



# MISSION FRONTIERS

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Fishers of Men." p. 25

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Network. p. 30



## *Celebrating*

## 200 YEARS OF MISSION SOCIETY SENDING:

.....  
*What Have We Learned from 200 Years of Making Mistakes?*

MISSION BICENTENNIAL: 1812-2012



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**Editorial Office:** Phone: 719-785-3625 • E-mail: rick.wood@uscwm.org

**Advertising:** E-mail: advertising@missionfrontiers.org

**E-mail:** mission.frontiers@uscwm.org

**Website:** www.missionfrontiers.org

**Rick Wood**, Editor • **Darrell Dorr**, Contributing Editor

**Amanda Valloza-Hlavaty**, **Jonathan Pon**, Graphic Design

**Dan Eddy**, Circulation • **Amanda Valloza-Hlavaty**, Advertising

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*Empowering the Great Commission Community of North America*



# Editorial Comment



## Two Hundred Years of Pursuing God's Heart for All Peoples

Rick Wood, Editor, *Mission Frontiers*

**W**ith this special bicentennial issue of *MF* we celebrate not only 200 years of mission society sending of missionaries, but also the efforts by thousands of missionaries over the centuries who have worked tirelessly to discover the strategies and methods that God uses to establish and grow his Church in every tribe and tongue.

It is easy for us in our time to look back and think that we have learned so much and we are doing things so much better than they did “way back when.” But this process of learning from our mistakes is not a straight line of progress. In many ways we still have a lot to learn from the pioneer leaders in missions, such as William Carey or Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson, who developed the idea of establishing indigenous churches that are self-supporting, self-governing and self-reproducing. We still struggle today to implement the great thinking of these pioneers from long ago. Even when we identify mistakes that we have made in the past, we still struggle not to fall back into them, and while the majority of missionaries may have learned from some past mistakes, there will always be those newcomers who never got the message that the methods they are employing today have continually failed over the last 200 years. In our efforts to grow Christ's kingdom we manage to make new mistakes that our forefathers in the faith may never have envisioned. *MF* seeks to keep these setbacks from happening as much as possible by letting you know in each issue what others are learning and discovering about what God uses to grow His kingdom quickly and effectively.

Even with this uneven record of progress, we must never lose heart in striving to improve what we are doing and to discover God's ways of establishing and growing His kingdom. In this spirit, we present a number of respected leaders who give us their insights into what we have learned and the mistakes we have made in more recent times.

We start off on page 18 with an article written by Ralph Winter in 2007 in which he gives his own insightful overview of the mistakes the Western Church has made in the hope that others will learn from them and not repeat them. Other leaders give us their insights starting on page 22. Robby Butler provides some of the most important strategic insights in this issue in his article starting on page 25. If we do not learn how to turn the average believer into a disciple-maker, it will be very difficult indeed to bring access to the gospel to every person. We will talk more about this in an upcoming issue.

### So What Have We Learned in 200 Years of Doing Missions?

Here are my own thoughts. Feel free to send me your own. Today we have a far superior understanding of the unfinished task of missions than ever before. When Judson and his friends set out in 1812, their understanding of world religions and culture was extremely limited. At first they did not know the difference between a Hindu and a Muslim. The early missionaries believed as some still do today that their job was to establish a Western church like they had back home. In large part today, most missionaries understand that their job is rather to make the gospel indigenous to each people and not to transplant Western cultural forms.

### It's About Going Cross-Culturally to Peoples

Thanks to the efforts of missiologists like Donald McGavran, Ralph Winter and others, we have learned that we must cross cultural and linguistic barriers to get the gospel into every unreached people group. This means establishing indigenous, reproducing churches that are effectively equipping all believers to be disciple-makers and church planters so that a Church-Planting Movement develops in every people. This is the commission that Jesus gave to us in Matthew 28:19-20, and we have no excuse in our day for not completing it.

We have come to recognize that at its heart missions is no longer primarily about crossing geographical barriers, as it was in Judson's day, but rather crossing the barriers of the heart and mind—those barriers of culture, language and understanding. One of the most important mission strategies in our time is to reach out to the unreached peoples in our midst. In His sovereign plan God has brought the unreached peoples to where we live. He has brought Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim people groups to our neighborhoods. These peoples, if reached, could significantly impact those same people groups wherever they exist around the world. Judson was willing to travel around the world to reach the unreached of his day. The question for us: are we willing to cross the street to reach the unreached of our time?

### Finding Unreached Peoples Wherever They Live

The level of information on the world, its peoples and populations available to Judson and his friends was also very limited. Today with the growth in computer and

satellite technology we are on the verge of knowing the church-planting status of every people group and community on earth. David Taylor reported in our Nov.-Dec. 2011 issue on page 26, "Global databases of habitats (cities, towns and villages) now exist for over three million communities. Surveys to determine the status of evangelism and church-planting have been completed for almost fifty countries and 350,000 communities." In the not-too-distant future, we will have all the information we need to deploy missionaries to go to all the peoples and communities that still need a Church-Planting Movement.

### It Is Now a Global Mission Force

One of the most significant accomplishments over the last 200 years is that the mission fields of the world have become the bases for sending missionaries. Africa, Asia and Latin America, while still needing to begin church-planting efforts among the unreached peoples in their midst, have also become a major force in world evangelization. The followers of Jesus Christ are no longer primarily located in Europe and North America, as it was in Judson's day, and it is no longer just the responsibility of believers from the West to be on mission with God. Every believer from every people is now part of God's family business of proclaiming His glory in all the earth to every people. The potential workforce for God's Kingdom has grown dramatically in 200 years, as has the potential for bringing the gospel to every tribe and tongue.

### We Can Complete the Task of Reaching All Peoples

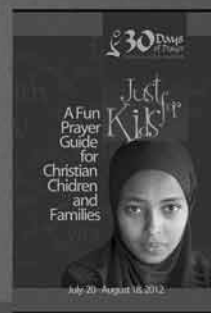
In Judson's day, it was likely not physically possible to complete world evangelization. There were simply too many obstacles in terms of distance, knowledge and manpower. Today it is a far different story. We have all the resources we need to bring the gospel to every people. We have a good grasp of the scope of the task and more than enough money and potential manpower to establish a Church-Planting Movement in every people. The only thing we lack is the vision and commitment to do so—something that was a huge problem in Judson's day as well. f

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# CELEBRATING 200 YEARS OF MISSION SOCIETY SENDING 1812-2012



## The Significance of February 1812 to North American Missions

In the midst of a snowstorm on February 6, 1812, five young men (with one wife and one fiancée) were commissioned for foreign missionary service at the Tabernacle Church in Salem MA. The town of Salem was chosen because the ship *Caravan* was sitting at dock ready to depart any moment for Calcutta, and two missionary couples had booked passage on it. The date, in the depth of a cold New England winter, was chosen because the British were threatening an immediate blockade of the harbor as the outset of "The War of 1812" loomed.

When the Judsons and Newells sailed out of Salem on February 19, and the others from Philadelphia a week later, they not only launched themselves from the shores of North America, they also launched North America into the world of foreign missions. Many others would follow – a trickle at first – and then a groundswell of individuals, agencies and churches culminating in a grand array of North American missionaries that would collectively become the largest missionary force in the world today.



### Marvin J. Newell

After serving with TEAM for 21 years, Marv taught eight years at the Moody Theological Seminary before becoming Senior Vice President, Missio Nexus.

**ATLANTA AREA OFFICE**  
655 Village Square Drive, Ste. A  
Stone Mountain, GA 30083  
t 770.457.6677 f 770.457.0037

**CHICAGO AREA OFFICE**  
PO Box 398  
Wheaton, IL 60187  
t 630.682.9270 f 630.682.9278

[Info@MissioNexus.org](mailto:Info@MissioNexus.org)

  
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# ENDURANCE PERSONIFIED

## IN THE LIFE OF JUDSON



AS WE CELEBRATE THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF ADONIRAM AND ANN JUDSON'S SAILING FROM SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS TO INDIA AND LATER BURMA, WE ARE NOT MERELY CELEBRATING A CRITICAL EARLY EVENT IN THE NORTH AMERICAN MISSION MOVEMENT. WE CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF A DEVOTED FOLLOWER OF CHRIST WHOSE LIFE AND MINISTRY PERSONIFIED THE LONG-TERM IMPACT OF ENDURANCE, PERSEVERANCE, AND TENACITY.

PAUL BORTHWICK

To begin, however, join me on a ministry trip to Burma (Myanmar) several years ago. Under the auspices of the World Evangelical Alliance and the Myanmar Evangelical Fellowship, my wife and I traveled to Yangon, Myanmar (Rangoon, Burma) to speak to youth and youth workers.

To connect our trip with missions history, we decided to re-read the biography of Adoniram Judson, pioneer to Burma, during our trip. Judson and his wife, Nancy (also called Ann) Hasseltine Judson, went out as one of the first North American missionaries, sailing in 1812 from Massachusetts.

The Burmese capital city, still dominated by the overwhelming Shwe Dagon Pagoda, looked much like the city Judson described to supporters at home. With the

indeed, the most striking aspect of the Judson-Burma story is endurance in spite of suffering. From start to finish, his biography describes hardship. He, his family, and his co-workers lived lives of affliction almost unparalleled in modern mission history.

exception of signs of technological development and the increased population, we could easily imagine the Judsons sailing up the Irrawaddy River facing unknown challenges and what we know now as unimaginable hardship.

Indeed, the most striking aspect of the Judson-Burma story is endurance in spite of suffering. From start to finish, his biography describes hardship. He, his family, and his co-workers lived lives of affliction almost unparalleled in modern mission history.

Lest we forget, however, Judson pursued his calling knowing full well that sufferings lay ahead—a significant lesson in itself to us Christians 200 years later whose first question is often, “Is it safe to go there?”

In writing to Ann Hazeltine’s father for permission to marry her, Judson wrote:



*Paul is a Senior Consultant with Development Associates International, a teacher at Gordon College and Urbana/Missions Associate to InterVarsity Christian Fellowship.*

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I have now to ask whether you can consent to part with your daughter early next spring, to see her no more in this world. Whether you can consent to see her departure to a heathen land, and her subjection to the hardships and sufferings of a missionary life? Whether you can consent to her exposure to the dangers of the ocean; to the fatal influence of the southern climate of India; to every kind of want and distress; to degradation, insult, persecution, and perhaps a violent death? Can you consent to all this, for the sake of perishing immortal souls; for the sake of Zion and the glory of God? Can you consent to all this, in hope of soon meeting your daughter in the world of glory, with a crown of righteousness brightened by the acclamations of praise which shall redound to her Savior from heathens saved, through her means, from eternal woe and despair?

His anticipation of the hardships ahead almost all came true. Their tribulations began on the sail to India (his first anticipated destination) from Salem, Massachusetts.

As hard as it is to believe, these struggles pale in comparison to the amount of personal grief that surrounded the Judson mission. Reviewing the detailed account of Judson's life in *To the Golden Shore* illustrates the biblical teaching that "unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself, alone. But if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24).

Statistics are not clear, but it seems that there were between a dozen and twenty-five enduring Burmese converts at the time of Judson's death. No matter what the statistics, the Judson-mission-deaths seem to have equaled or exceeded the number of converts.

But one mission had been completed. The Burmese had the Bible in their own language – with a Burmese-English dictionary completed as well.

## Anguish and struggles in Burma included:

- Language learning - more than two years to learn Burmese, in a country where no English was spoken.
- Resistance to conversion - six years to the first Christian convert, Maung Nau in 1819.
- The torture of young Burmese Christians by the government in 1819.
- Suspicion of him being a spy during Civil War with Britain, followed by a torturous stint in the "Death Prison" (1824-25), which included being hung every night upside down in leg-irons as well as a "death march" that nearly killed him.
- A temporary loss of his accumulated translation work in 1824. (It was eventually recovered.)
- Severe depression (what we would call clinical depression, verging on insanity) in 1828 that followed Nancy's death; Judson sat for months by her grave, contemplating her decaying body and writing, "God to me is the Great Unknown; I believe in Him, but I cannot find Him."
- The falling-away of new Burmese believers.
- And a lifetime devoted to one primary task: to give the Burmese a Bible in their own language.

A devout Congregationalist, Judson had not resolved the issue of immersion baptism, so he set his sights on studying the issue on the three-month sail. On the journey, he decided that the Baptist perspective was the correct one, and he and Nancy were baptized upon arrival. He wrote to his Congregationalist supporters in Massachusetts, provoking the first crisis. They immediately cut all of their support.

Support from Baptists came, but not without some very uncomfortable weeks. But this problem was only the beginning. The Judsons encountered visa difficulties in India, and their first years took them from India to Mauritius (Isle of France) to Malaysia, while considering both Ceylon and Java. They reluctantly ended up in Burma in 1813.

