of God in Mission”, Piper has this to say about mission,

*“Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever”* (Piper, p. 11).

Mission, according to Piper, is a “temporary necessity”. It is not the goal. Something else is the correct and biblical goal of mission. According to Piper, worship is the goal of mission. And peoples of the world are only led to worship the true God when they see His glory. At

least two instances in the Bible will provide us evidence that this concept is biblical.

In the Old Testament, the people of Israel worshipped God whenever they saw His glory (Exo. 24:1-18, in particular vv 1, 16-18, and compare with Isa. 6:1-8). This is likewise true in the New Testament where we find people prostrating before Jesus as they are convicted of His holiness and divinity (see Matt. 2:11, 8:2, 9:18, 14:33, 18:26 and 28:9). Worship and the Glory of God go together. Whenever God’s glory appears, people worship. We worship because they sense the presence of the Glory of God. And so Piper’s goal of mission as worship can also be re-articulated as follows: The goal of mission is to manifest the Glory of God which results in people worshipping Him.

If the goal of mission is the Glory of God resulting in worship, it becomes a challenge therefore for the Church to re-visit the task of mission as expressed in the Great Commission passage (Mat. 28:19-20). If this passage contains the “marching order” of the Church in doing mission, it is of great importance that she, the Church, interprets the passage correctly.

Once the right goal and end-product of missions had been set, the next question to ask is, “Does the passage support the construct that transforming communities and nations is part and parcel of doing mission?” If, initially, we assume that there is indeed a link between mission and transformation, then the Church has been mandated by the Lord, through the Great Commission passage, to engage herself in the task of transforming communities and nations!

Should we adopt, initially, that this view has a biblical basis then the journey that we have with God in doing mission is one that involves the transformation of communities and nations. Furthermore, if the observation offered by missiologists that while there is much conversions taking place in missions, we see less transformation, can we therefore opine that the Church as a whole may have misinterpreted and thus misunderstood the Great Commission passage?

## THE OBJECTIVE OF MISSION: TO MANIFEST GOD’S GLORY

Has the Church been correct in her goal of doing mission? Can she rest in the fact that since many of the unreached peoples of the world have already been reached by the gospel, the Great Commission has already been almost finished? If we are to base the target on the number of people groups that the Church has already reached, perhaps the Church can claim that the task of doing the Great Commission is almost complete. But with so many people groups already reached, why is it that Christianity appears to be not making much headway in transforming peoples and cultures of those who have already embraced the Gospel? Could it be that the Church has missed the mark in doing mission? What



should really be the object or target of mission? Thankfully, a number of contemporary missiologists and theologians are now beginning to address this topic and bring the Church to a proper understanding of the objective of mission. Among them, just to name a few, are John Piper, Christopher J. H. Wright, Robert Moffitt, Darrow Miller, Vishal Mangalwadi, Stephen Hawthorne, Avery T. Willis Jr., Henry Blackaby, Ralph Winter and others. Everyone appears to be unanimous in saying that the goal of mission is the Glory of God! But what should be the end-product of it?

While many have already agreed on the primary goal and motivation why we do mission, should we not also identify the end-result of it among the peoples and cultures reached by the gospel? Mission's purpose should not be only for the purpose of evangelizing and saving souls for heaven. Although this has been the traditional reason and assumption for doing the Great Commission, mission as expressed in the Great Commission passage implies more than just that.

A case in point for instance is Bob Moffitt's observation in his article "Our Target - God's Glory", who reminds us that,

*"... our efforts at evangelism and church planting have not achieved the transformation we expect from the Gospel we proclaim. I proposed that we haven't seen the transformation we hope for in individuals, families, and communities - when we have succeeded with evangelism and church planting - is that we have misunderstood the target of the task Christ has given us. The target is God's glory" (p. 1).*

Do these mission leaders, who I will label as "transformation missiologists", have sufficient biblical basis for saying this? Do we have enough biblical justification for linking mission with transformation? Firstly, it would be in order to prove that in doing mission, God's goal or target is His glory. It is essential that a sound theology of missions be first established before the practice of mission. I believe that two of the fundamental passages that would show us that God's purpose for mission is His glory are the following: (1) Col. 1:24-29, and (2) Eph. 3:1-11. I have marked these two critical sections of the Word of God as (1) the Mystery of God, and (2) the Mystery of Christ passages. Before proceeding to describe what these two mysteries are all about, let me define what I mean by biblical mystery.

A biblical mystery is a biblical truism that has not been before heard or known by the people of God, but through the revelation received by the apostles, it has now been shared, expressed or taught to the Church. For example, the Church is a mystery. The concept of Church has not been revealed in the Old Testament dispensation. But beginning with Jesus (Matthew 16:18) and on through the time of the Apostle Paul, God has revealed that there is such an organism as a Church and that it is God's intent to establish or form one (Col. 1:26-27, as basis for this definition, see also Eph. 3:5).

The Mystery of God's passage simply states that God's mystery is none other but Jesus Christ. Christ is God's mystery. The incarnation of the Son of God in the person of Jesus is a mystery that has not been clearly understood by the people of God in the Old Testament. But when the time came for God to reveal Himself in the Son, (Gal. 4:4, Gal. 1:15, 16 and Heb. 1:1-2, Luke 2:1-7),

then we have the Incarnation.

*"...the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:26-27).*

The mystery of God is Christ because in Christ we see God unveiled. Jesus said that whoever sees Him sees the Father. He and the Father are one; therefore, Jesus is the expression and manifestation of the God, the Father. God's purpose from the very beginning is to manifest or express Him. In Jesus, we see the fullness of the expression of God. Whenever God is expressed or manifested, we see or experience His glory. Thus, Christ as the mystery of God is God's glory expressed and manifested in Christ (Hebrews 1:1-2).

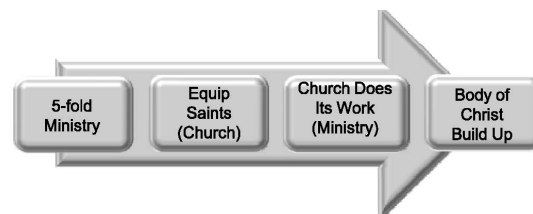
The mystery of Christ, on the other hand, is the Church (Eph. 3:1-11).

*"...and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,...." (Ephesians 3:9-10)*

Through the Church, God planned to manifest or express Christ, thus reflecting His glory. It is through the Church, therefore, that the whole cosmos, including the angelic world, will come to know who and what is God, in the person of Christ. This makes the Church very significant in God's over-all plan or economy. Apart from the Church God has not designed any other option through which He is going to manifest or reflect His glory. This reality is made even more pronounced or evident in Eph. 3:14-19 and 4:11-13.

In Eph. 3:19, we see that God's intention is to fill the Church with His fullness. The same message is repeated in Eph. 4:13, where, in the context of God's providing the Church with the so-called five-fold ministry (Eph. 4:11) He intends to complete the building up of the new man unto the fullness of Christ, which is another way of saying, the fullness of God. Christ is the fullness of God. And the fullness of Christ is supposed to be end-goal of completing or perfecting the Church.

In summary, God's purpose is to manifest or express Himself to man, thus reflecting His glory. In reflecting His glory He has chosen to express that in Christ. In turn, God in Christ has planned to reflect or express His glory through the Church. The Church's role in mission therefore is to unveil God's glory! Expressing God's glory is the target or goal of mission. The Church engages in mission for the purpose of manifesting God's glory!



Priesthood (or ministry) of ALL Believers





## THE AGENT OF MANIFESTING GOD'S GLORY: THE CHURCH

All throughout His Word God has designed that He will deal with man through and by man and not through angels. Starting from Gen 12, God began to reach out to man by way of man. In Genesis 12:1-4, we see God calling Abraham for the purpose of blessing man through him. God's purpose in calling Abraham as expressed in these verses is to bless man. Through the Bible, we can see that this blessing that God wants to give man is none other than Jesus Christ, or more specifically, the Spirit of Christ (Gal. 3:13-16). 1 Cor. 15:45 and 2 Cor. 3:14-18 confirm that the Spirit of the Lord (also the Spirit of Jesus Christ) is none other but Christ Himself. In the New Testament we see that the vehicle through which God is to bless man is the Church (Mat. 28:19-20 and Gal. 3:6-9).

We see therefore that God did not give the franchise of proclaiming or revealing who Jesus Christ is to the world to any other but the Church. Angels did not get the franchise. Nor did God plan to bless the nations directly through or by Himself. He has decreed and chosen that man gets the franchise of blessing the nations through the Church. This was His strategy after Babel, and beginning with Abraham's call. And this has been His strategy all throughout the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament.

While God charged Israel to be His ambassador to the nations in the Old Testament, God sent His Church under the New Testament dispensation to be His envoy to the world. Hence, we have the phrase in the Great Commission passage, "make disciples of all nations." Paul similarly confirms the call for the Church to be God's envoy (or sent out ones) to the nations when he wrote,

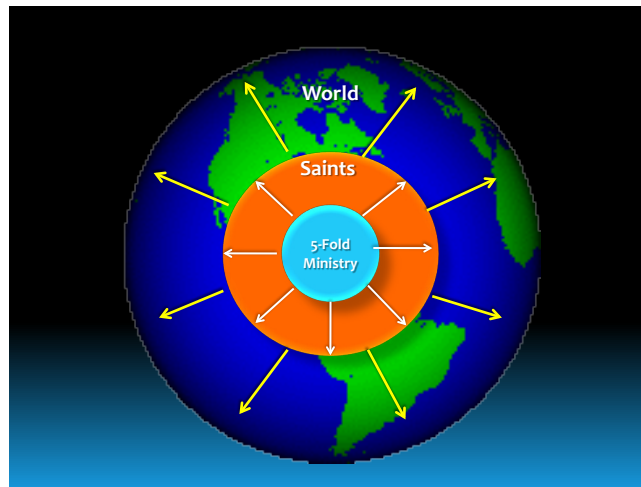
*"... God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us..." (2 Cor. 5:19-20).*

And then again Paul wrote in Romans 15:16 that he had this call to "be a minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles (nations of the world), that the offering of the Gentiles might be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit."

This explains why Jesus had to tell the disciples in Matthew 16 that one reason why He came was to "build His Church" (Matthew 16:18-19). Jesus needs the Church to be His agent for "discipling the nations", thus manifesting God's glory to the world resulting in communities and nations transformed. But the question that must be asked at this stage is, "Do we have the biblical basis for saying that the end-result or product of the Church's task in mission is transformation?"

Perhaps one way to address this question is to look at church history and re-discover the real motivation of the Church in doing evangelism and mission. An excellent article that provides a good synopsis of what happened to the Church throughout the centuries, and why the Church at present seems to be focused mainly on the salvation of souls is Dr. Bong Rin Ro's, "The Perspectives of Church History from New Testament Times to 1960." In his article Dr. Ro shows that the Church in the early apostolic period has always concerned herself with

the poor and social justice. That there has been a close connection between evangelism and social concern and action in the history of the Church since the New Testament period is the central thesis of his article.



Why is the concern for the poor and social justice essential to the fulfillment of the mandate to "disciple the nations"? Let's remember that the goal of mission is neither for the salvation of souls only nor the betterment of status of the nations today. Rather, the goal of mission is to manifest God's glory to the nations. And how is God's glory manifested? It is through the good works or deeds of His human agent, the Church. This is attested to by the following passages of Scripture,

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16).*

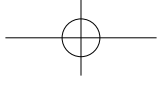
And then again in 1 Peter 2:11-12, it says,

*Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul, having your conduct honorable among the Gentiles, that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may, by your good works which they observe, glorify God in the day of visitation.*

While in one sense, God does not need us to do His work because of His great power. In another sense, God needs us to fulfill His divine purpose on earth. He has decreed that He needs man, who is in Christ, to bring about the reconciliation and restoration of His fallen creation. This is one other way of articulating why the Church goes into mission. Man has been mandated by God to "tend and keep the garden" (Gen. 2:15) which has fallen into decay, and needs restoration. And so "creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Romans 8:19-21). This mandate has now fallen unto the Church for her to fulfill. And such mandate can actually be seen in the Great Commission passage and in Col. 1:19-20 as well.

## THE MANDATE AND CONTEXT OF MISSION: THE GREAT COMMISSION AND NATIONS

The Great Commission passage of Matthew 28:19-20



could be viewed as the Church's mandate or mission order from the Lord. It is well understood by Bible teachers and scholars that the command (imperative verb) in this passage is on the "making of disciples", not on "going", "baptizing" and "teaching them to obey". But has the Church rightly understood the command to "make disciples". Has this passage been interpreted to mean that the task of the Church is to simply evangelize unbelievers within reach, and do mission to, interpreted also as evangelize, the unreached?

There is no question at all that the context of the passage is the "nations". The Church is expected by the Lord to fulfill her mandate among the nations, for God's concern from the very beginning has been the "nations". While God's concerns include the entire creation and all life in the cosmos, nevertheless, the main focus of His attention, as the Word of God shows are the nations of the world. His concern for the nations of course is within the greater context of His concern for "all things" (Col. 1:15:20). Christ died not just for the "salvation of souls" as many Christians would readily say. Rather He died to "reconcile all things to Himself" (Col. 1:20). Christ died for the very reason of reconciling all things, thus God's concern transcends just the "saving souls for heaven".

But why is there a focus on the nations? The answer has something to do with how God structured the manner by which He has planned to redeem the world. Before and right after man's fall (Genesis 1-3), God dealt with man directly without intermediaries. God dealt with Adam directly. This was His manner as well with Cain and Seth. When He decided to wipe man off the face of the earth through the worldwide flood, He dealt with Noah directly. And immediately after the flood, God dealt with man at the tower of Babel by Himself.

However, after the dispersion of peoples in Babel due to God's confusing their languages which act resulted in the formation of nations, God, as it were, changed His strategy in dealing with man (Gen. 10 and 11). In Gen. 12, God began to deal with the nations through one man, Abraham. And so, from Genesis and down on to Revelation, we read in the Bible that God's focus of His redemptive work is on the nations. It would appear that from here, God would only relate to the nations of the world through a chosen people group or nation. The Bible identifies this nation eventually, in the book of Exodus, as Israel.

And so, we find both in the Old and New Testament God's concern for the nations. Perhaps it would be good at this point to come up with a biblical definition of "nation", as our focus in this section is the "nations" of the world. The word nation, in both the Old and New Testaments, refers to a family group, tribe or clan. The main identifying mark of a nation is its language and culture. The Hebrew word for nation is "mishpachah". Its counterpart word in Greek in the New Testament is "ethnos" or it's plural, "ethne". Thus, when Jesus gave His disciples the mandate to disciple nations, He was referring to people groups, ethne or mishpachah. God had in mind reaching peoples not as individuals but as nations. Perhaps this is one of those inaccurate views that had been made out of the Great Commission passage. The command is not usually seen as one where the target is nation. Rather, the target seems to be the individuals within and comprising the nation.

