

## HISTORICAL DOCUMENTATION IN MISSION

The present reality is built on the past. Wisdom is a by-product and sum total of experiences, values and accumulated knowledge acquired through the time. History is the best teacher to an understanding of our present experiences. Spanish philosopher George Santayana wrote: "Progress, far from consisting in change, depends on retentiveness. When change is absolute there remains no being to improve and no direction is set for possible improvement: and when experience is not retained, as among savages, infancy is perpetual. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it." (Santayana, *The Life of Reason*, 1905)

In every sphere of life, historical documentation is so valuable that we refer to them not only to better understanding of our present reality but as building blocks to progress and better practices. Those who faithfully recorded the past are to be acknowledged wise and unselfish for they relate to us not only their accomplishments but also their struggles and mistakes which are valuable to the present and future generations. This is no less true in the Church and her missions.

The Bible is God's Word. It does not only convey sets of teachings but also faithful record of God's dealing with human race in the past. Imagine mission enterprise if there was no record of the patriarchs, kings, prophets apostles and the early believers. What if the apostle Paul thought only of his present reality and neglected sharing his experiences through epistles and personal correspondences? What if he did not tell us about his sojourn in Ephesus and other Asian regions where he encountered opportunities and oppositions? The Book of Acts, for example, is an accurate record of the life and expansion of the Church in the beginning. Our predecessors left lasting impact through their recording system. We all benefit from written records of activities, theology and strategies and hence, we can establish our missiology based on faithful records of the past and the correct reading of our existential and faith realities.

In this issue of Asia Missions Advance, we would like to underscore mission documentation as an immensely necessary tool for the fulfillment of Christ's

Great Commission. Documentation is important for sharing knowledge, pitfalls and dangers, successes and prospects, among others. It also enables the readers to see the clearer picture of the mission work in a particular setting and serve as a valuable piece in the big mosaic of global enterprise of God's salvation. It also enables to learn valuable lessons and unlearn the ways and mission myths that are not supposed to be done in the first place. As mission is both spiritual and physical, we can read trends, find opportunities and device strategies as faithful records become more and more available. Mission documentation tells us about the works of the Holy Spirit in the mission field and the world. Thus, it leads us to give greater honor and glory to the Lord of the Harvest who has gone ahead of us to prepare the field for the abundant harvest.

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We acknowledge the valuable insights of the contributors of this 37th issue of AMA. Dr. Peter Beyerhaus, professor of Missions at Tübingen University, shares the current state of the world as challenge to World Mission in his article "The Christian World Missions Today". Dr. Reuben Ezemadu, of the Movement for African Nationals Initiative (MANI) wrote about the current status of missions in Africa, with some portions written about missions in Africa in the past. Dr. Decio de Carvalho, President of COMIBAM reports on the history of Latin American Mission - how missions came to Latin America and about COMIBAM. Dr. David J. Cho, founder of Asia Missions Association and the founding editor of Asian Missions Advance, wrote about the history of Christianity in Korea - touching on how Christianity, missionaries and the Bible entered the Peninsula. Dr. Dale Kietzman of Latin American Indian Ministries wrote about Latin American missionaries, how they worked, their mistakes and some valuable strategies in missions. And Dr. Jonathan Bonk, Executive Director of Overseas Ministries Studies Center dealt with the issue of missions and money.

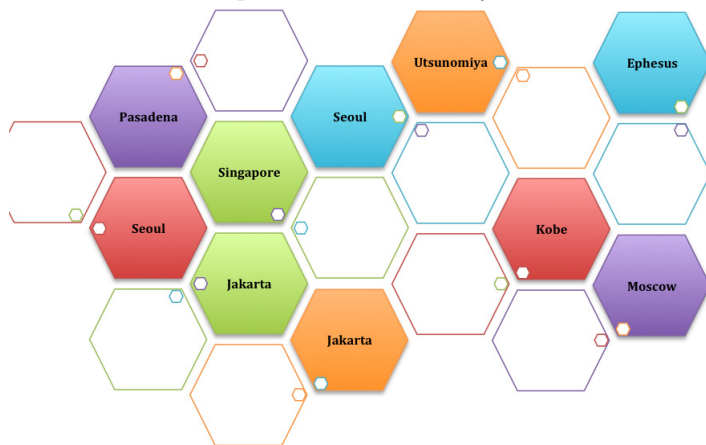
Being a great leader and doing a great ministry are good, but keeping record and making documentation what God does in and through us are also important. As Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote the life and work of Jesus Christ from different perspectives and helped us to have a comprehensive understanding of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we also must make contributions to the Church for the better understanding of mission by recording and making reports what God has done through us.



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## The 40th Anniversary of AMA: 1973-2013 & the 11th Triennial Convention

Plans are being laid out as the 40th anniversary of AMA and 11th Triennial Convention on October 7-11, 2013. The venue is the campus of State University of New York – Korea in Incheon, Korea. Representatives of national



mission associations in Asia, mission leaders and representatives from Western mission, Latin American mission and African mission have been invited.

This important event will mark the 40th year of Asia Missions Association. It was in 1973 when Dr. David J. Cho initiated the formation of AMA after the All-Asia Missions Consultation held in Seoul, Korea in 1973 with the participation of Asian Christian leaders. This first non-Western missions body gave birth to the national missions association in several Asian countries. The first convention was held in 1975 in Seoul Korea. Singapore hosted the

second convention in 1978. In 1982 the third convention was held in Seoul, Korea. Pasadena, USA was the venue of the fourth convention in 1986. In 1991, Utsunomiya, Japan hosted the fifth convention. And gain, Japan hosted the sixth convention in Kobe. The seventh convention was held in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2000. Moscow, Russia was the venue of the eighth convention in 2003. In 2006, the 9th AMA convention was in Ephesus, Turkey. The 10th Triennial convention was in Jakarta, Indonesia in 2010.

For registration and details visit our website at <http://asiamissions.net> and [http://ewcenter.org/?page\\_id=3673#1](http://ewcenter.org/?page_id=3673#1).

*The 40th Anniversary of AMA*  
*The 11th Triennial Convention*  
**SEOUL**   
 Oct. 7~11, 2013 **AMA 2013**

# THE CHRISTIAN WORLD MISSION TODAY

## *The World's Spiritual State as Challenge to Missions*

Peter Beyerhaus

### I. THE AD 2000 AND BEYOND MOVEMENT

When responsible leaders of the international missionary movement on all continents began to realize that a new i.e. the third millennium after the birth of Jesus Christ was approaching, they were inspired to conceive gigantic plans, through which the Gospel of God's redemptive action in Christ should become known to all humanity, and our Lord really be worshiped in all nations as Saviour of the world. It is remarkable how church and para-church agencies of various confessional backgrounds became involved in these schemes - ranging from Pentecostalism up to Roman Catholicism. Although most of these plans had been conceived independently from each other, during the last decade of the 20th Century had developed a growing mutual consultation and cross fertilization that allowed us to speak collectively about the "AD 2000 Movement". The ideas and designs were presented in a number of congresses, one of them held in Seoul in October 1996. Meanwhile the third millennium has been on its go for more than a decade, but none of these schemes has been fulfilled completely, but missions were still eager to cling to this vision, which they now extended by the clause "and beyond". Seen in a flexible attitude, the program still appears not completely unrealistic if we consider that our evangelical movement commands of powerful broadcasting companies. The biggest of them were amongst the first evangelistic agencies that geared themselves into the AD 2000 Vision. At the World Evangelization Congress Lausanne II in Manila, 1989 they announced that their combined networks already covered the entire surface of our globe. In their manifold programs the Gospel is preached in 142 different languages, and additional ones are included either by them or by regional Christian radio stations every year.

However we have to be *considerate* at the same time as we try to be more zealous. Therefore I have to add two notes of caution:

**Firstly** we should be careful not to confuse our chronological timetable with the kairological timetable of the Lord. Nowhere in the Bible is it written that the third Millennium in our Western chronology falls together with the millenarian reign of Christ as foretold in Revelation chapter 20. On the contrary: Christ Himself has clearly instructed his disciples that no human being can know God's appointed date of the final appearance of the Son of Man with his heavenly kingdom.

**Secondly** we should not fall into the trap that we substitute our human designs for world evangelization with the design according to which Christ himself will lead the evangelization of the world to its proper completion. For as we have been reminded by some renowned missiological thinkers: "*The primary commissioner and agent of world evangelization is not man, is not even the church of Christ, but God himself.*" The Mission

is God's i.e. *Missio Dei*, not ours, *Missio Hominum*. There is the great temptation that by replacing the primary author of mission from the divine to the human subject, all our well intended attempts, eventually may be frustrated, or - even worse, - that the plan of redemption is perverted into a plan of confusion. We should never forget that human methodology, technology and science are but useful tools in the work of the Lord. The power, however, to effect the proper results and the direction where to go must come from God himself. This means, that we are constantly dependent on the ever fresh anointment of His Holy Spirit - whom we cannot command! - and that we are to study conscientiously what God Himself wants to say to us through His Holy Word, the Bible.

### II. THE UNCHANGING TASK

When we speak about the Church's missionary task in the world, it is important to distinguish between "world evangelization" and "world Christianization".

The writers of the two Testaments tell us that the total discipling of the Gentile world will take place only when Jesus Christ returns to set up his Reign of peace and justice visibly from Mt. Zion. It is the task of the people of God to prepare for this event by first bringing the good news of salvation to all nations on earth.

This people was originally the **historic Israel**, whom God had called to be a royal priesthood to all nations. - When, however, the historic Israel failed its vocation, God made a new beginning by gathering out of Israel a new elect community, the **Church of Jesus Christ**, redeemed by his blood, to become the beginning of a new, the true Israel. She has her historic roots in the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob/Israel, for the members of the very first church in Jerusalem were all Jews. The new people of God is made up both by such believers who are Israelites according to natural birth and by those who have become spiritually Israelites through faith in Christ. At present the majority of converts are believers out of the world of the Gentiles. But as the promise of the messianic Kingdom originally was given to the people of Israel, and as God's promises are never broken, there will be a time when the whole people of the Jews in a miraculous way will be healed from its present blindness and will acknowledge Jesus as their expected Messiah. When this marvellous event has taken place, then the moment has come that the returning Christ will set up God's Kingdom in power and glory.

The prophet *Zechariah* tells us in the 12th and 14th chapters of his book that this event will take place in a situation when the people of Israel will be exposed to a devastating aggression by armies from all nations fighting Jerusalem. Paul mentions another important event that will forestall the final conversion of Israel:



Her present spiritual hardening will melt away when "the full number of the Gentiles has come in". And the Apostle adds: "... and so all Israel will be saved" (Rom 11:25f).

Thus there will be a **convergence of events in the political and ecclesiastical history** which together ushers in the end of the present age and the breaking in of the new Age of God's Kingdom in power:

In the *political scene* there will be a worsening of international relations, leading to a final military confrontation centred on the conflict in the Middle East: Israel and its neighbouring Arabic countries.

In the *ecclesiastical scene* there will be a final bid of the Church of Christ to reach all peoples with the Gospel of Christ who have not got a chance to listen and to respond to it. These are the two crucial co-ordinates that signify the approach of human history towards its divinely appointed destination.

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This biblical reflection leads us to a twofold conclusion which is extremely important for our theme: "Mission in the 21st Century":

Firstly, there is no promise given to mankind that this earth ever will become a place of peace and prosperity for all before the second coming of Jesus. If political history will mount in a global confrontation of nations and super-powers, we cannot assume that peace on earth will be established by a political New World Order which some American leaders, especially the two presidents Bush Sr., the father and Bush Jr., the son, used to speak about. On the contrary: The Revelation of John (17:12-14) clearly warns us of a future world dominion which is brought about by the ten mightiest kings of that time handing over their power and authority to the beast, who is the Antichrist. He will be a political and a religious figure in one person. He will also command over the respect of many religious people because of the great signs and wonders which the second beast, the false prophet, will perform in order to increase the authority of the Antichrist (Rev 13-15). Let us heed that in the New Testament, John, Paul and Jesus himself mention the appearance of signs and wonders not only as features accompanying the work of evangelization but even more as the methods by which false prophets and false "Christs" will accomplish the great spiritual apostasy within Christianity!

Secondly, the biblical view of the future contains a very definite marching order for the church of Christ. If His Second Coming will be preceded by the ingathering of all souls who positively respond to the offer of salvation, then witnessing to all people who are still outside Christ's flock has the utmost priority in all Christian activities. This is what Jesus himself clearly has told to His disciples. When they asked Him about the end of history and the signs of it (Mt 24:3) He gave one positive sign and injunction to them: "*This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all people, and then the end will come*" (Mt 24:14). Christians should not be scared to despair by the acceleration of disasters in the history of nations and of nature: Wars, earthquakes, famines and the like. Christians cannot avert them, but these events cannot separate them from the love of God. Neither should Christians be bewildered by the seducing words and miracles of false prophets. Instead they should be Christ's faithful witnesses at home, in their neighbourhood until the remotest places of the earth. Christ did neither promise to them that they ever could Christianize the secular order nor that they would win the majority of people to become converted. But he truly assured them that their testimony will not be silenced until the last still unreached people have heard it. He guaranteed to his apostolic messengers that He would be present amongst them until the end of this age (Mt 28:20). When this goal will be reached, nobody can know, because we cannot look into the human heart. But we know that this goal definitely will be reached by the support of our Lord. And we can at least assume, that this goal is not very far ahead of us anymore; because there are many indications in our present world situations that the Lord is near.

### III. ENCOURAGING NEW ASPECTS OF WORLD EVANGELIZATION

Whilst the Protestant Missionary Movement during the 1950's and early '60's was marked by several negative trends, both politically and spiritually, these were reversed in the second half of the 20th Century.

#### 1) *New Gathering of the Evangelical Movement*

There was a new gathering of evangelical forces, a new sense of spiritual vocation. This led to the formation of a mighty movement with the renewed desire of the classical student volunteer movement to "*evangelize the world in this generation*".

The leading role was taken by American world evangelist Billy Graham. He became instrumental in convoking two international congresses for world evangelization at Berlin 1966, and at Lausanne 1974. These were followed by Lausanne II in Manila 1989, and Lausanne III in Cape Town 2010, supplemented by a number of regional assemblies on similar lines and, moreover, by the Triennial Congresses of *Asia Missions Association*, founded in 1973 in Seoul, Korea. All of them contributed to bring about and to strengthen a new evangelistic vision and the readiness to co-operate towards its implementation.

#### 2) *A New Missionary Force from the Two-Thirds World*

There was another remarkable development in the evangelical constituency: The emergence of a new missionary force from amongst the younger churches in the Third or rather Two-Thirds-World. Instead of being mere recipients of ecumenical inter-church-aid from the West, these cross-cultural missionaries coming from such new agencies are already surpassing the number of their Western colleagues. As the late Nigerian evangelist *Panya Baba* remarked in an address given at our Korntal School of World Mission: *"The Holy Spirit raises missionaries in Third World countries in order to bring in the harvest of souls ready for salvation."* In his own West African country there had been established 20 mission agencies which sent 1050 missionaries mainly to five other African countries. Soon they began to send them also into other continents. Some of them work among the black people in Chicago. The total number of the Third World missionary force had risen from 5,000 in the year 1980 to 37,000 in 1990, and to 115,000 in 2002.

It is not only this new miracle strength which is exciting. We may rejoice also about the fact, that these African, Asian and Latin American missionaries do not meet with major resistance to their service just for cultural reasons. Sometimes their acceptability even grows with the distance of their native home. There are many countries - especially in Muslim areas - where Asian Christians can move quite freely, whilst Westerners are met with distrust for historical and political reasons.

### **3) Revivals and Mass Movements in Several Countries**

In several countries of the world there have been remarkable revivals and mass movements towards Christianity in recent years. This happened partly also in some East European countries after their liberation from Communism: Russia, Ukraine, Baltic countries, Romania. In other countries there is a great openness or even hunger to listen to the word of God. My son John, who was working as missionary in Kenya during the latter nineties, reported that evangelistic rallies attract large crowds to the halls, and churches were packed with people wherever the Gospel is preached with conviction.

During the last decades non-Western churches have grown so much - whilst European cathedrals have become empty museums - that the centre of spiritual gravitation has moved from North to South and from West to East. The statistics of David Barret tell us that at the beginning of this 20th century there were 560 million Christians in the world, 84 % of whom were living in the West. At the beginning of the 21st century there were an estimated number of 2 billion Christians, of whom only 29 % lived in the West.

The main problem is that church adherence is growing much faster than church leadership can care for the spiritual needs of these new converts. Whilst in the USA you have one academically trained leader for 1,300 Christians, in some Two-Thirds World countries one such leader has to serve 10 or even 20 times that number of church-members and inquirers.

### **4) New Tools for World Evangelization**

In addition to the bodily presence of the Gospel through

human messengers, there is the audio and even visual presence by means of modern mass communication: Radio and TV. God has raised quite a number of able program producers and has also stimulated the readiness of Christian donors to give sufficient support to their financial needs. As Japanese electronic companies sell their products at reasonable prices in the remotest areas, the number of listeners and spectators to Gospel programs is rising swiftly. By AD 2000 two billion people in the Two-thirds World regularly listened to the Gospel through Radio! This has become particularly significant in "closed areas" countries under Communist or Islamic dominance.

