

Are You Ready for *The Future of the Global Church?*

DARRELL DORR

Jesus told us, “Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more” (Luke 12:48 *ESV*). By this standard, 21st-century evangelicals (especially in the West) can expect rigorous accountability when our Master returns. In the past two years our stewardship has been enormously increased by the appearance of three remarkable books that inspire and inform new expressions of wise obedience to Jesus’ commission to make disciples of all nations.

In early 2010 we first were entrusted with the *Atlas of Global Christianity*, edited by a team led by Todd Johnson and Kenneth Ross, extensively documenting the shifts in global Christianity over the past century. Then in October 2010 we received the latest (seventh) edition of *Operation World*, in which Jason Mandryk and his team have given us country-by-country narratives to help us to pray and act. Now, as we turn the corner into 2012, we have before us *The Future of the Global Church*, Patrick Johnstone’s delightful new book that beautifully complements the *Atlas* and *Operation World* and that pushes us to renewed zeal and creativity.

(Full disclosure: I was part of the editorial team for the *Atlas of Global Christianity*, I was also part of Patrick’s team for the fifth edition of *Operation World* in the early 1990s, and I have long been a vocal advocate of Patrick’s work. So if you’re looking for a dispassionate and detached critique of these books, you’ll need to look elsewhere.)

So, where to begin with *The Future of the Global Church*? The subtitle “History, Trends and Possibilities” gives us our first clue that Patrick utilizes long arcs backward and forward to suggest a variety of possible futures as well as to advocate his own positions and fuel the progress of world evangelization. Patrick is an evangelical optimist who writes “in the face of a prevailing pessimism and creeping universalism.” He combines the synthesizing mind of an analyst with the passionate heart of an evangelist. He liberally sprinkles his text with “Food for Thought” and “Burning Questions” sidebars. His preface declares, “My concern in designing this book is that passion and vision be paramount,” and his introduc-

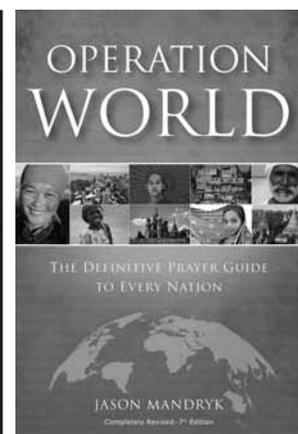
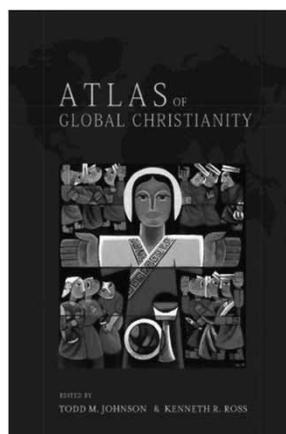
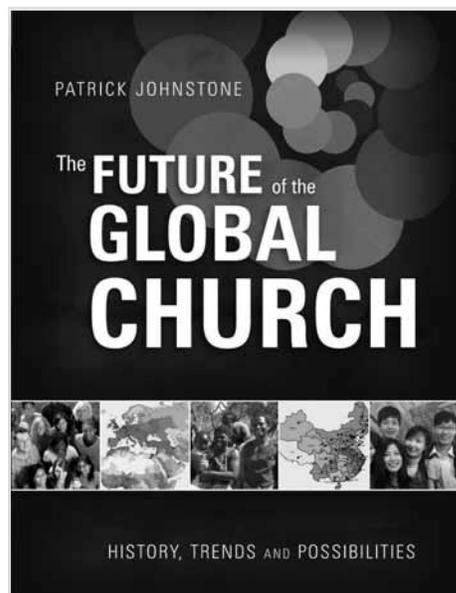
Darrell Dorr is an Associate Editor of the *Atlas of Global Christianity* and a Contributing Editor of *Mission Frontiers*.

tion specifies the users for whom the book is designed:

“Christians passionate about the extension of God’s kingdom,” Christian congregations, disciplers and teachers, mobilizers and missionaries, researchers and academics.

