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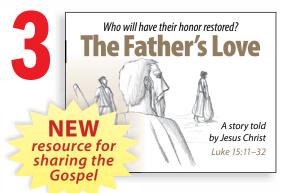
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OUR MISSION DEMANDS THE MOST EFFECTIVE TRAINING AVAILABLE



RICK WOOD

/ EDITOR, MISSION
FRONTIERS

aking disciples of Jesus from every tribe, tongue, people and nation is *the most important job in the world*. It not only transforms the lives of people here in this world but also for all eternity in the next. Few jobs are as difficult as this one—we have a powerful adversary who is working against our every effort. If this is true, should we not employ the most effective means available to prepare every believer in Jesus to accomplish this mission of making disciples who are able to disciple

others? Does not a mission of such critical importance demand our very best efforts? Literally, the eternal destiny of billions of people hangs in the balance.

So how are we doing in preparing believers to make disciples in every tribe and tongue? Are we using the very best training methods—so effective that others are seeking to copy them? Are we giving this critical task our very best efforts?

Unfortunately, often the opposite is true. The church generally uses the least effective means available to make disciples and to train others to do so. And the sad fact is that in some cases we are actually doing less today than we were in previous generations. No other profession in the world uses the Church's methods to prepare its people for various jobs because they know that *these methods do not work*.

To train our people to make disciples we ask them to sit in a church and listen to lectures (sermons) week after week for years. Participation in Sunday school used to be expected for adults, but increasing numbers of churches have even done away with this modest avenue of training as well. Note taking is not required during these lectures; no tests are given; no outside reading or study is required; no opportunity for "student" discussion of the material presented in the lecture is provided. There is no one available to supervise or mentor the "student" toward mastery of the information and skills required to become an effective disciple-maker.

In the realm of academia this process would be called *auditing* a course. In such cases no academic credit is given because everyone in academia knows how ineffective this

process is in enabling a student to gain competency in a particular subject. They know that only about 10% of what is given by lecture alone is remembered. In effect the majority of believers in Jesus are "auditing" the Christian faith. They have become passive participants in the most critical mission in the history of the world and most pastors and church leaders are content with continuing this means of "training." But it is not working to equip most believers for the essential work of making disciples who disciple others.

So after undergoing hundreds, if not thousands, of lectures in church we send out these "trained" disciple-makers to peoples, tribes and tongues all over the world with the goal of making disciples and planting churches without ever having proved that they can do these tasks within their own culture. The job of doing so cross-culturally is many times more difficult.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that having worship services where the Word is preached is wrong or should be done away with. My life has been changed by some sermons. The problem arises when this is the *primary means* that is employed to equip *all* believers for the work of ministry. The worship service is not an effective means of training people in disciple making and should not be relied on as the primary means to accomplish this vital task. Many churches have small groups that could be effective venues for training in disciple making if they are focused on doing so. Real Life Ministries is one church that does this well. (See Jan.-Feb. 2011 *MF*)

Discipling someone must be a highly intentional, personal relationship between people where the disciple is trained in the process of making disciples by actually *doing it*, not just hearing about it in a sermon. It seems so basic but people learn by doing not by simply listening. I would never want to be operated on by a surgeon who simply listened to hundreds of lectures on how to do surgery. Neither should we send out disciple-makers with similar preparation.

Some will say that we train many people in Bible schools and seminaries with high academic standards. This is true but these institutions usually teach people biblical information to be mastered, not skills in discipleship and church planting that can be reproduced in the lives of others. When was the last time you heard of a Bible school or seminary in the West requiring students to demonstrate

a mastery of disciple-making or church planting as a prerequisite for graduation? Also relatively few believers are able to receive this type of training. Our goal must be that every willing believer is trained as a disciple-maker.

JESUS SHOWED US HOW

Jesus modeled for us the most effective methods for making disciples and the rest of the world has copied his methods while the Church has largely abandoned them. For three years Jesus spent most of his time mentoring or discipling 12 men, day in and day out. These disciples learned by watching and listening to the master and then going out on their own to practice what they had seen lived out before them. Then they came back for debriefing and correction. This was not just a sit and listen means of training. This was hands-on practice whereby skills and competency were mastered.

Throughout the centuries the world has often adopted this means of training and applied it to many occupations. There has been a long history of *apprenticeship* in many professions where those who have learned various skills are able to pass them on to others. See the article, "The Guild," starting on page 10 where the centuries-old model of apprenticeship is being applied to the training of today's missionaries.

We have a long way to go toward developing effective training for all believers to be disciple-makers but we must commit ourselves now to move in this direction. Approaches like the T4T Process (see page 18) and the Discovery Bible Study Method have been presented in recent issues of *MF*. They are an excellent place to start in developing the skills for the most important job in the world.

A TRIBUTE TO DR. RICHARD TWISS, 1954-2013, CO-FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT OF WICONI, INTL.



I want to take a moment to pay tribute to a friend and fallen warrior for Jesus. Richard Twiss died February 9, 2013, from a

heart attack. Richard grew up as a member of the Sicangu Lakota Oyate people of the Rosebud Lakota Sioux Reservation in South Dakota. He met Jesus in 1974 and came to understand that as a Native American he did not have to completely reject his heritage and culture in order to follow Jesus. Since then he has led thousands of others both Native and non-Native alike to this same understanding. He said, "Why does the Native American

have to exchange his sin-soaked culture for someone else's sin-soaked culture?"

No other ministry leader has had so significant an impact in pioneering new contextual approaches to reaching Native Americans as Richard Twiss. I have never known a more eloquent advocate for contextualizing the gospel for Native American peoples as well as for all the other unreached peoples around the world.

Richard was a great friend of the US Center for World Mission and he was instrumental in helping to pull together two different issues of Mission Frontiers—one in Sept-Oct. 2000 and more recently Sept-Oct 2010 titled, "Making Jesus Known." Be sure to look them up at www.missionfrontiers.org. Through his work with MF, I came to value him as a friend as well as a respected colleague working on behalf of the unreached. His voice will be missed, but what he has started will live on in the lives of the thousands he has inspired with his vision of contextual ministry among the Native peoples of America and beyond. Pray for God's grace and power to be poured out upon Wiconi, Intl. as they move forward in their mission to reach Native peoples without their founder. Go to www. wiconi.org for more information on their ministry.

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EQUIPPING THE PEOPLE OF GOD FOR THE MISSION OF GOD

HOW ARE WE DOING?



FRANCIS J. PATT

"Fran" graduated from Penn State in 1974 with a degree in History. He did graduate work at Penn State in Public Administration from 1976-7, and he has been on staff with the U.S. Center for World Mission (USCWM) since 1981. He has been the regional director of the Northeast Regional Office of USCWM since 1988. Fran led church-planting teams from 1998-2004 and has been training cross-cultural workers since 2003. You may contact him at fran.patt@uscwm.org

Seven years ago, I wrote an article for this magazine entitled "What DNA Are We (Really) Reproducing?" (*Mission Frontiers*, July 2006) In that article I questioned the ability of the American Evangelical Church to field adequately conceived and prepared missionaries without a major reorientation of the culture of the Evangelical Church. After seven additional years of reflection and time working with several more cohorts of missionary candidates (their agencies and their churches) I have to confess that my 2006 assessment was overly optimistic on more than one front. In the 2006 article I said;

We will never be free of the problems that cultural Christianity breeds unless we deal with these problems at their root. If we are content to maintain and promote a mission strategy that accepts the status quo in North American Christian culture, we can assume the strong likelihood of either failure or recidivism in our training of missionaries. It is likely that North American Evangelicalism will need to reinvest or reinvent itself as a new people and a new culture for these problems to be completely eradicated.

When I wrote this I was hopeful that given time, the Evangelical church would make the necessary corrections in how it is the Church and how it does church. What I failed to take into consideration was how deeply ingrained the problematic values were to the culture of Evangelicalism. The culture of the American Church has developed over a considerable period of time. One of the battles that the Church has fought is to be in the world but not conformed to the world. Every human is in a constant process of being conformed to the world (and his culture) or being transformed and remade in the likeness of Christ (Romans 12). The most significant problems for the Church originate in our becoming lost in earthly cultures. The net effect is that we attribute our cultures' values and beliefs to God and, in essence, reinvent God in our own image. This process has changed our reading of the Bible, our understanding of the gospel and our perception of our place in the world as the Church and our duties as the children of God.



There are a number of biblical values that the western Church has contextualized to the point of syncretism. This syncretism has forced the Church further and further away from biblical patterns of behavior and has blinded us to how it has changed us as a people. In the process we have lost most of the belief-driven values that empower us to be a world changing force, a reflection of the eternal Word and a people that show the unmistakable presence of Jesus in our midst. We have sacrificed transformation for culturally-determined "sacred cow" practices.

Sacred Cows that need to be turned into hamburger:

- 1. Worship services ad nauseum
- 2. Preaching without teaching/training
- 3. Orthodoxy without orthopraxy
- 4. Proliferation of church property dedicated to no one but those already Christians
- 5. Education as sufficient preparation for ministry without character development and competence in disciple-making
- 6. Understanding the "gospel" as primarily an issue of salvation.

As we have worked with young men and women these deficiencies have become very notable and visible. American evangelicals do not understand "worship" as something we do to honor our relationship with God and that requires us to bring something to the presence of God as an act of worship. Quite often a worship service is an event that is viewed as either entertainment or an event from which we should get something. God is secondary if he is a factor at all. The idea that our lives should be seen as an act of worship is often something completely missed by the evangelical.

One of the more disturbing offenses is the idea that what is experienced as "preaching" in a service is somehow teaching or equipping the congregation for future ministry. The idea of teaching denotes that learning is going on or that the desired outcome of teaching is learning, where revealed truth is applied to life in obedience. There are a number of

incompatibilities with calling what we do in our services as "teaching." First the setting is all wrong. Our Sunday experience is a one-way communication process where congregants are passive listeners. If we were concerned about teaching it would need to be two-way with active participation from both sides of the conversation. But it is also possible to utilize the service to communicate a message that we come back to later in the week in small groups or other venues where two-way communication is possible. This would enable something approaching learning to take place. Since many, if not most, churches never take the message preached beyond the time it consumes in

the service, most
missionary candidates
do not understand
the difference
between teaching and
entertainment—I
mean preaching. The
missionary candidate is
seldom shown disciple
making or church

planting, nor is he trained or apprenticed in these roles as he seeks to become a competent disciple-maker himself.

One of the more disturbing offenses is the idea

that what is experienced as "preaching" in a

service is somehow teaching or equipping

the congregation for future ministry.

The issue of orthodoxy being a litmus test of a healthy church and healthy believers is one of the historic developments that has been forgotten by the Church. Right thinking (orthodoxy) is always paired with right living or right behavior (orthopraxy) in the Scriptures. The understanding is that a changed allegiance from living in spiritual darkness to following Jesus will also bring with it a changing lifestyle. Historic records prove this point. Fox's Book of Martyrs is full of such evidence. But with dramatic and, most often, unfortunate culture changes that took place in the Church from the second century onward, orthopraxy became less and less a virtue and signing statements of faith or ascribing to

doctrinal statements became the measure of success. When this is paired with a lack of understanding or interest in discipleship, we end up with missionary candidates who know what is doctrinally accurate, but who do not know how to apply these values to their total existence in their own culture, to say nothing of how this would be done in another culture.

The American evangelical preoccupation with church buildings and massive building projects is primarily a problem in its lack of focus on serving others and

particularly the havenots of the world. The whole discussion of whether property and buildings are a good investments for the kingdom would change dramatically if our buildings were done to meet the needs of the larger community, particularly those suffering or in need.

normal and necessary to train and mentor doctors so meticulously and yet something as important and as complicated as communicating the gospel and living spiritual truth in a cross-cultural setting should be treated so cavalierly?

The pertinent question is why it is seen as

The Christian habit is to build to meet Christian needs and this preoccupation is most often the single most significant evidence of an earthly culture at work conforming the Church to the world instead of to Jesus.

A more realistic understanding of our "edifice problem" is that in much of the unreached world, church buildings will be neither possible nor affordable and so the missionaries and the believers will need to conceive of a church system that exists and thrives in the absence of buildings. For American evangelical missionaries, this will require learning unlike any they have had to do up to this point, and the ability to think outside their own cultural box. The patterns and practices that they have learned as spectators at countless church services will be counterproductive in preparing them for cross-cultural disciple-making.

For many Christians the word "training" connotes education. I would never want to have be operated on by a surgeon who had never been to medical school, but neither would I like to be the first person on which that a surgeon, fresh out of medical school, operated. The medical profession is a good example from which to draw. A person desiring to be a surgeon needs to jump through a fair number of educational hoops in order

complete his or her undergraduate degree. Then, the grueling first year of medical school happens where the intention seems to be to either torture the student into withdrawing or hardening the survivor to the reality of his or her profession. After three years of medical school, the student must intern for a year during which he or she is discipled by a more experienced doctor. This is followed by three or more years serving as a resident. Medicine is one of the few professions where mentoring or discipleship is a common and indispensable practice.

The pertinent question is why it is seen as normal and necessary to train and mentor doctors so meticulously and yet something as important and as complicated as communicating the gospel and living spiritual truth in a cross-cultural setting should be treated so cavalierly?

Often the only requirement to serve

as a missionary is to pass some psychological tests, be able to raise financial support and attend the mission agency's one or two week indoctrination session. After these cursory preparations, the person can report and in many situations, if they are serving on a team, no one on the team has more experience in disciple-making than they do, including the team leader! One more facet of this problem is that many missionary candidates have significant and deep personal issues that need to be dealt with before entering the pressure cooker of foreign crosscultural service. When they do not remediate these issues ahead of deployment, the pressures, spiritual warfare and interpersonal complexities of life often turn them into casualties and attrition statistics. In the current state of the Christian world it is incomprehensible why any mission agency would not prepare their candidates thoroughly. Should not missionary candidates have proven their ability to make disciples and plant churches before they are sent to do so cross-culturally?

