

Agents of International Development
and *Shalom*

Beth Snodderly, Editor



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Agents of International Development and Shalom

William Carey International University Press

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www.wciupress.org

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ISBN: 9781518646027

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Beth Snodderly

Introduction

Beth Snodderly

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For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God (Romans 8:19-21).

Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven (Matthew 6:10, GOD'S WORD® Translation).

The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined. (Isa. 9:2)

Creation Waits for Liberation by the Children of God

After Satan used his free will to rebel against God, and because Satan was already the ruler of the earth (John 12:31), God put a long-term plan in place to bring his will to earth, as it is in heaven. N.T. Wright explains his view of this plan on pages 22, 23 of his article, “Romans and the Theology of Paul,” (http://ntwrightpage.com/Wright_Romans_Theology_Paul.pdf):

- The divine intention was to deal with the evil of the world by heaping it up into one place and there passing and executing sentence of judgment upon it.
- This “place” was always intended to be the Messiah himself.
- Israel, God’s chosen people, became the place where sin was first gathered together [through their knowledge of the Law and failure to obey it], in order that this burden might then be passed on to the Messiah alone.

After the Messiah came, and dealt with the heaped up sin of the world, thus “destroying,” or “undoing” the works of the devil (1 John 3:8), creation was still left groaning under the burden of what Satan had

done to it. Just as God subjected the people of Israel to the frustration of knowing what is right (through the Law) and not being able to fulfill it, so creation has been subjected to the frustration of “knowing” what it is meant to be and not being able to be that. The author of First John envisions the world as being in need of rescue from the hold the evil one has upon it: “the whole world lies in the [power of] the evil one” (1 John 5:19). He seems to allude (in 1 John 2:13, 14) to the need for strong champions, in the tradition of Heracles, to overcome evil wherever it is found and contribute toward the final cosmic overthrow of Satan.

Jesus passed on to his followers the responsibility to continue the work he had begun of destroying/ undoing/ nullifying the works of the devil: “the person who believes in me will perform the works that I am doing and will perform greater works than these” (John 14:12). The author of First John echoed this, saying, “as he is, so are we in this world” (1 John 4:17).

God has let a lot of time go by since the Messiah passed on to the children of God the responsibility to do for creation what he has done for humanity. God’s children need to be using that time to do what they were originally created to do: to act as stewards of the earth by undoing the effects of the curse and frustration of creation and liberating it from Satan’s dominion (Genesis 1:26).

This book is a collection of stories about men and women—some well-known, others not so well-known—who have chosen to let God work through them as his change agents in the world. Their stories each demonstrate something of what God’s will looks like within their spheres of influence.

I would like to introduce these stories with a story of my own, that retells the points just made and that illustrates the twelfth of Ralph Winter’s “Frontiers of Perspective”—“The Challenge of the Evil One.” This is a challenge every person has to face who desires to show what God’s will looks like in this world.

A Story: “Choices”

Once upon a time ...

Well, actually, before our time began, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit called for a very special meeting of the Heavenly Council. “We have decided to make a new kind of creature in our image,” the Trinity said. “And we want some of you angels to be their guardians, to watch over them and influence them to make wise choices.

We are appointing Lucifer, the light-bearing cherub closest to our glory, to be the ruler of the new world where these humans will live.”

A dialog between God and Lucifer might have gone like this:

God: We know we are taking a big risk in making these new creatures and putting you in charge of their world. But we think the risk is worth it because of the great potential for GREAT LOVE. We want heaven’s rule to be freely chosen on earth.

Lucifer: I’m honored that you have chosen me above the other angels, to be the ruler of these new creatures in my world.

God: Well, you do need to realize that they may not always choose to follow your leadership. They may rebel against you, or even try to harm you. We’ve already taken that risk in giving free will to you angels.

Lucifer: Don’t worry. I won’t let them disobey me. I’ll *make sure* that they follow my rules.

God: The meek shall inherit the earth. My kingdom is not ruled by force.

Lucifer: You made ME the prince and ruler of the earth. Now it is MY kingdom and I’ll do things MY way. I’ll kill off anyone who doesn’t want to do what I say.

God: Sadly, you *were* the seal of perfection
Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. . . .
You were blameless in your ways
From the day you were created—
Until wickedness was found in you.

Then there was WAR in heaven.

Michael and his angels had to fight the dragon. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.

“How you are fallen from heaven,
day star, son of the dawn;

you are cast down to the earth.”

As for the earth, after Michael and his angels got done battling with the devil and his angels, the earth was a mess. It was *tohu wabohu*. You can read in Genesis 1 how God went about refashioning the earth to make a place where humans could live—because he still intended to create those humans.

But you might think that now God had a problem. How was heaven’s rule going to be freely chosen on earth when the ruler of the earth had already rebelled against heaven’s rule? Now the whole world was lying in the power of the evil one. And God couldn’t take back the rulership he had given to Satan just because he didn’t like the results of his decision. That would be to go back on his word. That would be to deny God’s own trustworthy character.

But God had a plan:

God always overcomes evil with good.

God always knows how he will respond to every possible choice that angels or humans could make.

God planned to work through humans who would choose whom they would serve. In a sense they would be voting for who their ruler should be—Satan, or God.

In his wisdom, God knew that humans would not be able to resist the wiles of the devil without supernatural help. And they needed someone to show them what God’s will looks like on earth. Someone who is wise and good and loving; someone who would be willing to take the risk of being rejected by the very people he was trying to help. Since no one else in heaven was willing to take that risk, God himself chose to risk being betrayed and even killed.

And sure enough, God the Son was the victim of violence. He was the Lamb who was slaughtered. But we are called to have faith in the God who has faith in himself. The Lamb was *willing* to be slain, from the foundation of the earth. Because he knew that God’s power is greater than death. He knew that death would not be able to hold onto him. And *that* was God’s peacemaking way of defeating the enemy.

And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under *your* feet. Because he has brought us out of darkness into the Kingdom of his beloved Son.

Dearly beloved, if God so loved us, we ought to choose to *love one another*. We can choose to be a display window of what God’s will looks like on earth.

The Stories in This Book

The men and women whose stories appear in this book are people who chose to be a display window—of right relationships with God, with others, and with God’s creation. They are agents of international development and *shalom*.

The first part of the book provides some general principles. Chapter 1 is a short overview of principles of transformational development from the perspective and practical experiences of a long-time development worker in India and Cambodia. The second chapter serves as a further introduction to the kind of people featured in this book who have chosen to identify themselves with God’s Kingdom.

The rest of the book gives stories of change agents God has used in the past and present. Chapter 3 tells the story of Joseph, a biblical example of an agent of international development. Chapters 4 through 8 tell stories of key people who are no longer living that God has used to make a difference in their spheres of influence. Key people God is using today are highlighted in chapters 9-13, while chapters 14 and 15 highlight how groups of believers can band together to be agents of *shalom*.

The last chapter is a collection of short autobiographies that illustrates Jesus’ principle, echoing Psalm 37:11, “the meek shall inherit the earth and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” These are sketches of less-well-known people whose sacrificial service God is using to bring about transformational development and *shalom*. These people are examples of display windows, showing the world a glimpse of what God’s will looks like on earth. They are agents of international development who are a foretaste of what the world will look like someday when the King returns to set things in order and set creation free from its bondage to decay.

Chapter One

Principles of Transformation

Ravi Jayakaran

Senior Associate for Integral Mission for the Lausanne Movement.

Dr. Ravi Jayakaran has over three decades of experience in poverty reduction and providing strategic support to development programs. This chapter is excerpted from his book, *Stories of Transformation*.

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God (Hebrews 12:1, 2, NASB).

Using the “Observe-Study-Inference” (OSI) principle, I have studied actual events of transformation and made inferences from these. This is the basis for my list of principles of transformation. My basic assumption is that transformation is a “Default Intent” of the Creator. That is why I have defined transformation as “progressive, permanent God-intended change.” God intended for transformation to take place in all the people He created, and the scriptures make this amply clear. It is His desire that it happen. As development professionals, we should put all our energy and effort into facilitating transformation, and countering everything that intends to prevent it.

Based on observation, these are some principles that emerge in relation to transformation:

- If we are willing, we can each be an agent of transformation.
- Being an agent of transformation is sometimes at tremendous personal cost.
- Becoming an agent of transformation involves getting involved and becoming vulnerable to hurt.
- Transformation is about one heart reaching out to another to establish a relationship.

- Transformation takes place in those we least expect it to happen to, when we least expect it to happen, so don't give up!

- Transformation has to first take place in the agent of change before taking place in those they serve.

- Transformation is not merely a one-time event, It continues to happen progressively through out one's life.

- The agent of transformation has to learn to be able to see the transformed person "in embryo" and be patient with them while they have not been changed yet.

- Transformation in the life of an individual is a chain of events: one sows, one waters, one weeds, another is there at the harvest—but transforming power lies at a higher level, giving the growth.

- Transformation is attitude and perspective change.

- When we get involved in the task of transformation, we slowly become aware of the "big picture."

- Transformation is labor and time intensive, and requires persistent effort. If you are too busy to invest time and efforts on individuals, then you better quit this type of work!

- Transformation is time consuming, but at the same time can take place instantly!

- Transformation is about widening one's horizons of inclusion.

