

MISSION FRONTIERS



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REACHING THE UNENGAGED

It's TIME to Act

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THE GOD-GIVEN RIGHT TO “ACCESS”



RICK WOOD
/ EDITOR, MISSION
FRONTIERS

They are some of the most eloquent and profound words ever put to paper. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.” These familiar words, taken from the United States Declaration of Independence written in July 1776, have changed the lives of hundreds of millions of people around the world.

But with all due honor, appreciation and respect to the epic contribution of Thomas Jefferson and the others who penned these immortal words, they did not include the most important of Rights¹ with which our Creator has endowed us. Perhaps it was assumed, but inherent in the existence of the Creator are *the Right to know Him* and to follow Him in obedience. Every person is created equal before the throne of God with the Right to know the gospel and what God has done for each person through Jesus Christ and His death on the cross. I recognize that not all will choose to believe and not all are the elect of God, but everyone at least has the Right to know the gospel and to choose freely whether to act upon that knowledge in faith. It is all about access. Every person has the God-given Right to have access to the gospel.

Even when a Right is declared, as in the Declaration of Independence, it must be worked for and pursued. We must give everything we have to the struggle in order for the God-given Right to become a reality in the lives of people. Likewise the Right to have access to the gospel must be worked for and diligently pursued in order for it to be realized.

God has called us, those who claim Jesus as their Savior, to make sure that this Right is secured for every person, tribe and tongue. This calling is at the heart of the missionary task. As followers of Jesus, all of us have been called to be on mission with God to overcome every barrier that keeps people from having access to the

gospel. That is what this issue of *Mission Frontiers* is all about—overcoming all the barriers that are keeping the Church from engaging every people so that every person may have access to the gospel. We call those peoples whom no agency is working to reach the unengaged. And as Paul Eshleman says in his lead article starting on page 6, “*it’s time to act*” to make sure that every people has someone working to reach them. It is up to us, the Church, who have access to the gospel, to decide whether we will obey what God has commanded and provide others with the same Right of access we have enjoyed.

GETTING THERE IS THE FIRST STEP

There are two basic stages to the expansion of the gospel into any people. The first is to establish a “beachhead” for the gospel in every people where agencies engage these unengaged groups and missionary efforts are initiated. In this day, there is no reason to compete for disciples where other agencies are already working. There are plenty of unengaged peoples to go around.

We must move as quickly as possible to mobilize the resources needed to get workers into all of the peoples who remain unengaged, peoples with no one working to establish a Church-Planting Movement in their midst. The lists of unengaged peoples are being refined so we have a better idea than ever before which peoples are being neglected and need a missionary outreach by some agency. Starting on page 26, Phill Butler gives us an overview of the barriers that are keeping us from reaching these unengaged peoples.

THE SECOND STEP: CATALYZE A MOVEMENT


Once a “beachhead” for the gospel has been initiated, the goal is to establish a self-replicating Church-Planting Movement within that people so they can eventually reach their own without outside help. Typically mission workers have stayed too long and done too much, thereby creating dependency. Instead, the missionary task is to initiate and to catalyze movements of multigenerational discipleship and church planting by working with the people to establish the foundational

DNA of biblical truth that a Church-Planting Movement uses to replicate generation after generation in the lives of new disciples and churches.

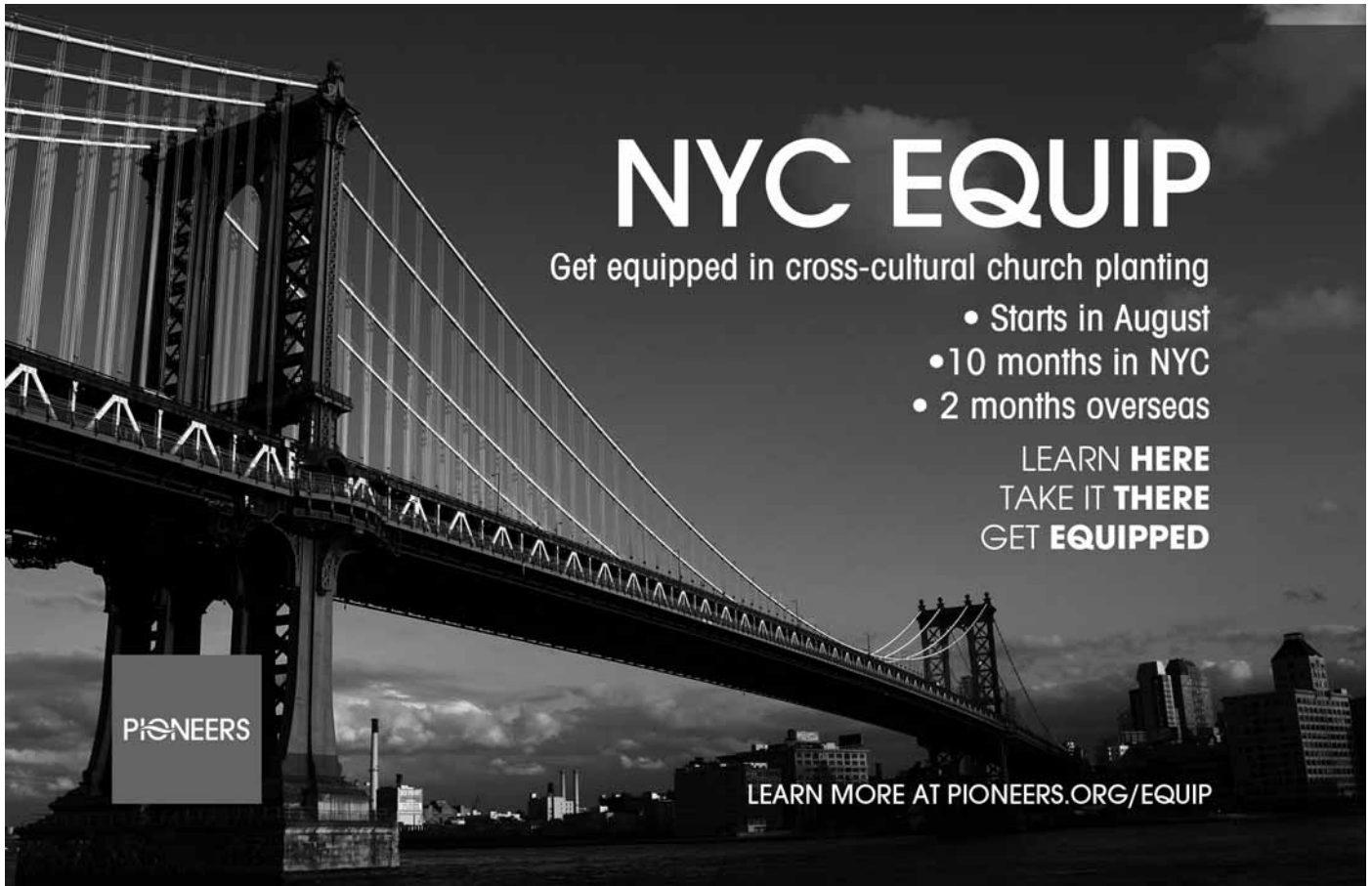
The type of church we establish when we get to these peoples is critical. Instead of following the failed Western model of doing church, we need to train new believers to make disciples who are able to make disciples and plant churches that rapidly replicate themselves. This must be our ministry focus, not growing the attendance at church services, as so many are prone to do.

The simple fact is that providing access to the gospel for every person, tribe and tongue is a pipe dream unless our goal is to equip and deploy every believer in every people group to be a disciple-maker or church-planter. It is simply not possible to mobilize and deploy enough professional

missionaries and pastors to replace the enormous exponential power of the average believer who is trained to make disciples who then go on to make more disciples who are likewise equipped. So if the development of a Church-Planting Movement is our goal within every people, then we need to make it our highest priority and focus to learn how to create these movements of multigenerational discipleship. We have presented a number of methods for developing CPMs in the pages of recent issues of *MF*. But these methods need to be continually applied and refined in various contexts around the world so that a critical mass of skilled practitioners will emerge who are capable of catalyzing these movements in every people. Every church must become an “equipping center” for multigenerational discipleship, not just a worship center.

The question we have to ask ourselves is whether we believe that the goal of providing access to the gospel for every person, tribe and tongue is worthy of our supreme efforts and sacrifices. Thomas Jefferson and the other signers of the Declaration of Independence concluded by saying, “with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.” They were willing to sacrifice everything they had and to trust God for His provision to realize the earthly goal of establishing a new nation. Are we as followers of Jesus likewise committed to the more important mission of providing access to the gospel for every person, tribe and tongue? 

1. The words Right and Rights are capitalized in this column for emphasis and in accordance with the style of the original Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776.




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REACHING THE UNENGAGED

It's Time to Act



PAUL ESHLEMAN

Dr. Paul Eshleman is Vice President of Networks and Partnerships for Cru (Campus Crusade for Christ International).

Additionally, Paul founded The JESUS Film Project and served as its Director for 25 years. He serves as Director of the "Finishing the Task" Network, seeking to enlist churches to take responsibility for the hundreds of unengaged, unreached people groups throughout the world. You may contact the author by phone at: 949-600-7223, or by email at: paul.eshleman@ccci.org.

I was in a small Karamoja village in northern Uganda. One hundred and eighty thousand people had died of starvation the year before. On the outskirts of the village was a pile of human skulls that stood as a stark testimony to the tragedy. I picked up two of the skulls in my hands and realized that just six months before, these had been living, breathing, human beings. I wondered if anyone had ever told them the message of Jesus.

As we gathered some of the people together, I began to ask them, through my interpreter, to tell me what they knew about Jesus. One by one, the answers came:

"I don't know who he is, sir."

"Does he live in Nairobi?"

"I've never heard of him."

Or in some cases, they just shook their head "no" as they looked at the ground. Finally, there was just one little eight year-old boy left. As I asked the question again, a tear ran down the little boy's cheek.

"Sir," my interpreter said, "He would like to tell you about Jesus, but he has never, ever heard his name."

The experience was a seminal moment in my life. Everything inside me shouted, "It's not fair! It's not fair that he doesn't have at least one chance to hear the message of Christ." That night I prayed, "Lord, I'm only one person, but whatever I can do, I don't want there to be any eight year-old boys—or girls, or men, or women—who don't get one chance to know You." Passion for those beyond the reach of the Gospel became the driving force of my life.

Getting the gospel to the unengaged, unreached people groups of the world is the first step in providing access to the Message. But it is not just access that is involved. We need to present the gospel in a culturally relevant way, in the language of the people. And, it's not just about evangelism. It's making disciples and planting a church, so that new believers can grow to maturity in Christ.

But in so many places, no one has gone to tell them. Nearly forty years after Ralph Winter challenged us to prioritize the unreached people groups of the world, there are still 3,000 groups unengaged. Why?

1. **We always quit before we get to the last languages and people groups.** We send our missionaries and translate our materials into the 20% of the languages that

cover 80% of the world's population. Jesus never talked about the 80/20 rule. His words were to go into *all* the world, make disciples of *all* nations, preach the Gospel to *every* creature, because He is not willing that *any* should perish, but that *all* should be brought to repentance. I hear ministry leaders talking about their new evangelism and discipleship tool. They say they've got it in Spanish and are working on getting it in French. And I think, "What about Dayak or Sudanese or Urdu?" And we only go to the places that we can easily pronounce. It took a while for missionaries to go to Dnepropetrovsk, Ukraine, because no one could say it.

2. **We fall in love with the *process* of missions, and forget the *objective*.**

Missions' leadership is not about getting westerners to the rest. It is about facilitating workers to the neglected, from wherever those workers originate. There are 50 million believers in India today. Every people group in India could be engaged with full-time workers in the next 12 months if outside efforts would be devoted to training, equipping, and *temporarily* (2-3 years) giving some financial support. Financial dependency will not be created if those three years are used to build self-sufficiency through training in micro-enterprises of many kinds.

MISSIONS' LEADERSHIP IS NOT ABOUT GETTING WESTERNERS TO THE REST. IT IS ABOUT FACILITATING WORKERS TO THE NEGLECTED, FROM WHEREVER THOSE WORKERS ORIGINATE.

3. **We don't have enough 21st century men and women of Issachar.** As David became king of Israel, each of the 12 tribes sent thousands of soldiers for his army. The exception was the tribe of Issachar, who sent 200 men and their families who, "understood the times and knew what Israel should do." Who are those men and women in



our day? I believe they are those who know from the commands and models of Scripture, what the Lord has told us to do. And they understand our times to the extent that they know how obedient we have been or not been in making disciples of all nations or preaching the gospel to all creation. Today's men and

as it relates to how they perform in doing local ministry and meeting local needs. Very few of those they lead are saying, "Thank you for helping us take the gospel to the ends of the earth, and make disciples in these unreached people groups." Every elder board ought to be thinking about its responsibility to the ends of the earth.



women of Issachar know *who* has been neglected and *where* we have not preached the gospel.