Lastly, we come to the word "gospel". What does this mean? For the American Evangelical Christian, it is most often associated with the idea of Jesus' death and resurrection as an act of penal substitution for the sins of the world (or some subset of this depending on your

theology). In a recent book, Scot McKnight describes the situation this way:

Most of evangelism today is obsessed with getting someone to make a decision; the apostles, however, were obsessed with making disciples. Those two words—decision and disciples—are behind this entire book. Evangelism that focuses on decisions short circuits and—yes, the word is appropriate—aborts the design of the gospel; while evangelism that aims at disciples slows down to offer the full gospel of Jesus and the apostles.¹

In the world of the Muslim sheikh, Buddhist priest or Hindu guru decisions are neither individual nor do they lead to visible transformation in society. The world outside the kingdom of God awaits the King and his kingdom that defeats sin, suffering and death once and for all. Most statistics related to conversion from these mission fields say that Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus become followers of Jesus because of the noticeably different and changed lives of the missionaries with whom they have relationships. In spiritual terms, they see Jesus and do what they have been meant to do before the foundation of time; they fall on their knees and confess, "My Lord and my God." But what must happen next in their life is discipleship. No one can call himself a follower of Jesus who is not being changed into his likeness. This is true in Asia, Africa and the Middle-East and it is true in North America.

The most significant issue that we face in preparing men and women for the mission field is that American Christians are not primarily representative of the biblical idea of being a follower of Jesus and they do not embrace enough of the beliefs and values associated with Jesus. What the American Christian missionary represents is a culturally conformed church that will unwittingly reproduce its own culture and communicate its values as the gospel and as central to being a follower of Jesus. Across the world

this has led Muslims,

Buddhists and Hindus to believe that being a follower of Jesus means becoming a western Christian, and most want no part of this. In the course of this author's almost thirty years of working with missionary candidates I have found that the majority of those men and women required major reconstruction of their understanding of reality, and very frankly, our efforts were not always successful. Matthew 28 tells us to go and make disciples of all ethne. We need to thoroughly rethink our methods and practices of pre-field training of missionary candidates with a focus on effective disciple-making, because if we do not, if discipleship happens at all, it will be to make disciples of American evangelical culture and not of Jesus and the kingdom of God. 🐠

¹ McKnight, Scot (2011-09-06). The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited (p.18). Zondervan. Kindle Edition.



Implementing Kingdom Apprenticeship

BRUCE GRAHAM

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DICK SCOGGINS

Dick Scoggins founded The Fellowship of Church Planters (1985) in RI: teams working with immigrant people groups starting small, organic home communities. He moved to England in 1995 where he worked for 16 years in the Frontiers, International Office training teams in the Muslim world. He is presently working with The Guild.

BILL WAYNE

Bill Wayne was the founding director of the Intercultural Studies Program at Fuller Seminary. He has researched effective/ineffective workers and their methods in 73 countries and trained 20 teams and hundreds of crosscultural workers for 32 years by having them live among their intended overseas community in Southern California.

AN ANCIENT MODEL OF TRAINING IS NEEDED

Birthing kingdom communities (fellowships oriented around allegiance to Jesus and life in his kingdom) is much more a craft than the pursuit of an academic subject. Therefore a more suitable model for training is needed beyond the typical Bible school or seminary structure.

For millennia, craftsmen have been trained through a master—apprenticeship model. A master in a trade or skill trains apprentices to the competency level he has attained. For the purposes of this article we will call them "trained practitioners." They have gained the experience needed from a master trainer to be able to help other apprentices and eventually rise to the level of a master trainer themselves.

This was the ancient pattern of training found in the New Testament. Jesus trained the twelve in this manner. Paul, a Pharisee, was trained in this manner under Gamaliel. Both Jesus and Paul trained their "craftsmen": the Twelve and Timothy. It was an intentional training pattern for the first century apostles. Paul referred to himself as a "wise master builder," using craftsmanship terminology.

This kind of training requires lifelong learning and upgrading in a rapidly changing world. Masters must continually keep up-to-date in their craft and skill or become irrelevant. Medical doctors have to constantly upgrade their knowledge and skills. Soldiers need training camps where they learn and practice using the latest equipment and warfare tactics. Airline pilots need enhanced manual flying skills and access to advanced simulators to learn the latest cockpit technology. The same should be true of apostolic practitioners and apprentices. The apostolic task is too complex to expect anything less.

THE PROBLEM

Many who sense God's calling might rightly question their own abilities. They have not been tested or trained in the environments they will face. They've sat in classrooms and learned how to read books, write papers, compete with classmates to achieve higher grades and pass exams. Some have become very skilled in how they've been trained. But training has focused mainly on the mind in an artificial environment. The spiritual challenges, the issues of the heart, the relational, linguistic, and ministry skills needed have not been learned or experienced.

No medical doctor feels confident in the operating room having studied surgery in a classroom alone. No soldier feels confident in warfare having studied its history from a book. He needs to get out in the field and experience battle, sweat, dirt, fear, and the blast of a gun. He needs to learn the tactics and strategies of warfare in relationship with other comrades in the face of an enemy. While there are tremendous resources available for understanding (cognitively) the dynamics involved in cross-cultural apostolic

ministry, few find the master trainer (field-experienced) workers or environments where they can learn what they need experientially. Because of this, many lack the capacity and sensitivity to face the challenges they will be confronted with long term on the field. It's more than mobilizing warm bodies to leave home and go to the field!

DEVELOPMENT OF "THE GUILD"

For a number of months we've been developing a process within an environment where master-apprenticeship-type training can occur for the purpose of equipping apostolic workers. We've identified 18 areas of competency for equipping workers in birthing kingdom communities within the cultural traditions of the unreached peoples.

apprenticeships will vary deposition experience, age, and target pe

While there are tremendous resources available for understanding the dynamics involved in cross-cultural apostolic ministry, few find the field-experienced workers, or environments where they can learn what they need experientially.

experientially. Even good field practitioners never finish learning and are always looking for ways to upgrade skills in more fruitful practices.

Apprenticeships for cross-cultural practitioners should involve experience in different locations and varying contexts over a period of time. The crafting of appropriate apprenticeships will vary depending on the trainee's past experience, age, and target people or culture. A phased

apprenticeship approach will adapt to the needs of each apprentice.

This is similar to the apprenticeship model in the medical field. Following medical school, doctors usually move onto a three-year residency at a hospital where they gain experience under the watchful eye of trained doctors. Their final phase focuses on a specific

field of specialization with a personal doctor overseeing their work.

We envision a similar phased apprenticeship approach for training field practitioners. Time frames are approximate. Few apprenticeships will include all the phases. This is a proposed framework for designing a program to fit an apprentice's needs.

A Phase 1 Apprenticeship: Up to two years with an Apostolic Learning Community (ALC) in a culture near to the sending culture—probably located near an urban city with various unreached ethnic populations. The training teams will be led by experienced apostles who can train and evaluate apprentices in the following:

- apostolic calling (exploring and confirming)
- personal character (exploring and developing)
- models of kingdom community (exploring)
- apostolic team (experiencing)

FIRST-AN APPROPRIATE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In order to achieve these outcomes, which involve heart attitudes, character and skills as well as knowledge, specific conditions need to be met for developing an adequate learning environment, namely:

- A context where learning can be experienced
- An environment where the felt needs of an apprentice engaged in a task guide the selection of the information he is taught
- An environment or community that is initially safe for experimentation, failure, and practice
- An environment or community that is "unsettling" enough to test and try a person's character and skill
- A transactional learning environment where peer to peer, master-apprentice type relationships can develop
- An environment where models of incarnational ministry can be experienced

SECOND-A PHASED APPRENTICESHIP APPROACH

Apprenticeships will vary in length based on the complexity of the craft being learned. Shorter ones might last three years, longer ones five years. Stimulating the birth of kingdom communities cross-culturally is a complex task that could take years to sufficiently learn

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We envision at least four possible *outcomes* of a Phase 1 Apprenticeship:

- 1. The apprentice could be confirmed in his/her apostolic calling and move on to a field team or a Phase 2 apprenticeship.
- 2. The apprentice could be encouraged to move to some other aspect of the apostolic community such as a sending structure, new role in the training network, etc.
- The apprentice could be evaluated by the master trainers as one not apostolically gifted, nor ready for a role in support work with the apostolic network, but rather encouraged to seek a role in a local church.
- 4. The apprentice could be denied any further confirmation due to uncovered sin or character issues and referred back to the sending community.

A Phase 2 Apprenticeship: A two to three year internship in a training network in a gateway city of a culture near to which the one the apprentice feels called. These training teams will be led by experienced cross—cultural workers who can evaluate and develop apprentices in:

- · Language and cultural learning
- Cross-cultural adaptation
- Team-ship in challenging pioneering contexts
- Character issues that emerge in difficult cross-cultural adaptation situations
- Developing teams for specific fields and unreached people groups.

We envision at least six possible outcomes of a Phase 2 Apprenticeship:

- 1. Complete Phase 2 apprenticeship and take up a lifetime of practitioner work on a specific field team.
- Complete the apprenticeship and be evaluated as one not gifted as a cross—cultural apostle (like Paul); encourage them to return as a Petrine apostle (like Peter) to their own culture.
- Have the calling confirmed as a potential team leader of a specific field team and move to a Phase 3 Apprenticeship.
- 4. Encouraged to move to some other aspect of the apostolic community, such as the sending structure, or a role on a training team.
- Confirmed that they are not an apostle, nor have a role in support work with the apostolic organisation, but encouraged to pursue a role in a local church or elsewhere.

6. Denied any further confirmation due to uncovered sin or character issues and referred back to the sending community.

Phase 3 Apprenticeships: A one to two year internship on a field apostolic team in the target culture or a culture close to the target culture. Phase 3 apprenticeships are suitable for potential team leaders going to isolated, pioneering situations among unreached people groups and who need specific training for leading a team. The mentor would be an experienced team leader with a proven track record for reproducing team leaders and equipping them in:

- The dynamics of a high performance team
- · How to develop a high performance team
- Character issues that emerge in the challenges of leadership
- Recruiting a team and developing a plan to engage an unreached people group. Recruits might come from field training teams, sending agencies, or existing field teams.

THIRD-THE NEED FOR EXPERIENCED MASTER TRAINERS

One of the most serious challenges we face in attempting to launch these types of apprenticeships will be finding appropriate leadership. Field-experienced workers who return home could be a huge untapped potential resource for this type of training. Bible schools, churches, and seminaries are often limited in their capacity to make use of these types of people. Many have more years of fruitful ministry and valuable experience to pass on to a younger generation. A Guild-type structure could harness their experience and provide ongoing fruitfulness for them.

Jesus looked upon the crowds and expressed deep dismay that they were like "sheep without a shepherd." How many in the coming generation, stimulated by faith to pursue cross-cultural work among the unreached, will be like "sheep without a shepherd?" Many will be mobilized to go to the field, only to learn years down the road what they wished they had learned before going. Master trainers need to be harnessed to shepherd a new generation of cross-cultural workers.

Sending agency personnel often lack the time, resources, or master trainers to provide this type of training for new candidates. The Guild (www.uscwm.org) as well as other groups can hopefully fill this gap. It is our prayer that the investment and time taken to provide a more adequate training process for potential apostolic workers will pay long-term dividends yielding sustained, life-long, apostolic practitioners.

Framing a New Model of Training Cross-Cultural Church Planters

ROGER DIXON

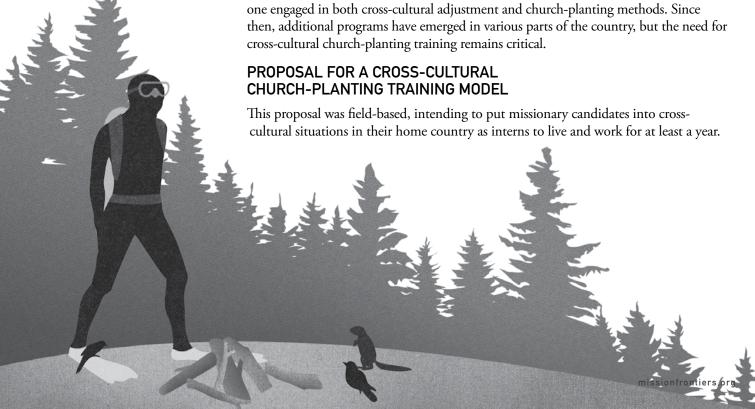
Roger Dixon was a missionary for 34 years in Asia, mostly among the Muslim Sundanese of West Java, Indonesia. He earned an MDiv. at Drew University, a ThM at Fuller and a PhD from Biola's School of Intercultural Studies. He is currently a consultant with Pioneers. You may contact the author at rogerd205@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

onfusion of massive proportions is taking place across the missionary enterprise. Great cultural change in the world has thwarted both young and old so that many are unable to engage successfully in cross-cultural church-planting. Political and religious opposition as well as emotional stress are partly responsible for this. But the greatest problem seems to be a lack of skill in cross-cultural church-planting. Some agencies report as high as 47% of their personnel leave the field in the first 5 years. Others stay longer but do not really succeed in planting churches. This is a tragic waste of outstanding and committed people. We cannot expect them to do a job they have never been trained to do, and that is exactly the case which I want to address in this article. I want to suggest two things: 1) the type of training modern missionaries need in order to plant churches cross-culturally, and 2) the time and place where that training should initially take place.

CREATING THE TRAINING MODEL

In 1999, a team created a cross-cultural church-planting model for Church of the Savior in Wayne, PA. Although the model was never implemented, it is useful as a template to discuss training issues. After surveying other programs in the U.S. we found that only one engaged in both cross-cultural adjustment and church-planting methods. Since then, additional programs have emerged in various parts of the country, but the need for cross-cultural church-planting training remains critical.



Generally speaking this required them to live in urban areas where there was a significant immigrant population that still spoke their native language. The interns would rent living quarters and secure jobs in the area where they would raise part of their living expenses. It would probably be necessary for their church or agency to add to their income. The challenge of finding and fulfilling a job in a cross-cultural neighborhood would give them valuable experience for future assignments. Family and singles, housing would enhance immersion in the

ethnic community. They would then partner with a local church to implement a church plant among their focus group. If the candidates had children, they would experience the challenges of raising their children in an ethnic neighborhood.

