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CARING FOR GLOBAL MISSION WORKERS - BURNING OUT

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During my final year of medical school, I had the opportunity to serve at a mission hospital in an Asian country. With a deep sense of call and many months of preparation, I arrived on the “mission field” eager to meet some “real missionaries”. Upon my arrival, I was given a tour of the hospital and introduced to Dr. Ivey* (not real name), the missionary physician who would serve as my supervisor. I was eager to see Christ-centred care in action, and on my first morning I joined Dr. Ivey and her team of local nurses for morning rounds.

My first impression of Dr. Ivey was that she looked tired, *really tired*, but I brushed off my concern and quietly carried on. Our first patient was a heavily pregnant woman who had come to the hospital to deliver her baby by caesarean section. Dr. Ivey wearily approached the bedside and picked up the medical chart. I was alarmed that we had not greeted the patient, but I willed myself to suspend judgement. After all, I was the newcomer and perhaps there was something I didn’t understand about the local greeting customs.

After reviewing the chart, Dr. Ivey huffed in exasperation and released a barrage of complaints about the things that the nurses had done wrong. The nurses were quiet, *really quiet*, but that did not mean they were without feelings. Like a series of warning beacons, a flicker of knowing flashed from one set of eyes to another. Everyone understood what was happening; the shame of being openly chastised on a ward full of patients was palpable to all, except Dr. Ivey. She didn’t understand. Sadly, she didn’t have the capacity or margin to understand. Instead, her voice grew tighter, as she reiterated her complaints. I felt badly for her as I could see that underneath it all, she was trying very hard to salvage some meaningful connection with the very people she had come to

“minister to”.

There were other alarm bells, but I stayed with Dr. Ivey hoping that her behaviour would change. Sadly, after a week I found it too difficult and when a local physician confided in me, “*Why don’t these missionary doctors just go home!*”, I asked to be transferred to a different department. I felt terribly conflicted about this decision, but at that time I didn’t know enough to understand that Dr. Ivey was likely suffering from burnout. My only instinct was to flee. There was so much I didn’t know, but what I did know was that the most basic medical maxim, “*First, do no harm*”, was being violated. I also knew that my first exposure to medical missions did not look anything like the Christ-centered care I had hoped to see. And finally, I knew that if I remained with Dr. Ivey, it would be at

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the peril of my own mental and spiritual well-being. Nearly 25 years later, having served in other contexts and worked with other mission workers, I have come to appreciate how critical the care and development of mission workers is to the global mission endeavor. Real burnout and the lead up to it are not benign. It can destroy people, break relationships, and sink ministries. It should never be upheld as a rite of passage or badge of honour, although sometimes if we are honest, it is part of the darker side of mission culture.

Burnout is such a pervasive issue that the World Health Organization (WHO) included it for the first time in the International Classification of Diseases, ICD-10, which is a diagnostic tool that is used to classify and monitor causes of injury and death. In the most recent version, ICD-11, burnout was defined in greater detail and categorized as an occupational phenomenon rather than a medical condition. This distinction is important.

According to the ICD-11: Burnout is a syndrome conceptualized as resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. It is characterized by three dimensions:

- feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion;
- increased mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job; and
- reduced professional efficacy.¹

This is a very cause of concern among us in the missionfield, because burnout is known to cluster with depressive symptoms, poorer health outcomes and increased work absenteeism and attrition.²

Over the years, I've provided care to many patients at mission hospitals. Despite this, I've often wondered if my greatest contribution to the global mission endeavor was through the kitchen table "member care", where I tried to offer help through deep listening, spirit-led counsel, conflict mediation, prayer, and good food. However, the longer I provided this "member care", the more convinced I became that something greater was amiss. Why did so many good workers start out well and end up going the way of Dr. Ivey? For years I wrestled with these questions, "Surely there must be a better way to care for mission workers. If the LORD has given us all that we need to participate in the call of global missions, why do we often carry it out as if it were not so?" (Mt 28:19, Act 1:4-8, 2 Cor 12:9, 2 Peter 1:3)

I return to the WHO's definition of burnout. The fact that it has been classified as an occupational phenomenon is significant. The definition recognizes that burnout is not solely about an individual's resources or coping strategies. Rather, burnout can be prevented and managed by focusing on protective

1. World Health Organization. (2019). *Burn-out as an occupational phenomenon*: International Classification of Diseases, <https://www.who.int/news/item/28-05-2019-burn-out-an-occupational-phenomenon-international-classification-of-diseases>,

2. Ahola, K., Hakenen, J., Perhoniemi, R., Mutanen, P. (2014). *Burnout Research*, 2014:1, pp. 29-37, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2213058614000060>

and contributing systemic factors in the workplace. As mission organizations seek to address burnout, a holistic approach is required. One helpful way to think about burnout prevention is from a socio-ecological framework (i.e., individual, social, community and societal factors) which sits within the overarching kingdom framework that God is over all people, the earth and all of creation. (Ps 24:1).

I currently serve with a mission organization as the Global Director overseeing its international people development and care team. In some contexts, this may be referred to as "member care". People often assume that my role is about providing counselling services for burnt-out mission workers. While I firmly believe in the value of counselling, I will respond, "I am not in the business of fixing burnt-out mission workers. I am in the business of trying to put those who fix burnt-out mission workers, out of business.". I really do want to see burnout become a thing of the past. I really do want to make the traditional "fix-it when it's broken" approach to caring for mission workers obsolete by preventing burnout in the first place.

Thus, the main objective of any "member care" or people development and care work, irrespective of the organization's mandate, must be to ensure that people leave the organization having grown more like Jesus.

If this was possible, and I believe it is, what would it look like? I am still learning, but I share a few ideas and invite you to engage with them to see how they may apply to your context. The following describes preventative interventions or practices at the higher levels of the socio-ecological & kingdom framework that ultimately seeks to shape an organization's culture.

1. Start from the End: "What will our people look like on the last day they serve with us?"

People enter our mission organizations and stay for variable lengths of time - some for months and others for years. The one thing that is universally consistent is that one day they will leave. When they leave, they will have important ministry to attend to such as caring for their families, serving in churches, entering the marketplace or another mission organization. Thus, the main objective of any "member care" or people development and care work, irrespective of the organization's mandate, must be to ensure that people leave the organization having grown more like Jesus. Thus, any related policies and programmatic activities should be assessed by indicators that point toward this goal. This is in fact the vision of my team,

and we work towards indicators that demonstrate that our people are growing more like Jesus. We work on strategies and initiatives that help people grow in their relationship with God, grow in their relationship with other people, grow in their ministry skills and effectiveness, and grow in their sense of well-being and resilience. When the people that God brings to our mission organizations leave exhausted, negative, and cynical, we will have missed the mark in helping them grow more like Jesus. And when churches see this result, it becomes the slow death knell for mission mobilization.

2. Address Grief and Become Storytellers.

For many years, I worked as a palliative care physician, caring for people and their families at the end-of-life. The parallels between palliative care and caring for people in global missions are strikingly similar. Those who are dying experience a series of transitions and losses that are reminiscent of the transitions and losses experienced by those that have chosen to follow Christ and die to themselves.

The grief of transitions and losses are numerous throughout a mission worker's journey. Perhaps the most pervasive and discouraging is the grief of losing fellow mission workers who choose to leave prematurely or complete their time in ministry.

In cross-cultural mission work the hardship of transition and grief is never a singular event, but a chronic condition. This hardship is a well-known occupational hazard, but that does not make it any easier to accept. The grief of transitions and losses are numerous throughout a mission worker's journey. Perhaps the most pervasive and discouraging is the grief of losing fellow mission workers who choose to leave prematurely or complete their time in ministry. Whatever the reason for attrition and turnover, the constant grief of losing people we love is real. This grief cannot be easily solved, it can only be lovingly managed.

How a mission organization addresses and manages grief, and the way in which it helps people make meaning of their grief, will promote greater resilience and stave off burnout. One way to do this at an organizational level is to promote, model, and nurture a culture of reflection and storytelling. In medicine, this kind of practice of valuing stories and experiences has been found to be so effective that it is an emerging discipline called narrative medicine. Among healthcare workers, storytelling and reflective practices have shown to promote communication, cultural competence, empathy, professionalism, and

vitality while mitigating burnout.³

3. "Member Care" – Who are We Talking About?

Throughout this paper I have put the term "member care" in parenthesis to denote its limitations in describing what it means to care for global mission workers. In our organization, we use the terms "people care", or "people development and care", to acknowledge the importance of thinking beyond just the long-term cross-cultural mission worker. Whatever "member" may mean in your organization it is unlikely to be an inclusive term.

Someone once asked me, "Is the care that you provide also available to staff?" This haunting question from a valued office staff worker, who didn't necessarily see himself as a missionary member, serves to remind me that our words are important. The choice of our words conveys to people that they are either in or out – valued or not valued – belong or don't belong. In our organization, the word "people" refers to all our mission workers for whom we have some organizational responsibility (i.e., long-term mission members, short-term mission associates, staff, and volunteers). On the surface this may seem trivial, but I would argue that this is one of the most significant cultural shifts that needs to take place in a mission organization to ensure that an underlying "us and them" narrative doesn't drive further disparity and divisions among its people. Where there is disparity there is the risk of division and conflicts which contribute to chronic workplace stress, burnout, and attrition.

4. Define Meaning and Close the Expectation Gap

When I started my role, I conducted an organizational needs assessment to determine what our people needed to flourish in their ministries. From this we learned that a significant contributor to burnout was the confusion and hurt people experience when expectations for care and development are not met. This is a particular concern for people who are in care intensive leadership roles. These leaders could list multiple care related activities (i.e., providing administrative support, making visitations, organizing prayer meetings and social gatherings, etc.) and yet, they were hurt when some of their workers expressed that "no one cared". This kind of mismatch in expectations often led leaders to feel ineffective and undervalued. The risk of burnout increases when there is a gap between workplace expectations and the perceived level of resources that workers feel they must possess to meet those expectations.

Care and development are goals that people universally agree are important. However, if you ask ten people what care and development means, you will likely end up with ten different responses. With

3. Remein, C. Childs E, Pasco JC, et al. (2019). Content and outcomes of narrative medicine programmes: a systematic review of the literature through 2019. *BMJ Open*, 2020:10, <https://bmjopen.bmj.com/content/10/1/e031568.abstract>

ten different responses to something as critical as care and development, it shouldn't surprise us when people become confused or even hurt when their expectations are not met.

Several years ago, our organization developed a mission wide survey to ask our people what they thought these words meant. Based on over 500 responses we defined several key words (e.g., care, development, ministry, team, outcomes) and developed a workbook for teams to engage with these more deeply. For example, we defined care as: *"Care is living out our biblical calling to love one another. We do this as we go about being and making disciples in communities where Christ is least known. Care isn't limited to a program; care happens as we love, listen, and encourage one another. Care is intentional. To care is to pursue excellence in who we are and what we do."*

The risk of burnout increases when there is a gap between workplace expectations and the perceived level of resources that workers feel they must possess to meet those expectations.

