

 **MISSION
FRONTIERS**

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Worship That Moves the Soul

Recognizing the critical role of indigenous worship in church planting.

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MISSION FRONTIERS

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Editorial Comment

Ralph D. Winter



Few Christian thinkers today write with the penetration and boldness of Philip Yancey. His experience contemplating a beautiful young bride suddenly devastated by a fatal illness is where this editorial begins.

It does not end there.

Our mission in this world is not yet so perfectly obvious that we can consign it to a marginal place in our daily lives, our wallets, our awareness.

Claudia, a beautiful young bride only a year into a glorious marriage, is now suddenly confined to a hospital bed, her beauty rapidly fading, her body sinking into unexpected and yet certain death from Hodgkin's disease.

This we hear from Philip Yancey. But his (true) story only begins there.

Now six kinds of visitors show up.

One is a deacon. He solemnly and earnestly "reminds" Claudia that our God would not "do such a thing to her" unless He had some good reason, unless there was some sin, some lesson for her to learn. Search for that in faith, he said. But, in her weakness she could not think of anything she had done wrong. And, anyway, why such a violent punishment?

Another visitor is an ebullient, cheerful woman. She arrives with flowers and flowery words to cheer. She insists on changing the subject every time Claudia refers to her illness. She overflows with exciting stories. She does not come back. She has done her duty.

Another woman arrives with great confidence in the power of faith.

When she learns about the first visitor, she reacts instantly with, "Sickness is never God's will! Haven't you read the Bible? The devil stalks like a roaring lion, but God will deliver you if you can muster up enough faith to believe you will be healed ... Simply name your promise, in faith, and then claim the victory." Claudia was exhausted and confused.

A fourth visitor "brought along some books about praising God for everything that happens." This very

spiritual woman told Claudia, "You need to come to the place where you can say, 'God, I love you for making me suffer like this.'" This repulsed Claudia. Is God really like that? What kind of glory of God is that?

On and on. You must get Yancey's book—*Where Is God When It Hurts* (Zondervan, 1990).

This is not just an intellectual problem. It has a great deal to do with Who and how we worship.

What is the connection between worship and a day by day deeper awareness of the true glory of God? If worship hinges on our sense of His "worth-ship" we can't go on singing again and again "Majesty, Worship His Majesty" and expect the mere repetition of those words alone to deepen our awareness of His Glory. Jack Hayford did not write that magnificent song so much to gain or procure a sense of God's majesty as to express his awareness of it—and to allow us to do so along with him.

But the power of his marvelous song hinges on the degree of whatever true sense we have, what true aware-

ness we have, of God's majesty. Otherwise those words can become no more than a Hindu mantra.

Thus, if our awareness of God's glory is confused or distorted by the puzzling issues of Claudia's visitors, our worship is going to be limited to our actual experience of that glory.

Yet we commonly hear people wondering out loud why would God have "done" this or that dastardly deed, as though there is no other power working to tear down His Glory.

I would not give you a dime for the idea that God's sovereignty is limited by His "inability" to know what choices His created beings will make in the future, or the reverse extreme that nothing really happens that is dead wrong or truly evil. Apparently a handful of "openness" theologians are being accused of the first extreme. And *Christianity Today* (April 23, p. 103) gives a whole page to let us hear them stoutly deny this.

But I would give you far more than a dime to know more about that "other" person in this world whose sole occupation is incessantly to pervert and despoil God's goodness and creation, and to twist our understanding of what in this world God does or doesn't do.

Yancey is right to bring this puzzle before us. Why are our usual hospital "visitors" so confused about the virtually omnipresent pain, suffering, premature death, and the myriad examples in our world of the distortion of God's intent—in a word, evil? Or, why are we so illiterate—so seldom discussing—what precisely are "the works of the devil" which "the Son of God appeared to destroy" (1 Jn. 3:8)?

As a matter of fact, how in this world of universal pain and violence, can anyone for a moment question the existence of a Satanic campaign to reduce and distort the true glory of God? How can we be content if we do not learn more of the details and how to fight back?

Frontier mission is that activity which focuses on precisely the confused edge of our active awareness of

How, in this world of universal pain and violence, can anyone for a moment question the existence of a Satanic campaign to reduce and distort the true glory of God?

Satan's domain of global destruction.

This bulletin is focused on mission frontiers, not on what is already clear and widely accepted. Like Yancey, our thinking is intended to probe the borders, the frontiers of our understanding of God's Mandate.

Many interpret the Great Commission to be merely the global extension of knowledge, the "all things I (Jesus) have taught you." Look again. The text clearly says something far more than that. It has Jesus requiring us to make certain that that knowledge is "obeyed," that is, acted on. A colossal difference. Merely 1) to know Jesus healed people, and 2) to both know and "obey" that knowledge, is the difference between, say, 1) a casual intellectual reflection on the existence of disease germs and parasites and 2) an active sense of duty to eliminate them in the Name of Christ.

This is why mission is more (although not less) than sending Bibles. We cannot—now that we know oodles more than we ever have about what can be done to eliminate and totally exterminate various disease pathogens—we cannot go on just praying for people. We worship a God who urges us to do what we are able to do to fight back against the works of Satan which harass and ravage not only millions of precious children and believing families in the Sudan but invade and plague our own people in the USA with rampant heart disease and diverse cancers.

How long will our pre-scientific theologies allow us to go on believing naively that if we will just "live right" and "eat the right thing" that we will not succumb to any of the virulent viruses, bacteria, parasites, and many other violences that pervade our sad world?

In other words, what may well be "all to the good" is definitely not always good enough. Urging sick and dying people to "praise the Lord" becomes much more inspirational if we

and they understand that our faithful God is not only mindful of the nature of evil but He is, with our help, in the process of conquering it. Only in that process of conquest can the full meaning be glimpsed in John's brief statement that "the Son of God appeared for this purpose that He might destroy the works of the devil (1 Jn. 3:8)."

We can ask, "Where were our theologians when one of the most outstanding theologians of all time, Jonathan Edwards, sought—against theological opposition—to do away with smallpox?" Massachusetts pastors back then condemned him for "interfering with Divine Providence." What kind of Satan-favoring, God-distorting theology is that?

Why did it take another 200 years for any concerted effort to eliminate smallpox from the face of the earth? And why, when it did happen, was it not any kind of direct result of Christian initiative?

Can we not better worship and glorify a God who is pleased by the ending of the horrible annual toll of two million people dying by smallpox, that most terrible of all deaths?

Why is our mission to this evil-ridden world not more strategically obedient to God's concern to triumph over that evil? Maybe it is, as my pastor (Gordon Kirk, Lake Avenue Church, Pasadena) put it, "Satan's greatest achievement is to cover his tracks."

What happens to the quality of our worship if we only go around the world making plain by "actions that speak louder than words" that the God we worship is able merely to offer malarial ridden sufferers a bed on which to die? Does this not mean He does not know or care, or even with our help is unable to do anything, to *eliminate* malaria once and for all?

Or, does it not affect our worship if we worship a God that does not ask us to do anything about the fact that

four children die every sixty seconds from the work of that devious, ingenious, metamorphing parasite called malaria? At the minimum, are we not shouting to the world that the God we worship has not enlisted us on His side in this endeavor?

Don't blame Calvin. He did not have the faintest idea about germs and he only faintly understood the evil intelligence embodied in the masses of parasites that inflict us. With greater knowledge comes new responsibility.

And, worse by far, it may very well be that Calvin, along with Thomas Aquinas, Luther, etc., were infected by an Augustinian pagan syncretism from neo-Platonism that conceived of God as actually orchestrating evil for good—not after the fact, but in its very initiation! The idea is, we must not fight evil but simply resign ourselves to it, knowing that a good God would never have anything but good in mind for us in "doing these harmful things to us."

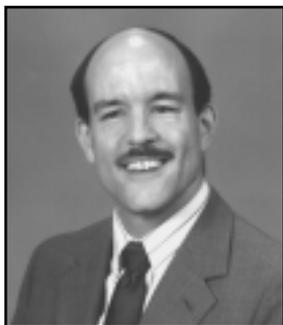
How much more logical to believe what the Bible clearly assures us, that God is able to use for good—and with our help ultimately triumph over—the evil deeds of Satan after they happen, but that He does not guide Satan or "put him up to" evil.

I personally don't put great stock in mere philosophizing, but I am very concerned that so very, very little of the vast energies of the world's millions upon millions of followers of Christ are so marginal and distantly related to the major matter of eliminatable evil. And I believe that to many intelligent observers of Christianity our integrity and credibility are at stake.

In many spheres of international mission, even among non-literate (but intelligent) people, the very viability and impact of our preaching is gravely blunted. Are we misrepresenting a zealous and loving God in stopping short of the true depth of His mission? 🌐

MF Behind the Scenes

Rick Wood, Managing Editor



We Need a New Standard for Church Planting

Until recent times the need has been almost totally overlooked and ignored. It has been a devastating cultural blind spot that has often crippled church planting efforts around the world. It has taken us almost two centuries to recognize the need. I am speaking of the need to make worship indigenous to every people on earth in fulfillment of Rev. 5:9 and 7:9.

Making the Gospel indigenous to every tribe and tongue involves helping every people learn to worship God in a way that is natural and meaningful to them within their culture. Unfortunately, the common practice of the past of simply translating Western hymns like *Amazing Grace* into the local language still goes on today. This can no longer be the accepted standard practice in church planting if an indigenous and naturally reproducing Gospel within every people is our goal.

It is already generally recognized that translation of the Scriptures into the mother tongue of every people is essential for a church planting movement to be established and nurtured to maturity. Likewise, it is now time for the development of indigenous worship music (ethnomusicology) and worship forms (ethno-worship) to become the widely accepted standard for all of our church planting efforts. It must become a high priority along with the translation of the Scriptures if our church planting efforts are to have the full

impact that we desire. An ongoing reliance on Western worship forms will not do.

In this issue of *MF* we describe the impact that worshipping through indigenous music and forms is having on church planting efforts around the world. You will read many stories of how it has made a heartfelt difference in the lives of the people we want to reach for Christ. See the section starting on page 10 with the interview with Dr. Roberta King of the Fuller School of World Mission.

There is a growing recognition of this need for indigenous worship on the part of a number of mission agencies and training institutions. See the list of training courses on page 27.

The choice of whether to embrace indigenous worship music and forms is an important one with eternal ramifications for those we want to reach. Not only will it affect whether the Gospel becomes indigenous and therefore understandable and available to people, but as Dr. King indicates in our interview with her on page 15, people can be drawn away into heretical movements like the African Independent Churches because these movements satisfy the hunger of these people for indigenous worship. Continuing to try to satisfy this hunger with translated western hymns or modern praise music will only exacerbate the problem.

In Rev. 5:9 and 7:9 we see all of redeemed humanity, represented by every tribe, tongue, people and nation, worshipping Christ because of the sacrifice He made to save us. They are not a uniform mass of humanity but a diverse group of peoples that God has ordained to offer up the praise and worship that Christ deserves. John Piper in his book, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, says, "This diversity will not disappear in the new heavens and the new earth. God willed it from the

beginning... When their diversity unites in worship to God, the beauty of their praise will echo the depth and greatness of God's beauty far more exceedingly than if the redeemed were from only one or a few different people groups."

By helping the various peoples of the earth develop their own unique indigenous worship we become partners with God in completing the international choir of worship that God has ordained from eternity to be offered up to Christ. This is indeed a task worthy of our greatest efforts.

Saying Good-bye to a Good Friend

For over twelve years now *Mission Frontiers* has reported on the accomplishments and exploits of the global effort known as the AD2000 and Beyond Movement. We have probably given more pages of coverage to this amazing global movement than any other publication in the world because they were effectively implementing our common vision to bring the Gospel to every people. Starting on page 32, you can read the final words of the leaders of this historic movement and read a summary of what the thousands of participants in this movement accomplished by working together toward a common goal.

In accordance with their bylaws and original intentions, the AD2000 and Beyond Movement closed its doors on March 31, 2001. It is now up to all of us to take the baton that they have passed to us and carry it across the goal line of a church for every people and the Gospel for every person.

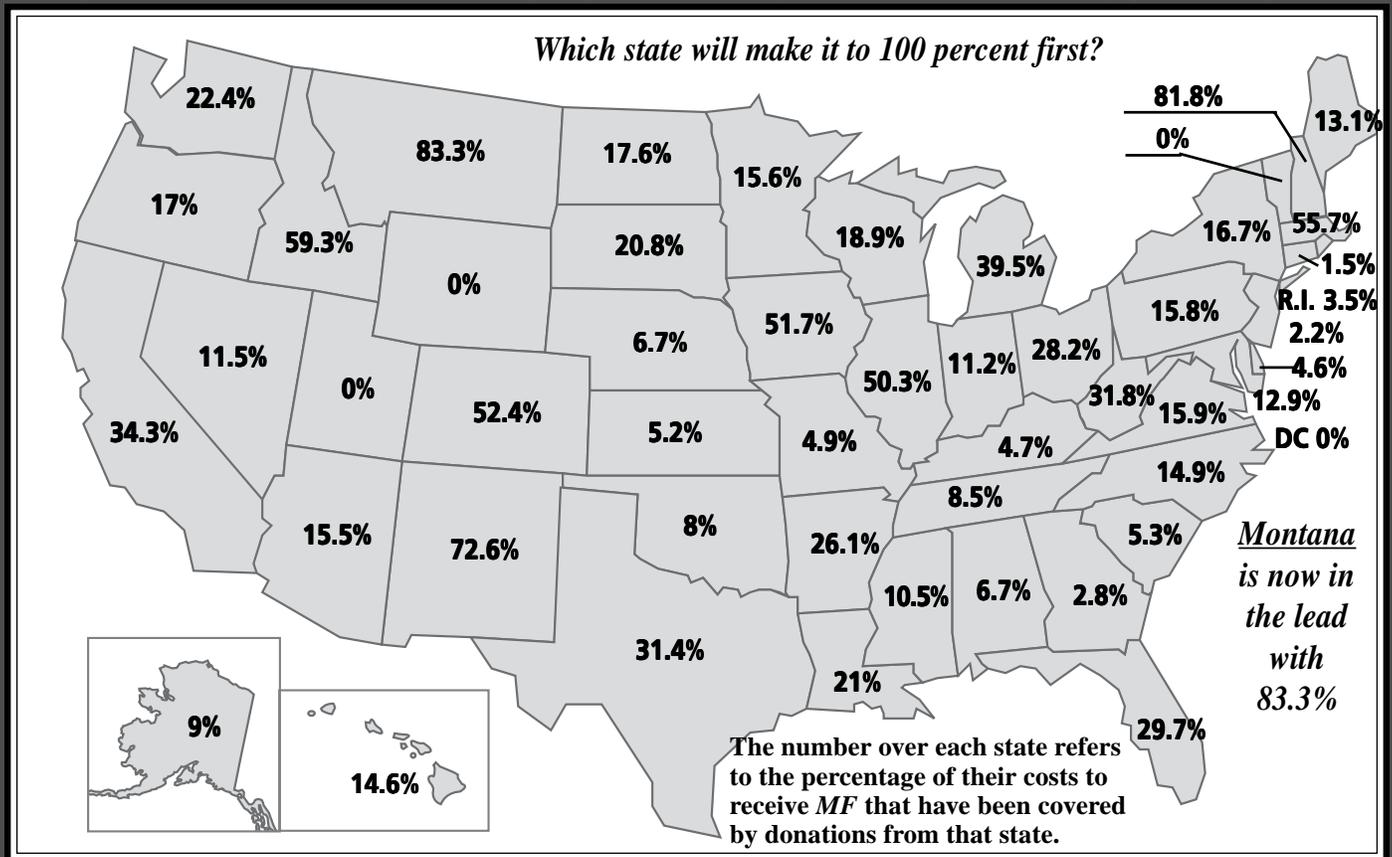
For His glory,

A handwritten signature in cursive that reads "Rick".

Please continue to remember our need for your financial support by sending in a gift of \$18 or more. We'd be grateful if you could take a moment now to make out your check to *Mission Frontiers* and return it in the reply envelope provided. Thank you! -Rick

Join us in spreading mission vision through *Mission Frontiers*.