When workers have not had any experience in how a church is organized and operated, they cannot envision what they are trying to accomplish among the unreached people group.

By doing this, the interns would achieve a two-fold objective:

- 1. They would learn to relate to a new culture while being given tools to understand emotional, spiritual, and lifestyle challenges.
- They would participate in the planting of a local congregation within a culturally different community while being coached in the observation and adaptation of biblical church-planting patterns in cross-cultural contexts.

PREREQUISITES

The following prerequisites were established in order to assure that potential candidates were being trained for cross-cultural church-planting.

- Each intern was expected to demonstrate spiritual and emotional maturity, a distinct call to unreached peoples ministry, and no personal problems or hindrances that would embarrass them in ministry.
- 2. Each intern was expected to have finished his/her formal training, Bible and religious studies, and/or degree work.
- 3. Each intern was expected to have completed the spiritual formation program at his or her home church.
- 4. Each intern understood that this internship was arduous and had released him/herself from other work or encumbrances to give full time to this program.

EXPERIENCED-BASED, COACH-INTENSIVE

Since this was formulated to be an experienced-based, coach-intensive program, we envisioned it to have several stages. In *Stage One*, the intern would follow a lesson-based course lasting from 8-12 weeks. The intern and family should attend. The interns would be in the classroom about one day a week studying the theory and process of cross-cultural church-planting, linguistics, and psychological/emotional debriefing/evaluation procedures. *Stage Two* would overlap with *Stage One*, covering a year

during which the intern would be assigned to work in a team model under the supervision of a church planter and a missionary coach. Here the tasks were envisioned to be both theoretical and applied in nature. Communication

lines between the worker and the coach would be open at all times through e-mail or phone.

The intern would be assigned to cross-cultural church-planting preferably among an ethnic population that is the focus group of the candidate. All aspects of the intern's fieldwork would be under the authority of the local area church that is his partner. A missionary coach would be assigned to the intern. This coach would be in regular contact with the intern and his partner church in order to give guidance on any area of cross-cultural or church-planting questions which arise.

The intern would also seek to develop a spiritual support group. This might be from the local area church, from his/her home church, or from a combination of churches. This support group would pray for and with the intern and family and would aid them in preparing spiritually and emotionally for departure to a foreign land. This group would pledge to pray for and maintain contact with the intern and family as co-workers in the harvest.

THE RATIONALE FOR THIS TRAINING PROGRAM

When workers have not had any experience in how a church is organized and operated, they cannot envision what they are trying to accomplish among the unreached people group. Churches have structure. This includes theology, worship, liturgy, organization, polity (government), and various infrastructure. When a worker helps create a church plant, it is necessary to have a concept in mind toward which to work. The goal is not to plant a clone church of another culture but rather birth an

indigenous church. This would not be a fellowship where no one has responsibility to train evangelists, pastors, or lay leaders. A fellowship does not develop its own literature, music, or youth camps. The church-planting team must have an idea of the kind of congregation that will thrive in the UPG and have long-term success in all those aspects of ministry. This training program seeks those goals.

The major problem that most cross-cultural church planters face is a lack of church-planting experience. If one has not done church-planting in one's home country, it will be difficult to do it in a foreign country. The reason is pretty simple and should be obvious. Pioneer church-planting involves a complex series of competencies that are only truly understood when one has had some previous involvement. A false perception that people will suddenly understand the complexities of disciple-making, church theology and organization when they go to another country often leads to immature outcomes.

BENEFITS OF CROSS-CULTURAL CHURCH-PLANTING TRAINING

"Preparation is not something suddenly accomplished, but a process steadily maintained," notes Oswald Chambers.² This program speaks to all the important weaknesses that lead to missionary attrition because it integrates the competencies needed to do cross-cultural church-planting. These include spiritual disciplines, family dynamics, team building, work experience, nurturing children, and learning to partner with national peers. In addition, this training program prepares a worker in language acquisition, cross-cultural communication and comparative religion. These are all competencies required for a successful cross-cultural church planter. Examples of the competencies can be found in the International Missionary Training Fellowship publication.³

A serious issue in today's world is preparation for trauma. Every cross-cultural church-planting model should have the experience of trauma or hostage training. Dr. Steve Sweatman of Mission Training International has commented that "more and more of those we debrief have experienced some significant trauma related to bodily threat or damage. We have noticed that there are three distinct missionary eras:

The era when Western Expats and missionaries were considered TERRIFIC

The era when Western Expats and missionaries were TOLERATED

The era when Western Expats and missionaries are now TARGETED

For those we debrief, 50% are coming from countries in the TOLERATED era and the other half from countries where they are in the TARGETED era."⁴

TRAIN IN THE HOMELAND

Many of us have become convinced that training new workers in their homeland is the most effective way to alleviate these problems. However, this requires a significant shift in attitude by all parties. The candidates must be willing to add another year to their training while the churches must be willing to finance them during this time. It will cost far less in dollars because it will reduce the number of those who return without engaging their focus group. The financial loss by these resignations is much greater than a year's training would cost. In "Understanding Missionary Support," Daryl Anderson writes: "The average cost to support a missionary family from North America is \$10,338 per month.⁵ A crosscultural church-planting training program in the US would cost the church less than half that because the intern would also be making money at his/her secular job.

Obstacles of all kinds can be overcome with preparation for cross-cultural church-planting in a UPG. Such preparation takes time and cannot be accomplished simply by taking a few summer courses and short-term mission trips. Also, training at home is more efficient because it means that the worker is able to (1) integrate more quickly with his or her team on the field and be an effective member and (2) not be a physical and emotional drain on team members who must spend considerable effort training them. The team gains a prepared worker while not expending the skills of a seasoned veteran.

- ¹ William D. Taylor (Ed.), *Too Valuable to Lose: Exploring the Causes and Cures of Missionary Attrition*(Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1997), p.13.
- ² Oswald Chambers, *So Send I You*, (Fort Washington, PA: Christian Literature Crusade, 1975), p.40.
- ³ Jonathan Lewis, (Ed.), "Training for Cross-Cultural Ministries," International Missionary Training Fellowship, WEF, (September 1991). [also see: August 1993.]
- ⁴ Steve Sweatman, e-mail, Sept. 1, 2012.
- ⁵ Daryl Anderson, EFCA Reach Global-8-2008. Available on the Internet at: Understanding Missionary Support
- EFCA.org www.efca.org/files/.../understanding-missionary-support-0812_0.pdf



the secret of CHURCH MULTIPLICATION



NEIL COLE

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Neil is the author of several books. Learn more about CMA's ministry at: www.cmaresources.org.

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The Secret of Church
Multiplication Movements
by Neil Cole.

am no mathematician. My high school math teacher would chuckle at the thought that I would have anything good to contribute to a conversation about mathematics. But maybe it takes a simple-minded, mathematically-challenged individual to help us to see the obvious.

Basic math is made up of four different processes involving numbers: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. In the sequence of positive numbers addition and multiplication gain in numerical sum, while subtraction and division reduce. When it comes to the Kingdom of God we want to increase, not decrease, so addition and multiplication are more preferable.

Multiplication is a popular topic in missions and church today. Unfortunately, when you look more closely, much of what people call multiplying is really just addition. When a church adds a small group, it is often called multiplying. When another worship service is added on Sunday morning, it is often called church multiplication, but it is merely addition. Adding a venue for worship in your church or a satellite campus is not multiplying a church, it is merely adding. I am not against addition, but let's not call addition multiplication.

The thing about basic math is that it is a world of absolutes; there is one right answer and an infinite number of wrong answers to every equation. But if the processes are mixed up, the solutions are way off. In Christendom today we have poor math skills, and our bottom line is wrong in the end because of it.

Imagine what would happen in life if you got the two processes mixed up in other areas of life. What would happen if NASA engineers added when they should have multiplied? What if Wall Street mixed things up and multiplied when they should have only added? The results would be problematic at best, disastrous at worst. So why do we confuse the two when it comes to something as important as reaching the world for Christ?

Even if you add an additional church to your denomination, you are still not multiplying, at least not yet. 2+2=4 and 2x2=4 as well. In the early stage of multiplication, addition plays a part. The difference starts to happen with succeeding generations. If you merely add another 2 to 4, the sum is 6. But if you multiply by 2 you get to eight, then sixteen, and now you know you are multiplying.

THE MOMENTUM OF MULTIPLICATION

Addition is good, but multiplication is better. Addition produces incremental growth, but multiplication produces exponential growth. Paul gets to the heart of multiplication in his second letter to Timothy when he says, "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. 2:2) This is the key verse in the Bible about what it means to multiply disciples. There are four generations in the verse: Paul, Timothy, "faithful men" and "others also." Of late, I have taken to commending people not to use the multiplication

language before the fourth generation. Until we get to "others also" we have not succeeded in multiplication. It is possible for a strong leader to attract other leaders who, because they are leaders, will have followers. You can have three "generations" of influence without really multiplying. But in order to get to the fourth generation of disciples, leaders

or churches, everyone must be giving everything away to the next generation. Then we are multiplying. This is truly the test of a movement in my own understanding.

Multiplication begins slower than addition. In fact, you cannot have a multiplication movement that is not rapid. That doesn't mean it begins rapidly; in fact multiplication starts slowly. But it gains velocity at an exponential rate as it goes—that is, its velocity increases with each generation. Like a proverbial car starting to roll from the top of a steep hill, it builds in momentum as it goes. Each foot it passes in descent increases the speed and momentum, which becomes increasingly harder to slow or stop.

To illustrate this dynamic, Christian Schwarz and Christoph Schalk, in their Implementation Guide to Natural Church Development, give the following example: "Imagine a water lily growing on a pond with a surface of 14,000 square feet. The leaf of this species of water lily has a surface of 15.5 square inches. At the beginning of the year the water lily has exactly one leaf. After one week there are two leaves. A week later, four. After sixteen weeks half of the water surface is covered with leaves." The authors then ask, "How long will it take until the second half of the pond will also be covered? Another sixteen weeks? No. It will take just a single week and the pond will be completely covered."

THE SEDUCTION OF ADDITION

Multiplication may be slower

than addition in the initial

stages, but in the long run, it is

the only way to fulfill the Great

Commission in our generation.

Multiplication may be slower than addition in the initial stages, but in the long run, it is the only way to fulfill the Great Commission in our generation. The population of the world is rapidly multiplying. If all we do is add disciples and churches we will not even scratch the surface of what we have been commanded to do. Nor can we simply add multiplication to our current addition strategies, because each one has completely different requirements. We must stop adding if we want to start multiplying. Could it be that our commitment to strategies that cannot multiply is in fact what is keeping us

> from seeing a movement here in the West?

Because addition is faster in the beginning and multiplication takes time, often through addition. We are easily seduced by the more immediate success and instant gratification of addition instead of waiting for the

with multiplying. As I said in my book, Search & Rescue, "Don't be content with addition! Stop applauding the pathetic success we see in addition and start longing again for the incredible power of multiplication."

In our current context, however, the success promised by addition is hard to turn down. It is so rare to have a church ministry grow at all that one that grows fast with addition is very desirable. The glamour of potentially being labeled "the fastest growing church" is hard to turn refuse. It is difficult for leaders to turn away from the crowds and invest in the few, but that is exactly what Jesus did Himself.

Jesus knew the power of multiplication, and He was willing to wait for it. He rejected the pressure of the crowds and chose instead to spend His life with the few that would multiply. We need leaders who are willing to do the same.

YING KAP

AND THE POWER OF MULTIPLICATION

YING & GRACE KAI

Ying and Grace Kai are from Taiwan. For a number of years they served as missionaries in Hong Kong. Every year they started a new church and led about thirty people to Christ.¹ In 2000 a Hong Kong business man challenged Ying with the needs of an unreached region in Asia for security reasons we'll call "Nandong."

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*For more information on the book, T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution by Steve Smith with Ying Kai see ad on page 31. "Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up, grew and produced a crop, some multiplying thirty, some sixty, some a hundred times. — Mark 4:8

ing was reluctant. He knew about the reputation of Nandong's authoritarian government. So the businessman took Ying and Grace on a tour of the region. Later Ying recalled his reactions:

As we rode the train, we passed many factories. The man told us about every factory we passed. He would say, "This factory has 3,000 workers. I know the owner. He hopes that someone will come to share the gospel, but we cannot find anyone who will come."

The biggest factory we passed has 70,000 people. When we saw all the lost people of these factories, God opened our eyes and our minds. I realized, "These people need the gospel."

Ying was called by God to reach the twenty million people in this rapidly growing urban center where each day thousands of new migrant workers arrive looking for work and a better life.

Ying knew that he would have to do things differently to reach Nandong. He knew that merely adding disciples and churches would not be enough; he had to tap into the power of multiplication. As Ying prayed, God gave him three insights for those who are called to make disciples:

- **Go, not come.** The Great Commission does not say we are to invite people to come to us. It says we are to *go*. We must go where the lost are and train new believers to go also to the lost—into factories, homes, shops, and neighborhoods.
- Everyone, not some. We must make disciples of all, not just a few. We typically
 choose whom we want to share the gospel with, trying to prejudge who might
 accept it. But God said to share with everyone. We cannot predict who will believe
 and whom God will use to birth a movement.
- Make disciples and trainers, not passive church members. Jesus wants true disciples who obey his commands—including the commands to witness to others and train new believers to do the same. Every disciple must be a trainer.

Ying the church planter and pastor became Ying the trainer and catalyst for Church-Planting Movements. He called his process of making disciples "Training for Trainers" (T4T). "Trainer" conveys the idea of someone who both grows in his loving obedience to Jesus and passes on what he learns to others through witness and training.

The T4T process trains believers to share the gospel and make disciples in a reproducible way. The discipleship training process includes new group and church formation along with leadership development.

Ying and Grace began by training one class of thirty believers. They taught the trainees that each of them had a unique story to tell of how they met Jesus. They trained them to tell their story and helped them to identify five people they would share with in the following week.

The next week seventeen of the thirty trainees reported sharing their story, and one farmer had shared with eleven people. The following week Ying raised the level of accountability and allowed only those who were sharing their story to continue with the training. Two months later, the trainees had started twenty small groups. After six months there were 327 small groups and 4,000 newly baptized believers scattered across seventeen towns. Within twelve months, there were 908 house churches with more than 12,000 new Christians.