4. **We neglect the cries of the most needy and pay professionals to reach our neighbors.** Almost every time I speak about unreached people groups, I hear a comment like, "We've got plenty of unreached people right here where we live, without worrying about groups halfway across the world." And that's true. There are more individuals living within already "reached" people groups, than there are in all the unreached people groups of the world. However, there is one major difference. Most people in the West have great *access* to the message of Christ through media, local churches, and believers. For 300 million people in the unengaged, unreached people groups of the world, there is no way, outside of divine revelation, to hear the message of Christ. There is no church, no missionary, and not one verse of Scripture translated into their language. How much longer will we wait until we go to these groups, and put them on our priority list for funding and manpower?
5. **Christian leaders are overworked and under-visioned.** Today the Global Church has more than 12 million full-time pastors and workers of all kinds. They are working to the best of their ability to serve the Lord. However, they are rewarded and encouraged

ACTION STEPS

What about you? Are you a Great Commission Christian? Your occupation or position doesn't matter. All of us have been called to disciple the nations (peoples) to God. My great encouragement to you is to set aside a day to begin learning who the remaining unengaged, unreached people groups are and where they live. Get your vision refreshed and your understanding of the unfinished task up-to-date. Begin thinking about how to use your position, influence, or giving to help open the unreached people groups to the gospel.

Whether you are a marketplace or ministry leader, think about these options:

1. Get your global vision up-to-date. Consider attending an Issachar Summit or check out the Issachar Initiative website for more information on unengaged, unreached people groups at **www.issacharinitiative.org**.
2. Support an unengaged, unreached people group national worker for three years, but send businessmen from your church to help them become self-supporting through micro-enterprises. Check out lists of unengaged people groups at **www.finishingthetask.com**, **<http://public.imb.org/globalresearch>**, and **www.joshuaproject.net**.
3. Ask current missionaries what it would take to open up an unengaged people group in the country where they are working.
4. Give a designated donation that can only be used for opening an unengaged people group.
5. If you have a Foundation, ask the organizations you support to give you proposals for what it would take for them to send new workers into an unengaged people group.

In summary, we are living in one of the greatest times of expansion of the Church since the first century. Various networks are holding the cause of unengaged, unreached people groups high. In the last seven years, the *Finishing The Task* network has tracked more than 700 new unreached people groups being engaged by over 7,000 missionaries. God is at work! The time to act is now! 

CULTIVATING A PASSION for All Peoples



STEVE RICHARDSON

Steve was raised in Indonesia, where his parents planted churches in a jungle tribe. He witnessed the impact of the gospel on their war-like society, a story documented in his father's missionary classic, *Peace Child*. Since 1999 Steve Richardson has served as President of Pioneers-USA. Go to www.pioneers.org for more information. You may contact Steve at unengaged@pioneers.org.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the “Peace Child” story—my parents’ 14-year adventure of obedience among the Sawi people of Papua, a journey that culminated in the dramatic breakthrough of God’s love into their violent and isolated tribal culture. I grew up as one of them, speaking their language, loving their jungle world, and identifying with their culture.

This past July, Sawi churches commemorated the event with a three-day gathering of more than 3,000 exuberant men, women, and children. Some of them traveled for days to be there. A newly released mini-movie, *Never the Same*, documents the emotional reunion that my father, brothers and I experienced as we participated in this remarkable event.

Following my college years, my wife and I embarked on yet another adventure. We spent ten years on a church-planting team in one of the world’s largest Muslim unreached people groups. Again, our relationships went deep. God gave us a love and passion for the Muslim world.

In the 1980s the Muslim world received negligible attention from churches in North America. This began to change in the 1990s through the efforts of Greg Livingstone and others. Awareness of the spiritual needs of Muslims accelerated even more rapidly following 9/11. Today, more than 60% of the teams in the organization I serve, for example, focus their efforts on Muslim peoples.

The needs of the Muslim world remain vast, and the workers few, yet we would do well in our mission strategies to keep the larger picture in view. The Psalmist wrote, “Let the peoples praise you, O God; Let ALL the peoples praise you!” (Psalm 67:3, ESV, emphasis mine) God is the God of all the nations. While the civilizational clash between the West and the Muslim world dominates our discourse, there remain great challenges and opportunities in the Hindu, Buddhist and Tribal worlds.

In a Google and Facebook era, it is hard for many people to imagine that there are still places with no incarnational

access to the gospel. Yet, the reality is stark: hundreds of tribal groups remain completely unengaged. Among Buddhists, 45 people groups are completely unengaged. There are 139 Hindu people groups that are completely unengaged. These are groups that are not only “lost” and “unreached,” but there is *no incarnational gospel witness* of any sort among them, as far as we know.

One of our leaders working among Hindus recently showed me a map of one state in India. It was covered in blue dots. Each dot represented an unengaged people group. The 139 completely unengaged people groups in India and the Hindu world represent millions of people. They are separated from one another and from the gospel not only by their languages but also by myriad

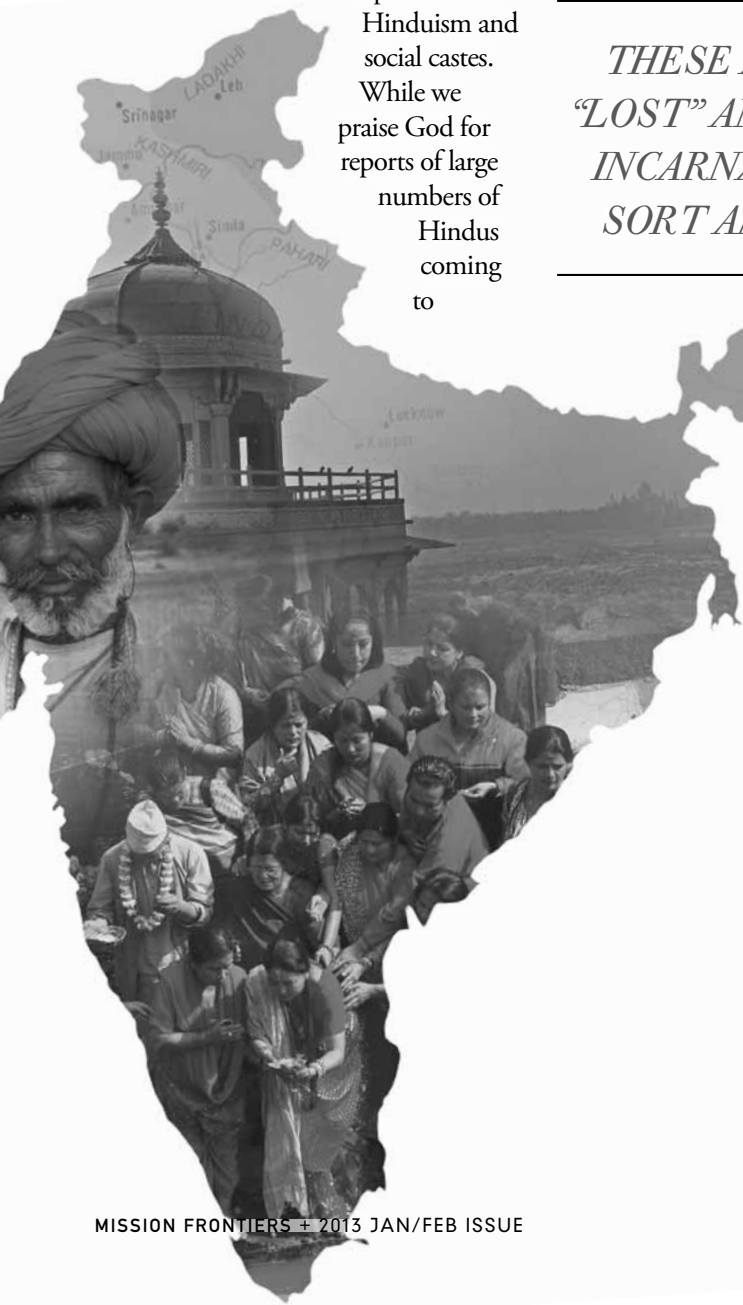
expressions of Hinduism and social castes. While we praise God for reports of large numbers of Hindus coming to

THESE ARE GROUPS THAT ARE NOT ONLY “LOST” AND “UNREACHED,” BUT THERE IS NO INCARNATIONAL GOSPEL WITNESS OF ANY SORT AMONG THEM, AS FAR AS WE KNOW.

Christ, an estimated 70% or more of these conversions are from low castes and tribal groups. It is easy to underestimate the complexity of the challenge and the remaining need. This is no time for churches in the West to abdicate their vital role in helping, often through partnership, to reach these groups.

Despite generations of seed sowing, the Buddhist world remains a remarkably difficult challenge in the global mission picture. Physical access by missionaries is not the greatest challenge in many cases. Rather, it is the suffocating spiritual darkness and the power of a radically different worldview that makes conversion and church planting difficult.

Our stereotypes of saffron-robed priests meditating in complete peace are far from the reality. Many Buddhists in unreached and unengaged groups have no knowledge of the “Noble Eightfold Path.” For most, there is a simple two-fold path: Appease the spirits and protect your karma. Spirits dominate every aspect of life. House spirits demand daily offerings, neighborhood spirits require weekly attention, village spirits need appeasement from travelers, and regional “guardian spirits” expect annual offerings.



In northern Thailand, for example, there is great spiritual darkness, even according to Thai Buddhists. For the younger generation, Buddhist rituals are more like ATM transactions, completed to earn merit or luck, as it is needed. The sense that one has thousands of potential lifetimes ahead can deeply affect one's worldview.

Spiritual opposition toward the gospel and its messengers can be profound. Our own workers in these areas have been ravaged with illness, marriage difficulties, and team conflict. It is a tremendous spiritual battle. Yet we are endeavoring to send more teams to various Tibetan groups and to the unengaged in Laos, Bhutan and Cambodia. The need is for workers and senders who are faithful in prayer, patient in enduring hardship, and strong in their proclamation of the goodness and glory of a Savior who is greater than the spirits that hold these precious people in bondage.

In remote corners of the world (and some not-so-remote), there remain hundreds of tribal groups that are still cut off from the hope of the gospel. In the jungles of the Amazon

Tribal work has become politically sensitive in many countries. Many of the tribal lands have been designated as national refuges in an effort to preserve the "pristine" pre-modern cultures. The reality may be quite different as most animistic people live in constant fear of spirits, on whom they call to heal or to curse. Exploitation by the encroaching commercial world threatens the extinction of many of these groups.

*"WYCLIFFE SHARES THE VISION OF THE
CHURCH AND MISSION PARTNERS:
IT'S THE NUMBER ZERO. ZERO UNREACHED,
UNENGAGED PEOPLE GROUPS AND ZERO
BIBLE TRANSLATION NEEDS. IT IS POSSIBLE
IN THIS GENERATION."*

—Bob Creson, President/CEO, Wycliffe Bible Translators USA



alone there are an estimated 40-50 unengaged tribes. These groups are typically smaller in number, with 200 to 1,000 members in a tribe. Yet, each has a unique culture and capacity for expressing and displaying God's glory. Many of them live nomadically, traveling large swaths of the jungle and only staying in one location for no longer than two weeks at a time. Simply finding these groups can be a challenge.

Who will learn their complex and difficult languages? Who will labor in difficult, often primitive conditions, partnering with nearby groups to reach these unengaged before it is too late? Who is willing to spend years helping to reach remote ravines in Southwestern China, nomadic peoples of the Sahara or desert tribes of Chad, or swampy areas of Papua New Guinea? I have seen firsthand the challenges and rewards of such a life. It's an extraordinary privilege. I can imagine no greater joy than to see people brought out of darkness, conflict and fear into the peace and joy found in Christ and his cross.

I am encouraged by a new generation of God's workers who are rising to the challenge of this final, great chapter of redemptive history. This year alone over 200 people have come through our organization's orientations, desiring to serve in the "hard places." We need people who are willing to do the "hard work," as Jesus put it to his disciples (John 4), and to lay a foundation on which others can subsequently build.

My own experience among the Savi and among various Muslim groups has given me a growing appreciation for the scale and grandeur of God's great campaign of blessings through Christ, originally foreshadowed in God's promise to Abraham, "All peoples will be blessed through you." My daily prayer is that the blessing that came to "my own tribe," the Savi, will come soon to every people group in the world. MF

THE MOST ABOMINABLE

“Word,”



MIKE LATSKO

Mike was a pastor for 22 years in Texas and Virginia before joining Frontiers and moving to their US sending base in Arizona in 2004. He is one of their Speakers-at-Large and has a particular interest in helping global churches and agencies work together to see the task accomplished. You may contact Mike at: mike.latsko@frontiersusa.org.

The term “unengaged” is the most offensive in missionary terminology. It is a blatant acknowledgement of the missionary community’s refusal to fulfill the minimal apostolic prerequisite of being present among all peoples and beginning the work of gospel proclamation. It is offensive to the LORD of hosts, who is the creator of all, has provided a great salvation in Christ, and desires all men to be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth. It is offensive to Christ himself, whose sacrifice is sufficient atonement for all men, whose mandate concerning all peoples is clear, and whose presence is promised to all who obey. It is offensive to the Holy Spirit, who convicts men and women of sin, righteousness and judgment, gifts God’s people with all that is required to accomplish all He commands, and intercedes for us in our weakness with groaning too deep for words. It is offensive to the Church, the pillar and support of the truth, through which the manifold wisdom of God is displayed to rulers and authorities in the heavenly realm, and whose onslaught upon the gates of hell cannot be withstood. And it is offensive to the global missionary community, called as apostles, carriers of the message which alone on earth is the power of God unto salvation for all who believe, and stewards of the mysteries of God. It is Satan’s favorite word and the foundation of all hell’s joy. It hangs on the tongues of angels and demons and is the core of the dialogue between their supreme leaders when the usurper is summoned to heaven’s court. It is a heinous word—the most loathesome of all. And it is time to be done with it.

As of this writing, 34% of all unreached Hindu peoples are also unengaged, as are 43% of all Buddhist unreached and 59% of all Muslim unreached. Enough. No more.