Send in your gift of \$18 or more today. Please consider a monthly gift of \$18 or an annual gift of \$185 to reach 70 new people. You may use the enclosed reply envelope.



MF received a letter from a reader with some serious concerns about certain approaches to contextualization among Native Americans. His comments were spurred by the interview with Richard Twiss entitled, "That the Natives Might Lift Jesus Up," found on pages 8-11 in our September 2000 issue. Here is an excerpt where Richard Twiss shares his views regarding the use of native drums for worship:

"We view [the drum] as any man-made object. ... As in many churches, evangelical, charismatic, non-charismatic, the prayer at the beginning of the service is, 'Holy Spirit, we invite you to participate with us in this meeting and lift our eyes to see Jesus.' So, we usually do it with an acoustic guitar ... But if a native Christian takes his drum and he invites the Holy Spirit to come on his drum, we don't see that as un-Biblical or compromising Scriptural truth. Nor do we see that as syncretism. ..."

Read the full interview at: www.missionfrontiers.org/2000/04/twissl.htm

Letter from a Lakota pastor:

As I read the comments from Richard Twiss, I was amazed that, until now, I had never seen him say that he invites the Holy Spirit to come on his drum. This is interesting and would be, in most people's minds, syncretism. As a Lakota pastor who contextualizes the message of Christ, I believe Mr. Twiss is weak in some places. Actually, he only partly contextualizes to one group of native people. Most native people are bi-cultural—maybe even tri-cultural. You have to go deep into some reservations to find people who only practice their ways.

Here is the question: If it is true that a drum can be used, even though some people have considered it sacred, and we use his methodology or contextualization, then we could do this with other objects. Let us look to a Ouija board. Using Mr. Twiss' method of looking at something used for spirit manipulation, we could still use it. Maybe we could play another game with this same board. After all, it is man-made and we are new creations, right? You see, it does not make sense, and Mr. Twiss has tried to change the minds of many people, but he has not worked out his contextualization. I would hope that you would not print these type of articles without the voice of people actually working fulltime in ministry. I serve in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, and I am trying to be respectful, but Mr. Twiss does not speak for the Lakota pastors working in the field. I have asked him to come to Pine Ridge and bring his methods, but he chooses not to come to Lakota Country.

I am sorry if I have offended anyone, but I am getting tired of people speaking about theory. I am working in my homeland as a Lakota pastor, and I have to stand before them on a daily basis.

Pastor Leon Matthews
Pine Ridge Gospel Fellowship
lmattews@gwtc.net • 605-867-5535

Response from Richard Twiss:

I have known Leon for several years and admire his faithful commitment to serve the people of the Oglala Lakota/Sioux Nation. Pine Ridge is the home of my father's people. Several years ago, at Leon's invitation, I was a guest on his radio program there, as well as a guest in his home.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to some of his concerns. First, when I say "invites the Holy Spirit to come on his drum," what I mean, as I stated previously, [See quote at left.] is that a believer, indwelt by the Spirit of God, can invite the Holy Spirit to bless or anoint their playing of a drum for praise and worship in the same way we would ask the Holy Spirit to anoint or bless a prayer, song, or sermon. The Holy Spirit indwells and anoints people to play instruments of music for the glory of God and the edification and enjoyment of His people.

Comparing a Ouija board to a Native drum is an unequal "apples and oranges" comparison. It is my understanding that the Ouija board's exclusive use is a medium of communication with demonic spirits for guidance, etc., with its roots in Druidic occultism, while the drum is a musical instrument of percussion or rhythm, which was a feature of ancient Jewish worship.

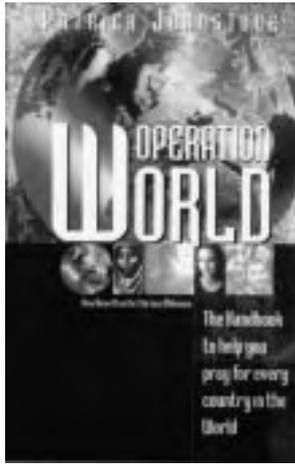
In the Old Testament we see radically different uses for various musical instruments. In Psalm 150, instruments are used to praise the one true Jehovah/God. In Isaiah 5:11-12, carnal people used musical instruments for their drunken parties. Finally, in Daniel 3, Nebuchadnezzar used them to call people to false, demonic worship and idolatry.

Some of the instruments, one being the harp, are used in all three cases. There is conceptually, only one identical harp being used by each group for a distinct purpose, as opposed to an evil harp, godly harp, and carnal harp. The problem is not the instrument, but the heart of the musician. Likewise, there is not an evil drum, godly drum, and worldly drum. The drum, conceptually, is simply a percussion instrument, not a medium of spirit communication.

Contextualization is always a challenge. To be thoroughly Biblical, our missiology must be supra-cultural—able to work in any country, among any people. Do we see African believers using their historical drums for Christ-honoring worship today? I believe their drums were/are used for the same reason our First Nations drums were used in North America. If using our drums, which were considered sacred objects, is syncretistic, then to be theologically consistent, we would have to say the African, Polynesian, etc., tribal believers' use of their drums is also syncretistic and the same as using a Ouija board, (which we know is not the case).

Richard Twiss
Rosebud Lakota/Sioux
President, Wiconi International
www.wiconi.com • 360-546-1867

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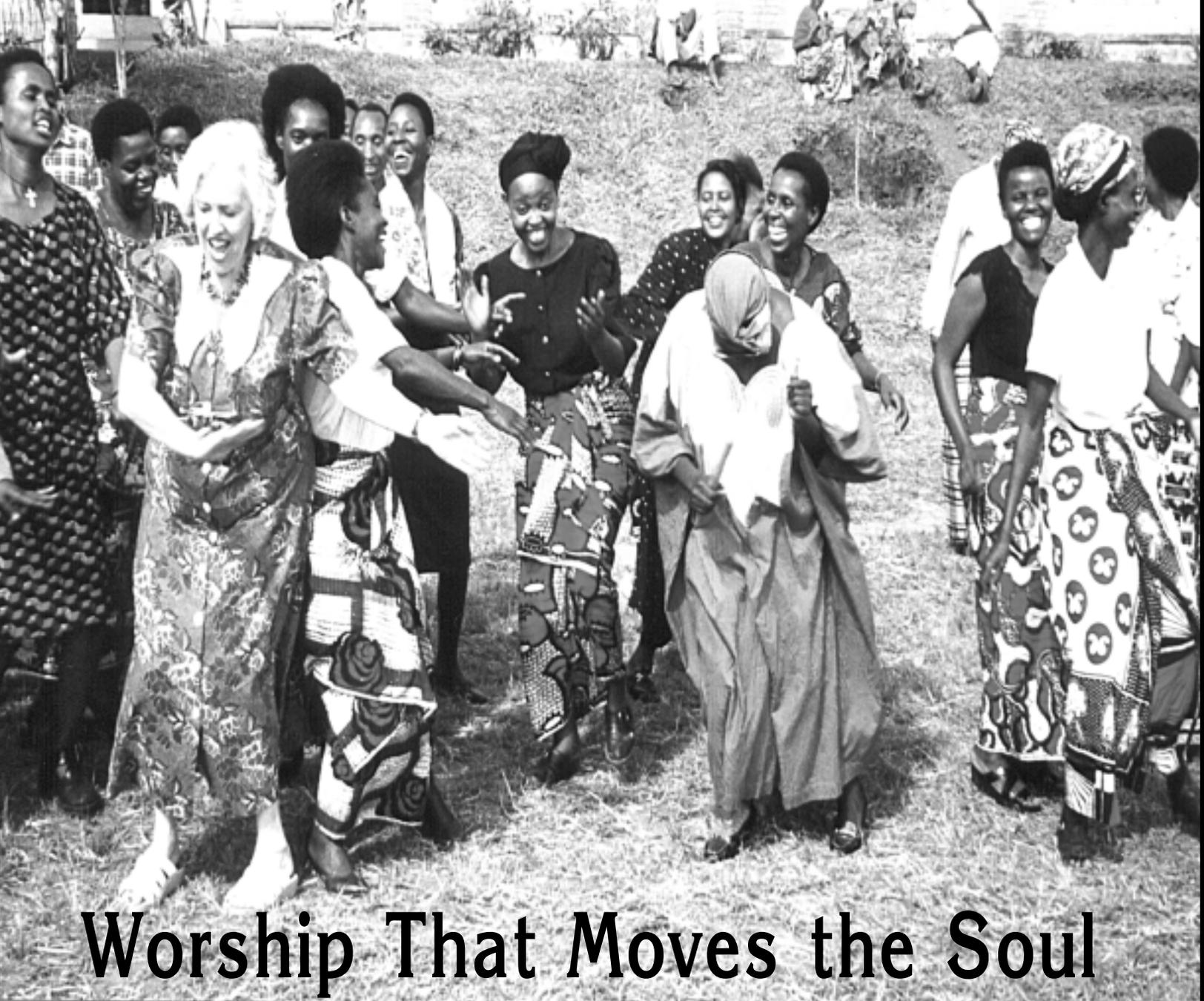


Operation China,

on the peoples of China—focusing on the minority groups—is a similar tool. The 120 copies sold in two days at Urbana 2000 were the first available here in the states. Already, another 2,500 or so have been sold to agencies and individuals who pre-ordered copies. This is a daily prayer tool with 400-plus full-color photos and 700 pages! See pp. 40-41 to order a copy or a case of 10.

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If you would like 100 copies or more of Operation China, please e-mail greg.parsons@uscwm.org. He will give you pricing depending on how many and where they are being shipped.



Worship That Moves the Soul

R. King

A conversation with Roberta King
—Russell G. Shubin

Roberta King, Ph.D. came to Fuller Theological Seminary in January 2000 after serving 22 years in Africa with CB International. While in Africa, she was based at Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya, where she facilitated the setting of Scripture to song in over 70 languages from peoples in 11 African and two Asian countries. At Fuller, King is now Associate Professor of Communication and Ethnomusicology. She also maintains her commitment to CBI, serving as an International Resource Specialist. Both positions allow her to expand her work in ethnomusicology beyond the African continent.

Mission Frontiers: Why should the North American church be passionate about ethno-worship?

Roberta King: The ultimate reason is that it is relevant to our culture today. It is relevant to the global world that we live in.

We don't live in a monocultural situation, even in the States. It's becoming even more multicultural, as we see people coming from many different nations. In addition, in California, for example, we have numerous, large ethnic populations. Ethno-worship recognizes those people. It allows for the differences that are found within each of those people groups—but it also allows Jesus Christ to remain the center focus.

Then you have the global perspective. As we live in a global world and we're interacting with one another, we need to be aware of one another in order to communicate in meaningful ways. As we go out doing mission we need to be aware of how to worship in ways that are meaningful. You have to move into the territory of the people where you are ministering. They will see the world in different ways.

If we expect them, or ask them, to come into the way we worship and they don't understand what we do, they are missing out on the message. What we want to do is get our message across. So, ethnodoxology, in terms of missions and being global, is recognizing people for where they're at and allowing them to be who they are before God.

God knew what He was doing when He made them—and ethno-worship allows them to be released to worship God in meaningful ways, allowing them to connect with God in much the same way we connect. We want the connection. It is not the form of worship that is to be idolized. It is the person of Jesus Christ that we want to worship. Too often we confuse these two.

MF: Was there a particular defining moment when you recognized the peculiar power of worship in mission?

King: I don't think there was one defining moment. It was a series of moments. About every six months, I found myself saying, "Lord, You mean you want *me* to do this?"

The defining moments are when you see people who are just "ho-hum" in worship, and then you provide an opportunity for them to worship in ways that are meaningful to them. Then the "ah-hah" happens and they come alive. It becomes electric! One early experience was on a Sunday morning in Nairobi, Kenya. We sang "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" at half tempo. Then, Sunday evening we started out with "What a Friend We Have in

Ethno-What?

Some brief definitions for newcomers to issues of worship and cultural forms.

Ethnodoxology: The study of the worship of God in the world's cultures; the theological and practical study of how and why people of other cultures praise and glorify the true and living God.

Ethnomusicology: An academic discipline committed to active analysis, documentation and participant-observation of the ever-burgeoning musics of the world's cultures. It is interdisciplinary, drawing from the fields of anthropology, linguistics and musicology.¹

Ethno-worship: A near synonym of ethnodoxology. Frequently used in reference to worship through song in diverse cultures.

1. Adapted from "Ethnomusicology," R. King in the *Evangelical Dictionary of World Missions*, Scott Moreau, Ed., Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000, p. 327.

Jesus" and we moved to more of a chorus of that time 20 years ago—"Heaven Came Down and Glory Filled My Soul." And then out came the Kenyan music with a *kayamba* (a Kenyan shaker-type instrument). Standing beside me was a Kenyan Presbyterian minister. All of a sudden he changed. He switched from being immobile to just being full of light and life and was worshiping wholeheartedly. That's when I started saying, "There's something going on here."

MF: How have recent efforts to foster indigenous worship contributed to the expansion of the Kingdom?

King: I was working with a small group of Senufo in Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) called the Nyarafolo. They are an oral people with no translation of the Scriptures. They now have the book of Mark translated into their language. There was a group of 12 believers who wanted to worship in Nyarafolo styles. I've worked with them off and on over the last 9 or 10 years. Two years ago we did a song translation of Genesis 1-4 on cassette. The goal was to answer the question that was on their hearts. They were asking, "What do our mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters need to know about God in order to understand who He is?"

So we made two audio cassette tapes in the indigenous language and musical style. The tapes started going all



A VISION OF SONG: Dr. King at Fuller today (above). Survivors widowed in the horrors of 1994 in Rwanda find renewed joy in Christ at a workshop in Kigali, Rhwanda (opposite page).



R. King

It is not the form of worship that is to be idolized. It is the person of Jesus Christ that we want to worship. Too often we confuse these two.

over the villages—in an animistic, folk Islamic setting. This took place where believers had witnessed to their families for years. One young man, a translator, found his mother dancing and singing to the songs (a clear sign of listening and responding to the message)—a response that he had long yearned for.

So, indigenous music opens up a willingness to listen. Also, in that group, we found that they were ripe for creating their own church—that they didn't have to be subsumed under another church. This means they can start to reach out to their own people. Indigenous worship gives them an identity.

I originally worked among the Cebaara Senufo. We thought Cebaara songs could work for Nyarafolo people as well. I came, we had some workshops, and they had their first worship songs in Nyarafolo. When the Nyarafolo heard their own songs, the non-believing people said “*Tchieh!* You mean that God is for *us*? We thought He belonged to the Cebaara.”

The critical factor is that we assume that if we use something from another close people, they will understand and accept it. Even though they are both Senufo, there are people groups—languages and dialects within that larger group—that, if you don't make a translation for them, then they think that God belongs to somebody else and is not for them. So, ethnic forms of worship music open them up to listen. There is an invisible barrier that we don't know about. I think music has a way of removing such barriers.

MF: Are you sensing this is true on a larger scale?

King: Yes. I'm still very fresh from Africa, so I think African. Everywhere I have gone, I have seen people responding to the music. Historically, we have not known how to draw out indigenous worship from people. Once people know that it is possible, then they open up.

There is still a lot of research to be done. In my last

year in Africa I did six workshops all across Africa, using this method in New Song Fellowships and the response was phenomenal. The last workshop was in Bouaké, Côte d'Ivoire. We had six language groups at the workshop (usually I do one language group at a time). Three of the groups were from highly Muslim cultures—I mean 99 percent Muslim. There was one group from Guinea which had less than 50 believers in their unreached people group. Two women from that group who came to the workshop learned they could make worship songs. They went back with two full cassettes of Scripture set to song, confident that the music would speak to their people. Another Senufo group from Mali came down to the conference. When they heard the teaching they said, “We want you to come to our place as well.”

There's a longing for ethno-worship. We have not yet released people to use their own style of worship nor facilitated the opportunity.

MF: How has the approach of North Americans to worship (and music) hindered the approach or the perspective we have of worship?

King: Historically, worship leads up to the sacred moment of the sermon. If you look at the Moody revivals of the 19th century, Moody recognized the power of music to prepare people for a message. That is very valid.