In my class where I teach, I usually test my students'

interpretation of the Great Commission passage by asking the question, "What does it mean to disciple the nations?" And I usually get the following answers: "evangelize", "share the Gospel", "bring people to Christ", "preach salvation", or similar ways of articulating these concepts. Hardly do I hear the word transformation or transforming nations come into the discussion. And usually, it seems that the application of the command to make disciples is individual or one-on-one sharing of the Gospel and not corporate or by people group. So here's another mind-set that needs changing. The end-result of the command to make disciples, according to the usual interpretation of the Great Commission passage, appears to be salvation and not transformation.

#### THE MEANS TO ACHIEVE THE TARGET: OBEDIENCE

It can be said that the Great Commission is a complete mission order which outlines for the Church her mandate. This mandate includes both the goal and the end-result of the task carried out through mission. We have seen earlier that the goal or target of the mission is for the Glory of God to be revealed or manifested to the world. Once the goal is achieved it will result in communities and nations transformed. But how is transformation achieved? Do we have the clue provided by God to the Church in the Great Commission passage? The clue to transformation is in the phrase, "teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:20). Why is the command "to obey" given? Casually, many Christians might answer that obedience is commanded because we need to avoid sin, or we obey so we will please God. For after all, were we not called to live holy lives? Were we not called to fight Satan, the world and the flesh? Is not obedience our way of pleasing God, of feeling good within ourselves knowing that in so doing we have "overcome sin" and gained victory over the self?

If our answer to these questions is "yes" then we have turned the call to obedience as something that serves the self rather than accomplishing the purpose of God in mission. Again, what is the purpose of God in mission? Is it not to manifest His Glory to the nations resulting in communities and nations transformed? What has obedience then got to do with communities and nations transformed?

I believe that the other clue is provided by the oft-quoted passage in 2 Chronicles 7:14, related to a desire for the Church to be revived and healed. But the passage does not talk about the healing of the Church. Rather it speaks of the healing of the land. It would be good to parallel this verse likewise with Revelation 22:1-2 where it also talks of "the healing of the nations". It would seem that 2 Chronicles 7:14 is saying that when God's people obey, God binds Himself to "healing" or "transforming" the land.

The question posed earlier to the reader is how this transformation be brought about? And is not transformation related to the healing of the land or nations based on 2 Chronicles 7:14?

In answering these questions, it would be proper to consider the steps and stages to transformation as outlined in the Great Commission passage, which are as follows:





**Stage 1: Evangelism or Proclamation** - "As you are going (Go)...." Christians are to "gossip" the gospel as they go about their mundane or earthly concerns. We normally call this as evangelism. But the usual way of looking at evangelism is intentional evangelism where Christians make use of methodologies such as evangelism explosion, four spiritual laws, the Romans road and others. However, Christians too need to be aware that we also do "evangelism" by way of establishing personal relationships with others, as well as doing our daily tasks in the marketplace or our places of work in an excellent (or Christian) way thus allowing non-Christians see our "good works" which lead to glorifying God (Mat. 5:16);

**Stage 2: Make Disciples** - "...make disciples..." The gospel mandate is not proclamation but the making of disciples. This is intentional and focused. It is intentional in that it is a command for the people of the Lord, and focused in that the target is the "nations" of the world.

**Stage 3: Baptizing** - "...baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..." Baptizing does not just mean immersing disciples in water which act symbolizes the death of the self and a resurrection to new life in Christ. Immersing here connotes communion or participating into the life of the Triune God. The Christian is to live his life not only in the presence of God but with the presence of the Triune life within him. It means being energized by the life of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. And this experience is a continuing and daily process which requires dying to self and living to God. Paul articulated it so well in Gal. 2:20.

John the Baptist's way of expressing this same concept is as follows, "He must increase, but I must decrease (John 3:30)." Jesus' life in us must continually increase as we deny the self or soul-life within us through the cross (Mat.16:24-26).

**Stage 4: Teaching** - "...teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you..." Why should the disciples be taught to obey? The simple answer usually given casually is so that we can keep God's commandment. But simply commandment keeping is not God's goal for us. God wants to build us as His habitation, or His dwelling or resting place. Isaiah 66:1 speaks of God seeking a "place of rest". This is talking of the Church, His final dwelling place as revealed in Rev. 19 and 22. Acts 7:44-50 also confirms this as well, when Stephen spoke of God seeking a place of His rest, meaning the Church.

The disciples' obedience is a reflection of the life of God within them. Thus, the more the disciples obey, the more God is expressed or reflected. And the more He is expressed in the disciples the more the house of the Lord is built. This dynamic is likewise affirmed by the passage in Ephesians 4:11-13 where we find that the one main job description of the so-called five-fold ministry is to equip or train the saints for their ministry to the world. And the more the saints fulfill their ministry the closer the Body of Christ is being built up to what it is supposed to be, which is it's conforming to the image of Jesus Christ. Paul's goal in doing ministry was to bring this about as he expressed the concept clearly in Galatians 4:19, "My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you."

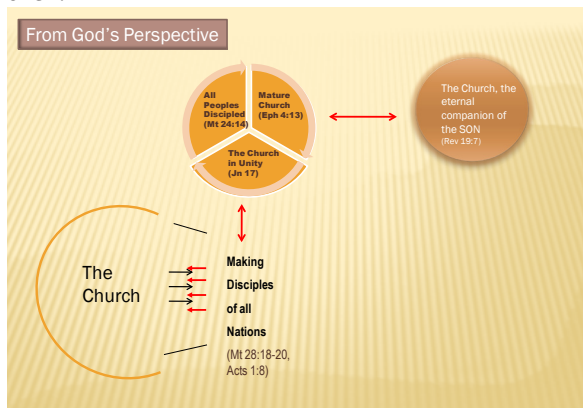
**THE END-PRODUCT OF MISSION: TRANSFORMED COMMUNITIES AND NATIONS**

Thus far, we have covered in this paper (1) the target, (2) the mandate, and (3) the context of God's concern for the nations as expressed in the Great Commission passage (Mat. 28:19-20). The last item to be covered in this paper is the end-result of mission which is the transformation of communities and nations.

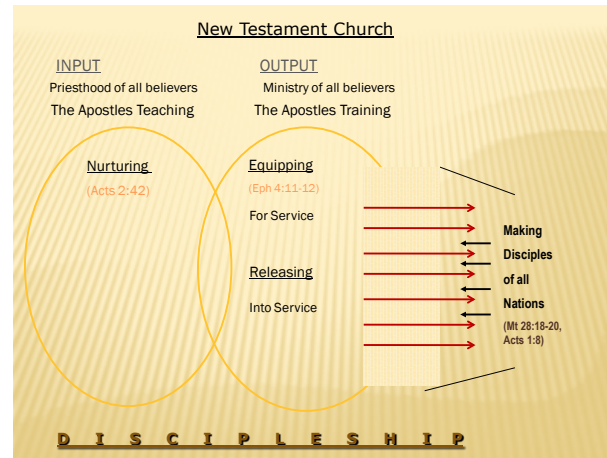
Do we have enough proof in history that the Church, indeed, has had involvement in the transformation of communities and nations when she gets to hit the mark or the goal of mission? Indeed we have. Transformation of communities and nations do not happen overnight. Just as a person develops in steps and stages, so does the transformation of communities and nations.

Take for example the case of William Wilberforce advocacy to eradicate slavery in the United Kingdom. It took him decades to bring this about. The same is true with the abolition of wife-burning or "sati" in India which was initiated by William Carey. What more can we say of what God has done or accomplished through His missionaries who were instrumental in transforming villages, communities and eventually nations as they labor to propagate the message of Jesus to obey the Great Commission mandate of Matthew 28?

History is replete with accounts of how God has used His sent out ones to the world and how God brought transformation to peoples and nations as His agents obeyed the Great Commission mandate of "making disciples of all nations". All one needs to do is to read books like the one written by Ruth Tucker, *From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya*, a Biographical History of Christian Missions.



by Max Chismon, Living Springs International (used with permission)





## APPLICATION: IMPLICATIONS FOR MISSION

Finally, what does this all mean to mission? As we clearly begin to see what the Great Commission passage is all about, and as we understand more the role of the Church in society and nations, we are faced with the challenged of having to re-examine missions in the light of these propositions discussed in this paper.

Missions as John Piper said is a "temporary necessity" as we seek to see the nations come to worship God. In the present dispensation, the Church does missions because worship is non-existent in the remaining unreached peoples of this world. Again, missions is not just leading peoples to acknowledge Christ as Savior. Missions should also bring the Lordship of Jesus Christ to all nations because God is seeking the place of rest for His Son. In other words, God's goal is to prepare a Bride for the Son. And He has mandated the Church as His agent to bring this about as Ephesians 4:11-13 shows.

The work of God which is preparing the Bride for His Son can only be finished when the Church fulfills her mandate of discipling nations. In one sense, the Church needs the unreached peoples to complete the Bride. And in another sense, the unreached peoples need the Church for them to be incorporated in the uncompleted Bride. When the key passages related to missions are placed side by side, namely Matthew 24:14, Matthew 28:19-20, Isaiah 66:1-2, Ephesians 4:11-13, Revelation 5:9, Revelation 7:9, Revelation 22:1-2 and 2 Chronicles 7:14, we are confronted with the reality that missions is central to God's over-purpose and economy for the Church.

May God's Church see the role of missions in discipling nations leading to transformation of communities and nations which eventually brings about the completion of God's economy of preparing a Bride for the Son. May God speed the day when the preparation of the Bride is completed so that the passage in Revelation 19:7 becomes a reality,

*"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."*

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## PHILIPPINE MISSIONS ASSOCIATION

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# CHURCH MISSION RELATIONSHIP

*John Kirubakaran*

The Church and Mission have been inter-related and working together for the same cause of the Gospel from the beginning. There is no Church without the Mission and no Mission without the Church. However, tension in church-mission relationship is a worldwide phenomenon periodically. Time and again this concern was expressed in national and international forum. Lengthy discussions in mission conferences or church mission interactions could not produce the desired result to the full extent. But, this issue cannot be brushed aside nor overlooked for it has serious implications for world evangelisation.

The two structures namely: Church and Mission grew side by side right from the beginning of Christian mission. Sometimes, there was cooperation from both sides; at other times, friction between the two structures which hampered the process of evangelisation. It is not necessary that the tension between the two structures will continue as long as the Church exists and mission continues. Differences are not eternal blocks. If both structures find their identity in Christ and realize the purpose of their existence, there is a way out. Christian unity is more important for Christian mission in the world now, than ever before; - unity within the church, unity among mission organisations, unity among denominations, unity between Church and mission. It is high time to realize the chief purpose for which God has called the chosen ones - the chief purpose is to evangelize the world.

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**Needless to say, the early church grew larger and larger in the midst of opposition and persecution. The tough resistance to the gospel never made them withdraw. Rather, they endured hardships and afflictions and were willing to pay the price. The Church and her mission were inseparably bound.**

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To this extent, this paper is an attempt to redefine the Church and reemphasize her responsibility in world evangelization in cooperation with the missionary organisations that are part of the Church. In the second part, the paper reflects on the movement of the Church in different angles and explores the possibility of using the resources of the Church in the best possible ways in the mission of God. The last part of the paper is a recommendation for a global level forum where the leaders of the Church and Mission can express their concerns, have elaborate discussions and move towards

better understanding of each other, better relation and better function. This paper provides theological basis and practical suggestion for better cooperation between the Church and Mission.

## I. ROLE OF THE CHURCH IN WORLD EVANGELIZATION

It would be appropriate to have a biblical understanding of "Church" before relating it to the immense task of World Evangelisation. The Bible describes the Church as God's own property because God has bought it with a price which is the very blood / life of His beloved Son (Acts 20:28). The Church is a community of called out people (I Pet 2: 9) for a definite purpose - to have a distinct life style and to bear witness to the Lord Jesus among the people of other faiths as well as no faith.

### A. An Overview of the Early Church

The beginning of the Church was marked by an unusual gathering of believers. It began with a strong "NO" to material possession (Acts 2:44 - 45; 4:32). It happened in stark contrast to the contemporary value system. Their unity and togetherness had a concrete foundation and a clear purpose. First, they realized they were set apart by the Lord to be different from others. They met in worship centres for a meaningful worship and in houses for fellowship. However, later they realized that the message of the Cross was meant for all humanity. Though the Church at Antioch understood the legitimacy of the incorporation of the people of other faiths into the Kingdom of God, it took some time for the church in Jerusalem to comprehend it. David Bosch rightly says that the Jerusalem Church was concentrating on consolidation, doctrine and institution while the church at Antioch was interested in pioneer mission. He calls it a tension that snapped after some years.<sup>1</sup>

Needless to say, the early church grew larger and larger in the midst of opposition and persecution. The tough resistance to the gospel never made them withdraw. Rather, they endured hardships and afflictions and were willing to pay the price. The Church and her mission were inseparably bound. The Church commissioned people for mission, supported and prayed for it, received mission reports and discussed mission related problems.

### B. Mission Through the Church

The chief drive of the mission of the early Church was their theological understanding of Church and mission. Paul understood mission as the work of the Church. He writes to the Church at Ephesus that God has purposed the Church to reveal his manifold wisdom (Eph 3:10).

1. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: ORBIS, 1993), 51.





It is rightly stated in the Lausanne Covenant that 'the Church is at the very centre of God's cosmic purpose and is His appointed means of spreading the Gospel'.<sup>2</sup> The Church needs strong theological motivations such as the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God to proclaim the gospel in the 21st Century world where the claims of Christianity are challenged by different theologies and ideologies.

#### 1. The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ

The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ is chiefly grounded in His Universality, that is, He is the Creator of this world (Jn 1:1-3); He came to the world for all humans (Jn 3:16); He died on the Cross for all humanity (1 Jn 2:2). The gospel, therefore, is meant for the whole world. The Church being the possessor of this knowledge must realize her responsibility of disseminating this knowledge among those who are outside the fold so that the Uniqueness of Jesus will have its meaning. His Uniqueness has universal significance in terms of revelation. The Lausanne Covenant does not approve of any salvific efficacy in the general revelation though it recognizes the general revelation. The Covenant affirms the soteriological significance of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ for all humanity.<sup>3</sup> Roger Hedlund rightly says that 'the Church is a necessity for the world's salvation'.<sup>4</sup>

#### 2. The Kingdom Vision

Having the reality of Jesus Christ as the chief motivating factor in mission, the Church must have a broad Kingdom vision. The Uniqueness of Jesus Christ lies in His universal Kingship that necessitates universal mission. The present social, religious, economic and political scenario of the world warrants the breaking in of a new rule that will bring assurance of joy, peace, justice and equality to the inhabitants of the earth. Despite the rapid escalation of violence, communal riots, terrorism, religious fundamentalism and intense hate campaigns through a handful of men and women with evil designs against peace and harmony in the world, there is a cry across every section of society for a new world order that will challenge the progress of every kind of dread. Thus, the prevailing situation of the world validates the mission of the Church. The Church cannot remain a silent spectator of the global drama. The kingdom vision is not limited to the present; rather its eschatological dimension becomes a strong driving force in the mission of the Church.