Leave the Judson saga and return with my wife and me to our visit a few years ago. In a meeting with youth and youth leaders, we picked up a copy of the Burmese Bible. The Burmese script was unintelligible to us, but we noticed one English sentence on the title page: "Translated by the Reverend A. Judson."

A Bible translation that had stood the test of time - over 150 years! It stands as a testimony to Judson's scholarship and meticulous linguistic study.

I took the Bible over to our host, the head of the Evangelical Fellowship. "Matthew," I asked, pointing to the English sentence, "Do you know who this man is—Judson?"



- 1812** *The Judsons and the Newells set sail to India. Harriet Newell and her child die at sea, en route to Mauritius.*
- 1814** *A European woman employed by the Judsons in Mauritius dies. Nancy gives birth to a stillborn child at sea, en route to Burma. Potential co-worker, Felix Carey, departs Burma, sailing up the Irrawaddy River; the boat capsizes, and Felix's wife and two children die.*
- 1816** *The Judsons' first son, Roger Williams Judson, dies in his second year of life.*
- 1819** *Co-worker Edward Wheelock dies.*
- 1821** *Mr. Newell (husband of Harriet) dies in Bombay.*
- 1826** *Judson's beloved partner and true soul-mate, Nancy, dies in October. Mrs. Price, wife of medical co-worker Dr. Price, dies three days after Nancy. Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Hall, Christian friends in Burma, die; Rodgers as a result of the Death Prison.*
- 1827** *Dr. Price dies. Less than six months after Nancy's death, their baby Maria dies at 2 years, 3 months on April 24.*
- 1830** *Judson Wade Boardman, son of George Boardman, who had been recruited as a church planter in the north, dies.*
- 1831** *George Boardman dies and leaves his young wife, Sarah, and the rest of their family alone, north of Rangoon.*
- 1834** *Judson marries Sarah Boardman, widow of George.*
- 1836** *Luther Rice, a friend and promoter of the work in Burma, dies.*
- 1841** *Sarah gives birth to a stillborn son, Luther Judson. Henry Judson dies at age 1 year, 7 months.*
- 1845** *Sarah Boardman Judson dies. Charlie Judson dies, age 1 year, 6 months.*
- 1848** *Judson travels to the United States, meets and marries his third wife, Emily.*
- 1850** *After completing his translation and the Burmese-English dictionary, Judson sails into the Indian Ocean in hopes of clearing his lungs from ongoing tuberculosis. He dies at sea and is buried in obscurity. Charles Judson, son of Adoniram and Emily Judson, dies at birth on April 22.*
- 1854** *Emily Judson dies of tuberculosis on June 1.*

*In 1812, Adoniram and Nancy Judson, along with Samuel and Harriett Newell, sailed for India. By 1850, all were dead. Judson himself died in obscurity, leaving few surviving children and only a few Burmese believers.*

"O yes!" he exclaimed. "Whenever someone mentions the name 'Judson,' great tears come to our eyes because we know what he and his family suffered for us."

He went on with great emotion, "We know about the sicknesses they endured. We read about the Death March and the Death Prison. We know about the wives who died, and the children who died, and the co-workers who died.

"BUT TODAY, THERE ARE OVER 2 MILLION CHRISTIANS IN MYANMAR, AND EVERY ONE OF US TRACES OUR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE TO ONE MAN—THE REVEREND ADONIRAM JUDSON."

Later in the 19th century, one of Adoniram's only surviving sons, Edward, speaking at the dedication of the Judson Memorial Church in New York City, summarized his father's story:

Suffering and success go together. If you are succeeding without suffering, it is because others before you have suffered; if you are suffering without succeeding, it is that others after you may succeed.

Judson probably illustrated this truth as much as any man who ever lived. Probably the greatest lesson we can learn from the life of this great man is that we have to trust in the work of God, even if our efforts seem fruitless and wasted. Judson's life is proof that God is faithful in bringing about His work in due time, and we simply need to remain faithful and trusting in Him.

When Adoniram Judson died on April 11, 1850, he had not seen vast numbers saved directly through his ministry. He will be remembered, however, for his role in the establishment of US missions, his outstanding translation of the Bible into Burmese and his foundational work among the Burmese people.<sup>f</sup>

Article based on a transcript of the address presented at the February 6, 2012 Bicentennial Celebration, Salem, MA.

# NORTH AMERICAN MISSION FROM JUDSONS TO GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

TODD M. JOHNSON

It might be tempting, on this 200th commissioning anniversary of the first ordained American foreign missionaries, to directly attribute the current status of global Christianity to their courageous obedience to the Great Commission. Even limiting the scope of their influence to Burma—their primary place of overseas service—the commendable work of these missionaries would produce a very incomplete explanation for the growth of Christianity around the world from 1812 to 2012. In fact, between the Judsons then and us today lay a vast assemblage of unsung local believers around the world who spread the gospel without fanfare or recognition. Ironically, this development would likely not surprise the Judsons.

## New England in 1812

Born August 9, 1788 in Malden, Massachusetts, Adoniram Judson entered the world as the son of a pastor. Though his parents hoped he would become a minister, Judson had other plans. While attending what would later become Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, he became a practical deist, turned his back on expectations that he would join the ministry, and later went to New York City to work in theater. This proved less than practical, and while on the journey back to Massachusetts, he experienced a crisis of faith. He

providentially spent the night in an inn where he overheard a man dying in agony and hopelessness in the next room. When he inquired in the morning, the cadaver turned out to be his deist mentor from Brown. He set himself back on the journey to ministry and was admitted to the new Andover Seminary.

Judson continued to develop his love for distant places at seminary. While ridiculed there for his new-found desire to be a foreign missionary, Judson read everything he could get his hands on related to Asia. It was on a snowy day in February of 1810 that Judson finally resolved to be a foreign missionary.

Judson would not have to face his uncertain future alone. Unknown to him, there were several other students at Andover Seminary who were privately committed to foreign missions as he was. They eventually founded a secret group called “The Brethren,” whose stated goal was that “each member shall keep himself absolutely free from every engagement which, after his prayerful attention, and after consultation with his brethren, shall be deemed incompatible with the object of this society, and shall hold himself in readiness to go on a mission when and where duty may call.”

The next step for these young enthusiasts was the formation of a mission-sending society, for which the young men needed the support of their elders. One key figure was Samuel Worcester, the pastor of Tabernacle Church in Salem. He had delivered a historic missionary sermon the previous year to the Massachusetts Missionary Society. After hearing the appeal of the students to create a missionary-sending society in 1810, Worcester and others argued among themselves as to whether the idea was feasible. In the end they decided, “We had better not



*Todd is Associate Professor of Global Christianity & Director of the Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.*

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attempt to stop God.” This marked the founding of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the first foreign missionary-sending institution in the United States.

A cascade of events transpired in February 1812. The young missionaries were scheduled to leave on February 10. Adoniram Judson and Ann Haseltine were married on Wednesday, February 5 in Haverhill, Massachusetts. On Thursday, February 6, 1,500 people attended the ordination service of the missionaries at Tabernacle Church in Salem. Their sailing was delayed until Wednesday, February 19, due to bad weather. The trip to India took almost four months, and as they arrived they saw what they thought was their first Hindu, who turned out to be a Muslim. Another year would pass before the Judsons finally arrived in Burma.

## The World in 2012

Events over the past two hundred years have transported us to a world radically different than that of the Judsons. When they sailed out of Salem Harbor in 1812, 20% of the world was Christian and over 90% of all Christians were Europeans. In 2012, the world is about 33% Christian and only about 25% of all Christians worldwide are Europeans. In the intervening period, Christianity grew rapidly in Africa (mainly through conversions) and Latin America (mainly because of high birth rates), while declining in Europe (mainly through defections and low birth rates).

While Christianity had taken firm root in Asia, including significant minorities in China and India, the continent remains home to large non-Christian populations. In the past one hundred years, unexpected stories of church growth have been found in the Korean peninsula (1907 to present), China (1970s), Nepal (1990s), and Mongolia and Cambodia (2000s). Burma itself saw a significant increase of Christians. In 1812 there were very few Christians in Burma, but today there are over four million Christians there (about 8% of the population).

Asians were unprepared for the wave of atheism and agnosticism that accompanied the rise of Communism in the 20th century. But 60 years on, a resurgence of religion is pushing down the number of atheists and agnostics, and traditionally Asian religions, such as Buddhism, Daoism and Chinese folk-religion, are experiencing a revival in both numbers and influence. In 1812 over 99% of the world's population was religious, but by 2012 this had fallen to below 89%. Such a general analysis hides

the fact that the high point for the world's nonreligious population was around 1970, when almost 20% of the world's population was either agnostic or atheist. The collapse of Communism in the late 20th century means that the world is more religious in 2012 than in 1970. In this way, our world closely resembles that of the Judsons.

EVENTS OVER THE PAST TWO HUNDRED YEARS HAVE TRANSPORTED US TO A WORLD RADICALLY DIFFERENT THAN THAT OF THE JUDSONS. WHEN THEY SAILED OUT OF SALEM HARBOR IN 1812, 20% OF THE WORLD WAS CHRISTIAN AND OVER 90% OF ALL CHRISTIANS WERE EUROPEANS. IN 2012, THE WORLD IS ABOUT 33% CHRISTIAN AND ONLY ABOUT 25% OF ALL CHRISTIANS WORLDWIDE ARE EUROPEANS.

The question remains, how did we get from 1812 to 2012? From the Judsons to global Christianity?

Looking at the history of Christianity in Burma provides some important clues. The gospel was effectively spread by what is now termed “indigenous agency.” This method emerged in Judson's lifetime, but was largely unrecognized at the time. The primary carriers of the gospel message were to a great extent unknown individual converts from among the indigenous people the missionaries set out to reach. In Judson's case, it was an untrustworthy thief who was most effective in spreading the gospel beyond the narrow confines of the missionary community, who largely focused on evangelizing the majority power holders, the Burmese. Instead, it was the “wild” Karen who responded to the gospel, a jungle tribe that had to incessantly knock on the missionaries' door to get their attention.

The missionaries did make some important strategic decisions in their approach that set the stage for later indigenization of Christianity. In Burma they took a very different approach to “primitive” tribes than their fellow missionaries did to Native Americans in America. Bible translations were slow to appear among Native Americans, but within a few decades there were already two full Bible translations in Burma, including Judson's Burmese Bible. As Christian mission scholars Lamin Sanneh and Andrew Walls have shown, this principle of translation eventually changed the balance of power among peoples who embraced Christianity. Between the “translation principle” and “indigenous agency,” the kind of Christianity that spread in Burma quickly differentiated itself from that of the colonial missionaries. In essence, foreign missionaries in Burma provided the necessary spark while local evangelists did the work on the ground, producing a culturally relevant version of the Christian faith.



## Some Things are the Same

Today we face many similar issues as the Judsons, such as decisions about how to engage the world. A central characteristic of both ages is courage. No matter where you live, deciding to live among peoples previously unreached with the gospel requires courage and faith. In fact, it is a rare individual who is willing to give up life, home and liberty for the sake of others. Surprisingly, friends and family often greet such aspirations with incredulity and ridicule.

The struggle between Christians with differing theological and social perspectives has intensified. Hundreds of Christian denominations in 1812 have split into tens of thousands in 2012. Today, more than ever, we are challenged to work together, rather than to compete. In particular, Protestants face the proliferation of independent churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America, as well as in the Western world.

WHILE MISSIONARIES WILL ALWAYS BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES, THE WHOLE CHURCH NEEDS TO PARTICIPATE IN INVITING PEOPLE OF OTHER FAITHS TO CONSIDER JESUS CHRIST.

Recent research reveals that as many as 86% of all Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists do not personally know a Christian. This has to be viewed negatively in light of the strong biblical theme of incarnation that is at the heart of Christian witness. Christians should know and love their neighbors! In the 21st century it is important to realize that the responsibility for reaching other religionists is too large for the missionary enterprise. While missionaries will always be at the forefront of innovative strategies, the whole church needs to participate in inviting people of other faiths to consider Jesus Christ.

## Many Things are Different

The greatest difference, 200 years on, is that Christian missionaries are sent out from all over the world. Burmese today are more likely to encounter Christ from Karen, Kachin or Thai hill tribesmen, Filipinos, South Asians, Chinese, or even Brazilians or Nigerians, than they are from British or American missionaries. Nonetheless, even today there are Western Christians who are engaged in reaching the Burmese. It is ironic that the Burmese people the Judsons went to reach with the gospel 200 years ago are still unreached today. It should be noted that even if Karen Christians in Burma decide to reach out to their (ethnically) Burmese countrymen, they would be performing the work of cross-cultural missionaries, not of local

evangelists. This is important not only in who is doing the witnessing, but in what this signifies: the gospel is not Western in origins or characteristics.