"Care-focused" organizations need to be vigilant about clarifying terminology and translating communications to their workers. Even when everyone speaks the same language, it is critical to clarify people's perceptions of care-related terminology and manage the gap in expectations. A formal needs assessment is not always necessary, but a consistent means of listening to workers is essential to achieving genuine understanding. "Care-focused" organizations will ask workers, rather than tell them, what their care and development needs are. Leaders in care intensive roles should regularly allow people to voice their needs and express how they would like to be developed. These kinds of practices decrease the gap in expectations and increase people's sense of autonomy and shared decision-making which help to mitigate stressors that lead to burnout.

5. Clarify the Spaces and Set the Stage

Creating clear and consistent roles is another way to mitigate stressors that lead to burnout. While we encourage this kind of practice for all our workers, it is also important to do this at an organizational and programmatic level. For instance, in our organization we have spent a great deal of time clarifying the roles and responsibilities of leaders in people management roles (i.e., country directors, personnel coordinators, human resources etc.) and those in people care and development roles (i.e., "member care", chaplaincy, pastoral care, and counselling). Both groups deeply care for mission workers, but they demonstrate their care through different roles. These roles are

complementary and interdependent but at times exist in tension with competing interests.

Mission organizations need to create systems of reporting to ensure people and ministries remain transparent and accountable. However, they also need to develop spaces that allow people to seek safe and confidential support that is separate from their workplace evaluation and performance. There is no single solution to solve the competing interests of people management leaders who "need to know", and people care and development leaders who often "will not tell". Conflicts arise when leaders seek a single solution rather than accepting that in a complex system like a mission organization, competing interests will always exist.⁴ Thus, competing interests need to be prayerfully identified and graciously managed through dialogue and collaboration. Clarifying these kinds of spaces is an on-going commitment. One way that we do this is by regularly updating our people related policies and guidelines. We also pay particular attention to principles and processes related to confidentiality and conflict management, as these are areas fraught with risk for misunderstanding.

Another mitigating factor for burnout is for mission workers to be well-equipped and trained for their work. The way to promote this at an organizational level is by creating a culture of lifelong learning where people are curious and eager to grow and develop.

In our case, it was only after clarifying the space between people management leaders and people development and care leaders, that we could develop more specific programs such as a global chaplaincy and pastoral care team. Chaplains and pastors who minister to people inside a mission organization need enough space, but a defined space, to exercise their gifts. Healthy boundaries enable people to flourish (Psalm 16:5-6) but sorting out those boundaries is often complicated. It's hard work because there are often deep, unexamined, competing values that arise during boundary discussions. The liminal space between professions is prone to misunderstanding and conflict. People often don't realize the extent to which their thinking and perspectives are shaped by their educational and professional training. A diversity of training and professions is a gift to the body of Christ, but at times it can make people blind to the differing perspectives of others. In missions we make much of our need for cross-cultural intelligence. In the same

4. Johnston, B. (2014). *Polarity Management: Identifying and Managing Unsolvable Problems*. HRD Press.

way, we should address the need for greater cross-professional intelligence so we can fully leverage the benefits of inter-professional collaboration. With humility, wisdom, and perseverance the work of establishing clear boundaries can set the stage for leaders to carry out their ministries with greater freedom and security. This kind of ecosystem level work prevents future stress and conflict and will mitigate worker burnout.

6. Adopt a growth and development mindset

Another mitigating factor for burnout is for mission workers to be well-equipped and trained for their work. The way to promote this at an organizational level is by creating a culture of lifelong learning where people are curious and eager to grow and develop. This kind of growth and development mindset enables mission workers to become like children (Mt 18:2-5), growing in a posture of humility and wonderment. In recent years, a plethora of resources have been developed to support mission workers. The options are dizzying, but mission organizations could do their workers a great service by curating resources and creating spaces that allow people to learn together in community and build learning networks. Curating training resources in key areas such as interpersonal skills, team development, biblical peacemaking and conflict resolution will help reduce the risk of burnout. However, more important than the provision of training platforms and content is the role of modeling by leaders. One of the most powerful ways people learn is by following the example of those they trust and look up to. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we are always picking up the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours of our leaders. Hence, it's important to know that mission leadership burnout is one of the greatest risk factors for burnout among mission workers. Leaders set the pace and play a significant role in creating workplace culture. It is not just the unpleasant stress of working with leaders who are burnt-out (or approaching it) that can lead to burnout, but it is the unhealthy workplace practices that they implicitly promote that allows burnout to prevail.⁵

7. Think Networks and Long-Term Sustainability

If we are to effect meaningful care-related change in the mission organization ecosystem, we need to recognize that it will not come about by any one person, one discipline or one profession. How should a mission organization think long-term about its policies, strategies, and programs to promote protective factors or mitigate risk factors for burnout? I would propose that it begins with resisting the over-professionalization of care. In our organization's definition of care, we are deliberate about stating that, "care isn't limited to a program," but rather it's about "who we are and all that we do.". While there

5. Schwartz, T, Pines, E. (2019). Leading On Empty: How Leaders Drive their People to Burnout. *Forbes*, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/theenergyproject/2019/07/31/leading-on-empty-how-leaders-drive-their-people-to-burnout/?sh=7e1dcba12503>

will always be a role for specialist care providers (i.e., chaplains, pastors, counsellors), they cannot, nor should they be, encouraged to meet all the needs of mission workers. One helpful way to think about creating a sustainable culture of care is to help everyone in the organization understand that care is not a specific group of people, but about a network of care providers. The "7 S's of care" is a helpful way to remember the various strands of this network:

- 1) Saviour (God is our ultimate care provider)
- 2) Self-Care (Everyone is responsible to steward their own well-being)
- 3) Sender (Supporters and churches)
- 4) Structure (Organizational policies and procedures)
- 5) Shepherd (People in formal leadership roles)
- 6) Staff (Fellow co-workers or team members)
- 7) Specialist (Professional care givers like chaplains, pastors, counsellors).⁶

8. Ending Where We Started – At the End

A godly colleague recently retired after many years of faithful service. At his retirement party, he reflected on the things he had learned and the ways in which he saw God worked. However, the one thing that caught my attention was his regret when he shared, "I wish I had prayed more." It reminded me of an article I had read about the late evangelist, Billy Graham who shared, "I would also spend more time in spiritual nurture, seeking to grow closer to God so I could become more like Christ. I would spend more time in prayer, not just for myself but for others. I would spend more time studying the Bible and meditating on its truth, not only for sermon preparation but to apply its message to my life. It is far too easy for someone in my position to read the Bible only with an eye on a future sermon, overlooking the message God has for me through its pages."⁷

One helpful way to think about creating a sustainable culture of care is to help everyone in the organization understand that care is not a specific group of people, but about a network of care providers.

Let's think about this from an organizational perspective. On the day when our mission organizations "retire", will they have any regrets and what will they be? Hopefully they are not the wistful words, "We wish we had prayed more." When it comes to burnout prevention, prayer changes everything, and corporate prayer (i.e., when the people of God

6. YWAM International Member Care. *The 7 S's of Member Care*, <https://www.ywammembercare.net>

7. Earls, A. (2019). Biggest Regrets of Billy Graham's Life, *Lifeway Research*, <https://research.lifeway.com/2019/02/21/3-biggest-regrets-of-billy-grahams-life/>

pray together) changes it many times over! The scope of this paper is too small to explore corporate prayer in great depth, but I don't think I am overstating it when I write that corporate prayer is likely the single greatest protective and mitigating factor when it comes to burnout prevention. In fact, I cannot think of anything more powerful than a rich corporate prayer life to help mission workers grow deeper in their sense of belonging to God (i.e., deepening spiritual maturity and growing intimacy with God), deeper in their sense of belonging to one another (i.e., unity, interdependence, and mutual support) and deeper in their sense of belonging to the larger mission organization (i.e., commitment to the greater purpose of one's team, organization, and global mission endeavor).

A life of prayer that is Spirit led and reflects an ever-growing dependence on God and deepening unity in the Body of Christ is critical if we want to see people flourish. God has given us all that we need to participate in His call to missions. The problem is we often forget to choose the "better thing" (Lk 10:42) and busy ourselves with lesser priorities.

Organizations need to prayerfully discern strategies and invest their best resources to develop an organizational culture of prayer. By this I do not mean mandating or pressuring people to attend prayer meetings which will only lead to meaningless ritualization - an obligatory duty which will contribute to burnout. Instead, we need to focus on creating opportunities and practices that nurture a growing intimacy with God through prayer. A life of prayer that is Spirit led and reflects an ever-growing dependence on God and deepening unity in the Body of Christ is critical if we want to see people flourish. God has given us all that we need to participate in His call to missions. The problem is we often forget to choose the "better thing" (Lk 10:42) and busy ourselves with lesser priorities. This kind of forgetting does not have to become endemic in an organization. In our organization, some of the most meaningful times of corporate prayer have included ample time for silence, stillness, and meditative reflection on God's word. Often it has been the simple reading of God's word together in community - once, twice, three times, savouring its goodness and allowing it to soak deep into our hearts that has rendered some of the most honest and earnest times of prayer. During these times many of us were deeply moved and

sensed God's loving presence drawing us closer to Himself and one another. It's tempting to conduct our prayer meetings by listing all our needs and praying through them in a mechanical way. While God knows our needs and welcomes us to express them, our needs will look very different when we allow God to have the first word. As Eugene Peterson wrote, "*Prayer is not something we think up to get God's attention or enlist his favor. Prayer is answering speech. The first word is God's word. Prayer is a human word and is never the first word, never the primary word, never the initiating and shaping word simply because we are never first; never primary . . . The first word everywhere and always is God's word to us, not ours to him.*"⁸

How would Dr. Ivey and many others who have experienced the deep discouragement of burnout fared if they were part of an organization that prioritized the well-being of their people over the demands of the work? What would have happened to these people if their organizations measured the success of their ministry outreach by the extent to which they were growing more like Jesus? We don't have to wonder. Burnout is preventable and God will give us the wisdom to know how to prevent it. May the LORD give the workers of His Harvest an abundance of grace so that they yield their fruit in season and their leaves do not wither as they make Christ known among the nations. (Ps 1:3).

⁸ Peterson, E. (1991). *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayers*. Harper.