One old farmer who had never before planted a church started twelve house churches in two months and 110 in the first

year. He began every day reading his Bible from 5 a.m. to 7 a.m. Then he worked in the fields until 5 p.m., at which point he went home for dinner and family time. At 7 p.m. he went back out again, and he worked in "God's fields" until midnight.

In another town a 67-year-old woman became a Christian and in one year led more than sixty families to become believers.

In another example, Ying lost touch with a Christian factory worker he had trained. After six months, he learned that the worker had been transferred to another large factory with ten thousand workers. During those six months, the worker had started seventy small groups and seen ten generations of reproduction (churches planting churches).

By the year 2003, Ying and Grace were training 300 to 400 believers each month. As the Kais trained them to be

trainers of trainers, they found that many would witness, some would start new groups, and a smaller number would go on to train their new group members to repeat the process. Hundreds and then thousands began to come to faith.

Immediately after coming to faith, new believers were equipped and held accountable to witness to relatives, neighbors and close friends. These new believers were taught to train and follow up with those they led to

> Christ. The trainers learned simple, reproducible Bible lessons and taught them to new believers who were encouraged to form into new churches.

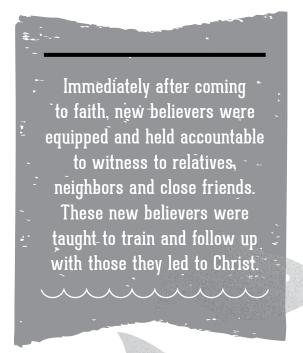
Urban streams of new converts jumped from neighborhood to neighborhood and from factory to factory as believers changed jobs. The T4T training prepares new believers to be seeds so that when the church is scattered, whether by dangers or opportunities, new churches are planted.

In the most recent survey of the Kais' ministry, more than 1.7 million people have come to faith and been baptized. Every month trained workers start two thousand house churches and small groups in villages,

urban high-rise apartments and factories. Over 140,000 churches have been started in what is currently the world's fastest growing church planting movement.

In other parts of the world, T4T has birthed new Church-Planting Movements within Hindu, Muslim and animist contexts among both literate and nonliterate peoples. T4T has also begun to bear fruit in the United States and Australia.

Ying Kai's strategy has been to aggressively train every willing local Christian in how to be more obedient in their spiritual life, how to effectively share their faith person to person, how to immediately follow up with new believers, and how to initiate reproducing groups which often become churches. Training, encouraging, and holding existing and new Christians accountable to become trainers of trainers has characterized this Church-Planting Movement. Ying's story demonstrates



the power of multiplication at work

At the heart of this amazing movement is a simple process for training disciples.³ When trainees meet, their time is divided roughly into thirds. They spend time focusing on each of these three areas.

1. LOOK BACK

Pastoral care. Trainees ask each other, "How are you doing?" and take time to minister to one another's needs in prayer, biblical counseling and encouragement.

Informal worship. Trainees praise God in a culturally appropriate and reproducible way. It could be prayer or singing, with or without an instrument or mp3 player. Some groups read the Psalms out loud.

Accountability. Trainees share in mutual loving accountability about how they have been following Jesus (obeying the previous meeting's Bible lesson) and being fishers of men (witnessing to and training others) since the last meeting.

Vision casting. Trainees are reminded what God has designed them to become and what he plans to do through them.

2. **LOOK UP**

Trainees receive enough biblical content to obey and pass on to others. After a series of six basic discipleship lessons, participants learn how to do inductive Bible study by asking the following questions: What does it say? What can I obey? What will I share with others?

3. LOOK FORWARD

Practice. Trainees spend time practicing what they have learned, gaining confidence and competence to pass it on to others.

Goals and prayer. Trainees set goals for how to obey the lesson and to take the next steps in witnessing and training others; then they recommission each other through prayer.

- ¹ See Steve Smith with Ying Kai, *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* (Monument, Colo.: WIGTake Resources, 2011); and Steve Smith, "Discipleship Revolution: Training for Trainers Process," *Mission Frontiers* 33, no. 1 (January-February 2011): 11-13.
- ² Smith, *T4T*, pp. 46-47.
- ³ Adapted from Smith, T4T. Used by permission.

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Doug Birdsall
President and CEO, American Bible Society

+ FEATURE 21 ▶

DEMYSTIFYING DISCIPLESHIP

Finding a More Biblical Model for the Multiplication of Disciples and Churches

..... 🗯

MARSHA WOODARD

Marsha Woodard has served in cross-cultural missions and ministry for over thirty years, including a number of years on church-planting teams in North Africa's Sahara region. Her passion to equip missionaries led her to write To Timbuktu and Beyond: A Guide to Getting Started in Missions (2009, William Carey Library, available at www. missionbooks.org). Marsha currently serves as a Field Coordinator for The Seed Company (a subsidiary of Wycliffe Bible Translators). You may contact Marsha at mwgitane@gmail.com.

esus' final commandment to His followers was to "Go and make disciples of all nations. . . teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19-20) His mandate is just as urgent now as it was 2000 years ago. With almost one-third of the world's population and thousands of people groups still without viable access to the gospel message, we need to "be the church" in a way that will effectively train disciples to make and train more disciples in an exponentially growing movement of discipleship and rapidly-multiplying churches. The New Testament gives us a successful model for carrying out this equipping process, but one that is rarely utilized in our Western church paradigm.

What would an honest evaluation of our churches, mission teams, and church-planting projects show? Are we focusing on the kind of individual and corporate preparation necessary to see a growing discipleship movement? Are we using successful biblical models? Unfortunately, our typical method of discipleship tends to be primarily idea-based, and focused on passively listening to sermons, classroom instruction and reading, with very little practical hands-on instruction and life application in discipleship and church-planting. Mentoring for ministry seems almost non-existent in our churches. Further, have we exported our failed Western models where churches rarely reproduce themselves to our cross-cultural church plants? Perhaps we've done a little bit better overseas, thanks to the multiplication church-planting models to which we've been exposed,¹ but a healthy self-examination in our mission practices would be worthwhile, as well.

If we want to see disciples making disciples and rapidly multiplying churches both at home and abroad, we need to readjust our discipleship and ministry training paradigms accordingly. Hopefully by eliminating some common false concepts and myths about the equipping process and looking at some simple biblical models, we can more successfully produce obedient followers, raise up new leaders and missionaries, and experience greater multiplication of disciples and churches.

FOUR COMMON MYTHS ABOUT DISCIPLESHIP AND EQUIPPING:

Myth #1: The task of discipleship is only for leaders and other mature and qualified people.

Nothing could be further from the truth! The idea that only certain high-level individuals should be developing others is one of the most insidious ministry myths to creep into

our churches and missions. We all need to be actively engaged in discipleship and there is no pre-qualification period. Some of Jesus' most recent followers began to share what He had done and immediately engendered more followers (for example, the Gadarene demoniac, the Samaritan woman, and the man born blind). During His years of earthly ministry, Jesus maintained a primary focus on making disciples and teaching them to make disciples. (We'll look more closely at how He did it in section 3.)

Paul, too, entrusted the work of spreading the gospel to new believers. In many of the cities he visited, he left handfuls of converts and was confident that multiplying churches would be left behind. Like Jesus, he also utilized a layered discipleship process: "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others." (2 Tim. 2:2) Each one that he trained was expected to train others, who

would in turn be prepared to go out and teach.

Simply put, discipleship and multiplication are primary tasks of the church and all of its members. Rapid and sustained equipping of others is all the more imperative in the frontier mission context where human resources (i.e., experienced leaders) are limited and the need for a rapid spread of the gospel is high. We must adopt an approach both at home and abroad that will produce disciples and cross-cultural missionaries with a multiplication mindset. Our traditional Western hierarchical teaching model is just not up to the task.

Putting it into practice:

The t-shirt motto comes to mind: "Just do it!" Prayerfully look around you for those who would like to grow alongside you. Are you reaching out to unbelievers? Are you continually reaching a hand back to newer, younger believers, as well as a hand forward to more mature and experienced ministers? Are you motivating others to reproduce? If you are part of a church-planting or outreach team, take some time to examine your methods and

model. Do they include a plan for multiplying leaders who will in turn be multipliers? Recent issues of *Mission Frontiers* have included a number of viable options such as the T4T Process and the Discovery Bible Study Method from which you can draw as you learn to make disciples and train others to make disciples as well.

Myth #2: I need to have specialized training before I can begin the complex process of equipping others.

Books too numerous to count have been written on discipleship, mentoring, and leadership development. Many offer excellent models and practical pointers. However, the plethora of teachings often cause us average folks to think of equipping others as a complicated process to be handled by a cadre of educated specialists. Reading and studying can certainly be beneficial, but we can start right now by adopting Paul's two-point model of discipleship: "Imitate me as I imitate Christ."

Paul, arguably history's greatest cross-cultural missionary and biblical teacher, focused on multiplication through modeling. He multiplied followers; he multiplied leaders (and taught them to multiply); and he multiplied churches. His model was a simple one. He urged his followers to follow his example and in turn be examples to others in *their* lifestyle, ministry, and teachings.

- "Imitate me." (1 Cor. 4:16)
- "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ." (1 Cor. 11:1)
- "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12)

Granted, it's a bit intimidating to compare ourselves to Paul.

Nevertheless, just as we can look to

Paul's character, intimacy with God, passion, power, and influence as goals to strive toward, we, too, can impart to others what God has taught and imparted to us. "Freely you have received; freely give." (Matt. 10:8)

Putting it into practice:

By all means, read some books on discipleship, mission strategies, and ministry development as mentioned above, but begin by immersing yourself in biblical models. Start by re-reading the life of Jesus, paying



attention to how He interacted with His disciples. Move on to the travels and writings of Paul. All of us can strive to live examples of Christ-like lives and encourage others around us to do the same. Be transparent about your shortfalls and keep yourselves mutually accountable.

Myth #3: Christian growth occurs primarily through listening to good sermons and participating in Bible studies.

The primary teaching mode of most Western churches is through a knowledge-based didactic paradigm. Of course a solid foundation of biblical understanding is essential for both personal growth and outreach. I am extremely grateful for the excellent theological instruction I've received through my church, its biblical study program, as well as through formal mission training. However, passive learning from church pew and

classroom Bible study alone will not prepare us to actively engage in fruitful ministry.

John Maxwell in *Mentoring 101* ² reminds us that we remember only 10 percent of what we hear, but we'll remember 90 percent of what we hear, see, say and do. (This statistic might be a little frightening to preachers and teachers!) As active disciplers, we need to ensure that what we teach results in understanding, recall at a better rate than 10%, and effective life application—that neither we nor those we train are just hearers of the Word, but "doers" (Jas. 1:22).

What are ways that we can teach people to "do" ministry? A look at Jesus' "School of Ministry" will give us insight into key elements for successful multiplication. When He chose His disciples, they were completely untrained and uneducated, but at the end of their time together they were a world-changing force that shook nations and kingdoms. What were specific ways that He prepared them for the tasks and challenges that would follow His death and resurrection?

a) Jesus spent considerable "face-to-face" time with His disciples. In fact, they were together almost 24/7 for three years. He modeled godly character in a wide array of circumstances, while at the same time giving

them input (both encouragement and rebukes) as they reacted to the happenings of the day: hunger, exhaustion, excitement, griping, comparing, fear, doubt, and so on.

- b) The disciples had the benefit of hearing Jesus' excellent instruction (the equivalent to today's sermons and teachings) to the crowds, but He also spent time giving them private explanations of some of the more challenging teachings. This allowed for questions and discussions on a more intimate level, and specific emphases on what they needed to hear as individuals and as a group.
- c) Jesus modeled ministry to them: preaching, teaching, healing, casting out demons, and performing miracles. Then, he gave them detailed instructions and sent them out to put it into practice. He did this first with His inner circle (Matt. 10), and then with the seventy (Luke 10). The passage

in Luke also shows how He debriefed them on their return, with further instruction and correction.

d) Finally, Jesus commissioned them to start their own ministry (Matthew 28, Acts 1), but promised that He wouldn't abandon them, but would still be available to help them.

Maxwell summarizes the method in a simple five-step process: modeling (the learner watches the teacher); mentoring (the teacher explains the task and the learner assists); monitoring (the learner performs the task, but the teacher assists and corrects); motivating (the learner performs on his own, with encouragement and help as needed); and multiplying (the learner now becomes a teacher, training others to complete the task).

Putting it into practice:

Think about the skills you'd like to replicate in others. What will help them to grow, reproduce, and become effective ministers of the gospel? Prayerfully consider who demonstrates a desire to grow and serve. Gather a few folks around you and then put into practice the "show and tell" model outlined above. Make sure that everything you do is imitable and place yourself in the background shadows just as quickly as possible. Monitor,











encourage, and make sure they are soon training others. You should be equipping multiple successors for every aspect of what you do.

Don't forget that shared living is also key to helping others mature. Few of us will spend 24/7 with our disciples like Jesus did, but it is important that we spend significant time together in a variety of settings. Activities such as playing basketball, cooking, a family picnic, or travelling together for an event will open doors for deeper sharing and transparency. None of us will be able to model character perfectly, but our own struggles and flaws will open doors for discussion and prayer if we are willing to be open and mutually accountable.

Myth #4: If I have been faithful to make disciples, I've done my job.

The task of discipleship is never "finished." We don't retire or disengage from the commands and commission of Christ. We may experience an ebb and flow of who the Lord places in our lives for a season. Some we have invested in will move on and God will bring others into our path; and we are told to go out in the streets and "compel them to come in." (Luke 14:23) It's fascinating to study the ministry of Paul and the individuals that came alongside him in his travels to learn and serve. Some stayed behind to help build up the newer believers in the cities where they had travelled. Other workers joined the entourage or visited Paul in other places. Wherever he went, Paul focused on making disciples and forming leaders.

We need to also remember that our discipleship is only successful to the degree that those we have trained are in turn multiplying and reproducing. Keep this end goal in plain sight from the beginning of any relationship.