In the past two hundred years Americans have experienced a rise and fall of their global influence. In 1812, the British Empire was on the rise, and many considered the twentieth century the “American Century.” But today, a changing balance of power means that Americans engaging the world find themselves on equal footing with missionaries from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Americans still have a significant role in the world, but that role is played out on a stage of many characters, each with his own valuable voice and perspective. Ironically, this assemblage is more representative of global Christianity than any single ethnic group, Western or non-Western.

The Judsons had trouble identifying the religion of the first person they encountered in Asia. In this sense, things haven’t changed much. A recent Pew survey shows that Americans still understand very little about other religions. Evangelicals, in particular, score poorly compared to atheists and Jews. But the difference today is the likelihood that one will encounter someone of another faith, no matter where one lives. There is much greater diversity right here in New England, where a substantial Burmese community resides. This includes the Overseas Burmese Christian Fellowship, celebrating this momentous occasion with us.

## Conclusion

Two hundred years ago the challenge for American missions was to channel the enthusiasm of eager students to provide a way for them to express their vocation in a colonial world dominated by Europeans. Today, American Christian students still have their vocations, but now operate in a multi-polar world where they continue to need encouragement and organizational genius. The challenge for mission agencies today is to adapt to these changing times while retaining the core values of commitment to the Scriptures, to evangelism, and to alleviating human need that have made them successful for the past two centuries. In doing so, the task of world evangelization will be more collaborative (across denominations, ethnicities, and languages), more integrated (vocationally and holistically) and more informed (religiously and culturally). Yet, in the end, it is likely true that if the Judsons were alive today, they would be the first in line to embark once again on a lifetime of service in Asia.<sup>f</sup>

*Article based on a transcript for the address presented at the February 6, 2012 Bicentennial Celebration in Salem, MA.*

# WHAT HAPPENED TO THE OTHERS WHO SAILED?

Two couples and two single men left along with Adoniram and Ann Judson in February of 1812. The eight were sent out by the newly organized American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Here is what happened to the others who sailed to India (on two different ships) that month.

MARVIN J. NEWELL

## Samuel & Harriet Newell

Forbidden to remain in India by the British East India Company, Samuel and Harriet ("the Belle of Bradford") sailed for Mauritius with plans to establish a mission there and possibly to Madagascar. After a long and perilous voyage, they reached the Isle of France (French name for Mauritius), where Harriet soon died, at age 19, after childbirth ten months after departing Salem. Grief-stricken, Samuel went on to Ceylon, finding it favorable to open a mission there. In January 1814 he joined Samuel and Roxana Nott and Gordon Hall in Bombay. He ministered seven years before his life was cut short by cholera on May 30, 1821, being violently attacked while ministering to the sick. He was greatly endeared to the friends of the mission by his devotedness and amiable character.

## Samuel & Roxana Nott

Forbidden along with the others to remain in Calcutta, together with Gordon Hall, the Notts went to Bombay, where the three commenced the first mission of the American Board in India. Their first son, Samuel Nott Jr., was born there, as well as their daughter, Harriet Newell Nott. Since Samuel was frequently ill, the family returned to America in 1815, never to return. Samuel pastored the rest of his life in Connecticut, writing several major books. He outlived all the men of the first missionary band, dying on July 1st 1869 in Hartford, Connecticut, at age 81, nineteen years after the last (Judson, 1850) of the original five men had died. Roxana outlived them all, dying in 1876 at age 91.

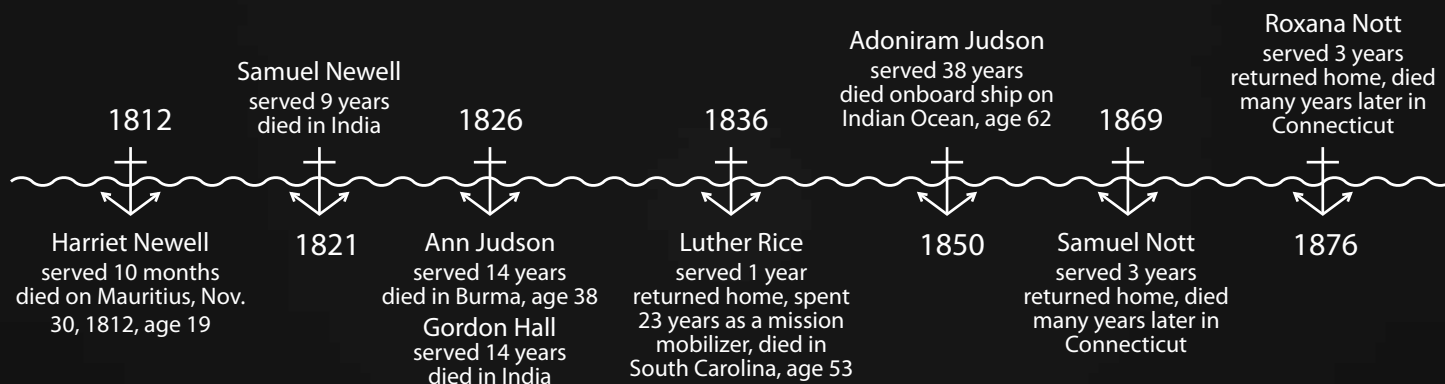
## Gordon Hall

Known as the "beloved disciple among the missionaries," and like the others, forbidden to stay in Calcutta, he obtained permission from the governor of Bombay to remain there. He labored 13 years, visiting the temples and bazaars with the gospel message and engaging in Bible translation. He completed the translation of the New Testament in the Marathi language. "No missionary in western India has ever been more respected among the Brahmans and higher classes for his discussions and pulpit discourses," noted one Indian believer. He died in Bombay in 1826.

## Luther Rice

Like Judson, Rice became a Baptist after arriving in India. When opposition against the missionaries forced them to go to the Isle of France, it was decided that Rice, the orator of the group, would proceed back to America to rally forces for the new Baptist mission. This he did admirably, being instrumental in founding the Baptist General Convention for Foreign Mission in 1814, and then spending years riding horseback throughout the colonies raising funds and awareness for Baptist missions. He also founded Columbian College of the District of Columbia in 1821, now known as George Washington University. In 1836, while on a mission promotional trip to South Carolina, he fell ill and died quietly. f

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# Three Missionary Wives

## *the Martyr, the Heroine, the Forgotten*

The motto of every missionary, whether preacher, printer, or school master, ought to be “devoted for life.” —Adoniram Judson

MARVIN J. NEWELL

Although five young men were commissioned as missionaries on February 6, 1812, considerable interest was concentrated on the three young wives who were so publicly expanding expectations of the role and capabilities of women in missions. Prevented by cold weather, distance and preparations for her imminent marriage to Samuel Nott, Roxana Peck of Franklin, Connecticut was the only one unable to attend the ordination at Salem.

Roxana was twenty-seven years old at the time she married Samuel Nott the week after the Salem commissioning service. Ann “Nancy” Hasseltine Judson of Bradford, Massachusetts was twenty-three and had married Adoniram the day before the commissioning.

The darling of the three was Harriet Atwood of Haverhill, Massachusetts – beautiful, delicate and only eighteen years old. She married Samuel Newell just days after the commissioning.

After their departure for India on two different ships, the lives of the first three missionary women, intertwined by fate and the public imagination, took surprisingly different turns. Each in her own way became a model for the practice of women in mission. United at first by circumstances, by similar spiritual experience, and by shared goals, the lives of Harriet, Ann and Roxana demonstrated how a range of hard realities could reshape mission theory and dictate practice.

### Harriet Newell

The Newells and the Judsons arrived on the *Caravan* in Calcutta in June of 1812. Because of the War of 1812 between Britain and the United States, as soon as the British East India Company learned of the presence of American missionaries, it issued expulsion orders. Since Harriet was several months pregnant, the Newells were the first to leave on a ship that had only two berths. On July 29, they boarded a ship bound for the Isle of France. But a proposed voyage of six weeks stretched into a nightmare of three months after the ship sprang a leak.

Harriet contracted dysentery, and in early October went into premature labor and bore a daughter on shipboard. The baby died after exposure to a severe storm at sea. Twenty days after her arrival on the Isle of France, Harriet died of consumption made worse by the same storm that killed her baby. Her grieving husband wrote her family, describing her last sufferings and telling them that Harriet never regretted becoming a missionary for Christ. Her short life of selfless sacrifice profoundly impacted many in the homeland.



After serving with TEAM for 21 years, Marv taught eight years at the Moody Theological Seminary before becoming Senior Vice President, Missio Nexus.

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MRS. ANN H. JUDSON.

### Ann Judson

Ann and Adoniram spent 1812 and most of 1813 wandering – emotionally, literally, and theologically. Seeking to evade deportation from India and searching for an alternative mission field, in late 1813 they obtained passage to Burma and settled in Rangoon. Ann’s goal for her own ministry in Burma was to open a school for children. After acquiring facility in the language, Ann assisted Adoniram in his translation work by translating several tracts, and the books of Daniel and Jonah, into Burmese. Ann’s early accomplishments as a missionary wife were phenomenal, even with the heartbreaking loss of two children. In 1822 her health broke and she returned to the States for a rest, publishing a book on their pioneering missionary work in Burma. Upon her return, in 1824 Adoniram was imprisoned and tortured. Ann followed her husband from prison to prison and preserved his and several others’ lives by bribing officials and providing food. In 1826, after two years of imprisonment, Adoniram was released. But in October of that year, while Adoniram was away, Ann died at age thirty-eight, worn out from hardships. She spoke her last words in Burmese.



### Roxana Nott

The least known of the three was Roxana Nott. Since she was not present at the commissioning in Salem, she longed to meet Harriet and Ann for the first time. Upon her arrival in Calcutta on the *Harmony*, she discovered that Harriet had already departed for the Isle of France, so the two women would never meet. Roxana met Ann Judson, but as the Judsons were in process of becoming Baptist, there was no possibility of continuing in fellowship with them. Thus Roxana suffered one disappointment after another. She and Samuel were finally granted permission to open the work of the American Board in Bombay in 1813. Within two years, Samuel’s health deteriorated and the couple was forced to return to the United States, arriving in August of 1816. Roxana encouraged other women who aspired to serve as missionaries, but the Notts themselves never returned to the field. Roxana lived a “humble and holy life” as a minister’s wife, finally dying in Hartford at age ninety-one. Despite her role as the first woman connected with the American Board, Roxana Nott was virtually forgotten.

Roxana Nott, the forgotten “failure,” Harriet Newell, the self-sacrificing martyr, and Ann Judson, the activist heroine – were the models of mission provided by the first American missionary wives. The three started out together, but almost immediately the different circumstances of their lives and their individual reactions to their contexts meant that they provided very different images of missionary life to women back in North America.<sup>f</sup>

*Compressed and adopted from Dana L. Robert, American Women in Mission: A Social History of their Thought and Practice. Mercer University Press, 1997.*

# NORTH AMERICAN PIONEER MISSIONARIES BEFORE 1812

THIS YEAR'S MISSION BICENTENNIAL DRAWS ATTENTION TO THE FIRST NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONARIES WHO WERE SENT OUT BY AN ORGANIZED MISSION SOCIETY. THAT SENDING PRECIPITATED THE SENDING OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF NORTH AMERICAN MISSIONARIES WHO FOLLOWED AFTER THEM RIGHT UP UNTIL TODAY. HOWEVER, IT NEEDS TO BE REMEMBERED THAT THERE WERE THOSE WHO HAD ENGAGED IN CROSS-CULTURAL AND EVEN CROSS-COUNTRY MISSIONARY WORK BEFORE 1812. HERE IS A LOOK AT SOME OF THE BETTER KNOWN.

**MARVIN J. NEWELL**

## **John Eliot**

John Eliot (1604 - 1690) was a Puritan missionary to Native Americans. His efforts earned him the designation "the Indian apostle." Eliot was born in England but emigrated to Boston in 1631 where he became minister and teaching elder at the First Church in Roxbury, founding the Roxbury Latin School in 1645.

Eliot was instrumental in the conversion of the Massachusetts Native Americans, whose territory comprised most of what is today the state of Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut. To help achieve this, Eliot translated the Bible into the native language and published it in 1663. In 1666, his grammar of Massachusetts, called "The Indian Grammar Begun," was published. As a cross-cultural missionary Eliot was best known



for putting Native Americans in planned towns in hopes of encouraging them to recreate a Christian society. At one point in time, there were 14 of those so-called "Praying Towns."