- Transformation is about changing one's mindset and worldview, and this often happens when a person gets convinced about something he or she has been resisting for a long time.

- Transformation is dramatic, Unique, "Awesome" (as my older son Amit would put it)—and at the same time happening all around us and more often than we might imagine!!

- And, most important of all, God himself is the Author and Completer of transformation. We are merely instruments in His hands. So work as hard as you can, and leave the rest in His hands!

Chapter Two

Identity in God's Kingdom

Chong Kim

Office of the General Director, Frontier Ventures; Founder, Band Barnabas

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and ... we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2).

To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices (Mark 12:33).

Introduction

The kingdom of God was Jesus' top concern. He inaugurated God's kingdom coming on this earth; he taught and spoke about it extensively; he subjected himself to the supremacy and rule of the kingdom. As was the case for Jesus, God's kingdom should be our top concern and vision for the world. Jesus taught us to pray that God's kingdom would come on this earth as it is in heaven. Listen to noted New Testament scholar and Anglican bishop, N.T. Wright:

I used to think of this clause simply as a prayer of resignation. 'Thy will be done,' with a shrug of the shoulders: what I want doesn't matter too much; if God really wants to do something I suppose I can put up with it. That might do if God were a remote, detached, God. It won't do for Isaiah's God; it won't do for Jesus; and it won't do for those who break bread and drink wine to remember Jesus and pray for the kingdom. No: this is the risky, crazy prayer of submission and commission, or, if you like, the prayer of subversion and conversion. It is the way we sign on, in our turn, for the work of the kingdom (1996, 19).

If the Lord's Prayer is the risky and crazy prayer of submission and commission, what does "signing on for the work of the kingdom" look like? What does kingdom "alignment" look like for Jesus' followers

today? When and how does kingdom reality become real in our own lives? How does this kingdom reality become real in our cross-cultural work as Jesus' followers?

Kingdom Identity

Kingdom identity belongs to those who say yes to God's kingdom to rule and reign over them and to those who sign on for the work of the kingdom. Our kingdom identity is derived from both kingdom spirituality (or spirituality of the kingdom) and natural human identity. What may be a surprise here is that our kingdom identity is not all about spirituality and the life thereafter and how we get there. We are instructed to pray that God's kingdom to come on this earth as it is in heaven. We must pray and live this out. Kingdom identity has to be rooted in our natural human identity. We are a product of both God's "heavenly" breath and "earthly" dust. Conversely, our natural human identity comes woefully short by itself and we "fall short of the glory of God," if there is no kingdom spirituality.

James Houston, one of the founders of Regent College in Vancouver, Canada, points out, "God does not want our lives to be merely spiritual; he wants our spirituality to be truly human" (1992, 191). A renowned Christian psychologist, David Benner, in his book, *Soulful Spirituality*, says similarly, "We are human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual beings on a human journey" (2011, 4). In my view, the prayer of God's kingdom coming on this earth as it is in heaven is in fact the prayer for all mankind as individuals to make our spiritual life natural and natural life spiritual. This is where we connect heaven to earth, being authentic and faithful stewards about the matters of the earth in the present, including how we live life on this earth. We are not to exclusively focus on "heavenly" matters, i.e. our concern for salvation both for us and for the world. This is not wrong; it just is not the complete picture of the fundamental calling of the Lord's Prayer. My suspicion is that the most dominant evangelical definition of spirituality is as "consecration," which therefore calls forth a reactive effort against the world—to be "set apart" from the "worldly" affairs. It can be defined by what we are against so extensively that we can forget what we are *for*. One unintended outcome of this approach is that we have cut ourselves from the world, the very world we are trying to reach. We are neither of the world nor in the world. Consequently, there is no power and compelling testimony of our faith and life.

Where Have We Gone Wrong?

In broad strokes, Christian spirituality is often reduced down to a system of beliefs and doctrines. Spirituality may become a cognitive set of the knowledge of who God is and how we “get it right” with God or at least how we think we can get it right with God. And when our system does not work, ie. when “life happens,” and we don’t have answers to life’s problems and questions, we are often told to work harder to get our beliefs and doctrines in order. We have forced ourselves into a world of simplicity when we are swimming in a sea of complexity. Has this been the case all along, one may ask? Were we always like this? Are there blind spots or things we simply lost over time? Can we “blame” something or someone else for our problems?

Modernity, in the wider sense can be described as the “*overarching intellectual ideology of a historical period whose hegemony has lasted from the French Revolution to the present ... and whose sociological features have been accurately delineated by writers such as ... Peter Berger*” (Oden 1990, 46, emphasis his).” Oden goes on to define modernity more pointedly as “*a mentality, found especially among certain intellectual elites, which assumes that chronologically recent ways of knowing the truth are self-evidently superior to all premodern alternatives*” (1990, 46, emphasis his). Over time, modernity eventually won the minds of Western humans, including the Christian minds. Christianity used the “modern” lens and ways to spread the Gospel and to organize our thoughts about God. Due to the modern worldview being a highly scientific and pragmatic worldview, reason became the top filtering mechanism for understanding reality. Over time, mysteries and paradoxes and complexities in life were chased into a corner in seclusion and were thought to be only for mystics and “non-rational” people. Christianity, particularly in the West, as well as around the world, became largely an intellectual and cognitive religion with both its strengths and limitations. The message of the gospel was shaped primarily as a set of cognitive beliefs—if one believes the “right” message or has the “right” theology, then one is saved. Benner asserts, “In Christianity, the shift from faith as trust to faith as belief was primarily a product of the Enlightenment” (2011, 6). The intellectually driven message left us without authentic answers to life’s most difficult questions, heartaches, and suffering. Many have tried to search for answers from somewhere other than Christianity. It is no wonder many today describe themselves as spiritual but not religious.

In a related vein, Robert Webber asserts that in the context of how modernity impacted the Church, “individualism resulted in an overemphasis on personal salvation and lost the larger message of the gospel” (1999, 143). I don’t need to elaborate much about the blessings and shortcomings of individualism that has led to the concept of personal salvation. The overemphasis on personal salvation led to a crisis of missing the importance of discipleship in following Jesus. I’ve heard Dallas Willard say, “The greatest barrier to whole life discipleship is a theory of salvation that does not include it.” He goes on, “A gospel of mere forgiveness does not produce disciples.”

Reaching further back into church history, Houston offers the following insight:

The history of the church is a reminder that until the rise of the academic theology called scholasticism in the thirteenth century, all the great theologians, the witnesses to the truth of God, were also great saints. They lived lives of great holiness, and used their intelligence in the service of God. They experienced a *lived theology* (1992, 191).

Can we ponder the words, “great theologians” and “great saints” together in one sentence? How about “holiness” and “intelligence”? These words describe the profound connection between heaven and earth. They lived lives as great saints and of great holiness on this earth. True theology is what we may call “theology-in-life” or “*lived theology*.”

N.T Wright offers a similar conviction:

How are we to address the world with the gospel of Jesus? You cannot just hurl true doctrine at it. You will either crush people or drive them away. That is actually not a bad thing, because mission and evangelism were never actually meant to be matter of throwing doctrine at people’s heads. They work in a far more holistic way: by praxis, symbol and story as well as what we think of, in a somewhat modernist way, as “straightforward” exposition of “truth” (1999, 167-68).

“Hurling” or “throwing doctrine at people’s heads” may be an overstatement, but it is also a fair indictment of where we have been in our effort to save the world. Historically, Celtic spirituality serves as a fine example of “*lived theology*.” There is much to be said about the Celtic faith as orthodoxy by praxis. To borrow Benner’s phrase again, Celtic spirituality embraced “faith as trust.” They captured both what it

meant to study the doctrines seriously as well as put them into practice.¹ One can make a connection as to why Celtic spirituality has gained a new appreciation among evangelicals, especially among young evangelicals. The current rise of new monasticism is also evidence of the search for “lived theology” among those who have grown weary of the too little emphasis on praxis.² I see these “new old” expressions as movements that are not satisfied with the current emphasis on downgrading our faith into a set of beliefs and doctrines rather than life transformation where connection between heaven and earth takes place.

What is Kingdom Spirituality?

Spirituality or spiritual formation, in its broadest sense, has no judgmental value. One can be spiritually formed in Christian tradition by both its strengths and limitations. One can be spiritually formed in militant and sometimes violent terrorist sects of any religion, including Christianity. Human history is littered with both angelic and evil examples of spirituality in the past as well as in the present. One might say both good and ill people are “spiritually formed.” This is where the word “kingdom” becomes crucial, because it points to the ultimate destination of Jesus’ followers. Thus, kingdom spirituality can be defined as both the outcome and the process in which the kingdom based transformation takes place.

Importance of Non-dualistic Thinking

Here, we come to one of the foundational flaws of modernity and how it impacted Christianity. I’m referring to none other than dualistic thinking. We are taught and programmed all our lives to take sides, to choose black or white. It is almost as if the world is so simple that we cannot process complex problems. The fact of the matter is that we will never be able to go back to a simpler world. In fact, that world never existed. Dualistic thinking has its place; just not always.

¹ Christianity Today ran a cover story titled, “Saving Celtic Christianity,” by Loren Wilkinson in 2000. Its main description reads, “Despite the mythmaking, there’s a wealth of Christian truth and devotion worth recovering.”