We may remember the example of Red China during the era of suppression. At that time Bible texts dictated from Radio stations in Manila and Macau, written down secretly by Christians, became their spiritual food! We must, however, take note of the other fact that mass media are merely useful tools to spread Christian knowledge. But listening to them does not normally lead to a personal commitment to Christ or to join His church. There are, however, remarkable exceptions to this general observation. I know of a Christian congregation in Zambia, that has emerged solely on account of their members being reached by the program of Trans World Radio. Nevertheless we must be aware that electronic media basically are tools that can support but never will be able fully to substitute the personal witness born by Christian love and ethical trustworthiness.

Therefore, the movement to evangelize the world by the year 2000 would commit a fatal error if it based its optimism mainly upon the global range of Christian broadcasting. Otherwise Christ would not have send out personal messengers but rather - together with his angels - have designed a magnificent heavenly telecast system to complete the discipling of all nations. What is needed really to evangelise and to disciple Asia's masses is a drastic rise of the number of trans-cultural missionaries who leave their homes and, cross barriers in order to reach them with the Good News.

## **IV. NEW HISTORIC CHALLENGES TO THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT**

As we were moving towards the third millennium we could observe how mankind was rapidly changing in its social composition. I can only mention four major trends which all are significant for world evangelization, because they ask for a change in our missionary approach. These trends are: 1) Population Growth; 2) Urbanization; 3) Predominance of younger people; 4) Poverty.

### **1) Population Growth:**

Mankind is growing in amazing speed. This constitutes a terrific challenge to the work of world evangelization if we do not want to fall back in our race to enlarge the proportion of people who have been one for Christ. In 1968 *Donald McGavran* of Fuller Theological Seminary spoke about the 2 billion still Unreached. He complained that the World Council of Churches in its Uppsala Assembly was about to betray them by its new

interpretation of world mission. Instead of aiming at World evangelization, they preferred to speak of the need of changing political structures and engaging in dialogue with representatives of other religions. In 1974 at Lausanne we were challenged to make plans for the 2.7 billion, and by AD 2000 the world population had grown to 6 billion, out of which one half still live in unreached areas. This calls for a drastic increase of the missionary task force and - more important - its re-deployment to move from fairly evangelised to completely unevangelised areas. One of them is Inner Mongolia, a country officially closed to organized Christian preaching; but its local authorities are quite tolerant over against religious plurality. A former disciple of mine is the only trans-cultural witness (he does not call himself missionary!) within a large area, with a distance of 600 kilometres to his nearest European colleague!

## **2) Urbanization**

More and more people move from their ancient rural culture into the modern civilization of the city or even the megapolis in the hope to raise their economic standard of life. They are enjoying or at least hoping to find a multiple choice of professional careers, associations, amusements and consumer goods. But often they face new problems difficult to cope with: difficulty to find employment and suitable housing; confusing traffic congestion with much noise, air pollution, epidemical diseases, drugs, prostitution, and crimes; they are losing the familiar bonds of their native community; and risk to get lost in loneliness and anonymity.

However, the dissolution of those former ties constitutes also liberation from religious sanctions; that opens up a chance more freely to consider the Gospel as a potential spiritual option. A mission program must be sensitive to the new needs, hopes and dangers and adopt the mood of presenting the Gospel and shaping the Christian fellowship accordingly. The challenge of urbanization has been ranking very highly in the efforts of the LCWE. For the trend is irreversible. Most of all metropolis are already or will be cited in the Two-Thirds World. In the coming century only one of the ten largest cities will be in the West, New York; seven will be in Asia, two in Latin America and one will be Mexico City. If we cannot find new forms of witnessing and ministering to the life of people in the cities, the church might easily become marginalized.

But many Christians have been able to cope with the socio-economic transformation and have established strong and well organized city churches which are attractive to their surrounding. Many of them have experienced remarkable growth and have developed a pastoral and evangelistic programme in which members can serve with their talents and are trained for leadership. Quite a number of the city churches even are responsible for sending and supporting missionaries to other parts of the world. Here the Pauline city-based strategy finds a reiteration under modern conditions.

## **3) The Predominance of the Young Generation**

In many countries in the Two-Thirds World the young people under 18 years constitute half of the population. At that formative period of their biography, young

people are still very open to a variety of influences. Our missionary programs must be tuned in into their emotional wave length and try to answer their vital questions! At the same time it is important to discover the different talents amongst our Christian youth in order to prepare them for active responsibility in the church-life already now and for future leadership. Many churches do not grow because they cling too much to the ancient principle of senior authority. This can develop into a serious problem, since the elder and the younger generation is oriented towards different value systems. The elder cling to their cultural traditions, the younger swiftly adopt the modern ideas and the lifestyle which is communicated to them by the mass-media, and also by going abroad for advanced studies. So a generation gap can become a serious problem. The true solution will be a combination of both: Preserving the abiding values of the past and being critically open for new achievements of modern culture.

## **4) Widening Gap Between the Rich and the Poor**

Most of the present population explosion takes place amongst people who are living below the existential minimum income. They are harassed by poverty, sickness, homelessness, crime and political suppression. Since its Melbourne Conference in 1980 the Conciliar Movement has been advocating a transformation of the traditional mission strategy of the church into a mission amongst the poor and by the poor. This meant that in such areas Christians and non-Christians should come together, organize ecclesial basic communities that pray, plan and fight for a better future, knowing that God is on their side. Now whilst it is quite appropriate to speak of "God's preferential option for the poor", it is less scriptural to conceive such a mission of the poor as a strategy of political liberation or of changing the global economical system, as some of its proponents suggest. For by now the collapse of established Communism in the Eastern block ought to have taught us that the basic predicament of mankind cannot be solved by totalitarian ideologies that make sinful man the agent of his own liberation. The poor, it is true, are calling upon us to develop an approach sensitive also to their social needs. If we fail to do so, we shall become inhuman in our preaching to them.

But let us not forget: The deepest needs even of persons living in utter poverty are to get reconciled to God and reconciled to their neighbours. When people have found a new confidence that they are not lost but precious in the sight of God, new hope be kindled in them, and they will be more ready to cooperate in social schemes which are directed towards strengthening their own initiative and their sense of communal solidarity. I believe that Korea gives us a magnificent example how the Gospel can transfer the lives even of poor and despised people, of a nation that has suffered under tremendous hardships and thus make a significant contribution to the cultural uplifting of a whole nation, especially the female gender.

At the same time the utter failure of the secular authorities and agencies to cope with the constant increase of tribal fighting, economic depression and devastating epidemics' like AIDS reminds us that we



are living in a fallen world heading for its final self-destruction. It is true, we are charged to exhibit the mercy of Christ by enhancing our message of faith with deeds of love. In this way we can ameliorate the miserable conditions of our suffering fellow human beings. The radical change, however, can only come when God himself will transfer his first creation into the messianic Kingdom of peace.

We have reminded ourselves that this will take place when our Lord Jesus Christ at his second coming visibly will assume his reign. He will, however, only come when his people have fulfilled their assignment to prepare his way by being messengers of reconciliation.

## V. NEW THREATS TO THE MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

We still have to consider a third factor conditioning our missionary movement in the 21st century. We have to be mindful of the counter-actions of Satan who tries his utmost to impede the world-wide witness to the nations. For the devil knows that his time is short and that the second coming of Christ will mean the final destruction of his own dominion on earth. He cannot stop the course of the Gospel, but he can delay it, and he constantly mobilizes new forces to do so. We cannot analyse all the manifold strategies of the Enemy; but we have to mention some of the most dangerous counter-forces that are meeting us today. They are working both from outside and from inside the Church.

### 1) Fundamentalist Islam

Firstly the most fearful force from outside today is the advance of fundamentalist Islam, the religion of the False Prophet Mohammed. Most of the present day persecution of Christians happens in totalitarian Islamic countries, especially in the Sudan and in Iran. These countries strictly forbid an open practice of the Christian faith. Yet, even there the witness for Christ cannot be silenced completely, although the price for it will be martyrdom. I believe that the suffering of our fellow-Christians under such conditions should encourage us to be ready for a time, when martyrdom might also be demanded from us, for this is the true way in which Satan can be defeated and his strategy neutralized. In Revelations 12:11 we read: "*And they have concurred him (the devil), by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.*"

### 2) Renascent Eastern Religions

Secondly there is the counter force of East-Asian Religions. In some of them there are fundamentalist movements, too, hostile to Christianity. This is true especially within Hinduism in parts of India and in Buddhism on Sri Lanka.

In India there are both official political parties like the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* which try to make Hinduism the State's official religion; and besides this there are radical fanatical groups that terrorize adherents of other minority religions including Muslims and Christians. There are cases of martyrdom amongst the latter. Christian churches and schools have been raided

and people been murdered. Hinduism is also spread in Western countries through Guru movements like Maharishi Mahesh Yogis "Transcendental Meditation".

Buddhism has experienced a resurgence after the Second World War. There are large Buddhist organizations that try to offer Buddha's religion to all people on earth as the only credible religion of peace. In Buddhist countries many new temples are built and statues of Buddha erected, which attract thousands of worshippers for prayer, sacrifices and fortune telling.

Buddhism, too, has become a missionary movement in the West; its widely respected representative is the Tibetan Dalai Lama who tries to initiate Westerners into the way of "illumination".

The greatest danger which these religions constitute to the Christian church comes, however, through the subtle influence of Eastern spirituality. Syncretistic cults are spreading in Western countries as well. Think of the many advertisements of Yoga and Meditation groups! They are part of the *New Age-Movement* which is spiritually poisoning our young generation.

Shamanism, too, is making inroads into the church. It has been openly advocated and presented at the last Assembly of the WCC in Canberra 1991 by the Korean female theologian *Chung Hyun-Kyung*. At the same time Shamanism is invading even into Pentecostal and other evangelical churches by being confused with the work of the Holy Spirit. Shamanism is one of the sources of prosperity theology which substitutes material blessing for spiritual re-generation. I am afraid that Shamanism even belongs to the background of the new Charismatic mission strategy of power evangelism that openly attacks the so called territorial spirits. I do not find any Scripture warrant for such practices. Shamanism is also the nature of some spiritualistic sects which are spreading rapidly in China today and try to infiltrate and pervert the evangelical House Church Movement.

In view of this spiritual development it is of utmost importance that the national churches in Asia and their missionaries make themselves acquainted with the basic doctrines and practises of those religions and learn to refute their errors in the light of the revealed Word of God.

### 3) Secularism

The third counter-force which the devil mobilizes against world evangelization is secularism. At present it constitutes the greatest threat to the Christian church; for secularism diverts the souls of her members and even of her ministers from the spiritual to the material.

Some time ago I received a document from a good friend of mine in Seoul, Presbyterian theologian Dr. *Kim Myung-Hyuk*, called "The Nature of the Church". Dr. Kim had sent out a questionnaire to some leading ministers in Korea and other Asian countries. In this paper he enquired their opinion about the spiritual condition of their churches today. All of them were unanimous that the former strength of the church has suffered severely on account of secularism. The standard of living has risen highly in Korea. Consequently many Christians are more concerned with external values like prestige and

possessions than with spiritual upbuilding through the means of grace. The earlier interest in prayer-meetings and Bible-classes is diminishing.

Even church growth theories are often based upon secular marketing strategies. They might temporarily attract some people by their interesting offers. But no spiritual growth can be expected from such practice. To those Korean ministers this appears to be the main reason why right now for the first time in history the Protestant churches in Korea as a whole are not increasing, but rather decreasing in membership, whilst some of them are torn apart by personal rivalries, dissensions and faction fights. That is very deplorable, for in former times the Korean church has been remarkably manifested the transforming power of Jesus Christ. It would be a great tragedy in the history of Christianity in East Asia if it now would lose her spiritual beauty and evangelistic vigour.

## VI. HOW SHALL WORLD EVANGELIZATION MOVEMENT PROCEED?

We have treated our theme by taking a fresh look from the Bible and at our present situation. On the basis of what we have gathered I want to conclude my message by seven exhortations:

1. Biblical re-assurance
  2. Spiritual renewal amongst ministers and laity
  3. Watch out for open doors
  4. Be motivated by Christ's Love
  5. Holy urgency
  6. Spiritual watchfulness and discern
  7. Prepare for persecutions
- 1) As we set out for our evangelistic activities, let us time and again devote much diligence to studying the Bible as the authoritative word of God. For we need biblical clarity and must base our mission theory on the whole counsel of God. Otherwise we will lose the sense of orientation and become the victims of satanic confusion. Intensive Bible study has been the mark of the early Korean Church. It has contributed greatly to her orthodoxy and the persuasive force of her evangelistic message.
  - 2) Seek for spiritual renewal of your church as a whole and of your pastors, workers and missionaries in particular. It is not the technical know-how of communication methods or church growth strategies that guarantee a fruitful ministry. First of all it is Christ himself who works through us. But he needs human messengers dedicated to him in prayer and lifestyle.
  - 3) Watch out with expectation and follow the guidance of Christ. He himself is the Lord of His church and of secular history as well. A church attentive to His call will always discover new doors which He opens even into seemingly closed areas.
  - 4) Be driven by the love of the Saviour. Let our mission motive be the "little Bible" in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave His only Son ..." Jesus performed His ministry with a heart full of

compassion, and so he attended to the real needs of the souls and bodies of the peoples. Today we must look at the world with the eyes of Jesus. Then we can discern the physical misery and the spiritual suffering hidden behind it.

- 5) Do your work with great urgency. We are messengers of the coming King. We have heard of the evangelistic vision AD 2000 which has spurred so many agencies to re-enforce their missionary efforts. But even if that year should pass by without any drastic change: One thing is sure: the signs of our time clearly indicate that Christ wants to speed up the evangelistic efforts of His church. Like him we too must work the works of Him who send us, "*while it is day; night comes, when no one can work*" (John 9:4).
- 6) Be watchful, discern the devices of the enemy, get strong in the Lord to resist the devil. It is not Christ alone who works, Satan is working as well. Let us not be seduced by false prophets in the secular world or in the church. Satan can pose as an angel of light. It is by the word of God we will discern the spirits, whether they are of God (1John 4:1-3).
- 7) Be ready to suffer and to sacrifice. Jesus sent His apostles like sheep into the midst of wolves. The message of Christ being the only Saviour and the Lord of the world is not acceptable to our pluralistic society. Even Christian theologians might brand us as "fundamentalists" who are obstacles to the process of dialogue. If we do not open ourselves to the spiritual offers of non-Christian religions, we might soon be regarded as threatening the peace of humanity. Persecution could be the consequence. In this way for the true church the 21st century might come to resemble the first century when Christians were martyred because they did not bow to the religious claims of the Roman emperors. Korea has its own heroic history of martyrdom from the beginning up to the present generation. Jesus did neither guarantee earthly reward nor great external success to his workers. But he encouraged them:

***"Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev 2:10).***



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# ISSUES, CHALLENGES, TRENDS AND MODELS OF AFRICAN CHURCHES' PARTICIPATION IN GLOBAL MISSIONS

Reuben Ezemadu

## ECHOES OF THE RISE OF AFRICAN CHURCHES IN MISSIONS

Philip Jenkins, in his recent studies published *THE NEXT CHRISTENDOM* (Oxford, 2002)<sup>1</sup>, predicted "THE GREAT SHIFT OF THE CENTER OF EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY" from the North to the South, from the West to the Rest, and from traditional mission sending bases to the recipient mission destinations.

### 1. Large Christian Communities

One of the significant observations by Jenkins was that three of the ten countries that have "The Largest Christian Communities" in the world today are in Africa, namely, **NIGERIA, CONGO (D.R.), AND ETHIOPIA**. The others are two each from Asia, Latin America, Europe and one from North America. He also projected that by 2025, the population of Christians from Africa (633 million), Latin America (640 million) and Asia (460 million) alone (totaling 1.733 billion) will constitute 66.5% of the projected global population (2.6 billion) of Christians that time. The above predictions indicate that Africa (together with the other continents in the South and East) will be playing a very significant role in global missions in the 21st century. If the Church in Africa is growing and occupying such a strategic position in the global Church in the 21st century, then the resources to do missions and the harvest forces to be deployed into world missions will not be lacking. Such awareness is already increasing among African Church and Mission leaders. As a result, they are taking a number of initiatives to identify the resources, locate the harvest forces, harness and deploy them in such a way that the African Church will fulfill this mandate that has been thrust on her.

### 2. From Mission Field to A Mission Force

The African Continent which was hither-to a mission field, has become a major mission-force in the present decade. African Churches, denominations and indigenous mission agencies have for long accepted the challenge of reaching African peoples and beyond. They gave opportunities to raise indigenous missionary efforts, initiatives, mission agencies, denominational mission boards, missions strategies, missions training institutions, and National Missions Associations that were not there fifty years ago. This is the case in all the regions of Africa, south of the Sahara. African churches and mission agencies are also focusing more on the specific groups, targets and audiences that have not had such opportunity of hearing the gospel before. Regional, national (e.g. Ghana Evangelical Missions Association; Nigeria Evangelical Missions Association) and continental alliances are being developed by

some ministries to focus on the identified areas of the greatest needs in Africa. We also have many African missionaries, pastors, evangelists, reaching out to people groups in other continents, pastoring churches in other countries out side Africa, some of such churches are made up of non-Africans (e.g. Rev. Sunday Adelaja's church in Kiev that has a membership of over 25,000 Ukrainians)<sup>2</sup> \*See also notes 7 & 9. The Church in Africa has produced outstanding leaders who are making their mark in leadership within the global evangelical and missionary circles.