Putting it into practice:

In writing this article, I've realized that it's time for me to once again expand my discipleship role. Many of the young ladies I've mentored have "graduated" into their own ministry roles; several are beautifully discipling and mentoring others; some have far surpassed me in their kingdom influence. (This is a *good* thing, by the way.) While we continue to interact in mutual accountability, I know it's time for new discipleship relationships. What

about you? Take a few moments and write down whom you are involved with at the moment. Are you engaged with any unbelievers? Is it time for expansion? Here are some practical steps we can take together:

- Make yourself available to the Lord, staying alert to His Spirit as He brings people across your path.
- Look around you and reach out to newer people in your church—offer friendship and hospitality as a way of building relationship.
- Talk with the leadership in your church or mission; make them aware that you'd like to serve by discipling others, and get their input. (Be careful, though, if they are stuck in an old-school paradigm.)
- Find avenues of engagement in your wider community. Sometimes we are so involved with the church that we don't even know any non-Christians.
- May I specifically encourage you to look around for people that might be interested in a full-time mission career? The need is so great and the workers are few! If you have no idea how to start, my own book *To Timbuktu and Beyond: A Guide to Getting Started in Missions* will give you plenty of real-life tools.

CONCLUSION

The Bible gives a strong mandate for discipleship and multiplication, and richly provides us with examples and models for doing so effectively. Unfortunately, our entrenched Western paradigms have slowed us down with knowledge-based training and limited life application. If we are willing to step out in faith and obedience, utilizing biblical patterns for reproduction, we'll experience the rich reward of being apart of others' development, and a more rapid spread of the kingdom, while at the same time enjoying greater growth and maturity in our own lives. So let's follow the Nike model and "Just do it!"

- ¹ George Patterson's pioneering work on multiplying churches may be found on-line in a variety of formats, or in *Church Multiplication Guide: The Miracle of Church Reproduction*, Patterson and Scoggins, William Carey Library, Revised edition, August 2003.
- ² Mentoring 101: What Every Leader Needs to Know, by John C. Maxwell (2008, Thomas Nelson Publishers).





JEFF SUNDELL

Jeff Sundell spent ten years of his life spreading the gospel among Tibetan Buddhists in northern India and Nepal.

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here was no way Jeff could reach this people group alone. He began training local believers to make disciples and plant churches. Jeff learned to ask five questions:

- How do I enter an unreached region and connect with people?
- How do I share the gospel?
- How do I make disciples who disciple others?
- How do I form groups in the community that will reproduce?
- How do I develop and multiply local leaders?

Jeff sought out examples of the best practices from anywhere in the world where he could find a Church-Planting Movement. He then applied these lessons to his setting. He learned that a Church-Planting Movement is a work of God through his Spirit and his dynamic Word.

Jeff learned to teach new believers to obey Christ. He learned to identify leaders, not by their knowledge and gifts but by their obedience, because obedience is at the heart of any Church-Planting Movement. Local believers with little or no education faced persecution with courage and boldly declared the gospel. They learned to obey what they knew. Jeff discovered that a disciple who is obeying the little he knows is on the road to maturity.

Over the years Jeff and the leaders he trained equipped thousands of local believers to share the gospel and plant churches. Across the region tens of thousands of new disciples formed new simple churches—many of them in regions where there is official hostility toward Christianity.

In 2009 the Sundells moved back to the United States and began applying what they had learned to their new situation. They moved to an old mill town in North Carolina that had been in economic and social decline since the 1970s. Unemployment was high, and drug and alcohol abuse was a problem. With help from the police, Jeff identified the three toughest neighborhoods in their county—Henrietta, Alexander Mills and Spindale—and chose them as his mission field.

Jeff met with pastors in the wider area to cast vision and offer training to anyone who was interested. He gathered a small group of men and women on Monday mornings and began training them how to share their story and Jesus' story. They then went out prayer-walking in one of the three neighborhoods, and they looked for opportunities to connect with people who were far from God.

These areas are known for their pit bull dogs and methamphetamine labs. As Jeff and his coworkers met people, they asked, "If God could do a miracle in your life today, what would it be?" Then they prayed for people on the spot.

Jeff recruited his mom and dad, Norm and Paula, to the team, and they began walking and praying. On their first day, Jeff's parents visited an African American neighborhood. The day didn't begin well when Jeff's "Yankee" father asked two middle-aged women, "How are you guys?" They thought he was addressing them as men

RANDY, RUTH, AND OTHER NEW BELIEVERS IN THE COMMUNITY CONSIDER THAT PORCH AS THEIR CHURCH. THE PORCH USED TO BE THE PLACE WHERE PARTIES HAPPENED. NOW NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO DRINK ON THE PORCH.

and began cursing at him. (A real Southerner would have asked, "How are y'all?")

Norm and Paula persisted in the conversation, however, and eventually one of the women, Ruth, asked them to pray for a severe pain in her chest. The other asked, "Just pray I'll get through the day." Jeff's parents prayed for them and promised to visit again.

A week later Jeff's parents returned and met a man named Randy sitting out on his front porch drinking even though it was only 10 a.m. Randy's porch was the place to hang out if you wanted to party. He invited them to come back and share some stories about Jesus.

Norm and Paula moved on and visited Ruth to pray for her. Word spread that they had returned, and a woman called Annie came looking for them. She'd heard there were some folks praying for people and wanted them to pray that God would provide a stove for her and her family. They prayed for her—and for a new stove. A few days later a friend of the Sundells heard about the need and donated a stove.

The next week Jeff's parents were at Annie's house enjoying the cookies she had baked on her new stove when Ruth came banging on the door. She wanted prayer. The doctor had just told her that the pain in her chest was breast cancer. They prayed for her.

Norm and Paula began a simple discovery Bible study with Randy and his drinking buddies on Randy's porch. They read stories about Jesus and asked, "What does this say about God? What does this say about people? Is there a command to obey or an example to follow?" Norm had them reading the story of the four friends who lowered the paralytic through the roof so that Jesus could heal him when Randy realized he needed to do something about Ruth's condition. Since Ruth had been diagnosed with cancer, she had missed all her medical appointments out of a combination of fear and her drinking problem.

Randy and his buddies knew this, and when they read the story of the four men who brought their friend to Jesus, they knew what they had to do. Before Ruth's next appointment, they stayed up all night to make sure she didn't get drunk. The next morning she arrived at her appointment on time.

The Bible studies on the porch continued until one day

Jeff's dad got a call from Randy saying, "I believe! I believe!" Ruth also gave her life to Christ. Six weeks after his conversion, Randy told Norm, "You know I'm an alcoholic. Would you pray that I'd get healed?" Today Jeff's mom and dad have a

ministry on the porch praying for people; they ask "that alcohol would taste bad in their mouths." They also pray for people to find work and God answers.

Randy, Ruth, and other new believers in the community consider that porch as their church. The porch used to be the place where parties happened. Now no one is allowed to drink on the porch. Instead those who are still drinking bring their bench as close to the porch as possible so they can listen in while the church meets around God's Word. Over twenty people have been baptized, and disciples are meeting in three simple neighborhood churches. One of the groups meets in a hotel room.

Jeff and his coworkers continue to prayer-walk the community. They pray for the needs, share their stories, share the gospel and make disciples. Discipleship can be a challenge as new believers grapple with drug and alcohol addiction and fractured relationships. Some of them are still using drugs or living together. Jeff never compromises what the Scripture teaches; he knows that making disciples takes time.

Some time later Jeff met with Neil Perry, pastor of a growing church in nearby Forest City. After planting the church, Neil found himself preoccupied with counting "butts on the seats." Over a three-hour cup of coffee, Jeff

helped Neil discover how he could get back to making disciples. One of the new believers in Neil's church was Chuck, a former crack cocaine dealer who had run a prostitution ring in his basement. With Jeff's help, Neil taught Chuck to make disciples and plant churches. Now

AFTER TWO YEARS, OVER 350 PEOPLE ARE GATHERING IN 73 GROUPS. OVER 250 PEOPLE HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED. JEFF HAS IDENTIFIED 45 PEOPLE IN THE NETWORK WHO ARE EFFECTIVE IN CONNECTING, SHARING THE GOSPEL, AND REPRODUCING DISCIPLES AND CHURCHES.

Chuck runs a simple church for his former friends and associates in the basement where he once sold cocaine and ran prostitutes. A pastor in Spindale, Andy Evans, has also connected with Jeff and is training anyone who wants to learn to make disciples. One of the new believers is a former cocaine addict who has formed a church in a trailer park with twenty baptized new believers.

It's a long way from the Himalayas to North Carolina. Jeff has been able to adapt the principles he learned in Nepal to a very different context. He still asks himself the same five questions.

- 1. How do I enter an unreached region and connect with people? Jeff prayer-walks the community, looking for opportunities to connect and praying for needs. His purpose is to find households of peace that connect him and the gospel to relational networks.
- **2.** How do I share the gospel? Jeff shares his story, and he shares Jesus' story. He offers a series of simple discovery Bible studies called *Seven Stories of Hope*. ¹
- 3. How do I make disciples who disciple others? Jeff and his coworkers do not do anything their disciples cannot copy. They teach new believers to share their story and to share Jesus' story. They teach new disciples to ask, "If God can do a miracle in your life today, what would it be?" Then they ask, "Can I pray for you?" They train new disciples how to take a friend or family member through the Seven Stories of Hope. All they need are the stories and four simple questions: "What does this teach us about God? What does this teach us about humanity? Is there a command to obey? Is there an example to follow?" All the learning is obedience-oriented. At the end of every study, the leaders ask, "How can you obey what you have learned today?" At the beginning of every study is the question, "How did you obey what you learned last week?"

4. How do I form groups in the community that will reproduce? Jeff believes that churches come from disciple making, not the other way around. He teaches communities of new disciples the basics of life from the book of Acts—worship, ministry, fellowship,

evangelism and missions, and discipleship.

5. How do I develop and multiply local leaders? Houses of peace become church communities. Multiple churches are formed simultaneously. Jeff trains existing believers and new believers to make disciples and form groups.

After two years, over 350 people are gathering in 73 groups. Over 250 people have been baptized. Jeff has identified 45 people in the network who are effective in connecting, sharing the gospel, and reproducing disciples and churches. Seventeen of them have equipped groups to reproduce between two and four generations of new groups.

Jeff's example and training is inspiring a growing number of people to apply simple church planting methods across the United States and Australia. Those he has influenced are identifying houses of peace, baptizing new disciples, and forming new neighborhood churches in their communities. In doing so they are imitating Jeff, but Jeff himself is imitating Jesus, because Jesus is the Lord of a missionary movement that Jeff and his friends have joined.

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CPMS: THE COUNTER-INTUITIVE WAYS OF GROWING GOD'S KINGDOM

STEVE SMITH

/ Steve Smith works with the International Mission Board (SBC) and trains believers to move toward biblical Church-planting movements. He is the author of the book *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution* with Ying Kai (WigTake Resources 2011). You can follow Steve's musings from his devotional thoughts and kingdom ministry on Twitter @kingreigncome and Kingdom Kernels on Facebook.

he King's ways in this world are counterintuitive. Intuitively we think His kingdom should follow a certain path or principles natural to us, but we find that it is quite the opposite. The primary way to discover the counterintuitive ways of the kingdom is to meditate on the Word of the King—Scripture. We think we should curse our enemy, but King Jesus says bless (Luke 6:27-28). We think that by elevating ourselves we will succeed, but the King says to humble ourselves (1 Peter 5:5-6). We think that resources, education and connections are the paths to breakthrough, but the King tells us that the weak, the have-nots and the are-nots will find the ultimate victory in this world (1 Cor. 1:26-29).

Perhaps it is in this last reference that we as a North American church are challenged most. We are so accustomed to the power of education, resources and fortitude to change the world that we've become much too self-reliant and too little God-reliant. If we ask ourselves the question, "Am I doing anything right now that absolutely requires faith in the Spirit to sustain me as opposed to my own personal abilities?" we often find ourselves at a loss.

I recall a group of twelve East Asian believers I worked with in a ChurchPlanting Movement. Their people group, on many economic scales, was classified as the poorest group in the country. Many individuals had one, perhaps two sets of clothes. Most had little, if any, money. The average educational level ranged between third and sixth grade. Illiteracy was at 86%. Drunkenness was rampant. They brought *nothing* to the table in their effort to reach their people group with the gospel—no resources, no education, no connections. And this brought great despair in a society in which connections were everything.

When I first saw them, clothes ragged, hair disheveled, teeth missing, I almost lost hope that God could do much with them. But then God gave me these counterintuitive promises for these precious new believers:

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. (1 Cor. 1:26-29 ESV)

I told them: "You're the poorest tribe in this country!" Their shoulders slumped. "You're the most despised in this country!" Their eyes looked down at their toes in realization.

Then I told them "So rejoice! That is why God is going to use you to win the world! You are in these verses. You are the weak, the poor, the despised to whom God will give grace. God gives grace to the humble and there is no group more humbled than you! Take up your calling."

At that a deep, Spirit-prompted identity rose up in the hearts of this "insignificant" band as they laid hold of that promise. These were their verses. God had shown them their place in the cosmic plan for the redemption of this world. They took up this mantle and began to spread the kingdom of God from village to village and from valley to valley.

The counterintuitive nature of the kingdom joyfully catches us by surprise.

THE MUSTARD SEED OF KINGDOM GROWTH

CPMs are kingdom movements that operate in the power of the Spirit on kingdom principles. Because we don't naturally or intuitively understand kingdom ways, Jesus painted many word pictures of the kingdom in the form of parables, starting most of them with "the kingdom of God is like...." Each is a kernel of truth about the overall mystery of the King's reign.

Jesus answered [His disciples], "To you it has been granted to know the **mysteries of the kingdom of**

heaven, but to them it has not been granted.... But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. (Matt. 13:11, 16, NASB, emphasis added)

Parables are a mystery to those outside, but to those who come like little children, God will disclose the mysterious nature of the kingdom. Surrender your pre-conceived ideas to Him and ask Him to speak afresh to you. We must be very purposeful if we would live King-centered rather than human-centered ways of ministry.