² Andy Freeman and Pete Greig’s, *Punk Monk: New Monasticism and the Ancient Art of Breathing*, credits Celtic Christianity: “We’ve ... been deeply inspired by the ancient Celtic Christian communities that combined prayer and mission so successfully more than a thousand years ago” (2007, 16).

Non-dualistic thinking is, therefore, a radical departure from dualistic thinking. It is a gift and willingness to see mystery as mystery, paradox as paradox, and wonder as wonder. It is the ability to accept opposite truths as truths, holding them in tension. How do we make sense of such truths as “freedom for those who obey,” “lose to find,” or “die to live”? In my view, mature spirituality is more about “both ands” than “either ors.”

Unlearning and Letting Go

Mark Twain said wisely, “It ain’t what you don’t know that gets you into trouble. It’s what you know for sure that just ain’t so.” In a recorded talk, “Beginner’s Mind,” Richard Rohr, a Franciscan monk who heads up the Center for Action and Contemplation out of Albuquerque, New Mexico, says, “Ignorance does not result from what we don’t know, but from what we think we do know. Most ignorant people are, in fact, quite certain.” One defining characteristic about kingdom spirituality is our willingness and commitment to unlearn and let go of our wrongly assumed realities. One reason why some do not readily embrace the “poverty of mind and heart”³ as much is because there is often great deal of confusion and even pain involved. Henri Nouwen helpfully describes a paradoxical concept of a *learned ignorance*.

To prepare ourselves for service we have to prepare ourselves for an articulate not knowing, a *docta ignorantia*, a learned ignorance. This is very difficult to accept for people whose whole attitude is toward mastering and controlling the world. We all want to be educated so that we can be in control of the situation and make things work according to our own need. But education to ministry is an education not to master God but to be mastered by God (Nouwen 1975, 104).

Can we honestly evaluate the work of the cross-cultural sharing of the gospel in light of a learned ignorance? How far or how short have we come in wanting to “master” others and even God? Speaking of

³ Henri Nouwen says, “Poverty of mind as a spiritual attitude is a growing willingness to recognize the incomprehensibility of the mystery of life” (1975, 104). In describing the poverty of heart, Nouwen pens, “God is not only greater than our mind, he is also greater than our heart” (1975, 106). He continues, “Poverty of heart creates community since it is not in self-sufficiency but in a creative interdependency that the mystery of life unfolds itself to us” (1975, 107).

“poverty of mind,” I saw this very quality over and over again in the life of Dr. Ralph Winter. As brilliant as he was, he knew he was far from understanding all reality. Thus, he submitted and committed to the process of learning that was mostly about unlearning and letting go of old assumptions. Nobody has arrived. Thus, we are all desperately in need of lifelong unlearning.

The Difference Between Religion and Spirituality

At the risk of sounding simplistic, I would like to equate spirituality to content and religion⁴ to container. We must recognize that religion is a “mixed bag” and is always culturally bound. Christianity as a religion is also a mixed bag. Jesus is and should be beyond any one religion, including Christianity. We are not commanded to promote the religion of Christianity, but rather to publish the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God.⁵ In the west where the religion of Christianity has found its home over the centuries, it seems like it has worn out its welcome.⁶ More and more of the earnest seekers of the kingdom are choosing to follow Jesus, but not in the religious context of Christianity. This is not to say that Christianity in the west is in such serious trouble that it cannot be

⁴ Some dispute the concept of “religion” all together, basically citing religion as a result of modern construct that does not exist or help. I do not disagree with the idea, but the purpose of my paper first assumes what religion is whether or not people understand where the term comes from. Also, some would use the term, religion, as high, deep, or true religion, giving benefit of the doubt as to its high impact on people in the context of life, spirituality, and the life thereafter. Whichever direction we choose to go, defining religion is fraught with difficulty. The purpose of this paper dictates me to go with the generally accepted definition of religion, as a particular system of faith and worship.

⁵ I resonate with Dallas Willard’s definition of the gospel. In his book, *Divine Conspiracy*, he describes the gospel as “the good news of the presence and availability of life in the kingdom, now and forever, through reliance on Jesus the Anointed” (1998, 49).

⁶ As once a longtime pastor in the local church, John Pavlovitz shares in his blog, “the vast majority of those who are opting-out of Christianity and her churches, are doing so because they either feel like they are not welcomed, not needed, or not given a compelling mission and then invited into making that mission tangible in the world outside the buildings ... so they leave those buildings; not to escape calling, but to find it” (<http://johnpavlovitz.com/2014/08/>).

rescued. I am a blessed product of Christianity in the west and still choose to follow Jesus in the context of Christianity. But to me, Christianity is not the main thing; Jesus is.

Kingdom spirituality is and should be beyond any one religious spirituality. Kingdom spirituality, I believe, is summarized in the greatest commandment—which boils down to love. Mark 12:33 reads, “To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.” One may simplify the above: love is more important than religion. The Greatest Commandment is to be lived out and practiced right here right now. Jesus expects us to obey the Commandment—if you love Me, you will obey my commands. The problem is that we cannot obey without getting rid of our misperceptions about what following Jesus means.

It is not so much about believing “in Jesus” as believing “like Jesus” with his “spirituality of the Kingdom.” There are many who believe “in him,” but do not believe “like him.” And we know that the devils also believe “in him” but it does not help them. “Follow Jesus,” a metaphor that is often over used, does not mean following the exotic paths he followed, but in following our own path “the way he followed his,” facing the world and history like Jesus did with rebellion and hope, utopia and realism, indignation, tenderness, struggle and contemplation and, above all, a perspective of the Kingdom as the centre of all things (Vigil 1998).

The above assertion made by Father José María Vigil on believing “like Jesus” brings forth transformation. We are not merely “thinking” our way to God, but actually living out our faith and being transformed. Believing “like Jesus” can better be described as “love like Jesus”—how Jesus loved God with all his heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loved his neighbor as he loved himself. As we follow Jesus’ footsteps in being in union with God, we embody and live out the Greatest Commandment. Union with God is love. Love is being in union with God. Richard Rohr agrees, “We worshipped Jesus instead of following him. We made Jesus into a mere religion instead of a journey toward union with God. This shift made us into a religion of belonging instead of a religion of transformation” (2009, 154-55). Can we broaden our conversation and effort to reach the world in the context of the pursuit of loving God, loving ourselves, and loving others? I believe we can and

should build common ground around love. Jesus then becomes a natural bridge and access to love.

Natural Human Identity

In our context, there are basically two implications for the natural human identity at work. First is the importance of self-knowledge. All of us are unique. There are no exceptions. We must understand that God delights in us as His creations, each of us different from others. The end goal of our natural human existence is to recognize that we come from God and that we “return” to God. Being in union with God is the ultimate “home” and destination for all of us.

John W. Gardner says, “The individual who has become a stranger to himself has lost the capacity for genuine self-renewal” (1981, 13-14). When we belong to God, there should be greater self-knowledge. Without self-knowledge, we lose sight of our divine DNA. There is a great danger that we let our true divine DNA die along with the other side of us that does need to die. Does the gospel that we proclaim recognize the importance of self-knowledge? The gospel has to give us answers to the fundamental questions of human existence or we lose our “grounding” on earth and begin to exclusively yearn for the heavenly existence.

Secondly, one may say that there is a collective self-knowledge we define as culture. The first point above is a subset of the second. Our individualism can only be understood in the context of a collective community and vice versa. One doesn't exist without the other. Both are complex matters with no simple answers. Any student of culture would agree that culture is neither good nor bad. To the perennial debate about whether culture is “fallen but creative” or “creative but fallen,” I would assert that in non-dualistic thinking, both are true.⁷ Just as when the gospel penetrates into a human being, good becomes better and bad transforms into good, when the gospel successfully penetrates into a culture, similar development occurs over time. Thus, one culture cannot and should not judge or dictate how one follows Jesus in other cultural contexts. There is ample room for people of different cultural background to share their lessons and growth, but not to the point of one culture functioning as the “host” or the “guardian” of the culture of the gospel of the kingdom. This is precisely the design and beauty of God's

⁷ One could extend the analogy to the individual human beings.

redemptive plan for the world. The sooner we embrace the multiplicity and diversity of cultures celebrating Christ, the faster we will experience unity of God's will for the world. Our natural human identity grounds our kingdom spirituality to something that speaks and makes sense to us as cultural beings.

One other point. I believe spirituality flourishes in communities—in the “otherness.” “Love your neighbor as yourself” doesn't separate loving ourselves and loving our neighbors. Without the community we are part of, there is neither expression nor growth of our spirituality. At the same time, spirituality cannot be defined only by communities. It is also a highly personal journey.

Bringing It All Together

If we go with the axiom that says only transformed people can transform others, then we ourselves need to be transformed. What does it mean for us to be transformed as we reflect on this topic together?

I believe we need to ponder the relationship between making disciples as the main command of the Great Commission and the Greatest Commandment. I echo N.T. Wright's perspective, “we must therefore get used to a mission that includes living the true Christian praxis. Christian praxis consists in the love of God in Christ being poured out in us and through us” (1999, 168-69). If union with the God that is love is the ultimate destination and fulfillment of our kingdom identity, then this very concept needs to be deeply embedded in our current global disciple-making efforts. In other words, discipleship is and should be about growing in our love for God, for ourselves, and for others.