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TEN COMMON CHALLENGES

Jacky Lau

International workers (IWs) encounter many challenges in responding to the missionary call. One out of eighteen (or 5.5 percent) of IWs from new sending countries¹ left their posts due to preventable reasons² each year, according to a study by 455 mission agencies with 23,000 workers in 1992-94 (Hay et al. 2007, 12). For the past twenty years, IWs from the A4 regions³ have become a significant force in frontier missions. Missionary movements in challenging areas will run out of steam if the workers do not have sufficient support strategies to address their challenges. Therefore, improving missionary retention and resiliency is a crucial member care goal for mission agencies and sending churches.

This chapter aims to present ten common challenges faced by IWs and offer practical strategies to overcome potential difficulties. International worker refers to all vocational missionaries and tentmakers⁴ serving in mission fields with considerable or no support from their mission agencies or sending churches.

International workers serving in Creative Access Countries⁵ in the 10/40 Window⁶ frequently encounter significant difficulties. New IWs who are not connected with or not supported by agencies are more vulnerable to struggles in the field. Researchers have conducted studies on field challenges in the past two decades (Carter 1999, Hay et al. 2007, Lau 2017, Narita 2018). Based on these studies and field observations, the following ten common challenges are identified in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Ten Common Challenges (Lau 2017)

1. Cultural Adjustments
2. Spiritual Loneliness
3. Family Issues
4. Language Skill
5. Fatigue, Sickness and Stress
6. Financial Shortage
7. Lack of Support and Training
8. Children's Education
9. Role Changes and Calling
10. Conflict and Disunity

1. Countries other than from Europe or North America

2. Preventable reasons include personal, family and team problems; Unpreventable reasons include retirement, death in service and project completion.

3. A4 regions include Africa, Asia, Arabic-Turkic, and America-Latina (O'Donnell 2011).

4. Marketplace worker (e.g. a professional employed globally and living as salt and light in that global context)

5. Countries that do not allow open mission work and require creative means to gain entry.

6. The 10/40 Window is the rectangular area of North Africa, the Middle East and Asia approximately between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees north latitude. (Joshua Project)

Throughout this chapter, we will briefly discuss these ten common challenges and offer practical strategies to overcome them.

CULTURAL ADJUSTMENTS

The term *culture* in this section includes “the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society.” Cultural adjustments are the most common challenges identified by IWs serving in a cross-cultural environment. Asian IWs serving in the Middle East point out how the host Islamic culture differs significantly from their home culture. They must adjust to the local ways of living (e.g., hot summer, fasting during Ramadan, driving, relating to local officials, etc.). They also must learn the diverse sub-cultures of the local and diaspora people they serve.

Long-term IWs often experience uncertainty, confusion, or anxiety in this culture shock and require more time to adjust to a new environment. There are five common cultural adjustment stages (Attitude 2018): 1) Honeymoon/Tourist, 2) Distress/Crisis, 3) Re-integration, 4) Autonomy, and 5) Independence. We recommend the following strategies for a better transition:

- Mission leaders and potential IWs should develop a good knowledge of the culture of the people group they are called to work with. Whenever possible, they should take an exploratory trip to the new field and experience the host culture and sub-cultures before moving into the region.
- Mission leaders should visit new IWs as soon as they relocate into the new country. Invite IWs to join a like-minded Christian community (church or mission team) where they can communicate with their mother tongue as they worship God, meet new friends, and learn about local cultures. Network new IWs with veteran IWs willing to offer practical ways to help them and their families transition well to a new living and ministry environment.
- Encourage new IWs to adopt a learner posture of new cultures. Help them to view culture in four levels: behaviour, values, beliefs, and worldview (Kwast 2009, 397-399). During the Honeymoon/Tourist stage, new IWs are encouraged to take public transportation, visit museums, dine at local restaurants, attend wedding celebrations, and visit homes of local families. They should take photos to capture interesting moments or scenery with their fresh pair of eyes. New IWs should be discouraged from travelling outside their fields during the first year (or first term) of ministry in order to focus on their initial cultural adjustment.

- Help new IWs become familiar with their host countries' conservative values, such as gender issues, social and religious practices, and implications relating to proselytization.
- The goal of cultural adjustment is to help new IWs be mindful of the effects of culture shock, have a smooth transition as they enter a new culture, and learn culturally appropriate ways to share God's love and Jesus Christ.

SPIRITUAL LONELINESS

International workers experience spiritual dryness and loneliness, especially when they live in isolated places and serve alone in unfamiliar, and sometimes hostile, locations. "Spiritual dryness can lead us to wander...without direction, hope, vision, and, most importantly, without the sustaining relationship of the Father" (Hicks 2002, 199). Single and younger IWs earnestly look forward to receiving spiritually mature visitors who are willing to share their life and ministry experiences. Tentmaking IWs who are married and have children often struggle to have quiet time and personal devotions. Most IWs desire to deepen their walk with Christ and long for God's presence and encouragement through fellowship, Bible study, and prayer meetings with other like-minded IWs. Many miss biblical teaching and revival meetings offered by their home churches.

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We recommend the following strategies to encourage IWs to revitalize their spiritual being:

1. Encourage IWs to build a close relationship with God and to seek the filling of the Holy Spirit through consistent spiritual disciplines such as Bible reading, prayer, fasting, evangelism, retreat, etc.
2. New IWs should connect with a local church or fellowship to worship God. If no Christian community is near their location, encourage IWs to worship God at home and invite other IWs to join. Married IWs should also establish private worship with their children.
3. Team leaders should meet with new IWs periodically and encourage them to conduct

weekly small group or team meetings to worship God and encourage each other. Network new IWs with other like-minded IWs with similar family backgrounds so they can build friendships, organize joint family activities, discuss ministries, and pray for each other.

4. Encourage IWs to attend in-country or regional networking meetings and conferences so they can celebrate what God has been doing in their region, building courage and rapport with like-minded IWs and Christian communities.
5. IWs should establish accountability prayer partners and set up prayer support networks inside and outside their countries. Join global prayer movements and participate in regional prayer events hosted by Christian communities in the field.

FAMILY ISSUES

Having a strong family relationship is a core value held by many cultures. IWs, especially those from the A4 regions, value and desire loving relationships with their families. Common family issues include:

1. single IWs experiencing parental pressure to get married
2. married IWs in an unhealthy spousal relationship
3. married IWs facing parental pressure to have children
4. IWs contending with challenges in raising children and teenagers
5. IWs' responsibilities in caring for their elderly or sick parents in their home countries.

Young IWs need mature IWs to serve as role models and walk alongside with them when facing difficult family issues relating to their marriage, parents, in-laws, children, celibacy, sexual orientation, etc. They can invite trusted IWs and Christian leaders to counsel and pray for them when they face family crises.

We recommend the following strategies to encourage IWs to address their potential family issues:

- Encourage single IWs to live a Christ-centered life with contentment and purity while seeking God's guidance on the possibility and timing of getting married. Develop opportunities and assist single IWs to meet with other like-minded Christian singles.
- Assist married IWs in learning how the emotional, physical, and sexual union of a husband and a wife reflects the complete unity of the Triune God. Encourage them to place a high priority on building a healthy married relationship centered on God's love. If their spousal relationship is not healthy, all other relationships will eventually be at risk.
- Encourage married IW couples to set aside quality time to date their spouse and attend special training/retreats on marriage enrichment (e.g., Family Life retreats) and how to raise their third culture kids (TCKs) in the field.

- Encourage IWs to love and honour their parents while maintaining a sense of independence from them (Genesis 2:24; Ephesians 6:2). Consider asking their sending church to visit and care for their aging parents in their home countries.

LANGUAGE SKILLS

English is the common trade language used in many countries inside the 10/40 Window. IWs understand the importance of learning fluent English to live and minister in the field. IWs should acquire a certain level of fluency in conversational English before or shortly after they come to the field. Besides learning English, IWs participating in frontier missions will also need to learn the heart language of the people group they serve. At least one IW in a mission team should be fluent in the local language (Allen et al. 2009, 75). Proficient language and communication skills are valuable assets that enable IWs to function well in a culturally diverse and globalized mission field.

All potential IWs should acquire a good command of English before being sent to the field. They should follow the principle of “learn a little and use a lot” to improve their language abilities. International workers whose mother tongue is not English should be encouraged to connect with English-speaking Christians in the field so they can improve their English, build friendships, and pray for each other. Cross-cultural IWs should focus on learning the local language full-time for at least one year through cultural centres, private tutors, or a language school located in their mission field. Mission leaders should prioritize visiting and caring for IWs and their families when they study the local language full-time.

FATIGUE, SICKNESS AND STRESS

Life inside the 10/40 Window can be very demanding. Foreign workers and tentmaking IWs typically have heavy workloads and work long hours. IWs from the A4 regions, newlywed couples, and IWs with children face more significant challenges in balancing ministries and healthy living. Many of them have a high view of work but fail to observe Sabbath. As a result, they often develop fatigue and sickness. Tentmaking IWs face stresses both in their ministry and at their workplace. They can also experience the challenge of living a life of integrity at work and, at the same time, demonstrating Christ’s love to their friends and adversaries.

Health professionals identify seven types of missionary stresses: cultural, people, agency, physical, psychological, support, and spiritual (O’Donnell & O’Donnell 1992). If these stresses are not reduced or adequately managed, IWs will experience burnout, leading to impatience, loss of joy, reduced ministry effectiveness, depression, sickness, and premature departure from the field.

We recommend the following strategies to assist IWs to improve their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being:

- Encourage and keep IWs accountable to faithfully observe Sabbath weekly and enjoy being with the Lord through spiritual disciplines including prayer, fasting, Scripture reading, etc. Help IWs to be joyful in Christ and maintain a positive outlook in life.
- Encourage them to exercise regularly and celebrate small successes and significant occasions with other IWs. Assist IWs with obtaining proper medical insurance coverage for their families. Accompany them to doctor’s appointments or visit them when they are sick. Counsel them if they return to their home countries to treat significant illnesses.
- Assist IWs to establish clear and healthy margins in life and ministry. Margin is defined as “a sufficient reserve of time, energy (spiritual, emotional, interpersonal, and physical), and money to provide for [one’s own] needs and the needs of others.” (Williams 2000, 196). Help IWs to recognize early signs of burnout⁷, acknowledge they may have a problem, encourage them to give others permission to speak into their lives (Ephesians 4:25), and be willing to adjust their life schedule and ministry loads to maintain emotional, physical, and spiritual health.
- Maintain regular contact with IWs who have signs of fatigue and stress. Be an active listener and an avid encourager helping IWs confront any unhealthy addiction they may have. Visit them as often as possible.
- Provide opportunities for IWs to get away from their everyday living and ministry environments, to have a personal retreat (like Christ did) and/or spend time with their family and friends. Refer them to more experienced IWs or health professionals to receive essential care and support when necessary.