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**"The African Continent which was hither-to a mission field, has become a major mission-force in the present decade. African Churches, denominations and indigenous mission agencies have for long accepted the challenge of reaching African peoples and beyond."**

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### 3. Increasing National and Local Initiatives

The sacrificial commitment to world missions by the African Church was clearly demonstrated at a consultation on indigenous missions in Africa held in 2003, where several exciting mission initiatives were unveiled. The consultation was convened by the Movement for African Initiatives (MANI) for the purpose of "**catalyzing, mobilizing, and multiplying the resources of the Body of Christ in Africa for the fulfillment of the Great Commission.**" The venue for the consultation was a local church in Ibadan, Nigeria known as "**Glory Tabernacle**" whose 3,000 members raise the equivalent of US\$25,000 per year to help support over 200 missionaries. The Glory Tabernacle is a model of an African Church that is sending and supporting missionaries in the 21st century. There could be more of such. Over 200 mission leaders were present: from Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana, Cote d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Gambia, Niger, Cameroon, Chad, Gabon, Rwanda, Botswana, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Malawi, South Africa and Mauritius. There were a few non-African observers present too. This consultation was primarily to highlight and show-case what the indigenous efforts and initiatives in the areas of missions mobilization, training, sending, funding partnership, are being achieved; and to discuss how to increase such efforts to achieve more in

1. *The Next Christendom*, by Philip Jenkins, 2002, Oxford University Press, ISBN 0-19-514616-6.

2. "God has sent a black man to bring religion back to Russia and the Soviet Union: Sunday Adelaja Promotes God And Democracy in a Land Suspicious of Evangelism", By ALAN CULLISON, July 21, 2006; Page A1, *Wall Street Journal*.

extending the Kingdom of God!

This was followed by two continental consultations of "MANI 2006" in Kenya and "MANI 2011" held in Abuja, Nigeria. The preamble of the MANI 2011 DECLARATION reads: "A total of 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 second MANI consultation, following on from the African Millennial Consultation in Jerusalem (2001) and the first MANI consultation in Nairobi (2006). Through worship, devotions, drama, testimonies, presentations, group meetings and informal conversations we explored the blessings, challenges, and opportunities faced by the mission of the African church".<sup>3</sup>

#### 4. The Church in Africa Comes of Age

The Anglican Church in Africa which is leading the crusade for the reformation of the Anglican Communion declared recently that "the Church in Africa has come of age". A statement by the Anglican Bishops from Africa after their Conference held in Nigeria, October 26th-November 1st, 2004 stated further that "...THE CHURCH HAS GONE BEYOND THE STAGE OF MISSION 'FROM THE WEST TO THE REST' TO THAT OF MISSION FROM 'EVERY WHERE TO EVERY WHERE...THE TIME HAS COME FOR THE CHURCH IN AFRICA TO ADDRESS THE PITFALLS IN OUR PRESENT THEOLOGICAL AND WESTERN WORLD VIEW EDUCATION.....AND ENGAGE INTELLIGENTLY WITH OUR PECULIAR CHALLENGES FROM AN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVE".<sup>4</sup>

#### 5. Being the Light and the Salt in the Market Place

The Fellowship of African Christian Economists (FACE) has just been inaugurated. FACE is an association of Christians who are also practicing economists and other social scientists with a keen interest in development and public policy issues in Africa. In a declaration of the goal of FACE, the promoters stated thus: "Through our association as Christian economists, we are called upon to bear witness to the Lordship of Christ and to the expression of a Kingdom Approach in economic and public policy and in the management of the wealth that God has blessed our continent (Africa) with".<sup>5</sup>

#### 6. Calling the World-wide Church to Her Knees

On May 15, 2005, the Global Day of Prayer was observed around the world by an estimated 40 million believers in every continent of the world. This was an initiative from the Church in Africa calling the Church world-wide to join her in interceding for the transforming power of the Gospel and the Holy Spirit to bear on the challenges of the continent and the whole world. On June 4, 2006, the participation of the global Church in this African prayer initiative almost doubled that of 2005. By the time GDOP

3. Movement for African National Initiatives (MANI) Continental Consultation on "The Remaining Unreached Peoples of Africa", Abuja, Nigeria-September 4-11, 2011.

4. Declaration of the African Anglican Bishops Conference, Lagos-Nigeria, October 26th-November 1st, 2004.

5. Statement by FACE during the MANI 2006 Consultation, Nairobi, Kenya

clocked 10 years in 2010, it has spread to and being observed in over 200 countries of the world.

#### 7. Taking Full Responsibility for the Task of Bible Translation in Africa

A Congress on Bible Translation in Africa was convened in Petermaritzburg, South Africa on September 19-23, 2005, to tackle the challenges facing the translation and engagement of the Bible in Africa. The goal of the world-wide Bible Translators is to see that the Bible is available in every needy language of the world by the year 2025. The purpose of the congress was to "optimize the resources in Africa in the cause of Bible Translation by stimulating dialogue and interaction between current and potential partners" (in translation and use of the Bible in Africa). Declaring that "Bible translation has come of age in Africa", the promoters observed that though until recently, "Bible translation in Africa was done and, therefore, in a sense 'owned' by missionaries from the West, however, Africa has started to take full responsibility for this task. Not only do mother-tongue speakers now render the first translations of the Bible into many African languages, but new (second and third) translations and study bibles are being made in response to the needs expressed by Christian communities".

#### 8. The Best Is Yet to Come!

It is a common feature of the African Church to thrive in the midst of spiritual battles, physical limitations, limited resources, social upheavals, and insecurity. In fact the Church in Africa exists in such context and flourishes within that kind of environment. The Church in Africa is increasingly becoming a missionary Church even in the face of such limitations, oppositions and challenges. The context of religious pluralism, ethnic and cultural diversities, multilingual realities, unwavering belief in the super-natural, tenacity and persevering spirit, adaptability, creativity, now strengthened by spiritual fervency, all these have placed the African Church in a position to contribute more towards the final push in world evangelization and missions. We share similar experiences with other sections of the Body of Christ world-wide, especially our brethren in Asia, Latin America, Middle-East and Central Asia and through cooperation and partnership, we believe we will be moving towards the best outcome in world missions.

#### FACTS WHICH IMPACT THE AFRICAN CHURCH'S INITIATIVES IN GLOBAL MISSIONS

1. There is remarkable decrease in the number of missionaries coming from outside Africa into Africa at the moment.
2. The level of funding and support from outside Africa for the missionary/evangelistic projects and programmes in Africa is diminishing.
3. The decline in spirituality and increase in disaffection for Western Christianity in the continent are also very strong factors.
4. There is an increasing awareness among African Christians and denominations for their involvement in missions.

5. The profile of African ministers and ministries is rising within the global Church as many of them are playing significant roles of leadership within a number of international ministries and global evangelical networks.
  6. The Church in Africa is also being empowered economically as the number of middle income earners and successful business people become evangelical Christians around the continent.
  7. The high rate of emigration of African Christians to Europe, North America, Middle East and now former Eastern Europe also swell the number of African potential missions force exported abroad.
  8. Increasing stability in the hitherto very volatile regions and countries of Africa is creating a missions-friendly environment in those areas.
  9. The rise of Pentecostal and Charismatic ministries and the popularity of the "wealth and health" message among both the African elite and the downtrodden, on one hand, create avenues for holistic missions.
  10. The various regional and continental groupings provide opportunities for cross-border free movement of nationals.
  11. Abundance of natural and mineral resources in Africa to be exploited and utilized for the development of the continent which will also rub off on the Church.
6. The popularity of the unbalanced "gospel of prosperity" to a great extent is undermining the initiatives by the Church in Africa to send and support her own missionaries. This is because majority of those who should go and who should send have got their priorities and values misplaced, exchanging eternity for the momentary gains. This is also associated with the shallowness of the Christianity that has been exported to Africa which is described as the *one mile wide but one inch deep* syndrome.
  7. We are also not oblivious of the spiritual strongholds that contend for the souls of our people. We are aware of the resistance and challenges that are coming from the kingdom of darkness. We are therefore determined to take up the whole armor of God to fight the good fight of faith.

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**"Africa share similar experiences with other sections of the Body of Christ world-wide, especially our brethren in Asia, Latin America, Middle-East and Central Asia and thru cooperation and partnership, we believe we will be moving towards the best outcome in world missions."**

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#### **CRITICAL ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACING AFRICAN INITIATIVES IN MISSIONS**

1. The missionary initiatives of the Church in Africa is mostly "mission agency driven", in most cases generating unnecessary tension between mission agencies and denominations/local churches
2. There is still manifestation of strong influence of western models and patterns of mission. Dominant in the mindset of many African Christians and Church leaders is the image of a missionary being "white" and coming from 'abroad', the missionary task being that of the Church from abroad and as such, the tools and resources for carrying on the task must also come from abroad.
3. There is also an undeclared rivalry between Western mission structures and the emerging ones. While the emerging missions are craving for space and visibility in the new things the Lord is doing with and through His Church globally, the older ones are fighting for relevance and sustenance of the status quo. Of course the result is some untoward development and polarization.
4. Islam remains a critical and major challenge to every initiative to fulfill the great commission in Africa. This is compounded by the use of government organs and political machinery where Muslims are in majority to undermine evangelistic and missionary initiatives.
5. Socio-economic challenges as posed by the HIV/AIDS scourge, ethnic rivalries and clashes, abject poverty, political instability, corruption and vices continue to stare at the face of every effort being made to bring the love of Christ to our people in the form that meets their holistic needs.

#### **PHASES OF MISSIONS' EVOLUTION IN AFRICA:**

1. *Western Mission initiatives:* (initially along the coastline, then thrusts into the interior; in some cases exploring trade routes and exploiting favorable political platforms)
2. *Apprenticeship with limited objectives:* Africans working with and under Western Missionaries as agents, assistants, helpers, etc, just to accomplish current tasks, not necessarily for the purpose of integrating them in team for continuity
3. *Delegation with limited vision:* As a result of nationalization and indigenization policies of many African nations following independence, Western missions turned over the leadership of denominations to Africans: 1) with little or no envisioning/empowerment for missions involvement, and 2) maintenance of existing institutions and structures with limited resources and paternalistic relationship. This turnover encouraged dependency on the West, thereby stifling local initiatives
4. *African Mission Initiatives:* The current missionary zeal that is emanating from Africa is more or less borne out of self-discovery and self-definition of the nature and the mission of the Church in Africa. They resulted to her determination to overcome all the limitations and labels imposed upon her and led her to become a legitimate part of the Body of Christ, as well as fulfill her mandate in God's divine enterprise. These describe the various models and patterns of



mission structures and activities coming from Africa that defy conventional description of missions from other perspectives.

### TRENDS OF MISSIONS IN AFRICA<sup>6</sup>

Some notable trends characterize the mission initiatives and models in and from Africa:

1. There is an increasing awareness and involvement of denominations and local churches in missions. Even though the indigenous mission's movement was spearheaded and driven by indigenous mission agencies, denominations and local churches are discovering and taking up their rightful place in the missionary enterprise.
2. There is a lot of spontaneity in mission's sending and going in and from Africa. Many of those who go do so when and as the Holy Spirit leads them. As a result, majority of those who go are not sent or supported by any group, church or agency in the traditional process of sending. However, majority of such have had very successful ministry (e.g. Sunday Adelaja in Kiev, Ukraine).<sup>7</sup> Some denominations also do not follow the conventional prescriptions for an effective sending structure nor do their policies fit into what is considered the code of best practice in member care delivery. But they have a steady flow of well motivated volunteer-missionaries that spread across the globe and are successfully planting churches first among their own people in the Diaspora and among the native hosts (e.g. The Church of Pentecost, Ghana).
3. Mission agencies, the denominations, and local Churches involved in missions in Africa, are demonstrating a lot of initiatives in defining, structuring and carrying out mission from the African Church perspective. This was very much evident in creative ways the denominations and mission agencies in Africa defined and determined the target groups to reach and the best way to reach them, the types and forms of support to raise and how to raise them, and the type and duration of the training they were to give to their missionaries in order to accomplish the set goals during the AD 2000 & Beyond era. This has continued to characterize most of the efforts of the sending churches and mission agencies in Africa today.
4. Some Western missions and global networks are restructuring and repositioning themselves to empower, encourage and resource the denominations they established in Africa to take initiatives in missions and assume responsibility for the remaining task of reaching the unreached in their countries and beyond. In many cases, some of these Western Missions define their involvement and role in missions in terms of how such role will enhance and strengthen the Church in Africa to fulfill her part of the mandate.

6. *Models, Issues and Structures of Indigenous Missions in Africa—a Compendium of the Consultation on Indigenous Missions*, edited by Reuben Ezemadu, 2006, Acclaim, ISBN 978-2508-45-7.

7. *Missions in the Third Millennium*, by Stan Guthrie, 2000, Paternoster, ISBN 1-84227-042-7

### LOCATING THE HARVEST FORCES IN AND FROM AFRICA

The harvest forces in Africa can be classified into several categories such as Recruiting, Training Sending, and Supporting Force on one hand, and the Going Force, on the other. We can also look at the harvest forces in the following ways:

#### A. THE HARVEST FORCE TO AFRICA

Despite the decline in the missionary support and personnel that come from outside into Africa, the church in Africa will still need the assistance and partnership of the wider Body of Christ in fulfilling her 21st century mandate. Strategic partnership with agencies, ministry networks, resource networks, national and regional associations, and personnel with specific expertise will definitely enhance the effectiveness of the African Church and ministries to accomplish the role that the Church in Africa has to play in world missions this century.

#### B. THE HARVEST FORCE IN AFRICA

The large growing number of Evangelical and Pentecostal believers in Africa constitutes a dormant but potent harvest force and change agents envisioned and empowered to truly witness to Christ through their transformed lives in the society. The increasing number of Mission Agencies and Churches in Africa that are involved in Missions as well as the National and Continental Evangelical Associations, Movements and Networks are good signs that the African Church is becoming aware of her potential for leading in global missions.

#### C. THE HARVEST FORCE FROM AFRICA

Believers (professionals and students) from Africa in Diaspora as well as Missionaries and Ministries from Africa in the rest of the world are harvest forces that could be properly envisioned in order for them to consciously anchor the global missionary role of the African Church in the 21st century. The increasing number of African leaders in leadership positions among global networks and ministries within the evangelical movement could also be vanguards of the African Church in this anticipated role.

#### D. CATEGORIES OF THE 'GOERS'<sup>8</sup>

Among those who have been going to the missions fields on "their own" or sent by the Church and mission agencies within and beyond Africa, have been identified and will still remain the significant groups of the harvest forces from Africa in the 21st century:

1. *Career and full time missionaries.* These are those who have definite and clear understanding of their call into cross-cultural missionary assignments and are trained and strategically deployed into the specific fields or area of their calling on long term basis. Because of their involvement in the missionary enterprise on full time basis, they need support

8. *Sending and Supporting African Missionaries in the 21st Century*, Reuben Ezemadu, 2005, Acclaim, ISBN 978-2508-73-5.

from others in the form of regular stipends for their personal (and family) upkeep and the ministry they are involved in.

2. **Tentmaker-missionaries.** These ones also have a definite sense of calling into missions in cross-cultural settings and perhaps in places that have limited access, acquire training in cross-cultural ministry as well as in relevant skills or professions that will serve as both means of getting into such least access places and generating local support for his/her sustenance during the period of service in such places.
3. **Fortune Seekers (Traders, Business people).** Such people travel far and wide and get into places that are not easily accessible to conventional missionaries. Their business partners, clients, patrons, and colleagues are usually people of influence and power who are potential change agents in their communities and countries. If the believers among these "fortune seekers" are deliberately envisioned and encouraged to be "ambassadors of Christ wherever they go in search of "fortune", the Church in Africa will have in them both mission supporters and goers at the same time.
4. **"Golden Fleece" Pursuers.** Thousands of African young people leave the shores of Africa every year in pursuit of education in other countries and continents. Their school mates and professors are potential leaders and opinion molders in their respective communities and countries. Because of the role students have played in the missionary movements through the ages, these African students and believers can become a strong force in fulfilling the mandate of the African Church in the 21st century if properly envisioned and motivated.<sup>9</sup>
5. **Adventurers.** These include the semi-skilled and unskilled Africans who undertake the often risky adventure by road and sea to Europe and other continents with the hope of making a better living outside the continent of Africa. Those believers among them who survive the ordeal and eventually settle down to decent living abroad can become useful tools for missions.
6. **Fun Seekers (African Pilgrims, Tourists, Holiday makers, Excursionists, etc).** These are the Africans who spend their annual leave and leisure outside their traditional homes and places either for rest and/or for educational and religious exercises. They also come across people who have not been exposed to the claims of Christ and can become the first epistle such people could be reading. Such believers can deliberately plan to seek such fun and leisure in places where they would have opportunities to either encourage missionaries and their ministries in the remote areas or utilize the time to carry out some outreaches among the unreached.
7. **Skill Hawkers.** These include the highly skilled and qualified professionals whose skills and professions are needed in most of the countries that are closed

to conventional missionary work. God has been using such people like medical doctors and nurses, professional footballers, oil company workers, UN employees, Transnational Corporations employees, etc, to penetrate closed doors and spread the gospel even among royal families of countries and kingdoms that are resistant to the gospel.

