



GETTING IT DONE:

Q & A with Paul Eshleman

Dr. Paul Eshleman, Vice President of Campus Crusade for Christ, International (CCCI), founded The JESUS Film Project and served as its Director for 25 years. Currently, he consults on all of the major evangelism strategies of CCCI as well as provides leadership to numerous coalitions and ministry networks, including the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism. He serves as Director of the "Finishing the Task" Movement, seeking to enlist churches to take responsibility for the 639 Unengaged, Unreached People Groups over 100,000 in population throughout the world who have never heard the name of Jesus.

Q. What are some of the things you are seeing God do today that are accelerating the fulfillment of the Great Commission?

A. 1. I believe there is a new sense that God is at work and the Kingdom is expanding throughout the world in ways that nobody can take the credit for. I believe He is simply moving in response to the global surge of prayer.

2. As people pray, they are burdened by God's heart for the world and there is a renewed passion by people interested in going to the final frontiers. They want to make sure that everyone gets at least one chance to hear the gospel message. In the last 36 months over 1,100 full-time workers have started church planting efforts in 338 people groups who were previously unreached.

3. Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists are responding in unprecedented numbers. Many Muslims are coming to Christ through media presentations. Recently a man called into a television program from Saudi Arabia. He said, "There are now 50,000 of us here in Saudi who are followers of Isa al masih" (Jesus Christ). Another

man called and said, "We are a thousand Muslims here in Europe who would like to know how we could become followers of Jesus."

4. Fourthly is the rise of new media opportunities through Internet, iPod, cell phones, and other portable media. Last year, Global Media Outreach had

17 million people view their 91 evangelistic websites. Of these viewers, 3 million people indicated that they had made a decision to receive Christ. Nearly 700,000 gave all of their contact information so that they could be followed up by one of the 2,000 GMO Internet missionaries. One church in Orlando, Florida, is itself seeking to raise up 5,000 Internet missionaries to handle the response to its own media efforts. By 2012, technology companies will launch 16 satellites so that all 6.5 billion people on the planet will have access to the Internet and, thus, will be reachable to the Gospel. We have the potential to deliver The Message to every person on Earth.



DR. PAUL ESHLEMAN

Q. You've been working with the Jesus Film for decades, and now you have been working on a new global initiative called *Finishing the Task*. Tell us a little about that, and what led to this decision.

A. Working with the JESUS Film has been one of the great joys and privileges of my life. But several years ago we reached a point in the Jesus Film project where we were finding language groups that had no workers and, thus, no one to help complete new translations of the film or to show it once it

was dubbed. So I began to feel the burden myself to encourage us all to go where the church is NOT. That has become kind of a theme for me in my own life. I want to find all those places in the world and encourage every church and mission organization to dedicate a portion of its resources and people to those neglected areas. The vision of the *Finishing The Task* network is to make sure that everyone on Earth has access to the Gospel. Right now there are just so many people who don't have access—who couldn't receive the message even if they wanted to.

Q. What are some of the ways that *Finishing The Task* is moving the Church forward in engaging all the least-reached peoples and areas of the world?

A. I think the number one thing is continually providing the vision and the updated information on which groups of people currently have no missionary and no one trying to reach them. By continually taking this information to groups of mission leaders, pastors, and executives of Christian organizations they can confirm, "Yes, no one is going there, but we will make a commitment to go," or they can say, "Yes we have just started here but we have information on other groups near us that no one is touching yet." We need to know where one another is working so we don't duplicate efforts. Let's not all go to the same

every mission could dedicate 5% of its resources to the global priorities of the whole body of Christ. It is inexcusable after 2,000 years that we still have 4,600 language groups numbering over 200 million people who do not have one verse of Scripture translated into their language. If "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God..." how will they hear? Why are there still nearly 3,000 people groups with no missionary, no church and no one trying to reach them?

I like the fact Tokyo 2010 is inviting participants as representatives of mission boards, associations, and agencies. I love the idea we will be able to give to every leader the latest people group information. At present, we have most of the people groups mapped as to location, how many workers are needed, background on language spoken, how much of the Bible is translated and available in a language, and which network or denominations are currently sending workers to each specific area.

Q. What is your challenge for Christian leaders today?

A. I would pray that today's Christian leaders would get together and say, "You know, that's right, these people deserve to have the Scriptures as a basis for their faith; yes, we ought to go to these groups where no one has gone before; yes, these people deserve a local body of believers where they can grow to matu-

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places. Let's divide the task that remains and send our people where no has gone. *Finishing the Task* network can help by giving up-to-date information, helping to coordinate the sending of workers to various groups, sharing information on what's working among certain types of groups, and gathering stories of faith so that we're encouraged to pioneer these groups that have been neglected for 2,000 years.

Q. How can Tokyo 2010 contribute to the goal of engaging all peoples by the year 2020?

A. The watershed consultations of the past decades have had one thing in common: they have brought new information to the missionaries of the world on what remains to be done in the unfinished task of world evangelism. Every mission leader and mission executive should be working off of the same list of priorities. God has not called every denomination or organization to do exactly the same ministry, but

ity in Christ; yes, we should be demonstrating our faith as we proclaim; yes, we need to pay attention to the oral learners of the world; we need to think differently than we have before." If we are all looking at the same global priorities, we can still follow the things that God wants us to do where we are, and at the same time we can work together to most effectively get us toward the fulfillment of the Great Commission as outlined in the Scripture.

Q. Any final comments?

A. These are great days to be alive and the best is yet to come in terms of those that are going to respond. If we walk in humility, and we realize the accomplishment of the Great Commission is by the power of the Holy Spirit, and if we are determined to live holy lives, we will succeed in living and modeling the love of Jesus Christ and those with whom we share will respond. f