



Dear Reader,

Many years ago a little Chinese girl fearfully stepped into the house of some newly-arrived missionaries 100 miles north of Beijing. Her parents had insisted that she listen to nothing these "foreign devils" would say to her; she was only to help with the children, for her family desperately needed the extra income.

She didn't listen. But she *saw* the husband open doors for his wife and treat her lovingly in other ways. She was totally astonished. Christianity was for her!

Her grandson, Thomas Wang, is one of the most widely-known Chinese believers in the world today.

Only foreign missionaries *physically present* can make such an impact. In many countries the mistreatment of women, even by pastors, continues precisely because something else has not been modeled for them by redeemed believers from afar. Sending money to such pastors won't make those changes.

Sending money cannot take the place of sending godly people, godly families. This is what it means to respond to Jesus' call for us "to be my witnesses," not just send words. Sending money is not sending witnesses. In all of the remaining untouched people groups there are, by definition, not yet any local pastors to pay to evangelize. Actions speak louder than words – or checks. The sheer example of a Christian family is the most often under-rated factor in missions!

It is with real sadness that we produce this issue at this time. Very rarely does a major mission organization come out with such blatantly harmful and misleading information. But now we have in our hands the Summer 2005 issue of Christian Aid's bulletin, *Christian Mission*, describing in some detail the work Bob Finley has been doing—from 1953 to 1976 with International Students, Inc., and from 1976 to the present with Christian Aid Mission. However, the actual work Christian Aid is doing is not so much the issue as what they are saying about other forms of mission.

Few mission organizations are in a position to make honest critique lest they be accused of simply bolstering what they themselves are doing.

But the U. S. Center for World Mission does not "send" missionaries. We have decided that we are the ones to speak out this time. We are out to promote the entire mission cause and anything that will enhance it or protect it.

Ralph D. Winter

Ralph Winter, Editor



What Is the Story?

Noting Errors of Fact, Concept, and Strategy

Ralph D. Winter

What is today called the Christian Aid Mission has an interesting history which is summed up in the Summer 2005 issue of its magazine, *Christian Mission*.

Bob Finley first went out as a missionary to China in 1948, the year before the Communist movement there started expelling missionaries. In 1950 he crossed paths with Bob Pierce and the two spoke to large crowds of people in Korea.

That led Bob Pierce to found World Vision in the same year, 1950. Between 1948 and 1953, the magazine explains (p. 6), many Christian leaders in Asia told Bob Finley, "It would be best for the cause of Christ if all foreign missionaries left their country." Thus, in 1953 he founded International Students, Inc. (ISI).

We read,

During the early years of ISI Bob Finley kept quiet about the need for reformation in traditional foreign mission activities carried on by U.S. churches. Consequently he received enthusiastic support from many Christian friends ... Dr. (Donald Grey) Barnhouse served on the board of directors. Others who served were Bob Jones, Jr. ... Oswald J. Smith ... Jack Wyrzten ... Dawson Trotman loaned staff ... Billy Graham ... served on the board ... The goal of ISI was to reach foreign students as a new approach to foreign missions, but from day one it included helping them financially when they went back overseas as missionaries among their own people. Thus the Christian Aid division was an integral part of the total ISI ministry.

Thus far there was still little criticism of standard missions. The article goes on,

In 1960 ISI published the first of several articles pointing out the need for a reformation in the way foreign missionary work is done. Emphasis was placed on how missionary colonialism was

hindering the cause of Christ throughout the world. A chorus of approval was heard from leaders of indigenous evangelical ministries overseas, but heads of traditional U.S. missions were fierce in expressing their opposition to the articles. Division and disputation resulted.

In 1970 ISI and Christian Aid divided, and Christian Aid Mission then later moved to Charlottesville, VA. By 2005, 700 different ministries were receiving some sort of help from Christian Aid, through which 90,000 "native missionaries" were being fielded. Today the rift is very clear. Christian Aid Mission and some other similar missions don't send people but just money, loudly proclaiming that theirs is the only legitimate kind of mission, and that sending people of love and integrity is both unbiblical and harmful. Standard missions both send people, and by means of those people on-site channel lots of money and goods to overseas ministries. (They are much more likely to know to what and to whom they are giving, as well as monitoring results.)

Isolated and rejected by the standard mission agencies their shrill publications constantly denounce, Christian Aid does not seem to have learned very much since 1970. This most recent issue of their magazine clearly displays errors of fact, of concept and of strategy. It is a pity when one type of work, in order to attract donors, falls into the rut of tearing down all other types of work, but you can understand the temptation.

Errors of Fact

In the sidebar on pages 10 which quotes exactly Christian Aid's mission statement (with their

Standard missions are much more likely to know to what and to whom they are giving.

(continued on page 8)



What Is the Story?

(continued from page 5)

permission), the italicized text, which is highlighted in the original, has got to be one of the most completely misleading statements ever made in the history of missions. The Christian Aid statement, referring back over 50 years, says that “foreign missionaries are still not allowed in Nepal.”

The fact is that during those same 50 years the United Mission to Nepal has been an umbrella organization for dozens of standard foreign mission agencies working all over Nepal, maintaining hundreds of foreign missionaries in that country at any given time. Their love and their integrity has had enormous impact. Even the government has been willing for them to work there.

No doubt what Christian Aid has done for Nepal has been helpful, but during those 50 years well over a *thousand* different foreign missionaries have also been faithfully at work. Not *none*, as the Christian Aid statement reads. What will Christian

You can't be both a native and a missionary. The phrase “native missionary” is a contradiction in terms.

Aid say to this? They can be counted on to point out that “what they meant” was the workers these dozens of foreign mission (“colonial”) agencies are sending into Nepal are not there under a

“missionary visa.” So what? As many as half of the workers sent out by many agencies live and labor under some other kind of visa.