8. **Diplomatic Corps Members.** Christians who work in diplomatic missions abroad or are employees of Governments, international corporations, UN related organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), etc, enjoy certain privileges, immunities and easy access and passage that can be utilized for the sake of the Kingdom if they are properly envisioned and encouraged. Peace keepers, Technical Aid Corps members, National Youth Service Corps members, aid agencies workers and volunteers, etc, are all assets to the missionary programme of the Church in Africa and around the world.

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**The increasing number of Mission Agencies and Churches in Africa that are involved in Missions as well as the National and Continental Evangelical Associations, Movements and Networks are good signs that the African Church is becoming aware of her potential for leading in global missions.**

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#### **CATEGORIES AND MODELS OF MISSIONARY INITIATIVES IN AND FROM AFRICA**

Category by origin: The missionary initiatives in Africa can be identified by how they originated as follows:

1. Offshoots of Initial Missions from the West: Some of the older missions from the West right from the beginning established indigenous or national mission outfits to work along with them especially in vernacular and contexts which such structures were considered most appropriate and reasonable to employ. E.g. the Evangelical Missionary Society (EMS) which was set up in 1949 by the then Sudan Interior Mission to reach the natives of the middle belt and Northern Nigeria.
2. Independent Charismatic/Pentecostal groups: These are the denominations and ministries that were started by Africans in response to the move of the Holy Spirit in their different countries and dispensations. These groups were very 'missionary' in their approach as their members founded branches of their denominations where ever they found themselves. E.g. Church of Pentecost, Ghana.
3. Christian Youth and Student Movements: Like other continents, student and youth groups in Africa have been vanguards of missionary initiatives within and

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9. "African Missionaries Flock to Europe to Re-Evangelize the 'Enlightened'" -The Washington Post published an article on June 13, 2007 addressing 'the increasing phenomenon of foreign missionaries from developing nations (especially Africa) coming to Western Europe to plant churches.'

outside Africa. A number of the current mission agencies in Africa today came to be through the visionary leadership of former leaders of evangelical student/youth groups. Most of the pioneer missionaries of the Church and mission agencies in Africa are graduates of higher institutions. Currently, the national, regional and continental student organizations have missions as a major focus of their activities and engagements (e.g. FOCUS of East Africa, Nigeria Fellowship of Evangelical Students (NIFES), Ghana Fellowship of Evangelical Students (GHAFES))

4. **Indigenous Mission Agencies:** These are mission agencies founded, led, funded to a great extent, and directed by indigenous believers in a given country, with little or no link with a mission from the West. Majority of such agencies work cross culturally and in many countries other their country of origin and operate several aspects of the missionary enterprise. While others are considered specialized (e.g. The Sheepfold Ministry Kenya; Calvary Ministries (CAPRO) Nigeria; Christian Missionary Foundation (CMF), Nigeria, Adonai Missions International (AMI), Central Africa Republic, etc)..
5. **Mission Departments/Societies of Denominations/ Local Churches:** Some denominations and local churches, as they become aware of their responsibility in missions, now set up their own structures to recruit, train, send and support missionaries from their churches (e.g. The Missions Department of the Baptist Convention of Ethiopia).

The second category of models of Africa missions has to do with the specialization of the various groups. While most of the mission agencies focus on mobilization, training, sending, a number of indigenous agencies/ groups specializing in missions-support, media or research are springing up in Africa. Examples include the Gospel Bankers, Mission Supporters League, Christian Missionary Fund, and Mission Unit of the Hosanna Christian Guest House, all in Nigeria to mention a few. The Media Village on South Africa is becoming a major missions promoting media outfit in Africa, as well as Inserve (also of South Africa) that is doing missions research.



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# THE LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONARY MOVEMENT

*Decio de Carvalho*

For the context of this publication I will be covering the Latin American missionary movement in some aspects. But I will also touch on information covering a wider region known as Ibero-America. COMIBAM has now been working as an Ibero-American movement for 25 years. It covers 24 Spanish and Portuguese speaking countries in the American continent, the Caribbean and Europe, as well as the Hispanics in the United States and Canada.

## I. AN EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW - HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN LATIN AMERICA

As we look at the Latin American Missionary Movement we need to first consider the church in Latin America itself. It is a history of dedication, vision and sacrifice. The first to come were killed before getting off the ships. Those who followed also laid down their lives in obedience to God. Please allow me to abound on this as much as on the other three areas of this presentation. The Ibero-American Mission Movement, as well as the missionary work being done today across the world by Ibero-American missionaries, was a result of the vision and commitment of those early missionaries, those who followed them and the pastors and church leaders of the more recent history.

During the first 300 years of the Colonial period, German, French, Dutch and Scottish Protestants established colonies, some with very good results among the general population, while others were more exclusive. But the dominating Roman Catholic Church would not allow it, so the Colonial powers would stop those efforts for a time.

In the early 19th Century, the British Bible Society would send missionaries to begin distributing Bibles throughout Latin America. James (known in Latin America as Diego) Thomson arrived in Argentina in 1819, but would soon move on to Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Mexico and the Caribbean.

Many other British Bible Society missionaries followed Thomson, preaching and distributing a short and economical version of the Reina-Valera Spanish Bible throughout Latin America. At the time, most countries were still dominated by the Roman Catholic Church and there was no freedom of religion.

Many foreign mission entities considered Latin America evangelized, but later realized there was a huge need and opportunity for the Gospel. Around the middle of the 19th Century, most countries allowed the establishment of Protestant movements. But it was still a persecuted and lower class minority. However, the missionaries had done and continued to do significant work not only in evangelizing but also in education and medicine, establishing many schools and hospitals. The church was well accepted by the politicians and the governments.

The Evangelical Church in Latin America was young and still very small at the turn of the 19th Century. It is estimated there were about 250,000 Protestants in the whole region in the 1900. But there would be phenomenal fruit in the years to come, and nationals would lead those efforts, with the help of many missionaries who continued to come and collaborate in reaching out to the far corners of the continent. The current size of the church in Latin America is estimated at 55 million (1,000,000 % in 100 years).

The following table summarizes these historical events, giving us a clear perspective of the high price paid to bring the Gospel to the nations and peoples of Latin America.

Year	Country	Event
1528	Venezuela	Welser family establishes a Lutheran colony. It became influential and well accepted. Lars Qualben wrote that the whole colony embraced the Lutheran faith. By 1546 it had been dissolved.
1555	Brazil	French Huguenot escapees form a colony near the Guanabara Bay. Disbanded by 1560 by order of the King of Portugal.
1624	Brazil	Dutch Calvinists establish work in Pernambuco. It lasted 30 years, until the Portuguese regained control of the region.
1698	Panama	Scottish Presbyterian colony is established, but fails economically and caused major problems for Scotland. Only lasted 2 years.
1700 - 1800	Several	A number of individuals manage to establish small communities, but are discovered and accused by the inquisition. No evangelical work remains.
1700	Caribbean	Moravians work among the African slaves
1819	Argentina	After the independence of the colonies, a new era begins. British Bible Society missionary James (Diego) Thomson is well received.
1821	Chile	James (Diego) Thomson arrives in Chile, invited by President Bernardo O'Higgins.
1822	Peru	James (Diego) Thomson arrives in Peru and is appointed national Secretary of Education.
1824	Ecuador	James (Diego) Thomson arrives in Ecuador. He later worked in Mexico and the English and Spanish islands of the Caribbean.
1836	Brazil	Methodist missionaries arrive, followed by Congregationalists in 1855, Presbyterians in 1859 and Baptists in 1881.
1868	Chile	Foundation of the Presbyterian Church

Year	Country	Event
1892	Mexico	Under persecution, but 566 churches had been established. By 1908 there were 700.
1909	Chile	First indigenous church is established

## II. NOT ONLY A MISSION FIELD, BUT ALSO A MISSION FORCE - LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONARY WORK HISTORY

During the Colonial period, when some efforts were made to establish the Evangelical churches in Latin America, some nationals were trained to become ministers and evangelists. The early missionaries knew they should make disciples and teach them, so that they too would go out to make more disciples.

When the British Bible Society missionaries came, they quickly decided to look for locals whom they could train and send out to do Bible distribution itinerant work. They found willing servants, ready to travel long distances on the back of a horse to bring the precious Word of God to very distant and remote areas.

Unfortunately we still do not have a comprehensive work on the history of the Ibero-American missionary work. We are working on it, so I must say this is a very limited and brief research and most certainly justice will not be made to many across the region who gained a vision for the unreached peoples of the world and went out to bring the Gospel to them.

Based on the information we have gathered so far, early in the 1900's the first denominational national mission entities were established and sent out missionaries. The Brazilian Baptist Convention sent out a Portuguese born believer as a missionary to his own country. This was followed in 1925 by a Brazilian sent as a missionary to Portugal. The Brazilian Presbyterian Church sent their first missionary, also to Portugal, in 1910. In 1916, the Latin American Cooperation Council organized a conference in Panama to discuss mission work in Latin America. This was a reaction to Edinburgh 1910 because at that well known event they did not include missionaries serving in Latin America or leaders of the church in the region due to pressure from certain sectors. They accepted the concept that Latin America was already evangelized by the Catholics, and Protestant missionaries going there were fanatics and illiterate. The Panama congress contributed to the expansion of the missionary vision of the church in Latin America.

Non-denominational mission societies followed soon after. In 1928 an indigenous mission was founded in Brazil, Missão Caiuá, with the specific aim of reaching the tribal groups of the country. In 1946, in Peru, Juan Cuevas founded AMEN, an indigenous non-denominational mission organization, focused on reaching the unreached towns and peoples of Peru. This agency would soon begin to look beyond and work to see Peruvian and other Latino missionaries serving in Europe. In the years that followed, other denominational mission efforts were initiated in countries such as Argentina, Chile, Venezuela, Puerto Rico and Cuba.

But only a few non-denominational organizations existed until the mid 70's. In Brazil, Jonathan dos Santos

and Decio Azevedo, challenged by missionary and mission teacher Barbara Burns, established Missão Antioquia in 1976, with a focus on mobilization, training and sending missionaries to unreached countries. In 1982 an indigenous, Latino formed, interdenominational and international organization established in Spain, focusing on work in North Africa.

More mission entities were being established, more churches were participating and more missionaries were going to more places. There was a need to communicate and cooperate, and the first steps were taken to form national mission networks. The Brazilian Mission Association is established officially in 1982. Mexico forms a similar entity in 1987 and Argentina follows in the early 90's.

In 1984, Luis Bush and a few other pastors in Central America began to consider the idea of a major continental and international mission congress. The plan takes shape and in 1987 the First Ibero-American Mission Congress took place in São Paulo, Brazil. More than 3,000 attended the event, representing almost every country in the continent. Other mission mobilization events had happened in several countries, but none had been as focused and challenging. At the end of the congress, Luis Bush and those in the organizing committee drafted a declaration. The main statement of the document was simply "Ibero-America is now not only a mission field, but also a mission force".

In 1997 the Second Ibero-American Mission Congress took place in Mexico, and in 2006 the third congress was organized in Spain. These events were known as COMIBAM, and by 2000 a decision was made to establish an international Ibero-American collaboration entity under the name of COMIBAM Internacional. Many other national, regional and thematic events have been organized over the years.

This brief history could be presented in short by viewing it in the following five periods:

1. Early post colonial period: 1840 - 1900 - In country, focused on Jerusalem and Samaria - entirely done by denominations
2. Initial international mission efforts: 1900 - 1950 - International, but mostly within the neighboring countries or culturally related - founding of the first non-denominational agencies
3. First response to the challenge and opportunities: 1950 - 1980 - Significant mobilization, recruiting, training and sending to the most needy and unreached people groups - forming of national networks
4. Growth and expansion: 1980 - 2000 - Entering some of the so called "creative access" countries, but better equipped due to the establishing of mission focused training programs, fast increase of sending structures and missionaries - forming of an international Ibero-American cooperation
5. Partnership unto the ends of the earth: 2000 and onwards - Maturing, focus on the field and the missionary - Forming of alliances with other international networks.

Recognizing once again the limited research done so far in this area, the following table summarizes these

historical events and lets us take a first look at the first steps taken by the Ibero-American church in the process of becoming a missionary movement.

Year	Country	Event
1908	Brazil	Brazilian Baptist Convention supports North American and indigenous missionary in Chile. In 1911 the Brazilian Baptist Mission Board sent their first missionary to Portugal, followed by a second worker in 1925.
1910	Brazil	The Brazilian Presbyterian Church sends missionary to Portugal
1916	Panama	Latin American Cooperation Council Conference (reaction to Edinburgh 1910)
1928	Brazil	Missão Evangélica Caiuá - An indigenous agency focused on reaching the tribal peoples of Brazil. Another agency with a similar vision, MEVA, was established in 1948.
1946	Peru	Juan Cuevas - AMEN
1976	Brazil	Jonathan dos Santos & Decio Azevedo - Missão Antioquia
1976	Brazil	Eude Martins establishes CEBIMI - Centro Brasileiro de Informação Missionária. The first meeting to create AMTB, which was officially established in 1982.
1982	Spain	Pablo Carrillo - PMI
1987	Mexico	COMIMEX
1987	Brazil	COMIBAM I - About 300 known missionaries
1997	Mexico	COMIBAM II - Around 4000 missionaries
2000	Peru	I COMIBAM International Assembly
2006	Spain	COMIBAM III - 9,265 missionaries

### III. UNDER CONSTRUCTION - CURRENT STATE OF LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONARY WORK

The Information presented at a meeting in Bombay in 1977 to international mission leaders indicated there were 136 Latin Americans serving as overseas missionaries.

There has been significant growth, but we all agree that we would love to see so much more happening. Since 1995 COMIBAM has carried out periodic statistical research to gather information on the state of the movement. From 286 mission entities in 1996, in 2006 we found that the number had grown to 462.

In 1996 there were about 3900 missionaries, having grown from an estimated 300 in 1987. In 2006 there were 9,265 missionaries. Ted Limpic, who coordinated these research projects, estimates that at the current pace, and even considering an expected slowing down, there may be as many as 32,000 Ibero-American missionaries serving cross-culturally by 2020.

The research is thorough and offers so much information, including countries of origin, countries of service, types of sending organizations, and more. It is available at the COMIBAM site at [http://www.comibam.org/catalogo2006/index\\_i.htm](http://www.comibam.org/catalogo2006/index_i.htm).

More recently, in preparation for the third congress, a

second major research project was launched. This time, seeking to examine more closely the state of the Ibero-American missionary at the field level. It had become clear to us that we were discussing, planning, praying, strategizing and organizing events, but forgetting that those who actually do the work are the missionaries. An online survey was prepared and carried out among 1,100 Ibero-American missionaries, covering a well predefined range of age, gender, marital status, denominational background, length of stay and other important characteristics. This document was published in 2006 under the name Strengths and Weaknesses of the Ibero-American Missionary. It can be found at the COMIBAM site at [http://comibam.org/docs/report\\_research\\_en.pdf](http://comibam.org/docs/report_research_en.pdf).

We consider the movement one that is still young, and therefore prone to mistakes. It is a work under construction, God being the builder.

### IV. COLLABORATION - THE FUTURE OF LATIN AMERICAN MISSIONARY WORK

I wanted to conclude this with a brief look at the future. Where are we going and how do we get there? I must point out that COMIBAM is not an association. It is also not a representative of the Ibero-American or Latin-American entire mission endeavor. The organization exists to serve and to offer a venue for dialogue and collaboration among those national missions bodies and other mission entities in the region.

#### *Leadership*

God has raised a great number of capable and committed people in Ibero-America for missionary work; pastors and church leaders, professionals, business people and mission candidates. We are excited about the future. There is still significant work to be done in the area of mobilization, and that is currently our largest focused area.

#### *Intercession*

This has been a strong emphasis in our movement during the past 10 years. We were late, but the Koreans had a huge influence on us and there are now mission prayer initiatives throughout Ibero-America. But we still need to expand in this area. We need to be more dynamic in passing on information, in calling prayer gatherings and in teaching the ordinary Christians in our part of the world to be effective intercessors.

#### *Focus*

During these past two decades, and even looking back to the first years of the Ibero-American movement, there has been a strong emphasis on the unreached or the least reached. This has helped give focus and maintain a high level of interest. Concepts and programs such as the 10/40 Windows, the Adopt-a-People and the major religious blocks of the world are taken into account by the mission entities throughout the region when considering their current and future strategies.

#### *Children and Youth*

In Ibero-America we are facing the same issues as in other parts of the world. Our people have travelled and seen how the young generations, and even the children, from across the planet, are quickly being impacted by the



modern societies they live in. They are all familiar with the computer and the mobile phone, the internet, TV and so much more. Their language now includes googling, facebooking and texting. We have noticed it is harder to get them to consider a missionary trip and a commitment to missions these days. At the same time, the average age of population in our countries continues to drop, and so is the age of the average mission candidate. Our response has been to look at the children and youth in Ibero-America and dedicate time and effort to relate to them and communicate the Great Commission in a way they understand. And we are letting young leaders do this. We also want young leaders involved in the overall mission work in Ibero-America.