Reflecting on Peter Beyerhaus' paper on world Evangelisation and the Kingdom of God in the Lausanne 1974, International Congress on World Evangelization, Hedlund observes that Beyerhaus' definition of Evangelization is two pronged, that is, grace for the present and promise for the future.<sup>5</sup> Approving of this view, Hedlund states that Beyerhaus' definition of evangelization provides a more satisfactory

undergirding to world evangelization.<sup>6</sup>

Hedlund's study of Beyerhaus' paper is helpful to the Church to reexamine her understanding of mission. When mission is understood from the Kingdom perspective the present and the future dimensions of the Kingdom need to be held in balance. The Church is called to usher in the kingdom 'now' through the preaching of the gospel, and to prepare the believing community for future glory. In other words, the Church being the sign and agent of the Kingdom, has a vital role in world evangelization. Whether or not the present condition of the world makes an appeal to the Church, the Church will engage herself in world evangelisation, because of her call to prepare the world for the present and the future Kingdom of God. When this larger vision diminishes, the Church loses her vigour and repudiates evangelization.

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**"Being a microcosm of the Kingdom of God, the body of Christ has a two fold function to practice the Kingdom values within the Church and to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom to those who are yet to come in. Thus ministry and mission go together."**

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#### C. The Failure of the Church

##### 1. Ministry and Mission

Being a microcosm of the Kingdom of God, the body of Christ has a two fold function - to practice the Kingdom values within the Church and to proclaim the gospel of the Kingdom to those who are yet to come in. Thus ministry and mission go together. Quoting from the second and fifth chapters of Acts, Hedlund describes the functions of the Church as follows:

*Gathered around by Him and His proxies in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church not only gathers for worship and edification but scatters for witness and service in the world.*<sup>7</sup>

Engulfed in internal activities the Church, over the years, has become more and more inward-looking, and her missionary impulse has diminished. The Church needs to get rid of her institutional grip and rediscover God's intention for her existence. Ken Gnanakkan calls mission the Essence of the Church.<sup>8</sup> Having analyzed the achievements of the Reformers, Gnanakan underscores their failure to link the biblical ecclesiology with the biblical missiology.<sup>9</sup> Turning the

2. Roger E. Hedlund, *Roots of the Great Debate in Mission: Mission in Historical and Theological Perspective* (Bangalore: Theological Book Trust, 1993), p. 306.

3. *Ibid.*, p.305.

4. Roger E. Hedlund, *Mission to Man in the Bible* (Madras: Evangelical Literature Service, 1985), p. 219.

5. Hedlund, 1993, p.294.

6. *Ibid.*, pp. 294-95.

7. Hedlund, 1985, p. 219.

8. Ken Gnanakan, *Kingdom Concerns: A Theology of Mission Today* (Leicester: IVP, 1995), p.198.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 199.



pages of history, Gnanakan rightly identifies mission as the axis of the church. The Church needs to have a balanced understanding of missiology and ecclesiology. Genuine biblical ecclesiology cannot be bereft of genuine missiology.

## 2. Preference for Problem-free life

Another reason for the failure of the Church in world evangelization is her fear of being attacked. To avoid confrontation the Church avoids evangelization. The growing hostile situation in India is an apt example to understand it. The mainline Churches in some places tend to blame those who are engaged in preaching the gospel to the people of other faiths, whenever opposition or persecution breaks out against the Church, and ask them to stop evangelizing. This is a faulty conception of the Church and is incompatible with the biblical portrayal of the Church and mission history.

To quote again India, the issue of conversion has been a serious concern to the Christian community across the country for the past few years in the wake of nation wide dissemination of Hindutva ideology, enactment of anti-conversion law, organised violence and persecution in different forms. The hostile and unfavourable situation has evoked three kinds of response among the Churches as follows:

- a. Keep doing evangelization with greater zeal and vigor.
- b. Apply wisdom and avoid aggressive evangelism.
- c. Stop preaching the gospel.

The Church becomes dormant when she, out of fear, holds high a harmonious co-existence with the people of other faiths at the expense of preaching the gospel. The Church has to realize that the gospel will challenge all shallow philosophies and ideologies and withstand every kind of threat as it did in the early Church.

The Church being a chosen community of believers should shed her internal burdens and cross over all the above said barriers and go forward in the power of the Holy Spirit to establish the Kingdom of God. (I Thes. 2:2) The Lausanne Covenant calls such ventures 'a deep and costly penetration of the world'. Every Church should seriously consider the challenge of the Covenant 'to break out of our ecclesiastical ghettos and permeate non Christian society'<sup>10</sup>

## II. Guidelines for the Mission of the Church

To accelerate world evangelization, the Church has to build her mission on a double M formula - Moving and Mobilizing. As we all know, evangelization is not mere proclamation or preaching the Word. Following the Nazareth Manifesto (Luke 4:18-19), our Lord set a model as guided by the Holy Spirit, He shared the good news to the poor, which implied freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind and the release of the oppressed. We have to be concerned for the holistic mission.

<sup>10</sup>. Hedlund, 1993, p. 306.

### A. Moving Towards Mission

The Church being rooted in a pluralistic society, has umpteen opportunities to bear witness to the Lord Jesus Christ and to serve the needy. The local church has to realize that she is part of the universal Church. When the local church has a universal identity she has a significant role in global mission. She has to contribute towards world evangelization in terms of local evangelism and distant evangelism. However, the mission of the local Church starts in the place where the church is planted.

Maintaining peace and a healthy relationship with those living around the church could provide a strong platform for interaction and fellowship with the neighbours. It is important to respect their religious sentiments and avoid strident comments about their religions or gods/goddesses, and launching vain arguments.

Having maintained a conducive atmosphere for mission in the neighborhood, the church has to get into the task of evangelizing the neighbours. The incorrect notion about mission that has impeded its rapid growth could be 'mission through a few specialists'. This conception finds no room in the New Testament missiology.

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**Maintaining peace and a healthy relationship with those living around the church could provide a strong platform for interaction and fellowship with the neighbours. It is important to respect their religious sentiments and avoid strident comments about their religions or gods/goddesses, and launching vain arguments.**

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For example, the long list of names that Paul has added to the last section of his letter to the Roman church certainly includes the laity. As Paul appreciates them, they have made remarkable contribution to mission. When Paul writes to the church at Thessalonica, he makes a special mention of the spreading of the gospel. The whole church moving in mission finds adequate scriptural support. Then again he talks about edification of all saints and equipping them for the ministry in Eph. 4:11-12. The strong theological base could be the priesthood of all believers (I Pet. 2:9).

The movement of the whole church in mission would necessitate taking the church beyond the regular Sunday worship, cottage prayer meetings, rituals, ceremonies and celebrations. It is the leadership that should inspire the laity, impart a broader vision, throw contemporary challenges and train them for the enormous task before the church. Having a Mission Sunday would not suffice! Such programs may be celebrated to involve members in missionary outlooks and to raise resources for missions.

John Stott writes about the need of right structures



for mission-minded churches in his book, *The Contemporary Christian*. Having critiqued the self-centered structures, Stott challenges the church to come off the church-centered programs and get in touch with the community outside the church. Stott recommends a periodical survey covering both the local church and the local community so that the church can know how far she has taken the gospel to them.<sup>11</sup> Stott is right in saying that the church should make a radical change in her structures and programs to reach out to the people outside.

Activities such as preaching series of mission sermons, screening mission videos/CDs, conducting mission seminars and arranging local mission trips would set the church on the rails of mission. High motivation would result to high commitments. The church library should be rich with mission books to give mission education to the congregation. Mission history may be narrated orally or enacted in an interesting manner. To have an effective mission trip the congregation may be taken in small groups to slums, hospitals, orphanages, Old Age Homes, prisons and for tract distribution. The congregation needs exposure to both urban and rural evangelism. To increase the motivation level the members may be encouraged to take some survey and produce statistics by visiting some places and meeting people.

Mission trips would certainly build up interest in mission and gradually lead to deeper commitments. Training the church in evangelism can be a major program of the church. It can be a phased program stretched out through the year.

The mission movement that has started in a church can make impact on the other churches in the vicinity. To cite a biblical example, the church at Thessalonica was a great influence and a model to the nearby and distant churches. The local church that started moving within herself, to the neighborhood and to other churches to ignite them in mission has an extended movement towards the universal church. To keep pace with the global church, the local church has to know about the progress of mission across the world, mission issues and challenges. All members of the congregation need to have such information periodically and own the international concerns. Such mission movements keep moving through prayers for mission. Praying for mission once a while or once a week during the worship service is not going to help such movements. The church has to move and keep moving by frequently organized intercessory prayers for mission.

#### B. Mobilizing Resources for Mission

One main reason for the stagnation or failure of Christian mission is lack of resources or unused resources. Mobilizing the resources of the churches toward mission is the need of the hour. The churches and the mission agencies having strife and strong disagreement is not uncommon or outdated. The central factor of this widening gulf between them is 'RESOURCES'. The mission agencies that are in need of money for their programs and projects do everything possible to make

<sup>11</sup> John Stott, *The Contemporary Christian* (Leicester: IVP, 1992), pp.246-47.

an appeal to the church and raise funds. The church, on the other hand, having a fear that the church will be drained of all money, takes all possible steps to guard the income of the church.

The mission of the church or missionary organisations has a bearing on basic unity. Christian identity as 'the Body of Christ' lies in its central meaning - unity. The functional difference need not erect a dividing wall between the church and the mission organisations, because the church in its true sense includes the mission agencies also. Thus, the church and the missionary organisations have a common identity and belong to Christ together. The functional differences should not hit at the basic unity among the believers. Rather, shedding all surface level differences both the church and the missionary organisations should work towards true unity that may be expressed in accepting each other without any reservation and helping mutually. All suspicions and fears may vanish and all disdain and discord be dropped!

The Lord has blessed the Christian community with enough resources that can be used for mission. There must be proper understanding between the church and mission agencies about using the God-given resources for mission.

#### 1. Mission Field Visit

The church that questions the need of mission agencies can study the performance of such agencies. A sincere study may reveal the role the mission agencies play in extending the Kingdom of God. A practical example from India may be helpful at this point. Friends Missionary Prayer Band (FMPB) is one of the missionary organisations that emerged in the second half of the 20th century in India. It is committed to evangelizing the people of other faiths in India, especially in North India. The organisation sent the first missionary to North India in 1971. The Spirit of God opened the hearts of the people in many States. To cite an example, in Jharkhand State about 45 thousand people belonging to a tribe called 'Malto' have turned to the Lord Jesus Christ, and there are 535 congregations among them. In another tribe called 'Santal' more than 25 thousand people have accepted the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and there 326 congregations among them. The people who used to offer human sacrifices to their gods and goddesses have thrown away their evil practices and started worshipping the living God.

However, the transformation of these people did not take place without sacrifice. A missionary and his son, two bachelor missionaries and a social worker laid their lives for the sake of these tribals and were buried in Jharkhand itself. They became prey to dreadful cerebral malaria in that part of India.

Having known about the changes that have taken place in Jharkhand and the cost the missionaries of FMPB have paid, the mainline churches in Tamilnadu and the nearby States opened their doors wider to support the mission through prayer and finance. The church has to arrange a distant mission trip as well as a local mission trip. Trips like this, can be planned by the church mission





committee. Forming a church mission committee is essential for a healthy church - mission relationship. The fear that by giving to mission agencies the income of the church will decrease is a myth. When a member of the church understands the positive results of mission, he does not form a negative view of the church. Rather, he understands the church better and gives more to the church than before.

## 2. Prayer and Personnel

Besides financial support, the church can send the youth of the church for a short-term or long-term mission field exposure. Whenever mission agencies arrange mission conferences or seminars, the church can encourage its members to participate in them and share the blessings with the church members on their return. The church mission committee can arrange for mission reports to be read in the church so that the congregation would know how their money is used in the mission field and how the Spirit of God is moving among the people of other faiths. And how their prayers have been answered. The more mission news they hear the more zealous they become for the mission of God and for the church.

Special fasting prayers may be organised in the church on a regular basis and at times of crises in the mission fields. It is obvious that very few people participate in such prayers. The church mission committee must take special efforts to mobilize people for such prayers. To create interest, the incidents of power encounter may be narrated during such prayers or photographs may be displayed or videos/CDs may be screened.

A periodical evaluation would be helpful to revitalize the church in mission. Mission leaders and Church leaders may be used mutually in whatever areas they can contribute. For example, a Presbyter may be part of the Management Committee of the Mission. Similarly a mission leader can play a significant role in solving the problems of the church. The leadership resources may be used in conferences, seminars and training centres. S.K.Parmar ridicules the idea of using foreign speakers while there are speakers available here. He says that both clergy and laity can be powerful resources as they know the cultural milieu of the place.<sup>12</sup> There is one more way for the participation of the church in mission. The professionals and skilled people of the church can go to mission fields, stay there for a few weeks using their knowledge, talents and skills. To quote again FMPB, engineers from South India can visit the mission fields and help missionaries in constructing churches and children homes. Those who know two-wheeler mechanism can visit mission fields and teach the missionaries to handle and repair two-wheelers. All the above recommendations imply that the mission agencies will co-operate with the church, appreciate the church and contribute towards the growth and revival of the church, because they are part of the church. Parmar, while discussing the nomenclature of the church rightly states that a mission agency is a composition of some of the members of the church.<sup>13</sup>

12. S. K.Parmar, "Church and Missionary: Working Together," Ezra Sargunam (ed.), *Mission Mandate* (Madras: Mission India 2000, 1992), p.237.

13. *Ibid.*, pp.233-34.

### III. INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR CHURCH MISSION RELATIONSHIP

It was suggested already in this paper that a Church-Mission Committee is necessary at the local level, so that the church leaders and mission leaders can spend time together as often as possible, ironing out misunderstandings and planning to build the kingdom of God in a genuine partnership spirit. The local committee needs to be simultaneously part of a larger committee or association at the global level. The microcosm and the macrocosm of the church mission committee is just like the local church and the universal church.