One foundational meaning of human beings being made in God's image is that we were created for relationship. We start with relationship and end with relationship. Thus, our “call” in the greatest commandment is all about relationship. Our kingdom identity bears this relationship in mind and at the same time calls others to share in it.

Finally, when we pray, “let your kingdom come,” it means that we have to let our kingdoms go. Letting our small kingdoms go starts with awareness that we have small kingdom that we naturally hold on to and want to protect. I resonate with Frederick Buechner's insightful opening line in his book, *Sacred Journey*, “All theology . . . is at its heart autobiography” (1982, 1). Furthermore, as Rohr puts it, “even theology becomes more a quest for power than a search for God and Mystery” (2009, 29). If we are willing to accept this fact that is replete throughout

human history, then it's a start of letting our kingdoms go and thus welcoming His kingdom to come and reign over us all!

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Chapter Three

Joseph: A Biblical Agent of Change and Blessing

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Even though you planned evil against me, God planned good to come out of it. This was to keep many people alive, as he is doing now (Genesis 50:20, GOD'S WORD® Translation).

Introduction

The book of Genesis is the story of a family of migrants. Abraham migrated from Harran in Northern Mesopotamia to Canaan; Jacob migrated to Northern Mesopotamia and came back to Canaan; Joseph migrated to Egypt and his body was returned to Canaan centuries after his death. What is clear from these peoples' lives is that they were not truly settled where they were, although they prospered there, and had significant, often positive, relations with those around them. To put it succinctly, they were a blessing to those around them, and fulfilled the commission that God gave Abram in Genesis 12:1-3. Most significant for this discussion is the promise in Genesis 22:16-18:

I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me (Gen. 22:16-18).

Abraham and his descendant Joseph were change agents. They blessed the people around them, whether they worshiped the God of

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, or not. Joseph was a fulfillment of God's promises to Abraham that his offspring would possess the gates of their enemies (he rose to rule all of Egypt), and that all nations would be blessed (Joseph saved Egypt and other nations during the time of famine).

The Genesis narrative shows God is concerned with families: the families of the whole earth in Genesis 1–11, and the family of Abraham in Genesis 12–50. The extended family was the basic family unit in ancient Israel, as it is commonly in many cultures today, although it is no longer the basic sociological unit in Western culture. Old Testament scholars Waldemar Janzen and Christopher Wright both argue for the importance of the Israelite family for any discussion of Old Testament ethics. Janzen considers “family” to be one of the paradigms that shaped the faithful Israelite's view of what is right (Janzen 1994, 27, 28). Wright makes the extended family (several generations, several nuclear families, plus slaves and resident employees) central to his explication of Old Testament ethics (Wright 2004, 357-58).

I argue that the idea of the image and will of God being played out through the activities of an extended family has ramifications for how we read Joseph in the light of the rest of Genesis. Joseph comes to the fore as the one who brings to fruition the promise made to Abraham.⁸

An Overview of the Narrative of Joseph

Narrative is important when examining the moral world of the Old Testament. Rather than examining prescriptive statements in legal sections of Torah, or aphorisms in Wisdom literature, we will examine the plot of a constructed narrative to see what moral vision emerges from it. Narratives can highlight moral issues in a way that is not possible in other genres (Barton 2003, 4-5). Old Testament narrative is an effective vehicle to disclose reality and affect moral transformation:

We encounter in these stories testimony to what is really real and enduring—about our own humanity, about the God who encounters us in the midst of our humanity, about the community called into being from that encounter, about the world where that community seeks to live faithfully, and about

⁸ Such an approach does not negate the extension of the promise of Abraham to the rest of Abraham's descendants, or reading the seed to be Jesus, as the New Testament does.

the purpose toward which God moves community and the world (Birch 1991, 56).

In reading the Genesis narrative we see an ethos being developed: a way of viewing reality, humanity's relation to the divine. We see the possibility of moral transformation and societal development as the narrative calls us to examine ourselves as we relate to creation and to the web of relationships in which we find ourselves.

The Joseph story falls within the larger narrative of the book of Genesis, encompassing chapters 37–50, about one-fourth of the Genesis text. Its mere size in relation to the book should signal its importance to the overall message of the Book of Genesis. The contents of the other major sections are instructive to the book's message, as well. Chapters 1–11 relate the creation of the world and humanity's disastrous relationship with it. This necessitates God's calling a family through which the world will be blessed. Chapters 12–25 relate the calling and sojourn of Abraham in the land of Canaan, with mixed results concerning him being a blessing. Chapters 26–36 relate the lives of Isaac and Jacob, although it gives most its attention to Jacob, his fleeing from Canaan and his eventual return. Chapters 37–50 are the Joseph Story, which together with the Abraham story, draws the attention of the reader due to their size in comparison to the other sections.

In addition to the themes of blessing and promise, which dominate the whole book of Genesis, the three sections of Genesis 12–50 concentrate on the theme of sojourning; Abraham sojourns in Canaan, Jacob sojourns in Aram, and Joseph sojourns in Egypt. Abraham and Joseph in particular give insight concerning the missional responsibility of the people of God far from home as laid out in Genesis 12:1-3 (Carroll 2013, 12; Gallagher 2013, 147-61).

This theme of sojourning is of special importance when we endeavor to understand Joseph as a change agent. Joseph finds himself as a sojourner in Egypt through adverse circumstances not of his own making—he was sold as a slave. While sojourning he rose to prominence through God-given gifts and saved Egypt and other nations, including his own people. It is in Egypt where the small clan of Jacob became the nation of Israel. Joseph, within the narrative world of Genesis, is key to fulfilling the divine promise and mission of the extended family of Abraham.

“Through your seed all the families of the earth will be blessed (Gen. 22:18).”

Throughout the narrative in Genesis, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are promised that the families of the earth would be blessed through their family. As he migrated through the land of Canaan and interacted with its inhabitants, Abraham spread God’s blessing. The covenant between Abraham and Abimelech at Beersheba is an example of this (Gen. 21:21-34) (Gallagher 2013, 157-59). The blessings that came through Abraham were representative of God’s blessing for the whole world (Gallagher 2013, 260).

Joseph actualized the promise of God’s blessing in using his God-given ingenuity to be the vehicle of deliverance and preservation for the whole ancient Near East, including his own family that so callously betrayed him and sold him into slavery. This blessing is just not for those who enter into covenant with Abraham or his children, but for everyone.

What does this blessing entail? The idea of blessing generally refers to that which creates, restores, safeguards, and enhances life, and the Old Testament recognizes that this comes from God (McBride 2006, 477). In Genesis 1–11, the blessing is manifested in the springing forth of life in the new creation, and in the creation restored after the Flood. In the patriarchal narrative, blessing generally refers to the blessing of Abraham and the extension of that blessing to his offspring, which issues in miraculous crops and the multiplication of wealth, such as we see in the life of Isaac (Gen. 25–26).

This blessing extended to Joseph was transmitted to those in his sphere of influence. This is clearly seen in the episode of Joseph in Potiphar’s house. For Joseph’s sake, everything in Potiphar’s house and field was blessed (Gen. 39:5). Although it is plausible to consider the blessing to be passed on to people who enter into covenant with the faithful, as Gallagher does with the story of Isaac and Abimelech at the well of Beersheba where they enter into covenant, the story of Joseph seems to suggest that the faithful may be a channel of blessing to those around them whether they have entered into covenant with God or not. Joseph was Potiphar’s slave, and God’s blessing extended to Potiphar for Joseph’s sake. Even when Joseph was framed for a crime and cast into prison, God’s blessing followed him there, as well. He ended up basically in charge of the prison.

In times of trial, God’s blessing extended to the people with whom Joseph interacted. He generously used his God-given gifts for the benefit of others, even though he had ended up in prison in Egypt, due

to others who had acted against him. Because of his faithfulness, Joseph was in a position to use his God-given gifts not only for his adopted country, but for his family in Canaan, and for the entire world.

Joseph is seen most clearly as an agent of blessing and “international development” when he is able to save “all of the earth” from a severe famine due to his God-given ability to manage affairs wisely. His skill at management and development was evidenced by his work in Potiphar’s house (Gen. 39:1-20), in prison (Gen. 39:21–40:23), in Pharaoh’s palace where he interpreted dreams (Gen. 41). The narrator in Genesis relates this success to God’s blessing (Gen. 39:5) and the fact that the Lord was with Joseph (Gen. 39:23).

Conclusion

There are two aspects of Joseph’s attitude that allowed him to be a blessing and change agent in Egypt. The first is the fact that he understood himself to have a special destiny. In Genesis 37, the narrative describes Joseph’s dreams in which he saw his family bowing down to him in the future. This earned him the ire and jealousy of his brothers, so that they sold him into slavery in Egypt. Interestingly, although Jacob, his father, also rebuked Joseph for what he was saying, the text says that he held these things in his mind (Gen. 37:11). We cannot know for sure that Joseph understood that the family of Abraham had a special destiny in relation to God’s blessing of the world, but he knew that he did. Faithful change agents know that they have been set apart by God for a purpose. People as a whole are made in the image of God. Faithful change agents are able to apprehend that and allow it to inform how they view themselves and their work in the world.

The second aspect of Joseph’s attitude is that he submitted his own desires, perhaps for revenge against Potiphar’s wife or his brothers, to God’s intentions. The narrative in Gen 45 reflects Joseph’s view that God was at work in his sojourn in Egypt, even if his brothers had evil intent in sending him there (Gen. 45:4-8).