If churches, denominations and agencies, gripped by the Word of God, zealous for the glory of God, indignant over the mockery of His name, and heart-broken over not only lost people but also lost peoples living without hope and dying without God, were to determine, according to His guidance and enablement, to move toward the elimination of this horrible word from missionary conversation, then let them consider these warnings and this counsel.

WARNINGS

1. **Do not underestimate the organizational will that is required to turn your ministry toward a new, long-term presence among currently unengaged peoples.** By definition, none of what you are now doing is being done there. None of what anyone in the global church is now doing is being done there. Giants taunt explorers of this land; are you sure you want in?

2. **Do not underestimate the strong pull of your church's/organization's own internal flow to merely strengthen and improve the work where you already are.** So much yet needs to be done! Are you ready in some real way to turn from the (in some cases severely) underserved in order to come alongside the entirely unserved?
3. **Do not underestimate the challenge of new creativity and daring.** Thirty-four percent of Hindu unreached, 43% of Buddhist unreached, and 59% of Muslim unreached are unengaged for good reason. The best efforts of our best people have not yet borne fruit. And we think we will? We must, we can, and we will, but it will require our most sanctified ambitions. And better than our best.
4. **Do not underestimate Satan's ferocity against any attempt to move these peoples from unengaged to engaged.** They cannot call upon Him of whom they have not heard, nor hear without believing, nor believe without preaching, nor preach without sending, nor send without first committing to the unengaged. Our ancient foe will aim proven artillery against those who first commit to engaging the unengaged.
5. **Do not underestimate the level of urgency required to keep pioneering efforts toward the unengaged a church/agency priority.** Many and varied will be the sincere cries of dear stakeholders who insist that we must continue to prioritize the severely underserved of Ephesus, Galatia, Corinth, and Thessalonica—these with so many lost among them and so much Christlikeness yet to cultivate. But that is exactly what Paul said in Romans 15—"there's plenty of work here for pastors, evangelists, teachers and everyone else, but not for me. These peoples are now engaged. I and my team will move on."

Caleb was of a different spirit, and surely there are churches and organizations which share his fire today. Surely God Himself would enable us to do what He has commanded if we would but hoist our sail to His breeze.

COUNSEL

1. **See clearly.** The unreached cannot be reached until they are first engaged, so engaging the unengaged must become the lead priority of the global apostolic community. Thirty-four percent of the Hindu unreached, 43% of the Buddhist unreached, and 59% of the Muslim unreached are beyond the reach

of the Church today. They are not only unreached because they are unengaged; they are also unreachable until they are engaged. Leaders lead. Sound the trumpet. Let us come back to our roots and do this in our day.

2. **Dream boldly.** We do not despise the day of small beginnings, but neither are we content with it. Our sin, not in part but the whole, was nailed to the cross on that day, and we, not in part but wholly, commit ourselves to what He has assigned us. We do not summon one another to partial completion. We are not satisfied with mere progress. We do not rejoice in incremental change. Our eye is fixed, our instruction clear, and our enablement sure. In dependence upon Him, we intend on the elimination of unengaged vocabulary in our generation. Let Pathways and Perspectives hereafter include it in their history sections, but not strategy!
3. **Restructure ruthlessly.** If it takes two months for a person to change a habit, then it takes 10 years for an organization. Why do we not have the luxury of a decade? Because in addition to the outrage we feel over the continued besmirching of God's name until all the currently unengaged are engaged is the reality that scores of millions of individuals will stand unallied before God during the time it would normally take us to re-point our bows and actually move in the direction of the unengaged. Engaging

*WE DO NOT DESPISE THE DAY OF
SMALL BEGINNINGS, BUT NEITHER
ARE WE CONTENT WITH IT.*




them does not save them; reaching them does. But we cannot reach in order to save until we first engage in order to reach. So let us rip, tear, and destroy whatever encumbers in order to build, plant, and reap. And let us begin today.

4. **Communicate incessantly.** Unengaged and unreached are synonymous terms, right? No they are not. God is doing stunning things among the nations today, right? Yes and no. We're seeing some fruit over here including that of faithful perseverance over there; we should be content, right? Yes, maybe, and no. Listen, this is not for the faint of heart. Satan is well fortified in this ground, and it will take all our violent love to unseat him. We're going to have to stay on task. It will take many tellings. The board meetings will last a little longer and have an even sharper edge. But it will be worth it all. The unengaged will be engaged and have opportunity to be reached.
5. **Oversee vigilantly.** We don't do what is expected but what is inspected. It's one thing to announce a fresh vision; it's another altogether to do the hard work of

determining how to reach it, first unleashing energy to launch it, changing operations to facilitate it, evaluating progress to sustain it, and making further changes down the road to assure it. The ship may be celebrated at its launch (and it should be), but its builders are thought successful only after multiple voyages.

In the summer of 1806, five students at Williams College escaped the rain by gathering under a haystack to pray and otherwise consider God's purposes among the nations. One of them said, "We can do this if we will."

We can do this if we will. His Word is sufficient. His Spirit convicts and empowers. His presence is sure. We have the money. We have the workers. We have the know-how. The unengaged have been the new hidden, but they are hidden no more. We can do this if we will. So let us do it in our day, in full dependence upon Him, and in collaboration with one another. Let us do it in our day, and give honor to His Name. Let us do it in our day, and hasten the day when many others will sing with us, "Great is the LORD and greatly to be praised." Amen. 

TOWARD A BIBLICAL FOUNDATION FOR UNAPOLOGETICALLY PRIORITIZING THE UNENGAGED OVER EVEN THE UNREACHED MIKE LATSKO

"and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you"
(Gen 12:3)

But, by definition, this is not so for the unengaged—if we hold out for anything resembling a solid, biblically informed understanding of "blessing." The unreached have at least some blessing among them and the reasonable hope of more.

"that your ways may be known. . . your salvation among all nations"
(Ps 67:2)

But, by definition, the unengaged are not hearing that today is the day of salvation. The unreached have someone incarnate among them saying so.

"Praise the LORD, all you nations" (Ps 117:1)

But, by definition, the unengaged are not praising, while the unreached do have worshipers among them and, in most cases, from among that very people.

"there is no more place for me to work in these regions"
(Ro 15:23)

Such a statement can only be said from a reached or engaged unreached area but never from an unengaged, unreached area. Paul's regions were engaged and, we assume, unreached, but because they were engaged, he was leaving.

"from every tribe and language and people and nation"
(Rev 5:9)

But, by definition, this is not so among the unengaged. We know it will be so in that day. But it is not so in this day. So today we point our bow in the direction of promise and obedience.

It is true that some engaged, unreached peoples are woefully underengaged. We do need to send more teams to them.

But we need to send first teams before we can send more teams.

May God Himself help us to effectively engage and reach all peoples!

DISCIPLE MAKING MOVEMENTS AMONG UNREACHED MUSLIMS



JERRY TROUSDALE

Jerry Trousdale is the author of the recent book, *Miraculous Movements*, which tells the story of how Disciple-Making Movements are transforming Muslim peoples around the world.

See page 6 of the Sept/Oct 2012 issue of *MF* for an excerpt of this book. For more information email questions@cityteam.org.

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. —1 Corinthians 3:6-7 (NKJV)

One of Cityteam's African leaders reminds us that the God who tells us that He could have called forth praise from rocks, instead chose to envision and empower His people to be his junior partners and in turn partner together on earth as He displays His glory, drawing people to become His disciples from all corners of the globe. And in God's economy He blesses with multiplication the harmony of His people acting in unity with Him and each other to redeem lost people everywhere.

Today, this sometimes works out as healthy partnerships of Western mission agencies doing what they often can do very well—support and catalyze visionary indigenous ministries around the world to do what they also do very well—engaging lostness in challenging places, and passing along the biblical vision, values, and strategies to younger indigenous ministries. Then God often does what only God can do—transform whole families and communities where the Gospel had not gone before.

This brief case study gives a sketch of these kinds of partnerships in the context of highly intentional applications of biblical values and principles of engaging lostness, principles that have created surprising outcomes in a very challenging region of the world.

CHOOSING “THE IMPOSSIBLE” PROJECT

In late 2008, a foundation called our ministry inviting our team to provide executive summaries of three potential projects among least reached people groups:

- A) A project we were confident that we could achieve.
- B) A typical, challenging project that would require faith, hard work and God's blessings to achieve.
- C) An “only by God's miracle provision” project among extremist Muslim populations which was truly outside the realm of expectation of success.

We submitted this request to two of our African colleagues for consideration. And well before the time had come to submit the three summaries, every leader involved in this decision had concluded that the “impossible” project needed to be engaged, regardless of what the donor chose to fund. Remarkably, the foundation did choose the third option.

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Within this region, there are numerous Muslim people groups who have long histories of hostility to the gospel, but we focused on three groups. Group A has been Muslim for approximately 600 years, holding a dominant position within the culture, with perhaps a handful of Christian churches. Group B has been Islamic for around a thousand years, with perhaps a few thousand Christians scattered over a large area. Group C has also been Islamic for a thousand years and our research could not identify any Christian churches. A leader in that group had once remarked, “Not one of us will ever become a Christian and see a sunrise.”

And thus it was a very sober African leadership team that made a decision in early 2009 to engage these three people groups. Intercessory fasting and prayer immediately started. Mobilizing much prayer for this initiative was the primary focus for seven months among more than 500 African intercessors. They gathered regularly for all-night prayer vigils and spent countless hours in personal prayer. No pioneer teams would be deployed until there was a sense that the timing was right for launching Disciple-Making Movements.

DISCIPLE-MAKING MOVEMENTS

At the core, Disciple-Making Movements are not a formula, not some proprietary system of sharing the gospel or making disciples for Christ. Disciple-Making Movements are a highly intentional application of biblical values and principles that align our practices directly with the teachings and example of Christ, as found in the New Testament. These include finding a person of peace, engaging families in a process of discovering and obeying God’s Word, discipling people toward conversion, and launching simple churches that can easily and quickly reproduce.

Of equal importance is obedience to God’s Word. We are called to make disciples, “teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded” (Matthew 28:20), and it is vitally important that, whenever we teach from Scripture, we also teach *obedience* to the Scripture. This usually requires a paradigm shift from typical church ministry. We call our ministry model that facilitates discovery and obedience to God a Discovery Bible Study. This inductive Bible study is a simple process of producing the biblical elements of a healthy church in embryonic form, and a group commitment to obey everything they discover in each of the Creation to Christ Chronological Bible stories.

When, after six months of prayer, it seemed like the Lord was giving permission for the pioneer team to engage this new challenge in a new country, they settled in a region not too far from the people they were sent to reach. They began

by making friends with Christian leaders and helped them envision what might be possible among the very peoples that most of them understandably were hesitant to engage. After some training, coaching, and mentoring, more than thirty small and mid-sized ministries committed to the project. Within a few months the first waves of new pioneer teams who knew the cultures and languages were deploying among the three people groups. Like their coaches they understood the risks but felt led to be involved. Those sending ministries were also given training in how to build strong prayer support for their teams.

The teams were soon finding persons of peace, those individuals and families who seemed open to learning about the truths of Scripture (Luke 10:5–7). They began establishing Discovery Bible Studies with any who were interested, and these quickly grew into other groups which began replicating themselves.

Soon, Discovery Bible Studies were becoming churches and the original teams were very busy traveling through the areas, coaching and mentoring the new teams plus the new leaders that were emerging out of the harvest. They began holding multiple-day training sessions in several areas, and gradually they saw the phenomenon of “leaders producing leaders and churches producing new generations of leaders.” Within a year the original team had established numerous “prayer camps” and “schools of prayer.”

GOD IS GLORIFIED


In the past three years, the outcomes of this ministry have been dramatic.

Group A has seen the planting of 187 churches to the fourth generation, and almost 3,000 new Christ Followers.

Group B presently has 91 small churches to the third generation, with 1,001 new Christians.

Group C now has 150 churches to the fourth generation with more than 2,300 new Followers of Christ.

Tragically, these results have not come without great persecution, and in the last eighteen months there have been more than 200 martyrs. But the thirty or so ministries that took on this task have shown unprecedented courage in the face of horrific opposition, pressing on with underground disciple making and church planting.

We were privileged to have a role in these events, but this is not just our story—it is truly God’s story, the story of many prayerful and brave indigenous ministries and especially the story of precious brothers and sisters “of whom the world was not worthy.” 

Everything You Need to Know About the 4th Annual Ralph D. Winter Lectureship, April 25 & 26, 2013

An interview with 2013 Lectureship Coordinator Brian Lowther

Recently we caught up with Brian Lowther to get the lowdown on the upcoming Ralph D. Winter Lectureship.

Q. Tell me two reasons why I should attend this year's Ralph D. Winter Lectureship.

A. Well, number one, it's going to be a "who's who" event of theologically-oriented people from the mission and health communities.

And then secondly, the subject matter. The warfare worldview isn't talked about much in everyday Christian gatherings, or from the pulpit. But the Bible has quite a bit to say about it that will help reboot your notion of God's character. That's really the aim of this year's lectureship: confirming or restoring the truth and fullness of God's reputation.

Q. What do you mean by restoring God's reputation?

A. Well, God gets blamed for a lot of the evil in the world. To paraphrase Dr. Winter in regard to disease, suffering, violence in nature, and the like, we have become so used to these things that we have drifted into supposing that this is the way God created things. And a God who created violence, cruelty and suffering is not so appealing to the people we're trying to win to Christ, His Son.