FINANCIAL SHORTAGE

The living standard in certain regions inside the 10/40 Window can be quite high. Urban areas are more expensive to live in compared to rural living. Vocational IWs from the A4 regions, in general, do not have strong financial support from their sending churches or mission agencies. Most IWs serving in the frontier environment are tentmakers. They must work very hard to earn their living and maintain their work visas. IW couples who have children face additional financial burdens. Both husband and wife may have to work full-time to provide adequate financial resources for their extended families and their children. Therefore, many tentmaking IWs face financial shortages if one or both breadwinners lose their jobs.

IWs serving in the 10/40 Window must raise adequate financial support through creative means. First and foremost, they are encouraged to depend on and

⁷ For a “burnout” self-test, see MindTools website: http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_08.htm

seek guidance from God when they face financial difficulties. Hudson Taylor encourages, “Depend on it. God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.”⁸ IWs should learn how to raise funds effectively, use their financial resources wisely, and live a simple lifestyle. Before going out to the field, vocational IWs should raise enough funds, usually at least eighty percent of the total yearly budget. Mission leaders should guide IWs on raising funds, advocating for them, and encouraging their sending churches to pray for and send financial resources to the field/mission agencies on a timely basis.

New IWs should actively connect with established churches/fellowships in the field, seek internship or partnership opportunities, and request financial support to supplement their ministry expenses. Encourage IWs to develop accountability in life, ministry, and finances with prayer partners and supporters. IWs should maintain a lifestyle of integrity and return all money they may have borrowed from other IWs during crisis situations. Finally, encourage tentmaking IWs and Business-As-Mission operators to partner with each other and provide employment advice and opportunities while sharing their experiences and resources.

LACK OF SUPPORT AND TRAINING

IWs from A4 regions serving in the 10/40 Window do not have the same training and/or on-field support as those of vocational IWs sent out by established Western mission agencies. While IWs expect their sending churches or mission agencies to pray and provide on-field support for them, emerging mission agencies from the A4 regions often lack experienced field staff to care for their workers as a result many IWs seek development and training opportunities to improve their biblical knowledge and ministry skills. Young IWs also desire to be mentored by spiritually mature IWs.

All IWs need to rely solely on God for the ultimate support, knowledge, and wisdom to address their challenges. As a practical approach, IWs should be encouraged to adopt a lifelong learning attitude and develop a Personal Development Plan (PDP). A PDP should include setting realistic goals and actionable items to improve their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being, as well as their knowledge of God and ministry competence. IWs should evaluate, review, and adjust the PDP at least once a year.

Team leaders should periodically visit their IWs to provide pastoral care and offer appropriate ministry training. International workers in the field should connect with leaders of mission agencies, regional networks, and local churches to develop a good relationship with them and receive support and training through them. Mature IWs should provide internship opportunities, on-the-job ministry training, and theological education to less mature IWs.

8. <https://gracequotes.org/quote/depend-on-it-gods-work-done-in-gods-way-will-never-lack-gods-supply/>

CHILDREN’S EDUCATION

Children are a heritage and a special reward from God (Psalm 127:3). They are natural bridge-builders, allowing families and neighbours to connect regardless of their social backgrounds or religious beliefs. They are valuable mission team members in God’s Kingdom and bring much joy to IW families. Nevertheless, IW couples and their children encounter additional hurdles, including financial burdens, parental issues, children’s education, undue expectations from grandparents, etc.

We recommend the following strategies to address the challenges relating to children’s education:

- Advise IW couples to keep their children in the field whenever possible so they will live, grow, and serve the Lord as a family unit.
- Encourage IWs to train up their children in three main areas: teaching and living out the Scripture at home, worshipping God and experiencing.

His love at church, and acquiring knowledge and social skills at school. In addition, IWs may help their children to learn their mother tongue and the culture of their home country.

- Mission leaders should help IWs to evaluate the pros and cons of different school options for their children, including financial and human costs. These options may include homeschool (least costly, but parents will be the headteachers), local school (children will be immersed in the host culture and local religions), Christian school (set up by Protestants or the Catholic church), English international school (more expensive and children are exposed to liberalism and materialism, including the prosperity gospel), or boarding school in their home countries or elsewhere, etc.
- Encourage churches or fellowships in the field to give financially to cover part of IWs’ children’s educational expenses.
- IWs are counselled to arrange the best educational option, being both affordable and appropriate for the developmental stage of their children. Some IWs may send their children to their home country to receive their high school and/or university education. Leaders should help IWs understand the characteristics of and unique challenges of raising TCKs. They should also pray and help IWs care for their children who are not living in the field.

ROLE CHANGES AND CALLING

The 10/40 Window is a spiritually dark and challenging place to serve. New IWs coming to the field will undergo considerable culture shock and significant role changes in a new living and ministry environment. Many may feel they are not up to fulfilling this calling on their lives and question if God really did call them to serve in hard places. IWs who had successful ministries in their home countries will have a more difficult transition period. They are

regarded as an unknown IW struggling to survive in an unfamiliar environment rather than a well-respected Christian worker in their home church network. Only those who have clear and strong calls from God can endure these difficult transitions. New IWs often go through momentous psychological changes and frank spiritual reflections as they discern their true identities in Christ and new ministry roles in the Kingdom of God.

One of the most important goals of field support is to walk alongside IWs and help them to affirm their divine calling to serve in the mission field, discern their precious identity in Christ, see God as their ultimate supporter, and confirm their unique role in the Kingdom of God. Mission leaders should assist IWs in seeking God’s guidance and explore the most strategic and suitable ministry God has prepared for them. Counsel IWs and their sending churches to partner with like-minded IWs and serve in strategic ministries for the long haul, so they will see the unreached peoples come to Christ. Help IWs to redefine success as Christ-likeness, faithfulness, and gratitude to God.

CONFLICT AND DISUNITY

Many IWs experience the pain of facing conflicts or disunity with their mission agencies or other IWs in the field. IWs often tend to have tough personalities and steel-like determination, which helps them survive in challenging environments. Therefore, new and immature IWs often experience challenges in building good interpersonal relationships with others and are more likely to cause disputes, mistrust, gossip, divisions, and cliques in the field. Conflict and disunity among IWs reflect negatively on the Gospel they preach and portray an awful testimony of the Lord they serve.

We recommend the following strategies to minimize potential conflicts and disunity in the field:

- Challenge IWs to live a Christ-centred life filled with His acceptance, forgiveness, grace, humility, and love. Encourage IWs to prioritize praying and playing with their team members and their families as the best preventative measure to avoid conflict and disunity in the mission team.
- Encourage IWs and their team members to develop a team covenant that will strengthen their commitments to love one another and spell out clearly how to handle future conflicts and disagreements in biblical ways.
- Help IWs to be careful with their tongues, especially when they are in conflict situations. The Scripture teaches, “By patience and a calm spirit a ruler may be persuaded, And a soft and gentle tongue breaks the bone [of resistance]” (Proverbs 25:15 AMP⁹). Encourage IWs to actively take “time outs” and seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit regarding how, what, and when they

should respond.

- Encourage IWs to resolve their personal conflicts and assist them to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and to serve as agents of transformation.

Help IWs to put on the whole armour of God to stand against the Enemy’s schemes and to know, “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Ephesians 6:11-13).

CLOSING REMARKS

This chapter presents ten common challenges international workers may face in the mission field. It also recommends caring strategies to overcome potential difficulties and to increase the IWs’ resiliency as they live out the missionary call. These proposed caring strategies are based on the Seven Guiding Principles shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
Seven Guiding Principles (Wan and Lau 2019)

Guiding Principles	Specific	Relational Elements	Dimension
Depending on the Triune God to fulfill the mission of God	The Trinity	Being	Vertical
Living a Christ-centered life for the Kingdom of God			
Seeking the Holy Spirit for transformation and guidance			
Affirming scriptural authority and continual learning	The Scripture	Knowing	
Modelling life and ministry	Personal (individual)	Doing	Vertical and Horizontal
Adopting a relational approach for field support ministries	Collective (institutional)		
Partnering with Kingdom communities for the glory of God			

O’Donnell rightly warns, “Without adequate member care strategies, there is little hope for the ongoing maintenance of the frontier missionary movement” (O’Donnell 1992). We believe the retention rate of IWs serving in the field can be significantly improved if they and their mission leaders follow the recommended caring strategies provided in this chapter.

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MY JOURNEY IN MEMBER CARE

Grace Margaret Alag

MISSIONARY MEMBER CARE

I had never heard of this term before, but there I was in my 2nd year of MA in Organizational Leadership (Azusa Pacific University), in the classroom of my professor, Dr. Lois Dodds and later Dr. Larry Dodds. And on a table, they had brochures of Heartstream Resources, their organization and programs (www.heartstreamresources.org). They gave me some to read and said I might be interested to come and join their programs. At that time, I was serving in a church denomination as a trainer and was on my final year of the ten years service. Towards the end of my service, I would also have had three major surgeries related to my reproductive system. The last was a total hysterectomy and the year after would make me experience bouts of grief and depression after realizing that I would never be able to have biological children. Sharing this with my professor, Dr. Lois invited me to come to their Intensive Care Retreat in HSR Hqs., Liverpool, Pennsylvania. For a lowly church worker that I was at that time, having no millions in the bank nor properties to show to the US embassy visa officers, I said, 'oh thank you, your invitation will need lots of prayers.

HEALING IN COMMUNITY

Long story short, in 1999, the Lord provided in unexpected ways and I was able to visit in time for their Intensive Care Program which was a wholistic retreat offered to missionaries and families. I was also invited to enroll in their Member Care Foundations and Implementing Member Care Programs and served as an intern during my stay. The Intensive Care Retreat afforded daily counseling which helped me process and gain understanding about my life situation. It also involved being with American missionaries who served in different countries and came for much needed rest and refreshing. We took all meals together, shared our life stories, one or two at a time every evening and spent mornings learning about. "*Coping with Stress and Understanding Burnout: Understanding ourselves and others, how people develop, how we are uniquely designed, Conflict styles and conflict management,*" among many other topics. Since I was a graduate of AB Psychology with training in clinical psychology, I felt very encouraged that here at last was an application of my academic preparation that would focus on ministry. I also came to realize that my "brownout" or almost burnout experience due to lack of self-care and a number of surgical procedures were my preparation and development of empathy as I later will meet several harvest workers who experienced similar challenges, applying 2 Corinthians 3: 1-5.

WHO CARES?