Abraham’s family had a special destiny, by which the whole earth, or at least what the ancient writer of the Joseph story considered the whole earth, was blessed. The blessing gave power for life. This blessing, which all acknowledged came from God, was not only extended to the covenant people of God, but to those with whom they interacted as they sojourned in the ancient Near East. Not all of Abraham’s family understood this blessing and special destiny, but some, such as Joseph,

did. The blessing then extended through them and changed their world, and allowed them to rise above the adverse circumstances in which their migratory sojourn at times put them.

As we, the contemporary faithful, travel through the world, either by choice, or by circumstance, we too can change the societies in which we find ourselves. We are part of Abraham's family through faith, and the blessing of Abraham extends through us as surely as it extended through Joseph. Are we aware of our special destiny as people made in the Image of God? If so, we can let that understanding inform how we think and act in the world today, wherever we find ourselves, as agents of change and blessing.

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Chapter Four

William Carey: A Key Historical Agent for Social Reform and the Modern Missions Movement

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*Enlarge the place of your tent,
and let the curtains of your habitations be stretched out;
do not hold back; lengthen your cords
and strengthen your stakes.
For you will spread abroad to the right and to the left,
and your offspring will possess the nations
and will people the desolate cities (Isaiah 54:2, 3, ESV).*

“Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.”

William Carey, who is rightly called the father of the movement, was not the first Protestant missionary to go from Europe (or North America) to Asia, Africa, and Latin America. For the previous century and a half, missionaries had gone from Europe to other lands. But Carey was an important catalyst of the movement and he served as a model for those who came after him. His deep devotion to Christ motivated his concern for all the world’s peoples and sustained him during years of incredible hardship. He was a genius but also amazingly disciplined in the use of his many gifts. His missionary passion led him to seek the welfare of the people and nation he served in a myriad of ways.

The spiritual context in which Carey was converted, nurtured, and received his call to ministry, came from four related movements which had sought renewal in the established Protestant churches. These movements, which expected that spiritual renewal included social reform, were Puritanism in Anglican England, Pietism in Lutheran Germany and the Scandinavian countries, Moravianism in Germany, and the Evangelical awakening in England and its counterpart, the First Great Awakening in North America.

Puritanism, which attempted to “purify” Anglicanism, established schools for the poor and initiated mission to Native Americans in New England. In 1631 John Eliot pastored a church on the outskirts of Boston and rejected the idea that Native Americans should learn English before they could be evangelized. Instead he learned the language of the Algonquin people, evangelized them, translated the Bible and other works into their language and gathered 4000 converts into “praying villages.” Eventually thirty pastors were ordained from this people group. He worked against their exploitation by other European immigrants, taught them the system of agriculture he had learned in England and protested strongly when slave traders captured some of them.

Pietism in Germany was an attempt to re-capture the original thrust of the Reformation in the midst of state-sponsored Lutheran nominalism. August Hermann Francke made the University of Halle the spiritual and social center of Pietism. He established schools for the poor, a publishing house, an orphanage, and a medical dispensary. From Halle, two Pietists, Ziegenbalg and Plutschau, went to India in 1706 as the first Protestant missionaries to Asia. The Danish authorities there did not welcome them, but they were sponsored by the King, whose chaplain was a Pietist. Ziegenbalg, who remained until he died in 1719, evangelized and planted a church of 300 converts. He also established schools for the poor, including girls, a radical move in that culture. He started an industrial school, translated the New Testament and the Old Testament as far as Ruth, and wrote works on the Hindu culture. His successors were known to rescue young women from “sati,” the practice of burning widows alive with the bodies of their husbands.

The Moravians, who became a primary catalyst of Protestant missions and influenced Carey and the Wesleys among others, worked with African slaves in the islands of the Caribbean, often against the will of the planters. At times they were persecuted and even killed when they attempted to protect Native Americans from other colonists on the American frontier. A Moravian baptized the first Black African in South Africa and was promptly expelled by the Dutch.

The evangelical awakenings in England and their counterpart, the First Great Awakening in North America, had roots in the three previous movements. The best-known leaders were John and Charles Wesley in England, Jonathan Edwards in North America, and George Whitfield on both sides of the Atlantic. While evangelism of nominal Christians was the major emphasis, there was also a great focus on social reform and education. William Wilberforce and the “Clapham Sect” led the fight

against the slave trade, worked for prison reform, and for legislation to improve the lot of the poor. John Wesley's last letter was to Wilberforce, encouraging him in his fight against the slave trade. David Brainerd, who left Yale to minister among Native Americans in New Jersey, had a profound effect on the missionary movement. His journal, in which he poured out his deep devotion to God, was published shortly after his death by Edwards. It was read by many in the English speaking world, including Carey. Edward's call for concerts of prayer for revival and the advancement of Christ's Kingdom was influential on both sides of the Atlantic.

In this spiritual context, while the term "*shalom*" was not used and the theology was not centered explicitly around the understanding of the Kingdom of God, it is clear that the Protestant missionary movement began with the understanding of mission that these terms convey today. It is evident from his writings and even more from his actions that for Carey the central mandate was to communicate the Good News of Jesus and to gather converts into communities of worship, witness, and nurture. But he expected those communities to express the reality of the Kingdom of God, reaching out in ministries of compassion, especially to the marginalized, and working toward the transformation of their societies. It was only later, with the advent of the fundamentalist-modernist struggle toward the end of the 19th century, that the dichotomy developed between evangelism and social action. In reaction to the 'modernists' who tended to define mission solely in terms of social reform, some fundamentalists, especially under the influence of Dispensationalism reduced the mission only to the saving of souls.

Some have said that the missionary movement was simply the religious side of Western colonialism. While the accusation is not without merit, the reality is much more complex. Carey sailed to India on a Danish ship, because the East India Company banned the settlement of missionaries in any territory which it controlled. It expressed the fear that its profits would be jeopardized. Carey and his colleagues were derided, called "apostates from the loom and anvil," and "renegades from the lowest handicraft employments" (George 1998, 1) and "consecrated cobblers." More often than not, other missionaries, like Carey, found themselves in conflict with colonial forces when they advocated the welfare of the indigenous peoples.

William Carey was born August 17, 1761 in a small village in Northamptonshire in the Midland area of England. When he was seven years old his father became the master of the local charity school. He was a precocious child and read the Scriptures from an early age. At age

fourteen he was apprenticed to a cobbler and soon was befriended by John Warr, who was a “Dissenter,” or what we call today, an Evangelical. Through Warr’s influence Carey was “brought to a crucified Savior for pardon and salvation and to seek a system of doctrines in the Word of God” (George 1998, 8). Mentored by a number of more mature Dissenters, he found his spiritual home among the Baptists and was baptized in the River Nene one Sunday morning in October, 1783.

He joined the Baptist church in Olney, where the local Anglican parish had participated in the awakening, having had John Newton, the former slave ship captain who wrote the hymn “Amazing Grace” as its rector for fifteen years. Newton was succeeded by Thomas Scott, a fine biblical scholar, who frequently visited Carey in his cobbler’s shop, and encouraged him in his studies. Believing that Carey should seek ordination, in 1785 the local Baptist pastor invited him to preach. However his sermon was not considered acceptable and he was told to try again. But he soon became pastor of the Baptist church in Moulton and was finally ordained in 1787.

In order to support himself and his family, Carey continued to work as a schoolmaster and cobbler. Unable to afford a globe to teach his students geography, he made one out of leftover leather and drew on it the outlines of the different countries. The year that Carey moved to Moulton the “Journal of Captain Cook’s Last Voyages” was published to great acclaim. He read Cook with intense interest along with everything else he could find about distant lands. Soon he had a homemade map of the whole world on his wall with the population, religion, and other facts about the various nations written on it. John Marshman, who knew him in India, wrote,

While engaged in making or mending shoes his eye was often raised from the last to the map, and his mind was employed in traversing the different regions of the globe, and musing on the condition of the various heathen tribes, and devising the means of evangelizing them (George 1998, 22).

His focus on evangelism and eternal salvation was always primary but Carey was also concerned with the social dimensions of the Gospel. He was especially appalled by the slave trade in which England played a leading role. His sister said he never prayed in church or with his family without remembering the slaves. He refused to use sugar brought from the West Indies, produced by their labor, and encouraged others to do the same.

Carey obviously had a remarkable gift for languages. At the age of twelve he taught himself Latin, using an old textbook. Then as an apprentice cobbler he found a commentary on the New Testament with part of the text in Greek. He borrowed a Greek grammar and glossary and taught himself that language. A Baptist minister helped him master Hebrew, and on his own he acquired a reading knowledge of Dutch and French.

Carey's interests were broad. He was part of a group of friends who were concerned about prison reform, better care for the insane, scientific research and especially slavery. But his focus on the millions who had never heard the Gospel was paramount. In early 1792, after extensive research, he published "An Enquiry Into the Obligation of Christians to use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens in which the Religious state of the Different nations of the World, the Success of Former Undertakings, and the Practicability of Further Undertakings are Considered." It has been called "The first and still the greatest missionary treatise in the English language" (George 1998, 30). Booksellers in various cities ordered copies. On the last day of May leaders from 24 associated Baptist churches assembled for prayer and fasting. The following day Carey preached to the group from Isaiah 54:2, 3. The text follows the Suffering Servant passages and recognizes that the Gentiles shall become part of the People of God. He summarized his message with the words, "Expect great things, Attempt great things." At Carey's urging a resolution was passed, "Resolved, that a plan be prepared against the next ministers' meeting at Kettering for forming a Baptist society for propagating the Gospel among the heathen" (George 1998, 33).