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**It is in this global situation  
the Christian community has to  
set aside all differences and  
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Resources must be shared and used  
with true partnership in understanding  
the task of God.**

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#### A. Need of a Global Association

The world has become smaller due to scientific and technological advancements. Communicating a message from one continent to another is faster than ever before. Despite the misgivings about globalization, there is a positive side of it. Alex Araujo finds a possibility of drawing strategies for world evangelization from the marketing plans of a multi-national corporation. Araujo observes that some Christians take globalization positively as 'it offers new ways to find and apply resources for ministry.'<sup>14</sup> Araujo's study of evangelism in the context of globalization stimulates new thinking. Though globalization does have its negative impact upon some sections of society. It is true that the negative impact of globalization has serious ethical implications. Araujo warns that globalization does not unite the peoples into one world community as the Creator has intended, but the gospel does.<sup>15</sup> However, certainly it provides a global platform for wider interaction and a broader outlook. There could be enough theological justification to form a global association. John 3:16 says that 'God loved the world.' The incarnation of Jesus, the teachings of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus and the gospel of the kingdom have universal significance. God looks at the world; God looks at the whole human community. In short, God has a universal vision. The multi-national church mission association that fulfills God's universal plan can think globally and

14. Alex Araujo, "Globalisation and World Evangelisation," William D. Taylor (ed.) *Global Missiology for the 21st Century* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000), p.57.

15. *Ibid.*, p.69.



work globally. Although there are international bodies like World Christian Council, World Vision, World Evangelical Fellowship, etc. we need to address strongly to the aspirations of the Asian culture, when we talk about world wide evangelization.

### **B. Purpose of Worldwide Association**

As already mentioned in this paper, the local church extends itself to the universal church to affirm its universal identity. In the same way a global level church mission association would mean 'the universal church in universal mission.' Such fora can paralyse all parochialism and ethnocentrism. The world forum is a clearer expression of the identity of the church. The forum makes the purpose of church mission unity clearer and provides opportunity to get a world picture of church mission relationship in different national and cultural contexts. Besides getting a wider understanding of mission, the national committees get a broader picture of The Body of Christ. The forum can be a place of learning and unlearning. The committee from one country can draw models and inspiration from such committees from other nations. Similarly, the national committees that look for answers and guidance for their problems can get recommendations and solution to the issues they are facing, from common discussions and deliberations. Besides, such a forum can devise new ways and means for the evangelisation of the world, identify the un-evangelised geographical locations and people groups. Sharing of resources can be another possibility of such fora.

### **C. Functions of the Forum**

To start with, small level committees need to be set up. For example, in India, district level, state level and national level committees need to be formed. It may require several sittings of detailed discussion between church leaders and mission leaders. These committees may meet once in three months or six months to plan and pray together for the growth of both church and mission. Periodical evaluation will be helpful to set right relationship problems, strengthen fellowship and revitalize the functions. At times of opposition and persecution the leaders may represent the concern of the Christian community to the Government authorities. The State level committee may organize periodical meetings for the district level committees to study the growth or decline of church mission relationship and make state level plans of evangelization. It is so with the national

level committee.

Representatives of the national level committee would be part of the International church mission association. They may meet once in two years for elaborate deliberations. An international bulletin on church mission relationship will keep the smaller level committees informed of the developments in church mission relationship in the global arena. The International Association would make periodical visits to the member countries to make an on-the-spot study of the church mission relationship and give guidance wherever and whenever necessary.

### **Conclusion**

The changing world in the post-modern age poses big challenges to the Church and Mission agencies. Especially the theology of religion such as religious pluralism nullifies Christian mission as there is emphasis on harmonious co-existence. On the other side, religious fanaticism has risen as a monster and is posing threats to the survival of the Church and practice of Christian mission. Science and Technology have reached the pinnacle resulting in people being drawn towards more materialism. It is in this global situation the Christian community has to set aside all differences and move together towards the purpose for which God has called the believing community. Resources must be shared and used with true partnership understanding in the task of God. Forming church mission committees at different levels will help to a great extent to sort out the differences and solve the issues. World evangelization is the need of the hour, and that requires unity and co-operation.



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# CHURCH'S MISSIONAL TASK IN POST-MODERNIST SITUATION

*Peter Beyerhaus*

When we, during these days, deliberate about the theme "Asian Churches in Global Mission", we are doing so in a peculiar situation:

During the colonial age in the last three centuries mission was done primarily as a movement from West to East and from North to South. The main responsibility lay with the older churches which sent out their missionaries into mission fields in Asia, Africa and Latin America to evangelize people living in their traditional religions and to establish indigenous churches amongst and by them.

But when after the Second World War the great post-colonial change took place, Western missions to other religious cultures gradually became a problem both to the leaders and the ordinary members of those churches, not only for political and ideological, but also for religious reasons. The latter had to do with the inroads of modern theologies to the academic training institutions and to the leadership of churches and mission societies, especially those affiliated to the World Council of Churches. This resulted in the ominous "crisis

in mission" of which has been written and spoken much. This crisis culminated in the 8th World Missionary Conference in Bangkok 1973 which openly demanded from Western churches a "moratorium" - that means an at least a temporary stop - in sending missionaries and financial aid given to indigenous churches. Nowadays the very word "mission" has become an embarrassment to responsible people in Western churches. It is replaced by other terms like "One World", "The Church's international service", "intercultural theology" or "inter-religious dialogue".

The main reason for the waning of evangelistic concern and involvement, however, is not the distortion of missional theology and strategy; above that and underlying it is the spiritual lukewarmness and self-satisfaction to be sensed even amongst the ministers and the laity in churches and mission societies. This is lamented about even in the Roman Catholic Church, including the popes.

But this is only one side, the negative one of the total picture. Seen in a global perspective, the missional situation is far brighter. It is no exaggeration to maintain

## asian missions advance

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that the same period that was marked by a crisis and standstill of the missionary movement within the mainline churches in the West saw the rise of a new vigorous enterprise inspired by the classical vision to evangelize all parts of mankind, which have not been reached by the Gospel of Jesus Christ until now. These are composed partly by the great blocs of Asia's classical religions Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam and by adherents of tribal religions who live as socially secluded peoples' groups in hidden areas, often geographically not far from evangelized areas. This new missionary awakening took place, to start with, in the evangelical community in Western countries, to which respected leaders like Billy Graham took the initiative in 1966 and 1974 when they convened the World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin and the historic first International Congress of World Evangelization in Lausanne/Switzerland, and was followed by Lausanne II 1989 in Manila and Lausanne III (16-25 Oct. 2010) in Cape Town/South Africa.

Equally important was the surprising emergence occurring within the so-called younger churches in Africa, Latin America and Asia. This development led also to the founding of the *Asia Mission Association*, for whose 10th Triennial Congress we are happily assembled today in Jakarta's monumental *Mawar Saron Church*. Our aim is to become fully aware of the universal width to which Asian churches are to direct their missional calling. And at the same time also to consider the religious and ideological situation in which the addressees of our message are involved, a situation in which the theme allotted to me is signified as "*Post-Modernism*".

If we want to give justice to our topic, the paradoxical tension between the crisis and the new awakening in missions which I have described, renders it appropriate to structure this lecture into three parts:

**First** of all we must come to a solid theological consensus on the fundamental question: What actually do we mean by the expression, "the Church's missional task", or shortly, "The Church's mission"? Therefore I will dedicate the **first** part of my lecture to answer this question from a biblical point of view.

In the **second** part I want to describe the post-modern situation in which the Gospel is to be testified to, and in the **third** part I shall give some suggestions how the missional task will be shaped best in a post-modern world.

### I. The Trinitarian Origin of Mission

When we ask what is the deepest origin of mission and the primal mover of the sending of the Gospel into the world, we must not seek it in time and space, and not even in the Great Commission of our Risen Lord: "*Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation!*"

Nor is it Christ's other great command to love our neighbour as ourselves, although these injunctions are very important for missions, indeed. But the deepest foundation was laid much earlier, namely in the inner relations between God the Father and the other two divine persons God the Son and God the Holy Spirit, who from all eternity proceed from the bosom of the Father and who share with Him and with each other

that life of love and joy which never will end. The Triune God did not want to remain alone with this loving and life giving communion. No, He wanted to share it with other personal beings, whom He created for this very purpose to resemble Him as His image and to receive from Him and to return to Him that graceful life which God has in Himself.

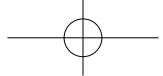
Thus the processing of the Son and of the Holy Spirit from the Father find their continuation in the creation of mankind and the subsequent history of God's self-communication to it through acts of mission. The most fundamental ones are the *mission of Jesus Christ* by the Father and the *mission of the Holy Spirit* by the Father and the Son on the Day of Pentecost, when Christ had wrought the great work of reconciling the sinful world with its divine Maker through his atoning self-sacrifice on the Cross of Calvary. This trinitarian Mission of God has rightfully been called by missiologists "*Missio Dei*", i. e. the Mission of God. This mission was resolved in God's eternal *plan of salvation*, and it is prepared, realized and continued in the permanent *history of salvation*, which all books of the Bible give account of. In this history God manifests Himself as a sending God; already during the Old Testament times we hear of God sending Abraham, Moses, the angels, the Judges, the Kings and the Prophets who speak and act on God's behalf.

Jesus in his own ministry was moved by his awareness that in it God's eternal plan of salvation was coming to its fulfilment. He had come by his death and resurrection to complete that great work of salvation which was to bring to all mankind peace with God, new life and hope. Therefore it had to be made known and offered to all nations and to every human being. For this purpose the mission of Christ is followed by the mission of the Holy Spirit, who becomes the director and enabler in the *mission of Christ's Apostles*, and by in the *mission of the entire Church*. Mission means, as the Third Lausanne Congress affirmed recently, that the whole Church takes the whole Gospel to the whole World.

What is the "the whole Gospel"? It is the proclamation by word and deed of the good news, centred in the saving work of Christ on his Cross and Resurrection and communicated to us by the Holy Spirit. Whoever accepted this message by repenting from his sins and believing it with confidence, will be a partaker of God's kingdom, and become a member of Christ's body, the Church, and once when He in his glorious return from heaven will set up his rule of peace in power and glory. The time for this event will definitely come; but it will not come earlier nor later, until the mission of the Church to the nations has been completed and all peoples on earth have got the opportunity to listen and to respond to the Gospel. Jesus himself said in Matthew 24:14: "*And this Gospel of the kingdom will be preached - Mark says "must be preached" - to all nations, and then the end will come.*"

Consequently the double event of Christ's atoning death and his Resurrection is the theological basis of mission, and on this foundation the resurrected Christ gives His missional imperative to his disciples. They both, together with the exhortation to accept it by repentance and faith, form the core of the missionary proclamation, the so called "*Kerygma*".

This apostolic Kerygma is to be faithfully administered



and preserved in all generations in Church and mission history. It is not only meant for the contemporary world of the apostolic age. No, it is equally pertinent to all subsequent generations and to all peoples on earth, independent of their cultural and socio-political situation and of the religious or ideological concepts prevailing in their minds and customs. For Jesus Christ Himself claims (John 14:6): *"I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me."*

The precious content of the Gospel, therefore, must be guarded with utmost care by all to whom it is entrusted for the sake of being preached, taught and witnessed to. In no way and under no circumstances are they permitted to diminish, to enlarge or to alter it out of fear, shame or curiosity, or to substitute it by another concept of revelation and salvation which in a certain situation may appear more pleasing to the mind of the listeners. This we are to keep in mind when we later on will deal with the subtle temptation of the present church worldwide, when she is faced with the pluralistic assumptions of post-modernism. The 12 Apostles who were the first ones to proclaim this Gospel of Christ crucified for our sins and rose up for our justification did so with great inner assurance without being ashamed or terrified. For they had experienced in their own lives and in those of other believers that it is God's power of salvation for every man and women, the Jews as well as the Greeks. (1Cor 1:18.24) Accordingly, St. Paul warned the Galatians (1:9): *"If any one is preaching to you another Gospel contrary to that which you have received: let him be accursed!"*

In conclusion we can define the missional task of the Church as follows:

*The mission of the Church is the fulfilment of God's plan of salvation for the world in the epoch between the ascension and second coming of Christ, in continuation of His own mission. It is executed under the guidance and empowerment by the Holy Spirit, in obedience to Christ's salvation royal rule over all creation in heaven and on earth.*

## II. The nature of post-modernism

The very word "post-modernism" indicates that it refers to a new cultural epoch that is following the former one which was and still is called "modernism". *Modernism*, too, arose as a revolutionary turn-over from a former cultural epoch which it largely replaced. The full emergence of modernism normally is usually dated to the break through of the "age of enlightenment" during the 18th century. It happened when the former unity between the civil and the ecclesial orders under the common respect of God's universal dominion and when the inner harmony between special revelation in Scripture and general revelation in creation, - in other words, between faith and reason - was broken up. The human being declared his autonomy by being guided to his rational insight into the laws of nature and history and shook off both the fear of God and his obedience to the hierarchical order of Church and state exercised in God's name.

The biblical miracles including those done by Jesus Christ or experienced by himself in his resurrection

were bluntly refuted as contrary to the laws of nature. Prayer as the trust that it would be answered and mysteriously influence the life of people was ridiculed as superstitious even by the famous German philosopher *Immanuel Kant* (1724-1804). Likewise Christian missions to people of different religion and culture were regarded as futile and unneeded, since modernists - including modernist theologians - maintain the basic equality of all religions both in truth and error. Inasmuch as a religion respects the existence of a divine being and in its moral instructions reflects ethical norms that are based on the Golden rule found in all religions and philosophies: "Treat your fellow human being in the same way you want them to treat you!" is ought to be regarded as a valid religion, providing both revelation and salvation for its adherents.

**Consequently the double event of Christ's atoning death and his Resurrection is the theological basis of mission, and on this foundation the resurrected Christ gives His missional imperative to his disciples. They both, together with the exhortation to accept it by repentance and faith, form the core of the missionary proclamation, the so called "Kerygma".**

There was, however, still a certain remainder of recognizing the cosmos as the work of a primal creator and of the moral law as binding to all human beings. Accordingly, even in modernism it was believed that there are unchanging laws of nature and universal moral principles from which the code of human rights is to be deducted. Likewise the fine arts, music, painting and architecture in all their variety were guided by the respect for their inherent rules. Therefore in the age of modernism it was possible to pass judgment between true and false, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly, although the appeal was not made to God but rather to human sense, reason and conscience.

It was a confirmation of Paul's statement, that what is demanded by the law of God is written into the hearts of all human beings, whether Jews, Greeks or barbarians (Rom 1:14-15). This was the common ground to which the early Apostles could refer when preaching to pagan people, both sophisticated and uneducated. Similarly in later periods Christian missionaries sent to people in Asian or African cultures could start their approach to Hindus, Buddhists and Animists by appealing to such religious, philosophical and moral insights which were in accordance with biblical revelation.