### **Women**

Another huge area is that of women. In our case, the numbers show that they are a majority in the mission field and very significant work has been done over the year by single women and by the wives. However, there is very little focus on their needs and capabilities, and there is little room for them to participate in leadership. We have recognized our failure in this area and have launch discussions to make changes and to implement a women initiative within the movement

### **Training**

Adequate training has been a strong need and an area of very intensive work in Ibero-America. We are in the process of researching our training schools and their content, but our most recent numbers indicated close to 200 mission training centres. After years of work we have now published a book, "Best Practices Guide for Missionary Training in Ibero-America." The world is changing rapidly, socially, economically, demographically and in many other ways. The missionaries of tomorrow will not be ready to be effective in the mission field if we continue to train them like we did yesterday. Our next strong effort in the area of equipping is to see an expansion in the practical and professional training programs, which need to come alongside the theological and missiological training being offered.

### **Practical Help for Sending Structures**

The number of mission agencies and sending structures will continue to grow. Another aspect of this is that more and more local churches are sending missionaries and getting involved directly in mission fields across the world. These organizations and churches need very practical help to be able to adequately function as a sending structure, able to provide the needed support and services for the missionary and the ministry in the field. This is another area of focus and we have plans to organize some events to generate dialogues and to eventually create a set of practical tools for the sending structures.

### **Practical Help for the Ibero-American Missionary**

As the number of missionaries serving across the world grows, and the world continues to change dramatically, so will the very practical situations the workers face and their needs. This is an area we have been weak at. With our big push to mobilize more churches, see more sending structures and more missionaries being sent, we did not consider the specific aspects of life in the mission field. Along with the already mentioned field oriented

research project carried out before the 2006 congress in Spain, missionaries themselves were brought to the event (300 of them) so that we would have their input in every aspect of the thinking and strategising that would take place there. After the publication of the research report, our 8 regions have been looking at the results and several national mission movements have also carried out gatherings to consider these and to help the mission entities in their countries apply the conclusions to their current missions practices. Looking forward, internationally we will be introducing a program to help Ibero-American families with the educational needs of their children and another to promote advanced and continuous education programs for the missionary.

### **More Research**

In COMIBAM we are committed to doing it well, and we know that takes work and requires good information. There are several more research projects already planned or in the planning stages. These will again be invaluable for the whole movement and for those we work along with.

We were born out of a vision of cooperation and collaboration to accomplish the missionary task. This is what led to the expansion of the Ibero-American missionary work in the 80's and 90's. But God has raised and is using His church from areas of the world we have not had much contact with over the years, such as Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe. We are committed to forming new relationships and establishing alliances that will enable all of us to advance quickly. We are in dialogue with national and international networks such as Cross Global Link, in the US and the European Evangelical Mission Association, and already have a collaboration agreement with MANI – Movement of African National Initiatives. We are convinced that together we can do it not only faster, but also better, and in a "John 17" way – the God honouring way.

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# APOSTOLIC DNA AND MISSIONARY MOVEMENT OF EARLY KOREAN CHURCH

David J. Cho

## PROLOGUE

- The spread of Christianity in Korea was very different from other Asian countries and African nations. It was also very unique and distinct in comparison with other cases of Christian expansion.
- The influx & spread of the Bible in the Korean Peninsula were also essentially different from the cases of other countries.
- Most historians appraise the process of the acceptance of Christianity in Korea as equivalent to its own national religion. The method of Church growth was also very unique compared to other nations.
- The development process from Diaspora mission to cross-cultural mission of the early Korean church was also radically distinct from other nations.

## I. THE ORIGIN OF THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY TO KOREA

### A. Introduction of the Nestorian Christianity to Korea (AD 8th ~ 9th)

The Nestorian Christianity was the most powerful mission force since the Milan Edict of the Constantine in AD 313. Nestorius, the Archbishop of the Messiah Church of Constantinople, refused to accept the Virgin Mary as the mother of God and Jesus which is the monogenesis. He declared that Jesus has two natures as the Son of God and the Son of Man. On the Pentecost of AD 413, he was convicted of heterodoxy by the Alexandrian delegates of bishops, at the fourth assembly of religion, which was held at Ephesus. Nestorius was expelled to Persia. He established the Nestorian School in Persia and started mission to the Eastern world.

For over 200 years between AD 5th to the 7th century, the Nestorian mission reached the end of the Silkroad through deserts, highlands, waterless black land of dead and passed over the ice cap of the Turkish land; which is today's Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Kyrgyzstan. It also reached Chang-Ahn, the capital of ancient China, called Tang Dynasty in AD 635. The Nestorian Church was well accepted by the emperor of China and spread throughout all parts of China for over 200 years. At that time, Shilla, the ancient Korea, was an allied nation of the Tang Dynasty, China. There were many Buddhist monks who became pilgrims to Chang-An and studied the Nestorian doctrine. They returned to Surabul of Shilla which is today's Kyong-Ju with the Holy Bible, Nestorian books, and some holy artifacts. This meant, the Nestorian mission reached the end of the Eastern land.

In 1956, a stone cross and an iron cross were found at the site of Bulguk Temple in Kyung-Ju. The size of the stone cross was 24.5 x 24 x 9cm and the size of the iron cross was 5.8 x 5.6 x 2.4 x 3.2cm. Two of these crosses are now located in the Christian Museum of Soongsil University.<sup>1</sup>

1. *Baeksan-Hakbo*, vol. 3, Collection of treatises of Bongyoung

### B. Introduction of Roman Catholicism to Korea (1790)

The Roman Catholic Christianity was also introduced to Korea through China. The first Catholic priest who was smuggled to Korea in AD 1794 was Chu-Moon-Mo, a Chinese priest. He was a member of the Foreign Missions of Paris, France. Four years later, in 1798, Lee-Sung-Hoon who was visiting China, as a member of the Korean envoy, was baptized at the South Cathedral of Catholics in Yanqing from Louis de Gramountand became the first baptized member of the Catholic church in Korea.

Since the Chinese priest, Chu-Moon-Mo entered Korea, a very intense persecution for Catholic Christians was started by the royal court of the Yi-Dynasty. But still the number of Catholic believers continued to increase among the inner members of Queen's court and high officers of the Palace. For over 10 years since the first persecution Decree of the Queen Mother in 1701, 1705 persecution decree, 1707 persecution decree, and 1801 persecution decree, over 1,000 people were killed as martyrs because of harsh maltreatment. The Chinese priest, Chu-Moon-Mo voluntarily surrendered to the government in 1801. He was decapitated and his head was hanged upon the tree on May of 1801 at the official execution ground of the government, called 'Sae-Nam-Teo', located in Seo-So-Moon of Seoul. Most of the Catholic martyrs were executed at this place. The Vatican honored 103 of 1,000 martyrs as saints in 1984.<sup>2</sup>

### C. Introduction of Protestant Christianity to Korea (1872 ~ 1885)

Most historians who wrote the history of the Korean church were saying that the first Protestant missionaries were Horace Newton Allen who arrived at In-Chon port of Korea on September 20, 1884, Horace Grant Underwood, a Presbyterian missionary from the United States, and Henry Gerhard Appenzeller, a Methodist missionary of America who landed at In-Chon on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1885.

However, J. H. Grayson, former professor of Keimyung University, is saying that John Ross was the first Protestant missionary for Korean people, on his commemorative article for the centennial celebration of the translation of Korean Bible. In this article, he wrote that John Ross was appointed as a missionary of Scotland United Presbyterian Church on February 27, 1872 and arrived at Young-Ku, north-east of China, where many Koreans were living on August 23, 1872. He started mission activities for Korean Diaspora.<sup>3</sup>

From the autumn of 1872, John Ross started to sell the

Yoo's 60th Birthday, Seoul, Korea, 1967. 11.

2. Kijin Cha, Senior Researcher of Institute of Korean Church History

3. J. H. Grayson, *The Development of Christianity in Korea*, Keimyung University Press (Daegu, Korea, 1982).

Bible tracts to Chinese and Koreans and automatically concentrated in mission to Korean people. That was at the Young-Ku, Woo-Chang and Korea Gate where the international market was being operated between Chinese and Koreans. John Ross reported that "Corean people purchased the Gospel booklets and studied carefully while Chinese people were receiving Gospels without paying and paid less attention to reading the materials." On his report of his first visit to Korea Gate, he said "Coreans are better looking than Chinese and in feature, and bearing there is much closer resemblance to the Western."<sup>4</sup>

On the second visit to Korea Gate in 1874, John Ross looked for a Korean language helper. He thought that his language helper for his translation ministry should be of high scholarly standard with noble personality, who was capable to be his co-worker for the translation of the Bible from Chinese to Korean. He met Lee-Eung-Chan who was from Eui-Ju, near the Yalu River and invited him as his language helper and co-worker for the Bible translation. He and Lee-Eung-Chan authored *Corean Primer* as a textbook to learn Korean from English and it became the foundation of the Bible translation for Korean. It was 1874.

Between 1875 to 1877, John Ross invited more Korean helpers such as Lee-Sung-Ha, Paik-Hong-Joon, Kim-Jin-Key, Lee-Ik-She, Seo-Snag-Ryun and his younger brother, Seo-Kyung-Cho. All of them were from Eui-Ju and accepted Jesus as their Savior. John Ross and John MacIntyre baptized six of them. They are the first six baptized members among Korean people. And later, Kim-Chung-Song from Korean village of China was added.

All of these men co-labored with John Ross to translate the New Testament from Chinese version to Korean language. Through the collaboration with Lee-Eung-Chan and his fellow workers, Books of Luke and Mark, Book of Acts of the Apostle, Epistles of Paul to Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians and Revelations were translated. This first Korean New Testament was named as "Jesus' Sacred Teaching Book". While finishing the translation of the New Testament in Korean version, John Ross said that "Corea is now thoroughly open to colportage or tract distribution from New-Chwang; for the only Corean members connected with the Protestant Church were six men, more or less scholarly, baptized there and in Muoukden" on his annual report.<sup>5</sup> This record proved that John Ross' version of the first Korean New Testament was a co-translation with 6 Korean co-workers.

John Ross testified that the first Korean church for the Korean people was likened to a spontaneous church, planted solely by Korean people. This was found on his report "The Christian Dawn in Korea." John Ross also wrote that he baptized 75 Koreans while he was visiting seven villages along the riverside of Yalu west of Kan-Do. Ross, did not mention about the church of Lee-Ynag-Ja in the village of Jip-An province which accommodated over 100 baptized church members. But he mentioned

about the establishment of churches in Eui-Ju and So-Rae. He reflected upon his visit to Seoul through the invitation of Horace Underwood for the opening service of the first church in Seoul, Korea, mentioning about Seo-Sang-Ryung, Seo-Kyung-Cho, and Paik-Hong-Joon who pioneered all these churches in Korea and were baptized by him.

## II. THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE EARLY KOREAN CHURCH

The Korean people spontaneously adopted Christianity as Korea's national religion. Yes, the Korean churches were self-planting, self-cultivating, self-harvesting churches from its beginning. This very distinct characteristics proved the Korean church was truly spontaneous.

### A. Historical Testimonies Concerning the Spontaneity of the Korean Church

#### 1. Koreans paid for Bible booklets.

According to the official report of the National Bible Society of Scotland in 1868, Alexander Williamson, the Representative of China for the National Bible Society of Scotland, reached to the national border area of China and Korea for 3 years from 1866. He was distributing tracts and Bible booklets at Korea Gate, located 120 kms from Yalu River. Williamson testified, "I was very much glad to find that Korean people are gladly paying the cost of Bible booklets and purchased and studied them carefully."<sup>6</sup>

This report proves that the Gospel was planted 6 years ahead of John Ross's visit to Korea Gate and Korean people purchased the Gospel booklets and began to believe Jesus Christ through enthusiastic study of the Gospel.

#### 2. The First Korean Christians were Co-translators of John Ross's Version of the Korean New Testament

On John Ross' report, "Corean New Testament," he stated about the *Corean New Testament* as followings:

*"My mode of translation from the commencement has been to get a translation from the Chinese by a Corean scholar. Almost all our translators knew mandarin as well as Wen-li. As they have been fairly intelligent men and scholars, their translations gave an exact idea of the meaning derivable by ordinary scholarship from the Chinese Scriptures, and even in this light, the work has been very interesting. This translation was a first draft, very serviceable, yet remarkable few verses could be passed without corrections of a more or less serious kind. With the Greek and English of the revised edition this draft is carefully compared word with word, clause by clause and sentence by sentence. This careful translation is then copied out and the process repeated."*<sup>7</sup>

This testimony of John Ross proved, that the translation of the first Korean Bible from the Chinese Bible were done by Ross and the Korean scholars, while typesetting and printing were done by the other Korean co-workers, Kim-Chung-Song and Kim-Jin-Key. All of

4. "Visit to the Corean Gate," *Chinese Recorder and Missionary Journal*, 5 (November-December, 1875).

5. "The Christian Dawn in Korea," *The Missionary Review of the World*, 4 (April, 1890).

6. The Annual Report of the National Bible Society of Scotland, 1868, China.

7. United Presbyterian Missionary Record, 1880, pp. 150, 278-279.



these historical records clearly proved the voluntary and sacrificial work of the early Christians among the Korean people.

### **3. *The First Bible Distribution in Korea were Done by the First Korean Christians who Co-labored with John Ross***

Over a million copies of Bible booklets and the New Testament were distributed by Korean distributors to all the villages of Korean immigrants in the north western part of China. The Bibles were also smuggled to inland Korea to the Pyung-An province, Hwang-Hae province and finally reached Seoul, the capital of Korea. These Bible sellers were Seo-Sang-Ryung, Seo-Kyung-Cho, Kim-Chung-Song, Paik-Hong-Joon, Lee-Sung-Ha, and Kim-Jin-Key.<sup>8</sup>

### **4. *The First Baptized Koreans were Spontaneous Believers and Became the Foundation and Root of the Korean Church***

Six of the first Korean Christians voluntarily came to John Ross and confessed their faith to Jesus Christ. They also received baptism from John Ross and John MacIntyre.<sup>9</sup> On the report that he contributed to *The Missionary Review of the World*, John Ross expressed that these six baptized Korean Christians who distributed the tracks became the root and foundation of the Korean church.

### **5. *The First Korean Church was a Spontaneous Church Among Korean Diasporas***

In 1882, Kim-Chung-Song, tracts distributor and book seller, tried to reach his neighbors from Korean village in Jip-An province in the north eastern part of China near the border of Korea. He was able to get over 100 believers and went to Bong-Chun to meet John Ross and requested to come to seven Korean villages in Jip-An province to baptize the new believers. John Ross went there on December 5, 1883 and stayed there for three weeks until December 22 and baptized seventy five Korean young believers. These newly baptized Koreans established the first Korean church in Lee-Yang-Ja, a village of Jip-An province in January of 1984.

This first Korean church in the Korean village in China was established more than a year ahead of the landing in In-Chon of Horace Underwood, the first American clerical missionary on April 5, 1885.<sup>10</sup>

Historically, the reason why the first Korean church was planted in the Korean village in Jip-An province, which was the ancient capital of Koguryo, was because of the national isolation policy of the royal authority of Yi Dynasty which began in 1866. This policy prohibited Western religion to enter the Korean peninsula.

Many Korean Bible booklets sellers tried in every possible way to distribute the Bible in their homeland Korea. But it was not possible to cross the Yalu River and contact the inland peoples of Korea. John Ross was trying to enter Korea for over ten years while reaching the Diaspora Koreans in China, but was unable to cross the Yalu River.

8. Yangsun Kim, "Ross version and Korean Protestantism," *Baeksan-Hakbo*, vol. 3, Seoul, Korea, 1967. 11.

9. *The Missionary Review of the World*, Nov. 1883.

10. "Journey to the Corean Valley," United Presbyterian Mission Report, October, 1885.

However, since the first Korean church was established in the Korean village of China, six Koreans who were baptized by John Ross, dedicated themselves to spread the Gospel to Korea. They prayed hard and made a decision to smuggle the Bible crossing the Yalu River and establish churches in their homeland despite of possible harm and dangers in one's life. They received a special training from John Ross from 1883 and departed to Korea. Seo-Sang-Ryun was the first one and he was captured at the border and imprisoned and threatened with death sentence. By the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, however, he was able to break out from jail and escaped to Eui-Ju, his home town. He finally arrived in Seoul with his family.

He begun to distribute tracts and Gospel booklets to his neighbors and was able to have thirteen new believers in Seoul. Seo-Sang-Ryun wrote to John Ross asking to come to Seoul to baptize them. The diplomatic relationship with Western countries was opened because of the Treaty between Korea and the United States in 1882. However, the actual circumstances was not changed. Seo-Sang-Ryun requested John Ross again in 1885 due to baptize more new believers, but John Ross was not able to come.