When they met again in October, most were hesitant. They were only a few young Baptist pastors, with no prestige and little money. But Carey reminded them of the work of the Moravians among the slaves in the West Indies and the faithfulness of Brainerd. So they voted to form "The Particular Baptist Society for the Propagation of the Gospel among the Heathen." Their first offering was thirteen pounds two shillings, and six pence.

He faced two primary obstacles as he contemplated leaving England. One was his family. His wife, who was illiterate when they were married, had lost two daughters and now had three sons to care for, did not share his missionary passion. His father opposed the idea. Both thought the idea foolish and impractical. And the church Carey now pastored was growing and it was hard to think of leaving his people there. In addition there was the question of where to begin the mission.

This question was answered when a Baptist surgeon, John Thomas, who had worked in India, returned to England and was appointed as a missionary to go back to India. Thomas had learned Bengali, preached to Hindus, and translated the Gospel of Matthew, all under the patronage of Charles Grant, an evangelical Anglican and official of the East India Company. Carey agreed to go with Thomas to India.

To go there looked impossible. By an act of Parliament any British subject going to India without a license from the East India Company was guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor. Anyone who did so might be fined, imprisoned, or forced to return and have his belongings confiscated. After attempting to sail on a British ship and being forced off, Carey and Thomas got passage on a Danish vessel. Dorothy Carey, with a three week old baby, had refused to go with them but Carey persuaded her to accompany them when her sister, Kitty, agreed to go also. They sailed in June, 1793, and after a five month voyage, arrived in Calcutta. However they had to take a small boat from the ship to the city before they docked in order to evade the British authorities who would not have allowed them to enter.

Soon Carey found himself on the outskirts of Calcutta with no money and no way of supporting himself and his family. They were living in a shack on the outskirts of the city with unsanitary conditions and most of the family was ill. Thomas had taken all of their funds to set himself up in medical practice in the city in order to pay his debts. But Carey persevered in learning Bengali

He followed two principles he had learned from the Moravians; that he should live on an equal footing and be a companion with the people he served, and that he should become self-supporting. Life was very difficult. During these months of suffering, deprived of Christian fellowship, he was sustained by reading Brainerd's journal and Edwards' sermons. After an attempt to homestead 40 miles east of Calcutta in a dangerous area teeming with wild animals, he was invited to supervise the manufacture of indigo dyes in Mudnabatty in northern Bengal. That gave him both a salary and legal status. He would spend five years there. But when he told his supporters in England of his move, they criticized him, saying they had not sent him to India to become an entrepreneur and make himself rich. Life was extremely difficult. In mid-1794 he became seriously ill with malaria and dysentery. A terrible blow came when his five year old son, Peter, died. Carey was grief stricken but even worse, Dorothy nearly lost her mind, and finally became insane, never reconciled to their having left England.

Six months later, alienated from his wife, he wrote that he was passing through the valley of the shadow of death (George 1998, 109).

During the five years in Mudnabatty he laid the foundations for his future ministry in India. He began regular Sunday services for the people, preaching in Bengali, with attendance ranging from 200 to 600 each week. They were Hindus and Muslims in about equal number. His focus was on “the infinitely great sacrifice offered by Christ on the cross. Eternal life and the benefits of grace were to be found in Christ alone, a “free salvation for poor and perishing sinners” (George 1998, 109). Many inquirers stayed after the services to talk further and he hoped for conversions.

He encountered different theological problems in preaching to Hindus and Muslims. Hinduism was a syncretistic religious system that could absorb elements of other religions without offense. It taught that Krishna, the greatest incarnation of Vishnu, had performed deeds of charity, been killed, and would come again. Could the Christ of the missionaries simply be another version of Krishna? Only the Bible could show the difference. That convinced Carey of the great need for Bible translation.

Carey’s business interests necessitated frequent travel throughout northern Bengal. As he did so he collected specimens of Bengali flora and fauna, reflecting an early interest of his. That would eventually become the basis of horticultural research.

But visible results in terms of conversion were few. He baptized a cousin of John Thomas who had sailed to India. And a Portuguese merchant was converted and helped support Carey’s ministry. But still no one from the indigenous population had been converted by 1796.

He soon developed a strategy to make a greater impact on India. More missionaries were needed and they should live in a community that would be an encouraging example to others. He wrote, “Our families should be considered nurseries for the mission” (George 1998, 114.) And he recognized that wives should be as committed to the mission as their husbands, and that single women were needed to work toward the “literary and religious improvement of their own sex” (George 1998, 114).

Carey opened a school in Mudnabatty and installed a small printing press. Then a devastating monsoon in 1799 left the situation there untenable and he moved to Kidderpore where he began to develop his own indigo plantation. He hoped to create a missionary community there that would take root and flourish. But again his hopes were dashed and he had to move again.

That same year eight new missionaries were commissioned in the Baptist church at Olney. The group included a single man, William Ward, a single woman, Miss Tidd, and three married couples with their children. They included Joshua and Hannah Marshman who had directed a charity school in Bristol. But when they arrived in India they were not allowed to remain in territory controlled by the East India Company and had to remain in the Danish settlement at Serampore, where they were welcomed by the Governor.

Carey was faced by a difficult dilemma. He had invested heavily in the land and buildings at Kidderpore and had formed a church and a strong witness in the area. But when Marshman explained the situation, after seeking God's guidance, Carey and his family moved to Serampore in January, 1800. He called it a city of refuge for debtors and derelicts. It was a melting pot of people from various European nations, Armenians, Sikhs, Muslims, Hindus and others, all sinners, as he said, needing a Savior. The move involved financial sacrifice but was providential. It provided a new base for the growing missionary community and its expanding ministry.

Grief struck when two of the adults and one of the children died soon after they reached Serampore. They began to live as a community, similar to the Moravian model. They decided to hold all things in common with all funds from any work done funneled back into the ministry. It is estimated that Carey eventually contributed 90,000 pounds from his earnings to the work. The community gathered twice each day for reading the Scriptures and prayer, and rotated preaching and presiding. Their watchwords were honesty, intimacy, and equality.

In 1804 they agreed on a covenant, or Form of Agreement which they read publicly three times per year. It included eleven statements of purpose:

1. To set an infinite value on men's souls.
2. To acquaint ourselves with the snares that hold the minds of the people.
3. To abstain from whatever deepens India's prejudice against the Gospel.
4. To watch for every chance of doing the people good.
5. To preach Christ crucified as the grand means of conversions.
6. To esteem and treat Indians always as our equals.
7. To guard and build up the "hosts that may be gathered."
8. To cultivate their spiritual gifts, ever pressing on them, their missionary obligation, since Indians only can win India for Christ.

9. To labour unceasingly in Bible translation.
10. To be instant in the nurture of personal religion.
11. To give ourselves unceasingly to the Cause, “not counting even the clothes we wear as our own” (George 1998, 123).

From 1800 on Carey would be closely associated with the Marshmans and Ward, and from these four, with Serampore as their base, multiple ministries developed.

The Moravians had abandoned Serampore as a mission field in 1792, believing it impossible to convert anyone there. And it was very hard. One reason was the brutality of the local religious practices. It was the site of one of the Jagannath shrines where thousands of pilgrims came to witness the practice in which the devout would be pierced by two hooks in their back, then swinging on suspended ropes forty feet in the air. A car was also pulled by means of hooks fastened into the flesh of disciples. Often people were killed in these rituals which were designed to make atonement for sins.

Carey and his colleagues engaged in dialogue with Brahmin priests, preached in the streets, and as soon as the printing press was set up, distributed copies of the Gospel of Matthew. Soon people began to come with crumpled copies, wanting to know more about Jesus Christ. But sometimes the evangelists returned home with faces bloodied from stones thrown at them. Hindu ballad singers were common in the marketplaces, so Carey and his colleagues composed a hymn in Bengali depicting an Indian renouncing his idols and embracing Christ as Lord. The last verse went: “Ho! All sinful people, this good news attend, Salvation and Righteousness now apprehend, this, this is the order he gives unto you, and then after death you to glory shall go” (George 1998, 128).

On December 28, 1800, Carey baptized the first Hindu convert, along with his own son, Felix. Krishna had worked for the Moravians years earlier, then had been helped by Thomas, who talked with him about sin and its remedy in the cross of Christ. He began to attend Bible studies and when he told Thomas that he had confessed his sin and was now free in Christ, Thomas called him brother and invited him to eat with him. That meant breaking caste, which outraged the Indians. But Carey saw the act as the breaking in of the Kingdom of God. He had always believed the caste system to be incompatible with faith in Christ.

The baptism was witnessed by a number of Europeans as well as Hindus and Muslims. They sang “Jesus and shall it ever be” in Bengali. That evening they celebrated the Lord’s Supper for the first time in that language. Krishna became a great witness among his own people. By

1821 the missionaries had baptized over 1,400 new Christians, over half of them Indians.

