



China is, for the first time, experiencing the problems of truly massive industrialization.

Ralph D. Winter



What is the greatest downside to China's miracle industrial growth? It must be the extensive damage to millions of families whose husbands have trekked off across the country to south China to take jobs that were no longer available where they lived. Mass production elsewhere kills village industry.

China's Miracle

You read about the miracle of China lifting four hundred million people out of poverty. But that great achievement has come at great cost because in many cases they are simply pulling workers from other parts of the country and pulling families apart. It is true that in China the workers may be able to get back to their families now and then. And, of course, they can send money back. But absent father families are not, by any means, the best kind.

In many other countries it is worse. There is often no way workers—once dangerously (and expensively) smuggled across an international border—can return to their families. For example, in Guatemala, I know from our own visit there a couple of years ago, that some towns have 20% of their people in the United States as illegals. In that case, unlike China, the people can't come back because

they have gained a big debt and risked their lives crossing the border. They simply don't want to go through that again.

In China, they probably can go home. Nevertheless, the impact upon the families of China has been enormous and tragic. All this is added to years of "one child" family structure, where the one child grows up with inordinate attention, producing millions of what are called "little emperors."

So, this additional partial migration problem rests upon millions of families that are being torn apart by the "welcome, much praised" economic surge in South China.

The Root of the Problem

I have hinted at the root of this problem. China is, for the first time, experiencing the problems of truly massive industrialization. This is similar to the industrial revolution in England which put so many people out of work at the local level that London became an absolute hell hole of poverty, starvation

and disease, as those workers, and sometimes their families, streamed into London to find work. That is how Friedrich Engels and Karl Marx got their start—by 1850 twenty percent of English workmen were too poorly nourished to go to work!

Thus, the very reason that workers are streaming to South China is usually the loss of their trade as manufactured goods and agricultural products (from more efficient industrial processes elsewhere) stream into their

towns and villages in the interior of China like a menacing cloud of locusts, outdoing local processes.

Other Problems

The Chinese sell more girl babies to other countries than any other country, and they turn around and buy more brides from other countries than any other country. One province has 800,000 men with no brides. They commonly cost \$25,000.

The USA kills millions of infants in utero, and turns around and buys more babies from abroad than any other country.

In all of this, the issue of morality becomes more and more urgent and critical. In a small town universal morality is sometimes kept in check by the fact that a customer is a neighbor but when customers are a thousand miles away, adding a chemical to milk that will make it appear to be undiluted by water is something that people are more likely tempted to do.

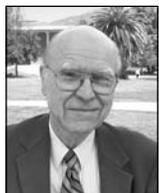
In the USA, after decades of scuffling, labeling and testing we still have salmon farmers resisting disclosure of artificial coloring, while many prescription drugs are made in foreign countries, and even if pure in manufacture typically pass through the hands of five middlemen sometimes becoming adulterated in that circuitous route. There is no doubt that in a globalized world where hard candy is made in one part of the world and sold in another, the instinctive scruples of local commerce don't come into play.

Faith First

All of this puts a greater strain, in general, upon the need for morality because there is greater and greater opportunity to get away with things in a distant relationship to the customer. Those temptations become very strong and morality becomes proportionately more a needed reality.

This is the reason why again today China may be helped a great deal simply by looking back on people who came from a distance with a strikingly higher morality and a very great love for the Chinese people. In fact, certain elements in China's

In fact, certain elements in China's government already have a high regard for much of the work that missionaries did.



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The Irreducible Record of Missions

This issue of *Mission Frontiers* is intended to explain and describe that possibility for the future. The Chinese government already asked the Norwegian Missionary Society to establish a university in China because they are apparently aware of that society's work many years before.

In this issue we introduce Eric Liddell as an example of that kind of highly praised work. I describe the role of one of many, Timothy Richard. He worked wonders in his dealing with local officials and high governmental people, seeking overall benefits to the people of China. This was a radically different approach from the pure evangelism of other missionaries even though both were very much Christian activities and were very significant to China.

Some good things are already coming from the four hundred million who have been lifted out of poverty and are gaining new skills appropriate to a technological world.

Yet, there is no way you can overstate the importance of personal salvation and individual transformation of people into people of integrity and good will. At the same time, our Gospel compels us to demonstrate God's love as Jesus did, helping people climb out of poverty and brutal limitations that God never intended them to suffer.

However

Most of what has been said so far in this editorial may seem negative and ignore the fact that Chinese officials have very shrewdly accumulated enormous amounts of cash in their dealings with foreign countries, in their exploitation of a very low priced labor market. Obviously, in the long run that lucrative labor market will rise in cost as they run out of workers and wages have to go up.

Some good things are already coming from the four hundred million who have been lifted out of poverty and are gaining new skills appropriate to a technological world. The Olympics in China demonstrated the incredible potential of China's wealth and their intelligence and resourcefulness.

But equally true and maybe not so often reported is the terrible need (as well in the USA) for heightened morality in business dealings. We can hope and pray that the burgeoning Christian movement in China is concerned for translating their worship of God into personal integrity and actions that glorify God. And we need those Chinese believers to pray for us in the same regard. 🌐

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ERIC LIDDELL **THE** *Flying* **MAN**

by Mark Harris

Chariots of Fire

In 1981, movie audiences in the USA and abroad were introduced to 1924 Olympic champion Eric Liddell through the film “*Chariots of Fire*,” which went on to win four Academy Awards, including the award for best picture. The focus of this film was on the events preceding and including those Olympic games in Paris.

For the few that may have never seen that film, here is a brief summary. Eric Liddell of Scotland and Harold Abrahams of England are two of the top sprinters in the United Kingdom in the early 1920s. Their paths cross early in the movie when Eric defeats Harold in a 100-yard race – a rare defeat that drives Abrahams to hire a coach and strive to improve. This is a controversial move in the eyes of officials in the U.K. who question whether the use of a professional coach threatens the “strict amateur code” that all U.K. athletes are to follow. Abrahams also struggles with the difficulties of being a Jew in “Christian England.”

Eric’s struggle surrounds whether or not his running is interfering with his ministry, the opposition being voiced by his sister. This conflict was probably imagined for story purposes, as his sister in later interviews denied that she opposed his running. Sadly, the film portrayal has tarnished her own reputation, taking what little is known of her life and making it a picture of Christian intolerance for worldly activities.

Both men make the Olympic team and head for Paris. On the way, Eric discovers that the heats for the 100-meter dash are to be held on a Sunday. To run on a Sunday goes against his Presbyterian con-

victions about the Sabbath, and he opts out of that race—much to the consternation of the officials of his Olympic team. A consolation of sorts is offered, as he is offered a teammate’s spot to run in the 400 meters—not his best event.

In the climax of the movie, Harold Abrahams wins the 100-yard dash, and then Eric Liddell wins the 400 in world-record time. As he is running, his words to his sister from earlier in the film are recalled, “When I run, I feel His pleasure.” Not noted in the movie, Eric also earned the bronze medal in the 200 meters. Also not emphasized in the movie was the fact that he was assigned the outside lane, and at the gun took off in a sprint. Onlookers assumed that he would surely burn out at that pace, but calling on inner reserves he was able to hold off the challengers in the second half of the race and win handily. He later said, “The secret of my success in the 400m is that I run the first 200m as fast as I can. Then, for the last 200m, with God’s help I run faster.”

Harold Abrahams went on to fame in England as a sports commentator and as the chairman of the

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Amateur Athletic Association. He died in 1978, and his memorial service is used as the framing device in introductory and closing scenes of the movie.

We are also told at the closing of the film that Eric returned to China and died in an internment camp near the end of WWII, for which all of Scotland mourned.

The Sequel

What we are not told in that movie is that the second half of Eric Liddell's life was every bit as inspiring as the first half – although in a different way.

Now that inspiring story is to be portrayed in a major motion picture to be called *“The Flying Man.”* The screenplay has already been written, and the team plans to begin shooting in early 2009, aiming for a theatrical release date in late 2009 or early 2010. The film is to be produced by a joint Chinese/American team, and is to be partially filmed in China.

The planner and director of the project is Z. Wang, a filmmaker from China. He has stated that he considers it a great privilege to honor this heroic figure who was born and died in China (and after whom Mr. Wang named his son). His vision for doing this story was partially inspired by these words of Psalm 77:

“Then I thought, ‘To this I will appeal: the years of the right hand of the Most High. I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes I will remember your miracles of long ago. I will meditate on all of your works and consider all your mighty deeds...’”

As with *“Chariots of Fire,”* *“The Flying Man”* will aim for excellence in production. Mr. Wang's passion for this project has attracted and inspired a collection of top-notch acting and filmmaking talent. The filmmakers will employ a story-telling approach that will allow Eric's life to speak for itself, aiming to appeal to the widest possible audience.

“The Flying Man” production company plans to distribute the film worldwide, as the story of Eric Liddell has international appeal. A series of premiers are planned for many strategic cities, including London, Paris, Toronto, Moscow, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Singapore.

The Story

Eric Liddell was born in 1902 in the city of Tianjin, China (approximately 50 miles southeast of Beijing). His parents were Presbyterian missionaries. Not long after his birth, the family moved to Siaochang, approximately 100 miles northwest of Beijing. Eric returned to the U.K at the age of six to enter school, and over time gained sporting fame in rugby and as a runner – the latter being the subject of *“Chariots of Fire.”*

In Scotland after the Olympics, Eric was the Michael Phelps or Usain Bolt of his day. With his fame, all kinds of doors to earthly success could open up for him, but he announced that he would return to China, following in the footsteps of his father and older brother.