From 1990 to 1999, I was a church worker, not a missionary. The residential community experience in Heartstream Headquarters in Liverpool, Pennsylvania, was my first introduction to missionary life through the shared stories of the missionaries who participated in their Intensive care retreat. Thus, I was all ears and wide eyed with their shared stories. But at the end of all the programs, I asked myself, what do I do with all that I have learned? This was in 1999, and it so happened that I was to start on my Capstone to complete my MA in Azusa Pacific University, and this led to my decision to tackle the question: "A Look into the State of Missionary Care in the Philippines?", using the methodology of Appreciative Inquiry. During the crafting of my Capstone, the Lord would work in my heart and called me to the ministry of missionary member care, not just as a requirement for graduation but as a life vocation. The process of call was filled with divine interventions and supernatural experiences which can fill a book. My faith journey towards accepting the Lord's call upon my life, the second one, was greatly facilitated by what I call my "constellation of mentors", and not all were older than I was but were definitely highly attuned to the Lord, very discerning and not afraid to confront me with the truth. They helped me process this re-direction and I am so thankful to the Lord, that up to now we share this exciting journey of missionary member care.

The Intensive Care Retreat afforded daily counseling which helped me process and gain understanding about my life situation. It also involved being with American missionaries who served in different countries and came for much needed rest and refreshing.

When I finished my capstone proposal in 1999, I sought the blessing of the Philippine Missions Association (PMA), which at that time was under the leadership of its Director, Rev. Rey Corpuz. He encouraged me to pursue my interviews with mission leaders and if I had the burden to "run with it". I eventually got to have meaningful conversations with Rev. Dr. Jorge De Ramos, CBAP, Dr. Jojo Manzano, then with ATS and OMF, Dr. David Lim (ASDECS). I remember their common statements, that they had

multiple tasks of leading their mission organizations, human resources, member care but no one focused on member care alone. They encouraged me to pursue this focus if the Lord was calling me to do so. Later, as I would pursue the ministry, they were the major encouragers and “think tank” of how the MCare movement would proceed, starting with several consultations and conferences to “put our ears to the ground”. Later, Ptr. Bob Lopez would be leading the PMA. In 2005, the mission leaders and PMA, ACM and my MCare partners and supporters organized the Philippine Member Care Conference in 2005. The mission leaders crafted the Member Care Declaration of the Philippines which articulated their commitment to Missionary Member Care in the Philippines. We were blessed to have MCare pioneers and authors, Dr. Kelly O'Donnell (WEA Member Care) and Dr. Laura Mae Gardner (Wycliffe International) as our main plenary speakers.

LISTENING TOURS

Stepping back to 2000 to 2001, my classmate in Azusa Pacific and dear missionary friend Karen Lynip, knew of my journey and heard of my interest in missionary care and the Capstone project. As a consultant of Translators Association of the Phils.(TAP), she introduced me to its Executive Director and his wife, bro Tony and sister Ate Amie Dasalla (+). I shared my Capstone project with them and they also shared their concern for extending member care to their membership. Thankfully, after several consultations, Amie and I would become partners in visiting their Bible translators from the north to the south of the Philippines. In doing these tours, I was guided with my capstone's purpose, “to discover if member care is an organizational ethos, value or culture in selected missions organizations in the Philippines (sending churches or mission agencies). And the following questions were little by little answered: If these missions organizations have MCare, how do they define it? What are their practices and experiences in member care and What are their dreams and visions for member care? And what are the needs to implement member care?

In studying the practices of Member Care of the missions organizations, here were my goals:

1. Open up a cooperative dialogue about member care.
2. Learn from each other about member care and visualize what is MCare.
3. Agree together in identifying member care indicators and practices
4. Seek consensus about how to innovate specific models in developing member care. (taken from Meg Aleg's “A Look Into Member Care Practices in Philippine Mission Organizations”, Research Proposal)

I committed to preparing a member care program for their organization which they would later present to their membership for approval in their

annual conference. Our visits to some 30 full time missionaries entailed traveling by land, by air, once by small plane, hiking mountains and stay with the families. Sister Amie and I listened to their stories or did informal debriefing and got to know their concerns as parents and as couples. There were also a number of single missionaries. They opened their homes and opened their hearts to us, as we cooked together, shared meals and stories till the depth of night. I also had the privilege of spending precious hours listening to sister Amie's personal testimony of her and her husband's missionary journey. This became my actual immersion in the lives of Filipino missionaries, my “exposure trip”, with the special focus on the lives of the frontliners.

**I remember their common statements,
that they had multiple tasks of leading
their mission organizations, human
resources, member care but no one
focused on member care alone.**

My original plan was to conduct the Appreciative Inquiry with several organizations, but TAP alone already had some 30 missionaries, so I decided to focus on this organization mainly. Sis. Amie would take me under her wings to meet other MCare practitioners and trainers like Brenda Bosch and Selma Guanzon of YWAM who were in deep involvement in missionary care already at that time. Amie and I were then invited to attend the Asian Missions Congress in 2001 in Pattaya, Thailand. The first Asian Member Care Consultation organized by Dr. Kelly O'Donnell was held back-to- back with this Congress. This was attended by other member care practitioners and leaders from Asia, such as Pramila Rajendran of India, Harry Hoffmann, from Thailand, among others. The meeting birthed an informal agreement to promote “purposeful affiliation” (Dr. Kelly) and networking among member care practitioners in Asia.

By 2002, I was invited to join Asian Center for Missions (ACM) as its Deployment and MCare Director and Deputy Director under now Dr. Elsie Reyes-Cook. This will be the start of my organizational service for the next 12 years. My service with ACM afforded me the opportunity to visit frontliners in Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos, China and Indonesia as well as be involved in preparing the ‘goers’ and their senders. Through ACM, we were able to equip the sending churches and organizations through “Sending with Care Seminars” from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao. The module of Missionary Care was also included in the curriculum of the Missionary Training Program, with the objective of equipping each missionary trainee a thorough understanding of the Phases of Missionary Life and understanding what happens in their whole being as

they navigate the various stages of mission life, from Recruitment to Retirement.

PURPOSEFUL AFFILIATION

A major strategic approach that I had taken was to encourage networks of care and equip sending churches and mission organizations in the ministry of member care from recruitment to retirement. I recognized early that no one agency can be responsible for caring for all Filipino missionaries. I deeply believed in the Acts 13 model of sending and for churches to be in partnership with other organizations or individuals in the care of the frontliners and their families. I also sought partners who could join me in the MCare travels to visit the frontliners. Since our organization cannot sponsor their travel expenses, they needed to raise personal support and this would give birth later on to a network of MCare practitioners who joined our annual trips. As I transitioned to moving to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to join my engineer husband in 2013, my partners and I decided to formalize our group to form Heartstream Resources Philippines. The name is similar to the organization where I trained, having obtained their permission to do so as an active member of the Heartstream International Partners Network. It took several years to obtain the SEC registration but the ministry never abated. Now we are a registered non-stock, non-profit organization. Unlike Heartstream USA which has its beautiful member care facilities, Heartstream Resources Philippines focuses on offering equipping programs for member care for sending entities, churches and mission organizations as well as programs for the well being of missionaries and ministry workers. From the UAE, I joined my husband in Kuwait since July 2018. And from here I continue to be the Director of Heartstream Philippines, reporting to a Board of Trustees and working with a team of gifted volunteers who are based in Manila.

I recognized early that no agency alone can be responsible for caring for all Filipino missionaries. I deeply believed in the Acts 13 model of sending agencies and for churches to be in partnership with other organizations or individuals in the care of the frontliners and their families.

“You are not a missionary, how can you care for missionaries?” was an accusation I encountered from the start of my journey and at different times in my service. Reflecting on my life, I believe that my calling and vocation was birthed by God in my life even before I was born. I looked back at my grandparents

who were pioneers of the Christian faith in Mindanao. My grandmother had a passion for helping struggling pastors and set up a scholarship fund for them to be able to go through Bible school.

“You are not a missionary, how can you care for missionaries?” was an accusation I encountered from the start of my journey and at different times in my service. Reflecting on my life, I believe that my calling and vocation was birthed by God in my life even before I was born.

My parents, particularly my mother loved to care for American missionaries through her delicious cooking and baking. She also had a passion to care for widows and orphans. Her favorite verse which I will always remember was Psalm 37:25. “I have been young, and now am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread.” Both my parents were open handed in their generosity and modeled Ecclesiastes 11:1 and 2. Missionary member care I learned is not a job, nor a title, it is a lifestyle. Despite an affliction (Rheumatoid Arthritis) that I got in 2005, which affects my mobility now, I continued in the ministry, visiting frontliners every year with my volunteer partners in the MCare. My husband and I share the dream of having a missionary care home or facility with a farm towards our retirement years in Iloilo. I received this vision in 2000 and though it has yet to be fulfilled I firmly believe that the Lord who called us is faithful and He will complete what He started in our lives. To him belong all the glory, honor and praise!

“...there are practical, relational, subjective experiences that move us toward ministry. But in the end, it is the hidden hand of God's gracious providence that puts us, throws us, where he wants us to be.” -John Piper



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THE POWER OF PRAYER IN MISSIONARY CARE

Suraja Raman

Why discuss on a subject pertaining to missionary care? Because we are living in challenging times! Missionaries are facing tough times on a daily basis, and that risks are too much to bear sometimes.

The world is suffering from the pandemic, COV 19, Delta variant, and now, Omicron. These are viruses that had spread to nations, affecting people from the youngest to the oldest.

Then we hear of the invasion of the country of Ukraine by a powerful nation, Russia! Is it possible that there could be a war in this 21st century? The world leaders are appealing for peace! But the President of Russia continues to send the military, and targets the civilians in Ukraine. The people of Ukraine are fleeing to safety to other countries.

How can we participate as intercessors to the larger community in missionary care?

INTRODUCTION

A missionary working overseas need our fervent prayer and care. Upon reflecting on their lives, we learned that the intercession and correspondence from the members of the home church attributed to their holistic formation.

We read that,

- *Intercession is a way of loving others* (R. Foster: Prayer).
- *Intercession is coming to God on behalf of another* (Tan SY: Disciplines).
- *Let's rejoice that, All Christians are given the role of intercession* (A. Smith: Veil).

A. Scripture Text: Acts 12:5-17; Mt 18:19-20

The following are some suggestions for God's people to participate in Missionary care through the Ministry of Intercession:

1. A Listening heart: The emotions are affected.
Acts 12: 5...The church interceded for the imprisoned Peter. Our hearts need to be filled with God's love for those in need of prayer.
2. A Listening mind: The mental area is affected.
Acts 12: 6-11 God heard the prayers of the believers and intervened on the night before the trial.
Prayer for Peter in prison took place in the believer's home. Our minds need to be alert for the many urgent concerns for intercession, that the enemy will be defeated.
3. A Listening will: The response through actions is affected.
In Acts 12: 12-17, we read that Peter went to the House of Prayer. The prayers of the Christian community had been answered. God has done an

extraordinary thing, through the intercession of the people.

The ministry of intercession is a powerful way to manifest missionary care.

In another Scriptural text, we are inspired to explore on the ministry of missionary care.

Where are the areas in the world in need of the Gospel?