Eliot married Hanna Mumford, and they had six children, five girls and one boy, with only the son surviving. John Eliot died in 1690, aged 85, his last words being "welcome joy!" A monument to him is on the grounds of the Bacon Free Library in Natick, Massachusetts.

## **David Brainerd**

David Brainerd (1718 – 1747) was a missionary to the Native Americans with a particularly fruitful ministry among the Delaware Indians of New Jersey.

Brainerd was born on April 20, 1718 in Haddam, Connecticut, and was orphaned at the age of fourteen. At age 21 he enrolled at Yale but in his second year was sent home because he was suffering from tuberculosis, the disease that would eventually take his life.

In April 1743, Brainerd began work as a missionary at Kaunameek, a Housatonic Indian settlement near present-day Nassau, New York. He remained there for one year, opened a school for Native American children and began to translate the Psalms.



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Subsequently, he was reassigned to work among the Delaware Indians along the Delaware River northeast of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, where he remained for another year. After this, he moved to Crossweeksung, New Jersey, where he had his most fruitful ministry. During these years, he refused several offers to leave missions to become a church minister.

In November 1746, becoming too ill to continue his mission work, he traveled to Northampton, Massachusetts, where he stayed at the house of Jonathan Edwards. He remained with Edwards until his death the following year. He died from tuberculosis on October 9, 1747, at the age of 29.

### **John Marrant<sup>1</sup>**

John Marrant (1755 – 1791) was one of the first African-American preachers and missionaries. He was born in New York City in 1755. Following the death of his father, he moved with his mother to Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina. At the age of 13 he heard Methodist preacher George Whitefield and was converted. After disagreements with his family about this, he wandered in the wilderness, relying on God to feed and protect him. He was found by a Cherokee hunter and taken to a Cherokee town, where he was sentenced to death. However, his life was spared, allegedly due to the miraculous conversion of the executioner.

Marrant lived with the Cherokees for two years before returning to Charleston, where his own family didn't

recognize him. He continued his missionary work with slaves, despite the objection of their owners, until the start of the American Revolution. By 1775 he had carried the gospel to the Cherokee, Creek, Catawaw and Housaw Indians. He was ordained in 1785 and sent to Nova Scotia to minister to several thousand African-Americans who had fled north during the fighting. He then traveled to London in 1790, where he died the following year.

### **George Liele<sup>2</sup>**

George Liele (1750–1820) was an emancipated African-American slave who became the first missionary to serve outside the borders of the United States and the first Baptist missionary to Jamaica.

Liele was born into slavery in Virginia in 1752, but was taken to Georgia. As an adult he was converted around 1774. Liele was freed by his master, a Baptist and Loyalist, before the American Revolution began. Once freed, Liele went to Savannah, Georgia, where he helped organize an early Baptist congregation.

At the close of the Revolutionary War, Liele chose to depart with the British to ensure his freedom rather than risk re-enslavement in the American South. In 1783 he was transported to Jamaica with his wife Hannah and their four children. He preached at the racecourse in Kingston, where the novelty of a black itinerant ex-slave preacher attracted considerable attention. News of his itinerant-style preaching quickly spread. Lisle (as his name was spelled in Jamaica) was soon able to gather a congregation and purchase a piece of land about a mile from Kingston, where he gradually built a chapel. He formed the First African Baptist Church of Kingston. Over the next 10 years the church grew to over 500. He died in Kingston in 1820.

### **Prince Williams<sup>3</sup>**

Rev. Prince Williams was the first African-American Baptist missionary to the Bahama Islands. He left Saint Augustine, FL, around 1790 and organized a Baptist church in Nassau. In 1801 he secured land and built a small house of worship, calling it the Bethel Baptist Mission. At age 70 Williams erected St. John's Baptist Church and ministered there until his death at age 104. Subsequently, 164 Baptist churches were planted in the Bahamas.<sup>f</sup>

1. Vaughn J. Walston, and Robert J. Stevens, editors, "African-American Experiences in World Missions: A Call Beyond Community," pages 49 and 83. Also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Marrant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Marrant)
2. Walston and Stevens, *ibid.* Also: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George\\_Lisle\\_%28Baptist%29](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Lisle_%28Baptist%29)
3. Walston and Stevens, *ibid.*



# Learn From Our Mistakes



FIRST PRESENTED AS THE PAPER, "TO THE NEW ASIAN SOCIETY OF MISSIOLOGY: GREETINGS FROM THE WEST," IN BANGKOK IN 2007

**RALPH D. WINTER**

In 1973, a third of a century ago, David Cho, Ph.D., invited several of us from the West to a meeting in Seoul, Korea, which preceded the formation of the Asia Missions Association. On that occasion I presented a paper urging Asian mission leaders not to make the same mistake as Western leaders had made when the Foreign Mission Conference of North America shortly after 1900 had insisted that in God's Kingdom only denominational mission boards were legitimate. My paper was entitled, "The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission," which spoke favorably of both "modalities" and "sodalities." By now, of course, there are many American as well as Asian structures that are interdenominational.

Later, I often pointed out in my classroom teaching the shocking failure of the Western missions to understand the possibility and importance of non-Western believers to form their own mission agencies. By now, of course, non-Western agencies are very numerous and enthusiastic.

It would seem clear that Asian mission leaders (and others) have potentially a great advantage in being able to learn from the mistakes of Western agencies. If not, Asian mission leaders face the danger of making some of the same mistakes. One problem is that Western leaders may not know what their mistakes are, and thus cannot warn Asian leaders of what Western leaders did wrong. It is also true that not all Westerners agree about the various issues in missiology. Thus, the twelve "mistakes" of Western churches and agencies, as described below, must be understood to be merely my own best understanding. Note that they are not problems of the distant past. They are all contemporary problems. In any case, Asians (and others) will have to judge their validity.

## **The Mistake of Starting Bible Schools, Not Universities**

The Student Volunteer Movement, in which John Mott was a leader, is noted for the number of universities that it established around the world. The missionaries who went to China made sure there was a university in every province of China. However, in later years Evangelicals, who had never been to college, went out across the world and established Bible schools, Bible institutes or theological schools that either replaced or ignored the university tradition. In the last 50 years the majority of American mission agencies have not founded a single university.

The curious thing is that, even though Western missionaries cannot be given credit (except in the earlier period) for establishing universities, the hundreds of thousands of national leaders who have been a product of Western mission agencies have been able to see what the missionaries could not see. They have recognized the great influence of the university pattern. As a result they have taken the initiative to found over 40 universities in the last 40 years. I myself was, somewhat accidentally, part of the founding of an evangelical university in Guatemala, which now after 40 years has 37,000 students. No missionary can be given any credit for the founding of this university. In my case I merely stood up for a photograph of the founding board of directors two weeks before leaving the country to be a professor at Fuller Seminary.

Why is it that missionaries have not realized that Bible schools, no matter how high the quality of instruction and curricula, simply do not represent the global mainstream of the university pattern? In the last 100 years in the United States 157 Bible institutes eventually, after

sixty or seventy years, have converted over to colleges and universities. Why haven't missionaries applied the same practical wisdom in their work overseas? This has been a serious strategic mistake. We can at least be glad that national leaders have taken the initiative to found universities without the help of Western missionaries.

### **The Mistake of Only "Salvation in Heaven," not "Kingdom on Earth"**

Earlier missionaries again were wiser than those in recent times. They realized that (as we see in the Lord's Prayer), Jesus told us to pray for God's Kingdom to come and His will to be done on earth. Yet we have mainly helped people escape this world. Unlike the 19th century, many missionaries in the 20th century, who have not been influential in the upper levels of society, have been content to talk about getting people into heaven but have no longer been concerned for transformation in this life. They have done many good things on the micro level of society—hospitals, clinics, schools, vocational training, agricultural developments—they even pioneered insights into leprosy and essentially conquered that malady. But there were many things on the macro level of society they couldn't do without greater social influence, such as stamping out Guinea Worm or malaria. Today, however, when Evangelicals have far greater influence than ever before, they are often asleep to the opportunities for transformation on the macro levels of society.

### **The Mistake of Congregations Sending Missionaries, Not Using Mission Agencies**

Today many congregations are large enough and strong enough to feel that they don't need a mission agency through which to send their missionaries. This is a new and widespread phenomenon which ignores the great value of the veteran mission agencies which can draw upon the insights of missiology and the vast field experience which are lacking in the average congregation. It may be true that some mission agencies are more experienced and wiser than others, but to my knowledge there is no example of a local congregation bypassing mission agencies with any great success.

### **The Mistake of Whole Congregations in Direct Involvement, Not Professional Missions**

A more recent phenomenon (which is characteristic of whole congregations which are highly excited about missions) is the idea of every family in a congregation briefly becoming a missionary family. In this plan, during, say, a four-year period, the intention is for every family in the church to go overseas to work on some sort of two-week project. This is a marvelous idea for the education of people in the church about foreign lands. Yet, it is incredibly

expensive and it is a very questionable contribution to the cause of missions.

### **The Mistake of Insisting that Devout Followers of Jesus Call Themselves "Christians" and Identify with the Western Church**

Congregations may find it easy to believe that their people can win converts to Christianity in a ten-day short-term mission. But what very few congregations in America are prepared to understand is that dragging people out of their culture and converting them to what they think a "Christian" should look like is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible talks of our conveying a treasure in earthen vessels. The earthen vessels are not the important thing, but the treasure is. The new vessel will be another very different earthen vessel. This is what happened when the faith of the Bible was first conveyed to Greeks. In that case the treasure of biblical faith in an earthen Jewish vessel became contained in a Greek earthen vessel. Later it went to Latin vessels and to Germanic vessels and to English vessels, and is now contained in Muslim vessels, Hindu vessels and Buddhist vessels.

It is just as unreasonable for a Hindu to be dragged completely out of his culture in the process of becoming a follower of Christ as it would have been if Paul the Apostle had insisted that a Greek become a Jew in the process of following Christ. Amazingly, there may be more Muslims who are true, Bible-believing followers of Christ, than there are Muslims who have abandoned their cultural tradition in the process of becoming Christian. There are already more Hindus who are predominantly Hindu in their culture but who are Bible-reading believers in Jesus Christ, than there are Hindus who have abandoned their culture and become "Christian." In the New Testament there was no law against a Greek becoming a Jew. However, Paul was very insistent that that kind of a cultural conversion was not necessary in becoming a follower of Christ.

### **The Mistake of Sending Only Money, Not Missionaries**

This has been a problem for many years. It can rarely be a good thing to send money to a mission field with little accountability for its use. There are many examples where foreign funds are used to "buy" national leaders away from their churches or away from their denominations rather than strengthening the existing churches. Money can be very helpful, but there is no example of harm to the cause of missions that is more extensive than the careless use of money. Money is more easily corrupted than missionaries. This is the reason that wise national leaders talk about trade, not aid. What poor people need is the ability to earn money. With earnings they can buy

food and medicines and not have to rely upon uncertain gifts from a foreign country. Missionaries are often ill-trained to establish businesses.

### **The Mistake of Sending Short-Termers, Not Long-Termers**

This is not a case where one of these things is good and the other is bad. Neither should take the place of the other. However, there are now almost two million short-termers leaving the United States each year compared to 35,000 long-term missionaries. Note that the overall cost of short-termers is at least five times as much as the overall cost of long-term missionaries. This means that instead of doubling or tripling the number of long-term missionaries, we're investing at least five times as much money in short-termers. Short-term trips are a wonderful education, but a very small accomplishment in missions. Worse still, a short term is often scary enough or useless enough to turn a young person away from being a missionary at all.

### **The Mistake of Not Understanding Business in Mission and Mission in Business**

One of the latest explosions of interest in missions is the result of Christian businessmen in the United States recognizing the value of thoroughly Christian businesses in a foreign land. There is no question that one of the greatest needs of churches across the world is for their members to earn a living. It is pathetic when we think of sending food around the world instead of sending businesses that would enable believers to earn the money necessary to buy their own food. Businesses can often do things that are very essential. They can enable local people to sell their products in foreign lands. They can produce goods of great value to the people. Unfortunately, it is true that few missionaries have business experience and often ignore opportunities to establish businesses that would employ large numbers of needy people.

One thing is true, however, that businesses cannot be relied on as a source of profit for missionary work. In the long run, businesses that divert profits to other things will lose out to competitors who don't divert profits to other things. There is no great future in a plan to "milk" profits from a business to support ministry. It is equally true that micro loans may have a temporary value, but will also fall prey to competitors with larger capital resources employing inherently more efficient processes. In the early history of missions, Moravian missionaries started businesses and so did some Swiss and German missionaries. Sadly, American missionaries have not been as creative. However, the business process will never take the place of the mission process in situations where the people in need cannot pay for what is needed. Businesses have to recover their own expenses. The mission process

is still essential in all situations where there is no realistic possibility of remuneration.