A foundational kingdom kernel is the mustard seed.

He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches." (Matt. 13:31-32 ESV)

What is more insignificant than a mustard seed? What was more insignificant than this little band of barely-literate ignored believers in East Asia who sought to change the world?

The parable teaches us that large movements start from small beginnings. In this manner God most fully receives the glory. Powerful transformation comes through those we would deem weak. It is not the resources, education and connections that enable us to succeed but rather the recognition of our spiritual bankruptcy and absolute need for Jesus every day.¹

What transformed that humble band of twelve East Asian believers, like the early apostles, was their recognition of their insignificance and their utter dependence on nothing but the Spirit of God. They had no other options. Like Peter, they could say "Silver and

gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee."

The CPMs around the world have nothing to do with earthly socio-economic status and everything to do with spiritual socio-economic status.

This bursts a common myth about CPMs: that they only occur in poor societies. They more often occur in poor societies, perhaps because their physical poverty helps them recognize spiritual poverty. But CPMs are also taking place in educated communities and professional arenas. The key is not economic status but status of the heart.

The King's ways are to take the spiritually bankrupt when they rely on Him and His Word in absolute dependence and use them to spread throughout the world as His change agents. In the West, we find it hard to imagine that a small group of poverty-stricken or poorly-educated believers and churches could grow like a mustard tree and become the largest tree in the garden. We find the speed of Church-planting Movements of the world unbelievable precisely because we forget how the kingdom operates. It does not depend on human resources or engineering.

And that's what I love about CPMs: God taking bedraggled have-nots and shaming the haves.

That's our King! If we plant the right DNA of the kingdom in the right types of individuals, the growth of the kingdom is inevitable. It is critical that we get the beginnings right! We must start with the counterintuitive ways of the King.

What follows are two examples of how that is happening: the percentage growth of believers in societies and the transformation of cultures in which they live. CPMs—in which ordinary believers and churches are envisioned, equipped and empowered to complete the task of world evangelization—offer a fresh arena in which the percentages of disciples of Jesus in a lost society are significantly increasing. Stan Parks, a CPM Trainer with Mission to Unreached Peoples, speaks about this below. He may be contacted at sbp@gcnow.org.

CHANGING THE PERCENTAGES

by Stan Parks

In the Great Commission of Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus commands us as His disciples to make disciples of all ethne. The Great Commission was given to the entire Body of Christ; all of us have a part to play in reaching the world. So how are we doing?

According to the Joshua Project, there are currently 16,598 ethne in the world and 7,165 are unreached constituting 41.5% of all people. In 1900 the world was 34.5% Christian and now we are 33% Christian. The global annual growth rate of Christianity is 1.2% and the global annual growth rate of Great Commission Christians is 1.2%. Ironically, these both match the world population annual growth rate of 1.2%. This implies that our Christian growth rates are merely biological and not spiritual. As a global Body of Christ, we are not doing a very good job of obeying the Great Commission.

We MUST change our Great Commission efforts if we are going to see the world reached! Missions as usual will continue to lose ground and leave millions and billions without even the first opportunity to hear the gospel. We must be willing to make radical changes and be open to new approaches. Church-Planting Movements (CPMs) are the main way we are seeing God change these heart-breaking percentages among the unreached. CPMs are rapidly² multiplying indigenous churches planting new churches within a population segment. This is happening because all new believers are being taught to obey Christ's commands, and as a result they expect every believer and every church to take responsibility for reaching those next door and at the ends of the earth. CPMs are not a new fad, but rather a modern example of what God has always done in history: bringing individuals, families and groups into relationship with Him in a powerful way which makes these new communities of faith want to serve those around them and reach more people with the Good News.

In recent years, God has delighted in starting CPMs in some of the most unreached areas of the world. In North India, sometimes called the "Graveyard of Modern Missions" because of 200 years of largely fruitless efforts, God has birthed a movement among the Bhojpuri of India that has grown to over 80,000 churches and four million baptized believers in 20 years. This movement has started CPMs in four nearby groups and has sent missionaries to South America and the South Pacific. Another CPM in China has seen over 150,000 churches established and two million people baptized in the last twelve years. Over 6,000 new churches have been planted among Muslims in eighteen different countries in Africa over the last seven years. Around the world, there are over 90 CPMs that are seeing consistent 4th generation or beyond reproduction of churches. And God is starting these movements in every region: Africa,

Asia, South America, North America, Europe, the Middle East.

What are we willing to do to support and catalyze these new movements? Are we willing to change anything and everything to better cooperate with God's movements? May it be so!

Not only is the percentage of believers growing in these people groups and countries, but they are also actively transforming their communities. Here's a testimony from Nathan Shank who works with several CPMs in South Asia. He may be contacted through www.movements.net.

A BREAKTHROUGH IN HOLISTIC MINISTRY

by Nathan Shank

I am proud to say, "Our ministry has started thousands of localized, strategic community transformation centers (or co-ops)."

We have gone about a systematic campaign against alcoholism among men in hundreds of communities. This has happened through ongoing teaching related to being filled with the Spirit rather than the things of this world. As a result, hundreds of men have put down the bottle and stopped beating their wives. With the money no longer given to liquor stores, children are sent to school with books, materials and appropriate dress. Sobriety offers these families new hope through a model of fatherhood focused on the needs of the family rather than daily appetites.

We have fostered an unprecedented literacy campaign across hundreds of communities. We have discovered a breakthrough in the major barrier to education across the fields we target. Countless families have emerged from isolation into the light of education

for their children offering a bright future of progress and economic development. The breakthrough was intrinsic motivation. By instilling the motive for literacy we have seen families emerge from the grinding legacy of the caste system and its oppressive outlook of fatalism.³

To varying degrees each of the co-ops participates in regular benevolence projects determined locally for the betterment of their community.⁴ Further, they provide ongoing support and subsidy generated from local sources for widows, orphans and the oppressed. Many expressions of care for the sick, dying and hospitalized have been received.

We have mobilized hundreds of indigenous volunteer workers to advocate, support and adopt the victims of sex trafficking, domestic violence and infant exposure. We have received dozens of reports of infant girls rescued from exposure, as well as orphans and abandoned children placed into protective custody led by Christian families. We have seen dozens of volunteer kingdom agents compelled by the teaching of the Word and the Spirit of God to engage the local sex industry in their cities with the light of the gospel.⁵

We have catalyzed citizenship across the nation through the same localized co-operatives by introducing biblical teaching on submission to authority, prayer for one's masters and the value of quiet productive lives. We have heard numerous reports of lives and families reformed of law-breaking. We have heard the testimonies of reformed smugglers, prostitutes, murderers and child molesters. We believe teaching through these co-operatives was the central catalyst for these reforms.

Finally, we have seen countless lives oppressed by sin released from a

lifestyle of despair and transformed to productivity. It has been based on an outlook of hope in a just Judge capable of righting wrongs for eternity.

For those interested in holistic ministry we offer you our best practice. All these things have been accomplished through the establishment of localized community-oriented transformation co-operatives. We believe the Holy Spirit inspired these co-operatives and laid out patterns in Scripture for our systematic pursuit of their establishment.

For more information on joining the Spirit and the Kingdom in transformational, holistic ministry please begin your search here:

Matthew 16:18—"... I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not stand against it."

As you can see, local churches that are part of CPMs are demonstrating the ability to transform their communities as a result of life transformation and obedience to the admonitions of Scripture. Rather than transform society first then redeem individuals second, in CPMs it is normally reversed: redeem individuals first and then help these Spirit-led believers and churches transform their communities.

It's counterintuitive, and that's one thing that is so delightful about God—He's the King and we are not. It's about His ways, not our ways. Mustard seeds are being planted around the world, and the trees of the kingdom growing and spreading their branches are glorious!

How will you and your church apply this kernel of truth about the kingdom? Whom do you know that appears insignificant but is hungry for God and His Word?

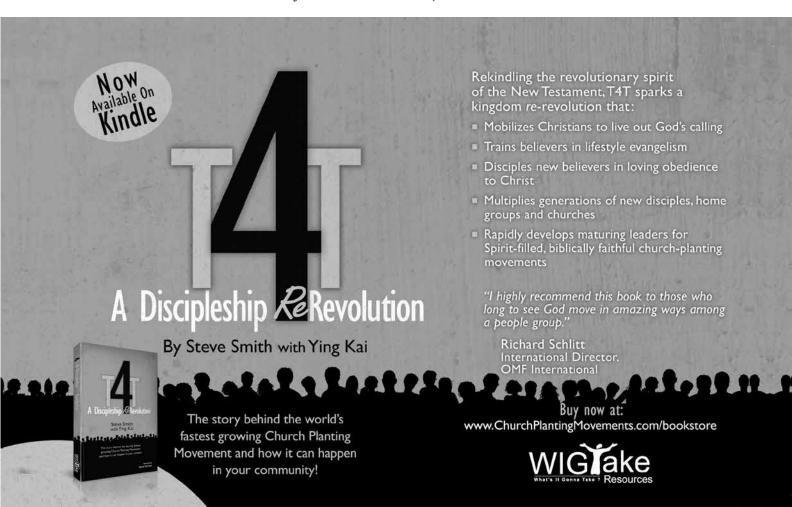
FOLLOW-UP:

To send examples of what you are learning in CPMs to be featured in future issues, write us at

KingdomKernels@onepost.net.

Kingdom Kernels is a regular column featuring lessons from Church-Planting Movements around the world.

- ¹ The "poor in spirit" of Matthew 5:3 literally means to be "bankrupt"—no resources left.
- ² The average church in a CPM plants and disciples 1 new church a year.
- ³ Between 2006–2010 we distributed more than 85,000 books in local languages. In most cases these books were accepted as the first written material owned in the household.
- ⁴ A survey of more than 300 groups conducted in 2010 showed 75% of the groups surveyed were active in benevolent ministries outside their membership. If weekly collections and monthly distributions averaged just \$10 per month across 1800 active groups an average of \$18,000 is distributed monthly to local needs.
- One such effort has mobilized members of nine different "co-ops" into weekly prayer meetings and evangelistic encounters within the red light districts of their city.



OWANTED" NEIGHBORS



MELODY J. WACHSMUTH

Melody J. Wachsmuth
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www.balkanvoices.
wordpress.com.

You may also contact Melody at mjwachsmuth@ yahoo.com he grew up conscious of the Roma (Gypsy) presence but had no more thoughts of them than the usual stereotypes: they are filthy and they steal, their yards look like junkyards and they do not want to work. Although Anita¹ would see them begging, she felt no particular compassion or empathy for them. When she quit her job and submitted her life to serve God, she imagined that God might send her to Africa—she had little idea that she would, in the near future, begin to be part of many Roma lives in a community near her home.

My research among Roma communities in the Balkans over the last year highlights a consistent yet strange irony found in missional praxis—a truth that first struck me when I read *The Brothers Karamazov* years ago. "I MUST make one confession," Ivan began. "I could never understand how one can love one's neighbors...One can love one's neighbors in the abstract, or even at a distance, but at close quarters it's almost impossible."²

Why does our compassion so often scab over in response to those closest, and most unlike us, even as our hearts burn with passion for "those in need" who are far off? Perhaps Jesus told his parable of the Good Samaritan in order to elicit a visceral reaction regarding the true challenge of loving our neighbor—a reaction we can experience today if we take out the word Samaritan and insert a neighbor with whom we share close physical proximity but try to avoid. In fact, despite changing paradigms in 21st Century missiology, the word "mission" and "missionary" often still hold an implicit meaning of being "far off and distant."

The reasons for this are not merely peripheral—in fact, it is imperative that we understand the *why* behind this issue, perhaps unique in every context, so that we can effectively address the *how* in rethinking proximal mission in a given context. There is most likely a complex web of historical, cultural, personal, spiritual, and social factors at play that feed into disregard for the other at close proximity.

I have tried to analyze this issue in my research among Roma communities in the Balkans—communities that have very little missional contact from the surrounding Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant churches. However, I proceed with caution in this venture of understanding the *why* in this context. It is always easier to identify another culture's "Samaritans" and likewise pass judgment, even as we remain blind to our own. In this regard, I am mindful of Jesus's admonition in Matthew 7:3-5 to "take first the log out of your own eye."

At 10-12 million, the Roma make up Europe's largest minority and yet remain largely invisible.³ The poverty and educational levels are often far below the average in each respective European country, and their history showcases a theme of disregarded suffering. It cannot be said, however, that this marginalization is simply due to ongoing discrimination—

they are not passive agents in their own history. Rather, there are elements within the Roma culture itself which contribute to the separation from the surrounding culture. Even after over 800 years of being in Europe, the Roma remain not only distinctly "cross-cultural," but also profoundly unwelcome and unwanted. Although there are exceptions, Roma communities in the Balkans hardly register on the local church's missional radar screen. "Nobody wants to accept the Roma," one Roma pastor in Serbia declared to me. "Not the traditional [Serbian

"NOBODY WANTS TO

ACCEPT THE ROMA," ONE

ROMA PASTOR IN SERBIA

DECLARED TO ME. "NOT

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THE PROTESTANT CHURCH...

SO NOW IS THE TIME WE

CAN MAKE OUR OWN

CHURCH FOR THE ROMA."IV

Orthodox] church, not the Protestant church...so now is the time we can make our own church for the Roma."

CONFRONTING HISTORICAL BARRIERS

The Roma are not new neighbors in the Balkans—historical accounts substantiate their wide establishment there by the end of the fourteenth century. Therefore, history plays an important role in current perceptions of the Roma. Unfortunately, the church's historic attitude towards the Roma has often been a double-edged sword—faulting them for

being pagan while showing scant inclination to include them in the church. In fact, the church was complicit in forced conversion, limiting access to sacraments, taking children away from Roma families to raise in "non-Roma homes," and forcing segregation from the church.