What we haven't recognized in the States is that the music itself can carry the message—we think it's something that is on the sidelines or the edges of society. But really it can be at the heart of society. I find in contemporary society, in this postmodern age, music is becoming a major vehicle for communicating a message. We have had a tendency to say there's only one form that is valid for worship. Really, there is only one God whom we worship—and many forms can help us to worship, depending on what our backgrounds are and what our musical language is.

As an ethnomusicologist I look at music as a language.

So, there's not one music that serves as a universal; there are many musics. They speak differently according to the context of where people are coming from. That's why we have so many worship forms.

MF: In recent years there has been a surge in praise-oriented events in the States (especially among our youth). Do you see anything in these events that is transferable or applicable to the type of worship you are encouraging?

King: At the recent Urbana convention, worship through song was at the heart of the meeting, it was a crucial factor for the meeting; it wasn't a side issue. Young people are responsive to music to such a degree that it's becoming one of their main channels of communication. God is gifting them to do worship, worship that cannot leave you alone. It transforms you. We know that worship is not music only, but in the music part of worship, God can speak in a very real and deep way. It inspires us to go out. So it becomes worship-evangelism, worship-discipleship. I think that's the gift of this generation.

I believe that worship is becoming one of the ways of doing mission.

MF: You speak and write that God is "receptor-oriented." Would you describe this term?

King: God is receptor-oriented in that He is very concerned about using the language that a receptor knows or a people knows. So, when God comes to speak to me, He would speak to me in American English. He wouldn't speak to me in Arabic. God moves into our cultural milieu and works with us where we are at. It is the message that's important. He uses the principle found in 1 Corinthians 9: "I have become all things to all men so that

by all possible means I might save some." Thus, He uses what is within that cultural context to help people understand who He is so that people might come into a personal relationship with Him. That transfers into the area of ethno-worship and ethnomusicology in that God also knows about the music of a people's culture. He knows very well how to transform that music so that people can understand who He is.

MF: You write of commissioning the musical instruments. That practice might seem odd to evangelicals here in North America. Explain the significance of it in other cultures.

King: That comes out of my book, *A Time to Sing*, which is written as a manual for the African church. In many of the cultures of the world, instruments are related to the work of spirits. Among the Senufo as they make their instruments there is dedication through a blood sacrifice to the spirits. The blood and the chicken feathers are actually found on the instrument. This is true with their 17-key balafon (which we call a xylophone). So there's allegiance to the spirits who give the balafons. That shows how important it is to the religion in the society as well.

You have to help people understand that God can still use their music while not condoning the spirits. Therefore, you commission a new instrument to bring new meaning to the instrument. In a sense, it would be analogous to baptizing the instrument for the service of the Lord Jesus.

Then, when you're making new instruments, you no longer allow blood sacrifices. Some have put little stickers on them, claiming Jesus Christ as the master of the instrument. And then you see how it is used. It starts being played with Christian songs and the whole area

Two Communication Principles God Uses With Song

—ROBERTA KING

God has two priorities when it comes to using song.

Principle 1: When it comes to song, God wants to be understood. God wants most of all that we come into relationship with Him. Thus, His priority in any type of communication is that we understand Him. That means we must use songs that help us to understand what it is He is saying. Songs should use the language that speaks to us. They should also use the

musical sounds that we know and respond to. This leads us to the second communication principle.

Principle 2: When it comes to song, God is receptor-oriented. He knows who His listeners are. He also knows the musical language of different communities. God, in fact, is the one who enabled peoples from around the world to create their own different musical styles, so why would He want you to sing in someone else's musical

style? He is free to use the music of a people so that they may understand His life-saving message of salvation. He extends that same freedom to us.

Beyond One Style

God is not limited to any one style of music. Neither is He limited to only one spoken language. He is the Creator of the world. He knows the music that speaks to us. He works within our musical styles so that we know He cares for us. There is no musical style that is

Christian or non-Christian. He is pleased with His creation, including various musics, and chooses to communicate with us in a loving receptor-oriented manner. He uses our musical languages to speak to us. He is the one and only caring God who is concerned about our needs. He communes with us through the music we know and love.

This selection and "Youth Camp" on page 79 excerpted from Roberta King, *A Time to Sing*, Nairobi: Evangel Publishing House, 1999, pp. 54, 79.

hears it. We have examples of where it actually stopped pagan worship. So the instrument is becoming another voice of God through musical sound. The Senufo Christians want to be sure that people know that the master of the instrument is God. The commissioning makes it clear that it is no longer an instrument that is serving the things of this world and its satanic elements.

MF: Earlier mission efforts have often been characterized by the use of Western hymns. In your book, you describe a scene where Western missionaries lead a group of Africans in organ-led American songs as the congregation murmurs along in somewhat apathetic participation. Is this a scene that is still common today?

King: Oh, we find it worldwide—people using Western music, saying that it has to be the hymns. The other thing that is now common is to do contemporary worship—songs written in America and the U.K.—worldwide. That seems to be the new mantle for doing worship. Though it is a valid way, we need to be careful, allowing people to express their relationship to God through their own music. Contemporary worship is closer to a lot of non-Western cultures. So, there is some relevance there. Young people around the world respond to contemporary music. But there is this issue of universalism versus particularity. Many argue, essentially, that “music is the universal language and we have the music that is being used in North America. So, we’re going to bring it and bless people with it.” This does happen to a degree. But, we’ve still got to be culture-specific. Certain peoples are going to respond to the contemporary worship. But that doesn’t mean everybody responds to it. We still must seek to be culture-specific by recognizing all cultures.

MF: It seems that some people wouldn’t find a movement dominated by Western musical styles attractive at all. Is there going to be a need for alternative movements?

King: Ethno-worship can allow you to reach people who won’t listen because we’re doing worship in a Western style. You can have the Western style there. But, you have to recognize that not everybody is going to respond to the

Western style. So, my passion is to help people understand that God is for *them* within their own cultural context. We need to win a hearing. If there are Hindus who will not listen to Western music, why do we think we’re going to reach them with it?

How do we move into their musical territory and work within their culture so that they have a viable opportunity to hear? They are going to respond to what is familiar to them. Sometimes people like novelty, and they like newness. But, that doesn’t necessarily bring you to the deep levels of searching and reasoning where you make a decision for Jesus Christ.

In Uganda, there are young people, professionals who work in the city, running the coffee companies, running the banks. When they get together for worship they use both hymns and contemporary worship. But there comes a moment when they say, “now take me home.” And that means, “Take me back to my roots, so that I can worship God in a holistic way, from the depths of my being.” In fact, the vice chancellor at Daystar University is from Uganda, with the Lusoga language as his mother tongue. He’s an engineer, trained in England where he earned his Ph.D. As vice-chancellor or Daystar University, he is the equivalent of a university president. As a Christian statesman, he is a highly educated, highly influential world-class leader. When we sang Colossians 3 in his language and he heard the song in his own language and his own musical style, his response was “That goes to the very depths of my being and cleanses me from the inside out.”

MF: Is there any resistance to change on the part of missionaries? If not, what are the new challenges?

King: We’re not dealing with obstinance, we’re dealing with lack of training and lack of information. I think there are a lot of people going out like early missionaries—with the best of intentions, but do not recognize the implications of what they’re doing.

There’s a lack of understanding the culture and how to work relevantly within that culture. I just taught a course and had a number of very fine students. One fellow who has worked in India for years and had a vision of going around doing Christian rock, now says, “You know, it doesn’t reach everyone.” So, he’s now going through a



A NEW SONG: The workshop in Bouaké, Côte d’Ivoire turned into a time of celebration, a call to praise Jesus in the language and cadence close to the hearts of the peoples.

R. King

paradigm shift, realizing there's more to using music well. It's a lack of training and a lack of opportunity to think through the issues.

Music is not seen as the first element or the first tool that we use for communicating the Gospel. But, with the upcoming generations I think we're going to see that changing.

MF: While not limiting worship to music, let us recognize that music is a key means for worshipping. How does the growth in appreciation for and practice of ethnodoxology serve as a powerful tool for the fulfillment of the Great Commission?

King: What I see is a broader scope of how we do mission. Our approach will be more holistic. We won't base it predominately on literacy. In other words, we're opening up all of our signal systems and all our symbols to be able to communicate Christ. There's this big gap in doing mission where we need to recognize music as being more than a time filler. When you fill in this gap with a powerful means of communication, viewing it as a vehicle of communication, it changes your whole strategy. You can have people contemplating the Gospel message all night long as they sing and dance to it in an African village. But if you go and sit and listen to a sermon, maybe you could go for two hours, but you're not going to go all night long for 8 to 10 hours and consider the claims of Jesus Christ as you can through song. So, you have a much greater opportunity in terms of exposure to the Gospel through music. You could be playing it in the courtyard of the church and the person across the way who's a neighbor hears the music "jump" the wall. All of a sudden, he's hearing something and you see him coming and asking the pastor "What was that about?" It's expanding our means of doing mission, of reaching out to nonbelievers beyond the walls of our churches.

MF: A missionary that's adversarial to the charismatic movement might have a hard time doing ministry in this fashion. Dancing, worship throughout the night ... Is the charismatic movement the primary one that's growing in areas of Africa you're familiar with?

When the Youth Camp Rang Out in Praise

The youth camp was going very well. Ngana Josef loved teaching the sermon series about the life of David to the 125 young people. Now they had come to the end of their time together. What more was there to say? He was just beginning to wind up his talk when, suddenly, from the back of the room, a lone voice began to sing. The young mother, with a baby wrapped on her back, was singing about David and all that God had done in his life. Excitement pulsed in the air as the young people spontaneously sang back the

King: Most of what I am telling you about is work among Baptists. That's one of our problems: we attach cultural traditions to different denominational groups. When you move cross-culturally, you can't do that. To dance and clap among the Senuso is to give your testimony for Christ—to do it in terms of a Christian shuffle. There's a distinction that you have to know within the culture. A lot of charismatic worship is closer to the Two-Thirds World and how they approach worship. So, there's a natural relationship there. When you move across cultures you have to be much more open to various alternative vehicles of worship.

MF: In regard to African Independent Churches, some would argue they are non-Christian, some would argue they're aberrant, some would argue they're just excessive. But many would argue they're more indigenous. How do you view them, especially in this context of worship?

King: Well, part of their reason for being is because worship wasn't relevant to them. So, they didn't wait for a missionary to find out that there might be ethno-worship. They went and developed means of worshipping that were closer to their traditions and their hearts.

Every group will have some sort of excess. They will be more obvious in their differences than missions from mainline churches, traditional mission churches or the different denominations. Some of them are clearly aberrant in terms of doctrine. But some churches that we've planted in mission could be off in other respects.

response to the lead singer. The song captured the essence of the teaching and formed a good summary. Within very little time, the whole group was on their feet—moving, clapping, rejoicing, and reviewing what they had learned about

The whole group was on their feet—moving, clapping, rejoicing.

God through the life of David. It was a prime time for Christian music communication. God was at work in the hearts of the young people. Glory was given to Him! ☉

We all err at different points. But, I see them as being quite relevant. In a very real sense, the reluctance of missionaries to embrace indigenous forms of music has fueled the growth of movements that are not theologically sound (though they are sincere in their desire to worship the living God).

I did a workshop with an African Independent Church in Kenya. We used it as an opportunity to get them looking at the Scriptures more directly, to get them not just singing songs with, say, "Alleluia" in them, but to get them actually interacting with the Scriptures. So, you're doing discipleship, helping them to grow theologically through the song-composing process. ☉



Reclaiming the Bhajan

Ancient musical styles of India transform modern worship of Christ.

—Chris Hale

The average religious Hindu man—hungry for an encounter with the Ultimate Reality—responds to song perhaps more than any other form of communication. He wants to experience the Truth, to feel it. He is not content with mere intellectual understanding. Music is one of the best bridges from me, as a follower of Christ, to this Hindu man.

All kinds of songs are sung in India. The average religious man on the city street loves the Indian film songs which are mostly about romantic love. Then you have your semi-classical *ghazal* and classical *raga* lovers—but they are a minority. The villagers, of course, appreciate their local folk styles which consist entirely of live performances during festivals which last all night long.

As far as Western music goes, about a half a million young people all over India love rock and roll, but through MTV and VTV that number

A graduate of Berklee College of Music, Chris Hale was raised in Nepal and has served 10 years in India. He is currently living in New York and records devotional songs (bhajans) to Christ in Hindi with Peter Hicks and their group, Aradhna.

is increasing rapidly. Something over a million may seriously love pop music. But the majority of India's upper class, though they would not go out and buy the CD, would love to dance at a disco to some good, fast, dance music from the West (along with their favorite, Hindi pop music).

When it comes to his devotional life, however, the Hindu religious seeker wants *bhajans*, repetitious songs with a simple melodic line which the leader sings and the devotees repeat. Bhajans can

The bhajan goes from the mind into the heart and touches the emotions and the will.

also take on complex classical forms and are available on cassette or CD. But, by and large, a bhajan is 'live' and sung in the context of a *satsang*, or religious meeting where a preacher expounds Scripture with bhajans interspersed throughout keeping the devotees actively involved. Satsangs are held at temples, ashrams and

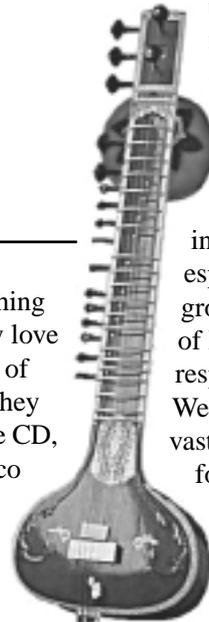
outside wealthy devotees homes under *shamianas* (large tents) throughout the year but especially during festivals.

The average urban Indian is attracted to Western modern music and Hindi pop (which is influenced greatly by the West). It makes him loosen up and enjoy himself. But if you introduce this kind of music in a religious context he would likely find

the experience confusing. He may well leave saying, "*Tan halata hain lekin man ko kuch nahin karta*" (or, "This music moves the body, but it does nothing for the soul").

Admittedly, there is an increasing minority in the cities especially from Christian background and an increasing number of Hindu young people who are responding spiritually to modern, Western worship styles. But the vast majority of Indians do not. As for the typical Western hymns and Western classical music, these do even less spiritually for the average Hindu than the modern Western choruses.

Translating the Western choruses into the local languages is only a minute improvement, because though the intellect can respond, the emotions are not touched by the Western melodies. Translating the



words of great Western hymns and putting Indian melodies to them is a vast improvement on the above, but this also has its weak points. One can easily imagine how difficult it is to take a Western poetical form and fit it into traditional Indian musical form. The majority of popular Christian worship songs have melodies that are reminiscent of Hindi film song melo-

dies of the last 20 years. This brings us back to square one, music that moves the body but not the soul.

Likewise, many of the Christian songs in North India are South Indian songs translated into Hindi. Though there is a far greater similarity between South and North than between West and East, it is clear that this is still very inadequate for use among North Indians. The translations are quite poor and lack the sweet poetical flow of North Indian verse.

Clearly, with Hindus, the bhajan is the most helpful musical form, especially in North India, where Christian and Western influence is most strongly opposed. These songs have Indian lyrics, Indian tunes and an Indian worship format. Historically, they are taken from Hindu devotional practice, but there is nothing unscriptural about these forms. The forms are conducive to Biblical meditation. First, there is the exposition of the passage by the preacher which enlightens the understanding through the Holy Spirit. Then there is the repetition of

the Biblical thought through the singing of the bhajan and the thought goes from the mind into the heart and touches the emotions and the will.

Of course, this style of worship is very foreign to most Indian Christians from traditional church backgrounds. Initially, many of them find such a format offensive because it reminds them of Hinduism. However, the use of bhajans is recommended primarily in evangelism or in churches that are actively seeking to make their worship service more appealing to Hindus.

Bhajans and satsang are primarily being used by church planters in the vast areas of India that are not being reached directly by the local church.

Finally it needs to be said that the modern, English-speaking, high class, secular, Hindu person may be more open to spiritual things through modern, Western worship formats than traditional Indian ones which he has already thrown out. We've found in the ministry we do among these people that they respond to the traditional bhajan format when presented using a combination of

Western and Indian instruments. This format is also appealing to Indians living outside India. From my experience with the bhajan worship group Aradhna¹ (meaning, "worship") in the United Kingdom during the last two summers I have found that this format appeals greatly to the large number of Indian emigrants. It is even welcomed in predominantly white churches who are seeking a multi-cultural worship experience.