During the Lausanne Congress in 2010, two countries were identified as in need of the gospel and missionaries. They are China & Africa. Missionaries and volunteers are encouraged to take up the challenge to serve in these countries. The task of missionary care becomes a greater responsibility to the church, and to the mission care givers.

B. Scripture text: 3 John v 3-8.

Faithfulness to the truth (verses 3-4)

- a. MISSIONS: COMMITMENT TO THE TRUTH.
 - b. Are we a Missional church? Test: Faithfulness to the Truth?
1. Faithfulness to the Missionaries (verses 5-8)
 - a. Examples of such missionaries during Paul's time were Priscilla & Aquila, Apollos, Phoebe, Timothy & Titus.
 - b. The ministries are pertaining to evangelism, church planting, teaching, nurturing, and leadership.
 2. The relationship between a church and the missionaries was one of love that took place in 3 ways:
 - a. Sending (v. 6)...*You will do well to send them on their way in a manner worthy of God.*
 - b. Going (v.7)... Those who go are going out as an act of faith in God's people and loyal to God's Name. *They go out for the sake of the Name of Jesus Christ.*
 - c. Supporting (v.8)... There is an obligation to show hospitality, *so that we work together for the Truth.* What is our main goal: *we will work together for the truth.*

REFLECTIONS ON MISSIONARY CARE:

What are some reflections as we journey with the missionary, who is our friend and co-worker in Christ:



The picture of the 'Hand' model introduced by my professor, Ted Ward, is illustrated on the previous page. The Hand represents us, that each one of God's created being is important in the Kingdom of God.

In missionary care, we need to know the missionary holistically. Each missionary comes with diverse needs. We need to take time in our communication and ministry to the missionary. We need to keep the communication process a meaningful one, through a sincere relationship with the missionary.

Let us consider five themes from the Scripture by linking them to the five fingers, in the Hand Model. The Hand is represented in the realms of physical, mental, emotional, social, moral, and in the center is the spiritual core:

From the Scriptures we read of characters that fit into this Hand Model. For example, the Samaritan woman in John's Gospel, chapter 4:1-40. Christ, the Messiah ministered to the Samaritan in all the realms.

Another example is that of Onesimus in the book of Philemon. Paul, the apostle, and a missionary, reached out to Onesimus. This was a holistic approach, showing care and concern.

In missionary care, we need to know the missionary holistically. Each missionary comes with diverse needs. We need to take time in our communication and ministry to the missionary. We need to keep the communication process a meaningful one through a sincere relationship with the missionary.

The following are further reflections and recommendations in the ongoing ministry of Missionary Care:

1. As a church let's continue to...
 - Send out missionaries and by interceding for a particular missionary, and the people of his mission field. Receive information on the work and of the ministries of that missionary.
2. As cell members of a local church, let's continue to...
 - Pray & be on the mailing list to receive regular prayer updates of the missionaries. Utilize time during cell meetings to pray for missionaries and also for the work of missions around the world. Plan to visit the missionary on the mission field or when they are home in their respective countries.
3. As members of the church let's continue to...
 - Participate in the weekly prayer meeting of the church. The prayer meeting is a power house to intercede with other members of the church. God works powerfully through intercessors and the

results are encouraging.

- As friends of the church let's continue to-
- Worship in the Sunday services for the ongoing missions of the church. Our presence in the prayer ministry on Sunday is a meaningful time to meet the Lord and intercede for God to work in the life of a missionary.

CONCLUSION

The church members and the community will be enriched & empowered in the ministry of missionary care.

The results of missionary care is an encouragement to the urgent work of current and potential missionaries, and this is because of God's intercessors.

Prayer of Dedication:

Dear loving God & Father, Today, we want to pledge and dedicate ourselves to the ministry of missionary care through the privilege and joy of intercession, together with others in this congregation. Please help us to pray regularly for our missionaries, the countries, and all who serve you here in our county, and around the world, to the end, that your Name will be glorified. In the powerful Name of our Risen Christ, Amen.

Questions for Discussion/Reflection

1. List some ways whereby we can participate in the missionary care of the church.
2. In my desire for God, what are some insights for a creative and meaningful missionary care through the ministry of intercession?

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IS INCLUSIVISM BIBLICAL?

Takaaki Hara

What is the eternal fate of those who have not responded to the gospel? Are they destined for hell as orthodox Christianity has traditionally held? This is not only a theological question but also a deeply personal issue as none of my family members in Japan, including my late father, is a Christian. In this article we will investigate whether inclusivism can offer comfort and hope regarding the fate of those who have not responded to the gospel. As Nash notes, “if inclusivism is true, it eliminates a problem that troubles many Christians. What about those people who die without ever hearing the gospel? Think how many cares the adoption of inclusivism might eliminate from our lives. Think how many burdens about possibly unsaved loved ones we would be delivered from – how much easier we might sleep at night.”¹ We will see, however, that despite its obvious appeal, inclusivism is not a tenable option from a biblical perspective. In what follows, we will briefly survey the tenet of inclusivism. This is followed by its critique from a biblical standpoint. Finally, we will conclude this paper with an alternative hope we may have as biblical Christians.

INCLUSIVISM

Inclusivism is a soteriological position that states that “Christ is *ontologically* necessary for salvation but not *epistemologically* necessary.”² In other words, those who have not responded to Christ can be saved by him without knowing about him. This is in contrast to exclusivism, which argues that Christ is not only ontologically but also epistemologically necessary in order for us to receive salvation. According to Pinnock, the centerpiece of inclusivism is pneumatological in that “in the economy of God, the Spirit is under nobody’s control but free to grace any person or any sphere, however remote from the church’s present boundaries. The Spirit embodies the prevenient grace of God and puts into effect that universal drawing action of Jesus Christ. . . . The Spirit is ever working to realize the saving thrust of God’s promise for the world.”³ The Spirit may use religion to draw people to God when it is appropriate, for “positive values of non-Christian religions prepare

for and are perfected by the light and power of God’s revelation in Jesus Christ.”⁴ Note, however, that religions themselves are not salvific; rather, it is faith that is significant:

If a non-Christian believes (as in Heb.11), it is faith and not membership (or non-membership) in a religious community that counts. By faith, one receives the prevenient grace of God on the basis of an honest search for God and obedience to God’s word as heard in the heart and conscience. A pre-messianic believer is, one might say, latently a member of Christ’s body and destined to receive the grace of conversion and explicit knowledge of Jesus Christ at a later date, whether in this life or after death.⁵

Melchizedek and Cornelius are representatives of pagan saints in the Bible among whom God worked.⁶ Inclusivists thus contend that “there is a chance for the non-Christian world to enjoy God’s blessings and God’s Being by coming into relation with God through the person of the universal Spirit. The Spirit profoundly extends the limits of the historically bounded salvation of the Son taking it beyond the multi-faceted human borders and making God’s presence actual in the whole world.”⁷

If the unevangelized can be saved by faith, does it affect the motivation for world mission? According to Pinnock, inclusivism can actually improve our motivation, for it is not driven by the feeling of panic. We can still call pre-messianic believers to “come higher up and deeper in, to know God better and love God more.”⁸ Note also that from the perspective of Christianity worldwide, inclusivism is a predominant view, for it has been the official position of the Roman Catholic Church since Vatican Council II in the 1960s.⁹

BIBLICAL STANDPOINT

Does the Scripture affirm the inclusivists’ stance that one can be saved by Christ without knowing about him as long as s/he has generic faith? Although it is an appealing position, upon close scrutiny we must say that inclusivism is not in line with what the Scripture

4. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” 115.

5. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” 117.

6. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” 109.

7. Najeab George Awad, “Theology of Religions, Universal Salvation, and the Holy Spirit,” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 20 (2011): 270.

8. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” 120.

9. Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen, “Theologies of Religions,” in *Witnessing to Christ in a Pluralistic World: Christian Mission among Other Faiths*, eds. Lalsangkima Pachuau and Knud Jørgensen (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2011), 112, accessed October 19, 2021, <https://scholar.csl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1024&context=edinburghcentenary>.

1. Ronald H. Nash, “Is Belief in Jesus Necessary? The Answer to Religious Inclusivism,” *Christian Research Journal* 27, no. 3 (2004): 2, accessed October 19, 2021, <https://thinkingmatters.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Is-Belief-in-Jesus-Necessary.pdf>.

2. Daniel Strange, “Exceptions to the Rule? The Salvation of Old Testament Believers and the Unevangelized,” *Ethics in Conversation* 5, no. 4 (July 2000): 1, accessed October 19, 2021, <https://kirbylaingcentre.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/5.4WBStrange.pdf>.

3. Clark H. Pinnock, “An Inclusivist View,” in *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, eds. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 104.

reveals. We will discuss four pieces of scriptural evidence against inclusivism. First, it is indisputable that the apostle Paul did not espouse inclusivism. Had he believed that one could be saved by generic faith alone, would he have risked his life to preach the gospel? Paul's life was replete with troubles precisely because he was driven to proclaim the gospel in diverse places (2 Cor. 1:8-9; 11:23-27; 2 Tim. 3:11). For the sake of the gospel Paul did everything he could in order to save some (1 Cor. 9:19-23). This is clearly distinct from the mindset of an inclusivist, who merely exhorts others to "come higher up and deeper in, to know God better and love God more." We thus concur with Nash, who states that "if inclusivism is true, then Saul the Pharisee was saved before he met Jesus. Paul the apostle, however, wrote that before his conversion, he had only a purely human righteousness that comes from the law (Phil. 3:9) — a false righteousness that does not save — instead of the true righteousness that comes from God through saving faith in Christ. Saul satisfied the inclusivist tests of salvation, but he was still a lost sinner (1 Tim. 1:15)."¹⁰

Second, recall that Pinnock contends that "the issue for God is not the content of theology but the reality of faith."¹¹ However, the Bible plainly teaches that the content of faith is utterly crucial for our salvation even though saving faith surpasses merely intellectual assent to some biblical knowledge. Thus, Paul declares that faith comes from hearing the message about Christ (Rom. 10:17). He also reminds believers in Corinth that "by this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the Word I preached to you" (1 Cor. 15:2) and expounds that the gospel he preached comprises Christ's death and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:3-4). Furthermore, with respect to the Jewish people Paul states that "they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge" (Rom. 10:2). As Phillips and Geivett observe, "if the devotees of Judaism—arguably the most exemplary of non-Christian faiths—are consigned to darkness and are under the dominion of Satan, there is little chance that those of other faiths will fare much better apart from faith in Jesus Christ."¹²

Third, let us take a look at pagan saints such as Melchizedek and Cornelius. As for the former, Nash reminds us that "Melchizedek is identified as a priest of the Most High God, but nowhere does the text indicate that he was a *pagan*. Melchizedek worshiped and served Yahweh as certainly as Abram did. Melchizedek, therefore, fails as an example of genuine piety among pagans; indeed, the New Testament treats him as a symbol of Christ's high priestly work (Heb. 7)."¹³ What about Cornelius, whom

Pinnock regards as a "key symbol"?¹⁴ Interestingly, even though Cornelius was devout and God-fearing and his prayers had "come up as a memorial offering before God" (Acts 10:4), that was not enough. When an angel asked Cornelius to send men to fetch Peter, he told the reason in these terms: "He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved" (Acts 11:14). Cornelius is indeed a key symbol but not because of what inclusivists consider him to be. His life illustrates that even a devout, God-fearing person needs to hear the gospel in order to be saved.