### **The Mistake of Healing the Sick, Not Eradicating Disease Germs**

The activity of healing the sick is one of the most genuine means of portraying God's love and His concern for hurting people. It is a perfect example of the importance of the essential relationship of word and deed. On the other hand, with our increased scientific knowledge of microbiology God can expect us to go beyond healing the sick to the eradication of the germs that make millions sick. Missionaries have done well in establishing a thousand hospitals, but very few of them are big enough or are properly structured to be able to drive out of existence the evil pathogens that cause millions of people to be sick.

Malaria is an example of a tiny parasite that drags 45 million Africans out of the workplace every day of the year. It is imperative that the malarial parasite be eradicated. Malaria is virtually as large a threat in Africa as the AIDS epidemic. We don't yet know how to eradicate the AIDS virus, but we do know how to rid this planet of malaria. That would be a significant transformation. Why then is there no Christian mission agency that is involved in the eradication of malaria rather than merely the healing of those who are attacked by malaria? It is very embarrassing to have to admit that the Church of Jesus Christ is expecting billionaires like Bill Gates to do that job for them. Worse still, Christians are misrepresenting the love of God in Christ if they do not become noted for their relentless efforts in such a cause.

### **The Mistake of Thinking "Peace," Not "War"**

Missionaries have for centuries moved out across the world with the idea that the gospel is merely a message to be communicated rather than a "call to arms." I grew up with the idea that the main problem the Bible talked about was how human beings can become reconciled to God. That is certainly a glorious part of the story! But the main problem the Bible is really talking about goes beyond man's reconciliation to God and is more precisely a war in which God-plus-man is fighting against Satan and his evil works. As a result, our God is being blamed widely for rampant disease, poverty, injustice and corruption—since we, as Christians, are not fighting these works of Satan. People are asking, "What kind of a God would sponsor a world like this?" They say this because they are unaware of the existence of Satan and his intelligent opposition to God. Thus, instead of God being glorified, He is being blamed for the work of Satan.

When things go wrong Evangelicals commonly say, "Why would God do that?" instead of blaming Satan. They do



not realize that we are in a war and that casualties are to be expected because of the hideous strength of our opponent. We are lulled into inaction by the widespread belief that Satan was “defeated” at the Cross. In fact, the Cross was the turning point beyond which there have been centuries of ongoing conflict with a Satan yet to be completely defeated. Long after the Cross, Paul told Agrippa his mission was delivering people from “the dominion of Satan.” Satan was still around. Peter talked about Satan seeking to destroy. Christians today, with modern understanding of microbiology, for example, as well as the endemic corruption in business and government, now possess far greater responsibility than we have ever had before. Are mission agencies part of that war against Satan? Is it necessary for Christ’s followers to be counted at the front lines of that war, whether it be the eradication of disease or the conquest of corruption in business and government? Do we misrepresent God if we are missing in action? I feel sure we do.

### **The Mistake of Assuming Science Is a Foe, Not a Friend**

When I was a young person, missionaries were showing science films 2,000 times per day in the non-Western world. The Moody Institute of Science films were shown even more widely in America. Many times in history Christian scholars have recognized that God has revealed Himself in “Two Books,” the Book of Nature and the Book of Scripture. As Psalm 19 indicates, the Book of Nature does not even need to be translated into the world’s languages. Every missionary must take with him to the mission field both a microscope and a telescope if we are to properly glorify God. Even more important is the need to take to the field a true reverence for the glory of God in Creation. This requires a substantial knowledge of nature. Science is the study of God’s creativity. Art is the study of man’s creativity. We cannot truly expect educated people to accept Christ if our hymns in church reflect no awareness of anything discovered in nature in the last 400 years, or if our young people are being led astray by recent and superficial theories that the world is only 6,000 years old. That is an improper reading of Genesis 1:1, as well as a reckless ignoring of thousands of honest Evangelicals who are outstanding scientists.

### **The Mistake of an Evangelism That is Not Validated and Empowered by Social Transformation**

Several times in the points I have already made above I have contrasted the 19th-century Western missionaries

and 20th-century Western missionaries. This is because a radical change in the perspective of American Evangelicals took place between the 1800s and the 1900s. In the 19th century we were singing about the glorification of God as His will is fulfilled “on earth.” Here is the final stanza and chorus of “America the Beautiful”:

O beautiful for patriot dream  
That sees beyond the years.  
Thine alabaster cities gleam  
Undimmed by human tears.  
America! America!  
God shed His grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea.

In the 20th century we have been singing mainly about heaven:

This world is not my home,  
I’m just a passin’ through.  
My treasures are laid up somewhere beyond the blue.  
The angels beckon me from Heaven’s open door.  
And I can’t feel at home in this world anymore.

In the 1800s great revivals swept the country, and Evangelicals in high places conceived and promoted equally sweeping reforms. Then, immigration of non-Evangelical people quadrupled the population, and Evangelicals lost influence. Millions of non-college people were converted by D. L. Moody and others, but their 157 Bible institutes did not feed the professions or Congress. Only recently, as Evangelicals have more and more been going to universities, are there sufficient numbers of American Evangelicals to begin to think seriously about social transformation either in the USA or elsewhere in the world.

### **Conclusion**

I hope it is clear that I have not wanted to do more than point out what in my estimation are failings and shortcomings in the history of Western mission thinkers. My perspectives may be faulty. At least I have raised certain issues that Asian missiologists may also confront in their work. Furthermore, this must not be a one-way street. I hope that we in the West can learn from members of the Asian Society of Missiology as they share with us their own perspectives.

We of the West have already learned a great deal from you. We expect to learn a great deal more in the future. Thank you for this invitation to greet you in Christ’s name! f

# What Have We Learned From 200 Years of Doing Missions?

Various Leaders Share Their Views

## Raising the sails for the wind of the harvest

STEVE SMITH, CHURCH PLANTER AND CO-AUTHOR WITH YING KAI OF *T4T: A DISCIPLESHIP RE-REVOLUTION*

From the days of Carey until now, missionaries have continued to refine ways to implement biblical expectations for God's kingdom to come fully to unreached peoples. Each generation of missions has moved forward in the journey toward appropriate expectations and models of reproducing evangelism, discipleship, church-planting and leadership development. In their quest to learn appropriate biblical, cross-cultural ministry patterns, missionaries have steadily moved from paternalistic models to empowering models, albeit with setbacks and hiccups along the way.

Reliving the movements of Acts has moved from a remote possibility to a realistic faith-filled expectation with each generation. To believe that we have arrived would be a naïve assumption. However, what we have learned in 200 years of missionary history is bearing fruit in unprecedented ways. We have learned more deeply that God's heart is to ignite kingdom movements that result in

multiplying generations of disciples and churches similar to the book of Acts. The number of true church-planting movements characterized by 4th+-generation disciples and churches continues to grow at a rapid pace, limited no longer by continent, worldview or religion.

We have grown in faith that our Father has prepared a harvest already in every people group. We know that he has sent us out as harvesters. What we have learned in addition to faith is an assortment of best practices of evangelism, discipleship, church-planting and leadership development that are better enabling us to posture ourselves to cooperate with the Spirit of the harvest. Acts-like movements are no longer a distant reality or occasional anomaly. We have come to expect that the Spirit is blowing and that we can raise appropriate sails of ministry to move with Him to see 30-, 60- and 100-fold fruit. We do not cause it, but we expect it because of greater understanding of the Spirit of the harvest.

## There is much to celebrate two hundred years later

PAUL PIERSON, PROFESSOR EMERITUS, FULLER SEMINARY

### The Great Growth of the Church Around the World.

It is now widely recognized that two-thirds of all active Christians live in what were formerly considered "mission fields," that is, in Asia, Africa and Latin America. And the church is still growing more rapidly than the population.

- Furthermore, with few exceptions, those churches are strongly biblical and evangelical. That is, they are Christocentric and believe strongly in the historic Christian faith.
- The growth of the cross-cultural missionary movement from Asia, Africa, and Latin America is, I believe, the most important fact since Carey sailed for India in 1793. No longer can the Christian faith be seen as a "Western religion." Its universal nature, the fact that the gospel is for all races, languages, cultures is being more clearly seen as it is being communicated

by men and women of a myriad of races and cultures. The promise to Abraham and the picture seen in Revelation 7 are being fulfilled!

- There is much greater sensitivity to cultures than before; through the study of anthropology and missionary experience, we recognize that every culture has within it elements that can be used to communicate and live the gospel. To become Christian does not mean to become Western.
- The growing understanding of two important theological concepts undergirds mission today; the *Missio Dei*, and the Kingdom of God.

*The Missio Dei reminds us that the mission is God's mission.* He is ceaselessly active in ways and places we can never fully anticipate. We are called to participate in His mission. It is His, not ours, and we can trust Him to bring it to completion.

*The Kingdom of God.* Jesus brought the Kingdom into history, a new reality. And God is working to establish His Kingdom. This concept, which is profoundly biblical, enables us to overcome the false dichotomy between evangelism and ministries of compassion and social transformation, and to embrace the ministries of the Holy Spirit and power that our Pentecostal and Charismatic colleagues have rediscovered.

## Issues to Be Faced in our Changing Era

We need to recognize that we have entered a post-denominational era in much of the world, and that this will be a growing tendency in the future. Our traditional Western denominations were formed around 16th- or 17th-century issues, no longer relevant in missionary contexts, (if they ever were).

We need to be clear in our definition of mission. I define mission as the communication of the Good News of Jesus Christ with the purpose of calling men and women to become His disciples and be formed into worshipping, nurturing, witnessing, serving communities called churches. These communities should become centers of witness and service in their own societies and beyond, including ministries of compassion and hope-fully, social transformation.

- It is important to focus on *discipleship*, seeking to plant churches and form believers who grow beyond conversion to maturity in personal and corporate life, the inner life with Christ, the Christian community, and the world beyond. For example, how do we address the fact of Rwanda, where “revival” had taken place earlier? Or the rapid growth of the Church in sub-Saharan Africa, where there is still great political corruption?
- *Globalization and Migration.* Cross-cultural mission is now from everywhere to everywhere. I am a pastor of the Hollywood Presbyterian Church. We have around 15 nations every Sunday in worship—and probably

120 languages spoken within two or three miles of the church. One of our former students, Magdy, from Egypt, was expelled from a Middle Eastern country, and now he is evangelizing Muslims near a large university in the United States with impressive results.

- *The focus on transformation that goes beyond but begins with evangelization.* Transformation will no doubt mean different things in various contexts, but should include gender equality, care of children and minorities, health care for the poor, etc.
- *Contextualization and “insider movements”*—new forms of the church. The recognition of the values that exist in every culture.
- The need for *partnerships and greater cooperation.*
- The need for *new methods of selecting and training leaders for the growing churches*, especially among the poor. This should include both institutional and non-institutional models, training men and women in the context of their ministries.
- *A theology of power.* Power is the most important religious category in most traditional religions. We have not paid enough attention to its importance.
- The need for a more *biblical theology of the church*, its nature and purpose. We must have mission at the heart of our ecclesiology.
- The *theology of the Kingdom of God* should be at the center of our thinking along with the *Missio Dei*. It provides a framework for a more biblical understanding of evangelism (called to become citizens of the Kingdom), the need to embrace and express the values of the Kingdom (justice, concern for the poor, etc.) and provides a scope for the Charismatic emphases, the gifts of the Spirit, power (since the Kingdom has already come, although not fully, in the coming of Christ).

## Obeying the Great Commission: Are We There Yet?

CHARLES WHITE, PROFESSOR OF CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND HISTORY AT SPRING ARBOR UNIVERSITY.

### Obeying the Great Commission: Are We There Yet?

**W**e do not know who was the first person to attempt to quantify Jesus’ Great Commission, but we know the voyages of Captain Cook and the stories of the lands he explored stirred the heart of an English cobbler named William Carey. Taking time away from his shoemaking, Carey made himself a globe out of left-over shoe leather and used the latest information to estimate the number of people on earth who needed the gospel. Where Carey could, he

used population figures, and for areas where these were unknown he guessed, using estimated population densities and areas to calculate the population. In addition to showing that there were hundreds of millions of people who had never heard the gospel, Carey also argued that Christians needed to make special efforts to reach people for Christ. Roman Catholics had long felt the missionary call, but Carey’s 1792 book mobilized Protestants as never before to preach Christ to the unevangelized. The next year, when Carey himself led a small team to India, his example gave new force to his facts and his arguments,

and inspired hundreds to follow his lead. At least a dozen missionary agencies were started, and churches were planted along the coasts of Africa, India and China.