What we need, then, is for people to begin learning and using the traditional forms and arranging them musically using a combination of Indian and Western instruments. By and large, the first part must be done by Indian poets and Indian musicians. Foreigners can help especially with the packaging because of their access to quality electronic musical equipment and their familiarity with its use. With God's help, there is much that can be done with music to communicate the message of the Gospel in India. 🌐

1. Our first CD, *Deep Jale* (Light the Lamp) is in its second production. See "Resources," page 27.

Worshiping Christ With the Best of East and West

-Chris Hale

In 1990, I went to India after graduating from Berklee College of Music with a degree in classical composition, jazz and rock guitar, with a vision to reach modern Indian youth with a rock band that sang songs in Hindi and English. Within the first year there I discovered Christian bhajans, devotional songs addressed to Christ that had a lyrical and melodic style that was truly Indian and that drew me into worship. Our rock band, Olio, which was performing in univer-

sity campus rock music festivals began singing some of these bhajans using the instruments in the band as well as Indian percussion. We found that the young people loved these songs the most although at that time it was not common to mix Western styles such as rock music with the traditional Indian styles.

Now, 10 years later, Hindi songs with Western instrumentation, both devotional and secular, are very popular. Andrew Lloyd Webber is presently

working on a new Broadway musical with India's top popular song composer, A.R. Rahman. Rahman popularized the use of Western instrumentation and rhythm in Indian songs.

Indians, both young and old, love their own melodies and poetry. The time is ripe for Christian youth to begin composing worship songs to Christ which blend Indian melody and lyrical style with Western instrumentation. There are many

composers of Indian music in the Church in India, but many of them feel that the younger generation is not interested in their music. What is needed is a freshness that will attract the young people to the Indian melodies, and that freshness is Western instrumentation and rhythm. There needs to be an exchange of musical ideas between the older and younger generations in the Christian church. 🌐



What Happened When Grandma Danced

—Paul DeNeui

Jesus is a foreigner in Thailand. The forms most Thai Christians use to express their worship of him are primarily Western imports. The average Thai person, viewing what they see in churches throughout their country, would say that Christianity is the foreigner's religion. It is seen as the Westerner's way of gaining merit. Because of a strong sense of Thai national identity with another religion, most Thai people

Paul DeNeui works in development and church planting among the Isaan people in Northeast Thailand with the Evangelical Covenant Church.

reject Christianity for themselves. Jesus remains an outsider to them.

But what would happen if Jesus came as a Thai? What would he look like? How would he talk? What would he eat? What music would he enjoy? What would happen if John 1:14 became a reality for Thailand today?

The northeast sector of Thailand is home to approximately 20 million people known as Isaan. With a strong Lao heritage the majority of these people carry cultural traditions that distinguish them from the Central Thai. Their language (Lao/Isaan) is different. They eat glutinous rice with their fingers as their staple diet. They

have a unique musical heritage that goes back for hundreds of years and remains popular today. This was the region where the Evangelical Covenant Church of America sent Jim and Joan Gustafson as missionaries in 1971.

Through a process of learning, solely based upon the grace of God, the Covenant work began to bring Jesus to where people lived in a way that people could encounter him as one of themselves. The work began with the Word—and the Word had to be reborn as a northeastern Thai.

Something as simple as using the local language in worship made an

immediate impact. “Jesus talks *our* village talk!” This exclamation heard by believers in Isaan seems simple yet is still considered radical. To outsiders it is an open invitation. Unfortunately, even today, 30 years after our work began, most Westernized Thai churches throughout the *Lao-speaking* region of northeast Thailand still use the *central Thai* language in their worship.

It was during one of these local-language Bible discussions, as people sat on the straw mats in the home of a believer, that one elderly woman stood up from her squatting position, stepped into the middle of the circle and suddenly began to dance the traditional Isaan steps. Her thin arms and fingers waved gracefully back and forth in rhythm to her small, delicate steps. It was a familiar sight at drunken parties—but this was *Christian worship!* There was no music, only a stunned silence.

Finally one voice called out, “Grandma, sit *down!* What do you think you’re doing?”

Without a break in her motions she simply stated, “You don’t tell your old grandma to sit down. I’m 90 years old, and I’m just thanking the Lord that you’re here.”

What happened after Grandma danced changed everything. Dance became a part of worship. And music soon followed.

Isaan culture has a variety of beautiful and melodious indigenous

musical instruments but none express the heart of Isaan people more than the bamboo panpipes known locally as the *kaen*.

The incorporation of the *kaen* into worship did not come without questions, however. In animistic practices, the *kaen* is used to call upon the spirits. Was it appropriate to use the *kaen* in the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ?

This question is still debated by many Thai Christians. Some cannot separate the idolatrous

practice from the instrument used and therefore condemn the *kaen* as “satanic.” However, for the local Isaan man or woman, unspoiled by Western religious trappings, the *kaen* remains the sound of “our people.” It speaks deeply to the heart values of those Isaan who are now in a new family as God’s children. God accepts them as they are. As one follower says, “Why can’t we use the *kaen* to praise God? We used the same mouth to follow spirits before. Does this mean we need to get a new mouth to praise God now?” Isn’t a new heart enough already?

Over time a whole hymnody of Isaan music has been produced and continues to be written by gifted men and women changed by the grace of God. The church has truly become an indigenous Thai Isaan church that rejoices in using the best forms from their culture to celebrate new life in Christ. One recent song, translated below, expresses the fact that Jesus is no longer a stranger to Isaan people. And, of course, this is one of those songs to which Isaan Christians get up and dance! 🌐



“The Way Sinners Make Merit” (above) and “Reception Party” (at left) were illustrated by an artist from the Isaan people. The Scriptures that inspired these are Luke 21:1 and Genesis 29:14-22 respectively.

Join in Praise

Lyrics from a Isaan worship song

From the Heavenly City the Word came down.
He was born right here where we live.
We Isaan people have new happiness now.
He loves us and that will not change!

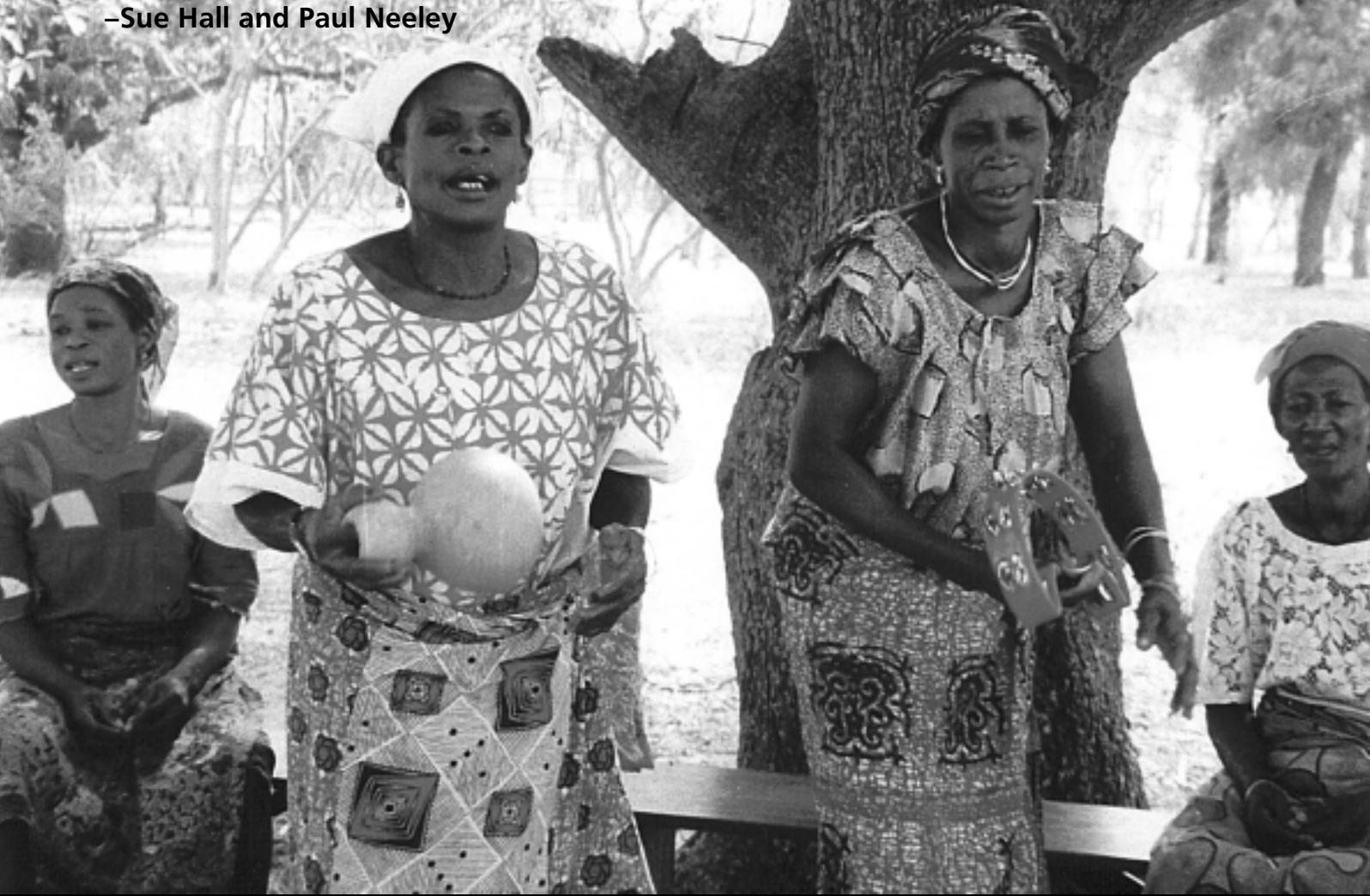
From the City Above, he came down for us.
Full of love from the Almighty.
Now listen! The sound of the *ching* and the *kaen*,
And who is that playing the pin?
Hear the clear tones of the *ponglong* as they join
The sounds of the saw, “Eeee oon aaaw.”
The melody of the saw is coupled
with the sound of voices of praise.

The Lord Jesus Christ, the Victor over death,
Is born in our cultural forms.
Listen to the sounds of the flute and the drum
All Isaan rejoices in Him!

The Vaglas Sing

A Song from the Heart

—Sue Hall and Paul Neeley



Sitting expectantly inside the building in Ghana, West Africa, were representatives from various churches in the Vagla area. As ethnomusicologists, we had come to coach them to develop indigenous hymnody—Christian music that would affirm their dual heritage as Vagla people and children of God.

We were praying for songs that would be acceptable and exciting both to unbelievers and Christians (the minority). Our job was to do preparations (musical research), encourage them to “push” (compose new songs), and help in the final delivery (recording the new songs on cassette so they can be copied and distributed). Since not everyone at the workshop was

literate, we asked someone to read aloud a chosen passage from the Vagla New Testament.

Only the roar of a passing truck disturbed the moment of silence in the church. The men and women waited expectantly following the reading, while we wondered for a moment if this approach to making new Christian songs with nonreaders



was accompanied by a horn ensemble of seven antelope horns played in intricate interlocking patterns. To the uninitiated, it sounds remarkably like a traffic jam; but to the Vagla people, it's one of the sweetest sounds on earth—especially when coupled with those life-changing words.

The 7,000 Vagla people of Ghana have had the New Testa-

“He who is carrying a heavy load and is getting tired, bring it to Jesus ... He has peace.”

could really work. Then, hesitantly at first, but with growing confidence, one old woman began to sing out loud the song which was in her heart:

He who is carrying a heavy load and is getting tired, bring it to Jesus. He will save you. You who labor hard, come to Jesus because He has peace.

The 2000-year-old words tumbled out of her mouth, carried by a new melody composed in a traditional Vagla song type. Immediately the other women responded with the chorus. One of them picked up a rattle to provide the accompaniment. Suddenly the dream in our minds of seeing Vaglas free to worship the true God through their own music became reality.

As the singer moved deeper into worshipping her Lord she fell to her knees: “Let’s give Him glory, because He is my Father.” As she finished, another woman took up the theme in a different style of song. Then it was the men’s turn, and soon everyone was up on their feet dancing in a circle or improvising an accompaniment on any rattles or drums available. They were so eager to sing and

dance as people who were uniquely both Christians and Vaglas.

Up until that day in 1997, the believers’ cultural identity as Vaglas had always been left in the shadow of being Christians. Their worship music had been borrowed from other ethnic groups and was not rooted in Vagla culture, emphasizing the foreignness of their religious expression. We were so privileged to be ‘midwives’ at the birth of a culturally-appropriate ‘heart music’ to be used in worship by this people group.

Pastor Phillip, a Vagla blind man skilled in music of all kinds, testified to the power of these new songs made in traditional styles. “You can’t see my eyes because of these dark glasses, but when I started hearing these new songs tears came to my eyes. For many years, we could have used our music to worship God and reach our people. Instead, the music has been used by the devil.”

Now, the Vagla musical types of Maara, Zungo, Dugu and others are being used to communicate the content of the Gospel in a form that all Vagla people instinctively recognize as their own. And it certainly sounds unique to our ears! John 3:16

ment (translated by a Wycliffe team) in their language for 20 years, yet the church has been slow to grow. “But now,” said Pastor Phillip, “I really hear God’s words in these songs.” So will many other Vaglas through the two cassettes of Scripture songs and readings recorded that week in an improvised studio at the church.

Late that evening, we met outside to eat pounded yam by the light of stars. After supper more songs started pouring out. The two old women who were lead singers composed song after song as the night went on, extemporizing lyrics as their thoughts took them from the foundation of the initial Bible verse to other truths they knew. The excitement spilled over in dancing and eagerness to be the next to sing.

That night felt like a prelude to the joy of heaven. And all the angels joined in singing: “God loved the world so much that He gave His Son Jesus, so let us believe in Him and bow down before Him and worship Him. The Lord Jesus has called me and I have come.” And the stars added their shining voices to the praise of God’s glory.🌍

A longer version of this article was published in *EM News*, 7:1, 1998.



The Dangers of Prayer Wheel Worship!

—Ralph D. Winter, Editor

What is most important is worship. Therefore what is most important to falsify—from Satan’s point of view—is also worship.

In the Bible, the pinnacle of devotion is the angels in heavenly worship. But what is “heavenly” for angels may not always be the reality with human weakness in the picture.

Worship “experiences” are pervasive and virtually everywhere in the cults and various non-Christian religions of the world, but, even in the Bible, worship is both highly prized and profoundly mistrusted.

I have often thought that the most anti-religious paragraphs in all of the world’s literature can be found in the first chapter of Isaiah, where the text clearly condemns worship that had devolved to a sham and fraud utterly detestable to God:

Your celebrations of the new moon and Sabbath day, and your special days of fasting—even your most pious meetings—are all sinful and false. I cannot stand the sight of them. When you spread out your hands I will refuse to look. Even though you offer many prayers I will not listen. (Isa. 1:14-15)

Dazzling and impressive forms of worship abound. The worship of spiritually-minded, Muslim Sufis has led to their being called “Whirling Dervishes.” On a small Caribbean island, the worshipers of a god “Zo” paint those two letters on every square inch of their naked bodies and gyrate for intoxicated hours of fervent “worship experience.”

It is not strange that throughout the Bible, especially in the gospels, we are often startled and sobered by the harsh

condemnation of phoney or empty religious practices.

Yet none of this is in opposition to true worship. Consider the exalted language which conclude 1 Timothy:

He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords; who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light; whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion. Amen. (1 Tim 6:15,16)

Or, take Paul’s expression of true worship at the end of Romans 11:

Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable ways! ... For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. I urge you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies [not animals] a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. (Rom. 11:33-12:1)

Yet, even though animal sacrifices had been legitimate symbols in the past, Psalm 51:17 declares that:

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart.

Perhaps it is a measure of our mindlessness in worship that many people do not realize that some worship songs are essentially a *proclamation* to other human beings, while other things we sing are actually *prayers* directed to God.

We religiously shut our eyes when we pray, but we don’t always realize that often the words we sing—with our eyes wide open—are also prayers to the Living God.