In any case is it at all fair to imply that “with the help of Christian Aid the number of believers has grown to more than a million”? Doesn't this imply that the movement was all or mainly the work of Christian Aid? This is a wide departure from the facts.

Errors of Concept

Persistently in their literature is the claim that “native missionaries” whom they support already speak the language as natives. They say,

Because they already know the language and customs of their people ... Native missionaries are much more effective in reaching their own people than are foreigners from a diverse culture.

It is all well and good, and perfectly normal, for believers to win their own people. This is what all foreign missionaries count on once a breakthrough occurs. But classical mission has always been bent on reaching into societies where there are not yet any Christians. Once there are believers in a society, if they

are paid with foreign funds to preach the Gospel, their motives are suspect and their funding is envied.

Furthermore, if they wish to venture out of their native group to reach into another, different, unreached group, they are no longer natives and they face language and culture barriers like any other missionary would.

A little-understood fact about missions is that most of the peoples of the world are seriously alienated from groups nearby that are ethnically different. It would be much better for a Navajo evangelist to go to Norway to reach out to the Laplanders than to try to reach the Hopi who are their next-door neighbors, with whom there have been tensions for years. And, it would be much better for a Navajo evangelist to go to Norway to reach out to the Laplanders than for a Norwegian to go to their next-door neighbors, the Laplanders. It would be better for a Norwegian missionary to come to the USA to reach the Hopi Indians in Arizona than for a white citizen from Phoenix.

This is simply the way it is, and it is one of the most unavoidable obstacles in missions.

In any case, all missionaries are native in their home culture and foreign in their field culture. You are either a “native” where you are, and not a missionary but an evangelist, or you are a non-native and a “missionary” where you have gone. You can't be both a native and a missionary. *The phrase “native missionary” is a contradiction in terms.*

This is a fact: if you can already speak the language and understand the culture (as those supported by Christian Aid are purported to be able to do) you are native, not a missionary. If you can't speak the language and have to learn the culture where you are, then you are no longer a “native” in that situation, but a missionary who faces cross-cultural barriers of communication. Real, cross-cultural missionaries are not merely pastors paid to reach their own people for less money. And, if they try to reach out to a next-door neighbor group, they often face greater local prejudices and barriers of culture and communication than would a missionary from afar.

Frequently foreign missionaries soon become the most trusted people in the situation. Americans are often highly respected. Very often groups do not trust people from a group speaking differently right next to them. This is why rarely in the Middle East are the thousands of Christians (surrounded by millions of Muslims) the best ones to win those

Muslims. You can understand that Christians living in minority enclaves through centuries of oppression are often the last ones even to wish that the Muslims would come to Christ, and if one here and one there does come, suspicions are so great that they may not even be allowed to enter a Christian assembly!

Errors of Strategy

It is perfectly understandable that if sending checks would be all that is necessary, it would save an enormous amount of sacrifice and heartache. No one would, humanly speaking, wish to leave family, friends, and country to labor in risk and relentless, wrenching ambiguity in a strange foreign culture. But that has had to be the case in the past wherever untouched cultures were yet to be penetrated, where you cannot simply send money to Christians who are already there.

On page 11 of *Christian Mission* we find,

When William Carey went from England to India as a missionary in 1792 he found no churches or native missionaries. When Bob Finley traveled throughout India in 1948, 1951, 1973, 1974, and 1975 he found thousands of Evangelical churches and tens of thousands of native missionaries. He soon came to realize that a new day had dawned in the history of missions.

What this statement does not reveal is that India is a huge continent of ethnic and cultural diversity. These thousands of churches in India (which really are there!) are 95% within only one stratum of culturally-oppressed minority peoples. Even within that oppressed minority they are a minority. Reaching all of the rest of the unfortunate people in this huge, oppressed stratum has, indeed, got to be considered a major mission challenge, but that is only part of the story.

Sending existing believers money to reach the rest of India is, thus, not by any means the only thing that has to be done. A parallel would be if the only Christians in the USA were among native Americans, that is, Navajo, Choctaw, Apache, Cherokee, etc. Suppose also that Japan was mainly Christian and Japanese believers wanted to spread the Gospel in the USA. Would it be sufficient simply to send money to Navajo believers and expect them to fan out and effectively reach the huge US population of non-Christian Caucasians? And, would it be fair to say that no other method is valid?

The phenomenal spread of the Gospel into the Roman empire in Paul's ministry was specifically due

to the fact that for hundreds of years "foreign" Jewish believers had fanned out across the empire and established maybe a thousand synagogues. Their strangeness of diet and culture did not obscure their integrity and worship of the true God, and in Paul's day there may have been as many as a million non-Jewish "God-fearers" and "devout persons" sitting in the back rows of the synagogues. *They were there because they were attracted by the integrity and clean living of the foreigners*, the Jews, who had come to live among them.

Those Jews had to learn the language and the culture of their new locale. They were no doubt often misunderstood. Nevertheless, *because of their physical presence* thousands of Gentiles were attracted to their synagogues (such as Cornelius in the NT).

For these reasons it is painful to report, the virulent Christian Aid denunciation of any *sending* of missionaries is a poison spread even in mission fields themselves. One of the brightest and best "new things" in missions is the fact that all over the former mission lands the mission-planted churches have become outnumbered greatly by home-planted churches, and – great! – they are now wanting to send their own missionaries. But, Christian Aid workers are there to urge them not to do so but rather to send money to Christian Aid to send on to Christians elsewhere! You can see this illustrated in the second report on pages 13-14.