The clear-sighted goal of this first era of Protestant missions work was to plant the Church on native soil with native pastors, and then reassign the missionaries to the regions beyond. However in 1865, Hudson Taylor, a missionary to China, was brooding over statistics, charts and maps. He realized that the Church had indeed been planted in many nations, but after beginning to raise up native pastors, the missionaries were not being reassigned to the regions beyond. Many missionaries felt the inland areas were too hard to reach or too dangerous for foreigners. Driven by a strong sense of call, Taylor adopted Chinese dress and headed for the interior. The China Inland Mission he founded set the pattern for 40 other missions that shared his calling to seek out lost souls for Christ, no matter how far away they were or how hard to reach. This second era of Protestant missions culminated in the Student Volunteer Movement, which by 1930 had sent more than 20,000 missionaries overseas, supported by perhaps half a million believers at home.

The success of this second era of Protestant missions led many to conclude that the Great Commission was complete and the missionary task accomplished. Of course no one thought Jesus' work on earth was done, but many seriously believed that since the Church was planted in almost every nation-state, local believers could finish the task. Many new independent nations emerged. Since the colonial powers were withdrawing, in the 1950s there was a call for a missionary moratorium in recognition of the strength of national churches.

In light of this Christian triumphalism, in 1974 Billy Graham convened an international congress on world evangelism in Lausanne. One of the questions to be answered at this congress was "How much of the missionary task yet remains?" Charged with answering this question was a missionary to Guatemala who was teaching at the Fuller School of World Mission, Ralph Winter. In a voice that rarely rose above a whisper, Winter answered the question in a way that rocked the Christian world. Drawing on the work of Cameron Townsend, founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators, and of Donald McGavran, the discoverer

of people movements, Winter pointed out that most of the non-Christians in the world of his day could not be reached by normal forms of evangelism. Winter argued that when Jesus told his disciples to make disciples of every *ethne* he was not commissioning them to reach every political nation, but every ethnic group. He asserted that the reason the Church misunderstood its task was "people blindness." People blindness prevents a church from seeing the hundreds of separate ethnic groups that reside within a nation-state. People blindness also keeps missionaries from seeing that a local church within one ethnic group cannot simply use ordinary evangelism to reach people in a neighboring but different group. Special cross-cultural evangelism must be employed if that different group is to hear about Jesus in a meaningful way.

So revolutionary was Winter's address that one of the experts whom the conference asked to comment on his paper did not grasp his idea, even though he had studied it ahead of time. Winter had shown that national boundaries were irrelevant to the missionary task because the nations (*ethne*) that Jesus wanted to reach paid no attention to national boundaries. He argued that even in the thoroughly-Christianized United States there was a cultural mosaic of groups who would never hear the gospel from the cozy, middle-class Church. The implication was that right down the street from a church could be a whole neighborhood of people who would never know Jesus unless someone loved them enough to learn their language and culture.

Winter's address, and the mission agency he founded, redirected the missionary efforts of the worldwide Church. Realizing it was unfair to present Christ's message once again to the middle class of North America, who have the chance to hear the gospel every day of the week and twice on Sunday, missionary agencies have refocused their efforts on the 10-40 Window, where most people have a chance to learn about Jesus at best once a year. In the 38 years since Winter's address the proportion of the world that has never heard of Jesus has fallen from more than 40% to less than 30%, as Christians have refocused their evangelistic efforts. Plans now exist to reach those remaining two billion people. For the first time in human history, our generation has the opportunity to finish the Great Commission.

## From What I've Learned...

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GALEN CURRAH, RETIRED MISSIONARY CHURCH PLANTER, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT, AND MISSIOLOGY TEACHER

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From the little I have learned from others and through experience, I wonder if the current Church-Planting Movements have not taught international Christianity the viability of non-clergy movements, that everything Christ commanded can be

accomplished without money, clergy, chapels and power structures. Put positively, the biblical patterns remain both viable and perhaps more effective, over time, than privileged, ecclesial power structures.



# Reproducing Fishers of Men



ROBBY BUTLER, WITH BILL SMITH AND GALEN CURRAH

DR. RALPH WINTER ONCE TOLD ME THAT, WHEN HE WAS IN OFFICERS' TRAINING FOR WORLD WAR II, THE NAVY CONSIDERED IT IMPORTANT FOR THEIR OFFICERS TO DISPLAY SKILL AND EXPERIENCE IN EVERY SOCIAL SITUATION. THEIR CURRICULUM THUS INCLUDED THREE WEEKS OF INTENSIVE TRAINING TOGETHER IN EVERY MAJOR SPORT—FROM VOLLEYBALL TO CRICKET.

Jesus used group interaction to train<sup>1</sup> His followers to become disciples—fully equipped to train others in complete, Spirit-led, loving obedience to all His commands. Where Jesus' training model is adapted today, the results are still “turning the world upside down.”

## Jesus' Training Model

Jesus is recorded twenty times in the New Testament as saying “Follow me.” This command brought a small group into a training relationship—with Jesus and with one another. Through these relationships Jesus

- turned His disciples into “fishers of men” (Mt 4:19; Mk 1:17),<sup>2</sup> and
- trained them in loving obedience (Jn 14:15) to train others (Mt 28:19–20).

Following His resurrection, Christ commissioned those He had trained to

- wait for the Holy Spirit's empowering (Ac 1:4), and then
- train all peoples to obey everything He had commanded (Mt 28:19–20).

Jesus didn't explain in advance everything His disciples would need to know; instead He gave them His Holy Spirit to continue their training after His departure

(Jn 16:13). With the Holy Spirit's guidance and empowering, the disciples then trained others to follow Jesus just as He had trained them—through modeling, practice, transparency and discussion.<sup>3</sup>

Consider these essential components of what Jesus gave the disciples:

- A living example of what complete obedience looks like.
- Training in working with the Holy Spirit.
- Guided experience to develop appropriate skills.
- Group obedience to overcome individual hesitance.
- Clear assignments, feedback and correction.
- Empowering disciples to make other disciples.

The Church in Acts had no written record of Jesus' teachings, and Jesus drew others to Himself so quickly that there were soon too many followers for most to have direct contact with the Twelve. Yet despite the unavailability of the tools we depend on today, explosive growth continued as Jesus-followers received Spirit-led ministry from one another in small groups (1 Co 14:26). This reproducible group process resulted in multiplying, Spirit-led, loving obedience to Jesus which rapidly drew yet others to follow Him.

## Training for Obedience

My wife and I sometimes encounter resistance in our children to learning things for which they lack skills and positive experiences, like public speaking. Teaching them about the value of speaking skills reduced this resistance but didn't overcome it. However they did acquire significant skills and positive experiences in public speaking by training with peers in a competitive speech league. Where they were resistant before, now they are grateful.

Information and doctrine are of value,<sup>4</sup> but these alone are generally not enough to move believers past inhibitions rooted in lack of skills and experience.

*Robby Butler: a student and advocate of fruitful mission models, and a contributing editor for Mission Frontiers.*



*Bill Smith: church planter, trainer of church planters and trainers, VP of Church Planting for East West Ministries.*

*Galen Currah: church planter, consultant, and editor of Paul-Timothy.net - galenc@peopleofyes.com (English and French)*

Overcoming such obstacles usually also requires some combination of

- Holy Spirit conviction,
- group encouragement,
- appropriate skills, and
- positive experiences.

In witnessing, for example, doctrinal teaching and how-to resources are enough for a small percentage of believers who seem to have a natural gifting or personality that makes sharing their faith easy.<sup>5</sup> But other believers, who feel awkward in sharing their faith, may compare themselves with those who seem to find witnessing easy and end up feeling inadequate and inferior. Without Spirit-led group training they may still push themselves sporadically, only to conclude based on negative experiences that God simply hasn't gifted or called them to actively sharing their faith.

However as the *Training for Trainers* (T4T) movement shows, appropriate group encouragement and the cultivation of related skills with reliance on the Holy Spirit can play a transforming role in leading people to positive experiences in sharing their faith.<sup>6</sup>

### Teaching without Training

Unfortunately, the Western church relies heavily on *teaching* people doctrine and information alone, without complementary group *training* in Spirit-led application. This is a very slow approach to overcoming personal obstacles to obedience. Such teaching should be a *complement* to training in Spirit-led obedience, or even a *component* of such training, but not an exclusive *replacement* for it.

Yet in Western seminaries, church gatherings, small groups, and other ministry contexts, the *teaching of doctrine and information* is generally isolated from *training in Spirit-led obedience*. This heavy reliance on human teaching—without training in Spirit-led obedience—often “trains” those who sit under such teaching to ...

- rely on human experts (rather than the Holy Spirit),
- pursue knowledge (rather obedience to what one already knows), and
- direct others to an expert (rather than discipling them to Jesus).

The result is a largely stagnant Western church in which only two percent are active “fishers of men.”<sup>7</sup>

### Training with Teaching

All the major doctrines of the faith are required for obedience, so there is ample opportunity to teach doctrine while training groups in Spirit-led obedience. All such doctrines can and often should be taught inductively from stories in the Bible in a way which cultivates reliance on the Holy Spirit to speak through His

Word—rather than reliance on someone else to interpret God's Word for them. Whenever the Holy Spirit leads us to present information or teach doctrine, we must also train the group to listen together to the Holy Spirit, and to test what we teach against the Scripture.

Our role in training all peoples to obey is *not* merely to

- pass on knowledge, or
- tell them what to believe.

Our role is to train them to

- evaluate all doctrines and activities by God's Word,
- interact with one another to agree on what the Holy Spirit is saying to them,
- help one another overcome cultural and internal obstacles to obedience, and
- act in loving obedience to Jesus, both individually and collectively.

### Rediscovering Obedience

Love for Christ is demonstrated in obedience to His commandments (Jn 14:15).

In 1976 George Patterson introduced *Obedience Oriented Education*<sup>8</sup>—a practical group process for training pastors to train others in Spirit-led, loving obedience to Christ. This resulted in the *Spontaneous Multiplication of Churches*<sup>9</sup> and inspired other Church Planting Movements<sup>10</sup> which have borne fruit reminiscent of the book of Acts.

Patterson's original model was developed for pastors in an effort to integrate formal theological education with pastoral ministry. Later adaptations by Patterson and others have become less directive, more inductive and interactive, and applicable to every believer.

### Group Guidance

Western individualism is reinforced by the absence of a distinction in English between the plural and singular “you.” Even though nearly all of the commands and promises of Scripture were originally addressed to groups, we tend to read such passages *only* for personal application.<sup>11</sup>

“Personal devotions” have many benefits, but they can leave believers with a bewildering mix of real and imagined guidance. They should not be considered an adequate *substitute* for the group interaction Jesus modeled.<sup>12</sup>

A more reliable approach to discerning God's guidance is inductive *group* discovery of what God is saying from His Word—to whole groups as well as to individuals. This requires the full active participation of everyone, as directed by Paul:

When you come together, everyone has a hymn, a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue, an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church (1 Co 14:26).<sup>13</sup>

In most societies, family and community remains the primary context in which believers will gather to pursue guidance and obedience. *Church Planting Movements* and *Jesus Movements*<sup>14</sup> demonstrate the wisdom and fruitfulness of trusting the Holy Spirit to guide and empower such local believers in obeying God's Word within their own context, free of imported church culture. Such movements also display the Holy Spirit's sufficiency even where access to the Bible is nearly as limited as it was in the book of Acts.

## Training for Obedience

*Teaching* information or doctrine to individuals isn't the same as *training* groups to obey Jesus. Training groups in Spirit-led, loving obedience requires two-way interaction which facilitates each group member in:

- discussing what God is telling them through His Word and His Spirit,
- identifying and addressing obstacles to obedience (such as fear),
- developing skills for obedience through "safe" practice in the group,
- making specific plans to obey and praying together over those plans, and
- debriefing later to celebrate victories and address remaining obstacles.

The common fruitfulness of *Church Planting Movements* and *Jesus Movements* demonstrates the Holy Spirit's eagerness to reproduce groups of people which gather to hear and obey Jesus. Here are two examples:<sup>15</sup>

- *Training for Trainers* (T4T) grows by training believers
  - first in basic skills to collaborate with the Holy Spirit in leading non-believers to follow Christ,
  - then to guide these new believers in Spirit-led obedience in leading others to Christ and a few other explicit commands the early Church was swift to obey, and
  - finally to train the resulting groups to continue relying on the Spirit's guidance to empower them to interpret and obey God's Word.
- *Discovery Bible Study* (DBS) grows by
  - inviting non-believers to explore God's Word together, and
  - following patterns with them from the start which become obedience as the Holy Spirit reveals Jesus to them.

## Conclusion

Where the Church reduces the Great Commission to teaching information and cultivating a dependence on human leadership, obedience to Christ tends to be slow and sporadic, and movements do not flourish.