Eric with his Chinese students

The China to which Eric returned was suffering from the effects of war, famine and other tragedies. He went to work at the Anglo-Chinese College in Tianjin as a science teacher and became a favorite of his Chinese students.

After returning to Tianjin from his first furlough in 1932, he married Florence Mackenzie, the daughter of Canadian missionaries. The couple had three daughters, Patricia, Heather and Maureen.

In 1937, his happy life was interrupted by the invasion of Japanese forces into Northern China. During the occupation, Eric's work became dangerous and traumatic as he witnessed the brutality of the Japanese soldiers. He helped the victims in whatever way he could, including teaching them hymns. In one dramatic event, he risked his life to save a wounded Chinese soldier.

In 1941, life in China had become so dangerous that the British government advised British nationals to leave. Eric faced a difficult decision and elected to stay in China to continue his work in spite of the danger. However, he sent his pregnant wife and two daughters to Canada, not realizing that he would never see them again. Eric then based himself full-time in Shaochang.

After the USA entered the war, the Japanese Army pushed further into China. When the fighting reached Siaochang in 1943, the Japanese rounded up the westerners and sent them to the Weihsen Internment Camp, the largest internment camp in Asia during WWII, located almost halfway between Beijing and Shanghai.

While in the camp, Eric continued his informal ministry to all needy people around him. He helped the sick and aged and freely shared his food with those more in need. He organized and refereed soccer matches for young people. When he found a boy with no shoes in the cold winter, Eric gave him his running shoes – the very ones he used in the Olympics.

Eric showed his character most brightly when he instructed his fellow prisoners not to hate the Japanese, but to forgive them and pray for them.

Life in the camp degenerated as food and supplies became more scarce. An opportunity came to Eric when his name appeared at the top of a list for POW exchanges that was negotiated on his behalf by Winston Churchill. He refused to be exchanged, giving up his place to a pregnant woman and choosing to remain and continue serving the other prisoners. Eric's health began to fail, and his longing for his family (which had grown with the birth of a third daughter) only increased his suffering.

Eric died in the camp on February 21, 1945, five months before liberation. A brain tumor, exacerbated by exhaustion and malnourishment, hastened his demise. In death he was greatly honored and mourned, both in the camp and in Scotland.

The Impact

The life of Eric Liddell has been an inspiration to millions in the Western world, thanks in part to the recapturing and communicating of his story in film. *"The Flying Man"* has the opportunity to ex-



The government invested a million dollars to revamp the former residence of Eric Liddell.



tend that impact, completing the untold portion of his life story. Those watching the Beijing Olympics have already caught some glimpse of this, as NBC devoted a segment to a reverently positive retelling of the story of Eric Liddell's life between the 1924 Olympics and his death in 1945.

Not as widely understood is the expected impact in Liddell's beloved China. There are few westerners who are as honored by the Chinese, including the modern Chinese government, as is Eric Liddell. He is esteemed as a hero both in sports (he was the first person born in China to win an Olympic medal) and in life, and is especially revered for his sacrificial love for the Chinese people. In every way he is an admired role model of excellent character.

This honoring has taken several forms over the years, including the following:

1. He is honored as a war hero. In Tianjin, Eric's house is protected as a building of historical significance, and was restored at great expense to the government.
2. At the site of the Weihsien Internment Camp, a stone monument was erected in his honor.
3. Many TV networks in China have produced documentaries of his life.
4. A 24-hour movie channel in China purchased the rights to "Chariots of Fire" in 1990 and has shown the film repeatedly. The audience has been estimated at 850 million. Each time the channel has aired the film they have received enthusiastic response – Chinese people from each corner of the country have sent hundreds of thousands of letters and e-mails to the channel manager, requesting a replay of the movie.

5. A book called "Running the Race" by John Keddie, a biography which portrays Liddell's sporting accomplishments in the religious context in which it was lived, was recently published in Mandarin and distributed in China. It

is a rare honor for such a story to be given such preference by the Chinese government – further proof of the esteem granted to Eric Liddell in China even today.

The producers of "The Flying Man" expect that this film will be received with much acclaim and appreciation in China, perhaps even beyond the acclaim received for "Chariots of Fire." The timing of the film is significant, since the story of

Eric Liddell links the 2008 Beijing Olympics with the 2012 London Olympics, deals with relevant issues of sport and world peace and portrays the virtues of commitment, devotion and forgiveness. The life of Eric Liddell will continue to influence people more than 60 years after his death.

Get Involved

If the prospect of this film production has motivated you to get involved, here are a few ways you can do this:

1. Pray for the financing, production and distribution of the film.
2. Promote awareness of the film project, which will help build anticipation for its release.
3. If you would like to donate to

the organization that is funding the early stages of this project, you may inquire about this by sending an e-mail to: loveinchinacommunications@gmail.com. 



The former residence of Eric Liddell has been one of the Tianjin Historical and Stylistic Architectures, protected by the Government of Tianjin.



The memorial stone for Eric Liddell. It was presented by the University of Edinburgh in Scotland and has been set in the site of the former Weihsien Internment Camp.

The Legacy of Love in China

By Rick Wood

They came with a passion for God and a love for the Chinese people that transformed a nation. They gave up all the wealth and power that the Western world could offer and chose to sacrifice their lives for the cause of the Chinese people. They were the Evangelical missionaries of the 19th and 20th centuries that came to China largely from Britain and America. They did not come just to proclaim the Word of God like good Evangelicals but to live out the Gospel by meeting the needs of the hurting people of China. Like Eric Liddell who came to China to teach science and math, many came to set up hospitals, clinics and universities. These efforts, often misunderstood and sometimes opposed by the very people they came to help, laid the foundation for the medical care and educational system that China enjoys today. The incredible growth of the church in China is also a testimony to the faithfulness and effectiveness of these early pioneers of the faith.

An entry in Wikipedia, the online encyclopedia says, "Medical missions in China by Protestant Christian physicians and surgeons of the 19th and early 20th centuries laid many foundations for modern medicine in China. Western medical missionaries established the first modern clinics and hospitals, provided the first training for nurses and opened the first medical schools in China. Work was also done in opposition to the abuse of opium. Medical treatment and care came to many Chinese who were helplessly addicted and eventually public and official opinion was influenced in favor of bringing an end to the destructive trade. The history of China's current health institutions can be traced to many of the medicines, methods and systems introduced by medical missionaries."

Rick Wood is managing editor of Mission Frontiers.

In addition to providing the first Western medical care, the missionaries also took on social causes such as the cultural malady of footbinding. They could have simply gone to preach the Gospel but unlike some today who continue to separate proclaiming the Gospel from social work, the missionaries to China did both. They lived out the Gospel in both word and deed and transformed a nation in the process.



Robert Morrison



Peter Parker

The first modern medical efforts in China began when Rev. Robert Morrison, D.D. and John Livingstone, who worked for the East India Company, opened a dispensary for the Chinese in Macau in 1820.

The following report from Wikipedia shows that by caring for the needs of the Chinese people they overcame many of the common obstacles to the spread of the Gospel that we face today.

A significant moment occurred in 1828 when Dr. Thomas Richardson Colledge, a Christian surgeon of the East India Company, opened a hospital in Canton. Colledge believed that Christians had a duty to help the sick in China, but he was never able to devote his time fully to medical missionary work. He corresponded with the existing Protestant mission societies and in 1834 Dr. Peter Parker, the first full-time Protestant medical missionary whom Colledge mentored, was able to open a hospital at Canton in connection with the mission of the American Board.

Parker quickly realized the need for trained Chinese help, and trained his first medical student Kwan Ato in 1836. Parker introduced both ether and chloroform anesthesia to China. His medical school is most remembered because of Dr. Sun Yat Sen who studied there in 1886 for one year before returning to resume his studies in Hong Kong.

In 1835-36 Parker, Colledge and a few Christian foreign residents formed the Medical Missionary Society of China. In a little time the news of Parker's mission spread. Public preaching was not permitted in China and foreigners were restricted to residence at the Thirteen Factories at Canton. But the new hospital appealed to



the Chinese in spite of their suspicions. In a Chinese village, married women would sit all night in the streets in order to get a chance in the line of patients which would crowd upon the doctor the next morning. When the First Opium War closed Parker's hospital in 1840, 9000 severe cases had been relieved besides uncounted minor ones.

In 1839 there were only two missionary physicians in China, by 1842 more reinforcements had arrived. 50 years later there were 61 hospitals and 44 dispensaries, 100 male and twenty-six female physicians with a corps of trained native assistants connected to the missionary endeavor. Prior to the spread of Western methods in China, the Chinese generally had had little knowledge of surgery but the demand for surgical treatment was soon far beyond the capacity of the mission hospitals. From the annual reports of the hospitals in 1895, it was reported that annually not fewer than 500,000 individuals were treated and about 70,000 operations performed, of which about 8000 were for serious conditions. At first the Chinese had to learn to have confidence in the surgeons, and submit calmly to the severest operations. A patient's relatives were consulted, and usually there were no resentments expressed if a dangerous operation failed.

The motives that brought physicians to China to work in mission hospitals were often a puzzle to the Chinese in the beginning. But the patients, who were being treated with gentleness and skill that seemed almost miraculous to them, often felt that the religion that had inspired such work must be good. A few showed no gratitude, thinking that they had rendered a service in allowing a foreigner to treat them. Many had no desire to accept the religion of their doctors, but some did. Many patients converted to Christianity after they returned to their distant homes.