Q. Give me the essence of the lectureship in 39 seconds.

A. Okay, really fast: Greg Boyd is a pastor in Minneapolis, he's a theologian, he's written or co-written 18 books, he's controversial and he's coming to Pasadena on Thursday April 25, and Friday April 26. Thursday evening will be his story, his pilgrimage. Then Friday he'll deliver three lectures on, *"Is God to Blame?: Moving Beyond Simple Answers to the Problem of Evil."* After each lecture will be a



Speaker: Gregory A. Boyd
Theme: *Is God to Blame?: Moving Beyond Simple Answers to the Problem of Evil*
Date: April 25 & 26, 2013
Location: William Carey International University in Pasadena, California
Cost: \$50 (Students/Missionaries - \$25)
Register: www.uscwm.org/rdwlectureship

panel discussion with influential believers such as Dr. Charles Kraft of Fuller Seminary and Dr. Bob Blincoe of Frontiers. After each panel will be a Q&A session with the audience.

Q. What is controversial about Greg Boyd?

A. What is *not* controversial about Greg Boyd? He's probably most well known for his open view of the future, which challenges the traditional

understanding of God's sovereignty. While we're not afraid of controversy, the theme of this year's lectureship is not Open

Theism, but the warfare worldview and the problem of evil.

Q. What is meant by the warfare worldview?

A. In Boyd's words, it is the conviction that the good and evil aspects of life are to be interpreted largely as a result of good and evil spirits warring against each other and against us.

Anyhow, I think it's going to be a solid event. You'll walk away having grappled with how the warfare worldview affects your life, your picture of God, your prayers and your ministry. And, the registration cost includes a copy of the forthcoming book, *The Ralph D. Winter Story*. Plus you'll get to engage Greg Boyd and other thinkers from Loma Linda University/Medical Center, Biola University, Azusa Pacific University, and William Carey International University, just to name a few. So, register online (www.uscwm.org/rdwlectureship) and I'll see you there.



Brian Lowther has been the director of the Roberta Winter Institute since 2010. Prior to that he served at the U.S. Center for World Mission in graphic design and publishing for eight years.

EFFECTIVE ENGAGEMENT

After 6 Years



JEFF LIVERMAN

Jeff Liverman is the Director of Strategy Coordination for the mission agency Frontiers. He and his wife Cookie have served on several fields and have been on staff with Frontiers since 1985. You may contact the author by email at: jliverman@fimtld.org. You may learn more about the work of Frontiers at www.frontiers.org.

In the spring of 2006 I was asked to identify and create strategic initiatives that would lead our mission and its partners to “engage all Muslim peoples with a population over 100,000 by 2012.” As I set out on that task, I quickly learned there was no consensus definition for what the term “engagement” even meant. Thus, it was a real challenge to ascertain which groups were “unengaged” and in need of an effective outreach. Some used the term “unengaged” to describe a people group that was not “adopted” by a church or mission agency. Others applied the term to peoples for whom evangelistic material had not yet been produced. Still others applied the term interchangeably with “unreached” or other important missiological designations. In order to develop strategic initiatives, I decided first to attempt to bring clarity to the term itself and then to submit a simple yet meaningful definition to the missions community at large. *Mission Frontiers* published my modest attempt in their November-December 2006 issue which brought about broad usage and application of the definition.

GROUNDING IN GOD’S WORD

As with any approach to sharing the gospel, one must find his moorings in the Word of God. In the New Testament we see the Apostle Paul make reference to what were, in his day, the equivalent of “unengaged” peoples.

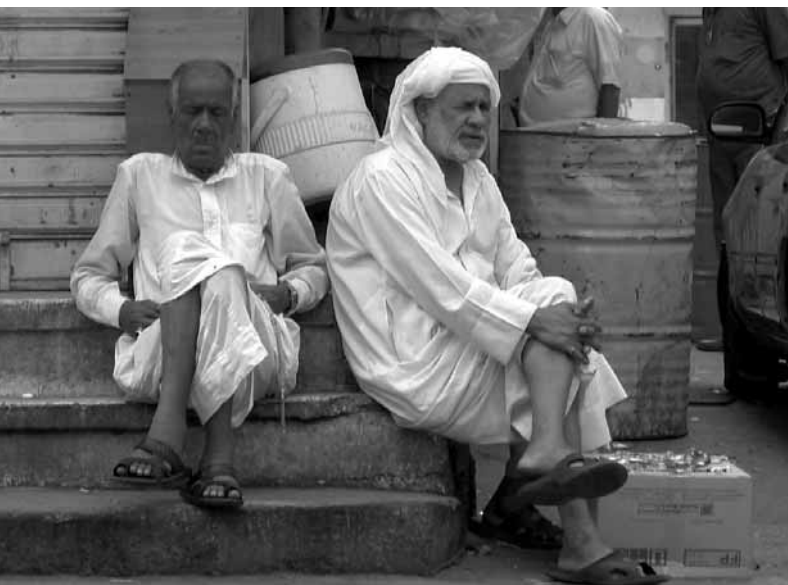
“My ambition has always been to proclaim the Good News in places where Christ has not been heard of, so as not to build on a foundation laid by someone else. As the Scripture says, ‘Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.’” Romans 15:20, 21

Although much can be written about these verses, I’d like to point out three things. First, Paul was absolutely passionate about taking the good news of Jesus Christ where it had never been. In the above verse we see that it was his “ambition,” a strong word in the original Greek used to describe an athlete giving his last ounce of energy to cross the finish line. Second, Paul was utterly convinced and confident that this gospel would be preached to those who have not yet heard. Third, and this is very important, the measure or efficacy of that preaching would be taken from the recipients’ point of view. Look what it says: “they will see” and “they will understand.” Paul was not simply concerned about completing a task or assignment given him by the Lord, he was passionate about how his efforts affected the recipient people.

Cultural anthropologists refer to this as the “emic perspective.”¹ This is how we want to view and measure the likely impact of evangelistic activity among all people groups—not only by what we do or think we are doing, but by how our activity is felt by the people themselves. Any truly strategic focus must measure its efficacy from an emic perspective.

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

I've often been asked to speak on "engagement"—what it means and how the missions community has applied the concept. When I do, I like to use the illustration of a "plumb-bob." A plumb-bob is a tool used by carpenters to determine a straight vertical line. It happens to be one of the simplest tools in the carpenter's box. It is simply a string with a weight tied to one end. Holding the string with the weight dangling at the bottom will give the carpenter his desired straight vertical line. From that line he is then able to build a wall or even an entire house should that be his objective.



The criteria for defining effective engagement has acted in many ways like the plumb-bob. Dropped into the sea of literally thousands of unreached peoples, the criteria has given us a way to identify and highlight those groups yet to hear the gospel at least once. It has also created a category called "under-engaged." That being simply defined as a people group with only limited access to the gospel.²

The need for more workers among those people groups which are under-engaged can and should be recognized in our recruiting and deployment priorities. In the case of at least one sending agency, application of a strategy focused primarily on the unengaged has not only resulted in new workers deployed to the "back of beyond," it has also increased the number of workers being sent to the under-engaged. By focusing on the unengaged this sending agency has achieved a "both/and" increase in workers going to the field.³

RESULTING LISTS OF UNENGAGED

Applying the criteria has resulted in the creation of lists of peoples that are unengaged. For better or for worse, these lists have sparked discussions and debate as to just who the unengaged are and what is the best way to go about measuring or defining them. The lists have also been used by mobilizers and sending agencies to aid in developing mission strategies. For a variety of strategic reasons, I have worked closely with the International Mission Board (IMB) in applying these criteria to Muslim groups around the world. The IMB's list can be found at: www.peoplegroups.org.

As we have evaluated people groups by, among other things, listening to the field practitioners, we have had to apply not only the definition of engagement but also other standards to our work. Perhaps the best way to present how we go about identifying and categorizing people groups is to work through some frequently asked questions. I hope this is helpful.

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT HOW THESE TERMS ARE BEING APPLIED.

Q: What if a team goes to the unengaged and is on the field for 2 years and then goes home—does this count as having engaged a people?

The impact on the unengaged list would be an initial reduction in the number of PGs still unengaged, but if that only apostolic effort left the people group, we would then add it back to the list of unengaged.

Q: Is a people group considered engaged if there is one believer on the ground working? At what point does this people group move off the "unengaged" list to the "unreached" and so on?

The determination of engaged or unengaged is made by field practitioners. We have discussed our "standard" for engagement with them, and they then apply that standard to their context and give us their read on whether or not the people group is engaged.

Q: What about "national" or "global south" efforts to reach out to the unengaged? Does their activity get factored into determining a people group's status?

Absolutely! We are not measuring Western activity only. What we are trying to evaluate is if and how the gospel is impacting all peoples. Remember, we try to look at things from an "emic" perspective.

Q: As you determine which groups are unengaged, do you consult field practitioners from multiple agencies and churches? What about the nationals?

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We have and will continue to check with any and all like-minded field practitioners regarding the status of a people group. We canvas field workers for their input on every people group on the list. If you would like to be in on this vital conversation, please contact me.

Q: How to evaluate people groups in urban centers presents us with a whole range of issues. How many teams do we have in the city of Karachi? How many are needed to impact the complex mix of ethnic groups in that city? What about urban centers where multiple people groups may co-exist and inter-marry with one another?

The current system of “counting” and keeping track of engagement is based in a large part on the Homogeneous Unit Principle (HUP). We have agreed that this method, though appropriate for many contexts, does not completely address the wide milieu of humanity confronting the Church today. This is particularly true when looking at large urban centers such as Karachi, Cairo, Kolkata and many others. When trying to ascertain where effective engagement is happening and where it isn’t with regard to “urban stews,” perhaps we should put cities over a certain size (or cities sufficiently homogenized) into an “other” category—outside the HUP. Then we could present an analysis based on population per “apostolic effort.” This is a thought we’ve had about how to address this situation, but the process is still in development. What do you think?

Q: What about access to the gospel? It seems to me that some of the larger people groups can be considered “engaged” by a relatively few number of workers. Yet there may be millions of persons covering thousands of square kilometers without any practitioner resident among them. Shouldn’t we look at engagement through the lens of “access points”?

As I have mentioned, applying the criterion for engagement has certainly brought to the fore those groups which are under-engaged. I see this as a good problem, one that will hopefully spawn effective outreach and tracking strategies.⁴

We read in Isaiah 26:8: “Yes, LORD, walking in the way of your laws, we wait for you; your name and renown are the desire of our hearts.” Paul echoes this same passion in Romans 1:5, “Through him and for his name’s sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among ALL the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.” Like Paul we crave the “glory of His renown” as far and wide as possible. To that end may there be no people group without a viable witness to *His renown!!* 

1. Hesselgrave, David 1991 *Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*. Grand Rapids: Academie Books 124-126.
2. *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, 27:3 Fall 2010, 133-138, www.ijfm.org.
3. Frontiers (US Sending Base).
4. *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, 27:3 Fall 2010, 133-138, www.ijfm.org.



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ENGAGED UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS:

A Call for Reaching the Under-Engaged



JIM HANEY

Jim Haney is Director of Global Research, Office of Global Strategy, IMB. Jim and his wife Donna served in Nigeria and Ghana for 18 years before moving to IMB staff in Richmond, Virginia. You may contact Jim for more information at: Jhaney@imb.org.

In recent years, a great deal of attention, energy and resources have been dedicated to engaging *unengaged unreached people groups* (UUPGs). Certainly, joining hands to engage the unengaged is a critical task in making disciples of all nations. Can you think of any reason why an entire people group should be denied an opportunity to hear the gospel? I can't. That's why the task of engaging the unengaged is so important.

As critical as embracing and engaging people groups is, what happens from a mobilization standpoint when a people group is engaged and removed from the UUPG list? When this happens, a people group appears to fall from the "Great Commission" radar screen. Critics of the priority placed on UUPGs agree that UUPGs need to be engaged, but they have a hard time with removing a UUPG when only one team is engaging the people group, especially since engagements can be short-lived.

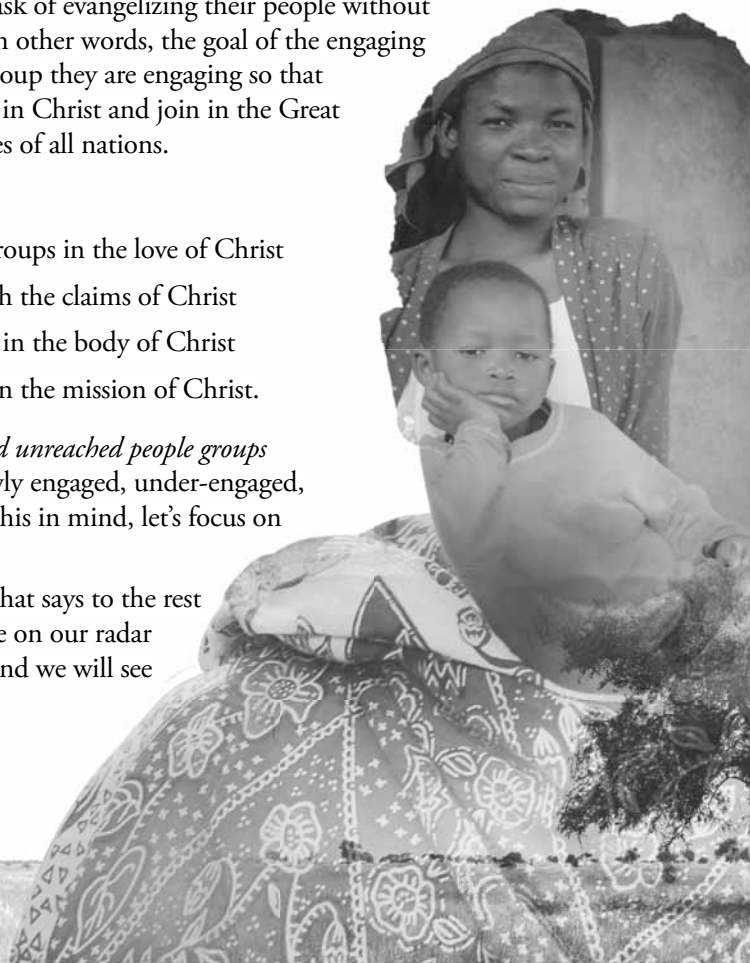
Engagement must be maintained with purpose—to make progress toward establishing churches among the engaged and providing resources to the extent that local believers will be able to continue the task of evangelizing their people without assistance from the outside. In other words, the goal of the engaging team is to reach the people group they are engaging so that the people group will mature in Christ and join in the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations.