But the evidence from recent *Church Planting Movements* and *Jesus Movements* demonstrates that the Holy Spirit can start a movement through anyone Jesus leads to train groups to adapt Jesus' training model under the Holy Spirit's guidance. Where this is being done today, the results are still "turning the world upside down."<sup>16</sup>

## Resources for Application

- David Watson's *Discovery Bible Study*.<sup>16</sup>
  - George Patterson's *People of Yes*.<sup>17</sup>
  - Steve Smith/Ying Kai's *Training for Trainers* (T4T).<sup>18</sup>
  - David Garrison's *Church Planting Movements*.<sup>19</sup>
1. Since "teaching" has a popular meaning of "passing on information," and "disciple" has a diverse and confusing variety of meanings, I use "train" throughout this article for the biblical concept of shaping behavior through example *and* instruction. While I recommend learning from and adapting reproducible training principles which have proven fruitful where Christ's Body is multiplying, I do not mean to imply the use of any materials other than the Bible interpreted by the Holy Spirit.
  2. Unless otherwise noted, all Bible references are from the NIV.
  3. Jesus' model can be summarized in four reproducible steps: 1) model the desired behavior, 2) assist others to hear and obey the Spirit's leading, 3) evaluate and discuss the results, and 4) sacrificially empower others to carry on the work.
  4. Information and doctrine are of greatest value, and most easily and deeply grasped, when taught in the context of application for obedience.
  5. Unfortunately, those who witness naturally with no need for training themselves often do not discover how to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in training others. They often become superstar Christians who gain the respect of others, without learning how to produce others who reproduce through multiple generations.
  6. David Garrison details here the T4T answers to four questions each Christian must get past to become an effective and consistent witness: <http://vimeo.com/19845474>. This is part of an excellent series of short videos by David Garrison on T4T.
  7. According to Bill Bright in his book *The Coming Revival* (New Life. Publications, 1995), p. 65, "Only two percent of believers in America regularly share their faith."
  8. [paul-timothy.net/studies/pt\\_104\\_a4.pdf](http://paul-timothy.net/studies/pt_104_a4.pdf).
  9. Patterson's insights provide the foundation for *Perspectives* lesson 13: *The Spontaneous Multiplication of Churches* [paul-timothy.net/pages/perspectives/lesson\\_13\\_rev.pdf](http://paul-timothy.net/pages/perspectives/lesson_13_rev.pdf).
  10. David Garrison is the author of *Church Planting Movements: How God is Redeeming a Lost World* (Wigtake Resources, 2003). His website [ChurchPlantingMovements.com](http://ChurchPlantingMovements.com) offers this definition: "A Church Planting Movement is a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group or population segment" [tinyurl.com/CPMDefined](http://tinyurl.com/CPMDefined).
  11. It is possible to compensate for this by mentally inserting "together" or "alone" after "you" to test the context.
  12. In cultures where everything is normally done together, imposed individual "quiet times" can become a painful and unnecessary burden which Westerners do well not to overemphasize.
  13. Adapted from the NIV to reflect the emphasis in the Greek on everyone bringing everything mentioned.
  14. See the May/June 2011 issue of *Mission Frontiers*.
  15. See the resource list at above and below for more details on these models.
  16. For the dynamics read Paul Watson's "Small Groups that have the DNA of a Gospel Planting Movement": [networkedblogs.com/2slfF](http://networkedblogs.com/2slfF). For content see "From Creation to Christ – Guided Discovery Bible Study Reference List": [davidwatson.org/2009/07/11/from-creation-to-christ-%E2%80%93-guided-discovery-bible-study-reference-list](http://davidwatson.org/2009/07/11/from-creation-to-christ-%E2%80%93-guided-discovery-bible-study-reference-list). For a 68 minute video with links to other videos, see: [ustream.tv/recorded/1505155](http://ustream.tv/recorded/1505155).
  17. [PeopleOfYes.com](http://PeopleOfYes.com).
  18. [missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/training-for-trainers-process](http://missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/training-for-trainers-process). See also the resources at [T4Tonline.org](http://T4Tonline.org), or see a two minute video with links to other videos: [vimeo.com/19845280](http://vimeo.com/19845280).
  19. [ChurchPlantingMovements.com](http://ChurchPlantingMovements.com).

# BUILDING MOMENTUM...

## Report from the Global Network of Centers for World Mission

DAVID TAYLOR

Over thirty years ago it was proposed at a world-level meeting known as Edinburgh 1980 that a network and movement of centers for world mission be formed which would do the following: research the unreached peoples; assess the potential harvest force; establish a global registry of unreached people engagement; develop and share resources, ideas, approaches and models; mobilize agencies and churches for frontier mission; facilitate inter-mission cooperation; coordinate training for frontier missions; sponsor regional and national frontier mission meetings; and equip frontier mission intercessors.

Since that time what has become known as the Global Network of Centers for World Mission (GNCWM) has been formed to link national mission centers around the world. In general terms, Centers for World Mission can be thought of as missional think tanks. Their job is to look at the big picture of what is happening to finish the task, propose solutions to problems and gaps, and help facilitate action to address any critical issues which are identified. The latter objective, which is the “missional” or activist part, is the distinguishing mark of a center for world mission (CWM).

In December of 2011, the GNCWM held a three-day gathering for such centers in South Korea. The time was spent focused on discussing issues related to strategy, mobilization and training. One day was given to each of these important areas. Though the papers of this gathering will be published in an upcoming edition of the *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, a brief summary of each day is given here for *Mission Frontiers* readers, along with some of the key insights that were shared.

*David Taylor is the research director of the Global Network of Mission Structures (www.gnms.net). He is the senior editor of the Global Mission Database (www.gmd.info) and author of Operation 10/40 Window (www.op1040.info). You may contact him at david.taylor@uscwm.org.*

### Strategy

The area of strategy dealt with field realities and the state of cooperation to finish the task. In his opening remarks to the gathering, GNCWM's lead facilitator Chong Kim placed strategy front-and-center for the network's attention. He challenged the delegates:

As we meet here in Korea . . . I submit that our highest priority is no longer frontier mission mobilization but strategy. Generally speaking, the global missions enterprise continues to recognize the need to focus on the remaining UPGs. What we are not sure about is how to reach them most effectively.

Kang-San Tan delivered the opening strategy paper which wrestled with why Westernized Christianity has been ineffective among the world's major religions. Among many keen observations, Kang stirred the network with this reality:

“There are so few genuine models of partnership whereby the dominance of wealthy Western partners give way to non-Western interests. Would Christians in Europe be ready to receive leadership from non-Western partners beyond tokenism? Given the new equilibrium of Christianity from the majority world, more could be done in promoting diversity in mission leadership.”

Also during this session, a proposal was made to see 500 field-based centers for world mission established in strategic areas around the world. These field CWMs would function in a very similar way to the traditional concept of a CWM, but they would have a specific focus on a particular unreached area or people group. Their purpose would be to serve the entire mission effort in that field area, including expatriate, national and indigenous pioneering activities, towards the end of seeing fully disciplined peoples. Among other activities, these field-based CWMs might do one or more of the following:

1. Identify strategic population segments for missionary engagement.
2. Evaluate the extent to which the gospel is impacting various identified sub-groups.
3. Investigate reported breakthroughs.



4. Track the progress of the gospel among every community (towns, villages, city neighborhoods) among the people group(s).
5. Facilitate the reaching of nearby smaller unreached people groups.
6. Serve as a liaison between the outside mission force and the indigenous church.
7. Act as a communication hub for sharing news and updates with both intercessors around the world as well as the church and mission community.

A model for one field-based center was presented by Dwight Martin, founder of the Thai Christian Resource Center. Dwight and his team have researched the entire country of Thailand, and have identified the major church-planting priorities for the whole nation. They have collected every evangelistic and discipleship resource ever made in Thai and digitized them, making available a whole library of resources to every pastor who wants it. His group has also been a champion among the expatriate community for bringing Thai leaders to the table when discussing strategy issues.

## Mobilization

The second day of the gathering was focused on mobilization, which related to equipping the Church for fulfilling the Great Commission. Two unique presentations were given from the Philippine and Korean contexts, both of which called for the total mobilization of the entire Church. Dr. Rey Taniajura of the Philippine Missions Association asserted that “God is refocusing our attention from the task to the goal—from simply doing missions to preparing the Bride of Christ—a turning point. This is evidenced by the focus on transformation and discipling of nations.” In other words, as we become more effective in engaging every part of the Body of Christ in carrying out the Great Commission within our own culture, we will be mobilizing and preparing them for mission in other cultures. For example, lawyers and doctors that become awakened to their mission as Kingdom ambassadors in their field can become effective in impacting lawyers and doctors in other cultural contexts. The same could be said of believers in the business world, education sphere, etc. To put it simply, a healthy Church will lead to healthy and effective global mission.

Dr. Yong Cho gave a report on the mobilization goals and strategies of the Korean Mission movement, which is one of the most dynamic, organized and unified mission forces in the world. Their goal is to deploy over 100,000 missionaries in the next 20 years, of which 90% will be sent to unreached peoples and frontier mission fields. They also plan to see 200 unengaged, unreached peoples

adopted by local churches every five years, and over 50% of all local churches in Korea with a strong missions program by the year 2030.

## Training

The third and final day of the GNCWM gathering focused on preparing missionary candidates for engaging unreached peoples. Mike Adegbile of the Nigerian Evangelical Mission Association challenged the network to rethink the traditional approach to mission education that has become predominant around the world. He cautioned, “Local training ought to be geared to local needs. Currently, most of what goes on is “one size fits all.” Even where you have training going on locally, it is still the Western institutional model.”

As a challenge to the traditional model, Gavriel Gefen gave an impassioned plea for resurrecting personal, incarnational mentoring in mission training. He also gave a call for teaching innovation, and training students to think outside the box. He observed of Dr. Ralph Winter’s style of education that he “taught mission the way engineering is taught.” Gavriel noted,

Instead of simply indoctrinating his students in how mission is done, he confronted them with problems that needed solving. It drove some of the other professors mad. He had far too many ideas. They just wanted him to teach the students how mission is done. Winter’s response was to establish the USCWM as, among other things, a missions think tank. One of the things he was already onto was the value of training through collaborative problem-solving. One hindrance to implementing this kind of training is that too many mission educators are career institutionalists and methodologists who lack experience in innovative problem-solving.

This call for innovation in mentorship resonated well with the network participants. While the Great Commission calls us to make disciples of all nations, the reality is that many of the missionaries we are sending out have not been disciplined themselves, nor are they being effectively mentored once they are deployed.

## What’s Next

An effort is being made to identify the new centers which God is raising up around the world. The GNCWM is making plans to hold regional meetings in the years ahead to strengthen these emerging centers. Additionally, online tools are being developed to assist the network in sharing ideas, resources, plans and concerns. A global-level meeting is being planned for 2014. <sup>f</sup>

Those interested in participating in the network should contact the GNCWM lead facilitator, Chong Kim - [chong.kim@uscwm.org](mailto:chong.kim@uscwm.org).

# INTRODUCING THE GLOBAL GREAT COMMISSION NETWORK

DAVID TAYLOR

What is the state of the Great Commission today? This is a question which should rightly concern every believer. Yet remarkably, even many mission and church leaders remain unaware of the progress being made, or lack thereof, towards discipling all peoples in our generation. Some mission strategists believe this ignorance is a fundamental cause for the lack of initiative in frontier mission efforts. Information obtained through self-discovery has always been a driving force for long-term sustainable action. So what can be done to bridge this divide?

Two years ago, mission agencies gathered from around the world in Tokyo to ask “What is it going to take to see a disciple-making movement among every people in our generation?” Since that time much discussion has taken place about the degree to which this is happening. In the past, people groups have been assessed for whether or not the gospel had been proclaimed among them, or whether or not a church had been established. Tokyo 2010 gave a call to take us beyond this surface-level examination and look at the extent to which the command of Jesus to “disciple all nations” is being carried out. Now a special network has been formed to give leadership to this vision of assessing, promoting and resourcing disciple-making movements among every nation, tribe, people and language.

Structurally, the new network is intended to be a neutral forum where collaboration between networks, agencies, denominations, churches and individuals can take place towards the common vision of discipling all peoples. This new network is now being called the Global Great Commission Network (GGCN)—*Carrying Tokyo 2010 Forward*. The driving vision behind the network is the Tokyo 2010 Declaration, which gave a clarion call to see the Great Commission fulfilled in both breadth and depth in this generation. By breadth, the declaration calls for an examination of where the Church is, and where it is not, and how to bridge the gap between these two. Now while some progress has been made in identifying the world’s unreached peoples and determining the status of their engagement, little progress has been made in assessing the quality of faith that has taken root and grown

up among reached peoples. The Great Commission calls us to do both. This is what is meant by “depth.”