Although a few Protestant missionaries had gone from Europe to Asia and North America earlier, Carey's mission inaugurated what Latourette has called "the Great Century of Missions." In 1795 a group of Congregationalists, inspired by one of Carey's letters, gathered in London and established the London Missionary Society. The following year it sent thirty missionaries to Tahiti. Carey's work also made a deep impression on Charles Simeon, a leading Anglican evangelical at Cambridge. He inspired a number of his students to engage in missionary work, including Henry Martyn, and in 1799 the Church Missionary Society was formed. Even though it would not be recognized by the bishops for fifty years, it has been the main missionary arm of Anglicanism for two centuries. By 1834 there were fourteen mission societies in England and several others in the United States and other parts of Europe.

Because he believed the Bible to be the Word of God, uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit, and an infallible authority for faith and life, Carey's primary activity apart from evangelism, was translation of the Scriptures into as many indigenous languages as possible. Indeed, we would have a hard time believing the extent of his work in translation were it not so well documented.

He began each day by reading a chapter in the Bible in each of the languages he had mastered; Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Dutch, French, and English. He had quickly mastered Bengali and completed the first edition of the New Testament in that language on February 7, 1801. With the help of Ward, 2000 copies were immediately printed. It was revised a number of times until the eighth edition was completed in 1832. The Bengali Old Testament was completed in 1809 with five revisions later. Carey also made a great contribution to Bengali literature by publishing a dictionary and grammar in addition to the first Bengali newspaper. His influence on the Bengali language was comparable to that of Luther on German or Dante on Italian.

With funding from the British and Foreign Bible Society and friends in the United States, Carey and his colleagues continued their work of translation. By 1837, the year that Marshman died, they had translated part or all of the Bible into 40 languages and dialects. Carey was responsible for its translation into six Indian languages and portions into 29 other languages. Obviously he did not do this alone. Marshman was a better Greek and Hebrew scholar, and they gathered a group of Indian

pundits to help for accuracy. But Carey was either the translator or general editor.

While they could reach the masses with the various vernacular translations, the Brahmins believed that any sacred writing had to be in Sanskrit, the language of ancient Hindu culture. So Carey learned that language and in 1808 published his first edition of the Sanskrit New Testament. Ten years later the Old Testament was also published. The Bible told the story of redemption in Christ in contrast to myths of transmigration and re-incarnations depicted in the Hindu Vedas and Upanishads. He also published a Sanskrit dictionary and grammar. In addition he translated other Hindu classics.

Thus, if Carey had accomplished nothing else, he would have come down in history as one of the greatest Bible translators of all time.

Along with evangelism and translation, education soon became an essential focus of ministry. Carey had opened his first school in 1798. In 1800 Hannah Marshman opened a school for “young ladies.” She was especially interested in the plight of Hindu women, for whom education was believed to be both impossible and undesirable. It was considered sacrilegious for a woman to attempt to develop or use her reasoning powers. Her school became a model for others and by 1817 the Baptist missionaries had opened 103 schools with 6705 students. (George 1998, 145).

Carey’s philosophy of education was to instill divine truth into the minds of the students as fast as their understanding permitted it. He encouraged curiosity and inquisitiveness and rejected the dichotomy between science and religion. In 1816 Marshman published a manual for teachers in the Serampore school system, adapting the pattern of education advocated by the British pedagogical reformer Joseph Lancaster. The curriculum included emphasis on spelling, grammar, and arithmetic, along with courses on composition, history, geography, the natural sciences, ethics, and morality.

Even though parents often forbade their daughters from studying, these efforts to promote literacy and education in India had a lasting influence on the culture and also aided the Church by training its leaders.

Fort William College in Calcutta had been established to give advanced training to the sons of company officials stationed in India. So it was surprising that Carey, a dissenter, was invited to take the chair of Bengali there. He consulted with his colleagues and after prayer, they believed it to be a call from God. For 29 years he taught Sanskrit and Marathi along with Bengali and his salary became the primary financial

support for the mission. His position also gave legitimacy to residence in Calcutta and he soon opened a worship center in the city. He divided his time between the two cities, spending Tuesdays through Thursdays in Calcutta and the long weekends in Serampore. That meant that twice a week he rowed sixteen miles each way between the two cities.

His greatest educational achievement was Serampore College, founded in 1818. It began with 37 students, 19 of whom were Christian nationals, the others Hindu. The purpose was to provide theological education for Christian students of various denominations and it included a wide liberal arts curriculum. The faculty came from different denominations but all were required to embrace the essential evangelical doctrines. The charter said that “no caste, color, or country shall bar any man from admission into Serampore College” (George 1998, 148).

In his ‘Enquiry’ Carey had said missionaries should take every opportunity of doing good to the people among whom they worked. His commitment to Jesus Christ led him and his colleagues to seek social reform just as we have seen in the awakenings in England and North America. He had already taken a strong stand against the slave trade and prayed regularly for its end. Toward the end of his life when he heard of the emancipation of the West Indian slaves he asked the Baptist churches in Serampore and Calcutta to set aside a month of prayer of thanksgiving.

Shortly after his arrival he was troubled by the degradation of human life that he witnessed: unwanted babies exposed to the elements and animals and ritual infanticide. The old were often abandoned and exposed to the elements. He called on the authorities to take legal action to prevent these practices. But the worst was “sati,” the immolation of widows with the bodies of their dead husbands with the belief that the act would contribute to her eternal salvation. He witnessed it for the first time in 1799 and described it in gruesome detail in a letter. He studied the Hindu sacred books and discovered that “sati” was not required in them. He campaigned against the practice and in 1829 it was proscribed. There were other missionaries, evangelicals in England, and Hindu reformers who took part in the campaign, but Carey’s leadership was essential.

Carey has been criticized because of his relationship with Dorothy, his first wife. She had strongly resisted his call to India and at first refused to go. She agreed to accompany him only when her sister, Kitty, consented to go. Even so, still nursing their infant son, she went with him very reluctantly. She suffered terribly both physically and emotionally, losing her five-year-old child. She lost her mind as early as

1798, and died in December, 1807. On May 9 the following year Carey married Charlotte von Rumohr, daughter of a Danish count. The great love of his life, she was devoted to him, and contributed to the work of the mission from her own resources. He had tutored her in English and baptized her. In turn she took a special interest in his children. After 13 years of marriage Charlotte died, leaving him heart broken. He was married a third time, to Grace Hughes, a widow who outlived him. But he asked to be buried by the side of Charlotte.

Carey's vision for world evangelization never stopped expanding. By the year of his death in 1834 there were 50 missionaries serving in 18 stations in India. While he was a convinced Baptist he welcomed all evangelical groups. His stated goal with respect to Christians of other denominations was "to cherish a catholic spirit toward them, and engage in a ready cooperation with them in everything that did not require a sacrifice of religious principles" (George 1998, 163). And he hoped to bring together all denominations of Christians from the four corners of the world in a missionary conference in 1810 or 1812. That was not to take place for another century, when it was held in Edinburg in 1910.

The book on Carey by the Indian scholars, Vishal and Ruth Mangalwadi, has the sub-title, "A Model for the Transformation of a Culture" (Mangalwadi 1991). They point out that in addition to his other accomplishments, Carey was a botanist and published the first books on science and natural history in India. He believed that nature is not an illusion but was created by a good God. He introduced the steam engine and was the first to make indigenous paper in the nation. He also introduced the idea of savings banks to overcome the exploitation of money lenders. He founded India's Agri-horticultural Society, did a systematic survey of agriculture in India, and campaigned for agricultural reform. He also wrote essays on forestry and advocated cultivation of timber and conservation.

I have already mentioned his work in translation and education. For nearly 3000 years India's religious culture had denied most Indians free access to knowledge, and the high castes kept the masses in ignorance. Carey's work in education, as in other ministries, came from his conviction that every person was created in the image of God, an idea antithetical to Hinduism.

The oppression of women, polygamy, female infanticide, child marriage, sati, and forced female illiteracy were all sanctioned by the Hindu culture. The British government accepted these practices an irreversible part of the local culture but Carey published descriptions of

these practices to raise public awareness and protest in Bengal and England.

All of these aspects of his ministry came from his fundamental biblical worldview. It was in great contrast to Hinduism in which ethics were separated from morality. Carey's Bible taught him that this world is the creation of a good and holy God, that humans are created in His image but are sinners in need of redemption through Jesus Christ. That redemption should lead to a life of holiness. In contrast to the colonialists, "he saw India not as a foreign country to be exploited, but as his heavenly Father's land to be loved and served" (Mangalwadi 1991, 24).

When we think of mission today as *shalom* and transformation we can do no better than examine the remarkable, multifaceted life and ministry of this "consecrated cobbler," who still serves as a model for us all.

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Chapter Five

The Embarrassingly Delayed Education of Ralph D. Winter

Ralph D. Winter

Pioneer of Theological Education by Extension, founder of numerous organizations including the U.S. Center for World Mission (now known as Frontier Ventures), William Carey International University, the International Society for Frontier Missiology, and the Roberta Winter Institute.