Finally, let us consider pneumatological inclusivism from a biblical perspective. According to Awad, "the Spirit has a particular mission that is distinct from the one of the Son and not limited to it as if a copy or an automatic representation of what has been already done."¹⁵ Jesus, however, says with respect to the Spirit, "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me" (John 15:26). Furthermore, Jesus declares, "He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you" (John 16:14). It seems evident from these words of Jesus that the Spirit does not have a particular mission apart from that of the Son. Miles concurs with us and states that "the Holy Spirit always seeks to glorify the Son. In denying this, pneumatological inclusivism and pluralism fails on Christological grounds and ultimately, ironically, distorts pneumatology."¹⁶

CONCLUSION

We have argued that pneumatological inclusivism – the claim that as the Spirit is omnipresent and at work among those who do not know about Christ, one can be saved as long as s/he has generic faith – is not tenable for the following four reasons: (1) the apostle Paul did not espouse inclusivism, (2) saving faith encompasses content, (3) devout, God-fearing people like Cornelius still need to hear the gospel to be saved, and (4) the Spirit does not have a particular mission apart from that of the Son. If inclusivism is not a viable option for biblical Christians, is there any hope for those who have not responded to the gospel in this life? Stott refuses to speculate on the eternal fate of such people because "God . . . has not revealed how he will deal with those who have never heard it. We have to leave them in the hands of the God of infinite mercy and justice, who manifested these qualities most fully in the cross."¹⁷ However, while wrestling with the loss of my father, I came to the following tentative

10. Nash, "Is Belief in Jesus Necessary?" 5.

11. Clark H. Pinnock, *A Wideness in God's Mercy: The Finality of Jesus Christ in a World of Religions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 105.

12. W. Gary Phillips and R. Douglas Geivett, "Response to Clark H. Pinnock," in *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*, eds. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 135.

13. Nash, "Is Belief in Jesus Necessary?" 6.

14. Pinnock, "An Inclusivist View," 109.

15. Awad, "Theology of Religions," 263.

16. Todd L. Miles, "He Will Glorify Me: Evaluating the Pneumatology of Inclusivists and Pluralists," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 16, no. 4 (2012): 90-91, accessed October 19, 2021, <https://sbts-wordpress-uploads.s3.amazonaws.com/equip/uploads/2014/02/SBJT-16.4-Miles-p-74-95.pdf>.

17. David L. Edwards and John Stott, *Evangelical Essentials: A Liberal-Evangelical Dialogue* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 327.

conclusion. When my late father was dying, a number of people were praying for him. I also prayed that the Lord would somehow reveal Himself to my father – even in a dream just like the oft heard anecdote that Muslims have dreams of Jesus Christ.¹⁸ In this respect I concur with McGrath, who claims that “God’s saving work must never be exclusively restricted to human preaching, as if the Holy Spirit was silent or inactive in God’s world, or as if the actualization of God’s saving purposes depended totally on human agencies.”¹⁹ I hold on to this hope, for the Scripture says that “the righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them” (Ps. 34:17) and “the prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (James 5:16). When we get to the new heaven and the new earth, there will be no more mourning or crying or pain (Rev. 21:4). Thus, whatever happens to our loved ones, our biblical hope is that we won’t mourn or cry over them when we get to the new heaven and the new earth. At any rate, it is well to remember that “when speculating in areas where the Bible is not clear (i.e., the fate of the unevangelized), we ought not to allow our speculations to undermine where the Bible is clear (i.e., on the necessity of explicit faith in Christ).”²⁰

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MIGRATION, DIASPORA AND ICs

T. V. Thomas

INTRODUCTION

It seems that the whole world's population is on the move! Since the dawn of the 21st Century we have witnessed an unprecedented surge in migration worldwide. We have witnessed worldwide population shifts on a mega scale. People are crossing national borders for many reasons i.e. transnational migration is now a reality.

I am going to share with you three important dimensions about transnational migration.

1. Transnational migration is truly a global phenomenon

No one can deny the reality nor can everyone escape the reality that transnational migration is occurring at an accelerated pace. And it is occurring on an unprecedented scale. Therefore, transnational migration is a demographic reality that no one can ignore, because it is now a global reality. The truth is that no community can avoid and no country can be immune to it.

2. Transnational migration is multidirectional

For a long time, the migration of people was from people from the South and East moving to the North and West. But in the last 30 years transnational migration is occurring at unpredictable speed and in all directions. We are witnessing massive polycentric migration. Now people are moving from everywhere to everywhere. And people are moving in all directions.

- Example 1: For Koreans, the United States was the country of choice in the post-Second War decades. Now Koreans go all over the globe – Europe, the Philippines, Australia, South Africa.
- Example 2: Nepalis/Bangladeshis move to India, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Indonesia. Transnational migration is truly multidirectional. Nowhere is it more evident than at international airports. You have seen it yourself. Almost every single day, international airports are showcases of transnational migration.

3. Transnational migration is transformational

This great flow of people around the world is drastically changing many important aspects of societies.

- Transnational migration has never been as pervasive as it is now. It is seen as an uncontrollable change agent of society. It is changing the social, cultural, religious and even political landscapes of cities, communities, countries and continents.

- Transnational migration helps in releasing creative energies and adaptations, creating new realities and it causes people to intermingle with other people.
- Transnational migration is causing the development of a diasporic consciousness which produces confusion, pain, conflicts and even serial migration.

WHAT ARE THE REASONS FOR THIS PHENOMENON OF TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION?

The motivations to move and the factors causing displacement of people fluctuates considerably. These depend upon the people group, the time of migration, the socio-economic conditions in both countries, arranged marriage alliances or because of family sponsorships.

Some move for SAD reasons, because of man-made disasters. Sad reasons include:

1. Sustained civil war (Eg. 5.6 million Syrians are registered refugees).
2. Economic collapse (Eg. Four million Venezuelans left their native land).
3. Ethnic cleansing (Eg. Rohingya refugees – one million stranded in Bangladesh).
4. Political oppression (Eg. Five million Afghans are expected to leave Afghanistan in the next two years).
5. Religious persecution (Eg. Tibetans moved to India with their Dalai Lama now headquartered there).
6. Natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanic explosions and climate change (Eg. 200 million to be displaced by 2030).

All these natural disasters have caused many to flee out of sheer necessity. All of these affected people are trying to survive somehow in their new environments. Many, many people are also moving for good reasons. Thousands around the world plan in advance to move to greener pastures to pursue improving their academic credentials and subsequently to ensure economic advancement. These people are attracted by the possibilities of greater freedom and better living conditions.

Three Major Consequences of Migration:

Consequence #1 – Almost ALL countries are impacted by migration.

Some countries are impacted more than others. However, there is no shoreline that remains unaffected by migration. There are two categories of countries

that relate to migration.

1. Some massive Diaspora exporting countries include China, Philippines, India, Bangladesh, Palestine, Mexico, Nepal, Ghana and the South Pacific Islands.
2. Some are Diaspora importing countries. These importing countries like US, Canada, Germany, Australia, UK receive more immigrants than other countries. These Western countries need to boost their economies and so they encourage immigration. Other countries like Singapore, South Korea and in the Gulf region offer low-skilled and low wage jobs.

Consequence #2 – Almost all countries are taking in more diaspora people than most of their citizens realize.

Example 1. Syrian refugees that penetrated Europe (1.3 million just in 2015)

Example 2. Philippines – more international university students in Davao City in Mindanao than more Filipinos know about. More than 5000 Indian students are studying medicine in the City of Angeles in Central Luzon, Philippines.

Consequence #3 – The volume of recorded remittances by Diaspora people to developing countries has soared over the last three decades.

The term “remittance” refers primarily to the money migrants send back to their family in the country of origin. These remittances enable migrant families to achieve a higher standard of living.

Global remittances have continued to increase. In the early 1990’s remittances totalled less than \$50 billion annually. According to the World Bank in 2016 it became \$US 442 billion went to developing countries. In 2019 it was \$US 528 billion that went to developing nations, which is an \$US 86 billion increase in three years. And in 2020, it was \$US 540 billion – a drop of only 1.6 percent from 2019 despite the COVID pandemic conditions.

THREE EMERGING REALITIES OF MIGRATION

Reality #1 – Gains in Hyper Mobility

Just think about it! In less than 100 years we have witnessed massive changes in mobility. We have gone from horse – drawn carriages, to automobiles, to planes. Multi-billion dollars are being invested in emerging trends of technologies, industries and markets to increase mobility. What is the impact of all this investment? This is giving rise to new products and services that will sharply reduce the cost of moving people, goods and information. We are already moving faster than ever before. But we are soon going to move much, much faster.

Two examples that are going to increase mobility and thereby speed up transnational migration.

Example 1. Soon we will have Hyperloop Trains. These are trains that travel in vacuum tubes travelling

at supersonic speeds. These Hyperloop Trains will enable us to travel at 800 miles per hour. What will that do? For example, the travel time from New York City to Washington DC will be reduced to just 27 minutes and you will not have to fight traffic. Just imagine this? The travel time from Shanghai to Hong Kong will only be 1 hour 27 minutes. All of this means that over the next 20 years, the cost of distance will decline sharply. This will alter the way we live. However, this will also speed up migration.

Example 2. The introduction of High-Speed Rail. The largest infrastructure project on planet Earth is the construction of the NEW SILK ROAD. This is the ONE ROAD – ONE BELT INITIATIVE of China to connect Eastern China to Western Europe with high-speed rail. Trillions of dollars are being invested in infrastructure for this. This will save several days in transporting goods from Chinese factories to showrooms in Europe. And this will obviously generate billions of dollars in revenue for China. But the greatest impact of these high-speed trains will be the migration of people. It is projected that by 2050 about 100 million Chinese will migrate to Central Asia, Middle East and Europe. It is possible to have a high percentage among the Chinese migrants being Christians.

Reality #2 – Gains in Hyper Connectivity

It is a fact that more and more satellites are being launched into outer space. Why? In order to help us to communicate and network with each other better. With this communication we will be greatly accelerated. This means transnational communication will be easier and faster. We will be connected more and more with each other. E.g. We are now able to send money through mobile devices. I am convinced that we will be able to talk absolutely FREE to anyone anytime. The more we are connected, the more the desire to move and meet each other. This also means there will be greater desire to migrate.