**Post-modernism** as the spirit of a new time does not completely disagree with all basic assumptions of modernism; it is rather the exaggeration of some of them and a distorting transformation of others. Both modernism and post-modernism hold in common



the human emancipation from God and His personal involvement in the biography of men and women. Both ascertain man's autonomy and the right or even duty of self-realization. The human self in its interests and rights is given the highest place in conduct.

But at the same time there are also remarkable differences and contradictions between present post-modernism and former modernism. Post-modernists people criticise the progressive optimism which from the beginning has inspired the prophets of modernism. To refute them totally, they point out the failure of modernists to change the world into a better place to live in, perhaps even into a kind of earthly paradise by using their discoveries, inventions and technical know-how. In attempting to subject the whole realm of nature and history to the control of experts or democratic institutions and to counteract all obstructive forces, they'd rather destroyed the equilibrium of nature. This is what the champions of the green ideology preach and try to counteract in symbolic actions and subversive demonstrations. Moreover, they point out that modern technology has enabled rivalling nations and super-powers by the use of modern weapons to bring each other to the point of destruction.

To the post-modernists, the basic fault in this disastrous development is that modern man has made use only of one half of his brain by giving primary importance to reason and intellect rather than to feeling and intuition. Now they make a strong attempt to reverse this attitude by giving the highest place to feeling.

**Feeling**, however, is something subjective; everybody has his own feelings which he might or might not share with others. Neither do post-modernists try to impose their feelings to other people. That means that subjectivity takes over the lead from objectivity. In fact, post-modernists are in opposition to all claims of objectivity, and this in all spheres of life: public behaviour, civil order, moral, aesthetics, even logical thinking, and certainly religion. They deny that there exist general norms which under all circumstances are binding to all people. Subsequently post-modernists maintain the right of practicing one's personal lifestyle, in which any sexual inclination may be publically lived out, whether hetero-, homo-, or multi-sexual. Even amongst leading politicians, the shame to exhibit such alternative sexual relations is not to be found anymore.

This rejection of general norms and values by post-modernists does not suggest that for them norms and values do not exist at all. They are not nihilists who want to promote public chaos. But norms which post-modernists respect and values which they estimate are subjective ones; they are important and at least for a certain time guiding for themselves. They take interest in what on the "market of possibilities" and opportunities is offered, but they want to make their own choice according to what appears relevant, useful and attractive to themselves, complying with their personal wishes.

Post-modernists deny that there is an absolute truth, and they regard it as futile to search for it. Truth is what appears true to them, in a given situation. It may or may not appear true to other people who have the right to cling to their own truth and value system. This attitude makes post-modernists appear as rather tolerant people; for they make allowance for a plurality of truths held to by a number of people in their surroundings and

else-where. They do not question the importance of philosophical, moral and religious convictions to those who subscribe to them, but they do not want them to interfere with their own convictions. Communal sharing takes place not on the level of reason but of feeling, e.g. music and dance.

Post-modernists – unlike modernists – are open to include into their world view also the *supernatural realm* and do not reject in principle the existence of transcendent beings –which sometimes may approach them, e.g. angels or spirits of the departed. Even the existence and working of God is regarded as a possibility. On this basis, post-modernists can be religious people, seeking their own religious experiences, which they may call a "search for spirituality". It is however not the answer to a divine claim on their lives, which can come to them by an encounter with an evangelistic testimony or an appeal made to them by a Christian in the name of God who reveals Himself through Jesus Christ. Rather it is an anthropocentric religiosity, where its holders choose what appears to be enhancing to them, giving them access to supernatural phenomena. It is neither spiritually nor ethically binding to them as a higher claim to their obedience in faith.

Post-modernists in their assuming tolerance pay a certain interest in any religion they may come in contact with; but they would not accept the claim of any religion to hold absolute truth and to offer the only way to salvation. They regard all religions as principally equal.

They can be instrumental for the promotion of peace, as long as they do not regard themselves as mutually exclusive but rather share their experiences and insights in a fellowship of religions. Even within our theological faculties in the West there are now scholars who advocate a so called "pluralistic theology of religions" which claims the equal right of all religions and promotes their "sharing in spirituality" for the promotion of peace and harmony.

### III. Approaching Post-modernists with the Gospel

What, then, should the churches consider when they seek to discharge their missional task in a post-modernist situation? The answer is threefold:

**Firstly:** We must reassure ourselves about the essentials of the Gospel.

**Secondly:** We should carefully avoid the temptation to adapt our message to the ideological assumptions of post-modernism.

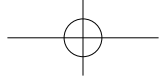
**Thirdly:** In shaping the concrete approach, we must consider the diversity of individual experiences and attitudes.

#### 1. Getting reassured about the essentials of the Gospel

As messengers of Christ we will always remain aware that our duty is neither to preach our own opinions nor to try pleasing the wishful thinking of our listeners. Rather we have to faithfully deliver that Gospel message which has been entrusted to us and which does not allow any alteration. Paul says: "*Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified*" (1Cor 1:22).

In a post-modernist situation in which people are





experimenting with a variety of ways to happiness, well-being and spiritual experiences which are introduced by contemporary philosophers or gurus – even such a super guru as the *Dalai Lama* – we have to point out that there is only one way to salvation and only one name in which this salvation is to be attained: Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God and a true man, besides whom there are no other Lords and saviours. And we must also make sure that we do not speak of any Jesus which modern people may form as he is appealing to them, but that we testify to the biblical Jesus, born by the virgin Mary, crucified as God's Suffering Servant and risen in glory to be installed as universal King.

*"Jesus Christ – the same yesterday, and today, and forever"* (Hebrews 13:8)

Our supreme and sole standard in presenting the truth is the Bible, which is sufficient to give answers to any basic question and shows us the remedy to heal a broken life by telling us God's holy will as revealed to us in His unchanging commands and His plan of salvation. We must not be silent about certain seemingly unpopular elements of biblical truth, e.g. regarding ethical norms for human sexuality, even if our listeners may deride them as obscure and fundamentalist. Especially in the present debate about gender and gender mainstreaming, the Bible contains insights that are far more real than any presumed insight discovered by scientific research.

Post-modernism is trying to solve the misery in the life of people today by seeking its root causes in psychological, physical or social conflicts. The Bible, however, tells us, – and this must be pointed out by us unashamedly – that the basic predicament of humankind is our sinful alienation and separation from the holy God, our Maker and Father. This our deepest wound can only be healed if we find the remedy in accepting God's offer of grace, given to us freely on account of Christ's substitutional self-sacrifice at the Cross.

## 2. Avoiding the temptation to adapt our message to post-modernist assumptions

Since post-modernists in their spiritual options and in their entire life-style are guided by their feelings concerning happiness and enhancement, they will weigh our offer to them under the aspect whether it satisfies such longing or leaves it untouched. This may tempt us to adapt our message to their expectations to such a degree that we even may substitute the authentic biblical content of it by new concepts that are in the mind of contemporary people. This, of course, would be a betrayal of our missional task in a postmodern society. It may lead us become mere acceptable to them, but we could not really help them to get out of their malady.

A negative example of such an illegitimate adaptation of the Gospel was given by at the 8th World Missionary Conference in Bangkok in January 1973. Its theme was "Salvation today", and that was treated in such a way that the message of salvation could appear as a saving message only if it offered a kind of salvation which suffering people were longing for in their specific detrimental situation.

In the Report of Section II "*Salvation and Social Justice in a Divided Humanity*" we read the following statement:

With the comprehensive notion of salvation, we see the saving work in four social dimensions:

(1) Salvation works in the struggle for social justice against the exploitation of people by people.

(2) Salvation works in the struggle for human dignity against political oppression of human beings by their fellow men,

(3) Salvation works in the struggle for solidarity against the alienation of person from person.

(4) Salvation works in the struggle of hope against despair in personal life."

That means that in the eyes of the authors of such a statement there is not such a thing as a given biblical message of salvation, but rather a variety of saving experiences hoped for and to be promised by the churches in their contemporary "mission activity to needy people in different parts of the world and different strata of society.

Evangelical missions today must be warned not to fall to a similar temptation when they perform their missional task in a post-modernist situation. We must avoid to present a Jesus who may appeal to the longing of some individuals or groups, e.g. people who are seeking for spiritual peak experiences or a Jesus that delivers from social oppression, or a Jesus who sympathizes with feminist grievances about a patriarchal order. No, our Gospel should not be adapted to the felt needs or moods, in the worst case even as a clown – as he was presented in the musical *Godspel* some years ago, a masqueraded Jesus who appears jokulous to some people seeking amusement even in evangelistic performances, as we can watch it in TV today.

Our missional task in post-modernism is essentially not different from the task to be performed in any given situation, ancient, modern, or post-modern. It is to faithfully present the good news of God who in Christ has reconciled the world to Himself and who through us as Christ's ambassadors appeal to all men: "*Be reconciled to God!*", by accepting His offer in repentance and obedient faith.

## 3. Empathy with the deeper concerns of our listeners

As I have pointed out: The content of the biblical message entrusted to Christ's Church must never be changed, since it is her holy duty to guard and deliver it faithfully. From clinging to this Gospel depends the eternal fate of all people for whose salvation Jesus died on the cross.

But when it comes to the **application** of this message to the specific homiletical situation, we have to be mindful of the inner spiritual condition of the listeners whom we want to win for Christ. Here we are not allowed to be monotone and stereotype, using the same words like slogans over and over again. For the evangelist is bound to seek for points of contact and mutual understanding with his audience, and if possible even with individual listeners. Especially when we want to meet a post-modernist audience, we have to consider that the subjectivity typical for it will present us with a variety of individual standpoints based on personal experiences. Like the Apostle Paul who endeavoured to approach every kind of listeners by considering his or her ethnic, religious and social condition. He described his solidaric approach by saying (1Cor 9:19-23, NIV):



*“Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some..*

Only when we can convince people that we try to understand them in their situation and sympathize with their suffering and joys they will be ready to listen what we want to share with them. In view of this, the Manila Manifesto in 1989 says: “We confirm our duty to investigate the society in which we live in order to understand its structures, values and needs and to develop a suitable mission strategy.”

Finally: In view of the subjectivity of post-modernist people it is necessary to present the Gospel not merely in dogmatically true assertions but always indicate by our personal testimony that we have gained an experience of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in our own lives. St. Paul spoke out of his apostolic experience when he testified to his readers in Rome: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of salvation to every one who has faith, to the Jews first and also to the Greek.” (Rom 1:16) We are to be persuasive witnesses of a Saviour who is not only above us in heaven but who is here amongst and with us. Therefore it is possible to experience Him in our daily conversation with him in prayer and his guidance on all our ways.

In short: The Churches missional task within a post-modernist situation is to present to people who constantly are out for gaining new experiences, a message by the acceptance of which they will be able to make the most rewarding experience that human beings ever can make:

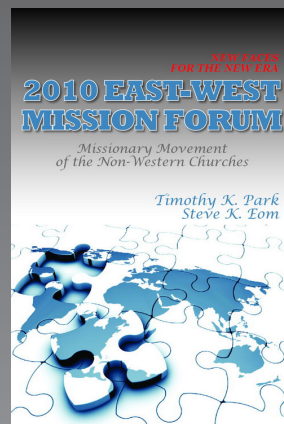
It is the experience of meeting Jesus Christ who invites them to win fellowship with him in his suffering and resurrection already now and later on as partakers in the joy of his messianic Kingdom, when in His second coming He will appear on the clouds of heaven with the whole company of saints and angels, with power and great glory. (Matthew 24:30).



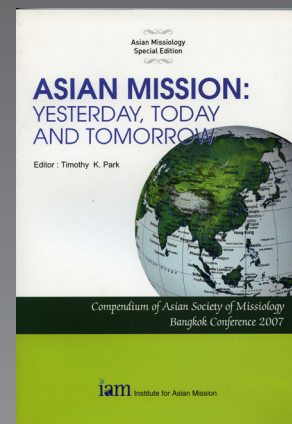
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*He is the President of the International Conference of Confessing Fellowships and Professor of Missiology and Ecumenical Theology at the University of Tübingen.  
He was a primary author of Frankfurt Declaration on the Fundamental Crisis of Missions in 1970.  
He is a loyal supporter of Asia Missions Association since 1975.*

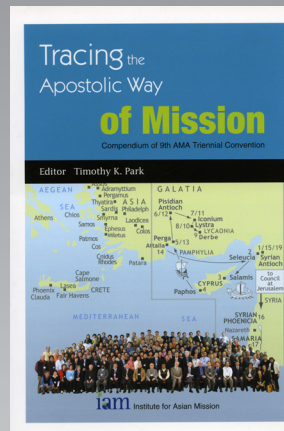
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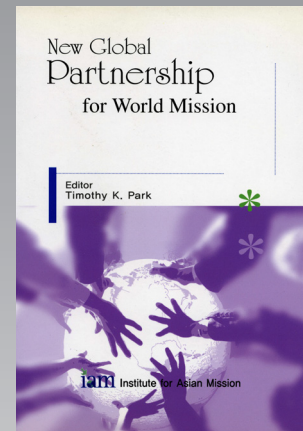
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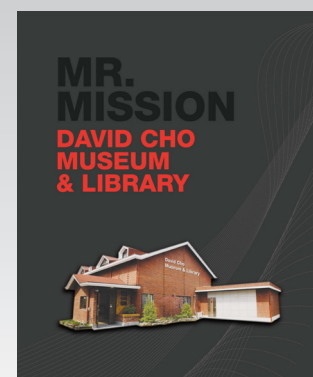
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## TOWARDS CLOSURE: IMPERIAL OR INCARNATIONAL MISSIONS?

*David S. Lim*

Is it possible to finish the Great Commission or reach all the unreached people groups (UPG) in the world by our generation, let's say by AD2025?

The AD 2000 Movement envisioned this "closure" when they convened the Global Congress on World Evangelization (GCOWE) in 1995 in Seoul, Korea. At that time, I predicted that it was "Mission Impossible," because almost all of the participants still used the traditional mission paradigm to extend Christendom through what I called "imperial (or denominational) missions," instead of "incarnational (or integral or transformational) missions." If we do not make this missional paradigm shift, I'm afraid I have to also repeat my pessimism that it's "Mission Impossible" by 2025. As Einstein said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

Yet I believe "closure in 10-15 years" can be "Mission Possible" – if, by the mercy of God, the mainstream of missions shifts into "incarnational missions" immediately. All of us who share the passion to win the lost into the Kingdom of God share almost the same vision and mission. Generally, we would all say that we are working to fulfill the Great Commission, bearing witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ to manifest the glory of God by the power of the Holy Spirit.

But we would differ on the basic strategic paradigm of mission dei (God's mission), which includes 3 major aspects of bearing witness to Jesus as the way (Missiology), the truth (Christology) and the life (Ecclesiology):

### **Missiology: Imperial or Incarnational?**

First of all, how do we do mission? The predominant "imperial" traditional missiology focuses on the recruitment of "career missionaries" who are sent out from middle class churches to plant their church's (denominational) model in less developed regions from a position of wealth and control/power.