Medical literature in the Chinese language was first provided by the medical missionaries, and native physicians were trained in Western methods for the first time by them as well.

Other notable medical missionaries to China during this period was Hudson Taylor MRCS, founder of the China Inland Mission, who was trained at the Royal London Hospital. Although initially the CIM had few trained physicians, it later brought in numbers of highly trained missionaries such as R. Harold, A. Schofield and A. J. Broomhall.

Medical mission work in Taiwan was begun by the Dr. James Laidlaw Maxwell in 1865. Maxwell was the father of two notable medical missionaries to China, Profs. James Preston Maxwell and James Laidlaw Maxwell, Junior. Preston worked as professor of gynecology at the Peking Union Medical College, and James Junior worked in the former China Medical Association and as Far East Secretary of the Mission to Lepers. James Junior finally returned to China early in 1949 to serve as a leprosy specialist at Hangzhou, as well as acting as professor of medicine in the Zhejiang Medical College. He died there in 1951, and had earned the respect of the Government of the Peoples' Republic who were represented at his funeral. The "Maxwell Memorial Centre" at Hay Ling Chau, Hong Kong is named after him.

With time the expansion and growth of hospitals in China during the 1800s became more widely accepted. By 1937 there were 254 mission hospitals in China, but more than half of these were eventually destroyed by Japanese bombing during World War II or otherwise due to the Second Sino-Japanese War or the Chinese Civil War. After World War II most of these hospitals were at least partially rehabilitated, and eventually passed to the control of the Government of the Peoples' Republic of China, but are still functioning as hospitals.

The faithful servants of Christ like Eric Liddell that transformed China by word and deed are a model for our mission efforts today. They went to China because of love and saw it as their natural responsibility to do what they could to alleviate the suffering of the people right before their eyes. Thousands of like-minded people have followed in their footsteps to nations and peoples around the world, transforming the lives of millions in the process. But much more needs to be done.

We need to learn from their example as we seek to serve the peoples of the world. What would God have us do today to meet the needs of hurting people in the neediest parts of the world? Can the love that transformed China also transform the world? World Vision is joining the global effort to defeat the mosquitoes that carry the deadly malaria pathogen. Should we join them in this effort or just stick to preaching the Word as many still advocate today? Or perhaps we could help save the lives of the 6,000 children that die daily from waterborne diseases. Would God have us help provide them with the clean water they need to survive? Is that part of the mission of the church? Would that not be the most effective way to show these hurting people what God is like, that He cares for their needs?

The early pioneers of the faith in China demonstrated convincingly to the Chinese people that God did care for them in real and practical ways and the results have been amazing. I believe people like Eric Liddell have shown us the way to do mission. The sacrificial love shown by Liddell and others has earned the respect of the secular leaders of China who today honor his legacy of love. It is a legacy of love that can change the world if we follow in their footsteps. 🌐

What would God have us do today to meet the needs of hurting people in the neediest parts of the world?

How To Best Help China?

The Story of Two Very Different Missionaries to China

By Ralph D. Winter

In this issue of *Mission Frontiers* Bulletin we are highlighting China. The purpose of this short article is to make sure our readers realize that the thousands of missionaries who went to China to love the people nevertheless used widely different approaches and did strikingly different things.

The work of two missionaries, Hudson Taylor and Timothy Richard, describe the amazing differences.

Both of them were fervent Evangelicals. Both believed the Bible, and believed in personal salvation and heart transformation. Both of them wore Chinese dress. Both of them endured enormous obstacles to their purposes but neither budged an inch from their calling. Hudson Taylor is very well known to our readers, while Timothy Richard is little heard of—thus we devote more space to Richard.

*Much of this information is drawn from **These Sought a Country** (1950), a little book by Kenneth Scott Latourette, the foremost historian of Christian missions in all of history. He covers both Taylor and Richard.*

Both of these men had a truly major impact on China. It would be hard to say which had the greater influence.

Hudson Taylor originally rushed to China hoping to help the huge but cultic Taiping movement become more Christian. He went out under a very unstable mission, the Chinese Evangelization Society, founded originally by Karl Gutzlaff, who was a brilliant, incredibly influential German missionary. Gutzlaff aroused all of Europe to missions, translated much of the Old Testament into Chinese directly from the Hebrew, pioneered the idea of missionaries wearing Chinese dress, etc.

Ralph D. Winter is editor of Mission Frontiers.

However, he eventually became the victim of a colossal scam in which most of nearly fifty Chinese workers turned out to be frauds, and his whole idea of “paying nationals to do the work” went down the drain—a phenomenon which could be called the “Gutzlaff Syndrome.” It was (and is) an easy mistake to make.

Despite many painful uncertainties of his work in China, Taylor at least found a wonderful wife, whose missionary parents had died. Soon, though, he came home broken in health and confused about what to do. Yet, he recovered and went back under his own agency, the China Inland Mission, now called the Overseas Missionary Fellowship. Even so, within five years, three of his four children and his wife had died.

All this time he incessantly pushed for recruits to reach the very last town and village in China, and with considerable success. His mission recruited more personnel than any other mission in China. There was a tremendous amount of integrity and spiritual vitality in his ministry. His early strategy, however, was very narrowly evangelistic. He had been influenced by the Plymouth Brethren for whom pre-millennial thinking (the world is getting worse and worse until the Rapture) was dominant. Since they couldn't see any hope for this world, there was no use trying to better it. Just getting people saved and lined up for eternity was the main thing.

Thus, Hudson Taylor came up with this logic: if you had a thousand missionaries evangelizing fifty people per day for a thousand days, you could evangelize all of China in that period. (That would only touch 50 million people, while in his day there were probably 400 million, but even so, the same logic would work if you had say, 8000 days.)



Hudson Taylor



Karl Gutzlaff



Evangelizing fifty people a day seems a little bit shallow. He didn't even want his people starting churches in the early days so that they could keep on evangelizing all day long. Latourette summarizes one of his seven policies:

(7) The objective of the mission was to present the Gospel to as many Chinese as possible. Emphasis was placed on the form of the Great Commission found in the last chapter of the Book of Mark, "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature." Little was said of the wording in the Gospel of Matthew: "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . . teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." . . . the emphasis was not on the growth of the Christian community and still less upon the conversion and transformation of all China. (p. 76)

On the other hand Timothy Richard went out to China with the same zeal for evangelism and the same belief in personal salvation and commitment to Christ, and with similar training and perspective. In fact, he applied to join Taylor about three years after Taylor began his own mission. But Taylor's policy was to urge people to go under the board of their own group. Since Timothy Richard was a Baptist Taylor urged him to go to China under the Baptist Missionary Society.

Luckily so, because once in China it became clear that their perspectives diverged very decidedly. Timothy Richard said he felt it was absolutely the duty of a missionary to declare the glory of God by dealing with all the various problems that a country like China would have, everything from foot-binding to nation-wide education.

Timothy Richard very clearly tackled that wide spectrum which William Carey's work demonstrated. It was unfortunate that this difference of approach, while not necessarily a matter of accusations of heresy flying back and forth, nevertheless meant that in certain parts of China when their work overlapped, Taylor decided that his people shouldn't cooperate with the work of Timothy Richard. Richard felt that you needed to deal with the local and national-level leaders. He urged that befriending those kinds of people would make things smoother in further church work in a given area and he was probably right in most cases.

He was convinced that the western world had been given gifts of insight into nature of which the Chinese were unaware, and that by engineering and science the distress and poverty levels in China could be dealt with more effectively. Believing this he easily won the confidence of a number of high ranking Chinese and influenced a great deal of the country in that way, spending every extra penny he had on scientific

apparatus and books and actually teaching science and developing science textbooks in Chinese.

Eventually even his own society, the Baptist Missionary Society in England, felt he was ranging far beyond the normal functions of a missionary and he joined an Anglican society, which had more congenial views. He even proposed, successfully, world level organizations and, like Taylor, zealously had all of China in mind. Neither of them thought in small terms.

He (Richard) held that Christianity should be presented "as the kingdom of God to be established, not only in the hearts of men, but also in all institutions on earth, for the salvation of man, body and soul, now and hereafter . . . it is positively wicked treason against God to despise all efforts at material, intellectual, social, and political welfare and call them secular rather than sacred." (p. 89)

He went on to declare that

. . . instead of preaching all the time to the thoughtless multitudes or to the rulers who are mainly guided by self-interest . . . most of the time should be devoted to preaching to the devout souls, the worthy . . . these are the born messengers of God, . . . and the multitudes follow them as certainly as the swarming bees follow the queen bee . . . He held that it was possible to find approaches which would win for Christianity the sympathy and co-operation of all the Confucianists, Buddhists, Taoists . . . He held that God had been at work in each of these religions and that by pointing out the similarities of each to Christianity contacts would be established which would win their adherents to the Christian faith (pp. 89, 90).



Timothy Richard

Interestingly enough, even before he left England when he was in theological college he joined with other students in urging a revision of the curriculum to include universal history and science. This is amazing because today, after 150 years, seminaries still don't teach either universal history or science.

Although he had large views of what missionaries ought to do, he certainly did not de-emphasize evangelism and church planting.

Before Richard left Shantung he had the satisfaction of knowing that a church of seven hundred members with two or three thousand inquirers had arisen in Ch'ingchow as a result of the approximately two years that he had spent in the city, and that there were several hundred more Christians outside the city. Much of this growth was accomplished through Chinese whom Richard trained. The method helped to inspire an American Presbyterian, Nevius. (pp. 93, 94)

The "Nevius Method" that evolved is credited with much of the spectacular growth of the Korean church.