I say it this way:

we *embrace* people groups in the love of Christ
to *engage* them with the claims of Christ
to *establish* them in the body of Christ
to *enlist* them in the mission of Christ.

This article focuses on *engaged unreached people groups* (EUPGs).¹ These may be newly engaged, under-engaged, or effectively engaged. With this in mind, let's focus on the local engaging team.

It is the local engaging team that says to the rest of us, "We have them. They're on our radar screen, we're tracking them, and we will see them home."



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Can they say this? Can one team—a very fragile team among so many—really say this? Have you been on such a team? Did your team really intend to commit to bringing a whole people group home to the Father? That's a tall order.

To those fragile teams, we start by saying that *we have a task*. The rest of us are praying for you and many are working to provide resources so that your engagement is fruitful and you can get on with establishing churches.



We acknowledge that *you have a task*. Your task is to implement a church planting strategy among a people group until your people group gains the desire, capacity and commitment to continue the task of evangelism without external assistance. Today, we are excited that many people groups who were once unengaged and unreached are now part of the harvest force—they are continuing the task of evangelism in their own people group and are involved in missions to other people groups.

You are not alone in your engagement task. As you engage, God supplies local believers, and the team grows. The team matures as local believers grow in Christ and provide new strategic insights for reaching their people group. As your team plants churches, each generation of churches leads to another. Their joy compels them to multiply their witness to many. Those people you are engaging begin to engage with you; it is those very people you are engaging that begin to pray and provide for the needs of your team, even as they see the harvest emerging. You are not alone.

ENGAGED OR UNENGAGED— THAT IS THE QUESTION!

In Romans 15:20-21 (NIV), Paul wrote:

It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.²¹ Rather, as it is written: "Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand."

Certainly, Paul engaged unengaged unreached people groups. He was a pioneering apostolic missionary. He was careful about team composition, and he was always adding people to his team, plugging them in, leaving them in place, and sending for them. But, he didn't put together large teams because his focus was training and mentoring local believers, commending them to the Lord to finish what had been started.

Whether unreached people groups are unengaged or engaged, there is plenty of work to be done without building on someone else's foundation. Some organizations and churches are called to a pioneering apostolic ministry such as Paul's. Others are called to come alongside pioneers to join them in building and extending a foundation for the gospel while appreciating that there is already someone who has established an engagement presence and can offer structure and guidance for their team.

Regardless of whether your organization or church is called to engage a UUPG or join a team already engaging an EUPG, team capacity grows as engagement gets underway. God will bring workers to the team; perhaps your church will join one of those teams, increasing their potential to succeed in their task.

TOOL-BELT FOR AN ENGAGING TEAM

Today, there are only a few UUPGs without engagement tools. Although UUPGs don't have engaging teams, they often have other tools—Bibles, cassettes, radio broadcasts, etc. The engaging team will want to pay attention to what tools are available that can be used in their engagement strategy.

All EUPGs have engagement tools because they already have an engagement team! Additionally, they are more likely to have Bibles, cassettes, radio broadcasts, etc. Engaging teams need to use available tools and develop




others that will increase the likelihood that the people they are engaging will understand and accept the gospel.

WHAT TOOLS ARE AVAILABLE?

Quite a few tools are available for those who want to help engage a people group. Let's take a look at how to access what we know:

1. *Open a listing of unreached people groups.* Go to **www.peoplegroups.org**; click on the link that says "View GSEC Monthly Reports;" download the "GSEC Listing of Unreached People Groups," and open the file.²
2. *Filter Column I (Evangelical Engagement) for either "No" or "Yes."*
 - a. If you filter for No, you will have a list of UUPGs.
 - b. If you filter for Yes, you will have a list of EUPGs.
3. *Take time to explore the list you have.*
 - a. If you are looking at a list of UUPGs, regardless of the tools available, all of the people groups on the list need a pioneering apostolic team. Without a team to implement a church planting strategy, any resources available may be left on some shelf without ever reaching the ears and hearts of your UUPG.
 - b. If you are looking at a list of EUPGs, you are already blessed with a team that is implementing a church planting strategy, and the resources that have been developed are available for your use. The engaging team will be able to tell you more about the suitability of these tools.

If you have any questions about how to access these tools, write the Global Research Information Center: **gric@imb.org**.

My reason for writing this article is to say that there are two kinds of unreached people groups—those that are unengaged (UUPGs) and those that are engaged (EUPGs). If you are called to an unreached people group that is unengaged, my prayer for you is that God will give your team the gifting that will make the pioneering apostolic nature of your engagement possible. If you are called to an unreached people group that is already engaged, my prayer for you is that God will help you work with the engaging team to add to their ability to successfully implement a church planting strategy. 

- 1 Engaged Unreached People Groups can be abbreviated as EUPGs. Engaged = Church Planting Strategy is Underway. See Jeff Liverman's article for some criteria for engagement. Unreached = Less than 2% of the people group population is evangelical in faith and practice. People Group = The largest population whereby the gospel can spread before encountering significant barriers of understanding or accepting the gospel.
- 2 Global Status of Evangelical Christianity. These reports are published monthly and contain valuable information for an engaging team or someone considering a "good fit" for their organization or church with a people group. Write gric@imb.org if you want help understanding the list of people groups. If you need help interpreting the data on the people group list, you can download "GSEC Field Descriptions" from www.grdweb.info/gsec/Overview/tabid/259/Default.aspx.

*TODAY, WE ARE EXCITED THAT MANY
PEOPLE GROUPS WHO WERE ONCE
UNENGAGED AND UNREACHED ARE NOW
PART OF THE HARVEST FORCE.*



ORGANIZATIONAL RESET: AGENCIES PRIORITIZING TO REACH THE UNENGAGED.

AN INTERVIEW WITH BRENT PRESTON, TEAM; D. RAY DAVIS, IMB;
BOB BLINCOE, FRONTIERS; FRED ELY, SIM



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BOB BLINCOE

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Editor's Note:

Recently leaders from four mission agencies shared with Mission Frontiers the "reset" issues they have faced in prioritizing the sending of new workers to unengaged Muslim people groups. Here is what they had to say.

MF: YOUR AGENCIES HAVE LED THE WAY IN PRIORITIZING MISSION TO UNENGAGED PEOPLES. WHAT WERE THE CHALLENGES YOU FACED?

Brent Preston, Senior Director of TEAM's leaders in South East Asia

At TEAM we have wide open doors to work among Muslim people; but a primary challenge is our own lack of getting the message out. We are taking strong action to right this and I look forward to seeing a turn-around in the number of people we send. There is an attitude of openness among people today to use their lives well for the Lord's purposes. But they need to know of the opportunities and they need to be coached through those doors.

D. Ray Davis, Associate Vice President for Church and Partner Connections at IMB

In the past, IMB primarily placed new personnel where existing field teams had needs—new personnel followed existing personnel. We entered new unreached and unengaged people groups, but slowly.

Our vision, based on Revelation 7:9, includes "a multitude from *every* language, people, tribe, and nation..." The word "*every*" became prominent, prompting our "reset." The task remaining is strategically more important than past accomplishment. With that

biblical vision in focus, our leadership rallied IMB to see beyond where we currently had engagement to unengaged peoples. We transitioned from a focus on countries to people groups in geographical regions. In 2009 our vision led us to recognize globalization's impact. Focusing on affinities has helped us to develop strategies that keep us moving toward the unengaged wherever they live.

Bob Blincoe, US Director of Frontiers

The “reset” problem was me; I had to reduce the number of leaders in the office that reported to me (from nine to four); that freed me up to do one “reset” thing: leading a new effort to recognize and release new leaders who would “preach the gospel where Christ is not known,” where the unengaged are. Five years ago US Frontiers had no team leaders in Chad or Sudan; today we have nine because there are more than 100 unengaged Muslim peoples in Chad-Sudan. This same trend is happening in the other key areas where the unengaged are located in Asia and Africa.

Fred Ely, Deputy US Director for SIM

Several issues within SIM make it difficult to prioritize a specific vision such as focusing on the unengaged. These include: our organizational structure in which ministry strategies are developed on the field level and are not pushed down from “the top” central mission leadership; the fact we are a “general” mission with many types of ministries—medical, education, development, radio, translation, etc., etc., not just work among the unreached; we work among other unreached people groups in addition to Muslims—Buddhists, Hindus, animists, etc.; and, we work closely with local church partners that have grown up out of our work in the past and they often have other priorities which we have to consider. *What we have done is designate a “champion” within SIM to raise awareness about MUPGs, one who encourages our field leaders to consider those people groups in their areas and begin by focusing on near neighbor people groups to those we are already working with, or that we are working with in other countries. Our International Leadership has also encouraged field leaders to refer to the list of MUPGs developed by the global Muslim ministries network many of us are aligned with as they develop their strategies. We also realize that the growing missionary force from the majority world can have great impact in this effort and so are facilitating their efforts wherever possible. This has not resulted in a total shift of our organization in this direction but has definitely highlighted and put more focus on the unengaged.*

MF: HOW ARE MISSION AGENCIES WORKING MORE CLOSELY BECAUSE OF THIS NETWORK FRED HAS MENTIONED?

Bob Blincoe—Frontiers

Working closely on *church planting research* has given us the “fruitful practices” results. It turns out that there are some common practices which, when followed, increase the likeliness of churches actually being planted. And we are all grateful for the data that the IMB is collecting on the names and locations of the remaining unengaged Muslim peoples. It is truly possible to know where the need is the greatest and to challenge the next generation to go where there are no push pins in the maps.

SIM—Fred Ely

The network has provided an excellent forum for exchange of ideas and fruitful practices, sharing research done by IMB and others, encouraged focused prayer and mobilization efforts and provided encouragement to those involved in reaching MUPGs.

TEAM—Brent Preston

It has helped numerous agencies connect. The wonder of it all is that mission agencies, which in the past did not partner with other agencies, are now ready to do so. This global collaborative effort is helping us identify much more clearly where the need is, join forces where we can, and share resources. On top of that, the conferences are a source of encouragement and have become a great resource in identifying fruitful practices we can all use to bring the light to the lost in a gracious way.

IMB—D. Ray Davis

The network provides two benefits for IMB: research and collaboration. First, when research is shared we all know what is yet to be done. Research gives practical expression to vision; it defines the term “every” in Revelation 5:9 and 7:9. Vision is not driven by what has been accomplished but by who is yet to be engaged. Shared research provides that clarity. Second, organizational collaboration is invigorating and enlightening. Partnering motivates us all to keep focused on the goal. The collaboration makes us all better. Iron sharpens iron and, through networking, our strategies are sharpened and our methods are shared. We benefit from each other as we continue toward the vision to see unengaged Muslims gathered around the throne.

If anyone would like to receive information about this global network of churches and agencies serving in the Muslim world, please contact John B. at outreach.io@aimint.net. MF

WHAT'S GETTING IN THE WAY?

THE FIVE GREATEST ROADBLOCKS TO ENGAGEMENT



PHILL BUTLER

Over the last 30 years Phill has worked in over 70 countries as head, first of Interchristo, then Interdev, and currently visionSynergy. He now is Sr. Strategy Advisor at visionSynergy, a ministry specializing in international ministry partnership and network development. You may contact Phill at pbutler@visionsynergy.net.

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The world is a big, complicated place. The Muslim world is a 1.5+ billion person segment of that world with significant Muslim populations stretching from West Africa to the southern Philippines. With its heartland in the Middle East, where all history began and where it will all end, for political, economic, and deeply spiritual reasons, engaging the Muslim world effectively with the transforming message and power of the Lord Jesus must be a very high priority. Christian leaders worldwide agree that today is a day of unparalleled opportunity in unleashing the gospel throughout the world. The global Church has never had more resources than she has today. However, despite serious and often sacrificial efforts to realize this vision, we're far short of achieving our goals. With 1177 Muslim Unengaged Unreached People Groups (MUUPGs)¹—187 of them over 100,000 in size—the task ahead of us is formidable.

Our global network, which is made up of 135+ organizations from 25 sending nations, has a vision to see effective church planting among all Muslim people groups, and we have set engagement of MUUPGs to be a top priority.

In April 2012 a survey was conducted of the network which asked the single question:

"From your personal or ministry perspective, what do you believe are the three greatest roadblocks or challenges that stand in the way of the global church engaging every one of these Muslim people groups in the next five years?"