In contrast, "incarnational" missiology emphasizes the mobilization of all believers to go among their non-believing networks to make disciples (followers of Jesus) through love and good works, from a position of simplicity and servanthood. "Every heart with Christ is a missionary, and every heart without Christ is a mission field" – locally and cross-culturally.

### **Christology: Insulated or Incarnated?**

Secondly, what truth/message do we communicate in

our mission? The "gospel of salvation" proclaimed by imperial missionaries highlights the spiritual aspect of Christ's death on the cross, and thus has focused mainly on the eternal destiny of people to go to heaven or hell, with hardly any regard for their earthly welfare and especially for their "growth" into self-denying, cross-carrying discipleship/maturity, except to become loyal church-goers, attending as many religious/liturgical services as possible.

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**Yet I believe "closure in 10-15 years"  
can be "Mission Possible"  
– if, by the mercy of God,  
the mainstream of missions shifts into  
"incarnational missions" immediately.  
All of us who share the passion to win  
the lost into the Kingdom of God share  
almost the same vision and mission.  
Generally, we would all say that we are  
working to fulfill the Great Commission,  
bearing witness to the gospel of Jesus  
Christ to manifest the glory of God  
by the power of the Holy Spirit.**

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In contrast, the "gospel of the Kingdom" shared by incarnational missionaries promotes the holistic dimensions of Christ's work on the cross (including peace-building, justice-seeking and community/reconciliation), and thus also the earthly ministry of Christians (as prophets, priests and kings like Jesus) and practical disciple-making so they will grow in Christ-like compassion in doing as many community services as possible.

### **Ecclesiology: Imported or Indigenous?**

And thirdly, what kind of churches do our missions produce? The ideal results of imperial missions are imported (or foreign) church forms (in liturgies, theologies, architectures, etc.) of the missionary's sending church(es), which also magnify the role of expatriate missionaries who dispense funds raised from their supporting church(es).

In contrast, the ideal results of incarnational missions are indigenous simple churches (actually networks of house fellowships) which are from the start self-governing (with their own leaders), self-supporting (own budget and funding), self-propagating (own programs of action/





ministry) and self-theologizing (own statement of faith), which aims at community conversion to Christ (not to a particular brand of Christianity) and community transformation through their obedience to Christ's law (loving one another and their neighbors and enemies to the ends of the earth).

Please note that the visible result of incarnational mission is not in religious buildings (cathedrals or temples) for performing religious ceremonies (liturgies) led by religious leaders (pastors or priests), which often separate believers from their community and divide themselves into different denominations. Instead it is seen in transformed communities that experience peace, justice and righteousness emanating from their love for Jesus and for one another that emerges from their intimate fellowship, while discussing and applying God's word facilitated by any believer who has been discipled by an earlier believer in a micro/simple/house church (in any building). Existing church buildings may be turned into multi-purpose ministry centers, like the synagogues in New Testament times.

### Main Models

The main models and proponents for incarnational missions are two: the global house church movements (HCM) and the Jesus (or kingdom or people or insider) movements (JM). Their impact are now starting to be noticed in church and mission circles today, especially those movements in China (since '80s), India (especially among Punjabis and Dalits), U.S.A., and some regions of the Muslim world.

Their "best practices" combines three "Cs" = Church Multiplication + Contextualization + Community Development/Transformation. For these to happen simultaneously, practitioners simply need to master the skills of making disciples (Jesus-followers) who can lead people to Christ through friendship evangelism, and disciple new converts in small Bible discussion groups. The simplest method today is called the Viral Simple Bible Study (VSBS). It asks only three questions of any chosen text: (1) What does the text say in your own words? (2) What does God require of us from the text? And (3) Who are the 3-5 people you can share what we learned with before we meet again next week? The disciple-maker aims to empower them to do likewise (as in 2 Tim. 2:2) by leaving them as soon as possible, so s/he can make new disciples elsewhere.

Incarnational "church-planters" (or better, "movement catalysts") do not mind being unrecognized in history, though they will be lovingly remembered by their disciples (if they don't die or get killed prematurely), for their objective is to decrease so that only Jesus Christ will increase (cf. Jn. 3:30; Mk. 9:28). They are ordinary people who simply obey God's call to be witnesses of Jesus. If properly trained, even if they may not have high academic credentials or social status, they can strategically win "a person of peace" (cf. Lk. 10:5-6) in each place, and disciple a core group around this person to disciple the rest.

New converts are encouraged to remain in their communities, follow local cultural and religious practices (unless they are clearly idolatrous, immoral or unjust), aim at family and communal conversions, and study the Scriptures themselves (1 Cor. 7:17-24; Acts 17:11). Almost all in the International Orality Network are already moving in this direction.

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**Please note that the visible result of incarnational mission is not in religious buildings (cathedrals or temples) for performing religious ceremonies (liturgies) led by religious leaders, which often separate believers from their community and divide themselves into different denominations.**

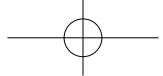
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### Other Approximate Models

Most Evangelical "para-church" movements and mission agencies in the past 50 years have struggled to thrive within the Christendom system, mainly because they depended on the giving and support of church people, especially their clergymen. So although their missiology leans toward the incarnational model, they often either compromised with or returned to the imperial/denominational model of ministry.

Among these are:

- 1) Perhaps the closest are the new "church-planting movements (CPM)" or "church multiplication movements (CMM)," which plant as many house churches as possible, but have not made strict guidelines to keep the groups small and/or avoid uncontextualized forms of worship and lifestyle (cf. 1 Cor. 9:19-23).
- 2) Second closest may be the campus ministries, like Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC), Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF), and especially Navigators, REACH, and Agape. They have trained students and graduates/professionals to lead disciple-making movements without the need for clergymen to lead them in chapel activities. Agape is now operating on the Jesus Movement (JM) mode, while Navigators and REACH are trying to move back to their original JM mode, too.
- 3) The third closest would be the communities that have been directly touched by Christian Development Organizations (CDOs), like World Vision, Compassion and Center for Community Transformation (CCT). By trial-and-error, they've discovered that to reach and transform communities effectively, they have to minimize denominational forms and use simple Bible study



groups in their portfolio of community activities.

- 4) Fourth may be the professional movements, like Tentmaker and/or Diaspora Ministries, Business as Mission (BAM), Marketplace or Workplace Ministries, Military and Police Outreaches, which have slowly relinquished their need for clergymen to lead church services in their life and ministry in the world. Instead of doing ministry in local churches, these "lay-people" focus on reaching out to their partners, colleagues and subordinates in their God-given vocation.
- 5) Lastly, we can include also some denominations which have emphasized "lay pastors," (like Vineyard, Grace Communion International), though most of them still lead denomination-type weekly worship services, which deflects much of their time from doing community services (cf. Matt. 5:13-16; 25:31-46; Lk. 10:27-37; 1 Jn.3:16-18).

### Challenge

So, let's join hands and do incarnational missions together! Let's finish the Great Commission together in our generation! Yes, even in the next 10-15 years, God willing, by the power of the Holy Spirit (Acts. 1:8)! Our Lord has promised, "I will build My church and the gates of hades shall not prevail against it," and has given us the authority "to loose and to bind" (Mt. 16:18-19). The harvest is still plentiful, but the workers remain few (Mt. 9:37-38). Let's prayerfully mobilize the whole church to share the whole Gospel with the whole world - servantly, holistically, contextually -- incarnationally!



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#### Erratum:

Apologies for the error committed on page 8, of the 32nd issue of Asian Missions Advance, regarding Dr. K.Y. Cheung Teng's title. Instead of Ph. D., it should be D.Min in Missiology.

## EAST-WEST CENTER FOR MISSIONS Research & Development

<http://www.ewcmrd.org>

*The East-West Center for Missionary Research and Development (EWCmrd) was created under the auspices of Asia Missions Association (AMA) in order to train missionary candidates from Asian countries. The mission leadership in Asian countries have been confronted with two contradictory phenomena in contemporary mission theory: (1) a strong missionary impulse among the evangelical churches of the Third World; and (2) a wide spread ambiguity of theology of mission. This ambiguity has caused a confusion of missionary concept for the younger churches, as well as between them and western sister churches. Unless this confusion can be clarified, it becomes more difficult for Third World churches to multiply missionary mobilization on a scale sufficient to reach the whole world for Christ.*

*The first confusion has to do with the missionary role of the local church: Is it just a secondary job to be performed out of the surplus resources of large and mature churches, or is it an integral part of the life of all churches, even small and younger churches? AMA believes that, from the very beginning of its existence, the local church must be encouraged to practice both near-neighbor evangelism, and world-wide, cross-cultural mission. Thus, the evangelistic structure and the missionary structure must coexist simultaneously. Establishing a mission-minded church must take preference over a focus just on the local or denominational church.*

*Secondly, there is a confusion caused by the assumption that traditional theological education alone is sufficient for missionary endeavor. Cross-cultural missionaries must be trained in terms of ethno-cultural and linguistic realities. We suggest that missiological training for all missionary personnel is absolutely essential. Furthermore, local church pastors must also be equipped with a modern philosophy of mission, its strategy and cross-cultural nature, in order that these pastors can be good supporters of missions.*

*Thirdly, there is confusion which results from the generalization of the term "Mission" as if whatever a church does is mission work. Local churches must not neglect or avoid their responsibility to send out missionaries.*

*Lastly, a very dangerous confusion is caused by the antagonism against Western mission agencies and also by the concept of "Moratorium". Many Third World churches are often emotionally involved in this pattern of thinking. We must be humbled in the face of the Great Commission of our Lord, because that commission is global. Third World churches must expect to learn from the experience of Western mission agencies, from both their successes and failures. We must examine these in order to develop an effective Third World missionary matrix. We need to select that which is the best, that which has been proven effective.*

*It is essential that East and West stand together as mature partners in a joint effort to go into all the world to proclaim the Gospel to every creature.*



# EFFECTIVE CROSS-CULTURAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

*Dale W. Kietzman*

The leaders of AMA are conscious of the growing number of missionaries coming from non-Western nations. Professor Andrew Walls, founder/director of the Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh, notes that "Christian advance in the world is serial and, in the providence of God, it is the Christians of Africa and Asia and Latin America and the Pacific that are next in the series. We who belong to the West are no longer the leaders, the initiators, the norm setters. We are now to learn to be the helpers, the assistants, and the facilitators."

The question for us is not "Who is going to tell the West about their new role?" but, rather, "How can these new forces in mission develop leadership qualities recognized beyond their own national boundaries; how can they truly become the initiators and norm setters in mission?" This theme suggests that the content of my remarks should go beyond the area of my expertise, which is intercultural communication and training of prospective missionaries for effective cross-cultural ministry. The inclusion of the concept of developing leadership for the cross-cultural ministries of the non-Western missionary forces, and for those forces, or those leaders, in turn to seize the initiative in mission (including for the Western missions), introduces additional levels of training and of relationships that must be addressed. Let us consider one level at a time.

## Training a Leader for Cross-cultural Ministry

There are so many people writing about "leadership" today, approaching it from every conceivable angle, so as to confuse one who is seeking a training approach. This is due to the many areas of activity in which leadership can be displayed, and thus various areas of knowledge and skills required to lead in different situations.

In order to address the problem of training leaders for the cross-cultural missionary task, we need to have a definition of what "leadership" is. As stated by Professor Carter McNamara in his free online course in administration, "Very simply put, leading is establishing direction and influencing others to follow that direction."

If leadership involves "influencing others", then cultural factors are definitely involved. This coordinates with the concept that training for leadership is a process that is dictated by one's own culture. If a person has not developed leadership skills as recognized within his own society, he probably will not develop as a leader in a cross-cultural context.

There is another factor that should be taken into consideration, which will make the leadership role in a cross-cultural setting more difficult. That is the innate ethnocentrism of all ethnic groups. We all feel more comfortable with persons from our own society, and

respond more warmly to ideas and concepts that are expressed in our own cultural idiom. This will always be a barrier, but not an insurmountable one, to exercise leadership in a cross-cultural enterprise, if all those working together have proper cross-cultural training.

We believe that the characteristics of a leader, the sensitivity to followers, the ability to take initiatives and to do strategic planning, however, should all be transferable to another cultural setting, if the leader's cross-cultural training has created a true cultural sensitivity and a desire to be a life-long self-motivated learner. A missionary who fails in his adjustment to other cultures probably is not the person who should be given a leadership role in projects involving international teams, in which team members from more than one mission are working together on a project in a foreign culture.

## Providing Cross-cultural Training to Individuals

Training for cross-cultural service refers to that training which prepares a Christian worker for living and working effectively in a culture not his own. Ideally it should be given after the Christian worker has received all the ministry or professional training he or she needs to fulfill a given role in Christian service, to whatever level his own culture expects him to be trained.

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**We believe that the characteristics of a leader, the sensitivity to followers, the ability to take initiatives and to do strategic planning, however, should all be transferable to another cultural setting, if the leader's cross-cultural training has created a true cultural sensitivity and a desire to be a life-long self-motivated learner.**

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All ministry training should include some courses on the mission of the Church, intercultural communication, and anthropology, even if the Christian worker does not expect to be a missionary. Such included training, by nature, is not people-specific; that is, it does not focus on the culture of a single ethnic group with which the student might expect to minister in the future. Training for cross-cultural ministry, to be fully effective for the needs of a future missionary, should be culture specific, that is, not generally about cultures, but specific to the culture to which the Christian worker will go.

Effective cross-cultural training, employing the current

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state of the art, can achieve a significant depth of preparation for the prospective missionary leader, to make it possible for him to be effective in another culture. What can and cannot be achieved will depend very much on the expertise of those doing the cross-cultural training and the degree of control that they are given over the training of the new missionary.

At the same time, the prospective missionary must be willing to develop the appropriate attitudes and skills being modeled in the training. Cross-cultural training cannot be expected to change a person's perspective radically unless that person is willing to learn and adapt.

Cross-cultural training cannot prevent culture shock, nor bypass the experiential unease of actually living with people of a different culture. Cross-cultural training can, however, point the way to becoming a self-directing person, able to learn from life in the new foreign context. Cross-cultural training can increase awareness, provide a foundation for understanding another culture, for developing skills through experiential processes, and reducing the anticipated anxiety of living and working in a new cultural context.

The first step in that training will be to develop cultural self-awareness. Self-awareness involves being conscious of one's own worldview, beliefs, values, and cultural biases acquired through enculturation to our native culture. The process of enculturation (primary socialization) is a natural development as one grows up in his or her own culture. We take things for granted in this process as we bond to our cultural values. To embark on a cross-cultural assignment, the need for achieving an in-depth understanding of one's own cultural conditioning cannot be overemphasized. To have a conscious knowledge of the assumptions of one's own culture, its customs, values and biases, provides a framework for interacting with a new culture. It provides a rationale for understanding basic cultural differences that might otherwise inhibit the development of mutually beneficial relationships.