Reality #3 – Gains in Language Translation

Soon we will have smartphone-based translation apps that will provide LIVE TRANSLATION across some 100 languages. This will enable the languages and culture barriers to come down quickly. Therefore, there will be greater and greater interaction between people across the streets and around the world.

TRANSNATIONAL MIGRATION CREATES DIASPORA PEOPLES

One of the inevitable consequences of transnational migration is the creation of DIASPORAS or DIASPORA PEOPLES. DIASPORA refers to any community whose members settle outside their native land and maintain some connection with the “old country”. The term DIASPORA also applies to groups whose members are widely scattered around the world and share common values. They often face

some special barriers for integration into their host nations.

Diaspora is a historic phenomenon. People have moved from the beginning of time. However, in the last 300 years we have seen some massive migrations.

Example 1. Because of Ireland's great famine of the 1840's it created the *Irish Diaspora*.

Example 2. The slave trade of the European colonists created the *African Diaspora*.

Example 3. The *Indian Diaspora* began in the late nineteenth century with indentured laborers recruited for the colonial plantations in Fiji, South Africa, Malaya and the Caribbean Islands. There are 35 million Indians in Diaspora.

Example 4. The *Armenian Diaspora* was the result of the slaughter of an estimated 1 million people in 1915

Example 5. Today, there are approximately 50 million *Chinese in Diaspora*

- Thailand - 9.3 million
- Indonesia - 7.0 million
- Australia - 1.2 million
- S. Korea - 1 million
- France - 600,000
- UK - 400,000
- South Africa - 300,000
- Germany - 136,000

Example 6. There are 13 million *Filipinos in Diaspora*

- USA - 3.4 million
- Saudi Arabia - 950,000
- Canada - 900,000
- Japan - 325,000
- Qatar - 250,000
- Italy and Singapore each have 175,000
- Norway - 18,000

Example 7. About 35 million *Indians are in Diaspora*

- USA - 3.5 million
- Malaysia - 2.9 million
- Canada 1.6 million
- Singapore - 800,000
- Australia 700,000

Ten percent of the overall population of Saudi Arabia are Indians and 3.5 million Indians are in the UAE.

The United Nations reports that there are 281 million diaspora people today; i.e. three percent of the world's population. This number is projected to reach 350 million by 2030.

FOUR OBSERVATIONS OF DIASPORA PEOPLES

1. Diaspora peoples exhibit a heightened religious consciousness during their migration and in their new diasporic settings.

Sufficient research is available to show that migrants cherish their religious connections and experiences in times of transition. Religion forms a powerful anchor for them in the midst of massive changes of their new environment - weather, culture, isolation from family, etc.

2. Diaspora people are more receptive to Christianity in their host countries

Q: Why does this happen?

New environments make people curious.

Opens their minds, makes them question their assumptions, they begin to compare their values with the values of others.

New environments give a new freedom.

Freedom from family structures, from community, from traditions and rituals.

New environments make them open to new ideas.

Eg. Book of ACTS - Most who came to Christ lived far away from home.

3. A large percentage of the global migrant populations are Christian in their background.

Nearly 50 percent have a Christian heritage. Some of the migrants are nominal Christians and they need to receive JESUS as Lord and Savior. Some are Roman Catholic or Orthodox and they need to be presented with the adventure of being a true disciple of Jesus. Many are believers in Christ and we need to receive them as fellow members of the family of God and help them walk their journey of faith as fellow disciples of Jesus in the host nations.

4. Diaspora Churches (Immigrant/Migrant) are being planted in diasporic settings.

By Diaspora Churches/Immigrant churches/Migrant churches, I mean they are ethnic specific, language specific...or culture specific... or a combination of them in the congregation. The First Generation needs Diaspora churches for socialization, enjoy speaking their language freely, enjoy their jokes or exchange political news from back home. Diaspora churches also allow the migrants to worship God in their own heart languages. I am sure you would agree that it is more meaningful for any one of us to worship in our own heart language.

HOW CAN ICs RELATE MISSIONALLY TO MIGRATION AND DIASPORA PEOPLES

Broadly speaking, the International Church is a "Diaspora Church." The International Church is especially unique "Diaspora Church" in several ways:

1. Most of the attenders of International Churches are expats who are foreign passport holders and are often have all or portion of their salary paid from abroad.
2. Most of the attenders of International Churches have different nationalities, different ethnicities and different denominations.
3. Most International Churches have a great turnover in membership and lay leadership. I like what one veteran International Church pastor so aptly said: "It is like pastoring a parade."
4. Most International Churches have conducive

public worship sites to gather for worship and other ministries.

5. Most International Churches use one language for worship services, e.g., English or French.
6. Most International Churches are established in major cities of the world.

In my travels around the world, I have observed there are often more than one diaspora people group where International Churches are located. I believe that the International Church is strategically positioned to relate missionally with Diaspora Peoples.

Let me suggest FOUR WAYS TO ENGAGE:

First Way – Cultivate a Kingdom perspective of ministry.

We all need to constantly remind ourselves that we belong to ONE Kingdom and there is only ONE King – King JESUS. Recognize that International Churches are just one expression of the Body of Christ. Recognize the ministry of Diaspora Churches are equally valid expressions of the Body of Christ. To cast vision, communicate frequently from your pulpit that there are multiple ethnicities worshipping the same living God in many languages in your city or country.

Second Way – Enlist commitment from your church leaders to partner and collaborate with Diaspora Churches and Diaspora leaders.

As an International Church pastor, you need to identify “bridge people” in your congregation to connect with and build relationships with Diaspora Churches and their leaders. Initiate trust building initiatives with them. Trust building will be slow but will pay handsome dividends later.

- Go out for a meal together with the pastor.
- Feature a music team for a service.
- Invite someone who found Christ in his diaspora journey to share in your service.

Third Way – Empower and Equip Diaspora Churches and its leaders.

My research shows that most of the Diaspora Churches are from the Majority World. Most Diaspora Churches are vernacular language specific or ethnic specific congregations, and they may not be fluent in English. And most of the pastors are lay pastors and they are bivocational. You will also find that most of the pastors have had no formal pastoral training. Most of the Diaspora churches are independent with little affiliation to other churches or fellowships. International Churches are pregnant with expertise and experience in their respective congregations. Here are some topics you can offer:

- Communicate to the Diaspora leaders that you are willing to equip them and also learn from them
- Communicate to the leaders – that you want them to develop to be effective leaders of healthy churches
- Share with them that you are willing to help them
- How to prepare Bible-based sermons

- Share your library with them
- Share ways to disciple others, how to lead a team and not be a lone ranger, how to develop an effective Boar, and many other topics

Fourth Way – Be missional to the Diaspora peoples within the city and country

In Diaspora Missiology we focus on four primary dimensions:

1. To the Diaspora – Evangelism and discipleship of Diaspora peoples in your current Jerusalem.
2. Through the Diaspora – Mobilization to reach their kinsmen locally and globally.
3. Beyond the Diaspora – Mobilization to reach cross-culturally beyond their Diaspora people.
4. With the Diaspora – Partnership in mission globally.

To... Through... Beyond... With. I am convinced that every International Church could at least focus on the first two dimensions – To the Diaspora and Through the Diaspora.

In my research I have discovered that most Diaspora Churches are fellowship rich and missionally poor. Sad to say that this is a global phenomenon. There may be individuals in your congregations who could be tapped to focus in reaching one or two Diaspora people groups.

Here are some things you can easily do:

- Start a Diaspora focused prayer group.
- Find language specific Bibles, literature, videos, etc., that can be distributed.
- Offer English as Second language classes to Diaspora Churches.
- Mentor a Diaspora leader.
- Many more things could be attempted

In your desire to reach the Diaspora peoples you likely can be catalytic and stir the Diaspora Christians and churches to reach their own – locally and globally

**This article was first published at Incendium, the newsletter of Missional International Church Network (MICN) and was given permission to re-publish by the author and MICN Executive Director. .*



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Dr. Thomas is Founder and Director of the Centre for Evangelism & World Mission (founded in 1984) in Regina, Canada. For four decades T.V. has enjoyed trans- denominational and transcontinental ministry of speaking, teaching, consulting and networking. Dr. Thomas currently serves on numerous national and international boards: he Chairs the FullSpectrum Network; Lausanne Global Diaspora Network (GDN); and Co-Chair of the International Network of South Asian Diaspora.



**The Missional International Church Network (MICN)
invites you to its Global Gathering**

Theme: Embracing the God-Sized Dream
of the International Church Movement

REGISTRATION

Cost includes registration fee, one Street Food Festival,
3 lunches, and one Dinner River Cruise.

GATHERING SITE

Evangelical Church of Bangkok (ECB) for hosting our 2022 Global Gathering.

HOTEL INFORMATION

Make your hotel reservations at Centre Point Sukhumvit 10 by emailing kessara.ae@centrepoin.com and mention in your email MICN Global Gathering for our group rate.

For more information please

- contact: Dina Dreessen at dina@micn.org
- MICN 17311 Milrig Court, Richmond, TX 77407, USA





CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF DR K RAJENDRAN

10 MAR 1952 - 22 MAY 2022

Dear Friends,

Dr K Rajendran, aged 70, went to be with the LORD on 22 May 2022 in Bengaluru, India. We held a private funeral the next day. Thanks for your prayers and comfort during this grieving time. We are grateful for many tributes that highlight Dr K Rajendran's tireless efforts for Christ, and shaping missional movements globally. We are planning an event to remember and recollect his life, memories, contributions, and achievements.

Event : Celebrating the life of Dr K Rajendran
Place : CEO Centre, SAIACS, Bengaluru, India (www.saiacs-ceocenter.com)
Date : Saturday, 24 Sept 2022 (10:30 am till 12:30 pm IST) followed by lunch

We kindly invite you to join us, to reflect on his life and impact, and to thank God.

Regards,

Pramila Rajendran, Preeti and Pradeep

RSVP by 30 June 2022: Kannan (whatsapp +919885302165)



Dr K Rajendran was a global missional leader, visionary, innovative thinker, author and coach. He led missional associations and movements in India, South Asia and across the globe. Also, served in many global committees and networks. He had wide leadership experiences with **Operation Mobilisation** [27 years]; **India Missions Association** [12 Years]; **World Evangelical Alliance - Mission Commission** [15+ years] and **GIVA Global** [5+ years]. And authored books, and written numerous articles on missiology and leadership issues in international magazines, journals and books. His research thesis **Which Way Forward Indian Missions** has influenced missions in India and the world. He's passionate for evangelism to the contemporary world & peoples, and developing global leadership. Leaders around the world identify him as one of the leading & credible voices of contemporary global missions.

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