The survey found the following five roadblocks, in order of frequency, to be most commonly identified by the respondents:

#1 LACK OF LABORERS

"Lack of workers—which I have observed is due to general lack of understanding God's passion for lost people—lack of discipleship."²

This quote by one respondent adequately expresses the recurring theme of the number one roadblock and sums up what has been published by researchers Barrett and Johnson. Regarding the lack of workers among the world's 4,400 least-evangelized peoples, the research states that 25% of the world's population receives only 7.5% of the world's foreign and national missionaries.³ Leaders have rightly identified that we need to continue "beseech[ing] the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest"

(Luke 10:2) as we improve efforts at discipling the Church in understanding God's heart for all peoples.

#2 LACK OF EFFECTIVE STRATEGY

"Slowness on the part of agencies toward embracing new paradigms for missionary response...."

Among these mission leaders there was a general sense of the need for new and effective strategies to realize effective engagements. This might be indicative of the challenge facing some of the established organizations to transition into today's realities regarding mobilization, effective training, funding, and working in the hostile environments where many of these people groups are found. Respondents found that their organizations were "unfamiliar with the breakthroughs that God is currently using..." and that they had an "unclear path from intent to action, concept to practice—how specifically to engage?"

#3 LACK OF UNITY WITHIN THE GLOBAL CHURCH

"Lack of coordination is huge: getting the various international and national partners working together as much as possible."

In an age of globalization it should grieve us that we still run "into" rather than "alongside" one another in our mission efforts. The message was loud and clear: we are still struggling with the grace, humility and sacrifice that collaboration and partnership require.

"Lack of unity," "mistrust," and "fragmentation," were some of the reoccurring words that expressed this roadblock. One Indian leader said, "Seems [like] Western missionaries and churches want to accomplish the task on their own, [there is a] huge imbalance in sharing the resources."

4 PREJUDICE

"The global Church is biased against Muslims. It is hard to support workers serving people you do not like or for whom you have no affinity."

The harsh reality is that the Church is reflecting the world in popular opinion of Muslims by non-Muslims. According to global missiologist Patrick Johnstone, the 21st Century will revert to patterns of earlier centuries where religion will be a dominant feature of future conflict.⁴ Organizational leaders are feeling this roadblock of prejudice from their supporting constituencies because of "the spirit of discrimination [fear] towards the people group [they] are trying to reach..." This roadblock is especially real among the leaders from the church in

Muslim lands where there is a "lack of desire from the national church because they feel besieged..."

What is the Church's role in mission in a world of increasing ideological conflict, fear and repression of citizens? There is a need for mission organizations to promote and undergird Jesus' teaching on loving our neighbors by putting a Muslim face to "neighbor."

#5 THE CHURCH IS UNAWARE

"Unengaged are unengaged for many reasons—but the greatest reason by far is that these UUPGs are not individually (by name) on anyone's 'radar'."

*THERE IS STILL MUCH TO DO WHERE
CHRIST HAS BEEN NAMED. BUT OH
HOW WE NEED TO PRAY FOR AN
ARMY OF HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS
WITH PAUL'S PASSION TO REACH
THE UTTERLY UNREACHED AND
UNENGAGED PEOPLES OF THE WORLD.*

—Pastor John Piper

When it comes down to it, the church is largely unaware of the least reached and the resources needed to engage them. A survey conducted by Global Mapping International found that only 48% of missionaries and 35% of mission-minded lay people are even aware of the term UUPG.⁵ Several leaders felt that the blame is partly theirs because "we tend to hold them [UUPGs] captive on database files in list form and do not invite churches to begin to embark on a journey with one UUPG." There was also a sense that too many other things take priority. "Agencies and churches have many different and immediate concerns that demand immediate attention—out of sight, out of mind."

SURMOUNTING THE ROADBLOCKS

For several years, personnel recruiters and other mobilizers from the North American region of the network have been meeting annually to pray, talk, and strategize about this challenge. In late 2011 there was a collective sense that to see real movement a whole new approach was needed. In June 2012, 105 leaders met in Kansas City and

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in September 2012, 60 other leaders met in Amsterdam. Each group gathered for two days of hard discussion, prayer, and planning. Among the groups, there were 27 CEOs along with other senior mission leaders from 80 organizations. At these meetings, working sessions addressed three very simple but very tough questions:

- Regular communication that keeps everyone up to date—both within the working group and across the wider network. An honest look at progress or problems can bring course correction and, often, celebration when progress has been made even though not all objectives have been met.




*“THE HARVEST IS PLENTIFUL,
BUT THE LABORERS ARE FEW.” THE
UNENGAGED...PEOPLES OF THE
WORLD ARE WAITING FOR US TO...
REACH THEM! THE BOTTLENECK IS
NOT WITH THEIR RECEPTIVENESS,
BUT WITH OUR WILLINGNESS.*

—Dr. Steve Shadrach, President, Center for Mission Mobilization

1) What are the roadblocks preventing the Church from engaging MUUPGs, 2) What are a few of the absolutely highest solutions that could address these roadblocks, and 3) What specific action steps (people, objectives, timetables, etc.) will be required to realize those solutions?⁶

Post-meeting evaluations by participants at the working meetings in Kansas City and Amsterdam suggested they were highly productive. Now, collaboratively turning ideas into real, sustainable action will require the following key elements:

- Visionary, committed leadership of each working group
- An awareness of and commitment to the fact that this collaborative effort is as important as their “day job” and, in the end, could potentially have as significant if not possibly greater kingdom outcomes.
- Relentless commitment to specific objectives and agreed timetables.

Stay tuned as further reports come in on this strategic action plan. And please pray! 

- 1 Muslim Unengaged Unreached People Groups, will be stated as MUUPGs for the remainder of this article.
- 2 All quotations, unless otherwise referenced, are taken directly from the survey respondents. The survey was conducted by the above mentioned network in April 2012.
- 3 Johnson, Todd, Barrett, David B. and Peter F. Crossing 2012 “Christianity 2012: The 200th Anniversary of American Foreign Missions” *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* 36:1, 28.
- 4 Johnstone, Patrick 2011 notes on PowerPoint Presentation “Politics and Freedom” based on content from “Demography: Nine Global Challenges.” In *The Future of the Global Church*. Westmont: InterVarsity Press/Authentic Media/GMI.
- 5 GMI (www.gmi.org) conducted a survey in May 2012. The survey was taken by 346 people of which 219 were field missionaries (most sent via agencies), 44 prospective long-term workers and 83 mission-minded others. Contact jim@gmi.org for more information.
- 6 We hope to publish a follow-up article on the potential solutions to these roadblocks that the work groups established at the Kansas City and Amsterdam meetings in 2012. Please write to laurie.e.hawley@gmail.com for more information.

THE VOICES OF PRACTITIONERS:

THE EARS OF MISSION EXECUTIVES



**J. DUDLEY
WOODBERRY**

J. Dudley Woodberry is Dean Emeritus and Senior Professor of Islamic Studies at the School of Intercultural Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, California. He served with his family at the Christian Study Centre in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, and as a pastor in Kabul, Afghanistan and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. You may contact the author at Dudley@fuller.edu.

At the beginning of the new millennium Rick Love and other young leaders reflected on the Apostle John's vision of the Lamb who with his blood "purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation" (Rev. 5:9 NIV). And they covenanted to cooperate, by God's grace, to see effective efforts to plant fellowships of Christ's disciples in every Muslim people group.

A lot had happened since the Glen Eyrie Consultation in 1978 which produced *The Gospel and Islam* (ed. McCurry, 1978). With the absence of significant numbers of converts from Islam in 1978, the writers of the conference papers were primarily scholars who drew insights from church growth and anthropological studies among non-Muslim people groups coupled with Scripture to suggest practices that gave promise to be fruitful among Muslims. These insights were developed further by the Muslim Track of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization in consultations in Pattaya in Thailand,¹ Zeist in Holland,² and Manila. Meanwhile Muslims began to follow Jesus in increasing numbers; so there were many practitioners with first-hand experience of planting churches among Muslims who could see what God was blessing.

The young leaders who had covenanted to work together towards the planting of fellowships of Christ's disciples among every Muslim people group then took concrete steps. One initially was for 13 mission agencies comprised of 5,800 workers to pool their research. This involved updating existing information on the Muslim Unreached People Groups³ by on-site surveys over a three to four year period. And it meant sharing and comparing a list of practices of the 13 agencies to seek to discern "fruitful practices" that God had blessed in planting churches, that reproduce. This was done with appreciation for the mystery of the blending of the divine and human in Paul's words: "I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth" (I Cor. 3:6, NRSV).

A multinational consultation was scheduled in Thailand for March of 2007 for nearly 500 participants, with two tracks. A Fruitful Practices track led by Steve Holloway was for field practitioners so that practices could be developed from experience not theory. The other was a Global Trends track to ascertain the task ahead and present it to invited mission executives who could cooperate in assigning personnel and resources toward accomplishing it. The practitioners who attended were from 56 organizations and had participated in the planting of 738 churches or fellowships of Jesus-followers among Muslims. They met every day in small groups

and evaluated 94 practices that had been highlighted by the original 13 agencies. The practitioners each indicated if they considered a practice important and whether they used it and gave case studies.

Some interesting things came out. Forty percent of the church plants were in contexts that had experienced social upheavals or natural disasters—an observation in line with previous church growth studies.

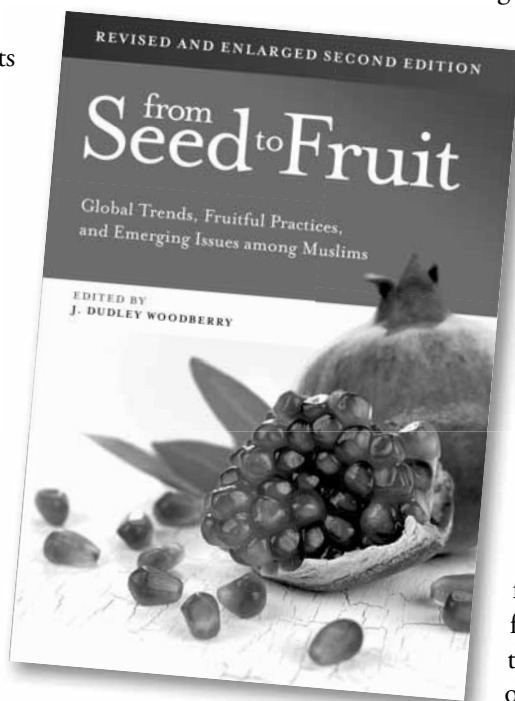
A majority of the plants that gave signs of developing into movements were contextualized to the culture and were planted in preexisting social networks where trust already existed. In these networks discipling began even before people came fully to faith because enquirers felt they belonged even before they fully believed. Far more church plants resulted when planters used the heart language rather than the trade language. Against conventional wisdom, in one area the best context to share faith with women seemed not to be in secret but at parties where women fed on each other's questions. The moral character of the witnesses was always most important.

The Global Trends Track, led by Jim Haney and others, discussed the state of the gospel witness in every part of the Muslim world in order to help mission executives develop their plans. Patrick Johnstone introduced the designation Affinity Block to refer to the largest clusters of people groups where the gospel can spread without encountering major barriers of understanding and acceptance (e.g., Arab peoples, Malay peoples). These he sub-divided into People Clusters (e.g., Kurds, Berbers). Such designations were designed to facilitate cooperation between mission agencies. The designation “unengaged” people was introduced more broadly rather than the commonly-used “unreached” people descriptor which has at times been hard to define. A Muslim people are considered effectively engaged when there is:


1. A pioneering church planting effort in residence.
2. A commitment to work in the local language and culture.
3. A commitment to long-term ministry.

4. Sowing in a manner consistent with the goal of seeing a Church-Planting Movement.

At the time of the Consultation there were 247 Muslim Unengaged People Groups of over 100,000 members, and the attending network of agencies committed themselves to strive with God's help to see that all of these were engaged by the end of 2012 and all the remaining Muslim Unengaged People Groups engaged by 2025.



A book was published in 2008 that included the proceedings and results of the consultation, *From Seed to Fruit: Global Trends, Fruitful Practices, and Emerging Issues*, ed. J. Dudley Woodberry,⁴ including a CD with updated demographic statistics and other resources. It was expanded in a second edition with additional analysis and an updated CD in 2011, and the demographic material is currently updated bimonthly. The emerging issues with respect to fruitful practices deal with topics such as factors that influence the identity that Jesus-followers choose, factors that facilitate fellowships becoming movements, the oral use of Scripture (since 75% of the practitioners worked with peoples preferring oral learning), and empowering indigenous leaders.

The vision that brought the young leaders together a decade ago still motivates us all—to partner with God so that some day we might join with those from the Muslim community who have decided to follow the Lamb and sing with them “with your blood you purchased for God persons from every tribe and language and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9, NIV). 

1. “Christian Witness to Muslims,” 1980, *Lausanne Occasional Paper 13*, accessed October 19, 2012, <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/lops/58-lop-13.html>.
2. “Understanding Muslims,” 2004, *Lausanne Occasional Paper 49*, accessed October 19, 2012, <http://www.lausanne.org/en/documents/lops/865-lop-49.html>.
3. Woodberry, J.D., ed. 1989 *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*. Monrovia, CA: MARC/World Vision Resources.
4. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library Publishers, www.missionbooks.org.