At the same time Richard was concerned to help with many other Chinese problems.

The recent famine, the chronic poverty of the mass of the Chinese, and his vision of the Kingdom of God on earth combined to lead Richard to undertake lectures on Western science to the officials and scholar class of China. He believed the civilization of the Occident to be superior to that of China in seeking “to discover the workings of God in nature” and in applying “the laws of nature for the service of mankind.” He was convinced that if he could point out to scholars and officials “ways in which they could utilize the forces of God in nature for the benefit of their fellow-countrymen,” he could influence them “to build railways, to open mines, to avert recurrences of famine, and save the people from their grinding poverty.” (pp. 95, 96)

He did not believe that his pre-field education was adequate.

To prepare himself for this expansion of his mission, Richard stinted himself on his personal expenses and devoted a legacy from a relative to the purchase of books and scientific instruments. He even studied the possibility of aviation, believing that if railways were slow in being built, aircraft might solve the problem of transportation—and this nearly a generation before the Wright brothers! With the help of his books and apparatus Richard lectured to officials and scholars on such subjects as astronomy, chemistry, mechanics, the use of steam, especially in railways and ships, electricity, photography, medicine, and surgery. When we remember that this was in the years when these subjects were still novelties to the Chinese, we can appreciate the sacrificial initiative which was entailed.

He paid attention to devout people, especially leaders.

In this fashion Richard not only aided the introduction of Western science to China but promoted social intercourse between influential Chinese and missionaries. Among other friendships, Richard formed a valued one with a governor, Chang Chih-tung, who within a few years was to be a leader in attempts to “reform” China by introducing much of Western science and education (p. 96).

His “far out” ideas did not go over with everyone. As with William Carey, younger missionaries arrived and opposed his approach.

Younger missionaries of his society had arrived in Shansi. They believed him to be in error theologically and held that his approach to Chinese religions was wrong—that in pointing out what from the Christian standpoint was true in these faiths and indicating where Christianity went beyond them, he was too tolerant. They wished him to alter his methods and to submit himself to the guidance of the group. This Richard felt that he could not conscientiously do. Moreover, he had a quite natural conviction that having been in China much longer than they, he was more experienced and therefore wiser in mission method. (p. 99)

As with Carey, withdrawal rather than conflict seemed to be the best path.

He felt that he had come to a turning point in his missionary career and wished to lay before the Baptist Missionary Society a new scheme for the future. Although he had declined to go into the service of the government, he still believed that as a Christian missionary he must concern himself with all that made for the well-being of the Chinese, physical and intellectual as well as moral and spiritual. He had memorialized (appealed to) high Chinese officials suggesting the building of railways, the opening of mines, and the establishment of factories for the manufacture of cotton goods. He had suggested that commissions of Chinese be sent to foreign countries to survey the educational systems of the world, to study religious conditions in other lands, and to report on industry and transportation as they were to be found abroad, and had suggested a bureau be established in Peking to see that the findings of these commissions were given publicity throughout the Empire. In England he laid before the Baptist Missionary Society a proposal that it join with all the other missionary societies in establishing a high-grade Christian college in each provincial capital with a curriculum which would embrace Western science and Christianity. Thus the future leaders of China would be brought to accept the Christian faith and would give themselves to winning their fellow countrymen and to utilizing the knowledge and appliances of the West in furthering the welfare of the land and in bringing the Kingdom of God. (p. 98)

Although the Baptist Missionary Society declined to back his proposal “for lack of funds,” Richard did not give up, and after withdrawing from the Society which he served for twenty years, he continued on in many strategic efforts for another twenty five. Latourette summarizes:

Hundreds, perhaps thousands of individuals have known the transforming power of the Gospel who but for Richard would almost certainly not have been in touch with it.

William Carey, too, continued on after turning over his mission to the younger members who objected. One wonders what could have been done collaboratively had the opposition in these cases been less insistent.

In Richard’s case world events themselves more and more seemed to favor a pessimistic view of a world getting worse and worse, one that could not effectively yield to God’s will. The First World War was a major negative. While Richard died just before the Great Depression, and of course, WWII, those events hardened the view of an evangelism-only approach.

Latourette notes that scholars contrast Taylor and Richard, however, they both made notable contributions:

Each man is representative of schools of thought which were widely prevalent in the nineteenth and the fore part of the twentieth century and are still with us. (p. 90) 

NEW INSIGHT FROM

Three Eras OF Mission History

Reflections on the Nature of God's Mission for His Church

By Robby Butler

Tremendous Progress

When the *Perspectives* course was first developed, half of the world's population was "hidden" in cultures without a church movement in their midst.

Over the last 30 years God has used many factors, including the *Perspectives* course and this *Mission Frontiers* bulletin to awaken His Church to the urgent priority of the darkest and hardest places on earth.

As a result, among an additional sixth of the world's population the church is now accessible within their own culture, proclaiming God's Word in terms they can understand and accept, and capable of demonstrating that the kingdom of God is at hand.

Many encouraging trends suggest that the complex "missionary task" of crossing all the remaining "barriers of understanding or acceptance" may yet be completed in our generation! This isn't all that Jesus commanded in Mt 28:19–20, but it is an important step in that direction.

Yet amidst such dramatic progress, some troubling trends have also emerged, prompting careful reconsideration of our mission strategies and challenging naive assumptions regarding what God expects of His people. The 2009 revision to the *Perspectives Reader* thus incorporates a variety of urgent new insights.

One such insight is woven by Dr. Ralph Winter into an update to his classic article on the Three Eras of Protestant Mission. (See the November–December 1997 edition of *Mission Frontiers* for a summary of the earlier chapter.)

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That updated chapter compares the roots and results of two alternate approaches to *mission*, concluding that as the Church pursues God's broader Kingdom purposes in combatting evil it is empowered to more effectively reach unreached peoples.

Following a review of the new insight in that chapter, this article outlines my reflection regarding obstacles to our pursuit of God's Kingdom purpose and the danger of thinking we are simply engaged in completing a task when we are in a battle against an evil intelligence who actively works to polarize the Church between two emphases which should collaborate rather than compete.

While the Bible does not dwell on Satan, it discreetly refers to our adversary by various names in enough detail to provide a fairly clear picture of what we are up against. We ignore or overspiritualize the devil's activity at our peril, and at the expense of our effectiveness.

Four Men, Three Eras

Most *Perspectives* alumni are familiar with Winter's identification of three overlapping eras of Protestant mission outreach over the past 200 years:

In the First, Coastland Era, *William Carey's* "Enquiry" provoked the first *broad*, organized efforts among Protestants to "go," reaching out to the *coastlands* of the world from 1800 to 1910.

In the Second, Inland Era, *Hudson Taylor's* appeal for the interior of China brought new emphasis on "all [places and countries]," sending a fresh wave of outreach to *inland* areas from 1865 to 1980.

In the Third, Unreached Peoples Era, *Cameron Townsend* and *Donald McGavran* brought Biblical understanding to "nations" (Greek *ethne*) as ethnic groupings *rather than countries*, prompting the present focus on *unreached peoples* which began developing around 1935.

A Disturbing Trend Toward Shallowness

These Three Eras resulted in an amazing period of global growth for the Church. Yet a disturbing trend toward shallowness emerged among some Second and Third Era mission fields, leaving them worse off in some ways than before they embraced the gospel. Such fields stand in stark contrast to the impact of God's Kingdom in Britain and its American colonies through the Evangelical Awakening of the 1700s.

This Kingdom impact protected England against the revolutionary spirit that engulfed France, and

laid the necessary groundwork for the development of the industrial revolution. Many mission fields where the Gospel was embraced eagerly but shallowly are, by contrast, still rampant today with corruption, oppression, immorality and disease.

Winter's new insight

takes direct aim at the roots of this trend.

A disturbing trend toward shallowness emerged among some Second and Third Era mission fields, leaving them worse off in some ways than before they embraced the gospel.

Two Approaches to Mission

Winter explains his insight in terms of two mission approaches which Evangelicals have pursued alternately during these three eras, and which remain in tension today. Both give top priority to expanding the church among every people group—where the church exists and especially where it doesn't. But "*Church Mission*" focuses on expanding the church, whereas "*Kingdom Mission*" expands *Church Mission* to include proclaiming and demonstrating God's Kingdom.

Kingdom Mission views the Church as God's primary instrument for His larger purpose of extending His Kingdom to destroy the full range of the devil's works (1 Jn 3:8). *Kingdom Mission* also sees combatting the devil's works as an essential component of our *witness* to God's Kingdom, by which the Church is built. While it pursues the eternal salvation of individuals, it also seeks to enlist them in seeking God's Kingdom.

Where variants of *Kingdom Mission* may be tempted to neglect building the Church, *Church Mission* is tempted to view combatting the devil's works as a distraction and to focus on building the Church solely by getting individuals saved and sanctified.

Kingdom Mission differs from *social action* in that it actively recognizes evil intelligence behind, for example, at least some diseases and natural disasters, rather than simply encouraging individual good

deeds or mopping up consequences without regard to the source (for example, dealing with sickness and not attempting to eradicate the pathogens causing the sickness).