Ross gave up his desire to come to Seoul and requested Horace Underwood to baptize new members of believers. On July 21, 1886, Sunday at the residence of Horace Underwood, an unknown leader of Taoism who was only known as 'Roh' was baptized. He was the first baptized Korean but his name is still unknown. It was the normal way then to keep the names of baptized persons from the official record as baptized members. I was wondering why the first baptized man's name was unrecorded. John Ross kept all the names of baptized Koreans with dates in his record. However, Horace Underwood did not keep the name of his first Korean baptized person in any record in the history of Korean church. It is a strange thing in the history of world mission. Anyhow, through the first baptized Korean in Seoul, Seo-Sang-Ryun, became the founder of the Korean church in Seoul, Korea.

In the autumn of 1887, John Ross was able to come to Seoul by the invitation of Horace Underwood for the Celebration and Commissioning Service of two elders of the first church in Seoul, Korea. Seo-Kyung Cho, younger brother of Seo-Sang-Ryun, started a church in So-Rae, Hwang-Hae province in 1885 with over twenty church members. That was 1 year earlier than the first baptism for a Korean Taoist leader in Seoul.<sup>11</sup>

## **III. THE EARLY KOREAN CHURCH AND THE APOSTOLIC DNA**

### **A. The Korean Church was Born with the Germination from the Apostolic DNA**

What is DNA? DNA is Deoxyribonucleic Acid which contain the genetic instructions used in the development and function of all known living organisms and some viruses. The main role of DNA molecules is the long-term storage of information.

How did Christianity produce DNA in the history of mission? DNA of fig trees produces figs. DNA of olive

11. John Ross, "The First Korean Congregation," *TMRW*, 1890.

trees produces olives. Those who have the DNA of the Apostolic ways of mission will conceive Apostolic mission and reproduce apostolic churches.

What is the organism and virus of Apostolic mission's DNA?

- 1) The genes of the Apostolic way were initiated by the oppressed and strewn people who were scattered because of cruel persecution in Jerusalem.
- 2) The Apostolic mission was carried by the homeless, stateless and poorscattered refugees.
- 3) The Apostolic mission was passed from the oppressed and powerless nations to wealthy and powerful nations and ruling the superpower empire.
- 4) The Apostolic mission was an extended mission, crossing from all the directions in every culture.
- 5) The center of the DNA of Apostolic mission was the Eschatological Mission which proclaim the Second Coming of Jesus.
- 6) The DNA of the Apostolic mission was a mission of survivedmartyrdom.

The Korean church was born with germination from the Apostolic DNA.

- 1) The genes of the Korean church were carried by the Korean refugees escaping from cruel persecutions due to the policy of being a closed nation to Western influences declared by the Yi Dynasty. They went to China and propagated the Gospel.
- 2) The Korean missionary outreach was carried by homeless and stateless people fleeing from the cruel ruling of China and the Japan, to the large and powerful countries and they generated the Apostolic DNA while living as refugees in those countries.
- 3) The poor, powerless and oppressed Korean people began to spread the Gospel to the strong and rich nations like China, Russia and Japan whichsurrounded the little peninsula of Korea. Through this outreach, the Korean church demonstrated its conceived Apostolic DNA.
- 4) Through the continuous spread of Koreans to unreached new areas for the propagation of the Gospel, the Korean church demonstrated the succeeding mission of Apostolic DNA.
- 5) The mission outreach of the Korean church was firmly rooted on the Word of Godas Bible-believing Christians and spread the eschatological faith. This is the proof of the Apostolic DNA of eschatological mission in the spirit of Korean church.
- 6) Many of Korean Christians were cruelly persecuted and martyred tokeep their faith in Christ. This demonstrated the Korean church was firmly rooted in the Apostolic DNA of martyrdom.

## B. The Apostolic DNA Became the Root of the Explosive Growth of the Korean Church

In 1910, at the Edinburgh World Missionary Conference, Samuel Maffet, an early American missionary to Korea, extensively reported on the explosive growth of the Korean church as the church, succeeding from the Apostolic DNA. The following quotations are from the original text of his report.<sup>12</sup>

12. Samuel A. Maffet, "The Place of the Native Church of Korea in the Work of Evangelism, June 17th, 1910 at the Edinburgh World

1) Samuel Maffet foretold that Korea will become the highest spiritually powerful country in the orient: *"We do not expect Korea to become a great military or commercial nation like our neighbors, Japan or China; but may it not become a Christian people, a spiritual power, perhaps the great spiritual power of the far East, profoundly effecting in a spiritual way the great nations of China, Japan and even Russia?"*

2) And he proclaimed that Korea would make great powerful countries ashamed: *"It is not impossible for God who made of little Judea, subjugated, humiliated, yea, carried into captivity by the great commercial and military nations, Assyria, Babylon and Rome, the great spiritual power of the world, and at the time of her greatest humiliation sent through Judea the Messiah, Christ our Lord, who there established his Church and from thence sent the Gospel unto the very peoples to whom Judea had been subjected God who delights to choose the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and the base things of the world and the things which are despised to bring to nought the things that are not impossible, I say, for God to bring through little, despised, subjugated, humiliated Korea a rich spiritual blessing to all the far East and to manifest His might by making Korea not a political power among the nations but a spiritual power."*

3) Samuel Maffet continued to testify concerning the spontaneous voluntary efforts of evangelistic movement of the Korean church: *"Not until twenty-five years ago was a mission established in Korea, when American missionaries settled in Seoul. At the end of two years work, there were nine communicants, at the end of ten years not yet 400 communicants, but into those few men God poured forth His Spirit and then in His Providence shook the whole nation by means of the Japan-China War of 1894, from the close of which till the present time there has been a steadily increasing evangelistic movement; so that within the last fifteen years the Church has become a great host of more than 60,000 baptized members, more than 40,000 catechumens and a Christian constituency of some 250,000 gathered very, very largely by the voluntary efforts of the Koreans themselves."*

4) About the early Korean church, Samuel Maffet testified as followings:

*"Twenty years ago when I first visited Pyeong Yang there was not a Christian in the City or Province. Today there are, fifty churches within fifteen miles of the city, 300 churches within that one Province, where fully four-fifths of the population are now within three miles of a Christian church. Seoul now has fifteen churches, Songdo (Kaesong) has four, one county in the North has forty-two, and one in the South twenty-four, and in all Korea today there are over 2,500 churches or congregations, hundreds of villages being largely Christian; while Christianity is the greatest factor in the life of such towns as Pyeng Yang, where one-fifth of the population attend church, and Syen Chun where one-third of the people are Christians."*

5) Samuel Maffet testified also that the reason for the explosive growth of the early Korean church was the Bible training classes:

*"First of all it is a Bible loving and Bible studying*

*Missionary Conference," The Union Seminary Magazine, vol. XXII, October-December, 1910, No. 1, New York, pp. 226-235.*



church, receiving the Scriptures as the Word of God and resting in simple faith upon His promise of salvation from sin through His Son Jesus Christ. I do not hesitate to state my conviction that what has been the chief factor in the transformation of the spiritual life of the Koreans and what has placed the Korean Church in its proper place in evangelization has been the great system of Bible Training Classes."

- 6) Samuel Maffet declared also that the process of the Bible training class transformed the Community for Evangelism as followings:

"And from these Bible training classes they go forth with a message to others, and carry that message with them along the roads and into their homes in the mountain valleys."

"It was in these classes that there developed the remarkable form of Christian activity known as a subscription of days of preaching, according to which the Christians spend the determined number of days in going from village to village and from house to house telling the story of the Gospel."

Maffet testified that this movement of Evangelism was the result of Bible training classes. Eventually, in the fall of 1910, all the Korean churches united to form 'Evangelize a Million People Movement.' Samuel Maffet testified that all of these movements of evangelism of ordinary lay people led to the Great Revival of Korean church which happened in 1907 in Pyung-Yang.<sup>13</sup>

- 7) Samuel Maffet stated that the uniqueness of the Korean church was her self-devotion and self-supporting spirit. His words were as follows:

"They have built their own church building and primary school buildings. Out of 840 church buildings in the work of one mission alone, not more than twenty are known to have received any foreign funds for their erection, a few of the very large buildings having received aid to the extent of not more than one-third of the cost. Of 589 primary school buildings, practically all have been provided from Korean funds. Of the 1,052 native workers of one mission on salary, 94 percent are supported by the Koreans."

"The Korean church this year (1910) has contributed for all purposes exclusive of hospital receipts the sum of \$131,000. The stories of self-sacrifice and liberality which might be told in connection with this phase of the work would fill a volume. Women have given their wedding rings, their hair, their ornaments; families have sold their rice and bought millet to eat in order to give the difference to the Lord's work: hundreds give a tenth, many as much as one-third of their income."

- 8) Samuel Maffet finally stated about the spirit of missionary movement of Korean church as followings:

"It has not been easy to secure nor to maintain this policy of self-support, and the temptations to depart from it have been many and frequent, but its great value has been appreciated more and more by missionaries and Koreans. Now, none rejoice in it more than the Koreans themselves, who realize what an element it has been in the development of individual character and the strength of the Church. They themselves enforce it in their own missionary work in Quelpart and Siberia."

He strongly emphasized that the achievement of mission cannot be done through the pouring of foreign money to the native churches in the mission field:

"If it can be more speedily and most effectually done by the furnishing of foreign money, well and good, pour it in by the millions. But certainly we in Korea do not feel that the foreign money should be poured in for the support of native agents in order to accomplish the evangelization of Korea. And we stand there because we have already seen the possibility of placing upon the native Church the necessity of supporting its own native evangelists. And it is starting them and is sending them forth into every village of that twelve millions of people."

All the above quotations from an article of Samuel Maffet, the founder of the seminary in Pyung-Yang, Korea, concluded that the reason for the explosive growth of early Korean church was deeply rooted in apostolic DNA.

### C. The Historical Background of San-Tung Mission of Korean Church and Apostolic DNA

John Ross who started mission to Korean diaspora in China since 1874, concluded in his report in 1890, "Korea will be one of the Eastern nations to become a Christian nation."<sup>14</sup>

Over 200 Korean Diaspora churches were planted spontaneously in the north western of China while the root of their nation Korea, collapsed in 1910. On September 1, 1912, the inauguration assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Korea was held at Pyung-Yang Women's Bible School, participated by 52 pastors, 125 elders and 44 foreign missionaries. Congratulatory addresses were made by the representatives of the Presbyterian Church of U.S., the Presbyterian Church of USA and from San-Tung Presbytery representative of the Chinese Presbyterian Church. The newly inaugurated General Assembly of Presbyterian Church of Korea, resolved the petition of the Department of Evangelism to send missionary to San-Tung province of China. This was the beginning of the cross-cultural missionary movement of the Korean church.

The Actual selection and commissioning service of missionaries to San-Tung was done at the Second General Assembly in 1913. The commissioned missionaries were 3 of the seminary graduates, Park-Tae-Ro, Kim-Young-Hoon, and Sah-Byung-Soon.

The Chinese church expressed their humble attitude to agree to accept the Korean missionaries. However that was an official attitude of the Chinese church. I presumed that their inner mind and emotional feelings were offended,

Until the Ching Dynasty of China was defeated by Japan at the China-Japan War in 1897, Korea was a small tributary country of China. Even though they were defeated from Japan, they still were the largest country in the world and they considered themselves as the suzerain country of all Asia and maintained their own national pride.

On the other hand, in the minds of the leaders of the

13. *History of the Chosun Presbyterian Church*, No. 1, General Assembly of the Chosun Presbyterian Church, 1927, p. 196.

14. John Ross, "The Korean Dawn in Korea," *The Missionary Review of the World*, 4 (April, 1980).



Chinese church, the Koreans were stateless people who lost their country and became a poor colony of the powerful Japanese Empire. In addition, it was not a real welcome to Chinese leaders that the Korean Protestant church, with already 25-year history, was trying to send their missionaries to Chinam whose Protestant history began for over 115 years since Robert Morrison, an Anglican, began missionary activities in China in 1807. After the Anglican missionary Morrison's Bible translation to Chinese language, many other Western missionaries came to China from various denominations of many countries such as Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Lutheran and it has been 60 years since the famous Hudson Taylor began his ministry of the China Inland Mission in 1854. It was hard to endure to welcome missionaries from Korea, a stateless people as the state can be considered as advanced in mission.

My analysis was proven with Kim-Jae-Oh's research dissertation titled as "Study of Mission to San-Tung, China by Pang-Hyo-Won's family." He recorded as followings:

*"Even though the Korean church inquired to the authorities of the Chinese Church, the China Mission Board of the Presbyterian Church of USA agreed and in outward, but they suspected in their minds that how this childish Korean church trying to do missionary work in China. And then they suggested to do ministries only at Lay-Yang county of San-Tung province."*<sup>15</sup>

Two of the first Korean missionaries to San-Tung, Kim-Young-Hoon and Sah-Byung-Soon, fled to America and Korea in less than 3 years of staying in San-Tung, China and the third one, Park-Tae-Ro, was seriously ill and returned to Korea. Pang-Hyo-Won, the Secretary of the Mission Department of Korean Presbyterian Church was dispatched to China to search for the reasons why this crisis in mission to China happened. After the fact-finding, Pang-Hyo-Won volunteered to succeed the San-Tung mission. When he finished his mission at San-Tung for 20 years since 1917 to 1937, he wrote a memoir about the San-Tung mission on "Mustard Seeds," a very influential periodical in Pyung-Yang, Korea. The following is an excerpt:

*"One of the important leaders of the Chinese church asserted that 'China is well known as the ancient civilized country and the great nation with long history. We, China, also have one-fourth of the world population and a very proud nation. We, China, was accustomed with this kind of habit ever since. The relationship between China and Korea had very clear distinction as a relation between great and small, and young and ancient. Because of this kind of historical background, it will be very hard and distressful, in every aspect, for the Korean missionaries in China. China, also, has 130 years of history of being a mission field and Korea has only 25 years of history. According to these historical facts, the Korean church mission to China will be unattainable.'"*<sup>16</sup>

Comparing the memoir of Pang-Hyo-Won with my analysis on San-Tung mission of the Korean church, it is clear that my anatomical thinking on the early stage of San-Tung mission is not too extreme.

15. Jaeoh Kim, "A Study on San-Tung Mission of Hyowon Pang," (Seoul: Yunsei University, 1996).

16. Huowon Pang, "About Mission to San-Tung," *Mustard Seed*, vol. 6 (1) 13-6, (Pyung Yang: Mustard Seed Press, 1937).

All of this historical background proved that the church of Korea, as strown and stateless people, poor, oppressed and weak, tried to minister in one of the century's great nation in Asia. And the movement of cross-cultural mission of early Korean church was born by conceiving the Apostolic DNA and succeeded in following the Apostolic way of mission.

As I have stated in earlier portion of this article, the Apostolic DNA mission, (1) was initiated by the persecuted and scattered people. (2) This mission, was also carried by the homeless, stateless and poor refugees, (3) coming from the oppressed and powerless nations to wealthy and powerful countries and empires. (4) This itinerant mission, crossing all the directions of every culture (5) towards the center of Apostolic mission is eschatological mission which proclaims the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (6) and finally, the apostles survived martyrdom.

The early stage of the missionary movement of the Korean church succeeded the Apostolic DNA of mission. I believe that all the above witnesses on the missionary movement of Korea, fully proved that the missionary spirit of the early Korean church was caused by the Apostolic DNA.

## EPILOGUE

This year, 2012, Koreans have reached the centennial of the cross-cultural mission of the Presbyterian church of Korea which started in 1912.

At the Centennial Celebration of Edinburgh World Missionary Conference in Tokyo, Japan, Stefan Gustavsson, representing Swedish Mission, confessed that "the Christian church in Europe is rapidly diminishing and became the prodigal son."

How different the phenomenon in the current Korean church today has? It has shifted from the Apostolic DNA after 100 years since the beginning of cross-cultural mission in 1912. The institutionalized church with humanization, secularization and mammonism took over the Korean church today.

The current pastoral leaders of Korea are dreaming to create mega-churches while mission leaders are ambitious of becoming the world's largest missionary sending country. These facts are very different from the spirit of the early Korean Church who succeeded the Apostolic DNA. I hope that this article could diagnose the severe illness of the Korean Church and Missions of today.



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# CAN WE SPEAK OF THE "UGLY" MISSIONARY?

Dale W. Kietzman

Is it possible that, at times, the presence of a missionary causes more difficulty for new believers than can be tolerated? Or that persecution may come to the believers after the missionary leaves, a result of the change he engineered into their lives?

The first situation, of the missionary being an embarrassment, even a danger to the believers, has been reported on several occasions in China: During the Boxer Rebellion, when both foreigners and Chinese associated with them were killed; during the Japanese occupation of China; and during the initial years of the Communist government, when missionaries were expelled from the country, but the believers were left there to suffer.

The second situation is a little bit harder to document, perhaps, but it certainly has occurred among the Indian tribes in Latin America. What follows is drawn from my own experience; no one has suggested (as yet) using the term "ugly" to apply to missionaries as it has been in the book title "The Ugly American", but we have, by our very presence, often been a source of discomfort to the very people we serve, even after we leave.

## Reality for Native Believers in Latin America

Many of the evangelical Native Americans of Latin America, especially those in small ethnic groups, face a crisis situation. In addition to their communities living in a general situation of extreme poverty, the Christians suffer intense persecution. This is true in many areas in Mexico; in the heartland of the Shining Path anarchists and cocaine producers of Peru; in Guatemala, Colombia and other countries. Their churches, while seemingly vigorous and growing, have very few financial resources and are pastored by men who seem to us to be ill prepared for their leadership responsibilities.