Our public prayers may start out addressed to God, but end up talking about Him. For example, we might

say, “We thank you, Oh God, for your mercies to us, and we want, above all else, for God to rule in our lives.” If we were consciously speaking to God, we would say, “We want *You* to rule in our lives.”

The place where we worship is not magical. We dedicate “sanctuaries” or “worship centers” but the Bible says,

Where is the house you will build for me? ... On this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at my word. (Isa. 66:1-2)

What is the actual basis of worship? Worship is, in part, the public, verbal acknowledgement of His “worth.” That worth, that true glory, is seen most clearly “in the face of Jesus Christ.” But the heavens also declare the glory of God. His creation displays his handiwork. The Old Testament word for “glory” describes the spectacular retinue of horsemen and chariots accompanying a king.

How long does it take for new insights into His glorious creation (such as only can be seen in microscopes or telescopes) to affect our worship lyrics? Recently, we have been astonished by breakthrough after breakthrough into the incredible complexity within the human cell.

But do our hymns lead us to reflect on mitochondria or DNA molecules? Apart from the person of Christ, nothing could testify more clearly to the astounding wonder of our Creator God. Should we be ignorant of such things and not allow them to heighten our awe before the Living God?

Worship must not be centered in what we want or seek but upon Who He is and the blessed, loving marvel that He is. Prayer wheels and verbal mantras are centered on what we want. Activities of worship can express the highest devotion based on the deepest understanding, or they can be one of the most dangerous of all forms of phoneyess. Worship can be dangerous! Prayer wheels are not merely found in Tibet. 🌐



Every Team Needs One

The essential role of the worship-arts leader in church-planting.

—Dave Hall

Many evangelical Christians have a very truncated understanding of worship. When asked to define it, they respond, “It’s singing,” or “It’s praising God.” Worship, from a biblical perspective, is far more than merely singing or praising God in the assembly of the saints (as right and wonderful as that is). For years now I have collected definitions of the word. One of the best I have found was penned by Dr. Bruce Leafblad. I have expanded it slightly and hope that it will provide a framework for our understanding:

Worship is both an event and a lifestyle in which believers, by grace, center their minds’ attention and their hearts’ affections on the Lord, humbly glorifying God in response to His greatness, His mighty acts, and His Word.

One might also ask, What is a worship-arts leader? This is someone who is uniquely gifted, called and trained to lead the people of God into

the presence of God. I incorporate the word “arts into the role because, both historically and Biblically, all the arts have played a major role in corporate worship. They should, therefore, continue to play a major role, especially in the cross-cultural church-planting context. As missionaries and missions organizations dedicated to the task of establishing church-

God is seeking worshipers, not people who know a lot about worship, not people who know how to worship, but worshipers.

planting movements, our strategies and practices must be built on firm, Biblical foundations. Much work remains to be done to better understand the implications of worship in regard to our theology and missiology. I humbly submit to you the top ten reasons every church-planting team needs a worship-arts leader.

Every church-planting team needs a worship-arts leader because...

1. Every church should be a worshiping church. Worshiping God is our highest calling. It is, as Dr. William Taylor has aptly said, “The mother of all paradigms.” Worship expresses the reason for our redemption. In Exodus, we are

told why God went to all the trouble to free his people from bondage. “Let my people go... so that they may worship me” (Ex. 9:1). Worship will be either central to the planning and process of church planting or it will be peripheral.

2. The battle against the enemy is won in worship. “Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the Lord and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: ‘Give thanks to the Lord, for his love endures forever.’ As they began to sing and praise, the Lord set ambushes against the men of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir” (2 Chron. 20:21-22). There is something inherently combative about worship; namely, Satan hates it. Worship is warfare, pure and simple. In our struggle to see the unreached reached, to see worshipers brought to Christ from every

tribe, tongue, people, and nation we would do well to use one of our most powerful weapons.

3. Culturally relevant musical and artistic worship is a powerful evangelistic tool inside and outside the church. When unbelievers experience corporate worship in their heart language, they are more open to hearing God’s Word. Their stereotypes of Jesus being the foreign God of a foreign religion are removed simply by relating the Gospel and facilitating worship in culturally relevant forms. Showing interest in their music and arts validates them as a people and opens great opportunities for building relationships and sharing the Gospel. Cassette tapes and

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visual art forms that use Scripture and Biblical themes in culturally sensitive ways have found great favor even among Muslim groups adamantly opposed to the gospel.

4. The performing arts provide unique opportunities for creative access. One Pioneer missionary learned to sing in the style of the people group she is attempting to reach with the Gospel. Since recording an album, she is now nationally known and has many opportunities to sensitively share her faith. Her prominence also gives her negotiating power when it comes time to renew visas.

Studying the music and arts of a people is another excellent means of entry into closed countries, and it provides practical benefits to developing indigenous forms of worship.

5. The performing arts provide unique opportunities for

evangelism. A man working in Pakistan was taught this principle: You can say anything to a Muslim in poetry or music and he will listen; say the same thing in prose, and he may kill you. He decided to put the principle to the test by hosting an international music festival. A hall was rented and many groups played, including a national Christian music group that presented the gospel using indigenous Pakistani music and instruments. After the standing ovation at the conclusion, the mayor of the city announced, “This has been the

culturally-relevant worship that is intelligible to the people. It incorporates their music, their arts, their means of expressing truth in their culture. While care must be taken to avoid syncretism, we must not allow the learning curve to keep us from applying the Biblical principle found in 1 Corinthians 14:23-25: Intelligible worship is much more apt to produce repentance than is unintelligible worship.

7. Worshiping in a people’s heart language requires worship leadership. You don’t have to be

Not only do the churches we plant need worship leaders, but our teams do as well.

finest musical event in the history of our town, and I feel it should be repeated every year!”

6. Worshiping churches worship in the heart language of the people. What is worship in a people’s “heart language”? It is

in ministry for very long to realize the crucial role of well-trained, godly leadership. Facilitating the release of people of diverse cultures to worship in spirit and truth is both an art and a science. I call it “ethnodoxology”—the study



Illustration ©2001 by Wuzzy Wu.

of how and why people of diverse cultures glorify the true and living God. Doing it well requires a well-trained, gifted, worship-arts leader. I place the emphasis here on training as opposed to gifting because many church planting teams don't have someone gifted to lead in these matters.

Ethnodoxology is, however, something that can be taught, caught, and implemented by those who have a heart for worship but feel they are not particularly musically or artistically endowed.

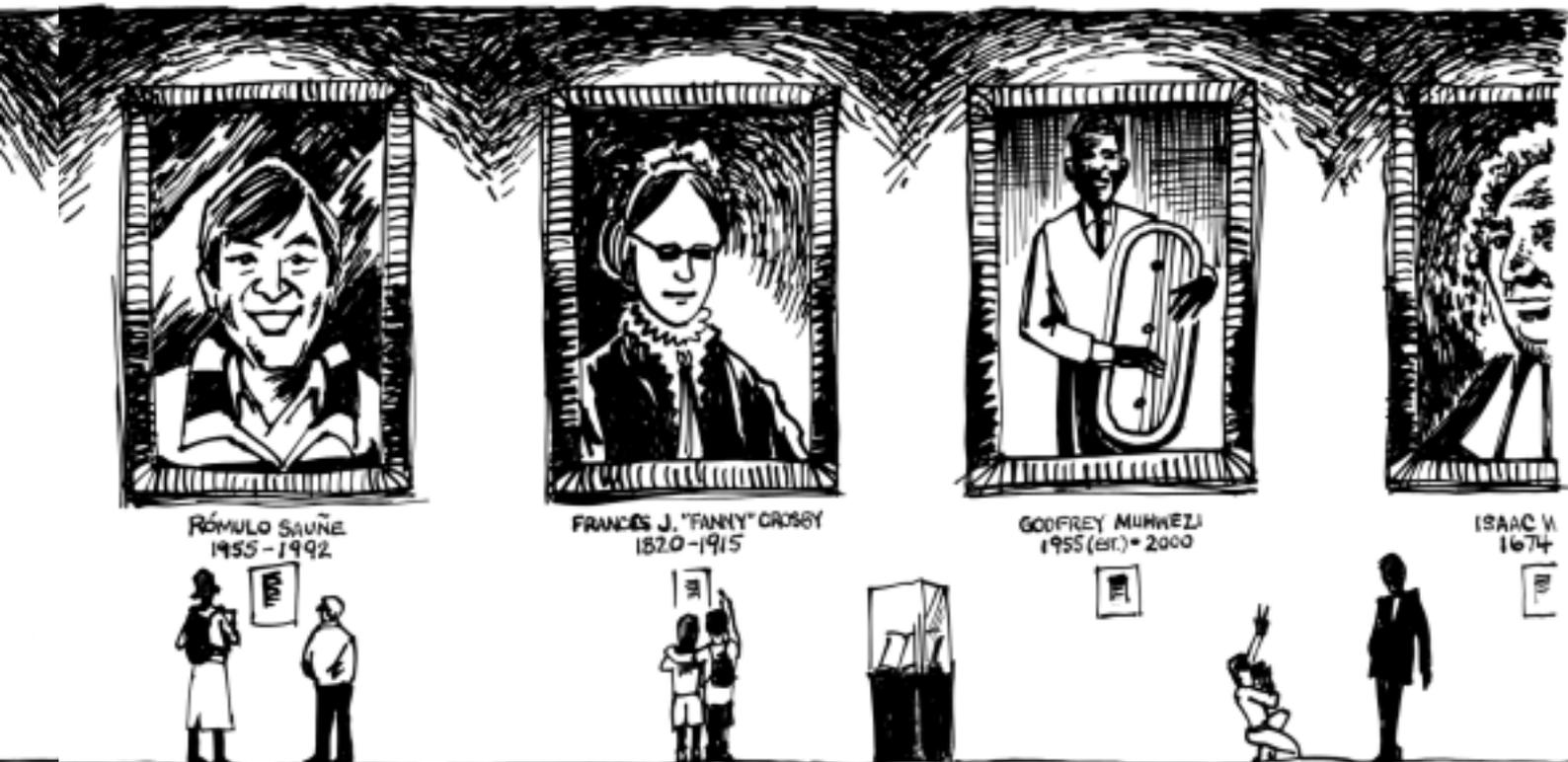
8. Worship leadership increases the effectiveness of both the church plant and the church planter. Shortly after a church is planted in North America, one of the greatest needs is for gifted, trained worship leadership. We spend large amounts of time and energy to fill this vital leadership role. We do this because we believe that biblical, creative, culturally relevant worship is essential to the

effectiveness of the church in glorifying God both with our lives and our witness. The church planted in a cross-cultural setting has just as big a need, but far fewer resources to meet it. May God enable us to mobilize and empower worship-arts leadership for every team, both before and after they are sent to the field. Not only do the churches we plant need worship leaders, but our teams do as well. John Piper, in *Let the Nations Be Glad*, writes, "Missionaries will never call out, 'Let the nations be glad!' who cannot say from the heart, 'I rejoice in the Lord... I will be glad and exult in Thee'... Missions begins and ends in worship." Missionaries without this foundational understanding are living out too much of their missionary experience in a spiritual desert. One of the worship-arts leaders' key roles is to facilitate and model both corporate and lifestyle worship with humility and servanthood, as a part of the team.

9. Missionaries who are fired up about God will be more effective witnesses for his glory. Piper challenges our paradigm for ministry when he writes, "Missions exists because worship doesn't.... You can't commend what you don't cherish." Our evangelism and discipleship of the nations must flow out of our passion for God and his glory. otherwise it will be shallow, at best, or man-centered and self-glorifying, at worst.

10. We are worshipers first, missionaries second. We need a fundamental paradigm shift to occur in our understanding and practice of missions. Jesus said that God is seeking worshipers, not people who know a lot about worship, not people who know how to worship, but worshipers. Being a worshiper is not something you *do*; it is something you *are*.[🌐]

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Some Things Remain the Same

—Ron Man

Worship in the Church of Jesus Christ has been characterized by enormous diversity across the centuries and across the world today. This diversity seems to be allowed by the New Testament, which gives us precious little in terms of specific guidelines for the practice of worship in the church—nor even much in the way of actual examples. The implication is that God allows His people considerable latitude in applying godly wisdom to choose and adapt forms for worship that are appropriate to a particular time, place, and people. And so, we find God worshiped with a vast array of different languages, forms, styles, liturgies, dress, music and other art forms.

With all of this diversity, it is appropriate to ask a question: what is unchangeable and non-negotiable in the panoply

Ron Man works in Germany with Greater European Mission, where he gives special attention to worship-related issues. His involvement on the European continent dates to 1969.

of worship options? What are the common denominators without which worship is sub-standard, if not sub-Christian? What are the things that bind and unite true worshipers of every age and locale?

Certainly there are doctrinal boundaries, fundamentals of the faith, which define those who are truly in the faith and therefore are able to worship “in truth” as Jesus commanded (John 4:23-24).

Besides a common doctrinal base,

The Main Thing

Our ultimate purpose in serving God in this world must be to align ourselves with *His* purpose for this world. I would suggest that God’s purpose is summarized (among other places in Scripture) in Psalm 86:9:

All nations whom You have made
Shall come and worship before You, O Lord,
And they shall glorify Your name.

Here we read that God *made* the nations (or peoples); the clear implication is that He has every right to expect their worship, their glorification of Him as their Creator. But not only is this an *expectation*, but also a clear *prediction* that this *will* happen (see also Psalm 22:27-28). The thrust of history and of the Church and of missions is towards that day when a countless throng of worshipers “from every tribe and tongue and people and nation” (Rev. 5:9) will join the angelic host around the throne to exclaim, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever!” (5:13). —Ron Man

there are some other vital elements which God has given to ensure continuity and purity in the worship which He engenders, encourages, and delights in from His people. These are things we should look for no matter where we go in the world, and regardless of geographic, racial, ethnic, economic or cultural context. And these are things we should actively encourage in church planting situations and other areas where we might have influence.

1. The Role of the Word of God in Worship

God’s people do not gather to exchange their own ideas about who God is and what He is like; rather worship is our response to what God has revealed Himself to be in the Bible. We gather under the authority of the Word, at the invitation of the Word, and with the guidance of the Word. We gather to learn from and respond to the Word.

The Word of God must permeate all that we do in worship services—certainly in the preaching of the Word, but also in public reading of the Word, praying the Word, meditating on the Word, singing the Word (both through scriptural texts and also texts which faithfully represent scriptural truth). God’s people should respond to Him *as He really is*—that He might receive the glory of which He is worthy. And that means that the Bible must have a central place of honor and use in our services, must form the foundation of all our services and guide and protect our services. If we are to worship *in truth*, we must worship *according to the Word*.

As John Stott put it:

What, then, does it mean to worship God? It is to “glory in His holy name” (Ps. 105:3), that is, to revel adoringly in who He is in his revealed character. But before we can glory in God’s name, we must know it. Hence the propriety of the reading and preaching of the Word of God in public worship, and of Biblical meditation in private devotion. These things are not an intrusion into worship; they form the necessary foundation of it. God must speak to us before we have

What, then, does it mean to worship God? It is to “glory in His holy name” (Ps. 105:3) ... But before we can glory in God’s name, we must know it. .

any liberty to speak to Him. He must disclose to us who he is before we can offer him what we are in acceptable worship. The worship of God is always a response to the Word of God. Scripture wonderfully directs and enriches our worship.¹

The Word of God must be honored in our worship because it teaches us about God’s glory.

2. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Worship

The Holy Spirit is responsible for true worship taking place. It is He

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who works in our hearts to show us our need for Christ (John 16:8). It is He who convinces our hearts that God is incomparably lovely and deserving of our worship. It is He who engages both the mind *and* the heart so that worship is an expression of both. It is He who quickens our spirit so that our worship is sincere (“worship in spirit,” John 4:24); and as the Spirit of truth (John 14:17) He illumines the truth of God to us (1 Cor. 2:14), so that we might know Him and respond to Him as He really is (“worship in truth,” John 4:23, 26).

3. The Role of the Congregation in Worship

Regardless of what kind of planning and preparation and practice goes into a service of worship, regardless of what sort of leadership

and tradition and liturgy there happens to be, these things don’t produce true corporate worship. The participation of the *congregation* makes it corporate worship.