Today we see exciting growth of mission-sending vision within the former mission-field churches themselves. The Nigerian Evangelical Mission Association (NEMA, with dozens of agency members) reports that there are 500,000 pastors in that country (with the largest population in Africa). But there are still at least 100 languages in Nigeria within which there are not yet any pastors who can be paid to reach their own people (even if that were a good idea). And the next-door neighbors of these unreached groups are not necessarily the ones most likely to reach them.

The India Missions Association (IMA) is even bigger, with 199 agency members and 40,000 missionaries, the bulk of which are true cross-cultural missionaries. Christian Aid Mission would tell US donors that these two large associations are dead-wrong, and that they should send their money to Christian Aid.

The denunciation of any sending of missionaries is a poison spread even in mission fields themselves.



What Is the Story?

On the other hand, if Christian Aid tells donors that they should send money to Christian Aid so that Christian Aid can then send money to such indigenous missions, they are contravening their constant message that cross-cultural missionaries

from different or strange cultures are not needed or can't do the job. Apparently it all boils down to "send money to Christian Aid," whether you live in Central America or India or the USA. 🌐

mission & ministry

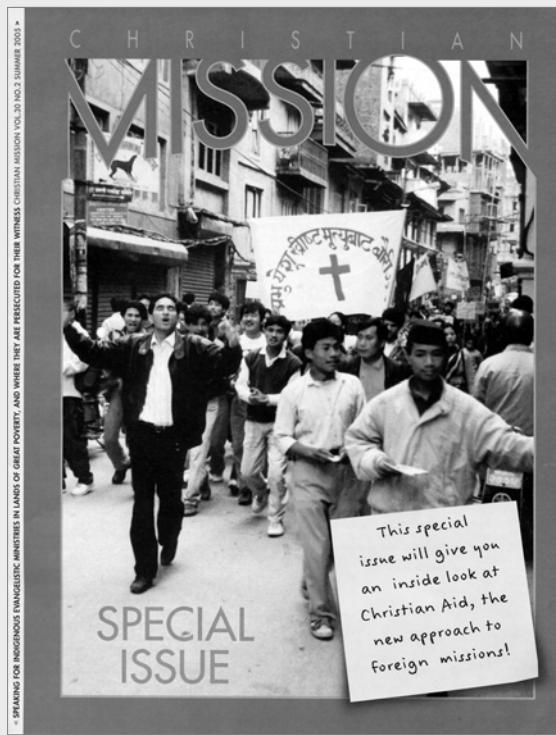
(The Christian Aid mission statement criticized in the previous article.)

The Mission and Ministry of Christian Aid

Reproduced by permission from *Christian Mission* magazine (Summer 2005). The italicized text is highlighted in the original.

“Our cover photo graphically portrays the mission and ministry of Christian Aid. It shows an Easter Sunday procession through the streets of Kathmandu by Christians in the Hindu kingdom of Nepal. When Christian Aid began helping indigenous ministries there half a century ago, that land had never admitted foreign missionaries, never had a church, and was completely closed to Christian witness of any kind. But a former Sikh from the Punjab region of India accepted Christ as Savior while a foreign student in Canada, and returned to his homeland as an impassioned missionary among his own people. Christian Aid got behind him financially and helped him and his coworkers plant over 2000 assemblies of believers throughout their country. Along the northern border they reached visitors from neighboring countries, including Nepal.

One Nepalese who came to Christ was Prem Pradhan, who studied at Calcutta University and had become a commissioned officer in the Indian army. After three years as a believer, God called him to give up military service and go back over the high Himalyas (sic) as a soldier of the cross of Christ. Prem became the first man ever to openly and



boldly preach the gospel of Christ and baptize new believers in that closed land.

He was severely persecuted by the Hindus, who repeatedly threw him into horrible dungeons. Time and again Christian Aid sent funds to bail him out. In 1973 Bob Finley went personally to visit Prem in prison. And when believers were put out of their villages and lost all of their possessions, Christian Aid sent financial help which enabled them to survive.

Christian Aid helped Prem set up schools so the children of Christians could learn to read. One who attended was Sundar Thapa, who is shown on the cover leading the Easter procession. He eventually earned graduate degrees in

Korea and America and now heads up a Bible institute in Nepal as well as an evangelistic ministry which has sent out over 150 missionaries.

Foreign missionaries are still not allowed in Nepal, but with help from Christian Aid the number of believers has grown to more than a million. They meet in thousands of churches throughout the country, and include some from all of the 60 plus tribes and nations that make up the total population of 24 million people. ”

'Disappointed and Grieved'

A Frontier Missionary's Response to *Christian Mission Magazine*

The author is a long-term, frontier missionary serving in South Asia.

Having just finished reading the Summer 2005 edition of Christian Aid's *Christian Mission* magazine, I am disappointed and deeply saddened by their disingenuous and manipulative approach to fund-raising and "kingdom-building." We live in an age in which God is doing wonderful things throughout the earth, mobilizing and anointing His worldwide Body – East, West, North and South, in unity and partnership – to go forth and reflect His glory among the unreached peoples of the earth. This magazine – filled with half-truths, overstatements, and faulty reasoning – represents a mighty step backwards for the cause of Christ and His Kingdom purposes.

There are numerous biblical, cultural, historic and strategic errors found throughout the pages of this magazine, but perhaps sadder than any one specific error is the overarching tone of the whole edition.

Any time one portion of the Body tries to tear down another portion in order to increase their support base, there are anti-Kingdom forces at work. This is certainly a "divide-and-conquer" magazine.

My grief is intensified by the fact that there are, of course, some kernels of truth underlying many of Christian Aid's assertions – and the issues that are raised should be discussed, prayed over, and jointly (in partnership) processed. There is always a need for repentance, growth, change, and re-evaluation.



Sadder than any one specific error is the overarching tone of the whole edition.