Although there is no simple explanation for this reaction, their identity was often interwoven around religious folklore, fostered both by the church and the Romanies themselves. In the fifteenth century, some Roma groups secured "letters of protection" from nobility by claiming to be wandering in penance for abandoning Christianity and returning to paganism.6 Other folklore claimed that they had constructed the nails by which Christ was crucified and they refused sanctuary to baby Jesus and Mary when they fled to Europe. The suspicions surrounding Roma identity increased because of their skin color, serving to portray them as "non-white, heathen outsiders.⁷ Finally, their spirituality deepened the religious antagonism against them—their practice of magic, palmistry, and fortune telling. "It is certain that the Gypsies have at all times been godless, wicked people who are harried with complete justification," declared the *Universal Dictionary of all Sciences and Arts*, published in 1749.8

In fact, often we construct our unwanted neighbors' identity around some measure of "folklore" derived from negative incidents, history, the media, or first impressions. This forms our assumptions and colors our perceptions toward them. If we are not careful, this puts us in a posture of "bearing false witness" against our neighbor, as we sum up who they are with quick cliches or stereotypes

that do not come from actual relationship.

When Anita first visited a Roma home, she was wary, half-expecting that they would try to steal from her. But she was surprised at their openness and their welcome, and when trust began to form, she realized that they were treating her like one of them. Her expectation would not be unusual-most of the majority culture in the Balkans knows little about the actual culture of the Roma, and their perception is filtered through stereotypes that have been present for centuries. But even as the historical legacy promulgates deep feelings of

suspicion toward the Roma, the ongoing cultural divide is at least partially maintained by disapproval of their lifestyle and fear of their potential economic demands.

CONFRONTING SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL BARRIERS

"But you've seen how they live," one earnest student asked me in my missiology class. "It is easy to say that we need to love and reach out, but how do you suggest dealing with your neighbor when their front lawn is full of garbage?" I had posed a case study to my students from recent events that took place in a small Croatian village. After a Roma family moved into a village unfriendly to outsiders, they came under great pressure from the community to leave again. Finally, the community built a fence around the Roma home to "keep them in." This action was roundly condemned by the Croatian president, but it displays a disturbingly graphic picture of what we may feel in our hearts toward our unwanted neighbors.

Christine Pohl, in her book *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, discusses this inclination in humanity to turn away from the stranger, to view them

as an enemy, the one not like us. "We seldom notice how substantially bounded our private worlds are—how few 'unknown' strangers we welcome, nor do we recognize how frequently the boundaries are socioeconomic." She points to a number of factors contributing to this response: a steady diet of media images portraying gratuitous need in



distant locations that paralyzes us from local involvement, a feeling of ill-will against neighbors who seem detached from social responsibilities, or people feeling inundated with "cultural difference or socio-economic need" of the other.¹⁰

As the economic situation grows more challenging for everyone in the Balkans, perhaps there is a fear that one's neighbor may demand too much—giving a little could open the floodgates of need, especially if we disapprove of how our neighbors live. Unpredictable outcomes can stymie relationship, particularly if there is a lot at stake. One Croatian pastor explained his hesitancy to include Roma in the church because of prior incidences of Roma attendance splitting a church. Another pastor admitted his relief that Roma stopped coming to his church so that Croatians would once more want to come.

One cannot merely dismiss or minimize these concerns. It is difficult to live next to someone who has different priorities and different cultural norms. What is to be done if a pastor loses most of his congregation because of Roma involvement—a congregation that contributes to the offering which helps maintain the church programs and building? What does a church do if by reaching out to unwanted neighbors, it loses its own identity in the process? Even if God might be doing something new with a church's identity, the prospect of losing what is comfortable and known is always difficult and painful. But perhaps some kind of death is always a prerequisite of new birth.

Of course it is not possible to confront the socio-economic and cultural barriers without beginning a relationship—

and being willing to accept both the risk and the joy that accompanies that beginning. "I found out that although of course there are some Roma who are messy like in any culture, "Anita told me, "many Roma earn their livelihood by hunting for scrap metal in junkyards and trash. Much of this metal gets sorted and stripped in the front yard of a Roma home." Relationship not only highlights truth behind the stereotypes and reasons for cultural behavior, but serves to illuminate our own self-erected barriers—our fears, our sin, our commitment to personal comfort and familiarity.

CONFRONTING PERSONAL PREJUDICE AND FEARS

It can be painful to consider a missional approach to the communities we feel most reluctant about—it forces us to confront our own hearts and our lack of commitment to love. Why do I feel no qualm about stepping over a passed-out homeless man in Portland, Oregon, my hometown? Why does a Croatian church not care that a nearby Roma village is in such dire poverty that some houses do not have doors? Is it because I am tired and feeling overwhelmed by work and my previous commitments? Am I worried that too many people will ask me for money? Perhaps I will be confronted with hard questions?

The narrative of Jesus' life is bent around the central principle that to "save one's life, one must first lose it." Losing one's life may look different in different contexts, but it demands that we submit to Jesus our own personal comfort, our ideas of mission, and how we think people should act and think. Such a surrender in the context of relationship with our neighbor can lead to a certain identification with them. When Anita proposed to her church that they put together shoeboxes for the children in a nearby Roma village for Christmas, the church stalled on its decision. Finally, Anita heard that it had been vetoed because people were afraid of exposing their own children to diseases by going into the Roma village. Anita found herself angry and offended—although the offense was not aimed at her, her identification with the people allowed a righteous anger at the misinformed prejudice and judgment.

And yet, moving in relationship toward the other does not often end in a neatly tied up happy ending. At one point, Anita was ostracized from the Roma community by making an unintentional but serious cultural mistake—after a woman had lost a baby, Anita had gone outside to talk to her husband alone, a cultural taboo. Soon, rumors and gossip were flying around the community and Anita struggled with fear and worry about what this meant for her ministry. She felt rejected after she had poured herself into the community.

"Still," she said, "I had a big love for the people that this pain could not quench and I wanted to keep being involved. "

CONFRONTING OUR LIMITED IDEAS OF MISSION

God continues to reveal himself in Roma communities through miracles, dreams and visions and the Roma expression of faith differs radically from the majority culture around it— therefore the few non-Roma that venture into the community find themselves blessed in unexpected ways. When the woman that Anita had offended finally asked for forgiveness for her behavior,

Anita was astonished at her humility and open repentance—an expression of the gospel that she rarely saw in Croatian churches.

Anita's journey is a powerful image of mission as a multi-directional catalyst. As we participate in God's mission, our own understanding of God deepens and our ability to love increases through the ones we are serving. If the kingdom of God begins as a mustard seed, we must step out of our groomed orchards and manicured lawns to poke

around in unexpected and unlikely places—will we be able to recognize it when it is only a small seedling?

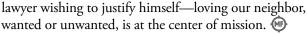
THE COURAGE TO RECOGNIZE THE MUSTARD SEED

In 1950, a French Roma woman's son was miraculously healed and consequently her family converted. However, evangelists refused to baptize them or allow them to take communion because they were not legally married according to French law. Disturbed by this, Pastor Clement Le Cossec arranged for both legal marriages and baptisms, and thus began his involvement in what became the rapidly growing Gypsy Evangelical Church. In 1958, the number of baptized had reached 3,000 and Le Cossec quit his involvement in the Assemblies of God Church to work exclusively within the independent Gypsy Evangelical Church. In its first three decades, the Gypsy Evangelical Church reportedly baptized around 70,000 members.¹¹

In the 1970's, Pastor Mio Stankovic pastored a small church in Leskovac, Serbia. Although there were thousands of Roma living in and around Leskovac, he gave little thought to them. However, one day a Roma woman came to him and asked for prayer. After he prayed, she was healed. By the late 1980's, Roma continued to come to the church as a result of the numerous healings and miracles taking place. By 2004, the church had grown from 30 people to 1,000 members.¹²

After a year and a half forming relationships with and discipling our Roma neighbors, Anita and I can see the small seedling pushing its head up from the soil. Our Roma partners in this endeavor decided that the time was ripe to begin a church. The first service, held in November 2012, was celebrated with two pigs and much festivity. In preparation, new Roma believers weed-whacked the

property, chopped down unruly trees, replaced windows, and painted the old building. We watched with awe in our hearts and certain expectation of what God was doing. Although it is easier for us to love the idea of the other than the actual other, Jesus' mandate requires us to move into this uncomfortable, unpredictable, and even sometimes dangerous territory. This is precisely why Jesus told such a disquieting story to the



- ¹ Name has been changed.
- ² Fyodor Dostoyevsky, The Brothers Karamazov (New York:Lowell Press).
- ³ European Commission. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. 2011. An EU Framework for National Roma Integration Strategies up to 2020. http://ec.europa.eu/justice/policies/discrimination/docs/com_2011_173_en.pdf
- ⁴ Interview with Aleksandar Subotin, Kucura, June 2011
- ⁵ Angus Fraser, The Gypsies. 2nd Ed. (Oxford, England: Blackwell Publishing,1995), p. 57.
- ⁶ Fraser, p. 65.
- ⁷ Ian Hancock, We are the Romani People (Hatfield, England: University of Hertfordshire Press, 2002),pp.57,58.
- ⁸ Fraser, pp. 129,188.
- Ohristine D. Pohl, Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1999), p. 92. Ibid, pp. 92, 99.
- ¹⁰ Thomas Acton, "The Gypsy Evangelical Church." Ecumenical Review 31 (1979), n. 3 pp. 11-17; Fraser, p. 312-316.
- ¹¹ Joan Harvey, "Life Story; Mio Stankovic." The Oregonian (2009) http://blog.oregonlive.com/lifestories/2009/07/life_story_mio_stankovic. html;Interview with Selim Olivić, Leskovac, April 2012.





Spotlight for May 2013

PEOPLES OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE THAI FAMILY OF PEOPLES



JOHN LAMBERT

John Lambert (john. lambert@uscwm.org) is a strategist and trainer based at the U. S. Center for World Mission. He and his family have served among the Isan and Northern Thai. He has a heart to encourage and serve both established and emerging movements among the unreached people groups in Southeast Asia.

Southeast Asian peoples are found in 15 main clusters, but only four have established or significant church movements: the Cham, Miao/Hmong, Mon-Khmer, and smaller tribal groups. Two, the Lao and Vietnamese, have seen nominal progress and would still be considered in the formative stages. The remaining nine are "unreached" or "least reached," with less than 2% evangelical believers among them.

Some may be surprised that the largest of the unreached Southeast Asian clusters is the Thai. Despite 185 years of Protestant missionary activity in Thailand, "only 0.3% of ethnic Thai, about 185,000 people, have become Protestants." Thailand is made up not only of distinct "Thai" people groups, but also many different tribal groups, based mainly in the north of the country.

A recent research project reveals the composition of the church in Thailand: of the nearly 400,000 Protestant believers, 42% are from a tribal background rather than Thai.³ Furthermore, the majority of believers in Thailand are based in only three provinces

out of 77.4 These provinces—Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, and Mae Hong Son—contain some of the highest concentrations of tribal peoples and some of the highest concentrations of expatriate missionaries in Southeast Asia.

Yet now the church in Thailand has organized around a national plan called the "20/20 Vision," with a preliminary objective (the "2015 Vision") for 100,000 members of the national church to declare their intent to bring one million to Christ by 2015. The goal of the 20/20 Vision is to plant a church in every sub-district in Thailand that currently has none; the fulfillment of such a goal will make it much easier for Thai peoples to come to faith in Jesus.

Researcher Marten Visser found that a Thai living in a village with a church was nearly 100% more likely to come to faith in Jesus Christ. He goes on to conclude, "The Thai have not declined to become Christians because of active resistance but because it has not been a live option in their own social network." The question that begs to

be asked: "What kind of churches should be planted among the Thai where there are currently none?"

While Church-Planting Movements (CPM)—"simple churches"—are promoted in many other places as a viable way to engage and reach unreached peoples, this approach has only belatedly received study or adoption in Thailand. Some in Thailand have quickly dismissed CPM methodology because of its emphasis on church leaders who earn their living through bivocational or self-supporting projects rather than Sunday-morning offerings alone.

In addition, most of the previous strategies for the Thai prefer an "extraction" approach that tends to cut off new believers from their families and social webs. The norm is extraction from any and all things that have even the scent of Buddhism; this includes praying with palms together in "wai," saying Satoo (the Pali word for "so be it") instead of Amen, and attending community functions at the temple or during Thai national holidays.

Extraction approaches minimize the power of Thai social identity and how social identity has been bound to Buddhist identity from the cradle to the grave. Yet the Thai are not strict, "religious" Buddhists. For most their faith is "high identity-low practice." Most are not actively seeking nirvana or even seeking to keep the five basic moral precepts of the Buddha.

By contrast, many in Thai society are lamenting the decline in moral values among both the general population and religious leaders. This decline is reflected in Thailand's high ranking for adultery⁷, whiskey consumption⁸, methamphetamine abuse⁹, an infamous and thriving sex industry, human trafficking¹⁰ and many publicized religious scandals.¹¹

In addition, most Thai are deeply enmeshed in various forms of "popular" devotion that is tied to Thai Buddhism, such as astrology, spirit devotion, spirit houses, monk veneration, fortune-telling, amulets, power tattoos, and merit-making schemes such as the wildly popular Dhammakaya movement. All the while, Theravada Buddhism struggles to stay relevant to modern culture.¹²

Some Thai believers are opening up to the need to use other means to reach their people rather than replicating Western or Korean models. They are opening up to CPM or "organic" approaches to planting "Christ-centered communities" where there are currently none. They are seeking ways to be self-supporting so that they can focus on empowering every new believer to be a witness of Jesus both in word and power. They are bravely looking at what it could mean for new believers to remain as witnesses within their own socioreligious environments. They are willing to "leave the 1% for the sake of the 99%" who still have little or no access to the gospel.

I believe that we will see a massive movement of Thai come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior and live out dedicated and grace-filled obedience to Him within their own cultural context. Pray with me for the Thai to know and honor Jesus as their Liberator and King!

To learn more, visit:
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www.thaicrc.com
www.thaimissions.info
http://e-star.ws/
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⁶Visser, Marten. (2008). Conversion Growth of Protestant Churches in Thailand. Retrieved February 5, 2013 from http://www.thaicrc.com/gsdl/collect/MIS/index/assoc/D6864.dir/6864. pdf, (p.127, 167).