The exacting nature of this first step in training for cross-cultural ministry suggests that the best trainer is one who comes from the same culture as the trainee. A top priority for mission organizations in any one country is to have their best people assigned to learning key anthropological concepts and the techniques of cross-cultural training, in order that all future cross-cultural training can be done by persons of that same culture. In the best situation these trainers will have had field (cross-cultural) experience and will have successfully adapted to the cultures where they were serving

We also insist that first-time missionaries be disciplined to learn at their own initiative, so that they will be accountable for their own learning, adaptation and ultimate behaviors once on the field. They will be encountering cultural situations that cannot be predicted and, even in such situations, they must be prepared to be successful in discovering the correct cultural response. This requires them to be self-directed and motivated learners.

In a stage of training that should take place several weeks prior to departure, the trainees will begin to focus their readings and reference work specifically on the

country where they will serve. A most unusual training design, but one that is applicable to every prospective missionary, regardless of the people group to which he or she may be going, is contained in a paper L. Robert Kohls presented to World Link University, "Determining the Content and Coverage of the Country/Area Studies Portion of the Preparatory Training Provided for Missionaries." It provides a comprehensive outline of information that the individual should research about the target country and its culture, as well as the specific people group to which he/she is to be assigned. Kohls suggests a wide variety of sources that can be used to find the information the missionary will need to know before going. This training design, while being culture specific, which we find very desirable, also develops the needed skills and disciplines of self-directed learning, which is crucial to operating in another culture.

Let me also hit an historical note: At the very beginning of the AMA, back in 1975, the members adopted a strategy for "receiving" missionaries, as well as sending missionaries. Realizing that their countries were also the mission fields of that time, they urged their member missions to be ready to provide services, including cultural orientation, to incoming missionaries. And I know that this occurred for arriving missionaries from other AMA members.

This concept could, with profit, be applied worldwide. National organizations always are better prepared than foreign mission organizations, in terms of cultural understanding and knowledge of local situations and contacts, to orient newly arriving foreign personnel and to get new arrivals properly settled and into their activity with the least amount of friction and lost effort.

As one moves toward becoming a bicultural person, the ease with which one can work within two cultures simultaneously becomes quite natural. Acculturation (secondary socialization) is the term for describing the process of adapting to a new culture, different from one's own. Acculturation (becoming a part of, or adapting to, a second culture) is a significantly different process from learning life and worldview as a baby growing up and becoming enculturated in one's primary culture. Acculturation requires a concerted effort on the part of the new missionary to be successful.

The skill of learning to learn must be introduced and developed. The individual must assume the responsibility for one's personal learning. In the process of becoming interdependent, the prospective missionary leader needs to accept the responsibility for his or her own adaptation and adjustment to the group and to the life context of the new culture.

Without the skills to learn within the context of life in a new culture, one can become very discouraged and blame others for their lack of adjustment and understanding. In addition, without these skills and abilities to learn it is easy to develop missionary ghettos.

### **Practical Strategies for Achieving Leadership Recognition**

There are practical steps that can be taken to bring to prominence an identified and effective leader in cross-cultural ministry, even if that leader comes from a non-



western nation. The recognition given to any one leader increases based on very human factors, rather than solely on those we might esteem as being spiritual.

### 1. *Build an adequate organizational platform for your Leader*

A leader's credibility increases as the number and/or quality of his followers increases. The average mission agency has a relatively small number of members. The real or imagined impact of the followers can be increased as they are recognized as being an elite within the missionary world. Even before it had reached its current membership numbers, Wycliffe Bible Translators had achieved a leadership role because of the number of its members who had advanced degrees and it was recognized for the number of its learned publications. Alternatively, mission agencies have dramatically increased in size through mergers with other organizations, or by including in its membership roles national workers from its mission fields. The larger the platform, the more attention we pay to the leader speaking from that platform.

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**Another very important element in such promotion is the publication of books authored by your leader. Publication, it seems, gives credibility and stature to the leader.**

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### 2. *Create and take Leadership in Virtual Organizations*

You may want to consider the possibility of, together, forming "virtual" organizations, creating special project teams formed of specialists from several organizations to address a challenge that no one organization is ready to address in a timely manner, to accomplish a specific defined result.

A virtual organization is made up of workers who belong to separate organizations, but who some of the time work together to accomplish a specific, defined result. They often communicate by telephone or the Internet, without leaving their normal work places, except on the rare occasion when at least some of the members of the group have the opportunity to discuss their tasks face-to-face. They, in effect, form a global team, a dispersed team which is not co-located and whose membership may cross international boundaries. The leaders of such virtual organizations will receive recognition beyond that of conventional organizations.

Luis Bush, the well-known missionary strategist, says "Partnership at all levels and in multiple form is essential for reaching the unreached peoples of the world." Through virtual organizations you can take initiatives that would be presumptuous if proposed by a single mission agency. I know that the possibility of a "world bank" to facilitate movement of support funds has been discussed by some of you. This would make an excellent initiative about which a virtual organization might be formed for planning and development. The concept

of receiving missionaries, to which I referred above, could also best become a universally accepted concept if an international team were brought into being to set standards and handle inter-mission communication.

### 3. *Actively Promote Your Leaders*

Now I am getting into the area of marketing "stars", both in the arts and politics. But the techniques by which these personalities are promoted can be used to bring attention to the leaders you would like to see giving direction to the mission enterprise worldwide. You will have to set aside some of your notions of humility: your leader's name and face will need to appear with greater frequency in your publications. He or she will have to be more available to the public, not just in select conferences such as this one, but in tours that make him or her visible to the Christian public, not only in your own country, but also abroad.

Another very important element in such promotion is the publication of books authored by your leader. Publication, it seems, gives credibility and stature to the leader. Of necessity, these writings must be published (also) in the English language, because that is the majority language of the international missionary community, the world you want to persuade. In this endeavor, let professionals help you develop the best possible product, including in any translated versions.

In conclusion, we must note that leadership is not a right, but a skill, which is ultimately earned through demonstrated competence, integrity, trust, personal example and hard work.

A leader must communicate vision and a strategy to his followers and bring them to life by leaders within your organization. You must know how to articulate verbally and in writing your personal leadership philosophy. There should be no question in anyone's mind who you are and what you stand for and where you are going.

Focus the majority of your efforts on the future. Understand the nature of fundamental change. Create shared vision to build bridges to the future.



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# THE ROLE OF CHURCHES ON SPIRITUAL AWAKENING IN CHRISTIAN MISSION

Won Sang Lee

Concluding HIS three years of earthly ministry, Jesus Christ promised to establish the Church by saying "Upon this rock I will build my church." (Matt. 16:18) This is our Lord's strategy for the world evangelization. For this purpose Jesus Christ trained His 12 disciples for three years. And before His ascension the Lord gave His disciples the Great Commission: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matt. 28:19-20)

He promised not only to establish the Church, but also to send the Holy Spirit to empower them for world evangelization. (Acts 1:4-8) On the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon the 120 people present in the upper room. (Acts 2:1-4) Thus the church of Jerusalem was born.

Therefore, the purpose of the church of Jesus Christ was very clear from the beginning. She was established to carry out the commission for world evangelization. Its aim shall never be changed. For this very cause, the Churches of Christ exist to the end.

In regard to the church's mission, Jurgend Moltmann calls the church of Jesus Christ "The Missionary Church". He wrote, "Today one of the strongest impulses towards the renewal of the theological concept of the church comes from the theology of mission." (*The Church in the Power of the Spirit*. Translated by Margaret Kohl from Kirche in der Kraft des Geistes. Fortress Press, 1993, p. 7.) Charles Van Engen published his book entitled, *God's Missionary People: Rethinking the Purpose of the Local Church* (Baker, 1991), points also towards this premise as well as the prominent missiologist, David J. Bosch also wrote in his book, *Transforming Mission* (Orbis Books, 1991, p. 9.):

"The church on earth is by its very nature a missionary." Church without mission is meaningless. Patrick Johnstone writes, "Scripture, theology, the church, and even Christians would not exist without mission. Therefore a theology without mission is not a biblical theology, a Church without mission is no longer truly the Church and a Christian without mission is no true disciple." (*The Church is Bigger than you Think*, Christian Focus Publications, 1998, p. 23.)

Now I want to come back to our subject, "The Role of Churches on the Spiritual Awakening in Christian Mission." We can accept the bold claim that the Church without Mission is no longer a true church. Then the next question is how the church of Jesus Christ can play the role on the spiritual awakening movement in Christian missions.

## I. HISTORICAL REVIEW OF THE SPIRITUAL AWAKENING MOVEMENT

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4 was the beginning of the Spiritual Awakening Movement of the Christian Church as Christ promised before His ascension in Acts 1:4-8. The Holy Spirit is the prime mover for the expansion of the Gospel for the world evangelization. It is our sincere prayer that all of us are united in one accord for prayer as we carry out the Great Commission of our Lord. (Acts 1: 12-14)

Before we go into the main subject, let us find out where we are now in regard to the fulfillment of the Great Commission. (Data Provided by World Evangelization Research Center on July 4th, 2003)

World population	6.278 billion	100 %
Christians	2.076 billion	30%
Non-Christians	4.2 billion	
Muslims	1.265 billion	
Hindus	0.849 billion	
Buddhists	0.371 billion	
Unevangelized	1.653 billion	26.3%

\*10,000 unreached peoples' Groups

Realizing the great need for world evangelization, we ought to make a united effort for fulfilling the Great Commission. Our Lord Jesus Christ said that "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14)

William Carey (1761-1834), who has been acclaimed as the Father of Modern Missions, was a shoemaker in England. At the age of 32 in 1793, he sailed for Bengal, India as a missionary. In 1792 he preached a famous missionary sermon; "Expect Great things from God and Attempt Great Things for God." By 1798 he had learned Sanskrit and had translated into Bangali the whole Bible except Joshua to Job.

However, our problem for world evangelization is that; Christian growth cannot match the world population growth. The U.S. Center for World Mission estimated in 1997 that the percentage of humans who regarded themselves as Christians rose at about 2.3% annually. This is approximately equal to the growth rate of the world's population. In comparison, Islam is growing faster: about 2.9%.

Samuel Huntington, Professor of International Politics at Harvard University made a statement as a warning signal to Christianity: "The percentage of Christianity in the world peaked at about 30% in the 1980s, then, leveled off, is now declining, and will probably reach





approximately to about 25% of the world's population by 2025. As a result of the extremely high rate of population growth, the proportion of Muslims in the world's population about the turn of the century, surpassing the number of Christians some years later, and probably accounting for about 30 percent of the world's population by 2025." (*The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of world order*, Touchstone Books, 1998. Pp. 65-66.) Three years later from his publication, the event of September 11, 2001 occurred. We may not agree with what he wrote. However, it calls our attention to an urgency of the world evangelization.

World evangelization cannot just happen by chance or accident, because our Lord commissioned this task to His disciples. At the present era it is our responsibility to carry out the Great Commission. From the apostolic age, the gospel expansion has been accomplished through the power of the Holy Spirit as Christ promised. It is, therefore, necessary to review the history of the revival movements.

#### A. *The Great Awakening Movement*

There was a series of revivals in the American colonies between 1725 and 1760. One of the most powerful evangelists in the awakening movement was George Whitefield (1714-1770), a British itinerant evangelist. He was admitted to Oxford University where he was converted to the new "Methodist" piety of classmates John and Charles Wesley. By traveling throughout the colonies in America calling men to repentance and faith in Christ, Whitefield helped to plant evangelical Christianity in America.

On the other hand, Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), an American theologian, minister, and missionary was born in East Windsor, Connecticut. Following his education at Yale College, Edwards served different churches in New England. Through the publications of his theological and philosophical works Edwards became America's most eminent Christian philosopher. He was the most influential defender of the Great Awakening Movement. He was appointed as President of the College of New Jersey (Later Princeton university).

#### B. *Welsh Revival of 1904-05*

The Welsh revival was a powerful spiritual awakening that brought 100,000 people to Christ. During the spring of 1904 a young Welshman, and coal miner, named Evan Roberts was repeatedly awakened at 1:00 a.m. He met with God until 5:00 a.m. Then the Welsh revival followed. Evan Roberts (1878-1951) was the person most recognized in Welsh Revival. He always took a Bible with him everywhere. Never without his Bible, he prayed and wept for eleven years for revival in Wales.

#### C. *Korean Revival in 1907*

The revival in Korea began in 1907, when the missionaries in Korea prayed earnestly for the same revival in Wales that took place in 1904. About 1500 representatives gathered for the annual New Year Bible Studies in which a spirit of prayer broke out. The leaders allowed everyone to pray aloud simultaneously as so many wanted to pray. That became a characteristic of

Korean prayer meetings. The Reverend Sun Joo Kiel was the first one who started Daily Dawn Prayer meeting in Pyong Yang, North Korea. Even today Daily Dawn Prayer Meeting is practiced in Korean Churches.

#### D. *The 100 Years Prayer Meeting*

It all began on August 13th, 1727 when Zinzendorf organized 24-7 Moravian Prayer Chain. 24 men and 24 women dedicated one hour a day for prayer so that intercessory prayer continued for one hundred years. The Moravian Mission began with prayer. For every 12 members, one went out as a missionary. The Key in this revival was prayer. More than 3000 evangelists and missionaries were sent out from the Moravian churches in the 200 years.

### II. **The Fundamental Task of Churches in Christian Mission is Revival of Prayer Movement.**

As we have reviewed the spiritual awakening movements, it can be easily concluded that prayer is the key. Because the main force in Christian mission is the Holy Spirit, without prayer we shall not experience the power of the Holy Spirit.

#### A. *Jesus Christ is our model of prayer life.*

- 40 days fasting in the Judean desert
- Whole night prayer before the appointments of 12 apostles (Luke 6:12-13)
- Priority in prayer (Luke 5:15-16)
- Prayer before performing miracles
- Prayer at Gethsemane
- Payer on the Cross
- The last words to God in prayer (Luke 23:46)
- The Lord taught the disciples how to pray.
- He commanded them to pray.

#### B. *Prayer and the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:12-2:13)*

#### C. *Prayer and the first Missionary Commission at the Church of Antioch (Acts 13:1-5)*

#### D. *Prayer Movement in Local Churches*

- Early Morning Prayer Meeting Daily
- Special Prayer Week
- Prayer and Fasting Retreat
- Intercessory Prayer Training and Commission
- Weekly Friday Night Prayer Meeting

### III. **Mission Oriented Strategies of the Pastoral Ministry in Local Church**

The primary purpose of the Church Of Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:18) is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the utmost parts of the world as Christ commanded His disciples before His ascension to the heaven.