FROM CONFLICT TO PEOPLE GROUP FOCUS:

A BRIEF HISTORY OF HOW THE CHURCH
HAS RELATED TO MUSLIMS UP TO RECENT TIMES



DON MCCURRY

Don and his family ministered 18 years in Pakistan. Upon returning home, Don taught at Fuller Theological Seminary for 7 years. He founded and directed the Samuel Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies, as well as Ministries to Muslims in order to train Christians anywhere in the world in evangelism and church planting among Muslims. This work has taken him to 65 countries, fifteen of them being in Latin America. He is the author of numerous books and is a frequent speaker in Perspectives classes. He currently ministers out of Colorado Springs. You may contact him at dmjmccurry@gmail.com.

When an obscure Arab citizen of Mecca claimed to have met a spirit-being in the year 610 CE, the world could never have imagined that this man, under the influence of that spirit, would birth a religion that today numbers about 1.6 billion adherents, twenty percent of the human race.

A hundred years later (711 CE), the followers of Muhammad, in a feat of unparalleled military success, sent armies simultaneously east to the Indus River of modern-day Pakistan, and to the west to the Andalusian Coast of southern Spain.

The Christian churches of the time found themselves living under Islamic regimes which, on the one hand purported to be a continuation of the Judeo-Christian tradition, but on the other, taught doctrines that refuted the heart of the Gospel message: God is not triune Father, Son and Spirit; Jesus is not the Son of God; no one can atone for another's sin; and Jesus did not die on the cross, but was supposedly rescued by God and taken alive to heaven.

When opportunity allowed, Christians would openly defend their faith. Outstanding examples of this were John of Damascus (c. 676-749) and Ibn Ishaq Al-Kindi (c.801-873). Al-Kindi's "Apology" is a record of his presentation before the Caliph Al-Mamun, and was translated from Arabic into English in 1881 by John Muir.

It was not until 1143 that Robert Kentenensis translated the Quran from Arabic into Latin under the direction of Peter the Venerable, the Abbot of Cluny.

Francis of Assisi (1181-1226) was granted an audience with the Sultan of Egypt during the Fifth Crusade. They became friends.

Ramon Lull (1235-1315), a Majorcan Franciscan who visited Tunis three times, advocated setting up schools of Arabic so that Christians could discuss their faith with the Muslims in their own language.

Slowly Europe awoke to this challenge and began to translate the Quran into its own languages. Martin Luther wrote the preface to the German translation published in Basel in 1543. Luther also wrote a work on the manners and customs of the Saracens and coached Christians on how to behave if they were taken as slaves by Muslims.

The first English translation of the Quran from Arabic was done by George Sale in 1734. In his preface to the translation, Sale's description of Islam was polemic.

In due course, European scholars, both Christian and secular, began to study Islam. Their perception of Islam was that it was a religion that grew out of the teachings of

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one man, Muhammad, over a period of 23 years (610-632) and accordingly called it “Muhammadanism.” In retrospect, the scholars that analyzed Islam during this period from Sale to Muir and beyond were called “Orientalists.”

The approach of the Christian Orientalists up to this time was polemical.

While all of the above was developing in the religious sphere, Western powers were expanding and asserting their rule over other nations, including about ninety percent of the Muslim World. As they did so, there were both secular scholars and missionaries who became fascinated with the comparative study of cultures and languages. These studies gave birth to the academic disciplines of ethnology, anthropology, sociology, and linguistics.

With the birth of the modern missionary movement in the West in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the question began to stir in the minds of those involved as to how do you look at nations. Are they monolithic entities, or are they conglomerates of several cultures?

By the time of the first Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in Switzerland in 1974, groups like Wycliffe Bible Translators and the Mission Advanced Research Center of World Vision had compiled impressive lists of ethno-linguistic groups of peoples. This new way of looking at the world, as separate ethnic groups was highly popularized by Ralph Winter’s presentation at the Lausanne Congress.

A short time later, in 1976, a group of mission-oriented scholars gathered at Willowbank, Bermuda, to hammer out a report that called for great sensitivity and respect for the culture and languages of the unevangelized throughout the world.

By this time, the stage was set for new thinking in missions. A shift had occurred from the older discipline of apologetics to indigenization and contextualization.


Also in 1976, at Fuller Seminary, a proposal for a new consultation was drafted by me and Bob Douglas which I presented to the North American Lausanne Committee meeting in Chicago. This was accepted and World Vision was committed to funding it. Out of this proposal a mini-consultation was held in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1977, led by Ed Dayton of MARC, World Vision, on whether or not to go ahead with a larger consultation. The decision was made to go ahead with a larger consultation.



The North American Lausanne Consultation was held in late October, 1978, at the Glen Eyrie conference center in Colorado Springs. One hundred and 50 people from 26 nations participated. The delegates were chosen on the basis of their specialties: anthropologists, Islamic scholars, mission executives, missionaries and communication experts. Careful inclusion was made of overseas nationals and women, all invited with the proviso that they had responded to several concept papers sent out during the six months leading up to the conference.

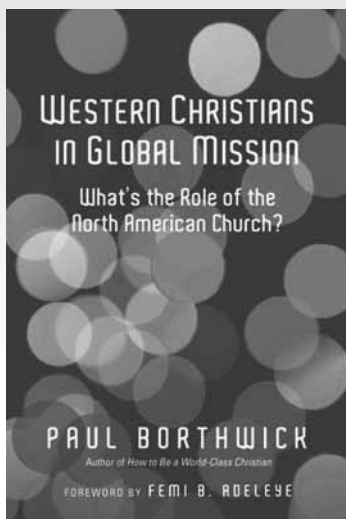
There were two significant products of this consultation. The first was the publishing of all of the 40 papers that led up to the consultation in *The*

Gospel and Islam: A Compendium, edited by myself, and published by MARC of World Vision, 1979. The second product was the formation of the Zwemer Institute of Muslim Studies, based in Pasadena, California, February 1, 1979.

In the Glen Eyrie Consultation, seeds of new ideas and new approaches were sown. Field workers implemented these new concepts in developing innovative approaches targeting the unreached Muslim people groups of the world. Later these practices were blended with church planting and church multiplication strategies that have led to the astonishing harvest going on in the Muslim world today. 

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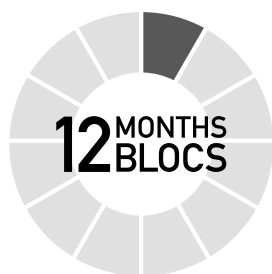
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Spotlight for January 2013

PEOPLES OF THE HORN OF AFRICA WITH EMPHASIS ON THE CUSHITIC FAMILY

DSK

DSK has served as a researcher, church-planter and community development worker for 24 years.

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Approximately 150 people groups inhabit the Horn of Africa, a region including Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Somalia, northeast Sudan, southeast Egypt and northern Kenya. Scholars classify the peoples of the Horn into four groups of family languages: the Cushitic, the Ethio-Semitic, the Omotic and the Nilo-Saharan. Though this classification is based on language affinity, these groups of family languages share common cultural traits within (sometimes across) linguistic boundaries. Therefore, I have categorized the peoples of the Horn into ethno-linguistic families, utilizing the terms used mainly for the linguistic classifications. In this article I will focus on the peoples of the Cushitic family.

THE CUSHITIC FAMILY

The Cushitic family has more people groups than the other three, with some peoples very large in population. The people clusters under this family are the Afar-Saho, the Beja, the Somali, the Oromo, the Agua and the Sidama. The Agua and Sidama clusters are predominantly followers of Christianity, with the rest predominantly followers of Islam.

The Afar-Saho Cluster consists of the (more than two million) Afar of southeast Eritrea, northeast Ethiopia and Djibouti, and the Saho of southeast Eritrea and northern Ethiopia. The Afar are fierce, warlike, nomadic and live by herding camels, while the Saho are comparatively more agrarian. Recent attempts to evangelize the Afar have resulted in many coming to Christ.

The Beja Cluster are pastoralists who inhabit southeast Egypt, the coastland of Sudan and western Eritrea. Estimated at 2.3 million in three main peoples, most Beja speak Bedawiyet. Though efforts are underway to reach the Beja, only a few evangelical believers are known.

The Somali Cluster inhabit the former Federal Republic of Somalia (nine million), the Somali Region of Ethiopia (five million), Djibouti (400,000) and northern Kenya (one million). Many are pastoralists, and they comprise two major families of clans: those that speak standard Somali (such as the Daarood and Dir), and those that speak Af-Maay (which include the Rahawiin and the Digil). Most Somalis


adhere rigorously to Islam; conversion to Christianity is not tolerated. The many efforts to evangelize the Somali have yielded few followers of Christ, and most of these have lived as secret believers or fled for their lives. Recent days have seen small success in evangelization in Somali refugee camps and among Somali children.

The Oromo Cluster is the largest cluster, consisting of 30 million people in 14 people groups. The cluster is divided into 50% followers of Islam, 40% followers of Christianity and 10% followers of ethnic religion. The majority of the Oromo are agrarian, though some like the Borana are pastoralist. In the last six years efforts to reach the Muslim Oromo have seen thousands come to Christ and hundreds of churches planted.

UPDATE ON DISCIPLE-MAKING MOVEMENTS

God is doing His marvelous work of redemption among the peoples of the Horn. Our ministry, in partnership with indigenous churches and ministries, has seen the starting of 15 Disciple-Making Movements (DMM) among the Horn of Africa people groups in the last six years. DMM is a process of spreading the gospel with the intention of making disciples who learn to obey the Word of God and quickly make other disciples who then repeat the process. We define a DMM as rapidly multiplying churches (100 or more), four generations deep, occurring within three years. The table below summarizes the outcomes of the DMMs in the Horn in the last six years.

People Group Family of the Horn	Number of Churches Planted	Number of Christ Followers	MBB ¹ %
Cushitic Family	4522	154,763	49%
Ethio-Semitic	1073	14,964	74%
Omotic	234	6,892	1.4%
Nilo-Saharan	138	20,018	3%
Total	5967	196,637	44.37%

We praise the Lord for this advance of His Kingdom in the Horn. However, we feel that these are the firstfruits; more needs to come until the Horn “will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11:9) Therefore, we feel much need for united prayer, for more laborers and the tuning of our vision and strategy in line with the Word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. 

1. MBB% is the percentage of Muslim Background Believers within the total number of Christ Followers.

A CUSHITIC CLUSTER FORECAST

Justin Long

Justin Long is a missionary researcher with Mission to Unreached Peoples and the author of a 2012 Cushitic Cluster Forecast, available from his website, www.justinlong.org. Here are a few of Justin's findings.

1. The slightly higher birth rate among Muslims in the Horn is not enough to overtake the 53 million Christians in Ethiopia, but does complicate evangelism and discipleship. This rate is not declining.
2. The peoples have chosen a rural, nomadic, disconnected life, making them physically difficult to reach. They are not urbanizing.
3. It is virtually impossible for outsiders (missionaries) to immigrate in and settle among these peoples for long periods. Creative methods of access are required.
4. Food insecurity is the biggest factor. Droughts average two out of every five years. Deforestation and warming make this worse.
5. Most live in absolute poverty, on less than US\$1/day. Farming and herding are their life, and this is not likely to change.
6. Wars have been fought for generations due to resource competition, governmental exploitation and rebellion. Any peace is fragile and unlikely to last.
7. Corruption, piracy, trafficking and smuggling are all thriving in the absence of firm, honest government, and threaten the Church.
8. Malnutrition reduces the ability to learn, work and thrive. The average lifespan is in the 40s, a very short window for evangelism.
9. Religion is a key part of tribal identification, and important for the survival of the individual and the family. Choosing Christ can be a death sentence.
10. Christianity is widespread among the Oromo, but tiny elsewhere. The above are barriers that prevent rapid spread. Given this and the lack of workers, significant church growth before 2025 seems improbable. May God prove me wrong. If you're looking for a challenge, this is it.



Spotlight for February 2013

PEOPLES OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA WITH EMPHASIS ON THE FULANI CLUSTER OF PEOPLES

MUMIN ABDAL MASIH

Mumin abdal Masih is a trainer and mentor-coach for *Church Planting Movements* among unreached peoples. He is a Fulani and has the dream of seeing any Fulani Christian become a missionary.

Contact him at:
mumin@pobox.com.

My name is Mumin abdal Masih; I am a Fulani. As my father used to say, “To be a Fulani is to be a Muslim.” So, I was raised as a Fulani, as a Muslim and as a herdsman. My father’s plan for my life was to be a Muslim cleric. As I grew, my dream was to be a devout Muslim and also to see every person become a Muslim because I was taught that Islam is the religion that God desires for all humanity.

But today I am a disciple of Jesus Christ. He found me, showed me His love and drew me to Him. Now my dream has changed: I dream and pray that not only will every Fulani come to know Christ and be His disciple, but that he or she will be a witness for Christ to reverse the fact that the Fulani spread Islam in Africa. Now we should spread the gospel and the love of Christ in Africa and beyond.

I would like to introduce you to my people, and I pray that you will join others who are obeying Christ and are making obedient disciples among the Fulani.

WHO ARE THE FULANI?

The Fulani are counted among the unreached people clusters and also among the most

resistant peoples to the gospel in Africa. More than one Christian missionary to the Fulani has become discouraged and given up after years of ministry without success. But the Fulani can be reached and turned into a powerful missionary force for the glory of God. God can do it, and He is doing it. We are seeing small sprouts of such growth today in different countries in Africa.

About 20 million Fulani are spread throughout 20 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Some Fulani are nomadic, others herd cattle, and others are merchants. They keep themselves separate from other peoples. They practice and propagate Islam throughout Africa. They have been and still are influential in politics, economics and religion throughout West Africa, and they have influenced the history of other major people clusters such as the Mossi and the Hausa. In many places in West Africa the Fulani provide the Islamic scholars and clerics.

