



Family-Blessing Advocates

Blessing Families by Filling the Gaps

By **RW LEWIS**

Lewis has been serving the least reached for 45 years.
 Email: info@telosfellowship.org

Too often Muslims and Hindus have seen the Gospel message as a war of religions, trying to get them to reject their beliefs and rituals and adopt a foreign set of beliefs and rituals. Did Jesus come to exchange one religion for another? Didn't He come to reconcile the relationship between God and all the families of the earth, to free us from sin and provide the brand-new life necessary to love Him and each other? Jesus came to fulfill God's covenant with Abraham to bless all the families of the earth.

How can God's love be made real in Frontier People Groups? It is not enough merely to identify people groups who don't yet understand God's love. We need to help their communities see Jesus as a messenger of peace with God—not a threat to their families—a healer of diseases and relationships, a deliverer from evil.

Fulfilling the Covenant by Blessing the Families

Blessing the families and communities of FPGs requires the kind of loving care that missionaries traditionally provided through medical help, job creation and caring for widows and orphans. They taught peoples to read their own language and to gain standing in the larger world, defending them against colonial powers and merciless merchants.

But most hospitals and schools established by Christians have been taken over by governments and forcefully secularized, including societies like the Red Cross. And NGOs have institutionalized and depersonalized charity functions like taking care of orphans and feeding the hungry.

It seems workers living among Frontier Peoples are left with few ways to tangibly help hurting families. But there are many gaps that do not put



Photo by International Mission Board

us in competition with the governments, and do not require infrastructure, organizations, or government permission. Compassion will open our eyes to these things destroying the families.

An Example

One older couple ministering in a Sudan refugee camp asked the mothers what was needed most. They answered, "a basketball court." Despite doubts, the couple arranged for a court to be built, and young teens that had been drifting into drugs began spending their time playing basketball (the game was invented for this purpose by a YMCA man!) Soon multiple courts, multiple teams, championships and Discovery Bible Studies were formed for those interested, like the original YMCA.

Many such "gap" opportunities exist. In the Punjab of India an estimated 25% of the youth are addicted to opioids, alcohol, or other drugs. Addiction is a significant problem in most FPGs. We can help with addictions, recovery and alternatives for adults and youth without setting up clinics. Other areas of need in FPGs include families with autistic children, primary health training or help with newborns, crisis pregnancy support, clean water and reversing desertification (by reinvigorating local herds and gardens through "Holistic Management").

Family-blessing advocates living within FPG communities have many non-institutional ways to bring God's blessing by helping solve problems destroying the families as they share the Gospel.

NOTE: When integrated with discipling movements, the CHE (Community Health Evangelism) non-institutional approach to blessing communities is called IDMM (Integrated Disciple Making Movements). For training and other information visit:

- cheNetwork.org/network/initiatives
- DMMsFrontierMissions.com/4-principles-of-integral-mission-and-dmms