These two dimensions to the Great Commission of breadth and depth are very closely inter-related and inter-dependent. The best way to bridge the gap between where the Church is and where it needs to go is to see disciple-making movements spread from one nearby people group to another. For this reason, Jesus commanded his disciples to reach the Samaritans, even though they would have preferred to go around them altogether and get right to the “ends of the earth”! In other words, part of teaching the nations to obey everything Christ commanded is teaching them obedience to the Great Commission itself. This has been one of the greatest failures of mission over the last two centuries. It is in part a failure of the Western church to disciple their own churches in obedience to the Great Commission. Thus we have transplanted our own deficiencies around the world.

So what does it mean to be disciplined into obedience to the Great Commission? This is the primary vision of the Global Great Commission Network, and many leaders see it as a rallying cry for our generation. In the past, the Great Commission was seen as a task for a committed few who were willing to forsake all for the cause of Christ. What we are seeing now is a recovery of the reality that the Great Commission is a call to the entire Body of Christ. We are all commissioned. In order to disciple entire nations, bringing the gospel of the Kingdom to every sphere of life and society, we need to begin rethinking everything we are doing. Such a task is too great to be left to a committed few! This renewed understanding may very well serve to ignite a global reformation of the entire Church in the coming decades.

As a result of this shared passion and concern among church and mission leaders, one of the first projects the GGCN has taken on is a global discipleship assessment. The initial discussions for this assessment project began at Tokyo 2010, and from this came a vision to see every nation, every church, and every believer equipped to understand where they are in the process of Great Commission discipleship. The assessment calls for a national

committee made up of leaders from every church network among a particular people group or country to come together to evaluate the extent to which national discipleship is taking place. This evaluation will examine the ways in which the Kingdom of God is influencing major areas of society, such as government, commerce, the military, entertainment, journalism, education and science. Within each area, the assessment will look at three criteria: presence, voice and transformation (Are believers present; are they being heard; are they making a difference). Beneath this level, the assessment then calls for every local church in every people group to annually evaluate their effectiveness in evangelism, mentorship, community-building, church multiplication, social transformation, and cross-cultural missions. Finally, the assessment calls for every individual to engage in an annual spiritual checkup to evaluate where he is in his personal growth, pursuit of God's calling, and involvement in fulfilling the Great Commission.

While online tools will be made available to do these assessments, each national committee will be encouraged to contextualize them for their region. It would obviously be presumptuous to design a universal tool, and hopefully what will come out of this process is a greater understanding of how different peoples view biblical discipleship. This process itself may help all of us come to a better and more fuller understanding of what Scripture is calling us to as a global Church. (Could it be, for example, that Africans will seek to evaluate how well an adult individual is honoring their parents, whereas as Westerners might totally overlook this important area?) Those interested in participating and giving input to this new initiative are encouraged to visit [www.ggcn.org/discipleshipsurvey](http://www.ggcn.org/discipleshipsurvey), where the latest assessment tool will be available for critique and use.

Of course, this project is just one of many which the network will pursue in the coming years. Another exciting development of the GGCN is the creation of an online social network for missions in cooperation with the Table Project. The Table Project is an online social network designed for local churches. It is currently used by around 2,500 local churches. The Table Project is working with

GGCN to adapt this tool for mission agencies, as well as develop an app that will enable local churches using the Table Project software to connect with ministry opportunities around the world.

The GGCN is also stewarding a special project called "Last Mile Calling," which was launched at Tokyo 2010 to facilitate secure online networking towards reaching

4,500+ priority least-reached people groups (to see the LMC list go to [www.fmresearch.info](http://www.fmresearch.info)). The LMC will give opportunities for believers to form online prayer teams for each unreached people, establish funds for engaging them, and partner with local ministries seeking to reach them. The goal is to see every people group adopted by at least 100 churches, prayed for by at

least 1,000 intercessors, and fully engaged by missionary teams by the year 2020. Well over half the peoples on the list are completely unengaged, un-adopted, and orphaned in prayer coverage. Your church could be the first to see a prayer team and engagement fund set up to reach them! This is the very exciting potential that exists today to leverage the power of the global Church with social networking to finish the task.

With these two initiatives of global discipleship assessment and global networking to finish the task, the GGCN is modeling in itself what the entire Body of Christ should be doing at every level to fulfill the Great Commission. A big part of Great Commission discipleship is giving believers opportunities and channels for involvement in building a Christ-centered community and working together with others to multiply such communities around the world. Jesus was constantly doing this with his disciples. He built a discipleship community with the DNA of personal transformation and missional action. These are the two wings of any disciple-making movement.

Those interested in learning more about GGNC should check out the expanding services and information available at the network's official website: [www.ggcn.org](http://www.ggcn.org). Those seeking to identify with the network more formally are encouraged to read and sign the Tokyo 2010 Declaration, which outlines the vision and direction begun at the Tokyo meeting. More information can be obtained by contacting the network interim administrative team at [info@ggcn.org](mailto:info@ggcn.org). f

## VISION STATEMENT

WE ENVISION EVERY PEOPLE GROUP REACHED AND IN THE PROCESS OF BEING DISCIPLED IN THIS GENERATION.

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

THE GLOBAL GREAT COMMISSION NETWORK – CARRYING TOKYO 2010 FORWARD EXISTS TO STIMULATE WORLDWIDE MISSION EFFORTS THAT PROMOTE THE MAKING OF DISCIPLES OF EVERY PEOPLE IN OUR GENERATION.





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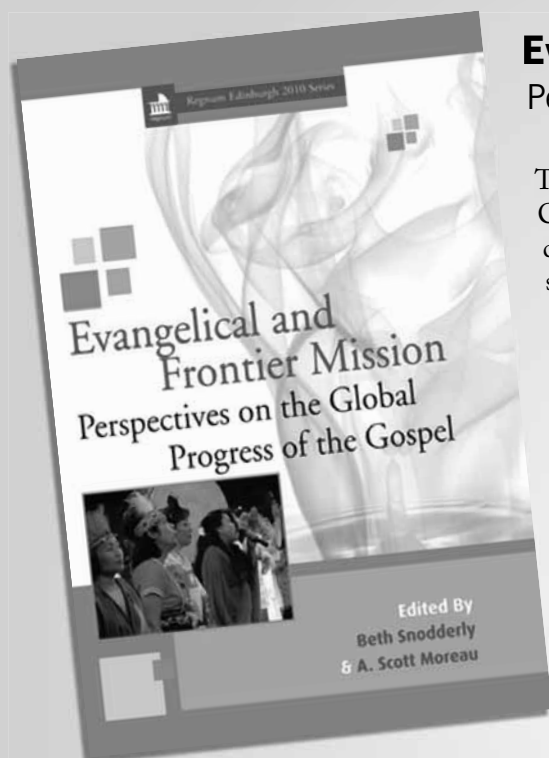
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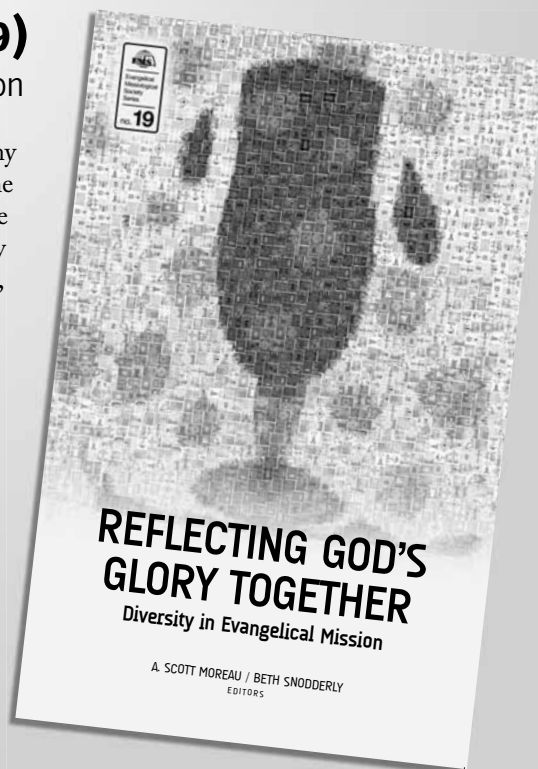
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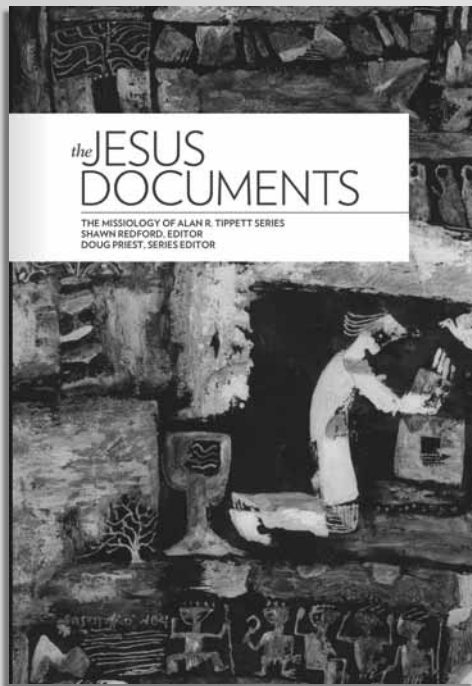


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# Further Reflections



## Religion-Bashing or Faith-Sowing

Greg H. Parsons, Global Director, U.S. Center for World Mission

**H**ere in the U.S., we are in our once-every-four-year presidential election cycle. Just hearing some of the back-and-forth makes me wonder if our “system” really does work as well as it used to. I’ve previously noted in this column that much of the campaigning is negative—candidates bash the other person’s position. I’ve talked about how we tend to do that with our theological arguments. But today I was considering how this kind of approach impacts how we share our faith.

Do we believe that we must put down another person’s religion or beliefs in order to convince them of the gospel? Do we need to say, directly or indirectly: “my Christianity is better than your xyz?” It may make us feel better to be “right,” but just as often this other person also thinks he is “right,” so it shuts down the opportunity to talk further.

Many are not direct in their approach, but even without a strong, “I am right and you are wrong” mentality, we can still come across as arrogant and condescending. While our culture here seems to admire those kinds of attitudes more and more, it doesn’t work when it comes to spreading the gospel. Ultimately, it is the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit that brings regeneration, yet God works in and through our words and actions.

Naturally, we believe we are right and that we know Jesus. If that is true, we are right. But that doesn’t mean all our theology is accurate. With Paul’s teaching, the Bereans checked out the Scriptures to be sure that what he was saying was in line (Acts 17:11). Just this last week, my pastor said that while he will never teach something he knows is not true, he

can be wrong! I appreciate that. Many in theological debates put up “theology” as crucial—and it is. But, that does not mean that my theology is always correct. Asking questions and reexamining theological issues doesn’t equal heresy. Neither is considering more effective ways of describing the gospel.

But more to the point: As we have discussions with those who do not (yet) believe, we need to be careful. I am not saying that we need to dumb down our message or hold culture above the Bible. Imagine someone was trying to convince you that your faith in Christ was misplaced. They might say that “this” or “that” fact about Christ or the Bible isn’t true and that you needed to believe a different “faith” to get right with God. How would you feel? Defensive? Angry? Entrenched in your position? Suppose for a minute that they are right: would you give up your faith because someone convinces you with an argument that put down the Bible? I’m sure it happens. But if you are reading *Mission Frontiers* regularly, you may be a bit stronger in your faith. You know you would not likely be swayed. Your faith may be tempted, but you are not likely to fall for any “debate” without a fight. If you don’t know an answer, you know people with whom you can consult. Perhaps, like me, you have grown up in Christian circles in a “Christian” country.

Now, imagine again, that you had grown up in a Buddhist family in a Buddhist country like Thailand. How well might our standard arguments work there? You can’t start with “God loves you” because they don’t believe in a supreme being. You can’t tell them our God is better than their god, for it wouldn’t make sense to them.

You can love them. You can serve them and learn the way they think. You can seek to understand their language and culture. Through that process—which several friends of mine have done in Thailand—you can find ways to share that make more sense and reap fruit for the Kingdom.

But remember—especially when the fruit seems slow in coming—it is the Holy Spirit who draws them, not our arguments. We need to contend for the faith, but that should start by our “contending for understanding” them. There must be proclamation of a message to go with our life being an example, but how we “preach” must fit the context, just like it did in the book of Acts.

We would love to hear what you think on this and other topics in this issue. Please take a moment and post your thoughts at: [www.missionfrontiers.org](http://www.missionfrontiers.org).<sup>f</sup>



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