THE PULAAKU: UNDERSTANDING THE FULANI

To understand the Fulani people, one should understand the *Pulaaku*—what differentiates


Fulanis from any other people group, including other Muslim peoples. The *Pulaaku*, put together with cattle, Islam and Fulfulde (the language of the Fulani), provide the foundation to be a true Fulani, a *dimon*. *Laawol Pulaaku* (the way of being a Fulani) is characterized by three virtues:

- *Munyal* is being patient and enduring any difficult situation. *Munyal* requires courage, self-control and discipline (physical and mental).
- *Hakkiilo* is being wise and intelligent. In any situation, the Fulani must show perspicacity and prudence. Being wise and intelligent is also being hospitable.
- *Semteende* is shame and also being modest. The Fulani must avoid anything that can bring shame. For that he must restrain himself and show self-control. Any demonstration of weakness in the face of difficult situations, or not behaving according to social codes, brings shame.

The *Pulaaku* is a way to the heart of Fulani people. Let them see the *Pulaaku* in the gospel, and they will follow Christ.

WHAT GOD IS DOING AMONG THE FULANI

We now see initial breakthroughs or sprouts of Church Planting Movements among the Fulani in several countries in Africa. More than 35 Fulani missionaries are reaching out to their own people and planting churches. Through one project launched in 2009 we have seen 542 churches planted in 11 countries, and in three of these countries there are more than 100 churches.

God is using scriptural principles of Church Planting Movements, and agencies such as CityTeam International, to make a difference among the Fulani. I believe that as more non-Fulani missionaries (Western, African, Asian, Latino, etc.) and Fulani Christians join together to implement Church Planting Movement principles among the Fulani, we will see God changing the spiritual landscape. We will see disciples of Christ emerging and changing the spiritual landscape of Africa as the Fulani did centuries ago. 

To learn more about the Fulani, see the following websites:

www.fulaniministries.org

www.jamtan.com

www.tabitalpulaaku-international.org

www.sim.org/index.php/content/fulani

www.byhisgrace.cc/fulani/profile.htm



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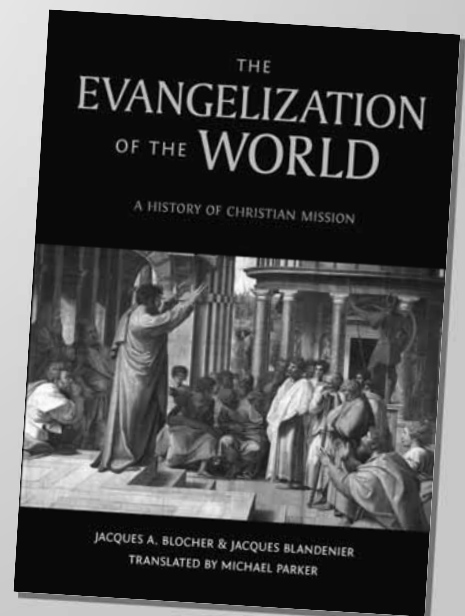
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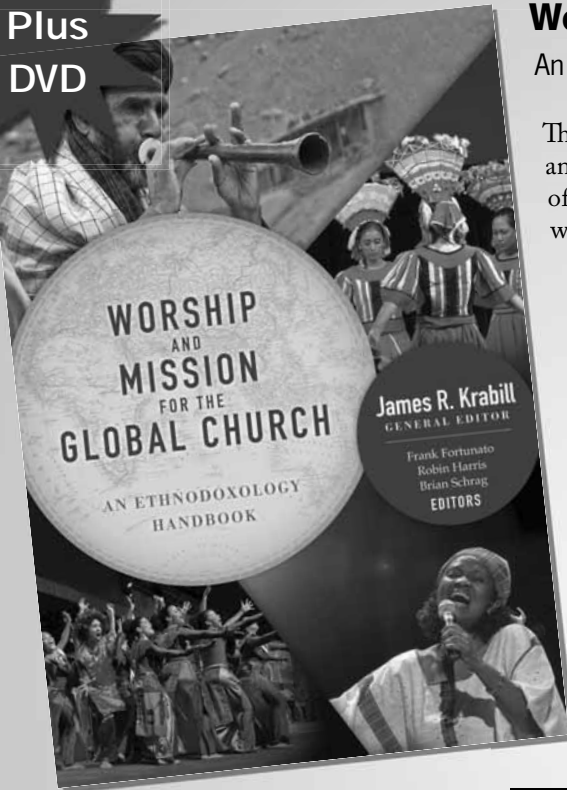


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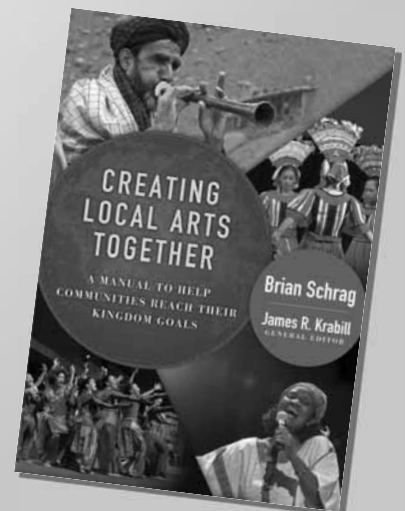
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LASTING IMPACT COMES IN THE SIMPLEST WAY



GREG PARSONS

/ GLOBAL DIRECTOR,
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I've heard a lot of people share their vision during my 30 years on staff at the USCWM. Naturally, they believe it is God's vision—and it sometimes is pitched as God's vision for the USCWM or for me!

Much of this comes from those with a good heart and often a solid track record

of ministry and prayer. And often it is reasonable and doable. But sometimes, I call it a “mobilization vision,” meaning that all too often, it is either triumphalistic or it doesn't take into account the field realities. Calls to send thousands to China several years ago caused all kinds of problems—partly because you can't “sell” these visions without making a big deal of them. If you make a big deal of them, the Chinese officials will know about it—not to mention non-government terrorist groups, among others. Just yesterday I heard about a new vision to send 1 million workers there!

But the bigger problem is that it usually doesn't work. A real story might help, one that starts with a researcher on the brink of depression. George Barna had worked for years, gathering and analyzing massive amounts of data in order to understand what was happening at the “intersection of faith and culture.”¹

What he discovered was that, despite all kinds of efforts, programs, and strategies, there was virtually no impact;

nothing was happening. Leaders and followers were very committed and wanted to make a difference, but the data showed that it wasn't working. Barna was discouraged, almost depressed. He writes:

“I couldn't figure out what the underlying obstacles were that kept us from seeing tangible, positive results.

It wasn't for lack of marketplace intelligence.

It wasn't for lack of funds.

It wasn't for lack of passion.

It wasn't for lack of plans and tactics.”

Then one day he had a breakthrough. He “realized that the key to spiritual health in America (if not the world), and a general about face in our culture, did not hinge on our facilitating some kind of grand, nationwide [I would add global] revolution that would hit with fury and force all at once. Instead, it was bound up in a return to the way Jesus did things—that is changing one life at a time.”

We've talked a lot about this in *MF*, over the last year in particular. Barna's story caused me to better understand what I've been processing over the last few years and have come to believe: *our greatest investment is in others.*


What we do in discipleship or mentoring must flow out of our own on-going growth in faith and walk with God. I always tell people that it's a two-way street—just because I've been a believer for more than 50 years doesn't mean I can't learn from my son. As all parents know (or will soon learn), our children have much to teach us about ourselves and our

depravity! The same is true with our newest, youngest, twenty-something staff member.

What Barna goes on to say is that the real “value” came in “connecting people's beliefs and lifestyles with biblical principles to effect a better integration of scriptural values and practices in their lives.”

My take-away from this observation relates to leadership. There is so much written on this, a dizzying array of books, ideas, breakthrough concepts, and key things to master if you are a leader . . . or want to be one.

The danger is that the strengths leaders have can often become THE important thing. At times, these are spiritual gifts, so it seems only right to maximize their use. But that must be done in conjunction with biblical truth. The diligence the Bible talks about with regard to leaders doesn't just mean we work hard. It means that we lead out of our relationship with God, His Word and an understanding of our times, just like the men of Issachar. (1 Chronicles 12:32)

None of this is groundbreaking; it is simply what Jesus did and taught. But reading what Barna has said and the data he presents helped me realize what I have been feeling: the best leadership with the greatest long-term impact happens when we invest personally in the lives of others like Jesus did and thereby empower them to lead others as well in true discipleship. 

1. All references are to Barna, George. 2011 *Futurecast: What Today's Trends Mean for Tomorrow's World*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, vii-xi.

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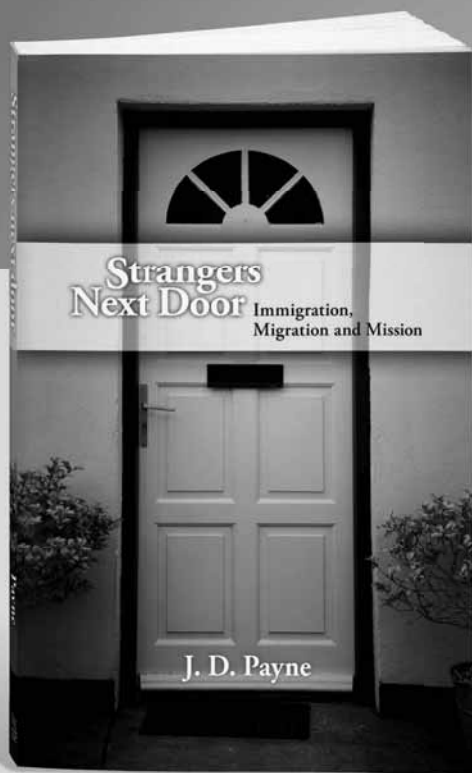
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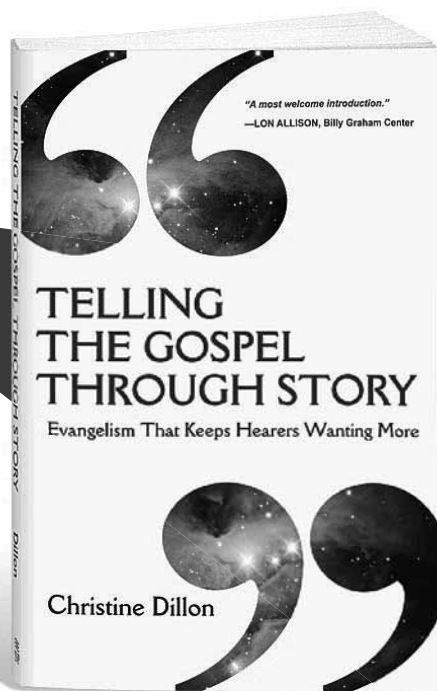
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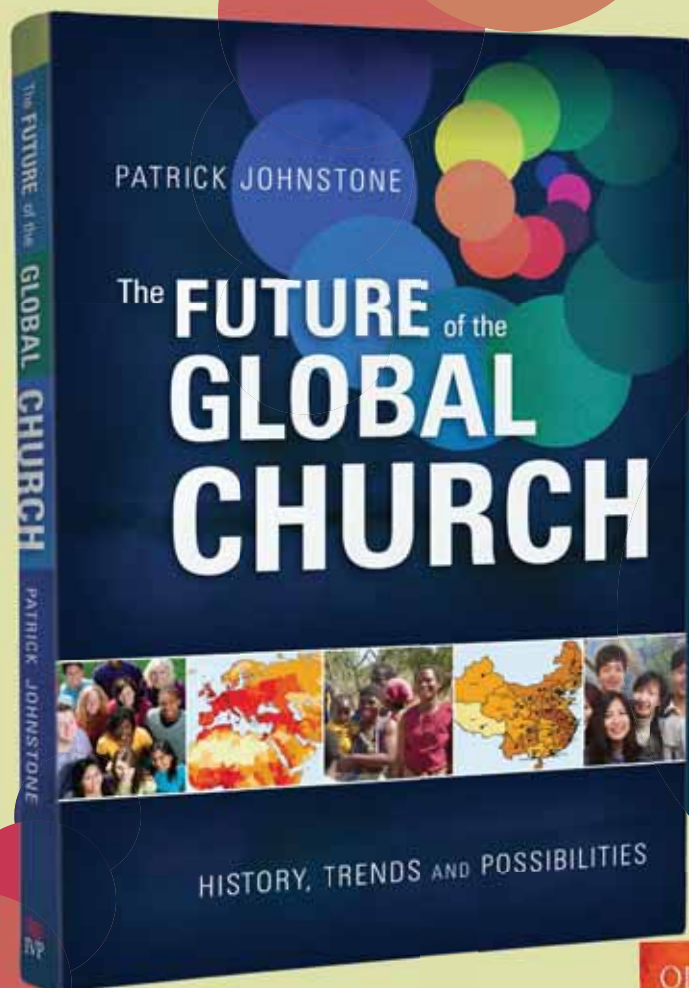
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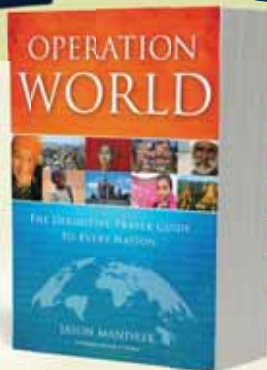
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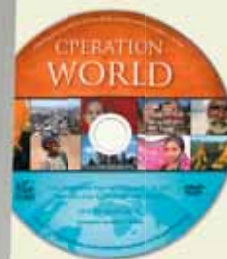
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