The fact of life is that, as a social class, all First Americans (called *indigenas* or *nativos*, or by less flattering names in many places), totaling some 48 million people scattered through 22 countries, stand at the bottom of the economic, educational and social scale throughout the continent.

The insurrection that has been going on in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas for nearly two decades has brought many of the inequities and injustices that the Native American communities suffer to international attention. The killings and dislocations of large groups are not confined to Chiapas, however, with persecution of evangelical Indians having occurred over the past four or five decades in many areas of Latin America. Violent persecution, in fact, appears to be on the increase in many places.

A factor in the current crisis facing many Indian believers has been the presence, then gradual withdrawal, with goals accomplished, of missionaries and Bible translators. Such persons have, at one time or another,

been active in most of the ethno-linguistic groups of Latin America. They have lived for extended periods of time in tribal locations, translating portions of the Bible into the tribal language, planting churches, conducting educational programs, and doing other things that are useful in a social sense for these people. Their work is the foundation for the hundreds of tribal churches scattered through the jungles and across the highlands of Latin America, some congregations with memberships of a thousand or more.

While they were there, these foreign missionaries were a source of assistance and communication for the tribal communities, and a positive factor in stemming unfortunate conflicts of various sorts with the non-Indian world. I remember that, while we worked and lived among the Amahuaca Indians in the southern jungles of Peru, we very quickly became highly prized residents in their community. We had aspirin tablets (and other medicines) that were very useful. We had access to the outside world, so that they could request very basic needs, such as machetes, axe heads, and pots and pans. I had a shotgun, which they loved to borrow, coming the night before, and asking for just two cartridges, with which they were sure to get game. I could speak with the local *patron* (a locally resident Peruvian trader) on their behalf, since they did not speak Spanish.

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Is it possible that, at times, the presence of a missionary causes more difficulty for new believers than can be tolerated? Or that persecution may come to the believers after the missionary leaves, a result of the change he engineered into their lives?

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The Amahuaca did not realize what was happening, nor did I, but I broke the power of the *patron* over their lives. The *patron* had been selling them the machetes and axe heads they needed, writing each purchase down in a little black book. Then, if an Indian had a beautiful skin to sell, he would reduce the debt; or when it came time of the year to send the raft of hardwood to the mill a thousand miles down river, he would summon all the Indians and show them their account in the book, which they now must erase by cutting timber, or even sailing with the raft downriver. They complained to me about that book; they did not understand what he wrote in it, but they always owed more work. After two years, the *patron* offered to sell me his little black book and he left the area.

I was assigned elsewhere after our one term with the Amahuaca. How did that cluster of Amahuaca on the Sepahua River fare after I was gone? Who would supply them with aspirin, or the use of a shotgun? And who would be there to protect them when someone else tried to cheat them with a little black book? I do not have answers to those specific questions, but current information seems to indicate this ethnic group has all but disappeared.

When missionaries have to leave, the tribal churches left behind are fully exposed to a variety of pressures coming from outside their group and, in many cases, persecution from within. They usually are left with little communication with outside authorities or with people that might be ombudsmen toward them. There also is little understanding of the Indian churches' situation on the part of national churches, with little communication between them. This is the gap that I have been seeking ways to bridge while avoiding recreating foreign residences that would probably be of more hindrance than help in the current political climate.

The goal of the ministry I now serve, Latin American Indian Ministries, is to be a facilitator to the ministry goals of indigenous Christian organizations and churches. We are a "Barnabas" to their efforts. This removes us from direct ministry. We do not send personnel to be doers of ministry; rather we help, guide, and support the efforts of tribal leaders. We are always available as mentors to the Indian leadership; this is a long-term commitment for any specific community with which we become involved.

In fact, there are many successful native ministries using varying approaches, such as the Totonac Radio Ministry covering the states of Puebla and Veracruz; or the intertribal council of evangelical Indians of Chiapas, known by the acronym CINSA; or the Berea Institute, an extension training program among the two million Quiché people of Guatemala; or the burgeoning Quechua Evangelical Church of Peru, a completely indigenous movement; or the mission board created by the Ticuna churches in Brazil, with a goal to reach every village in the Amazon basin. Each serves as a model for others to follow.

We do hear a cry for help from these Native American churches in Latin America. As fellow members of the family of God, we have a responsibility to respond to the needs of others, "...especially to those of the Family of God." In the case of the Indians of Latin America, the cry is: "Give us assistance in ways that will strengthen our ability to make our own way. Help us give our children hope for a better tomorrow."

### **A Case Study: Persecution in Chiapas**

The evangelical Native Americans in the southern Mexican state of Chiapas live with intense religious persecution in many tribal areas. A case in point, in 1965 in the Tzotzil town of San Juan Chamula, the new evangelical believers came under heavy pressure to continue to participate in the local "religious" festivals. Eventually, three of the believing men were murdered and several homes burned; the evangelicals were forced to surrender their rights to the land they farmed and

forced to leave town. Since 1965, at least 30,000 people have been similarly expelled from their communities for "religious reasons", and very little has been done to curb this tragically unjust practice.

The problem of religious persecution in Chiapas, principally in the municipalities surrounding the city of San Cristobal de Las Casas, goes back to that year of 1965, when what some have termed "The Holy War" began in earnest in the town of San Juan Chamula, conceived, promoted and led by local authorities. We note that every "expulsion" came while missionaries were absent.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the Tzotzil Indians of the town of Chamula, representing about 20 families, recount the incredible experiences that began when they decided to defy the authority of Sr. Domingo Lunes, then mayor of the town, by refusing to buy *posh*, their name for cane liquor used in local festivities. They wanted just to be able to dedicate themselves to their farming and to their newfound pattern of worship.

The simple act of abandoning the drunken orgies, and consequently also the purchase of *posh*, resulted in the assassination of the three men and the burning down of many homes. One of the Chamula Indian believers, Miguel Gomez, whose daughter was also shot, described how he had helped translate the Bible into his dialect and had been reading it to his neighbors. As a result of reading the Scriptures, he and his friends decided that drunkenness and dissipation could not result in anything good, and they made the decision to change their habits in order to be fully dedicated to farming the land. Such dedication to work simply brought them conflicts and animosity from tribal authorities, and the beginning of oppression.

"An isolated fire, a man wounded, another insult, that's how it went along--and when we did not change, an ambush in which three Chamulas were assassinated. Since the Bible teaches us not to pay back such offenses, we decided to move to San Cristobal de Las Casas," Miguel explained.

For some time the basis for these conflicts was said to be purely a difference of religious belief, but the real motivating force was the perpetuation of an economic structure linked with political power. That power had been exercised, over the years, by the *caciques*, who also control the social, religious and economic aspects of Tzotzil life.

As thousands of Indians converted to this new Christian faith, they all abandoned the drinking of *posh*, which was bound up with so many traditional practices in their communities. The drop in sales of *posh* gravely affected the economic situation of the *caciques*. Someone has estimated that there are a thousand clandestine *posh* stills in the area, all owned and operated by the *caciques*.

The *caciques* have always labeled the persecution as an effort to preserve the traditions and customs of the people, the remnants of their ancient Mayan culture. As a result, the lamentable killings and expulsion of

1. A detailed report of this development in Chiapas can be found in the book by Arthur Bonner, foreword by Charles van Engen, *We Will Not Be Stopped: Evangelical Persecution, Catholicism and Zapatismo in Chiapas, Mexico*, 1998.



believers has been tolerated by governmental authorities, and even defended by many intellectuals within Mexico.

In another situation, we became aware of an injustice that, to this day, has been unreported, and for which there has been no attempt on the part of the authorities to bring the perpetrators to justice. This occurred in a town called Mitontic, in which the town president at that time, a Sr. Juan Lopez Vasquez, incited a mob of some 300 people, armed with clubs, machetes and pistols, to ransack the homes of scores of families, for the single reason that they had professed the evangelical faith. The 232 persons in the families affected (120 women, 77 men, and 35 children) were locked up in a warehouse, without food or water, for three days.

After requiring the believers to sign a document in which they were committed to participate in the town's religious festivals and accept certain traditions, they were taken to the central plaza of San Miguel Mitontic. In the presence of the entire town, the municipal president gave the following warning: "You are under a sentence of death. All the people of the town are authorized to kill anyone who is seen singing or studying the Bible in their homes."

One week later, the majority of the evangelicals decided to "leave the land", moving to San Cristobal de Las Casas, depending on government agencies to care for them until a place might be found where they could build a new community, as had happened with other families who had also been forced out of their homes for the same reason. I visited Nuevo Mitontic, where the families had built their homes surrounding a water source. They had also built two church buildings, one for the Presbyterians and one for the Pentecostals.

Beginning January 1, 1994, the Chiapas problem took on larger significance when a band of strongly armed guerrillas attacked the military barracks in the city of San Cristobal de Las Casas. Since the beginning of the armed *Zapatistas* movement, the expulsions have increased, now at times due to military actions from one side or the other. Aggravating the situation, one of the conditions for an armistice, accepted by the government, is that the customs and traditional practices of the Indian communities would be respected. This includes the syncretic religious practices and traditions related to the use of *posh*, the root of the religious persecution of evangelicals.

In the face of all these problems, the pastors and leaders of the various tribal churches have come together to form a "self-help" organization, called the Indian Council of the North, the Jungles and the Highlands of Chiapas (called CINSA, an acronym of their Spanish name). After only four years, CINSA of Chiapas represented 1032 Christian congregations or fellowships among the five Mayan tribes of the area. They reported 80 churches larger than 350 membership, 500 churches with memberships from 100-350, and 452 with memberships under 100. The total membership of all congregations is approximately 120,000 baptized believers (30% of the population of their area).

CINSA assesses a small membership fee from each congregation, using the money to help newly arriving dispossessed families, or to pay legal fees for individuals

falsely arrested. It also has established a revolving loan fund used by believers to develop their crops, the loans repayable each year at harvest time.

By hard work, with minimal outside help, these Christian Indian men, women and children, forced from their homes and livelihoods, have succeeded in securing enough land on the edges of the city of San Cristobal de Las Casas, and in the municipality of Teopisca, to build new homes for Christians newly dispossessed of their inherited farmlands. They live in poverty, are often hungry; nevertheless they consider themselves to be blessed because they can live in peace and worship God freely.

### What Can We Do?

I think we would all agree that the presence of an outsider is required in a small ethnic group if these people are to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a language they can understand. During their period of stay, we would hope the outsiders' skills in intercultural communication and cultural sensitivity would maintain an easy atmosphere for both them and the early believers.

Should they not be expected to leave at some point, with their goals accomplished? Most mission executives will tell you they are already strained in their efforts to reach all the challenges they face. At some point they have to make a prudent decision to allow that new body of believers to continue to grow under their own leadership, no matter how shaky that leadership may appear to us.

What happens then? The church may do well, with no problems they were not aware of while the missionary was still with them. But what if it goes badly, as in the illustrations cited above? Should a missionary be rushed back into the situation, possibly causing greater irritation in the community-at-large?

What I would prefer to look at are much stronger ties of fellowship between these churches and the worldwide church. These isolated ethnic believers should know how to communicate with the rest of us, and the rest of us should be more acutely aware of what is happening to them. We need to find ways to be of help without imposing our presence in a sticky situation.

Is there a better way?



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# A MISSIOLOGY OF THE RIGHTEOUS RICH

Jonathan Bonk

The modern world is, if possible, even more economically polarized than it was when I wrote my book *Missions and Money* twenty years ago. The United States, Korea and other consumer driven countries are increasingly characterized by profound and growing internal inequities that threaten the harmony and even the viability of these societies.<sup>1</sup>

When within a given social context we are rich, it follows that what the Bible says *to* and *about* the rich, it says *to* and *about* us. Missionaries are not exempt from this rule. *Wealth* and *poverty* are among the most frequently recurring themes in our Christian scriptures. While gross material inequity in close social proximity poses profound relational, communicatory, and strategic challenges for missionaries, as I indicated in my earlier lectures, more fundamental are the complex questions of ethical integrity that challenge any wealthy follower of Jesus moving in contexts of profound poverty.

It is appropriate that I should begin this article with a story by Jim Wallis, editor of *Sojourners*. The story is particularly poignant to me, since I was a classmate of Wallis's at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1970-71, when what he describes took place:

*My moment of real awakening on the question of poor people came in theological seminary. Several of my fellow students and I made a study of every mention of the poor in the Bible. We found several thousand verses on the subject. In the Hebrew Scriptures, it was the second most prominent theme, idolatry being the first, and the two were often related. In the New Testament, one out of every 16 verses had to do with wealth and poverty. In the first three Gospels the subject is in one out of every 10 verses; in the Gospel of Luke, it is in one out of seven verses. We were utterly amazed. Then we became even more amazed as we discussed our findings and realized that none of us had ever heard a sermon in any of our churches on the danger of riches and God's concern for the poor. Yet the Scriptures were filled with this theme from beginning to end. Why the silence?*

*That seminary experience gave me one of my most tried and true sermon illustrations.*

*One of my seminary colleagues had taken a pair of scissors to an old Bible and, proceeded to cut out every single reference to riches or the poor. It took him a long time. By the time he was finished the Prophets were decimated, the Psalms destroyed, the Gospels ripped to shreds and the Epistles turned to tattered rags. The Bible was full of holes. He still has that old torn-up Bible; he's kept it all these years. I used to take it out with me to preach. I'd hold it high above church congregations and*

*say, "Brothers and sisters, this is our American Bible. It's full of holes."*

*.... The clarity of the Bible on the subject of wealth and poverty seldom comes up in America. You can imagine my surprise when I opened up *The Washington Post* one day and found an op-ed piece titled, "Woe to You Who Are Rich." Fascinated, I quickly read the opening paragraph, which began: "Assume that you had never read the New Testament and were given a quiz with the following question: During his ministry, Christ spoke out most often about (a) the evils of homosexuality, (b) the merits of democracy, (c) family-friendly tax cuts or (d) the danger of riches." It turns out that Christ said nothing about the first three and a lot about the last one. But you'd never know it based on the rhetoric of many modern-day Christians – particularly politically active ones."*

*The article was by Peter Wehner, the policy director of Empower America, a conservative Republican organization. Wehner pointed out that the Bible is clear on the issues of wealth and poverty. The article went on to quote large portions of Scripture to show how spiritually dangerous wealth is, according to Jesus and all the biblical writers, and how insistent the Scriptures are in demanding compassion and justice for the poor and oppressed. The clear implication was that America's affluence puts the nation in great spiritual danger, and our lack of concern for the poor is a sign of our moral failing.*

*U.S. Congressman Tony Hall has counted more than 2,500 biblical verses of direct teachings on the subjects of hunger and poverty, a fact that he shared with us at a "preach-in" for the poor that Call to Renewal (a national federation of more than 40 churches and faith-based organizations working together to overcome poverty) held in the U.S. Capitol in the wake of the welfare cuts. Hall, a Democrat from Ohio, had just returned from Sudan and was exhausted from his 41-hour journey but nonetheless wanted to tell us what he had seen. The congressman spoke quietly and movingly about his time in the Sudan, where he saw hundreds of women and children starving to death. This soft-spoken Christian layman apologized for not being a great preacher like those gathered that day; he went on to say,*

*"When I see a situation like that, there are a couple of Scriptures that really mean something to me."*

*He reached inside his suit-coat pocket, pulled out a small Bible and quietly read from Proverbs 14:31: "He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God." Hall went on: "We do something for God by being with the poor, preaching for the poor, legislating for the poor. The most important thing I do in Congress is to do the best I can for poor people." I had never heard so much powerful preaching in a single day before, but the most striking*

1. See Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, *The Spirit Level: Why Greater Equality Makes Societies Stronger* (Bloomsbury Press, 2009). This book is the distillation of thirty years of research showing the connection, and multiple levels, between economic inequity and social dysfunction.

moment of the preach-in came when this sorrowful and tired congressman reported that people were dying needlessly because we didn't care, and reminded us that God does.<sup>2</sup>

When within a given social context we are rich, it follows that what the Bible says *to* and *about* the rich, it says to and about us. Missionaries are not exempt from this rule. *Wealth* and *poverty* are among the most frequently recurring themes in our Christian scriptures. While gross material inequity in close social proximity poses profound relational, communicatory, and strategic challenges for missionaries, as I indicated in my earlier lectures, more fundamental are the complex questions of ethical integrity that challenge any wealthy follower of Jesus moving in contexts of profound poverty. Among those who make their living by speaking *for* God and about God, Christian missionaries—perhaps more than any other professional religious group—are acutely aware of the need for consistency between *what they say they believe* and *how they actually live*.

The concluding chapter of the first edition of my book, bravely titled “Grappling with Affluence,” left me and the readers deeply unsatisfied. In it, I made vague calls to bring missionary lifestyles and strategies into conformity with New Testament teaching on the *incarnation*—as both theologically descriptive and strategically prescriptive; the *cross*—as both symbol of the atonement and prescription for the only way of life promised to the followers of Jesus; and *weakness*—as channel of God’s transforming power.<sup>3</sup>

But I was unable to specify just what this change might entail. I invited readers to become part of an ill-defined, inchoate “Fellowship of Venturers in Simpler Living,”<sup>4</sup> and to this day receive a trickle of letters from idealistic, conscience-stricken Western missionaries wrestling with complex personal questions regarding lifestyle, sharing, tithing, children’s education, health care, and retirement.