Church Mission calls for most disciples to be simply beneficiaries and supporters of ministry within the Church and of gospel proclamation to extend the Church. *Kingdom Mission* abolishes false dichotomies between secular/sacred, clergy/laity, and evangelism/social action, and seeks to actively engage the full resources of all disciples in multifaceted large-scale efforts to proclaim and demonstrate God's Kingdom. As *Kingdom Mission* involves many more disciples *through* their full-time vocations—as well as their prayers, witness, giving and after-hours service—the additional breadth of activity involved in *Kingdom Mission* is undergirded by a much greater release of additional manpower and other resources.

Kingdom Mission and Church Mission in the Three Eras

In his updated chapter, Winter observes that Evangelicals' perception of what God has empowered them to do influences them toward either *Church Mission* or *Kingdom Mission*. Thus missionaries of the First Era, during which Evangelicals had influence at all levels of society, complemented their church-planting efforts with sweeping efforts to impact the surrounding society. This is in contrast with the *Church Mission* of the Second Era, during which Evangelicals had spread widely among the working classes but lost most of their presence in the leadership of society and thus "tended to de-emphasize, almost to the point of total exclusion, ideas of social reform."

Kingdom Mission characterized the First Era as Carey and those he inspired carried the influence of the first Evangelical Awakening with them to fight infanticide and widow burning while establishing universities and hospitals as an integral part of their strategy to extend the church. The Second Awakening in America, still during this First Era, "fostered the most extensive positive transformation any country has ever experienced in history."

By Hudson Taylor's day, however, the sending base and most Second Era missionaries, including Hudson Taylor himself, had shifted from *Kingdom Mission* to *Church Mission*. Taylor, for example, called for a thousand missionaries to evangelize all of China by each witnessing to 50 people per day for 1,000 days. So as not to be slowed down, Taylor directed these missionaries not to even establish churches.

In place of Jesus' "gospel of the Kingdom" (Mt

24:14), the *Church Mission* of this Second Era spread a “gospel of salvation” resulting in the shallowness mentioned above. Affected mission fields, such as most of Christian Africa, have a form of Christianity that has been described as “a mile wide and an inch deep.”

In this analysis, the Third (current) Era inherited *Church Mission* amidst a strong polarization that viewed evangelism and social action as competing priorities rather than essential partners. In arguing against such polarization, Winter asserts that “evangelism in **word**, if supported by ‘demonstration’ in **deed**, is actually empowered evangelism.”

Encouragingly, the growing presence of Evangelicals at leadership levels throughout the world is fueling a recovery of *Kingdom Mission*, thus bringing increasing effectiveness in the missionary task and reversing the trend toward mission field shallowness. An increasing number of voices within the Church, such as Rick Warren with his P.E.A.C.E. plan and Luis Bush through Transform World, are advocating *Kingdom Mission*, although not necessarily by that name.

Does God expect His Church in each generation to glorify Him *through and according to the influence and resources He has entrusted to them*? If so, then the dramatic increase of Evangelical *capacities* in recent decades should lift our understanding of God’s *Kingdom Mission* for our day. God may be calling various members of His body to again collaborate in combatting slavery and oppression in His name, and in working toward the eradication of malaria and heart disease.

While advocating *Kingdom Mission* as the most effective path toward completing the missionary task, Winter continues to emphasize the central priority which *Kingdom Mission* shares with *Church Mission*:

It seems obvious that the highest priority should be to go where the darkness is deepest. That, in turn, means clearly to go to those places where Jesus is not yet known. That, then, means we are still talking about the priority of reaching out to the thousands of remaining ‘Unreached Peoples.’

Ditches on Both Sides and an Intelligent Opponent

(My own reflection)

The path toward discipling all nations runs between variants of two major ditches. Too often our adversary successfully draws segments of the Church into one of these ditches, often in reaction against an awareness that another segment of the Church has fallen into the opposite ditch.

The Ditches of Church Mission

Transforming Individuals Alone

It is sometimes stated that “transformed individuals will transform society,” and that we should thus seek only to transform individuals *rather than* also seeking to organize efforts to fight evil in society.

Unfortunately many “transformed” individuals have assumed, been taught, or learned from the example of others to make false dichotomies between sacred/secular, as if God were concerned for one and not the other, and clergy/laity, as if God wants only to involve one and not the other. Such transformed individuals may thus believe that the only thing God cares about is saving souls, and/or that the only people God wants to use are “professional” Christian workers. As a result such individuals excuse themselves from working to change this world, and instead simply seek their own salvation and (perhaps) the salvation of others.

Such individuals have not properly been taught that all of Jesus’ disciples are to obey His commands to seek God’s Kingdom (Mt 6:33, Lk 12:31) and to glorify their Father in heaven through their good works done before men (Mt 5:16). They have not discovered how God is glorified and His Kingdom extended as we follow Jesus’ example of “doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil” (Acts 10:38).

We should certainly seek to transform individuals and, as God blesses our efforts, to engage them in obeying all that Jesus commanded. This will lead them, with the Holy Spirit’s guidance and empowering, into working with others both to declare and demonstrate God’s Kingdom. Meanwhile we who teach must also seek God’s guidance and empowering to obey all that Jesus commanded; otherwise our example will contradict our teaching, or our teaching itself will be in error.

Personal Salvation Alone

Similarly, an exclusive emphasis on saving souls produces “Christians” who neglect to “seek God’s Kingdom” and instead simply await their rescue from this life (into heaven). When such individuals do reach outside the Church, it is only to urge others to join them in such withdrawal.

As evangelist Ray Comfort documents in his talk *Hell’s Best Kept Secret*, a fundamental change in evangelistic approach in the late 1800s yielded a precipitous drop in evangelistic effectiveness. (This corresponds with the shift from *Kingdom Mission* to *Church Mission*.) Whereas 80% and more of converts “remained” long-term in the Church under the preaching of Wesley, Whitefield, Spurgeon, Finney and others, less than 20% of today’s converts “remain” in the church under our modern evangelistic methods.

Comfort relates this change in effectiveness to a change in approach—from that of Jesus, who proclaimed God’s Kingdom and the moral demands of God’s law *before* offering God’s grace and forgiveness (only to the humble and repentant),—to an approach that is much more comfortable for *us*—telling people that God loves them and wants to offer them His free gift of eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ so that God can begin blessing them.

Unfortunately, this modern evangelistic approach may yield a positive response without deep conviction of sin leading to genuine repentance. As

Comfort notes, this has resulted in congregations loaded with unrepentant people seeking God’s blessings rather than His Kingdom.

Note: In his materials, Comfort only notes the absence of God’s law from our proclamation of the good news. The general

absence of God’s Kingdom purpose from our witness is my own observation.

Congregations loaded with unrepentant people can pour tremendous energies into trying to fix the world. But such efforts are fruitless without God’s power and direction.

The Ditches of Kingdom Mission devoid of Church Mission

Winter’s concept of *Kingdom Mission* is centered on *Church Mission*. But various ditches lie on the side of neglecting the *Church Mission* component of *Kingdom Mission*.

The ditch of “social activism”

Congregations loaded with unrepentant people can pour tremendous energies into trying to fix the world. But such efforts are fruitless without God’s power and direction. Individuals *do* need to be transformed before seeking God’s will to be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

The ditch of “busyness in doing good things”

Even *transformed individuals* who are pursuing *Kingdom Mission* are susceptible to variants of this ditch:

- *Task orientation* can lead to ignoring or underestimating the intelligent opposition we face to God’s Kingdom. Simply working harder or even smarter will not prevail against “principalities and powers” and the ruler of this world. To be effective we must fix our eyes on Jesus while praying and working together in dependence on the Holy Spirit’s guidance and empowering.
- *Dryness* can quickly afflict any who neglect to meditate day and night on God’s word (Josh 1:8, Ps 1:2–3),

or who fail to wait for the empowering of the Holy Spirit (Lk 24:49).

- *Individualism* can so limit our vision that we can only see needs that we can solve or contribute to independently. Individualism also undermines our witness and makes us much more vulnerable to the enemy’s attacks. God’s word calls for us to guard and watch out for each other as well as for ourselves.
- *Pleasing others* can lead to overextending ourselves. We must seek to please God alone (Gal 1:10), otherwise we may squander the resources which God has entrusted to us on needs He intended *someone else* to address.
- *Busyness* can also render us ineffective, and increase our vulnerability and blindness to Satan’s schemes. The soldier, athlete and farmer of 2 Tim 2:4–6 speak of our need to focus to build our capacity and resources to do what God created us for. Furthermore, God ordains times of reduced activity during which we can build our capacity for what He has called us to accomplish. If we fill such times with activity that He didn’t intend, we limit our full life potential to fulfill what God designed us to do.
- *Misalignment* with God’s purposes may occur when our decisions are not rooted in a clear understanding of God’s priorities in the battle taking place against His Kingdom. We must continue prayerfully seeking God’s guidance for the most important thing that we can do for His Kingdom that others can’t do or won’t do. But without a clear understanding of God’s Kingdom purposes, we may turn for guidance to circumstances, or to subjective indicators such as what we are best at or what we want to do.
- *Duty* can, especially when we become chronically busy, substitute for or even replace the heart motivation that God requires—faith expressing itself through love (Gal 5:6). When this happens, all of our labors become useless (1 Cor 13:1–3).