The order in which Patrick lists the intended users points us to some of the comparisons and contrasts between this book, the *Atlas* and *Operation World*. The primary authors of these books enjoy warm and collegial relationships with one another, sharing data and sharpening one another’s perspectives. All three books have been prepared by evangelicals, but the *Atlas* carries a more detached posture directed to researchers and academics of various stripes, whereas *Operation World* and *The Future of the Global Church* carry advocacy postures directed primarily to evangelical activists. *Operation World* is organized primarily around countries and the *Atlas* around world regions, whereas *The Future of the Global Church* gives less emphasis to geography and more to ethnic and cultural blocs of peoples. (More on the latter in a moment.)

Operation World is the least expensive and is dominated by black-and-white text in paperback form, while the *Atlas* carries a much higher price suitable for a full-color, large-format reference book with elaborate maps and diagrams. Formatted in the attractive and useful A4 page



size, *The Future of the Global Church* is priced close to *Operation World*, but, like the *Atlas*, offers a hardback form and extensive use of color for multiple graphics. (Take a look at the four sample pages included in this issue of *Mission Frontiers*.) Whereas the *Atlas* and *Operation World* are the products of editorial teams, *The Future of the Global Church* is, in Patrick's words, "all essentially the work of one person" and is therefore "likely to contain biases and quirks" that will nonetheless refresh and stimulate many readers. All three books are accompanied by electronic media that extend the print products.

The nine chapters of *The Future of the Global Church* follow a clear progression. Three foundational chapters on demography, history and religious streams undergird the next three chapters that focus on Christianity and especially renewalists and evangelicals, and then the final three chapters elaborate evangelical emphases on the unevangelized, missions and "finishing the task." For me (and I suspect for many others) chapter 7 is Patrick's most distinctive and helpful, for it is here that he more fully unpacks the paradigm (he introduced years ago) in which he presents the world's array of people groups within 15 Affinity Blocs and approximately 250 People Clusters; these are not mere categories of convenience, but a genuine attempt both to reflect field realities and to highlight ethnic connections conducive to mission partnerships and missiological creativity. Patrick's commendable emphasis on least-evangelized countries and

least-reached peoples (reflected, in part, by his conclusion on "finishing the task") is counterbalanced by his deep and consistent concern for the re-evangelization of Europe and the strengthening of evangelical foundations in the West.

I have long anticipated *The Future of the Global Church*, and I am buying copies not only for myself but also for friends. I am delighted that Patrick's legacy to the Church now includes not only the first six editions of *Operation World* but also a carefully conceived and beautifully

presented "game plan" for world evangelization that seeks to shift proportionately more energies to the world's least-reached peoples. We have truly inherited an embarrassment of riches, with the accountability to match.^f

The Future of the Global Church, 240 pages, A4 page size (8.3 X 11.7 inches), hardback, \$39.99 retail (\$29.99 discount or \$23.99 for three or more copies). Published in the USA by Biblica and InterVarsity Press, ISBN-13: 978-1-60657-132-3. Electronic

media published by Global Mapping International. See www.thefutureoftheglobalchurch.org and www.missionbooks.org for more information, and see www.thefutureoftheglobalchurch.org/usatour to learn about Patrick Johnstone's January 14-25 tour of five U.S. cities. Also see pages 2, 17-20, and 33 in this issue of *Mission Frontiers*.