The missionary movement since the time of Christ has been one filled with fallible human beings, stumbling forward imperfectly. But let us not "throw the baby out with the bathwater." Historic ways of doing mission should be judged within their historical timeframes. But instead of discussing the issues in a spirit of cooperative understanding, I believe this magazine simply sets up "straw men" of extremes that they then tear down and replace with supposedly perfect answers.

Let's look at some specific problems and errors:

► *Christian Mission* claims, "Foreign missionaries are still not allowed in Nepal, but with the help of Christian Aid the number of believers has grown to more than a million." Actually, foreign missionaries have been in Nepal for decades both officially and as tentmakers, students, etc. These people have helped love and mentor the few Nepali believers forward into their destinies. More than 20 years ago some "foreigners" from our own mission organization (now primarily staffed and led by nationals) were thrown into prison alongside their Nepali co-laborers – together suffering for Christ and His Kingdom, together laying seeds that would be watered by the Lord and eventually bear much fruit. Nepali leaders today speak gratefully of these outsiders' pioneering and persevering efforts, and welcome other foreigners who want to work in Nepal and partner together in Kingdom work even now.

▶ *Christian Mission* states that they are connected to about “400,000” native missionaries and that many of these are “closed off to missionaries from America.” The 400,000 number seems excessive. Do they mean cross-cultural, church-planting missionaries among unreached people groups? I hardly think so. They must be speaking of any non-westerner involved in any type of ministry. Although these nationals are certainly worthy of our respect and support, they shouldn’t be necessarily designated as “missionaries,” and most are certainly not frontier missionaries among the unreached.

▶ I especially want to address *frontier missions* – that is, getting the gospel established (by church planting) among unreached people groups. Here is where the logic of *Christian Mission* is particularly flawed. Throughout the magazine, it is asserted that foreign missionaries run “roughshod over our fellow believers who are already there.” What fellow believers are already there in an unreached people group? That’s why they are called unreached! They say that “national believers already speak the language.”

If you mean the language of the unreached people group, that is not always true. National believers from Kerala and Tamil Nadu do not necessarily speak the Ansari dialect of Urdu, nor are their customs or culture very similar to North Indian Ansaris. Thus, they too need to cross cultures, learn new languages, and make major adjustments.

▶ Or take the high-caste Brahmins of North India. Many Christians in India come from peoples and backgrounds (castes) that Brahmins look down upon and sometimes even despise. A foreigner, such as an American (outside of their caste system) who is culturally sensitive and deeply committed, can often find inroads for the gospel among these people – while a “national” believer might face greater struggles, barriers and closed doors.

▶ Or take any Muslim people group with fewer than 1% Christians. Years ago a faithful, godly, committed American woman missionary was part of a team seeking to reach one of these Muslim people groups. A speaker (with an agenda similar to Christian Aid’s) came to her home church in the U.S. and pitched his case – “all foreigners are useless, they bring more harm


than good to Christ’s cause, nationals will finish the job for 1/20th the cost, etc.” The speaker raised much money, and the mission committee at this church bought into his message and immediately cut off support for their American missionary. She had been living on less than \$500 per month and was far from extravagant – bonding with her adopted people, learning language and customs, etc. Now she had zero support and eventually had to return to the United States. And back among the unreached Muslim people group? *NO* nationals were either willing or able to take her place. So much for strategic Kingdom advancement!

▶ *Christian Mission* approaches mission almost entirely from a financial perspective. For example, they paint a picture of excess and extravagance among foreigners. While I’m sure there are some cases like that, I also know a huge number of American and other non-western missionaries who are living on incredibly low support levels. They make a case that nationals can survive happily on \$50 per month, but that is rarely true. They also fail to

acknowledge the financial abuses and extravagances that sometimes occur in national situations as well. They claim to exercise accountability for all their national workers (from their American headquarters?), but a much more effective

accountability system to have foreign and national workers living and working together (or nearby) with open books and open hearts. Lastly, after accusing Americans of “free enterprise business models,” *Christian Mission* then applies the same reasoning to their arguments – emphasizing that nationals are cheaper and therefore better. Where is the room for the Holy Spirit’s involvement in calling and funding?

Instead of an “either-or” approach to mission, we should affirm a “both-and” approach. God is raising up wonderful, powerful national workers and non-western missionaries, but He is also continuing to call American and other foreign missionaries to strategic service. Let’s stop the petty attacks and start moving towards strategic partnership. Let’s not attack and cut back – let’s cooperate, encourage, assist, and move forward corporately for the Kingdom of God until every tribe, tongue, nation and people are represented before the throne of God. The Lamb that was slain is worthy! 🌐



Let's stop the petty attacks and start moving towards strategic partnership.

'Two Sides to Every Issue':

An Exchange Between Bob Finley and Ralph Winter

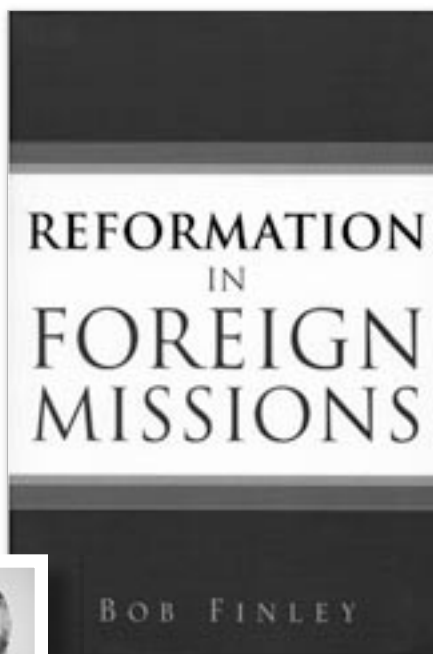
Ralph Winter's note: Below is Dr. Finley's response to a preliminary edition of this issue of *Mission Frontiers*. Here and there I have added some comments on specific statements - in which case we have put those statements in boldface type.