My Conclusion

God is not just offering salvation, He is enlisting participants in battle. The *Church* is not called simply to perpetuate itself, but to pursue God’s will on earth as it is done in heaven. This involves prayer (Mt 6:10, Lk 11:2), proclamation (Mt 4:17, Mk 1:15) and action/battle (Mt 6:33, Lk 12:31, 1 Jn 2:14). To free His people to give themselves to this battle, God has promised eternal and abundant life to all who unite themselves with Him in love and in purpose. With alertness to our adversary, we can avoid the ditches and aggressively and effectively collaborate to advance His Kingdom and His Church and to complete the missionary task in our day. 🌐

THE Missing Father

Living and Explaining a Trinitarian Concept of God to Muslims

By Leith Gray

“...In the West there is a ‘missing Father.’ When I go to the U.S. and I am around Christians...it bothers me because [they are] always talking about ‘Jesus,’ often with no reference to God—only Jesus. Even when quoting the Scriptures, there is no reference to the Father.” So observes Mazhar Mal-louhi, a follower of Christ from a Muslim heri-tage, in the recently-released book about his life, *Pilgrims of Christ on the Muslim Road* (p.183).

Mazhar further notes, “...the Heavenly Father is not there in our conversation. When our Lord taught us how to pray, He said, ‘Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name.’...We too often are not seeing the Father through Christ. We stop with Christ...Often it seems when Christians talk with Muslims they put Jesus in the place of God the Father. Yet, we read that Je-sus continually focuses us on God and gives glory to Him....I find Christians even praying to Jesus in the name of Jesus.” (ibid)

While God the Father is often missing from the thoughts and speech of Christians, when they do speak of Him to Muslims, they run into an enormous roadblock. A Sudanese Muslim friend who has been a follower of Jesus for many years observed: “In my experience, the term ‘Father’ as used for God is not acceptable to Muslims, and they react negatively to it, to the point of insult-ing Christians, threatening them, and persecuting them. Only about 1% of Muslims will accept this term, and they are those who are very open-mind-ed and educated.”

Muslims are taught to pray the following words from *Surat al-Ikhlās* in the Qur’an seventeen times a day:

Say he is God, the One and Only;
God the Eternal, Absolute;
He did not father, nor was he fathered;
And there is none like unto Him.

These words reflect a serious misunderstand-ing among Muslims of the kinship and begetting language of the Bible, language that is rejected as a reference to physical procreation. The shocked reac-tion Muslims feel to kinship or begetting language is the same shock we feel when we hear sto-ries of Zeus or Krishna taking physical form, ravishing virgins, and these women then giving birth to godlike offspring.

Those of us brought up in Christian settings normally have warm and positive asso-ciations with the term “Father” as used to refer to God. It is hard for us to understand, but Muslims in general do not have the same under-standings that we do. A short publication “Ques-tions and Answers on Islam” produced by the Royal Aal al-Bayt Institute of Islamic Thought in Jordan was recently distributed at a major gath-ering of Muslim and Christian leaders. In this book, they pose the following question:

Those of us brought up in Christian settings normally have warm and positive associations with the term “Father” as used to refer to God.

Leith Gray and his wife Andrea work in West Asia, where Leith has been since the late 1980s. They train local and cross-cultural co-workers on how to present the message of Christ creatively and incarnationally in local contexts.

Does Islam believe that God is male?

No. The Quran never refers to God as 'Father'. Muslim thinkers of all ages have agreed that God, as the Creator of all being, is the author of gender but is not gendered. While English translations of Arabic texts generally refer to Allah as "He," this only reflects the absence of a neuter pronoun in Arabic, and does not indicate that God is 'masculine.'

The above quotation shows that Muslims view the term "father" in its primary biological and physical sense. Many Muslims are actually fearful of God's wrath if they even hear or utter kinship language in reference to God, since the Qur'an says that such claims are so repulsive that the earth might even split open from the horror. On the basis of this Qur'anic verse, some Muslims actually fear the earth cracking open and swallowing them if they utter these words (See the Qur'an, *Surat Maryam*, 19:90-91).

The term "father" appears in the Bible to refer to genetic relationships, but it does so in a much broader sense than in English or other languages.

It is not just the use of the term "Father" for God that confuses Muslims, however. In Luke 2:48, for example, Mary and Joseph return to the temple courts in Jerusalem to find Jesus deep in discussion with religious scholars. Mary reproves the

young Jesus saying, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your *father* and I have been anxiously searching for you." One educated Syrian Muslim woman was quite upset when she read this passage. She saw it as contradicting other parts of the Bible that clearly state that Jesus had no human father and was born of a virgin, and proof that the Bible was corrupted and unreliable. This underscores the fact that for Arab Muslims, the term "father" means biological father. That is why they do not use the term in reference to foster fathers and step fathers.

Understanding the Biblical Usage of "Father"

Of course, the biblical text does not intend to communicate sexual concepts with the use of kinship language for God and Jesus. If that is not the intended meaning, then what does this kinship terminology mean? Here is where careful biblical research and exegesis is important, since we want to communicate the biblical message and not our own traditions or cultural understandings of the term.

The term "father" appears in the Bible to refer to genetic relationships, but it does so in a much

broader sense than in English or other languages. So the Bible uses the term "father" for any **progenitor**, even for a great-grandfather or more distant ancestor. (1 Kings 15:11; Genesis 15:15; Matthew 1:1-17).

Beyond this, however, the term "father" is used with a very wide metaphorical sense. It can be used to mean a **founder or inventor** (Genesis 4:20), a **benefactor or protector** (Job 29:16), a **patron** of those under a leader (Isaiah 22:21; Isaiah 9:6).

This word is **used by subordinates** to those to whom they owe honor and allegiance. (1 Samuel 24:11; 2 Kings 2:12) The word is also used for those who take the role of **teacher or counselor** to others. (Genesis 45:8; 2 Kings 6:21) The term father, as we noted above, can also be **used by worshippers** to address their god or gods. (Jeremiah 2:27)

It is widely acknowledged among Evangelical scholars that kinship language was used in the Ancient Near East to describe non-biological relationships, especially those of **patron and client**. As D.A. deSilva notes in the Dictionary of New Testament Background,

The relationship between human and divine beings, cosmic inferiors and superiors as it were, was expressed in terms of the closest analogy in the world of social interaction, namely patronage. . . . This holds true. . . for the way [New Testament] authors give expression to the relationship between the one God and the people of God. (p. 769)

This terminology was used for kings and those lesser kings that they controlled. It was also used for relationships of worshippers to their gods, and of the Israelites to the one true God.

How Do We Respond?

There is a yawning chasm of confusion and misunderstanding between Muslims and the message of the Bible. Therefore, we must consider not simply how to teach Biblical doctrines better, but how to live our lives in a way that shows the reality of God the Father in our lives. As Jesus taught, "Now this is eternal life: *that they may know you*, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." (John 17:3) One way we can do that is to make our prayers more Trinitarian.

Modeling Biblical Prayers

When we offer to pray for our Muslim friends in the name of Jesus the Messiah, whom our friends recognize as a great healer, we have the opportunity to model appropriate Trinitarian prayers. One Muslim woman our family knows came to us shortly after deciding to follow Christ. She had heard some of the local Christians praying and was confused, "Why do people begin their prayer

with ‘O Jesus’ and end their prayer with ‘in Jesus’ name?’” The confusion this Muslim woman and many others like her have with our language reflects the unitarian nature of many prayers and the need to be more Trinitarian.

A useful resource for model prayers is the wonderful heritage of Bible-based prayers that are used in certain denominations. For example, in the Anglican tradition there are many prayers and intercessions that call upon God in the name of Jesus through the Holy Spirit. There has been a tremendous upsurge of interest among Evangelicals in recent years in this heritage, and what is called the Daily Office (daily, set prayers at morning, midday, and evening). These are Trinitarian in a variety of ways. Sometimes people assume that to be Trinitarian, a prayer must end with the formula “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” as in Roman Catholic prayers, but this wording appears only once in the Bible, in Matthew 28:19. On the other hand, out of the over sixty passages in the New Testament that mention the three persons of the Godhead, we can find formulations such as “God, our Lord Jesus, and the Spirit” (Acts 20:21-22) and “God, Christ and His Spirit” (2 Cor. 1:21-22). One can also draw Biblical terms together into phrases like “God, His Word, and His Spirit.” These expressions are more acceptable to Muslims because the words do not involve biological language.

The Psalms of David and other Biblical prayers and songs of praise provide a model for honoring God the Father. There is a selection of worshipful Psalms rendered as Arabic poetry and set to Arab music at www.sabeelmedia.com, and these have proven to be quite popular with Muslims.

Some Possible Explanations

In addition to modeling the use of Trinitarian prayers and politely avoiding language that sounds biological, we need to be prepared to explain “Father” language to our Muslim friends when they ask. It is important to remember that many Muslims are interested in the Bible and Jesus, but they do not have the Biblical background to make sense of church terminology. Our aim should be to help Muslims get past the linguistic stumbling blocks so that they can understand the message of the Bible, and follow Jesus as Lord of all. Following are a few approaches that Christians have found useful when speaking to Muslim friends.

The Psalms of David and other Biblical prayers and songs of praise provide a model for honoring God the Father.

Old Testament Explanations

Since the kinship language of the Bible is being used in these passages metaphorically, it is very important that we explain this to our Muslim friends.

We can do so by starting in the Old Testament and introducing stories where the term “son(s)” is used for God’s people, with them using “father” in response. For example, we find in Isaiah 1:2:

Hear, O heavens! Listen, O earth! This is what the LORD says: “The children I raised and cared for have turned against me.”

Other useful passages are Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1-3; Isaiah 63:15; Malachi 1:6 and 2:10.

