



Future Challenges in Progress and Partnership

Hugo Morales

In preparation for the 2004 Forum for World Evangelization which will be hosted by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization (LCWE), in partnership with the Great Commission Roundtable (GCR), the leadership members of the various Issue Groups which compose this forum met for a 3 day intensive planning session along with the sponsors of the World Inquiry International Coalition (WIIC).

Although results varied between regions, composite ones helped immensely in establishing a clearer picture of current church realities. Religious fundamentalism, materialism and injustice were recognized as the highest external challenges that the Church faces today. Lack of vision, lack of inspiration/united prayer and lack of effective leadership, the highest-ranking internal obstacles. Personal evangelism and social transformation were predominant as respondents stated their beliefs of what today's Church calling is; and finally the areas of support which are expected from global structures were inspirational/prayer networks, leadership development, and relationship/fellowship building.

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of persecution, places like India, Indonesia and China where in spite of many times, violent opposition, the Church continues to grow and solidify.

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Three presentations were particularly challenging as they confronted participants with trends that have colossal expressions worldwide. First, "The World of the Twenty-First Century" by

Delia Nüesch-Olver. This position paper encouraged the audience to understand the powerful forces of globalization, urbanization, unemployment, hunger and AIDS and to live and exercise a Christian faith that is culturally relevant and holistic.

Second, "The Younger Leaders Forum" by Jeffrey De Leon and Lucas Leys. As many statistics show, the largest percentage of the global population is found below the age of 30 and in the evangelical world it is not any different. The need to strategically focus on this group and specifically on those who already exercise leadership or have the potential to do so was emphatically



conveyed. At a time of transition, passing the baton in a fluid manner is of utmost importance. Third, "The Church's Mission of World Evangelization at the beginning of the Third Millennium" by C. Rene Padilla. A back to basics kind of paper, it had the impact of narrowing the enormous task being handled at the time into the simple reality that we must not be led astray from a proper understanding of the Gospel, the commitment to Christ as Lord that it requires, the expression of discipleship as a missionary lifestyle and the significance of "being, doing and saying the witness."

Unfortunately, as the Mid-Course Assessment Session was



being brought to a close, tensions arose in the blending of agendas with Lausanne. The two groups continue to dialogue about their next steps together.

Lausanne and the World Inquiry are information providers and thought provokers. I believe that the Lausanne Covenant is a timeless document which is as pertinent today as it was when it first was published. It needs to be read and understood by a new set of leaders

if they are to continue building on the “good” things that this generation has produced. I believe this is part of what Jeffrey de Leon described as “holding the hand of new leaders as they move into positions of influence.” Second, the World Inquiry is a phenomenal tool to gain an understanding of church realities nowadays.

Both go together; the latter gives you a updated picture of the church and the former a framework in which to respond and become an agent of transformation.

God in His sovereign plan has not allowed any one person/initiative/organization or movement to hold “all aces” in its hand. In this day and age, financial resources are more difficult to obtain, fundamentalism and persecution are on the rise, and church growth is explosively occurring in the southern/poorer portions of the globe. The call for these entities, the majority of them “western led” by the way, to come together and find a way in which to vividly demonstrate how to work in unity is more important than ever before.

In our part of the world we honestly do not have the luxury of going our own way to accomplish our God given vision. Our poverty and lack underdeveloped situation forces us to partner with others. It is a matter of survival. If “western led” entities are going to show some relevant level of global leadership today, it will have to be in a one-body environment of unity and partnership.

From the information and themes presented during this Mid-Course Assessment Session, the World Enquiry and the 2004 Forum for World Evangelization are clearly needed and must be carried out to completion. May God grant us this day the unparalleled strength, grace and vision to see them become a model of efficient and fruitful cooperation. 🌐

What the Lausanne Committee and Others are saying about the World Inquiry

The World Inquiry meeting in Korea symbolized a major shift in the leadership of the world missionary movement, from Europe and North America to Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and also to a new generation of leaders. It also represented a genuine desire to listen, to hear what God is saying to the Church through believers in the “two-thirds” world.

—**Paul Pierson**

*Dean Emeritus and Senior Professor of History,
Fuller Seminary School of World Mission*

We reconfirm our commitment to blend the best in planning and vision of the 2004 Forum Issue Group participants, with the cutting edge insights being gathered through the World Inquiry. We pray for a seamless flow between these two important activities, and we trust the Lord to make each stronger because God has called us to work in unity.

—**Paul Cedar**

Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization Chair

Our commitment is to gain new insights from the World Inquiry, so that as LCWE addresses the 25 critical issues which are the focus of the 2004 Forum, we will have the freshest ideas helping to develop significant action plans for the Church to use in working together to reach our world for Christ.

—**Roger Parrott**

*Chair of the 2004 Forum
Lausanne Committee*