Dear Dr. Winter,

You were very kind and considerate to send us a copy of your magazine prior to publication, and you have demonstrated your ethical integrity by inviting me to respond to your comments concerning Christian Aid.

I am happy to say that we would be the first to acknowledge that there is some validity to all the things you have written. At the same time we would affirm that there is also validity to all the things we published in the recent issue of our magazine to which you refer.

There are two sides to every issue. In our magazine we can only present one side, which is the explosive growth and effectiveness of indigenous missions during the past 50 years, and why they should be included in our missionary giving. We also point out certain contrasts between native missionary ministries and the work of foreign organizations and denominations who send their representatives to countries where indigenous missions are located. In so doing, we confess, **we sometimes make the natives look good while being less favorable to the foreigners.** But such contrasts are not always valid, and it is good that you are pointing this out.



RDW: Basically, that is our point. You say "sometimes." Perhaps it should be "always"?

Because there is so much to be said about the extent and outreach of indigenous missions today, **we have no**

space left in our magazine to pay tribute to all the great things that have been and are being accomplished by traditional missions. These achievements have been well documented by others, as every student of Christian missions is well aware.

RDW: But you do apparently have space to say oceans of negative things, such as, "Generally, with a few exceptions, those who go from one country to another as missionaries end up hindering rather than helping the cause of Christ" (page 9 in the magazine, quoting from your book).

But few are aware of the fact that our Lord has raised up over **6000 evangelistic ministries in "mission field" countries that deploy over 400,000 native missionaries today.** Our mandate is to make their works known.

RDW: There are far more than that - in view of your definition below. They, however, are "type 3 and 4" activities in the diagram I have inserted below.

This figure does not include those whom you call "pastors" or "evangelists." We define a missionary as being equivalent to the biblical "apostle": one who bears witness for our Lord, including planting a church, where there is no church or witness. **He may or may not work cross-culturally. If God saves and prepares him while he is away from home, and he returns to his home community as its first witness for Christ, he is a pioneer missionary.** Saul of Tarsus went as a foreign student at the feet of Gamaliel in Jerusalem, and was called of God to return to Cilicia as an apostle among his own Greek-speaking people. **That's how we define a missionary.**



Two Sides to Every Issue?

RDW: Here is the chief problem. You have the right to define “missionary” in any way you wish. But if your definition differs from your hearers’, and you don’t warn them of that, they will be seriously misled. Most of the time “missions” means “crossing new language and cultural barriers to plant the Gospel in a language or culture where it has never been made clear.” Once there are churches and believers within that society (not just at a distance), the delicate mission task of framing the Gospel in a different culture is finished and evangelism begins.

If space permitted, I could satisfactorily explain and clarify every criticism or objection that you have raised concerning things that have been published by Christian Aid. If we carefully examine both sides of these issues, I am confident that we will see that what we have said is true, while there is also validity in your evaluations.

For example, when you quoted us as saying Nepal does not admit foreigners as Christian missionaries, you said our response would be that they are not admitted under “missionary visas.” In fact, in times past they have had to sign affidavits that they would not propagate their religion in Nepal, but would confine their activities to “social work” ...

RDW: Your article on page 3 says, very misleadingly, “Foreign missionaries are still not allowed.” The truth is that during the past 50 years dozens of mission agencies have had hundreds of missionaries in Nepal. Their witness by their works has often spoken louder than words.

Many of the foreign “social workers” have undoubtedly been used of the Lord while in Nepal. But there has been a downside also. Numerous Nepali Christians have told me that the presence of the foreign colony has had a devastating effect on the spiritual lives of Nepali Christians. While their parents suffered terrible persecution, imprisonments and death for boldly witnessing for Christ, the younger generation has seen foreign “missionaries” hold back from openly proclaiming Christ lest they be put out of the country. And those Christian young people have imitated the foreigners and compromised their testimony to avoid persecution. Also, **the comparative wealth of the foreigners has been envied by Nepali believers** and caused them to become

covetous of material gain. So, as I said, there are two sides to these questions.

RDW: Even greater envy may arise when one national worker is given a motorcycle and another isn’t.

I have dealt at length with all of these matters in a book titled *Reformation in Foreign Missions*. It is available for purchase from booksellers, Amazon.com, or other sources, but we would be happy to send a complimentary copy to any of your readers within the USA who are seriously concerned about current trends in the furtherance of the gospel.

To request a copy, call 434-977-5650, e-mail lucy@christianaid.org, or write Christian Aid, P.O. Box 9037, Charlottesville, VA 22906. A member of our board of directors has agreed to contribute the cost of these complimentary copies to promote better understanding between Christian Aid and the U.S. Center for World Mission.

“You have the right to define ‘missionary’ in any way you wish. But if your definition differs from your hearers’, and you don’t warn them of that, they will be seriously misled.”

—Ralph Winter

RDW: We encourage our readers to get a copy of this book. It extols the work of people speaking their own language, which is good. It goes to great lengths to deride in every way possible the work of people who work cross-culturally, ignoring the continuing necessity of that kind of work. It gives the impression that such activity is no longer necessary or that anyone – Western or non-Western – needs to work cross-culturally.

Again, thank you, Dr. Winter, for inviting me to share in your excellent magazine. I was greatly blessed a few years ago when you invited me to speak to your staff in Pasadena. As the Apostle Paul said of the saints at Rome, “Your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.” **In quoting him let me be somewhat coy by pointing out that until then no foreign missionary had ever visited Rome.** The churches there were started by Andronicus and Junius who found Christ while “strangers from Rome” visiting Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost. But even though these Roman “nationals” were said to be “of note among the apostles,” I suppose you might say they failed to qualify as “missionaries” because they didn’t work cross-culturally.