We also find God describing the relationship between himself and the anointed king by using the imagery of a father and a son, as in 2 Samuel 7 and Psalm 2:7, Isaiah 9:6.

Similes or Other Parts of Speech

Some Muslims will accept the use of a comparison to explain the kinship metaphors. This is the approach found in some Jewish texts, especially the ancient translations. In the ancient Aramaic interpretive translation of the Psalms, called the Psalms Targum, Psalm 2:7 is rendered as follows: “I will tell of the covenant of the Lord. He said: “You are *as dear to me as a son to a father...*”

Expressing the concept using adjectives or verbs could also be helpful.

Some ways we might communicate fatherhood language about God:

- God who cares for his people as/like a father
The fatherly God
- God who fathers/protects/cares for his people
- God the spiritual Father
- God our guardian/caretaker/protector

Useful Terms or Vocabulary

Sometimes it is possible to use the family imagery about God, but using words that are not seen in a physical or sexual sense. For example, while the term “children of God” is often very objectionable, to say “people of the household of God” has been found to be acceptable, as well as “household of God” and even “family of God,” if the right word for “family” is used (such as Arabic *ahl*).

Several of the so-called “Ninety-nine Beautiful Names of God” found in Muslim tradition communicate aspects of God’s fatherly nature. One of the most useful terms in Arabic is the word *rabb*.

This word is often translated by Muslims into English as “cherisher and sustainer.” It is derived from the Arabic root r-b-b which has the sense of “raising, caring for (especially children).” Some related words from the same root are *murabbi*

One of the most useful terms in Arabic is the word rabb. This word is often translated by Muslims into English as “cherisher and sustainer.”

“one who brings up a child” and *raab* “foster father.” Muslims feel that the word *rabb* has a sense of intimacy and closeness without physical or sexual connotations.

Another of the “Ninety-nine Beautiful Names of God”

is *al-waliyy*. The term *waliyy*, according to the Hans Wehr dictionary, has the following senses: “near, nearby; neighboring, adjacent; close;—(pl. *awliya*) helper, supporter, benefactor, sponsor;

friend, close associate; relative; patron, protector; legal guardian, curator, tutor....”

These are the normal terms used in Arabic to explain non-biological patronage relationships, and are used in this way in an ancient Arabic translation from the 9th century called *The Elegant Gospels*. In English we can use terms like those above to explain what it means for God to be Father. Of course it is essential to explain that the term Father has no sexual or procreational meanings when used for God.

Conclusion

Most of us already have or will soon encounter opportunities to befriend Muslims and speak about our faith. When we take the time to explain kinship terms and Trinitarian concepts in understandable ways, we open the doors for our Muslim friends to encounter the gripping story of Jesus and begin a journey of following him in faith and obedience. 🌐

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RALPH WINTER RECEIVES Lifetime Achievement Award

By Rick Wood

On September 25th the two major North American mission agency associations, CrossGlobal Link and The Mission Exchange presented Dr. Ralph Winter, renowned missiologist and founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission, with the 2008 Lifetime of Service Award at their joint meeting in Denver, Colorado. The award ceremony was part of the North American Mission Leaders Conference, co-sponsored by the two organizations.

Before an audience of more than 300 leaders from nearly 200 mission organizations, Christian colleges, and churches, the founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission (USCWM) in Pasadena, Calif. accepted the award that honored his lifetime of service to the cause of global mission. He was joined at this momentous event by his wife, Barbara, his four daughters and dozens of current and former staff members of the U.S. Center.

Winter was honored on the second night of the conference for his work as a mission educator, entrepreneur and paradigm pioneer for more than five decades. A video presentation produced by the USCWM for this event, chronicled for the conference delegates, Dr. Winter's achievements over the span of his career.



In accepting the award, Winter spoke on the need to recover the "Kingdom Mission" vision that was a vital focus of previous generations of Evangelicals. Winter was awarded a bronze statue of two hands



Steve Moore, president, The Mission Exchange, with Ralph Winter.

holding the globe. The USCWM also received an oil painting of Winter.

In addition to the USCWM, Winter was a central figure in founding the William Carey Library Publishers, William Carey International University and the course, Perspectives on the World Christian Movement.

Prior to founding the USCWM, Winter served as a missionary to a Mayan tribal group in Guatemala for ten years. Then he served on the faculty of the School of World Mission at Fuller Seminary for another ten years. In 1974, Winter gave a landmark presentation at a gathering of church and mission leaders convened by Billy Graham in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1974. The historic conference resulted in a major shift in perspective in the mission movement to a focus on unreached peoples.

Time magazine named Ralph Winter one of America's 25 most influential Evangelicals in 2005, alongside Rick Warren, Billy and Franklin Graham, and James Dobson.

Winter and his wife continue to live and serve on the U.S. Center for World Mission campus in Pasadena, California. 🌐

Rick Wood is the managing editor of Mission Frontiers.

Raising LOCAL Resources

by Glenn Schwartz

God-Inspired Local Creativity

Since 1961 I have been traveling in Africa, primarily East, Central and Southern Africa. In the past five decades I have heard hundreds of stories reflecting the creativity with which God has blessed the church in Africa. When people find out what I am concerned about, they love to tell stories illustrating what can be done when people begin to look for and discover local resources.

As I have often said before, this does not mean that outside resources are not needed, given the vast amount

What becomes clear, however, is that the indiscriminate infusion of outside resources can so easily cripple or destroy local creativity.

of human need we see in our world. What becomes clear, however, is that the indiscriminate infusion of outside resources can so easily cripple or destroy local creativity, which is sometimes fragile at best. It is often assumed that

what people have to give back to God is too little or too insignificant to be of any use. Even in situations where poverty seems to prevail, it has been shown that people can often find something to give to God when they are encouraged or inspired to do so.

A Biblical Example

One needs to look no further than the New Testament to see the truth of what I am saying. In 2 Corinthians 8 the Apostle Paul tells about taking a collection for those in need in Jerusalem. This was a collection taken from one of the mission churches he planted for the “mother” church in Jerusalem. There is no place in the New Testament where Paul’s mission churches received contributions from the mother church. What Paul says about the Macedonian believers



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is most striking. He describes them as being in severe trial and extreme poverty, yet he says “they begged for the privilege of giving”. We must be careful not to assume that people—even those living in either relative or absolute poverty—have nothing to give back to God.

Observation

I am fascinated by the creativity that is evident as I hear one story after another on the African continent. In the Nov/Dec 2007 issue of *Mission Frontiers*, I told the story of a church in West Africa that raised more than a hundred thousand dollars for evangelism—starting with an egg. Many people were inspired by that story, although someone responded by saying that any project beginning with giving an egg is no match for petro-dollars coming into Africa from the Middle East. The sheer success of the project is evidence that beginning with an egg is indeed a match for petro-dollars. Remember that petro-dollars are foreign funding while the egg represents something given from the hearts of local people. Dedicated believers who give from the little they have watch it become multiplied by the presence of the Holy Spirit. By the way, in that story, those who began with an egg planted thirty-three congregations in their evangelism effort.

Examples of Local Creativity

One of the more creative people I encountered over the years is a man in Central Africa whom I shall call Jon. He made a commitment to challenge his fellow believers to look for local resources rather than to look for those from far away.

Knowing that Jon had a reputation for fundraising from local resources, his pastor one day asked him to give a challenge to their congregation in the Sunday morning service. Allowing his imagination to flow, Jon found a hand woven African basket that was about eighteen inches in diameter and three inches deep. It is the kind used to throw grain in the air to allow chaff to fly away. Jon took the basket to church that morning and during his presentation put it on the floor, referring to it as the morning offering basket. He then stepped inside the basket to demonstrate that his offering that day was himself showing that “the Lord wants all of me—given for God’s glory.”

Little did Jon realize how his simple illustration would be used to impact the congregation. He did notice that while he was speaking some people were sniffing and wiping tears. In due course, the collection was taken and the worship service ended. Jon did not know how much was given in the collection. It was about suppertime when Jon got a call from the treasurer saying, “I just wanted to let you know that in this morning’s collection we

received more than we usually get in three months in this congregation.”

On another occasion Jon had the opportunity to speak to another congregation. He found that at the beginning of the service they took their normal collection which amounted to about 15,000 units of local currency—about average for that congregation. Jon found the Lord inspiring him to challenge the congregation to consider giving something in addition to the normal offering. He noticed that there was no pulpit from which the pastor could speak—only a low coffee table—the one on which the offering had been placed. He reminded the congregation that when God speaks to them each Sunday, it is through His servant, the pastor. He asked if it would not be reasonable for them to provide a pulpit from which God’s servant could speak. They agreed. So he asked them to bring another offering so that they could buy a pulpit. When they brought this (the second offering of the evening) it was enough to buy three pulpits!

But Jon was not finished yet. He presented them with yet another challenge. He said, “I noticed that when God’s servant visits you in your homes to pray for the sick, he walks to get there. Would it not be a merciful thing if you could provide at least a bicycle for him to use when he visits you? Could we not take yet another offering right now to see if a bicycle could be provided?” He then asked the treasurer to remove what was given for the pulpit. By the time the service ended, the congregation brought forward 1.3 million units of local currency. This was over and above the initial collection of 15,000 which was normally what they received. When telling the story, Jon likes to remind us that no new people arrived during the service to increase the giving. They all came with that amount of money in their pockets, and they gave it voluntarily.

