



What Is the Story?

Noting Errors of Fact, Concept, and Strategy

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What is today called the Christian Aid Mission has an interesting history which is summed up in the Summer 2005 issue of its magazine, *Christian Mission*.

Bob Finley first went out as a missionary to China in 1948, the year before the Communist movement there started expelling missionaries. In 1950 he crossed paths with Bob Pierce and the two spoke to large crowds of people in Korea.

That led Bob Pierce to found World Vision in the same year, 1950. Between 1948 and 1953, the magazine explains (p. 6), many Christian leaders in Asia told Bob Finley, "It would be best for the cause of Christ if all foreign missionaries left their country." Thus, in 1953 he founded International Students, Inc. (ISI).

We read,

During the early years of ISI Bob Finley kept quiet about the need for reformation in traditional foreign mission activities carried on by U.S. churches. Consequently he received enthusiastic support from many Christian friends ... Dr. (Donald Grey) Barnhouse served on the board of directors. Others who served were Bob Jones, Jr. ... Oswald J. Smith ... Jack Wyrzten ... Dawson Trotman loaned staff ... Billy Graham ... served on the board ... The goal of ISI was to reach foreign students as a new approach to foreign missions, but from day one it included helping them financially when they went back overseas as missionaries among their own people. Thus the Christian Aid division was an integral part of the total ISI ministry.

Thus far there was still little criticism of standard missions. The article goes on,

In 1960 ISI published the first of several articles pointing out the need for a reformation in the way foreign missionary work is done. Emphasis was placed on how missionary colonialism was

hindering the cause of Christ throughout the world. A chorus of approval was heard from leaders of indigenous evangelical ministries overseas, but heads of traditional U.S. missions were fierce in expressing their opposition to the articles. Division and disputation resulted.

In 1970 ISI and Christian Aid divided, and Christian Aid Mission then later moved to Charlottesville, VA. By 2005, 700 different ministries were receiving some sort of help from Christian Aid, through which 90,000 "native missionaries" were being fielded. Today the rift is very clear. Christian Aid Mission and some other similar missions don't send people but just money, loudly proclaiming that theirs is the only legitimate kind of mission, and that sending people of love and integrity is both unbiblical and harmful. Standard missions both send people, and by means of those people on-site channel lots of money and goods to overseas ministries. (They are much more likely to know to what and to whom they are giving, as well as monitoring results.)

Isolated and rejected by the standard mission agencies their shrill publications constantly denounce, Christian Aid does not seem to have learned very much since 1970. This most recent issue of their magazine clearly displays errors of fact, of concept and of strategy. It is a pity when one type of work, in order to attract donors, falls into the rut of tearing down all other types of work, but you can understand the temptation.

Errors of Fact

In the sidebar on pages 10 which quotes exactly Christian Aid's mission statement (with their

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