With love in Christ,
Bob Finley

RDW: The only reason people flocked to Jerusalem for holy days from all over the empire was because Jewish families had for centuries been scattered all over the empire. *They were the cross-cultural missionaries.* Greeks and Romans were attracted to their synagogues and became “devout persons” or “God-fearers,” as they are called in the Book of Acts. These people of faith, whether Jews, Greeks or Romans, did not go to Jerusalem to gain their basic faith but, at Pentecost, the Good News of Jesus Christ. Their faith had been gained originally cross-culturally from Jewish families in the Jewish “dispersion.”

Thus, they were, indeed, able to communicate in their local language, whether they ever went to Jerusalem or not. Paul was an “apostle” all right, but in the Greek language so was a little boy “sent” to buy a loaf of bread. Nevertheless, for most of his ministry Paul was not a “cross-cultural” missionary in the usual sense. He was proclaiming Christ to people who were already devout believers in the God of the Bible, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He had little success where he was outside his own bi-cultural (Greek/Jewish) heritage. That’s how tough cross-cultural work is!

Those of us who are students of missions will freely grant that the Gospel can more effectively be presented by someone who speaks the same language and culture – “native” or “indigenous,” as you put it. This is perfectly true. But, note, there are still many pockets of dear people where there does not exist a single believer who can witness in his or her mother tongue.

Before that can happen, before anyone can witness in his own language, a cross-cultural breakthrough must occur – either by means of a missionary from outside or by means of one or more of those people going outside.

When a foreign student becomes a Christian, that is precisely where the “cross-cultural” activity takes

place, and it is exceedingly more complicated to make sense to a foreign student than for that foreign student to speak to his own people once he becomes a believer and returns to his own country.

It seems obvious that, in the case of an untouched group, either someone has to go out from that group and learn the truth cross-culturally (mechanism 2) or someone has to go to that group from outside and present the truth cross-culturally (mechanism 1). Both processes are true missionary, cross-cultural events, and *very complex*.

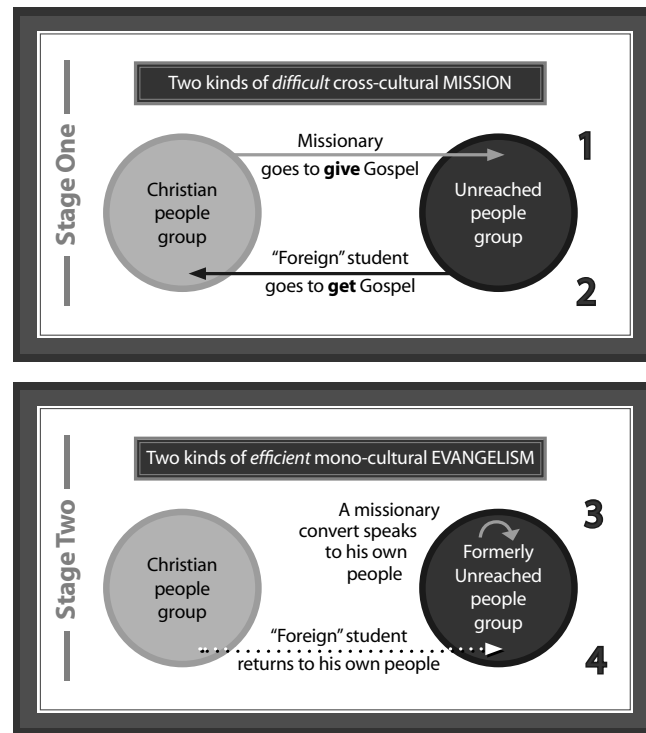
Why applaud the “going out to get the Gospel” pattern (mechanism 2) and denounce the “sending to present the Gospel” pattern (mechanism 1)? Going afar to get and sending afar to give are essentially the same, tough, cross-cultural problem. Both are pioneer efforts, that is, Stage One – what we call *mission*.

Once a person goes and gets the Gospel then, of course, it is much easier for him to communicate to his own people (mechanism 4). Or, once a missionary from the outside takes the Gospel and someone comes to faith, that person can then communicate to his own people (mechanism 3).

These are both Stage Two, what we call *evangelism*.

It does not matter what these two stages are called; they are momentarily different in degree of complexity. Your main point is that you are so enthusiastic about the impact national Christians are making (Stage Two, mechanisms 3 and 4) that you do not have space in your materials to praise cross-cultural efforts, Stage One, mechanisms 1 and 2 – just space enough to run them down?

In any case, I appreciate the fact that your letter does indeed acknowledge the role of foreign missionaries, even if your magazine and your book are full of negative reports about standard missions. 🌐



Good Intentions Aren't Good Enough: A Variety of Reports on Money and Mission



1

Are Orphanages Our Best Response to AIDS in Africa?

Glenn Schwartz

... [A critical] challenge relating to AIDS is what to do about the increasing number of orphans. Because the innocent are suffering, this breaks the hearts of compassionate people far and wide. Good people simply feel compelled to help. This makes westerners with charitable intent want to use their resources to get involved and *do something!* Hence, the building of orphanages becomes an attractive option for them. One reason that westerners are attracted to orphanages is that our culture has often used “institutions” to deal with problems in society. Orphanages, prisons, homes for the elderly, and rehabilitation centers for those in substance abuse are among the kinds of institutions we have established.