Romans 12:1 teaches us to present our bodies—our whole lives—as “a living and holy sacrifice acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service worship.” A church service won’t really be a service of corporate worship unless the people of God gather after walking with and worshipping God throughout their week, with full hearts which can then overflow into a common expression of adoration and praise. We must teach our people that worship is a lifestyle, a way of life, not an event.

By definition, corporate worship will also only happen if the people are truly involved in the service. This expression of the unity of the body

and of the priesthood of all believers is not optional. We are *commanded* to minister to one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs in the assembly (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). The Word of God requires that worship involve all of the people and not be a spectator event or performance.

4. The Role of the Jesus Christ in Worship

Perhaps the most crucial constant in all true worship is that which is least acknowledged: the role of the living Christ in leading our worship. The book of Hebrews teaches us about the *present* ministry of Christ, our *living* High Priest: His perpetual Priesthood, the One through whom we draw near to the throne of grace, the One who sympathizes with our weaknesses, the One who continues

The Centrality of Worship

Foundational points for a theology for worship and missions.

—Dave Hall

1. Worship is central, Missions is not. We Evangelicals have propagated a mind-set in the church and missions that might be best summed up in the adage, “God saved us to save the lost.” The fact is, however that God redeemed us not primarily to do something for His glory, but rather to be something for his glory. Jesus did not say the Father is seeking missionaries, husbands, wives, secretaries, carpenters, etc. Whatever our roles in this life may be we need to see them as flowing out of our primary identity before God; that of a worshiper. We are all called first and foremost

to be worshipers. He redeemed us to worship Him, and as a redeemed people, we are called to be a blessing to the nations. Mission flows from worship, not vice-versa. John Piper expressed it this way, “Worship is the fuel and the goal of missions.”¹

2. When missions is central, worship is peripheral. Lack of sound Biblical teaching on both worship and missions on the part of our churches and theological institutions has brought us to a place where we are sending out hundreds of missionaries who have little or no theological and/or practical skill in planning

and leading corporate worship, especially in a cross-cultural setting. In addition, most church planting teams have literally no clue about the importance or process of establishing new believers in a lifestyle of worship. When missions is central, worship is not only peripheral corporately, but personally. One missionary admitted he got to a place within two years of being on the field where he was totally burned out. He felt that God was only interested in “using him to save souls.” He continued, “It was only after I learned that God loves me for who I am, not what I can do for Him that I

could minister to the millions of unreached people around me with a sense of balance.” Without a loving, intimate relationship with God experienced and expressed in and through worship, missionaries lack the fuel needed to stick it out.

3. When worship is peripheral, the people’s ability to worship is terminal. The resulting tragedy: predominantly Western worship forms in predominantly non-Western cultures. Yes, much of today’s music is influenced on a global scale by Western music, especially in the larger cities. And yes, we must recognize that musical and artistic forms are increasingly “mixed.” But, we are still doing far too little to assure that aspects of corporate worship other than the Word (i.e., music, arts, offering, etc.) are in the heart language of the

as the unique God-man and the Mediator between God and man.

In Hebrews 2:12 we find a brilliant summary of the role of Jesus Christ in leading our worship. According to the inspired writer, Christ is speaking to His Father (with the words of Psalm 22:22). And He says: Father, "I will proclaim Your name to my brethren" That is, the living, glorified One undertakes as High Priest and Mediator to reveal and teach the truth about God and His greatness to those who are His brethren (cf. Heb. 2:11).

The second half of Hebrews 2:12 shows us another remarkable truth: Jesus goes on to say to the Father, "in the midst of the congregation I will praise Your name." When we come to worship, *Jesus Christ is in our midst*, and, in a sense, is leading us in singing praises to the Father.

What an incredible truth! To begin with, it shows that the ministry of music in the church is not a pretty add-on or an enjoyable preliminary, but rather it is given an astounding importance by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, whose ministry it really is! And this verse also shows us that *Jesus Christ is the leader of our worship*. (Hebrews 8:2 describes as the "minister," in Greek the "liturgist" or worship leader in the *heavenly sanctuary*— as the priests were in the earthly sanctuary). That means that the worship leader, choir, or whoever leads in this part of the service is likewise *representing Christ*, in *His ministry* of leading the brethren's praise.

God has been pleased to accept an incredible diversity of expressions of worship over the centuries and around the world, not because of any inherent worthiness or excellence on

the part of any people, but because Jesus Christ (who is "the same yesterday and today and forever," Heb. 13: 8) is at the center, offering up a perfect sacrifice of praise in the midst of His people. Our worship is acceptable because we come *in Him* and *through Him*.

And so, as we consider the ever-broadening range of diverse worship expressions in our world, let us encourage them as appropriate and acceptable—in so far as they give a proper place to the Word of God, with the Holy Spirit blessing and giving power, with the congregation fully engaged and involved and with a recognition that we come to the Father led by and clothed with Christ who leads us in our praise. ☉

1. John Stott, *The Contemporary Christian*, InterVarsity Press, 1992, p. 174.

people. A terminal is a place where one can go "only so far." Our journey has begun, but in order to go any further we must have a vehicle (a plane, a boat, a bus, etc.) that will take us the next leg of our adventure. One "vehicle" that will help us to plant worshiping churches among every people is indigenous worship. Indigenous worship incorporates ethnic music, instruments and other artistic forms of communication. This allows people to worship God more freely and without the hindrance of forms that reinforce a "foreign god" stereotype. I believe that God will gain even greater glory among the nations as we develop and facilitate worship, both in it's lifestyle and corporate aspects, that truly reflects and relevantly speaks into the culture in which the church is being planted.

4. When worship is central, it is in the heart language of the people. It would seem that we need a new field of study and practice within missions. The term I prefer to use for this is "ethnodoxology." "Ethno," from the Greek word "ethne" meaning

cultures worship the true and living God." But just how relevant and important is something like ethnodoxology to our faith and practice? Imagine for a moment walking into church this Sunday and all the music you hear sounds strangely

knew getting a former missionary for our new pastor would be a problem!" Why! We would never tolerate such goings on! It begs the question, doesn't it... why do we offer our new brothers and sisters in Christ around the world a form of worship that we wouldn't endure in our own church for two minutes?! The Sovereign Lord says in Isaiah 61:11, "I will cause righteousness and praise to spring up among all nations." Today God is raising up an army of lead worshipers, ethnodoxologists, to go into all the world that lost people might "turn to God from idols to worship the living and true God"² and that worshiping churches might be planted among all peoples. ☉

...why do we offer our new brothers and sisters in Christ around the world a form of worship that we wouldn't endure in our own church for two minutes?!

"peoples" or "people groups" and "doxology," from the Greek word "doxos" meaning "glory or "praise." Ethnodoxology, then, is "the study of the worship of God among other cultures" or, more precisely, "the theological and practical study of how and why people of diverse

out of tune. The organ and keyboard you're used to have been replaced by bizarre, odd-sounding instruments. You ask your deacon friend what's going on. "The elders decided that all the music from now on would be in a Middle Eastern style, using Middle Eastern instruments." He adds, "I

1. John Piper, *Let The Nations Be Glad*, Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993, 11.
2. 1 Thess 1:9, author's translation.

An Open Letter on Giving in Kenya

—Gideon Kiongo

TO MY BROTHERS IN THE LORD:

I would like to share some thoughts with you regarding giving by the Church in Kenya, hoping that your understanding will be enriched and that you will be further equipped to challenge the church in her giving.

First, I agree wholeheartedly that the Church in Kenya has been endowed with wealth - I mean material riches. One has only to drive from Nairobi to some up-country town and observe the level of development and investment. Many have built stone or brick houses with a tile roof which are quite expensive to build. This is because our people believe that the up-country house is their real home rather than the town dwelling which is just the house from which one occupies while working in the city prior to retirement.

If you visit the “houses” in the cities, you will observe (on the average), expensive furniture and electronic equipment. Those in the church go to the weekly celebration

Mr. Gideon Kiongo invites responses to this open letter. He can be reached in Kenya by e-mail at Gkiongo@maf.org or by regular mail at P.O. Box 50688, Nairobi, Kenya. For general responses on issues of dependency and self-reliance see the web site for World Mission Associates www.wmausa.org or send an e-mail to GlennSchwartz@wmausa.org (Please note this is a new e-mail address for Glenn Schwartz.)

meetings and give what is acknowledged to be “very little” in tithes and offerings. Is it because the Church has not been taught about tithing and giving? The answer to that is an ever-resounding YES. I believe that from the beginning, such teaching has been inadequate. This has often resulted in giving which is not Biblically balanced. These have to be addressed as one seeks to teach giving. The Church must be made to understand where we have become “lopsided” in our teaching and practice.

The very offertory plates and baskets we use suggest what our people are expected to contribute. These are designed to hold money (notes and coins) which limit giving other things to the church. However, when you look at giving in both the Old and New Testaments, you clearly see the giving of substance which, of course, included money but was not limited to that. I believe our earliest teachers misunderstood the essence of giving to the church from an African perspective. I would go further and state that their “theology of giving” was not Biblically balanced either. The examples they used were that of the “coin” that Jesus instructed Peter to get from the fish so he could pay the government tax and that of the poor widow who gave two mites. Each of these narrations is instructive in giving. However, we should be aware of the context as we draw out the teaching. Sadly, we have basically

carried on the misconceptions of those who first brought us the Gospel.

Some years ago, I met a retired missionary from Burundi. Among other things, we discussed giving in our local churches. He told me about an experience in the local church in which he served. Giving was so low that the needs in the church were not adequately being met. Their sermons were about things other than the Gospel of Jesus Christ. After prayer, the Lord impressed on them to have the local leaders study the Word of God in regard to giving and then prepare to teach their own people.

What they discovered revolutionized giving in that local church. Giving back to God of the “substance” God had given them was the catch phrase. They came up with a list of things which included cows, goats, chickens, rabbits, maize, bananas, avocados, papayas, beans, vegetables and the like. They also reminded people that their gifts could include their time, their energy and their labor.

Next came the issue of how to give this “substance.” They decided to “redesign” the offertory basket. At the furthest end of the church grounds they built an enclosure for animals which would be offered to the Lord. They also built a raised rack covered with grass thatch roofing to hold any agricultural produce given. They then visited church members in their homes with the “new,” yet old teaching on giving as unto the Lord. What they had to say was simply taught and simply understood. They reported to their people that God gives us our daily bread, and He does not mind receiving from us on a daily basis either. As such, someone was placed near the church on a daily basis (a full-time Christian worker), who accepted and recorded all that was given. In addition, each contributor was given an official receipt for their tithes and offerings. The livestock and agricultural produce that were received were then sold on the next market day which happened to be each Tuesday.

They acquired a stall and an area on the market grounds from which to sell their produce and livestock. The full-time worker was kept busy. They would then deposit the proceeds, and soon their account in the local bank was comparable only to that of the richest man in their small town! Since many church members also purchased their produce on a weekly basis, they were only too glad to buy from the church stall. The local church also used the produce given as tithes and offerings to help needy members as well as needy unbelievers amongst them. This made those involved in the benevolence ministry very encouraged because there was now something to share.

This all reminds me of the church as narrated in the first chapters of the

other input from the listeners. The moral of the story is then embraced or “owned” by the entire group. These stories, told by real people to other people, can be used to complement the pulpit (TV included) and tape ministry on the same subject. Sometimes modern forms of communication are overrated in regard to being the most effective ways to teach our people to obey what Christ commanded. We must “reincarnate” giving as understood by the local people in the context, reminding them that they have received from the Lord and need to give back something in return. Looking at that Burundian local Church, note the importance of giving to the local believers in need (Christ’s body), but also to those not yet in Christ (the unevangelized).

We must “re-incarnate” giving as understood by the local people in the context, reminding them that they have received from the Lord and need to give back something in return.

book of Acts. It exemplifies a doctrine understood by the African Church within its customs and values. This is where I believe those who brought the Gospel could have done better. What will it take to undo the wrong teaching? We must talk about it, especially in our homes and in the marketplaces. We must involve our church members in the discussion as we seek to understand what God requires of us in obedience. It is important that we employ the ever so powerful mode of communication in which Africans are renowned experts. I am referring to African “storytelling.”

African stories are not scheduled, but are simply told as we sit in our houses, walk in our streets and visit in the marketplaces. We discuss things on the way to work even as we ride the buses. The storyteller is at times interrupted with questions and

I leave you with a thought that bothers me a great deal. When God asked the people to bring tithes into the storehouse as we read in Malachi 3:10, was He not referring to the “temple”? For it was in the context of the Old Testament. This concept, together with Christ’s work of the Cross, should inspire us to meet the needs of those who are needy in our midst. I am not saying that we do not need to build church buildings. I am suggesting that we look seriously at both the Old Testament and New Testament in order to grasp the importance of this matter of giving. If we do this, we will begin to understand the privilege of giving found throughout God’s word. ☉

Your brother in the Lord,
Gideon Kiongo

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Luis Bush at GCOWE '95

Passing the Baton

With remarkable accomplishments to its credit, the AD2000 and Beyond Movement closes its doors. But its impact lives on.

—Rick Wood

For all of the AD2000 Movement's short 12-year history, Mission Frontiers has been a partner with this movement in its efforts to mobilize the church to reach every unreached people group. As we say goodbye, it is with the hope that God will bring to completion that which He has begun through them. We present here an overview of its history and accomplishments. May we learn the lessons from their success so we may complete the vision of a church for every people that was at the heart of this movement.

It started out as a simple question in the heart of Dr. Thomas Wang, "Is God trying to tell us something?" Dr. Wang, then International Director of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, posed this question in the May 1987 issue of *Mission Frontiers*. He presented the fact that there were hundreds of separate global plans being created and pursued to reach the world by the year 2000, asking; "What is He trying to say to you and me through these happenings around us today." This question became a burden for an answer in Dr. Wang's heart.

Less than two years later in January 1989, Dr. Wang convened the first Global Consultation on World Evangelization (GCOWE), bringing

Rick Wood has been the managing editor of Mission Frontiers since 1990.

314 mission leaders from 50 countries to Singapore to help answer this question. The result was the birth of the AD2000 and Beyond Movement with a commitment to establishing a church-planting movement within every unreached people group.

The AD2000 Movement started out as a small office to disseminate information. Although there was never more than 15 staff working from the home office, under the leadership of Luis Bush, the new international director, the catalytic impact of this movement grew far out of proportion to its size. The central purpose of the AD2000 Movement

was to mobilize the Body of Christ worldwide into active outreach to every people and every person. This mobilization effort expressed itself in four major initiatives: networking/partnership, national initiatives, information gathering and dissemination and global conferences.

Networking

The AD2000 leadership and staff saw their role as a catalyst to bring the mission community together to cooperate and coordinate toward a common goal and thereby boost the effectiveness of the overall mission force. Building networks and partner-

Final Statements of the AD2000 Leadership

Rev. Dr. Thomas Wang: Chairman, AD2000 Intl. Board

God has put you and me into this crucial hour before the return of His Son, Jesus Christ, with a definite purpose, the fulfillment of His Great Commission.

Under God's loving mercy the AD2000 Movement was conceived and born during the preparation of the second Lausanne Congress in 1989. In a short span of one single decade the Movement has received acceptance and cooperation from Christ's global body and has been operating in over 100 countries of the world. Through its initiation, names like 10/40 Window, Joshua

Project and Gateway Cities have become household terms among churches and mission agencies today. The AD2000 Movement has been ministering as a bugle-call to today's churches to take the Great Commission seriously and to fulfill the long-delayed task.

God in history has raised up various movements as His instrument for various purposes. When the purpose is fulfilled, the instrument must have the wisdom and the courage to die. And so it is with the AD2000 Movement. During its very first International Board meeting, the decision was made that the Movement as an organization would be dissolved

ships to accomplish this were an essential part of the process.

Hundreds of mission organizations and ministries were brought together to form specific "Tracks," "Task Forces" and "Resource Networks." Those ministries with similar areas of outreach came together to network, cooperate and coordinate their efforts. Tracks were formed for those involved with prayer, translation, Gospel recordings, mobilization, unreached peoples, saturation church planting, women and more.

Those organizations that could benefit a wide range of ministries and tracks formed the resource networks or task forces. For example, Phill Butler's ministry, Interdev, formed the Partnership Development Task Force to help a wide variety of ministries work together to reach specific peoples. Likewise, Pete Holzmann headed up the Interactive Task Force to help all AD2000 participants use technology to foster better communication within and between the various networks and tracks.