To the extent that my thinking on these matters has moved toward a more constructive and helpful conclusion—and I cannot be the judge of that—I am indebted to both the writings and the example of Jacob A. Loewen and his wife, Anne, venerable Christian pilgrims, missionaries, linguists and anthropologists.<sup>5</sup>

Each individual in any society is defined by a series of statuses, acknowledged and recognized by other members of that society. It is understood that each status carries with it certain roles and their associated

behavioral expectations, which vary with the social context. Human identities and relationships are shaped by the complex interplay of recognized statuses, roles, and self-images that comprise the society. In the words of Loewen:

“Roles are the traditional ways people act in given situations. They are learned within the cultural setting. Very frequently the missionary is quite unconscious of this inventory of roles which he brings with him, and so never questions their legitimacy. But we must point out that even the very role of a missionary—a person paid by a foreign source to live in a strange country and to preach a new religion—is quite difficult for most people to understand.”<sup>6</sup>

For a missionary’s communication of the Gospel to be effective, teaching must be accompanied by personal behavioral and character traits that are consistent with what is being taught. Role sincerity is absolutely crucial to missionary integrity. Those who make a living by being religious are often tempted to act and speak as if all the points they make are personal convictions. When this happens, *role insincerity* functions as a contradicting para-message.<sup>7</sup> As the old adage notes, “what you are speaks so loud that the world can’t hear what you say.”

Loewen points out that until a newcomer has been duly incorporated into the established network of relationships, members of a society will not know how to act toward him or her. This is why early explorers and traders in North America often found it necessary to become blood brothers to individual tribesmen. Once such a link had been established, the whole group knew how to behave toward the newcomer, even though the newcomer might not yet know what was expected of him. While most societies allow for a period of trial and error for newcomers to learn to play their roles appropriately, if a newcomer persists in unpredictable or inappropriate behavior beyond the allowed limit, he or she will be judged to be unreliable at best, perhaps even false.

A related problem arises from “roles” appropriated by a new missionary. He or she behaves in ways which, in that society—unbeknownst to the missionary—mark him or her as belonging to a given status. When the missionary fulfills only a part of expected behavior associated with the status and its accompanying roles, there are problems, and people can feel deeply betrayed or angry. For example, many missionaries, in an effort to help people economically, have unwittingly assumed the role of patron or feudal master. When they then refuse to fulfill the obligations associated with that role, people are confused, frustrated, and even angry. They question

2. See “A Bible Full of Holes,” in *The Mennonite* (November 21, 2000), pp. 6–7.

3. Jonathan J. Bonk, *Missions and Money: Affluence as a Western Missionary Problem* [First Edition] (Orbis 1991), pp. 111–132, *passim*.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 131.

5. Jacob A. Loewen, one of the most self-transparent missionaries it was ever my privilege to meet, wrestled in deeply insightful ways about missionary roles. Particularly helpful is his essay, “Missions and the Problems of Cultural Background,” in *The Church in Mission: A Sixtieth Anniversary Tribute to J. B. Toews*, edited by A. J. Klassen (Fresno: Mennonite Brethren Church, 1967), pp. 286–318. See also two articles co-authored with his wife, Anne Loewen, “Role, Self-Image and Missionary Communication,” and “The ‘Missionary’ Role,” appearing in *Culture and Human Values: Christian Intervention in Anthropological Perspective. Selections from the Writings of Jacob A. Loewen* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1975), pp. 412–427; 428–443.

6. Jacob A. Loewen, “Missions and the Problems of Cultural Background,” p. 291.

7. Loewen relates the story of the healing of Pastor Aureliano’s wife, who was ill with malaria. The missionaries “pretended” to believe James 5:14–15—“*Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well...*”—but their prayer for her was not effectual. Later, the Indian pastors prayed for her healing, this time with the desired result. When the missionaries asked why they had not been invited to participate in the prayer, Pastor Aureliano explained that it had been evident that they did not really believe, and that according to the text itself, their prayers would be ineffective. (Jacob A. Loewen, “Missions and the Problems of Cultural Background,” pp. 289–292.)



the sincerity and honesty of that missionary.<sup>8</sup>

I would like to propose that Christians generally, including missionaries—whenever they either anticipate or discover that their way of life and its entitlements make them rich by the standards of those around them—embrace the status of “righteous rich” and learn to play its associated roles in ways that are both culturally appropriate and biblically informed.

It is clear that the Christian scriptures draw a sharp distinction between the righteous who are prosperous and the rich who are unrighteous, and that the distinction between the two is determined chiefly on the basis of their respective dealings with the poor. It would seem absolutely vital for missionaries to make the Biblical study of this subject an essential part of both their preparation and their ongoing spiritual journey.

In his masterful summary of Old Testament teaching on the righteous rich, Christopher Wright observes that “God may choose (but is not obliged) to make a righteous person rich.”<sup>9</sup> The righteous rich are those who:

- Remember the source of their riches — namely the grace and gift of God himself, and are therefore not boastfully inclined to take the credit for achieving them through their own skill, strength, or effort (even if these things have been legitimately deployed) (Deut. 8:17–18; 1 Chron. 29:11–12; Jer. 9:23–24).
- Do not idolize their wealth by putting inordinate trust in it, nor get anxious about losing it. For ultimately it is one’s relationship with God that matters more and can survive (and even be deepened by) the absence or loss of wealth (Job 31:24–25).
- Recognize that wealth is thus secondary to many things, including wisdom, but especially personal integrity, humility, and righteousness (1 Chron. 29:17; Prov. 8:10–11; 1 Kings 3; Prov. 16:8, 28:6).
- Set their wealth in the context of God’s blessing, recognizing that being blessed is not a privilege but a responsibility — the Abrahamic responsibility of being a blessing to others (Gen. 12:1–3). Wealth in righteous hands is thus a servant of that mission that flows from God’s commitment to bless the nations through the seed of Abraham.
- Use their wealth with justice; this includes refusing to extract personal benefit by using wealth for corrupt ends (e.g., through bribery), and ensuring that all one’s financial dealings are nonexploitative of the needs of others (e.g., through interest) (Ps. 15:5; Ezek. 18:7–8).
- Make their wealth available to the wider community through responsible lending that is both practical (Lev. 25) and respectful for the dignity of the debtor (Deut. 24:6, 10–13).
- See wealth as an opportunity for generosity — even when it is risky, and even when it hurts, thereby both blessing the poor and needy, and at the same time reflecting the character of God (Deut. 15; Ps. 112:3; Prov. 14:31; 19:17; Ruth).
- Use wealth in the service of God, whether by

8. Jacob A. Loewen and Anne Loewen, “Role, Self-Image and Missionary Communication,” pp. 426–427, *passim*.

9. Christopher J. H. Wright, “The Righteous Rich in the Old Testament,” in Jonathan J. Bonk, *Missions and Money: Affluence as a Missionary Problem ... Revisited* (Orbis, 2006), pp. 199–200.

contributing to the practical needs that are involved in corporate worship of God (1 Chron. 28–9), or by providing for God’s servants who particularly need material support (2 Chron. 31; Ruth).

- Set an example by limiting personal consumption and declining to maximize private gain from public office that affords access to wealth and resources (Neh. 5:14–19).

It is because such a righteous rich person is marked by genuine, life-transforming fear of the Lord that the blessings he or she enjoys are not tainted with wickedness and the whiff of oppression.

Job is perhaps the best known, and certainly the most ancient biblical character to be characterized as both *rich* and *righteous*. I conclude my lecture by reading his characterization of a righteous rich person—in this case, himself. It should be the goal of any modern righteous person of means—whether missionary or business tycoon—to be able to sincerely and truthfully repeat these words to God. And having said them, to hear an echoing “Amen” from the poor among whom they reside.

*Job 29:11–17.* <sup>11</sup>Whoever heard me spoke well of me, and those who saw me commended me, <sup>12</sup>because I rescued the poor who cried for help, and the fatherless who had none to assist him. <sup>13</sup>The man who was dying blessed me; I made the widow’s heart sing. <sup>14</sup>I put on righteousness as my clothing; justice was my robe and my turban. <sup>15</sup>I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame. <sup>16</sup>I was a father to the needy; I took up the case of the stranger. <sup>17</sup>I broke the fangs of the wicked and snatched the victims from their teeth.

*Job 31:16–28.* <sup>16</sup>If I have denied the desires of the poor or let the eyes of the widow grow weary, <sup>17</sup>if I have kept my bread to myself, not sharing it with the fatherless — <sup>18</sup>but from my youth I reared him as would a father, and from my birth I guided the widow — <sup>19</sup>if I have seen anyone perishing for lack of clothing, or a needy man without a garment, <sup>20</sup>and his heart did not bless me for warming him with the fleece from my sheep, <sup>21</sup>if I have raised my hand against the fatherless, knowing that I had influence in court, <sup>22</sup>then let my arm fall from the shoulder, let it be broken off at the joint. <sup>23</sup>For I dreaded destruction from God, and for fear of his splendor I could not do such things. <sup>24</sup>If I have put my trust in gold or said to pure gold, “You are my security,” <sup>25</sup>if I have rejoiced over my great wealth, the fortune my hands had gained, <sup>26</sup>if I have regarded the sun in its radiance or the moon moving in splendor, <sup>27</sup>so that my heart was secretly enticed and my hand offered them a kiss of homage, <sup>28</sup>then these also would be sins to be judged, for I would have been unfaithful to God on high.

Whether we subscribe to the “hidden hand of the market” as the source of all good things, or whether we detect in the regional, national, and global marketplace the not-so-hidden hand of the economically and politically powerful, it is clear that Job understood himself to be personally responsible for playing a proactive role in the material well-being of poor people in his orbit, and that this is the way God wanted him to be.

For those of us who are wealthy, it is sobering to find

in the Scriptures scarcely any record of repentance on the part of the rich. Here in Nehemiah is one heartening instance, a reminder that no matter how complicated the issues or how deeply entrenched and personally vested the self-interests, it is possible to repent. What would repentance look like from the vantage point of powerful mission organizations in contexts of poverty? That is difficult to say, since the righteous rich missionary or mission agency, while informed Biblically, must be defined contextually.

*1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19. <sup>6</sup>But godliness with contentment is great gain. <sup>7</sup>For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. <sup>8</sup>But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. <sup>9</sup>People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs. ... <sup>17</sup>Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup>Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. <sup>19</sup>In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age, so that they may take hold of the life that is truly life.*

Contained in such biblical texts are the minimal guidelines—"righteous rich templates" so to speak—that should guide the righteous rich whatever their time or place.

That such texts to be applied to wealthy missionaries by the poor among whom they live and work is a certainty. And so they should be. The challenge for the wealthy missionary will be to make sure that he or she is seen as righteous, according to the standards of the group in which he or she lives and works, and above all, in ways that consistently reflect the mind of Christ whom he or she represents.

## Conclusion

I have been involved in the training and nurturing of missionaries for much of my adult life. For the past fifteen years, I have had the extraordinary privilege of serving Christian leaders and missionaries from around the world at the Overseas Ministries Study Center. It is natural, then, that I should bring my paper to a conclusion by proposing that our training and re-training curricula and on-field orientations should include courses and forums for serious, sustained discussion of this troublesome issue. To my knowledge, systematic exploration of the dynamics and missiological implications of economic inequity in close social proximity is not usually a part of missionary training, on-field orientation, or post-graduate mission studies. Included in every mission studies curriculum should be at least one seminar exploring Biblical teaching on wealth and poverty, the rich and the poor, with implications drawn and applications made for Christians in society. This would include missions and missionaries in cross-cultural contexts.

A missiology of the righteous rich is, at its core, no more than a willingness to be useful in terms defined by the local contexts and people. For this there can be no better exemplar than our Lord Himself. With a mission more sweeping in scope and magnitude than those of even the most daring mission strategists, his commission was to save the world. Oddly, by the standards of Western missions, Jesus spent His life as a laughably parochial figure, never venturing in his actual ministry beyond the borders of his own foreign-occupied country. By the standards of even the most tolerant mission administrators, he proved to be frustratingly deficient when it came to actually fulfilling his mission. His major difficulty seemed to have been the interruptions that intruded into his larger plans for the world.

Almost everything written in the Gospel accounts of his life relates directly or indirectly to the wrenching, but strategically petty, personal agendas of the ordinary men and women who pressed in on him on all sides during the few short years of his ministry. The Creator God incarnate, bent on saving the whole world, allowed himself to be interrupted by the sick, the lame, the blind, the withered, the bereaved, the outcasts, the pariahs, the deaf, the demon possessed, the grieving. Whatever he may have been doing at the time, he seemed never too busy or tired to stop and pay close attention to their agendas.

How understandable it would have been for Jesus to regretfully turn away the ordinary people who constantly sought his attention, reminding them that as Creator of their planet, now charged with redeeming it, he simply did not have time to give attention to the personal details of their everyday lives. Instead, he demonstrated that any proclamation of the Good News that does not intersect with the actual needs of ordinary people is not good news, but mere religious propaganda. On this issue he was at distinct odds with the Pharisees, as his followers today should be.

It is trite to remind ourselves that it was his willingness to yield to one final, fatal interruption on a hill just outside Jerusalem that accomplished our redemption. It is this interruption that lies at the heart of the Gospel that takes missionaries to the ends of the earth.

We affluent missionaries have a lot to learn from their Lord. Defined and driven by corporate and ecclesiastical agendas that are the product of organizations and well-meaning church leaders often thousands of miles away, we sometimes have no time to serve people on their own terms, thereby implicitly denying both that we are servants, at the beck and call of those among whom we minister, and that they, rather than we, ultimately determine our usefulness.

As individuals, families, churches, and organizations we to some extent justify our behavior by referencing corresponding behavior in the dominant cultures that shape us. As the institution of slavery in this country sadly illustrates, when highly regarded national or Christian leaders engage in culturally acceptable but biblically doubtful practices, these practices are easily rationalized and justified, particularly if they serve personal or institutional or national self-interest. We do well to consider the sage observation of John Woolman

[1720-1772] that whatever the cloak used to mask the true state of affairs, neither personal, nor institutional, nor national accountability to God is somehow thereby abrogated. "For as justice remains justice," Woolman warned,

*... so many people of reputation in the world joining with wrong things do not excuse others in joining with them nor make the consequences of their proceedings less dreadful in the final issue than it would be otherwise.*

*Where unrighteousness is justified from one age to another, it is like dark matter gathering into clouds over us. We may know that this gloom will remain till the cause be removed by a reformation or change of times and may feel a desire ... to speak on the occasion; yet where error is so strong that it may not be spoken against without some prospect of inconvenience to the speaker, this difficulty is likely to operate on our weakness and quench the good desires in us, except we dwell so steadily under the weight of it as to be made willing to endure hardness on that account.<sup>10</sup>*

The power of the institution or the state over the individual can hardly be overemphasized. The seemingly natural inclination is for all humans to imagine themselves, their tribe, their religion, their nation as part of an exceptional story of a singular people. Such stories—"myths," we call them when observing the predisposition in others—offer us humans a way of merging our temporal lives with the eternal. The histories in which we locate ourselves are older, bigger, and grander than our puny finite selves. A collage of highly selective partial truths and sometimes outright lies, our constructed histories are uncritically absorbed and internalized by children, in the process becoming incontestable truth. To question or deny them can in perilous times be interpreted as an act of sedition.

Christianity—which, if one reads Paul and the Gospels carefully, helps us to recognize and resist the self-flattering reductionist anthropologies of nationalism—has often been employed in the service of various egocentric schemes of order and domination. From

10. John Woolman, *The Journal and Major Essays of John Woolman*, edited by Phillips P. Moulton (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 212.

where I sit, this phenomenon is most visible right here in the United States, where church-going visitors from abroad are startled to discover that the Star Spangled Banner has been granted conspicuous pride of place behind the altar, as though belief in God and fealty to nation were inseparable. This innocent expression of patriotism mutates into outright idolatry in times of crisis, where serving one self become the same as serving God.

Believers, churches, missionaries, and mission societies can and must be critical of their institutions where these come into conflict with personal obedience, and not merely use these as a cover for personal disobedience.

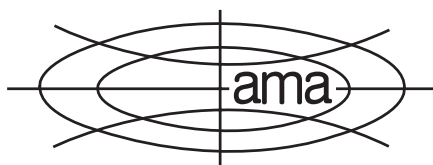
Were the role of the "righteous rich" to be widely appropriated by missionaries from Korea and the West, it is safe to assume that this would revolutionize the missionary enterprise. We would at once become more Christ-like. Rather than comfortably accounted promulgators of admirably correct propositions about God and inherited notions of ecclesiology, we would become righteous rich followers of Jesus, putting ourselves and our good fortune at the disposal of the neighbors, strangers and enemies among whom God places us.

*\* This paper is an adapted version of the fifth of five lectures on the subject of Missions and Money, given at the East-West Mission Seminar in Pasadena, April 23-24, 2012.*



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