⁷ *Thais Top The Infidelity Charts.* Retrieved February 5, 2013 from: http://www.bangkokpost.com/news/local/309732/thai-women-ranks-no-2-in-infidelity.

⁸Jitpleecheep, Pitsinee. (2012). *It's Official: Thais Love Johnnie Walker*. Retrieved February 5, 2013 from: http://www.bangkokpost.com/learning/learning-from-news/317667/johnnie-walkerthailand-3rd-in-world.

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Spotlight for June 2013

MALAY PEOPLES

WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PEOPLES OF SUMATRA

EVELYN ADAMSON

Evelyn Adamson (pseudonym) is a writer living and working in Southeast Asia. Across the vast Indonesian island of Sumatra, gospel seeds are sprouting from cities and towns among the tangled jungles and woven underbrush. Nurtured by prayer and intercession, believers in Christ are stepping out in new obedience and are searching for new believers among the approximately 45 million Muslims living in Sumatra.

Spearheading evangelistic initiatives are local believers working alongside expatriate workers, spreading the vision of God's mission to restore humanity to Himself. Three years ago believers were challenged to share more boldly and impart to others Christ's command for obedience. At that time there was not a single reproducing church on Sumatra; this challenge to obedience has resulted in several reproducing churches. In 2012 church-planting increased sevenfold, and 105 baptized believers were added to congregations on the island.

A man named *Dian is like many other believers on Sumatra. Dian is an agricultural worker who tends farm plots throughout the week. When his family's financial needs increased, he began to hunt wild boars in the outlying jungles. The boars devastate precious crops and attack villagers, yet they are difficult

to capture, and many butchers will pay a high price for the meat. Often Dian has returned from a hunt with three or four butchers waiting to receive the day's catch.

After some time, three men from Dian's community asked to join him in his hunts. Week by week the men hiked into the brush, set wire traps, trained hunting dogs and sharpened their spears. Dian had not told his companions of his faith in Christ until his house church challenged members to obey Christ's command to be His witnesses among the nations. Slowly, during the long hours of each hunt, Dian began to share his faith, daring the other men to embrace Jesus with all their hearts, and today his obedience has drawn his companions closer to Christ.

Another believer, 'Matius, recalls his own journey to obedience. Matius understood that his faith and obedience could lead to persecution, but he remained determined to convey Christ's love through every smile, handshake and conversation. Eventually his boldness took him to an area of Sumatra that is home to several peoples not only unreached but also unengaged by any existing mission initiatives.

When he first moved to his new city, Matius began to search for a way to both develop relationships and remain in the community long-term. After meeting a man who made ice cream, Matius began selling this ice cream from the back of his motorbike as he traced the weaving roads leading to surrounding towns.

Today Matius is greeted by smiles and warm receptions as he travels and chats with those who stop to buy his frozen treats. Conversations inevitably lead to the subject of faith in Christ, for Matius cannot help but share what Jesus has done for him. Small groups have begun to meet as house churches among this collection of neighboring villages. Matius guides his life in an intentional pattern of sowing and reaping, and today his work is beginning to touch one of the nine unreached, previously unengaged peoples on Sumatra. These nine peoples encompass a population of 875,000 and are located in some of the island's most daunting and remote areas.

One local church on the coast of Sumatra has made a commitment to increase its efforts to take the Good News to

their own ethnic group. Previously this body of believers was highly introspective, avoiding conflict in their community by keeping silent about the saving power of Christ. After they participated in several training conferences where they heard the challenge for all believers to live in obedience to Jesus' commands, the church stepped up their Bible study programs and members began to listen more intently to God's call. The Lord led several families to relocate to unreached areas.

Funded by this local church, these families are now engaging the lost and praying for responses to the Good News. Many of their efforts have been met with receptivity, and the fruit can be seen in the formation of house churches across areas of Sumatra where three years ago believers would never have dreamed they could reach.

Join in prayer for the new believers and churches throughout Sumatra. Much remains to be done! To learn more, see

www.researchseap.org/sumatra2.html

*Names have been changed.

SEEKING CPMS FOR EVERY CLUSTER AND EVERY PEOPLE!

by Evelyn Adamson

With 50 million inhabitants and at least 49 unreached people groups, Sumatra has been called the most unreached island in the world. These millions have not heard the good news of Christ because of strong, local religious traditions as well as political, geographical and cultural barriers. Yet God is moving on Sumatra, and we are seeing increased responsiveness among these unreached peoples in the last three years.

These 49 unreached peoples can be grouped into ten clusters:

- 1. Aceh Cluster (Aceh, Aneuk Jame, Gayo, Simeulue)
- 2. Batak Cluster (Mandailing, Alas, Singkil, Kluet)
- North Sumatra Malay Cluster (North Sumatra Malay, Tamiang)
- 4. Minangkabau Cluster (Minangkabau, Kerinci, Muko-Muko, Penghulu)
- Central Sumatra Malay Cluster (Jambi Malay, Riau Malay, Bangka Malay, Belitung Malay)
- 6. Bengkulu Cluster (Rejang, Bengkulu, Pekal)
- 7. Musi Cluster (Musi, Palembang, Rawas, Lembak)
- 8. Pasemah Cluster (Pasemah, Kaur, Kikim, Lintang, Semendo, Serawai)
- 9. Ogan Cluster (Ogan, Aji, Belide, Enim, Lematang, Pegagan, Penesak, Rambang)

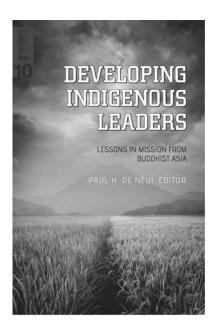
10. Lampung Cluster (Lampung Pesisir, Lampung Abung, Lampung Pubian, Lampung Sungkai, Lampung Way Kanan, Ranau, Daya, Kayu Agung, Komering)

New efforts are underway to start Church-Planting Movements (CPMs) in each cluster and within each people. We start Church Planting Movements (CPMs) by...

- · Asking God for His vision for these peoples;
- Carefully following the strategies modeled by Jesus, Paul and the New Testament Church for multiplying disciples exponentially;
- Discipling whole households to obey all that Jesus commanded;
- Teaching these groups to start other groups who start other groups;
- Equipping these groups to feed the poor, help the sick, share the gospel and change their societies from within;
- Collaborating globally to stimulate and resource more CPM teams.

To learn more about the Sumatra clusters, see www. joshuaproject.net/affinity-blocs.php?peo1=17. To learn how to become strategically engaged in Sumatra, write to sumatra@sr21.com.





DEVELOPING INDIGENOUS LEADERS

Lessons in Mission from Buddhist Asia (SEANET 10)

Every movement is only one generation from dying out. Leadership development remains the critical issue for mission endeavors around the world. How are leaders developed from the local context for the local context? What is the role of the expatriate in this process? What models of hope are available for those seeking further direction in this area, particularly in mission to the Buddhist world of Asia? To answer these and several other questions, SEANET proudly presents the tenth volume in its series on practical missiology, *Developing Indigenous Leaders: Lessons in Mission from Buddhist Asia*.

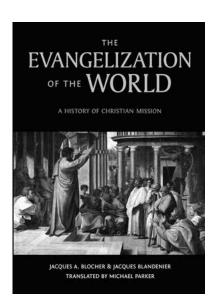
Each chapter in this volume is written by a practitioner and a mission scholar. The ten authors come from a wide range of ecclesial and national backgrounds and represent service in ten different Buddhist contexts of Asia. With biblical integrity and cultural sensitivity, these chapters provide honest reflection, insight, and guidance.

There is perhaps no more crucial issue than the development of dedicated indigenous leaders who will remain long after missionaries have returned home. If you are concerned about raising up leaders in your ministry, in whatever cultural context it may be, this volume will be an important addition to your library.

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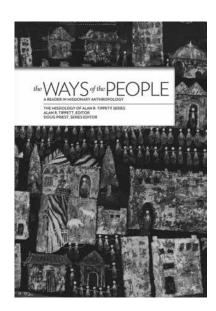
THE EVANGELIZATION OF THE WORLD

A History of Christian Mission

Written in an engaging style and intended largely for a lay audience, *The Evangelization of the World* tells the remarkable story of how Christianity grew from an insignificant Jewish sect in the first century to, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, the world's first truly global religion. The book is careful to explain historical context and mission theory, but the foci of the narrative are the great personalities of mission—the Apostle Paul, St. Martin of Tours, St. Patrick, St. Francis Xavier, John Eliot, Count Von Zinzendorf, William Carey, Robert Morrison, David Livingstone, Mary Slessor, Albert Schweitzer, and many others—who make this account of the expansion of the church a fascinating and often dramatic tale. In addition, the book does not neglect the great mission conferences of the twentieth century, nor does it avoid the controversial aspects of mission that, in many instances, continue to vex the movement today.

ISBN: 978-0-87808-017-5 Jacques A. Blocher, Jacques Blandenier, Michael Parker (translator) WCL | Pages 772 | Paperback 2012

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THE WAYS OF THE PEOPLE

A Reader in Missionary Anthropology

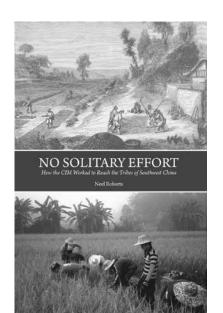
Alan Tippett's publications played a significant role in the development of missiology. The volumes in this series augment his distinguished reputation by bringing to light his many unpublished materials and hard-to-locate printed articles. These books - encompassing theology, anthropology, history, area studies, religion, and ethnohistory - broaden the contours of the discipline.

Missionaries and anthropologists have a tenuous relationship. While often critical of missionaries, anthropologists are indebted to missionaries for linguistic and cultural data as well as hospitality and introductions into the local community. In *The Ways of the People*, Alan Tippett provides a critical history of missionary anthropology and brings together a superb reader of seminal anthropological contributions from missionaries Edwin Smith, R. H. Codrington, Lorimer Fison, Diedrich Westermann, Henri Junod, and many more. Twenty years as a missionary in Fiji, following pastoral ministry in Australia and graduate degrees in history and anthropology, provide the rich data base that made Alan R. Tippett a leading missiologist of the twentieth century. Tippett served as Professor of Anthropology and Oceanic Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary.

ISBN: 978-0-87808-467-8 Alan R. Tippett, Editor WCL | Pages 702 | Paperback 2013



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NO SOLITARY EFFORT

How the CIM Worked to Reach the Tribes of Southwest China

No Solitary Effort describes how members of the China Inland Mission (CIM) engaged the tribes of Southwest China as part of their comprehensive plan to evangelize all of China from 1865 to 1951. That endeavor required the combined lifelong efforts of numerous missionaries, spanned several generations, and was invariably affected by events and decisions that occurred thousands of miles from where the actual ministry was taking place. The task was incomplete when the missionaries were forced to leave, but the foundations for the Church which were laid have stood. This book addresses the great challenges to cooperation that faced the missionaries. It also reveals the rich rewards that were obtained by the united efforts of committed Christians who had no timetable for withdrawal, but only an unwavering commitment to work together until the task was accomplished.

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NEXT STEPS IN YOUR CHURCH



GREG PARSONS

/ GLOBAL DIRECTOR,

U.S. CENTER FOR

WORLD MISSION

ithout the "fires burning" on the home front, things go cold on the frontlines. The first time I wrote about this in *MF* was in the 1990s. Over the years, I've written about the need for a "champion" who takes on the cause and keeps it in front

of the church. I've also talked about prayer, mentoring, and the missions conference or what my home church calls a "festival."¹

A growing problem for the church to grapple with is that there are more and more people at church who have a deeper engagement with the world. One reason is the wealth of information available on the Internet—which can be alternatively helpful or false and overwhelming. Often it is very difficult to effectively interpret. Another reason for this growing interest is the increasing travel of many church members for their work—not to mention the huge numbers of people who go out for short terms.

But often, those globally engaged brothers and sisters don't have an effective way to talk and learn more about the burdens they see. They come to church or attend a Sunday school class, but fail to see a connection between the teaching and day-to-day life in the world.

While I was speaking at a church

outside Houston, Texas a few weeks ago, I talked with a geologist from a large oil firm who was experiencing something different. Since he could work wherever he wanted, he had gained international experience by living in Nigeria for five years. Their kids had their worldview shaped by living in a very different culture. Their mom was able to reach out to all kinds of people—both from the country as well as global workers living there or passing through. And the company paid for it all! Now, as their kids go off to college, the parents are looking forward to where they might go next and the wife is as up for it as the husband!

As we talked, it was clear how much they enjoyed a particular class at their church that focused on global issues. It included not only Bible study but also concepts and books that allowed them to grapple more deeply with cultural understanding. They studied one that talked about shame and honor—subjects that the Bible has a LOT to say about, but we Westerners often miss.²

They studied another we have mentioned in this magazine: When Helping Hurts by Corbett and Fikkert. I suggested they consider, Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes as a way of understanding the Gospels and statements of Jesus in a whole new light. Kenneth Bailey, the author of that book and a new one, Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes, spent his career teaching NT in the Middle East.

But what was so encouraging to me was what I heard in this calm

engineer's voice. I heard a sense of engagement and excitement in church and its purpose. As we talked, he was able to discus a much broader range of subjects than is often the case. I sensed the church was tapping into his experiences and he was committed to the church and to helping them share their missions values. As I talked with others and heard other global workers share, I was very encouraged by the level of interest.

I know there are others who were not really that interested—such is always the case. But I was greatly encouraged by the weekend to sense that the engagement would continue. There was not a sense of "well, missions week is over for another year." It was more of a "how can we continue to grow and improve what we are doing?"

How is it going in your church? Perhaps there is something you have tried out that worked well—or failed! Are you excited about what your church is doing? Or are you frustrated? How are you engaged?

Why not grab one of those books I mentioned and discuss it with others? Then share what you learn by posting your thoughts about this article and see what others are saying:

www.missionfrontiers.org

- While helpful to bring sharper focus, one-week events are problematic if that is the only time "the world" is really talked about.
- A friend and long-term field worker who is very engaged with key missiological and theological issues and how they intersect with his extensive and effective work, told me that the book *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* by David A. de Silva was one of his top ten books. It is on my reading pile!



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