Most, if not all, of the networks and task forces will continue their cooperative efforts even though the movement that brought them into being has closed its doors.

at the end of the year 2000. But the spirit, vision and commitment of the Movement will hopefully continue to live, grow and be accomplished through churches and mission agencies worldwide.

With the consent of both the International and US Boards, it was decided that a simple ceremony will be held on April 20, 2001 in Los Angeles (where the first formative meeting of the Movement was held back in 1989) to mark the formal closure of the organization of the AD2000 Movement. May God continue to bless the final round on world evangelization through His own way and in His own time.

Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. (John 12:24)

National Initiatives

From the beginning, the AD2000 Movement was led by people who had grown up outside of North America. As a result, a major emphasis of its efforts was on mobilizing indigenous mission and church structures to find and reach every unreached people group within their own countries. Over 100 countries have started national initiatives as a result of the AD2000 Movement's efforts. The U.S. was slow to start, but its national initiative is now moving forward as Mission America.

was doing to reach them. They used this information to mobilize both churches and mission agencies to focus their efforts on reaching these unreached peoples. The results have been spectacular.

At GCOWE '95 in Seoul, Korea, the AD2000 Movement released, in cooperation with the Peoples Information Network, a list of unreached peoples under the title, *The Least-Evangelized Peoples of the World*.

Following GCOWE '95, the AD2000 Movement launched Joshua Project 2000 with a focus on reaching the unreached peoples with a population of 10,000 or more. Shortly after

The networks, partnerships and national initiatives that AD2000 fostered will not soon be forgotten and will continue to bear fruit in the future.

Information Gathering and Distribution

From its inception, the AD2000 Movement set out to collect the best information available on who the unreached peoples are and what God

the launch of Joshua Project 2000 in November 1995, the first Joshua Project list of 1,739 unreached peoples was released in the May '96 issue of *Mission Frontiers*. This list was continually refined as new data became available.

Rev. Dr. Luis Bush: International Director, AD2000 & Beyond Movement

I rejoice with my two dear brothers to be part of this final and farewell message of the AD2000 & Beyond Movement. Much has been said and reported upon over the brief tenure of this Movement, with great praises and thanks to God for His manifold blessings both seen and unseen! Seeking to be brief, my praises and thanks are three-fold:

- For the early acceptance and rapidly growing fellowship of leaders towards a church for every people and the Gospel for every person vision by the year 2000, both for geographic and functional purposes. This matrix was well blessed in many places around the world.

- For each of the Praying Through the Window initiatives I-IV, with prayer participation moving from 21 to 40+ million people around the globe, plus many onsite prayer journey teams as well. The measured impact of this prayer is testimony of God's power through man's faithful prayer!

- For the catalytic outflows of GCOWE '95 / Korea and GCOWE '97 / South Africa consultations, the fires still burning and advancing the flame edge among the unreached day by day.

Praises be to God! May it all continue, even increase, as God so leads and provides!

See AD2000, continued on page 34.



Seen here are the 262 Christian leaders from 140 ministries in 77 countries that gathered in Colorado Springs in Nov. 1995 to launch Joshua Project 2000. They are holding the first Joshua Project list of 1,739 peoples.

The information gathering continued as the AD2000 office launched a global survey of mission agencies and their activities among the Joshua Project peoples of the world. This survey of over 450 mission organizations and 350 other organizations and individuals gathered 22,000 pieces of information. This survey was published and released at GCOWE '97 in South Africa as *The Global Guide to Unreached Peoples*. It not only included information on the

unreached peoples but also the very important "work among" data which documented where agencies were working with each of the Joshua Project peoples.

Out of this survey came the list of the 579 "Untargeted Peoples." These are peoples with a population

over 10,000 with which no agency was working or had plans to work. The hundreds of mission agency leaders at GCOWE '97 were challenged to commit their organizations to reach out to these untargeted peoples. As a result, 390 of these untargeted peoples were selected by agency leaders for outreach.

Over the next three years the number of untargeted peoples went up and down as agencies targeted various peoples and new information became available. At Billy Graham's

Amsterdam 2000 meeting in August 2000, Dr. Bruce Wilkinson of Walk Through the Bible challenged the 500 delegates of the Strategic Task Force on Evangelism to take responsibility for reaching the remaining 253 untargeted peoples with a population over 10,000. By the end of the conference all 253 peoples had been selected by a mission agency for outreach. This was a specific example of how good information empowered the coordination and cooperation that is making a difference in the lives of hundreds of unreached peoples.

Global Conferences

Throughout its short history the AD2000 Movement was propelled forward by major global conferences of historic proportions that helped to focus the efforts of the overall movement.

In May of 1995, GCOWE '95 brought together over 4,000 delegates from 186 countries to Seoul, Korea, making this the largest and most widely represented international Christian gathering in history at that time. What is even more remarkable is that the focus was on reaching every unreached people by the year 2000.

As the national initiatives developed around the world, so did

AD2000, Continued from page 33.

Rev. Dr. John Kyle: Chairman, AD2000 US Support Committee & Board

Although the AD2000 & Beyond Movement has been brought to closure officially, the spirit of the Movement will live on as people across the globe continue to cooperate and work toward mutual goals. We have learned over these past years that we can accomplish a great deal more by working together rather than independently. The Movement has effectively handed off the concept of partnerships around strategic tasks by way of the Networks and Task Force concepts.

I have noted, for instance, that HIServices has proceeded from the Joshua Project 2000 to the Joshua

Project II that will include even more unreached people groups than ever before. This is moving strategically according to the Movement's credo, A Church for Every People and the Gospel for Every Person.

Also, our former sister organizations continue to expand their global vision as the Lausanne Movement and World Evangelical Fellowship forge ahead in seeking to provide ways to reach our world for Christ. It is heartening that the Great Commission Roundtable is also standing by to assist Evangelicals in the task of world evangelization.

I am personally pleased that the leadership of the AD2000 & Beyond Movement has been true to its original bylaws that stressed closure of the organization at the close of over a decade of intense ministry. Extremely

significant gains were made in reaching the lost for Christ around the world during the last decade of the Twentieth Century. I believe that Christian history will verify that the AD2000 & Beyond Movement was guided by the Holy Spirit in seeking to carry out Christ's Great Commission worldwide to the Glory of God. May God bless each of you who participated in the Movement. It has been an immense privilege to labor alongside of you these past years.

May the good Lord bless and keep you, individually and together, as the days proceed into the 21st Century / 3rd Millennium! Please know of our deepest thanks and appreciation for the many prayers, gifts and support given to the AD2000 Movement throughout its brief, yet blessed years. Thank you!

the desire to host and sponsor both regional and global events. The Koreans sponsored GCOWE '95 and the South Africans hosted and sponsored GCOWE '97 in Pretoria. While GCOWE '95 emphasized mobilization through vision sharing, GCOWE '97 had a more practical side focusing on specific steps to take in reaching unreached peoples.

The crowning jewel of this series of global conferences was to have been Celebrate Messiah 2000. It was scheduled to take place in Jerusalem in December 2000, but a strike by Israeli immigration workers forced its cancellation. A manifesto of this meeting was published and is available on the *Mission Frontiers* website.¹

Accomplishments

The AD2000 Movement succeeded in mobilizing a significant portion of the global evangelical church and missions community with a vision to reach the unreached peoples—and thereby provide access to the Gospel to every person. The concept of the “10/40 Window” was a huge marketing success with as many as 40 million believers praying for this part of the world and millions

more at least familiar with the term.

AD2000 not only mobilized people with vision, but it also brought people together to solve problems, bringing a level of coordination and cooperation that was previously unknown.

A Lasting Legacy

The networks, partnerships and national initiatives that AD2000 fostered will not soon be forgotten and will continue to bear fruit in the future. The multitude of ministries involved with AD2000 have seen the power of partnership and will not want to see these networks end.

The AD2000 Movement brought together many of the best researchers on unreached peoples to form a cooperative network to produce lists of unreached peoples with common coding that all could endorse and use. This was a monumental achievement in cooperation and made the first Joshua Project list of unreached peoples possible. This network of researchers has developed into the

Harvest Information System (HIS) database currently being developed by a new organization called Joshua Project II consisting of a number of staff who once served in the AD2000 office. Much of the data gathered under AD2000 is now part of the new HIS database. This new data collection effort by Joshua Project II will focus on all the peoples on earth regardless of size or evangelization status. It holds great promise to provide agencies with the most up-to-date “real time” information available.

Like the spark that ignites an enormous explosion of energy, the AD2000 office has closed, but the flames of vision and cooperation it has birthed lives on in Joshua Project II and the hundreds of organizations and thousands of individuals that made up this amazing movement. It is now up to all of us to work together to finish the task. 🌐

1. See www.missionfrontiers.org/2001/02/cm2k.htm

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Dreaming the Impossible

Can a younger generation of Indians be raised up as laborers for the Great Commission?

—Shibu K. Mathew

Mathew, a 26-year-old executive from a multinational company left behind a sizable paycheck, quit his job “to do something that outlasts this life” and joined a company that supports the cause of mission.

A student group in South India comprised of students from five states recently raised \$4,300 for a two-week mission trip.

India is in transition. Gurcharan Das, in his best seller *India Unbound*, portrays the social and economic transformation that is taking place in contemporary India. He divides the last fifty years into three eras:

1. Our Spring of Hope (1942-65)
2. The Lost Generation (1966-91)
3. The Rebirth of Dreams (1991-99).

He says this generation can dream and fulfill dreams which would have been unachievable for their grandparents. The above examples show some of the determination and flexibility of the youth of India.

The success of Indians in the area of information technology (IT) has spurred optimism among younger Indians—in spite of daunting issues

like poverty, illiteracy, and a



Shibu K. Mathew is a mission mobilizer with Perspectives India. E-mail:

shibukmathew@hotmail.com.

population exceeding one billion.

Liberalization, globalization and the Internet have added the needed impetus for an entrepreneurial spirit. Earlier generations typically found security with a government job and stuck with it until retirement. Today’s generation is swapping jobs and constantly looking for an opportunity to climb up the ladder. They have a “just do it” mentality.

According to the 1991 census, 55.4 percent of India’s population is between the ages of 15 and 59 and 26.6 percent is between the ages of 15 and 29. Economists predict that India will lead the new millennium because of its large pool of workers available for IT and related fields. India’s growing practice of “exporting” its human resources to different parts of the world is expanding the international impact of Indians. Cashing in on this opportunity, many multinational companies have started branches or main operations in India. The new-generation “yuppies” are earning in a month what their grandparents earned in their lifetime. Consumer companies are making specialized products to suit this young and rich market.

Though these changes affect a small percentage of the population, attitudes and preferences are changing fast in all areas of life, especially



among the younger generation. The older generation is also adjusting to the changing situation by learning to send e-mails to their children far away.

Are Indian missions and churches taking advantage of the opportunities offered by this new environment? Is the younger generation excited about finishing the task of reaching the unreached people groups of India?

“The missions and churches have been slothful in getting more young people, but God is raising up more youth to be involved in missions,” answers Kumar Swamy, the South India director of Operation Mobilization. He continues, “After the death of Graham Staines (the Australian missionary martyred with his two sons) we had a recruiting camp. We had many apprehensions, but to our surprise more than 60 youngsters came for the camp.” He also cited that the number of recruits from Orissa, Goa and Maharashtra is increasing—apart from South Indians. “We get an average of 25 young people at all the Discipleship Training Schools (DTS) in different parts of India,” remarks Jiggu, YWAM leader in Bangalore. Some 30 percent of DTS participants continue on with YWAM; the rest are challenged to be involved

in missions at different levels. Half of the participants in OM's recruiting camp stay with OM for church-planting efforts. The rest are sent back with a missionary vision, with some pursuing theological studies.

Although these numbers are encouraging, they are meager compared to tasks that face the church in India.

What is hindering India's young people from being involved in missions?

Lack of understanding about God and mission. Jacob Isaac, director of Kerygma Ministries which focuses on urban youth, said that if the youth are challenged, they will respond. But their missions awareness is minimal. Saju George, director New Life Computer Institute (NLCI), agrees that more missions education is needed at all levels.

Parental pressure. Indian parents will typically spend all their earnings on their children's education in hopes of getting support from them in their older days. They will oppose a mission career, which is always at minimal pay and without much social status, except in a few parts of the country.

Materialism. As discretionary income is increasing, consumerism is also increasing multi-fold. An affluent lifestyle is preventing many from committing to missions.

Wrong concept of mission involvement. Most students equate mission involvement only with full-time commitment and are not aware of other roles in mission. While many are willing to go as a missionary, behind-the-scenes roles are often ignored, as they are considered insignificant. Churches are willing to support a field missionary but not an office administrator in a mission office. Because of this attitude, most Indian mission organizations lack good administrators, accountants, computer operators, editors, etc. Many who do not fit a field missionary role opt to pray or support missions rather than to get directly involved.

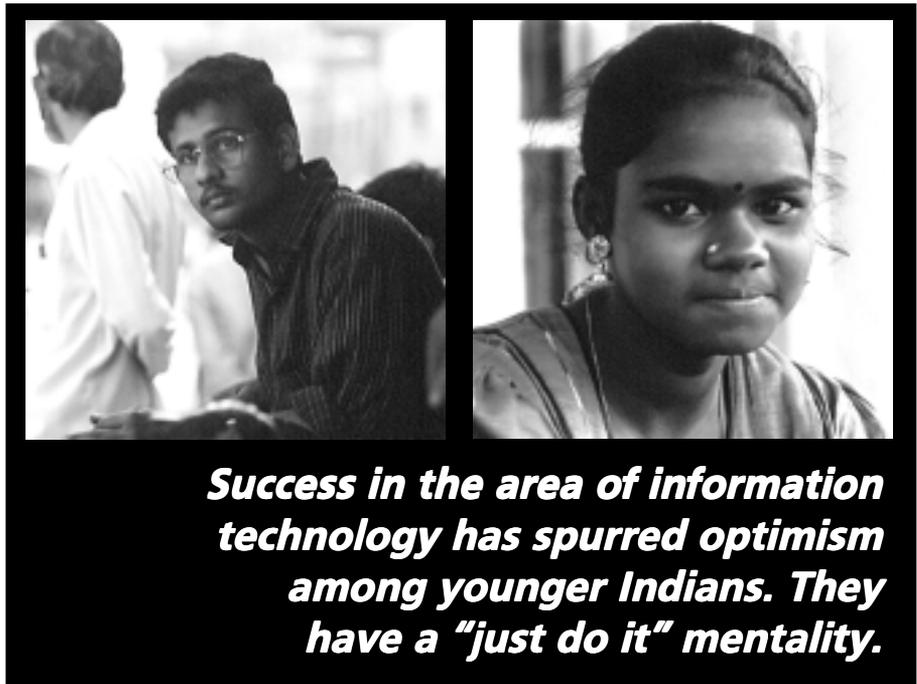
Lack of follow-up. Sufficient support has to be given to interested students to continue in their mission commitment, otherwise they lose interest, suggests Dr. Shaji Thomas, who recently led a short-term mission trip.

How can we motivate the younger generation?

The awareness for mission has to be increased. OM's Kumar says that more mission meetings must be

life to medical missions, and she is mobilizing others to do the same. During his student days a man Vijay participated in a National Missionary Training camp organized by the Union of Evangelical Students of India (UESI). The field exposure opened his eyes, and now he is a Bible translator in North India.

Through its Student Volunteer Program, the India Missions Association is giving opportunities to young



organized to focus on students and lay people. The plan of God and His mission should be taught in the churches and youth groups. Missions must be emphasized as part of discipleship. The responsibility of reaching India should be laid upon Indians. Forming mission interest groups at local levels for young people can create mission awareness. Preaching and teaching the Great Commission should be reintroduced in the pulpits. Praying for missions should be practiced as a church, in groups and within families.

Cross-cultural trips. Mission exposure trips are the best mobilization tool, according to Dr. Thomas. One team member who is a medical student has decided to dedicate her

people to be in the mission field for a month. Last year, around 20 students visited various fields through this program. Jose Thomas, coordinator of SVP and missions secretary of UESI, says that he wants to "send a hundred students every year through this program." Except the month-long SVP, no other missions are offering regular short-term exposure programs that are open to all lay people.