#### A. *Mission Statement of Local Church*

For example, VISION 2020: Training the Saints to Transform the World (Eph. 4:12)



**B. Senior Pastor's Philosophy of Ministry**

Unless the Senior pastor has a clear vision in the world mission, the congregation will not be motivated and mobilized for the mission.

**C. Consistent Mission Education Curriculum in the Church (From Kindergarten to Adult)**

- Mission in the Old Testament (Abraham, Jonah, Daniel, Ezekiel, Nehemiah)
- Mission in the New Testament
- Mission History
- Modern Mission

**D. Annual Missions Conference**

**E. Summer Short Term Mission Program**

**F. Church Mission Policies**

- Annual Church Budget for Missions
- Scholarship for Missionary Candidates
- Missionary support

**G. Missionary Pastor**

- Missions Committee Training Program
- Preparing Gifts Package for Missionaries
- Greeting Card and Correspondence
- Missionary Home Stay arrangement

**H. Home Grown Missionaries: The Church of Antioch Model**

**I. Prayer Group for Missions**

**J. Special Projects for Missions**

- Church Building in the Mission Fields
- Support for National Pastors
- Any Project for Mission

**IV. Theological Foundation for Missions in Eschatological Perspective**

Approaching the end times, the ministry of the Holy Spirit is ready more than any other times for the world evangelization. Therefore, every nation and churches in the world must surrender to the Holy Spirit that He may lead us in His own initiative. We have to make ourselves available for His use.

**A. We have to recognize the leadership of the Holy Spirit in World Mission.**

**B. We have to recognize the Sovereignty of God in World Mission.**

**C. We have to realize the Uniqueness of the Message of Jesus Christ for Salvation.**

**D. We have to identify the remaining tasks for world evangelization.**

**V. Conclusion**

Learning from the history of the church and her missions from Antioch to the present, we have to realize and fulfill the ultimate purpose of the Church of Jesus Christ. We have to believe and obey the leading of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit alone can accomplish world evangelization in the end times. We, therefore, as Church and Mission leaders, have to unite and submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit so His will be done for world evangelization. Let us therefore hasten the fulfillment of God's will thru Partnership and networking to achieve such goal. Imitating the servant leadership must also be required from all of us who desire for the fulfillment of world evangelization. Praise the Lord who is faithful and merciful for His people! Amen.



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He is the President of SEED International. SEED International has 132 missionary families serving 35 countries. He was the Senior Pastor of Korean Presbyterian Church, Virginia for 26 years. He served as Vice-Chairman of the Asia Missions Association from 2003 to 2010.

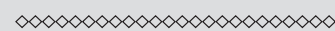
**ASM Strategic Mission Forum in Seoul, Korea**

Asian Society of Missiology announces the 3rd ASM International Forum to be held in Seoul, Korea on October 25-28, 2011. The theme of the Forum is "Discern What is Right" based on Luke 12:57. Asian Center for Theological Studies and Mission (ACTS) and SaRang Community Church will be this year's co-hosts

Registration is free for members whose membership dues are up-to-date while non-members will pay subsidized registration of \$100 inclusive of board and lodging.

Non Korean participants may also join the tour of some historic places in Seoul free of charge. Korean participants may join but will be responsible for the tour cost.

- Plenary Session Topics:
- Creative Access Mission
- Postmodern Mission
- Globalization
- Technology/Media
- Holistic Mission
- Open Access
- Partnership
- Indigenization/Contextualization
- Mission Research and Development
- Education



Online Registration  
<http://www.asianmissiology.org>  
email: [asm@asianmissiology.org](mailto:asm@asianmissiology.org)



## COMIBAM Embraces Business as Mission

*"In order to serve the Iberoamerican missions community, and the peoples they are seeking to reach, COMIBAM (the Ibero-American Missions Cooperation) must stay fresh, aware, and connected with current issues, trends, and opportunities."*

- Decio de Carvalho, COMIBAM Executive Director

**With that in mind, de Carvalho initiated an electronic dialogue on the subject of Business as Mission (BAM) in early 2010**, which led to several regional meetings and culminated with a BAM consultation in Panama in March 2011.

COMIBAM leaders, as well as leaders from both the business and mission arenas, were involved in the discussions concerning COMIBAM's role in catalyzing a BAM movement from within the Iberoamerican mission community.

"BAM is certainly a huge area of missions that we need to learn more about, get involved in, and help to equip and facilitate those God is calling from among us as BAMers," affirms de Carvalho.

Mats Tunehag, Lausanne senior associate on Business as Mission, was instrumental in the consultation and will continue to serve as an advisor. Both Tunehag and de Carvalho have been involved in BAM in various ways in Latin America, but also in the Arab world and Asia. BAM is not new to Latin America.

A growing number of missionaries from the region are running successful BAM enterprises in many countries, especially in restricted-access contexts and sub-Saharan Africa," says João Mordomo, coordinator of COMIBAM's BAM initiative. Mordomo, who was part of the 2004 Lausanne BAM Issue Group, leads a Brazilian mission agency which specializes in BAM.

"Latin Americans have many distinct contributions to make on the global BAM scene, perhaps most obviously those related to football and coffee and the like, as well as those which highlight the typical Latino joie de vivre," adds Mordomo.

COMIBAM was established twenty-five years ago to bring together mission agencies, denominational mission departments, churches, training centers, and other entities involved in the Great Commission. Currently, twenty-five national entities, representing all of Latin American, the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, the Hispanics of the USA and Canada, and Spain and Portugal from COMIBAM International.



*Decio de Carvalho*  
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*He is the Executive Director of the COMIBAM International. Carvalho has experience in mission in Brazil and in other countries in Latin America and has worked in Turkey and lived in the United States.*



## MOVEMENT FOR AFRICAN NATIONALS INITIATIVES Brief Report to AMA on MANI 2011 Consultation

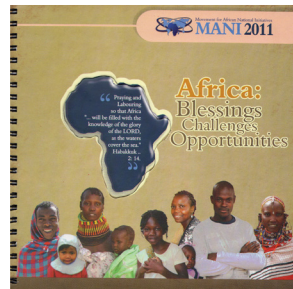
*Reuben Ezemadu*

The MANI 2011 Consultation was held at Abuja, Nigeria from September 4 – 10, 2011. The MANI 2011 Consultation was the second continental consultation of the Movement for African National Initiatives following the first one in March 2006 which was tagged The Post-African Millennium Consultation.

Dr. David J. Cho and Dr. Timothy K. Park, on behalf of AMA, attended the Consultation. They reported that “it was a great consultation. African missions leaders from all parts of the African Continent with the exception of the Northern part of Africa and many western missions leaders engaged in dialogue. Sadly, no Asian missionaries working in the African continent joined them. We felt the need for partnership with our African brethren and greeted them on behalf of AMA.”

There were 614 participants from 60 countries gathered in Abuja Nigeria from 5 to 9 September 2011 for the consultation of the Movement for African National Initiatives. The Nigerian church welcomed and hosted participants in this MANI 2011 consultation to commemorate the 10 years anniversary of MANI.

Through worship, devotions, drama, testimonies, presentations, group meetings and informal



conversations the participants explored the blessings, challenges and opportunities regarding the mission of the African church.

At the beginning of time God created the African continent with all its beauty, diversity and wealth. He filled it with plants and

animals, and with humans shaped after his image. From Genesis to Revelation, Africans participated in the unfolding of the biblical story.

The African church exists in communities facing serious challenges, often more so than in other parts of the world. These challenges present the church with new opportunities for sharing God’s Good News.

An estimated 970 least-reached people groups in Africa do not have yet a viable indigenous Christian fellowship in their midst. Here where Christianity of the South engages Islam of the North, the missionary task from the church is usually the hardest and sacrifice, the greatest.



Plenary Session of the MANI 2011



The African churches also heard the Macedonian call from the church in Europe, invitations from Colombia and opportunities in many other parts of the world where God opened doors for the expansion of His kingdom.

The African continent has the youngest population, with about 21% of its population being under the age of 18. Children and youth were central in the rapid expansion of the African church in the 19th and 20th centuries. However, there is the risk of losing them because they are often neglected in the ministry of the church and increasingly exposed to secular influences, much of which include values and practices not compatible with the Christian message and lifestyle.

The leaders of African church regret for not affirming the important role and not sufficiently nurturing young leadership and to help them to do better as they go on from here.

The missional task of the church should be bathed in prayer. We learn this from the example of Jesus (Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16; John 17), from his commands to the disciples (Mat. 6:5-13; 9:37-38) and from the practice of the early church (Acts 4:23-31; 13:1-3; Eph. 1:3-23). In recent years God has woken the global church up to the challenge and privilege of united prayer. It pleased Him to let the African church to play a leading role in this regard and we reaffirm our commitment to this calling. God specially assigns his Spirit to guide us in our prayers and transform them into expressions of his own design and power (Rom. 8:27-28; Eph. 6:16-20).

A central element in the Great Commission, which sadly is often undervalued, is Jesus' clear command to disciple the nations (Mat. 28:19). The purpose and standard of this task are beautifully stated in Eph. 4:13, namely that we should attain to the stature of the fullness of Jesus Christ. We need to submit ourselves to a process that will ensure the growth of the character of Christ in us individually and corporately, and from that basis develop and implement a process of discipling new believers and the fellowships in which they meet. Through effective discipling God will bring about the fulfillment of his word through Habakkuk 2:14, that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."



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*He is the Continental Coordinator of MANI since its beginning. He is the Founding Director of the Christian Missionary Foundation, Inc. with about 383 missionaries in Africa and the beyond. He served as the Pioneer General Secretary of Nigeria Evangelical Missions Association from 1983 to 1995. In addition, he served as the General Coordinator of Third World Missions Association for 10 years (1989-1999). He is a loyal supporter of AMA and the East-West Center for Missions Research & Development since 1989.*



*Praying and Labouring so that Africa  
"...will be filled with the  
knowledge of the glory of the LORD,  
as the waters cover the sea."  
Habakkuk 2:14*



**The Movement for African National Initiatives (MANI)** is a grassroots African movement committed to catalyzing the Body of Christ in Africa to work in strategic partnership to disciple the nations and to send Africans in mission around the world.

**MANI** emerges from a 40-year history of African national movements and given full expression during the AD 2000 AND BEYOND MOVEMENT era. Building upon this legacy, in 2001 leaders from 36 African countries gathered at the Africa Millennial Consultation in Jerusalem. They affirmed God's powerful work across the continent and committed to accelerate the advance of the Gospel through networking and collaboration. This gathering gave birth to a continental network called the **Movement for African National Initiatives**.

In 2003, **MANI** convened a consultation on **AFRICAN INDIGENOUS MISSIONS** at which the various issues, models, structures and strategies of African indigenous efforts were articulated, shared and documented in a compendium with similar title.





Two years later in 2006, the world watched as 520 leaders from 49 African nations gathered at MANI 2006 in Nairobi to pray, share best practices and assess the unfinished task in Africa. They celebrated the dynamic growth of the African Church and faced up to critical challenges. Commitments were made to advance national initiatives and to cooperate regionally to advance the Great Commission.

**MANI** flows out of the conviction that: 1) The Church in Africa has a crucial role to play in the fulfillment of the Great Commission in the 21st century; 2) The Church in Africa has the ministry gifts, manpower, and material resources to complete this task in Africa and to make a significant contribution towards global evangelization; and 3) Through the focused deployment of the resources of the African Church, we can partner with the global church to achieve the target of **"a church for every people and the gospel for every person"** in the countries of Africa and the world.

As an indigenous movement, it is helping churches and ministries work together and linking strategic networks for the mobilization of the African Church. MANI has a working partnership with the Association of Evangelicals in Africa and serves to bridge the African Church with global networks and African Christians in the Diaspora. Members of the **MANI** team relate closely with the WEA Missions Commission, the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, the Great Commission Roundtable, the Third World Missions Association and with global initiatives such as Joshua Project and Operation World.

**MANI** is coordinated by a Continental Coordinator and his team of Regional and Ministry Networks Coordinators whose responsibilities are related to the following areas:

1. Helping African Church Leaders and God's people to **understand the 'kairos' moment that has come upon the Church in Africa and the mandate from God for the Church to play significant role in the end-time harvest**
2. Building bridges of **understanding between older missions and emerging missions in Africa**, on one hand, and between the former harvest forces that are becoming harvest fields and the former harvest fields that are becoming strong harvest forces.
3. Helping Missions and Ministries from outside and within Africa to **explore new and strategic ways of doing ministry in Africa**

### **Strengthening African National Initiatives**

An African National Initiative is a strategic, national process designed to mobilize the whole Body of Christ to complete the Great Commission within its borders and to send Africans in mission to the least-evangelized of the world. The goal is to see healthy churches transforming every community throughout a nation and beyond. United by common vision and solid information, national initiatives take a unique form in every country and assume a local name, such as Ghana Evangelism Committee, Nigeria Finish-The-Task Network; the World Evangelization Network of South Africa, Finish the Task (Kenya-FTT), the Zimbabwe National Evangelism Task, the Disciple Namibia Movement, and a continental/global networks such Transformation Africa/Global Day of Prayer, to mention but a few. .

Nearly half of the countries in Southern Africa are engaged in some expression of a National Initiative. The first National Initiative in the region was launched in Zimbabwe in the early 1990s. Called "Target 2000", this strategic partnership involved 60 denominations in an effort to plant 10,000 congregations in unchurched areas by the end of the decade. Intrigued by what was happening across their borders, Swaziland sent a group of leaders from 13 denominations to attend the Target 2000 national congress in 1992. Profoundly challenged, they returned home and helped the three major church associations to launch a partnership called the "Swaziland Evangelism Task."

The AD2000 & Beyond Movement, and in particular, GCOWE 97, was used by God to light the fire of additional national movements across the region. The Namibia delegation was inspired to launch the Transformation Namibia movement, with significant strides made in networking church, business and government leaders. Building upon the foundation of the Love Southern Africa initiative, The Evangelical Alliance of South Africa helped to initiate the World Evangelization Network of South Africa (WENSA) which serves as a network of ministry streams within the country.

The Malawi National Initiative for Missions and Evangelism took initial steps following GCOWE 97 and the Copperbelt Survey began as a pilot project in Zambia in the years to follow. Lesotho has explored the initiation of a National Initiative and strong interest has been expressed in Botswana. The Portuguese-speaking countries of Africa converged at MANI 06 and voiced their commitment to encourage one another in the formation of national movements.

Each initiative is at a different stage of development. Several are vital and growing. Some are in the exploratory stage. Others may need revitalization. Yet all are expressive of the desire among many African leaders to mobilize the whole Body of Christ to fulfill the Great Commission within their nation and beyond.