Western-Style Orphanages and Other Resources

One reason that orphanages become attractive to westerners is that donors can see *visual* evidence of their investment. Not only can they see the pictures; they can go to visit what their resources have built.... As well-meaning outsiders, westerners often do not realize that they are bypassing other resources that could be used if they were identified and appropriately mobilized. One of those resources is the extended family – a God-given institution for caring for the young, elderly, crippled, unemployed and those suffering from illnesses such as AIDS. If the extended family is allowed to disintegrate or is rendered ineffective, one will end up with the kind of homelessness and alienation that we see on the streets of western cities....

Glenn Schwartz (glennschwartz@wmausa.org) is executive director of World Mission Associates. The full text of his article and other resources are available at www.wmausa.org.

The Extended Family and The Local Church As Resources

Unfortunately, the extended family in Africa is not the strong safety net it once was. It has been weakened by people moving to cities where they do not have affordable housing or fields where they can grow food for themselves or their families. In fact, many people in cities are unemployed, adding to the already

strained extended family system. Add to the weakened family system the challenge of AIDS, and one can see the disaster that is unfolding in many parts of Africa.

But the extended family system is not the only God-given resource for society. The local church is also God's provision for those in need around the world.... Is the church adequate to meet the needs of the world where

it exists? In many places, the church empowered by the Holy Spirit, *is* adequate to do Christ's work in the world. In other places, however, because of the way churches were started, they are not contributing to the cause, but are draining from it. In other words, churches are often born “handicapped”, while those planting them assume that they will never be able to stand on their own feet....

Given the prevalence of handicapped churches, one begins to see the scale of the tragedy. Think of it this way: into the world of already dependent churches there comes a crisis with the magnitude of AIDS. The church is now expected to reach out to the many orphans in their communities, even though they have not yet learned how to support themselves from their own resources. Fortunately, this is not true of all churches for there are some admirable examples for the encouragement of us all. Little wonder that outsiders feel they must step in and build orphanages with foreign resources. After all, if they consider local

Good people simply feel compelled to help. This makes westerners with charitable intent want to use their resources to get involved and do something!

believers too poor to build their own church buildings without outside assistance, how could such churches ever be expected to build their own orphanages if, indeed, orphanages are deemed to be the right solution? I used the term “deemed to be right” because institutions such as orphanages were unknown in pre-Christianized Africa. It was the family that cared for orphans, the widowed, unemployed, and the elderly.

In light of that, what is an appropriate solution to the problem of AIDS orphans in Africa? I maintain that it is to rediscover the role and importance of the extended family and the local church. Admittedly, both the church and the extended family are stretched beyond their ability to carry the current burden of AIDS in Africa.

What Is the Role For Outsiders?

In light of this, what should well-meaning outsiders do to help in the face of this crisis? Outsiders might

consider helping to strengthen extended families so that they can better carry the load they already have on their shoulders. This can be done by helping to increase food production, stimulate job creation and get appropriate job training. Things like revolving loan funds can help to improve family finances....

The second thing outsiders can do is become aware of the factors that contribute to the mentality of dependency. Will local churches ever be able to make their contribution in the Christian movement if they are considered to be handicapped with no possibility of change? One should be aware that solutions such as this will require long-term commitment and involvement by those who are culturally and spiritually sensitive. The current trend toward short-term missions and “quick fix” solutions – financial and otherwise – will not be adequate for a challenge of this magnitude....

2

Church Growth Through “Sheep Stealing”

The authors, who choose to remain anonymous, serve with a mission agency among an unreached people.

In recent months the church in this country has been seriously hurt by an unfortunate situation. The churches we planted have been less gravely damaged than those started by other organizations, but the churches we are working with have also been affected. Last year an American-based Christian organization, which raises large amounts of money for their support of “indigenous missionaries,” came into our country looking for people to support. They made it known to the local believers that they had significant amounts of money available (huge sums, in fact, by local standards) to support local workers, but only on the condition that those local workers have no relationship whatsoever with any foreign missionary in the country. The problem is that there are no such local workers among our people group. When we first arrived here, there were no believers at all among our people. With only one or two exceptions, those who are believers today have all come to Christ through the ministry of foreign Christians. Nonethe-

less, a couple of local believers who had fallen into grave sin and had been disciplined by their churches announced that they were severing all ties with foreigners, and the American organization began channeling large sums of money to them to help them “grow” their group. This “growth” has occurred largely through “sheep stealing,” as they approach members of existing churches and offer them financial support on the condition that people leave their churches, sever all relationship with foreigners (except the American funding organization), and join the new group. Sometimes the funds thus transmitted have disappeared in suspicious circumstances. So far none of the churches we planted have accepted this offer. But every other church in the country has lost members, and one church has completely collapsed. [Two of our national colleagues] have been criticized and even threatened because of their refusal to join this group

3

Check Out *MF* Back Issues!

Two issues from the past decade are especially notable.

Previous issues of *Mission Frontiers* can help today’s readers get deeper and wider perspective on related topics. Go to the *Mission Frontiers* Website (www.missionfrontiers.org), click on “Back Issues,”

review themes, and do word searches. Two *MF* back issues that may be of particular help are “Money and Missions” (September–October 1994) and “Strategic Giving” (September 2001).



They're Here!

2 Children's Bibles Impart Vision for the World



A one-volume children's study Bible containing the New King James Version and so much more came on the market in July. Published by Nelson, *Planet Word Bible* features significant contributions from Wycliffe Bible Translators and a roster of other mission enthusiasts. Each book of the Bible is introduced with a missions perspective. Principles from the *Perspectives* course are woven throughout, along with 50 life sketches of missionary heroes and personal accounts from kids around the world. This sturdy volume ends with 26 full-color pages packed with world facts. *Planet Word Bible* may be purchased from the publisher, from Amazon.com, through the Christian Book Distributors catalogue, and from William Carey Library.