Mobilizing theological students. There are more than 300 Bible training institutes in India, but the majority of them focus on pastoral ministry instead of missionary training. A study of non-Catholic clergy by prominent sociologists T. K. Oommen and Hunter P. Mabry found that there is an unhealthy

“craze” among theological students for higher studies. After finishing their studies they either opt for urban parishes or continue the pursuit of education—thus the rural parishes are depleted of pastors. Their study also reveals that, while 70 percent of Christians in India live in rural areas, over 50 percent of the pastors live in cities. These prospective pastors must be mobilized, so they can, in turn, mobilize the churches.

Mobilize the churches. “Mobilize the clergy. It is easy for them to challenge youth groups and the churches. Then the pastors will let go their young people and other resources,” advises OM’s Kumar.

Catch them young. Saju George proposes that students should be mobilized before graduation, so it will be easier for them to make career decisions. Sunday School and Vacation Bible School materials should have a mission emphasis to challenge children.

Using creative means of mobilization. A survey among young people says that TV influences their decisions and attitudes. New Life Computer Institute uses media effectively to mobilize for Bible translation. Saju George says that visual media make the challenge more effective than an ordinary message would. Kerygma’s Jacob Isaac also indicated there is need for more Indian mission videos. Missions should be communicated through drama, skits and songs.

More resources. There are many mission magazines but most are used as promotional materials. In a survey done by one mission magazine, 90

Frankly Speaking

Overcoming complacency for the lost of India

I feel jittery to think of the things to be done to influence this nation for Christ. I am slightly angered by the snail’s pace at which the churches and organizations go about addressing the needs of this nation, constantly arguing over non-matters such as church vs. parachurch and other rubbish, which will never be solved nor win one person to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. I really believe that these are of the devil to slow Christians down to uselessness while millions head for eternal damnation.

I guess that there are two ways to go. One is to take the side of the opponents of William Carey and say, “The Lord does not need your help or mine to reach the world. He will get people to do things in His own time!” Talk about callousness! This would let me relax and keep going at my own speed, without a care for seeing the nations and people around me come to Christ.

My complacency causes me to question whether or not I really believe that hell is real. If so, how much do I really believe that people go to hell

without the Lord Jesus Christ? How much do I really believe that Christ is the answer for each individual’s sin, that Christ is the only One who will change the ethos and corruption of men and, ultimately, change the nation?

If India is to ever change, we must be committed to the ethos of Jesus and convinced of the reality of salvation through Christ. I just wonder if the church and all of us are ready for it. Or, will our complacency cause us to perpetuate the same practices and excuses which have made very little difference to this nation? Think and pray, man.

The response is for me to proactively think, drive and do what needs to be done to influence the nation and see people to come to Christ.

Let’s do something significant in the days to come—corporately motivating people to make a difference for Christ in this nation—which will spill over to many other parts of the world!

Your Brother,
K. Rajendran
President, India Missions
Association

percent of their readers were above the age of 40. So most of the information reaches only the older generation. The need for youth-oriented mission magazines is crucial. Information about various ministry opportunities should be provided on a regular basis.

Promote creative ideas of mission involvement. As entrepreneurship increases in India, Christians should be trained in tentmaking efforts and deployed in unreached areas of India and abroad. Jacob Isaac suggests, “Youth will more interested in specialized ministries than generic ones.”

moved to North India. Using their hobbies, some housewives who took the class are raising money to support missions. Through its missionary conferences, retreats and other programs, UESI mobilizes more than 100 students every year.

But these efforts are like a drop in the ocean of India’s needs. Unless churches and missions coordinate efforts to mobilize lay people now, India will continue to be a missions challenge for the coming generation. May the Lord raise more dreamers who “expect great things from God, and attempt great things for God.”

What can you do to mobilize India?

- Pray that God will raise up more workers and mobilizers.
- If you are called to minister in India, use the opportunity to mobilize.
- Create Indian mission resources, including videos, for mobilizing youth, children and adults.
- Challenge Indians abroad to support missionaries working among India’s many unreached people groups.

Mobilization is bringing about more involvement. For the last six years, New Life Computer Institute has been mobilizing young people for Bible translation. As a result, more than 50 have decided on Bible translation ministry.

Another tool for creating awareness is the South Asian version of *Perspectives*. This book is now being used by various training institutions. In Chennai, after a *Perspectives* class, two participants joined the ministry and one pastor

COMINAD Unveils Adopt-A-Village Project

ORLANDO

Over 50 members of the Cooperative Missions Network of the African Dispersion (COMINAD) met on April 9-12, 2001 at Wycliffe's Bible Translators' Center for a conference that challenged all attendees to participate in the development process of the Adopt-A-Village (AAV) project. Envisioned by Brian Johnson, COMINAD's national coordinator, AAV is all about "building relationships between villages in Africa and the churches in the West, for the purpose of furthering God's Kingdom," Johnson said.

Participants included representatives from a range of ministries, including Wycliffe, SIM, USCWM, YWAM, Africa Christian Fellowship-USA, the Center for Urban Theological Studies,

Reconciliation Ministries Network, Carver International Missions, South Africa Inland Missions, National Black Evangelical Association and Campus Crusade. They were asked to take part in a "nuts and bolts" type meeting to plot a workable way to make the vision reality.

"I feel like I got a peek into a Kingdom Construction planning meeting around the throne," said one participant. Some challenging issues that were covered during this development phase included coordinating a networking system, choosing a village to adopt, designing AAV to not be a burden to mission agencies and avoiding inherent problems of exploitation, paternalism, denominationalism and sectarianism.

COMINAD by e-mail: IAAMM@aol.com

Bible League and Adopt-a-People Clearinghouse Merge

Aiming to enhance the goals of both ministries, The Bible League and the Adopt-A-People Clearinghouse have announced plans for a merger to be completed by early 2002.

"This merger will greatly increase discipleship training around the world by enabling a greater number of unreached people groups to be introduced to the Word," said Dennis Mulder, President of The Bible League.

The Bible League was founded in 1938 and to make Scripture available through training and supplying local churches for evangelism and discipleship.

The Clearinghouse was formed in 1989, (initially based at the U.S. Center for World Mission) and provides resources on the world's

unreached people groups with resources for "adopting" them through prayer, partnership, provision and personnel.

Up and Coming

COMING TOGETHER FOR UNITY

In what has been described as the most comprehensive meeting of mission workers in over 40 years, a broad spectrum of mission associations will join with relief and development associations and others for a convention entitled

"Godsmission.commUNITY." Meeting September 20-23 in Haines City, Florida, the focus on unity will look for "new pathways for collaborative global ministry."

On the web: www.godsmission.com
E-mail: GMC@wheaton.edu

NEW TOOLS

The International Society for Frontier Missiology (ISFM) will hold its annual conference on September 19 & 20 in Orlando, Florida. Patrick Johnstone (*Operation World*) and Todd Johnson (*World Christian Encyclopedia*) will join a number of other speakers to discuss "New Tools in the Toolbox."

On the web: www.isfm.bigstep.com
E-mail: slee@kacwm.org

AFRICANS FOR MISSION

African Christian Fellowship-USA will hold their biennial convention at Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio on August 1-5, 2001. Over 1000 attendees are expected, largely first generation Africans in the United States.

On the web: www.acfusa.net

Obituary

A Lost Voice for the Martyrs

Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, the Romanian founder of The Voice of the Martyrs, died on February 17, 2001, in Glendale, California, after a long illness.

Born March 24, 1909, in Bucharest, Romania, Wurmbrand came to faith through the Anglican Mission in Bucharest, eventually pastoring the Norwegian Lutheran Mission there.

He was kidnapped by Romanian authorities in February 1948 and imprisoned in Bucharest. He was subjected to brainwashing attempts, physical and mental torture and threats to his family. His wife, Sabina, was imprisoned for three years as well.

After a release, Wurmbrand was rearrested in 1959 and sentenced to 25 additional years. Pressure from Western countries led to his release in 1964. Although reluctant to leave Romania, he then heeded the council of Romanian underground church leaders, who

convinced him to leave and become a "voice" for the underground church to the world.

In October 1967 he published the first issue of "The Voice of the Martyrs" newsletter and began to establish the international offices which would assist him in efforts to inform Christians everywhere about persecuted Christians. By the mid-1980s his work was established in 80 restricted nations with offices in 30 countries.



Richard Wurmbrand
1909-2001

An author of 18 books in English, he is widely recognized for *Tortured for Christ*, the recount of his experiences in prison. He had returned to Romania in 1990 and retired from day-to-day work at Voice of the Martyrs in 1992. Tom White is the current director of VOM. Wurmbrand is survived by his son, Michael Wurmbrand, and three grandchildren.

www.persecution.com

Hot Titles



Circles of Blessing

Redemption in the Rainforest

David A. Tucker and Arlene Knickerbocker

Dave and Kathy Tucker served as missionaries in Irian Jaya, Indonesia for nine years. This is their story of how God grew and used them to bring the message of redemption to many of the Kayagar tribal people. As you read this book, you too will be included in the circles of blessing.

WCL605-6 William Carey Library, paperback, 188 pp.
Retail \$12.99 Discount \$9.09 *Wholesale \$7.79

New Title

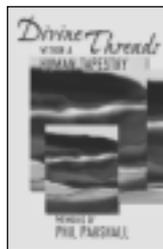


A Light Shines in Central Asia

Thomas Hale

New book from the author of *On Being a Missionary*. Presents real-life experiences of missionaries sharing the gospel in Buryatia, Tibet, Mongolia, etc. These stories show God's awesome power as He changes lives and protects his servants while they live and work in predominantly Buddhist countries.

WCL350-2 William Carey Library, paperback, 212 pp.
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Divine Threads within a Human Tapestry

Phil Parshall

This autobiography opens wide the doors of the soul of this masterful storyteller. Integrates personal stories, struggles and victories with missiological reflection.

WCL602-1 William Carey Library, pb, 210 pp.
Retail \$15.99 Discount \$10.39 *Wholesale \$8.79



Drumbeats that Changed the World

Joseph Conley

"Drumbeats weaves together the histories of the Regions Beyond Missionary Union and the West Indies Mission into a majestic tapestry replete with human pathos, fascinating narrative, providential networking, and missiological breakthroughs...illuminates the entire landscape of evangelical missions as it developed during the past century and a half." — Kenneth B. Mullholland

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Acts of the Holy Spirit

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Mission in Practice



Ministry to Muslim Women

Longing to Call Them Sisters

Fran Love and Jeleta Eckheart

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Lianne Roembke

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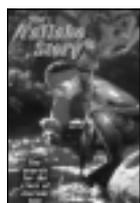
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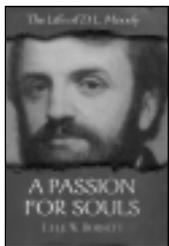
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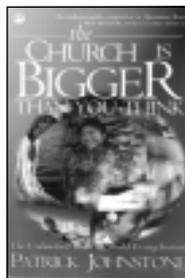
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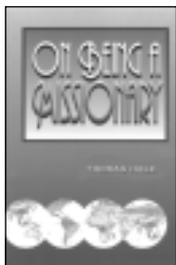
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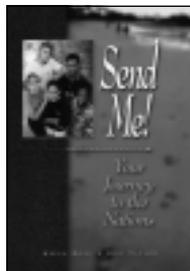
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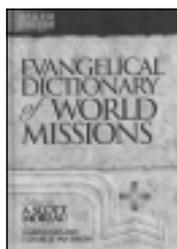
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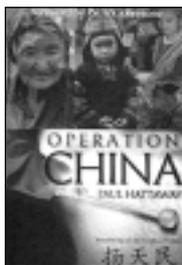
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Where are We Headed?

If we know the goal we're more likely to hit it.

—Greg H. Parsons

Experienced field coaches who work with mission teams in tough places believe that one of the biggest reasons—often unstated—for missionary attrition is that the missionaries aren't actually getting anywhere. They aren't getting anything done.

Is it because of our model in the United States?

A young missionary woman and her husband were just about to leave for the field to work with an organization focused on church planting among unreached peoples. At a church mission conference she remarked, "I don't know about this church planting, I just want to go out there and be like Jesus."

We certainly need more people being like Jesus on the mission field! Younger missionaries these days bring a dimension of this some of us veterans need. We need missionaries who deeply desire to be like Christ in every aspect of their lives. We need believers—missionaries or not—who live out those beliefs everyday.

But we also need to know where we are headed.

I've been studying the words of Jesus related to what He would do—I've called it the *I will* statements. I'm not finished with my study yet, but so far, two things stick out.

One is in Matthew 4:19 where Jesus tells the first disciples, "Follow Me, and I will turn you into fishers of men."¹



Rev. Greg Parsons is General Director of the U.S. Center for World Mission. He's been on staff at the USCWM for 18 years.

That is what that missionary woman was trying to say. She wants to love people into the Kingdom. But I wonder if she will feel she is not getting anywhere without understanding the second instance when Jesus says He will do something, in Matthew 16:18. There He says, "...upon this rock, I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."² Many translations use "overpower" instead of "prevail." The word *katischuo* has the

If the mission field church is modeled after what we have here, we may never see that church grow and truly impact its community for the Lord.

root meaning "to be strong, powerful, to gain the ascendancy."³ The idea of overpower has remained in modern Greek. Yet, it makes more sense—since gates are defensive weapons—for gates to prevail (or not) than for gates to overpower (or not).

In any case, Jesus tells us that He *will* build His church. It is important to remember that the church didn't exist yet. The word for church in only used three times in the gospels; here, and twice in Matt. 18. The next time it shows up is not until Acts 5:11. Jesus doesn't give much detail about this new structure or meeting, but He does say that it will be His. He doesn't say He will build *the* church, but He will build *His* church.

Jesus presents a clear picture here of where He is going. The phrase following adds to His focus. The idea that the gates of Hell will not prevail against the church strengthens our church planting focus. The gates of Hades are keeping people from the light and truth that is found only in

Christ. As Jesus builds His church, Hell's gates will not be strong enough to withstand it!

Jesus doesn't say He will take over governments. He doesn't say everyone will follow Him. He doesn't tell us we'll just walk in and all this will happen. He simply says, "I will build My church."

Are we listening? Is that the focus and passion of our lives and our churches?

I've seen a number of evangelical church mission statements. They usually hold high the teaching/preaching of the word. They talk about worship and fellowship and prayer. Some add a statement about outreach including evangelism and/or missions. All of these are wonderful and necessary.

How many talk about church planting? How many churches think of multiplying their impact for the Lord by starting another church *in their area*? Do their missionaries focus on this? So many churches getting involved in missions are looking for short-term results when church planting in a new culture takes time—because the gates haven't been broken into yet.

Perhaps it wouldn't take as much time if we were living it, praying it, and sending our people out to see the church built; in other words, modeling it. If the mission field church is modeled after what we have here, we may be in big trouble in terms of seeing that church grow and truly impact its community for the Lord.

Perhaps that young missionary woman can't imagine how to plant the church because she has never seen it done!

1. NET Bible Translation, www.netbible.com

2. Author's translation.

3. Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich 1957, pg. 425

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EMQ is a unique journal published for the worldwide missions community. Each issue is packed with challenging articles, reports, and editorials from missionaries, mission leaders, and experts in fields pertinent to missions. EMQ topics range from cultivating church/mission relationships to confronting postmodernism to dealing with bribery to facing missionary temptations. You'll also find a wealth of information in our regular departments: **Missions on the Web**, for help in sorting out mission resources and information on the Web; **Book Reviews**, for insightful comments on books on the market that are germane to world missions; and **In the Workshop**, for practical ministry tips.



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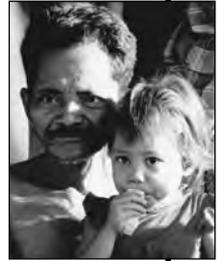
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Mission Frontiers is available electronically, at no extra charge, on a missions-oriented E-mail network called Brigada. To receive **MF Online**, send an e-mail to hub@xc.org and say, **subscribe brigada** in the message block. On a second line of that message say, **subscribe brigada-pubs-missionfrontiers**. That is all you need to do.

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