Truly, when local creativity flows, the results can be dramatic. We must be sure that such creativity is not stifled by the prevalence of foreign funding which, as we all know, so often can destroy local initiative. 🌐

Rice Missions and Rice Christians

by Rick Johnson, International Action Ministries

As the years passed, I continued supporting myself by working in the construction trade while also studying part-time at a community college and working in Mexico. For a while, I worked at the Mexican municipal trash dump in Tijuana where Pastor Von had begun helping the people on his day off each week. The people there were truly a needy, hurting people. In many ways, they were friendly towards us and welcomed our visits each week. Violent things happened at the dump, mostly at night.

The homes were simple. Cardboard, tacked-on plastic, a scrap of board, an old car hood for one wall, all wrapped with wire to hold it together, and a couple of tires on top to keep the roof from blowing away. Few homes had outhouses. Fewer still had a septic hole dug underneath. It didn’t matter; everything flowed together into the dump.

The families there worked hard; at least until many well-intentioned Christian groups corrupted the dump with a mix of evangelism and welfare. As more and more groups began visiting the dump, some residents found it all too simple to just quit working altogether. The compassionate Christian visitors gave away so much stuff that the dump people could earn plenty a couple days a week in selling the American mercy gifts at swap meets. The weekends would be dedicated to “being poor” and receiving more goods from the generous Christian groups, a couple of days could be given to selling those gifts and the rest of the time, well, that’s another story.

In the early days, the people dug through the tons of trash arriving daily. First, any food still edible was picked out, then the long process of extracting treasures. A treasure was anything that had any value in itself, broken things that could be converted to useful things. A broken toy cart together with a bicycle tire rim, a piece of pipe and a broken shopping cart could be fashioned into a wheelbarrow of sorts! Then glass and metal were extracted to form piles weighing tons. This in turn was sold and the little profit yielded sustained the dump community.

The families there worked hard; at least until many well-intentioned Christian groups corrupted the dump with a mix of evangelism and welfare.

Rick and Eunice Johnson are missionaries who work throughout Latin America. International Action Ministries, their organization, is based in Southern California. For 29 years, they have served among the poor, tribal groups and in training of Latin nationals for ministry and missions.

Later I worked there with another missionary. He worked with the men of the community, joining them side by side in their struggle. A number of community development projects were carried out. My friend, Andres, had the confidence of the men, but making headway was difficult. For whatever reason, this missionary finally had a nervous breakdown, ending his work there. Things happened at the dump that perhaps twisted our views of “normal” living. Abused children, children who disappear, murder, rape, death and oppression were facts of life in the dump.

I remember one day one of my friends there called to me in a very aggravated tone. He was the head of one of the few homes that boasted a real family unit (a “husband” and “wife” and the children all from

that relationship). As I approached, I saw tears in his eyes. He cried out in anger, “We are not dogs,” he motioned for me to follow him. We ducked through the low entrance of his cardboard home. “Look what my children found in the

trash today,” he said. There on the floor were several aborted babies. A pile of them had been dumped “in our neighborhood,” my friend cried. And, to add insult to injury, for a joke, a few more fetuses had been thrown in front of this man’s humble home.

Life went on for good or for bad there. Many American Christian and secular groups found it a fantastic adventure “helping the dump people.” It was their “help” which made real ministry there difficult; the community had learned a new, “adjusted” lifestyle. During the week the people would joke about “Los Evangelicos,” the Evangelicals, who would come without fail every Saturday. They came with food and clothing and other gifts. The poorer that one appeared, the more he would be rewarded. And so it went; most every weekend, vans and buses and trailers would pull in over the hill to “help the dump people.” With cameras flashing, food and clothing were passed out. “Rice missions” produce “rice Christians.”

A few groups worked hard to really help those who needed assistance. They did all they could do to maintain the dignity of the people. These were very few and they could not hold back the tide of the multitude of groups which naively believe that Mexico can be evangelized with no more than a handful of Spanish tracts or a film and a bag of beans or rice. However, what they saw was convincing enough to them. I guess we just watched from a different perspective.

Week after week, the same people would “get saved” and be rewarded or “blessed” with some beans or rice or some other token expressing thanks for their response to the message. In time, the people learned that poverty was their most valuable resource. The worse you looked, the more you would be given. Many groups walked around like tourists in a zoo. Some would gawk and hold their noses while others clicked off photo after photo. Some groups would stand on top of their bus or van and throw food and clothing into the unruly crowd. As the people fought over the nicer items, they were photographed. In later years, some of those in the dump learned to charge for their photo. There are endless stories best left behind in that smoldering dump along with the piles of burning dogs, the aborted babies, the trash and the corruptions left by many well-meaning ministries.

Christian missions could learn a lot from the dump. Much would depend on the vantage point, I suppose. Evangelism without teaching and discipleship can be a disaster. It’s happened many times. A great deal of harm and destruction can be caused by “the ministry.” The sad thing is the “evangelist” may be the last to ever realize what has been done.

Another sad reality is that although Tijuana boasts of many strong Mexican churches, in the years we frequented the dump, we never saw a Mexican church attempting any ministry there. Those most capable of meeting most of the real needs would not mix with these people of the dump. I do believe that God could have done a real great work there if some, or at least one Mexican church would have really gotten involved, really taught and disciplined the people. The ministry they needed the most and those most capable of really helping them never quite arrived. The dump ended up being a fairly hopeless place to minister. In my personal opinion, in many ways, “missions” made it so. 🌐

Editor’s Comment:

This actual account illustrates very well the inherent flaw in what could be called “felt need” or “symptomatic” aid. Not all homeless people are willing to “get a job” when handouts supply their basic needs. In this case, however, it is clear that the dump dwellers were already working for a living (isolating different metal or glass items, fixable items, etc.) and would have welcomed a more humane activity for making a living. But instead of mission workers going to the trouble of helping them find that more humane role, they are meeting their immediate (“felt”) need for handouts they can eat or sell. That can continue forever. In order to qualify for handouts they are forced to stay “in the dump.” In a case like this something more is needed than “discipling.”

Evangelism without teaching and discipleship can be a disaster. It’s happened many times. A great deal of harm and destruction can be caused by “the ministry.”



Pray for Them

Greg H. Parsons



Just the other day I had lunch with a good friend from church. “Joe” is one of those guys you really like to be with. He engages into my world, seeks my input into his and challenges me in areas of faith and action. It is refreshing, challenging and encouraging.

When we last met, about a month before, I had mentioned a friend of mine, Carl, who works with Muslims. When Carl meets a Muslim, he often asks them if he can pray for them. He has never had any Muslim refuse prayer. In fact, the vast majority of the time, they say something like, “I would be honored.” Often, they are touched in the process. Joe hadn’t thought of that before.

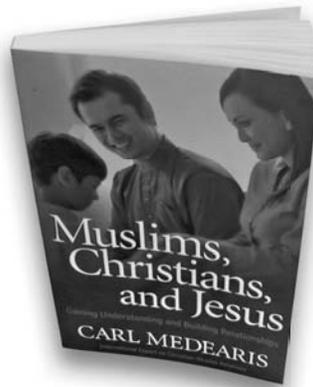
Joe has a coworker we’ll call “Farid.” They work at a large company here in Southern California. Farid is from a country in the Middle East but has been here in the U.S. since he was a teenager. He is from a Muslim background and is now in his 50s. He is very successful by the world’s standards—greatly respected for his work at the office. But, his personal life is a wreck. He was recently divorced and his children won’t talk with him (something that would be almost unimaginable in the Middle East).

As Farid told Joe what was happening in his life, Joe asked if he could pray for him. He was touched and welcomed the suggestion. They plan a follow up meeting in the next few weeks, and I plan to get Joe a NT in Farid’s heart language.

The pressure against those of faith in our society in the West causes us to think we are the underdogs. We feel we are in a minority. In reality, Evangelicals and Charismatics are more than 40% in the U.S. (according to *Operation World*). Yet, we are often afraid to bring up spiritual things.

Perhaps one reason is because we haven’t seen fruit from the way we’ve tried. Carl, whom I mentioned above, was encouraged to write a book that includes a number of stories describing situations where he and others engage with Muslims, most often in the Middle East. He focuses his sharing on Jesus and the Word,

not on a list of things Christians believe or what church he attends. His stories in the book are called things like, “Praying with a Hezbollah Leader” and, “The Saudi Princess” and “An Iraqi Muslim Sheikh and Jesus.” You can read them as well as information about what Muslims really think. (Carl had Muslims verify what he writes about what they believe!) The book is called: *Muslims, Christians, and Jesus* by Carl Medearis (2008, BethanyHouse). You can get it at www.missionbooks.org.



Of course, prayer isn’t all we need to do. There is no Scripture I can think of that would teach us *only* to pray. We need to serve, love and point to the truth. We also need to proclaim truth. Paul, at times (such as Acts 17:16-34) used the local cultural patterns as a means to share truth. Other times, he draws heavily on the OT Scriptures in his teaching and writings. It depended on his audience.

But throughout Paul’s writing in the NT, he always pointed to Jesus.

Carl’s favorite verse on how believers should act when they share is from what Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:2. In the context of coming to the Corinthians without eloquent or superior wisdom, Paul, “...resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified.”

Sounds like the best foundation anyone could have. Yet, often, we try to know all the answers. Or, because we don’t, we are fearful and don’t say anything. As I have suggested before, perhaps we should focus on Jesus and let His words and actions speak. When we combine that with our own love and service, people will see Him more often through us and His power within us. 🌐



Rev. Greg Parsons is General Director of the U.S. Center for World Mission. He and his wife have been on staff at the USCWM since 1982.