This fall, Authentic Press has published the CEV (Contemporary English Version) *Global Bible for Children*. Created to give children a global perspective and broaden their horizons beyond their own culture and country, this volume has over 300 photographs from seven continents and fifty countries. *Global Bible for Children* accurately

reflects the ethnic diversity of the world and utilizes a translation children will be able to read for themselves and understand. This Bible is available at www.theglobalbible.com,

by phoning 1-866-732-6657, and from William Carey Library.

Why two Bibles? *Planet Word* is a true study Bible and is probably most suitable for grades four through six and middle-school students. *Global Bible*, while offering vivid color photography and excellent introductions to many countries, does not have a missions teaching focus. Yet the controlled vocabulary makes it more readable for younger children and excellent in a context teaching English as a second language.

These two Bibles complement one another and provide superb tools for teachers and



parents who want children to develop godly action from a global viewpoint. I recommend both volumes for every Christian school and home and for use in church programs as well. They stand tall next to *Window on the World* (the youth version of *Operation World*) and will prepare kids for *Outside the Lines*, the exciting curriculum due on the market next summer from Caleb Project. Packaged in a combined CD/DVD format, *Outside the Lines* will offer a version of

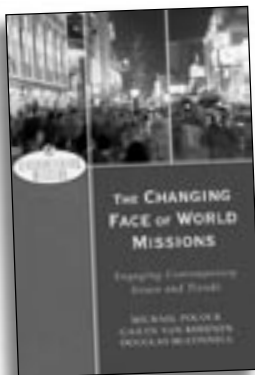
Perspectives to children from kindergarten through eighth grade. Watch for announcements of availability next year.

(For a one-page listing of children's mission books, videos and curricula published in 2005, contact me at Ftichy@aol.com.)

Mission Frontiers readers can order *Planet Word Bible* and *Global Bible for Children* from William Carey Library (www.wclbooks.com).



Missions in the 21st Century



The Changing Face of World Missions

Michael Pocock, Gailyn Van Rheenen, and Douglas McConnell

080102661X • 400 pp. • \$24.99p

"In a rapidly changing world, we can no longer carry out missions as usual. We need a renewed vision and new ways to reach a world in such desperate need. In this excellent book, Michael Pocock, Gailyn Van Rheenen, and Douglas McConnell relay the unchanging biblical foundations and renew our vision for missions. They also deal with urgent new challenges that confront us. In doing so, they help us both to analyze our world and our mission and to think deeply for ourselves, even as they call us to become involved in God's work in this world.

This book can help all of us in the church grasp the nature and the importance of the mission God has given us in our day."—Paul G. Hiebert, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School

"This is a fascinating book that challenges Christians, particularly evangelical Christians, to rethink what they mean by mission and how they put their commitment to spreading the gospel into practice. This is absorbing reading by thoughtful authors who make a real contribution to contemporary thinking about Christian mission."—Irving Hexham, University of Calgary

ALSO AVAILABLE:

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Giving According to ~~His Riches~~ ~~The Needs Our Western Expectations?~~

Greg H. Parsons



Pastor, if your church will officially associate with us and put our organization's name on your church, we will pay you twice what you are getting now."

The offer was simple. It appeared to be sensible. Some of the 400 pastors (in India) who received this offer probably wondered, "Wouldn't it be better for my congregation if I were able to focus more time on my pastoral duties?" We don't know what they actually thought, but they decided to take up the offer, and so those 400 churches—10% of the churches of one denomination in India—left and joined the organization wooing them.

We do know what the regional leader for the first denomination said when they left: "We really don't mind "losing" 400 of the 4,000 churches we have there. We will see new churches planted—the Church is growing! The bigger concern is that these 400 churches will stop growing now that their model for growth is one they cannot duplicate."

Underlying this true story are predominant Western assumptions about what our money can do. These grow out of our own patterns of church.

1. Churches around the world, especially the poorer ones, deserve a full-time pastor just like us.

Most, perhaps the vast majority, of the growing churches of the world do not have a full-time pastor—much less one trained in a seminary. Probably they will never have one, and the Bible gives us no reason to believe they should have one.

2. Church meets once per week on Sunday morning, usually at 11:00 a.m. local time.

Where do we see that pattern in the New Testament? We read about not forsaking our gatherings. We read about setting aside our gifts weekly (probably because of the way in which people were paid in New Testament cultures). Nowhere does the Bible say we must meet weekly, nor is it clear who is to meet. I know of an African tribal church that meets every night! No one there is the pastor; instead, the believing elders of the village share the leadership.

3. Churches around the world need a building.

Some have argued that church buildings enhance "identity" in a town or city, often helping believers to "stand up" to other, influential religious groups. Yet we see no church buildings in the New Testament. Believers met in the Temple, or in homes, or while making tents, or under a tree. That doesn't make buildings wrong for us and others today, but we should be prepared to re-evaluate the style of ministry we've developed in the last 100 years.

We know that when believers give, they are blessed (2 Corinthians 8-9, Philippians 4). Why would we want to deprive less-wealthy believers of such a blessing? I know that we don't intend such deprivation, yet providing for local needs from a global church often undermines their own giving, blessing and growth. They may still give, but somehow they lose ownership and responsibility under God.

What can we do?:

1. We should give to our local church, and, as we do, feed our local friends with global insights that help them in strategic focus.
2. We should give to global needs and opportunities. I could tell you of a dozen valuable projects right now.
3. We should learn to give in an mature way, not like we did when we were younger in the Lord, but with increasing wisdom and increasing volume as we are able. We should also look to give to strategic, high-impact ministries that may be less visible or are simply overlooked by the media. 🌐



Rev. Greg Parsons is General Director of the U.S. Center for World Mission. He's been on staff at the USCWM for 22 years.