CONTENTS		
Preface	v	
Acknowledgements	vi	
Introduction	viii	
Colour codes	x	
Definitions	xii	
Abbreviations	xiv	
1 Demography: Nine Global Challenges	1	
Population	2	
Migration	4	
Urbanization	6	
Health and disease	8	
Mexico	8	
HIV/AIDS	9	
Climate change	10	
Economy	12	
Energy resources	14	
Politics and freedom	16	
Water resources	18	
Israel/Palestine	18	
2 History: 20 Centuries AD	21	
1st to 4th Centuries	22	
5th to 10th Centuries	30	
11th to 14th Centuries	42	
15th and 16th Centuries	50	
17th and 18th Centuries	54	
19th Century	58	
20th Century	60	
3 Religion: The Major Streams	65	
World religions	66	
The non-religious	69	
Communism	71	
Islam	73	
Hinduism	79	
Buddhism	83	
Ethnic and other religions	87	
Sikhism and Baha'i	89	
Judaism	90	
4 Christianity: Six Megablocs	93	
Global and continental spread	94	
Freedom to minister	96	
Global growth and decline	98	
The Christian megablocs	100	
Catholics	104	
Orthodox	106	
Protestants	108	
Anglicans	110	
Independents	112	
Marginals	114	
Megabloc denominations	115	
Overview and the future	118	
5 Christianity: Renewal Growth	121	
The need for renewal	122	
The influence of the Bible	123	
Renewal movements	124	
Charismatic/pentecostal growth	125	
Renewal growth	130	
Evangelical revivals and awakenings	132	
18th-Century revivals	133	
19th-Century revivals	134	
Prayer and revival	135	
20th-Century revivals	136	
6 Christianity: The Evangelical Explosion	139	
Who are Evangelicals?	140	
Global distribution	142	
Africa's Evangelicals	146	
Religious conflict	147	
Asia's Evangelicals	148	
Religious conflict	149	
Europe's Evangelicals	150	
Religious conflict	151	
Latin America's Evangelicals	152	
Brazil	153	
N America's Evangelicals	154	
China's Evangelicals	155	
Evangelicals of the Pacific	156	
Bible translation in PNG	157	
Evangelicals and the future	158	
7 The Unevangelized	161	
Measuring evangelization	162	
The least evangelized	165	
Romania/Moldova	166	
Horn of Africa	167	
Peoples and languages	168	
The 15 affinity blocs	169	
Sub-Saharan African Peoples	174	
The Fulbe cluster	176	
Nigeria and Chad	178	
Arab World	180	
The Levantine Arab cluster	182	
East Asian Peoples	184	
The Chinese diaspora	187	
Eurasian Peoples	188	
The Caucasus cluster	191	
Horn of Africa Peoples	192	
The Somali cluster	194	
Malay Peoples	196	
Sumatra	200	
Persian-Median Peoples	202	
The Kurds	204	
South Asian Peoples	206	
India's Chamar caste	210	
Southeast Asian Peoples	212	
Impact of the Vietnam War	215	
Tibetan-Himalayan Peoples	216	
The Tibetan cluster	219	
Turkic Peoples	220	
8 Christian Missions and the Future	225	
What is a missionary?	226	
Sending missionaries	227	
From everywhere—to everywhere	228	
Mission agencies	234	
9 Conclusion: An Evangelized World?	237	
Finishing the task	238	
Select Bibliography and Databases	240	
Electronic Editions and Resources	241	
Note: Notes appear on the concluding page of each chapter.		

Measuring evangelization	161
The least evangelized	162
Romania/Moldova	165
Horn of Africa	166
Peoples and languages	167
The 15 affinity blocs	168
Sub-Saharan African Peoples	169
The Fulbe cluster	174
Nigeria and Chad	176
Arab World	178
The Levantine Arab cluster	180
East Asian Peoples	182
The Chinese diaspora	184
Eurasian Peoples	187
The Caucasus cluster	188
Horn of Africa Peoples	191
The Somali cluster	192
Malay Peoples	194
Sumatra	196
Persian-Median Peoples	200
The Kurds	202
South Asian Peoples	204
India's Chamar caste	206
Southeast Asian Peoples	210
Impact of the Vietnam War	212
Tibetan-Himalayan Peoples	215
The Tibetan cluster	216
Turkic Peoples	219
	220
8 Christian Missions and the Future	225
What is a missionary?	226
Sending missionaries	227
From everywhere—to everywhere	228
Mission agencies	234
9 Conclusion: An Evangelized World?	237
Finishing the task	238
Select Bibliography and Databases	240
Electronic Editions and Resources	241
Note: Notes appear on the concluding page of each chapter.	