*In beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.
As for the earth,
it was destroyed and desolate (tohu wabohu),
with darkness on the face of the deep,
but the Spirit of God stirring over the face of the waters.
Then God said, "Let there be light," and there was light!
And God saw that the light was good.
So God slashed a separation between the light and the
darkness.
(Gen. 1:1-4, editor's translation)*

Introduction

Note: Everything here represents either widely accepted scientific understanding or biblical interpretations that are seriously believed by widely respected Bible scholars. Granted that some of these ideas may seem unusual. To my knowledge there is nothing here that can fairly be construed as heresy. Further explanations are at the end.

1950

Soon after 1950, when I was 26 years old, discussions at the level of the Wheaton College Board (following the views of Dr. Russell Mixer, Chair of Wheaton's Dept. of Biological Sciences) came to a significant decision. The board determined that Wheaton faculty would be allowed to believe that the flood in Genesis was local, covering "the known world" but not the entire planet. Of course, once you speculate that

Genesis events do not necessarily refer to the entire planet, other unconventional interpretations of the first few chapters of Genesis loom. In any case, in 1950 I had no knowledge of this decision at Wheaton. Neither did it occur to me that any Bible believer would take that position. In any case, I would not find out about Wheaton's decision until thirty years later.

1958

Eight years after Wheaton's decision, the widely respected department chair of Old Testament Studies at Dallas Theological Seminary, Merrill Unger, went into print (Unger 1958; Unger 1981, 5) with a highly unconventional view of Genesis 1:1, 2, namely, that Genesis 1:1 accurately interpreted described "A" new beginning not "THE" beginning, that is, that Genesis Chapter 1 is the beginning of the human story not the beginning of the universe. But it was not until I was 80, 46 years later, that I typed into Google the words "before Genesis 1:1" and thus learned of Unger's point of view about "the geologic ages" occurring before Genesis 1:1.

1969

Then it was in 1969, when I was 50, that the USA landed on the Moon. But it would be 28 more years, when I was 78, before I heard that what we found there included the fact that the numerous, quite visible Moon craters (unobliterated by weather or erosion) were actually asteroidal impact craters not volcanic craters—as had long been believed. Now, in 2007, it has been 32 years since the Moon landing. Ever since 1969 hundreds of scientists have been scouring the surface of our weather-swept earth for similar asteroidal impacts. Result? Hundreds of huge craters have been discovered and thousands of smaller ones (Alvarez 1997). Now, for example, many specialized scientists believe that the 100-million-year dominance of the dinosaurs was suddenly ended 65 million years ago by the global turbulence created when a huge asteroid left a 100-mile wide crater in the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico. Indeed, one study reported in *Scientific American* tells of the discovery of 45 impact craters at least 15 miles wide, each with a date and size (Becker 2002, 76-83). Furthermore, it is understood that even smaller asteroidal impacts often darken the whole earth until, as the dust settles, first glimmers of light indicating light and day appear

and later the Sun, the Moon and stars become visible—a sequence which, if that of Genesis, is a sequence of restoration not of creation.

Something very strange and puzzling but widely discussed by both paleontologists and evolutionists is the sudden and very wide diversity of life forms appearing in what is called the Cambrian period. That sudden, spectacular profusion of diversity is why this period is usually referred to as the Cambrian Explosion. Such an event obviously damages seriously the idea of a gradual Darwinian process.

However, where have I been? I did not know until recently that a not-often-mentioned peculiarity of the Cambrian period, in addition to the very-often-mentioned sudden, un-Darwinian profusion of life, was the first appearance at that time of predatory, life-destroying life. I first saw this in *National Geographic* and later in technical books on paleontology (Fortey, 1998, 82, 92-93). Was the Cambrian event the first clear evidence of the attack and distortions of an archangel, C. S. Lewis' "Hideous Strength"? More specifically, has the slow progression of increasingly complex life forms been the work of obedient angels—while the violent, predatory life forms have been the contrary effect of angels whose rebellion enabled them to distort life forms into the violence which we see first appearing in the Cambrian Period? Is that why, when Satan appeared much later in the Garden, he already had a lengthy "crime record"? Was his "fall" when the Cambrian Period began 500 million years earlier, thus explaining the unremitting destruction, suffering and wildly diverse, violent animal life for the next 500 million years?

Back to Unger. His exegesis of Genesis 1:1, 2 (along with Scofield and a host of other Bible expositors) proposes that verse 2 describes the result of some sort of a destructive event. *Tohu wabohu* in verse 2 could mean "destroyed and desolate" not merely "formless and void."⁹ In that case such a destruction was the basis for the creative events in chapter one. Furthermore, notice that the text of Chapter 1 insists that both the animal and human life created at that time was not predatory or carnivorous. Hmm.

⁹ Old Testament scholars translate *tohu wabohu* with such terms as "desolation and disorder" (Gibson, 1981), "welter and waste" (Alter 2004, ix), "chaos and desolation" (Anderson 1994, 11).

At What Point Humans?

Furthermore, paleohistorians and paleoneurologists may have a better idea of when truly human beings first appeared than ordinary paleontologists whose focus is on fossilized bones. Paleoneurologists, in contrast, look to changes in genomics.

Paleohistorians pay attention to evidences of unprecedented intelligence rather than to the sizes and shapes of bones. Paleohistorians have come to the fairly settled conclusion that both plants and animals began to be genetically engineered through highly intelligent selective breeding about 11,000 years ago. Recent articles (even *Newsweek*, March 19, 2007) suggest that genes unique to humans appeared only 50,000, or 37,000 or even 5,800 years ago, the first two of which are apparently essential to true human beings.

The most recent of these unique genes, ASPM, clocked in at the 5,800-year date. Could ASPM be the unique “Edenic Gene” characterizing Adam’s stock in Eden? If so, this could mean that prior to Eden humans lacking this third gene were living all over the world. Widespread evidences are that such earlier humans were vicious and carnivorous cannibals. Were some of them wiped out in an area of the Middle East, say, when the impact of a smallish asteroid initiated the events of Genesis 1? Some, I say, leaving others outside the area to be eye-witnesses of the post-asteroidal atmospheric changes.

If that happened, the later breakdown of the Edenic new beginning would have resulted in the interbreeding of the Edenic animal and human life of Genesis 1 with the already-distorted and carnivorous forms of the earlier kind of animal and human life outside of the Garden of Eden. This would have caused a gradual degradation of the unique “image of God” type of Edenic humanity (bearing the ASPM gene). That interbreeding would have meant both moral degradation as well as genetic distortion in the form of carnivorous behavior (Gen. 9) and the resulting steady shortening of life.

The creation of a “new man” in Christ undoubtedly restores spiritual life that was extinguished by Adam’s sin—sin which was guaranteed to cause (and did cause) instant (spiritual) “death.” But spiritual restoration would not necessarily roll back genetic distortions, which may be what we call original sin. Are we humans not still carnivorous in our digestive systems? Despite being spiritually transformed by Christ do we not still need both our shotguns and immune systems as long as both large animals and microscopic forms of life are still dangerous? Does not, as in Romans 7, our spiritual nature still fight against our physical nature? The “renewing of our minds” in Romans 12:1 curbs our

inherited bestiality except when we may run berserk like Hutu pastors wielding machetes in Ruanda. The “old man” is still there unless crucified daily.

Thus?

If this scenario is by any chance correct, then there is clearly no contradiction between the Bible and the latest thinking of contemporary paleontology and paleoneurology. Neither is there conflict if the universe is 13.7 billion years old. There is no problem if the Earth is 4.5 billion years old. The simplest forms of life may very well have begun to appear 4 billion years ago. Then, after 3.5 billion years of angelic labor and intensive learning prior to the Cambrian Explosion, the labor of angels who were all good and, under God’s guidance could have worked directly with DNA life forms to eventually develop larger animals that were not yet the type of vicious nor predatory life first seen in the Cambrian Period.

At that point, totally unexpectedly, after 3.5 billion years of development, during just the next, most recent, half-billion years (one eighth of the total), massive distortion, chaos, suffering and pain would suddenly appear despite good angels continuously fighting against the distortions of rebel angels led by Satan. During these most-recent 500 million years life would continue to get more and more complex and fabulously diverse, as teams of good angels developed new and creative life forms in different parts of the world—but now having to arm the life forms they devised with defensive traits, such as scales, shells, and immune systems, in a continuous all-out war against vicious forms of life which were the constant counter distortions of evil angels.

This lengthy, contested development of life forms, contrary to Darwinian suppositions, could have been a process similar to that of thousands of intelligent engineers across the 20th century developing a series of different but similar automobiles in different parts of the world with ever increasing complexity. Unlike the unguided Darwinian process, however, is the fact that in the intelligently guided “evolution” of automobiles no manufacturer ever developed cars that automatically turned into newer models, much less ate others! By contrast, all life forms both then and now are subject to premature death and destruction as the result of violent aggression. And, in such a scenario (of good angels developing new and more sophisticated forms of life), it would not seem strange—it would be expected—that new “models” would be closely similar to earlier forms of life. That is, finding “missing links”

would no more support a Darwinian unguided evolution, than such intermediate forms would confirm a continuity of intelligent design.

Curiously, ever since the Cambrian Period 500 million years ago, asteroidal collisions have apparently repeatedly knocked out much of life on earth, the dinosaurs being one of the most curious and violent species to perish suddenly. Perhaps they deserved destruction? In this scenario, the destruction of all life in even a local area would have produced certain features mentioned above—initial global darkness and then the restorative (not creative) atmospheric sequence described in Genesis chapter one (total darkness, some light, finally rays of light) followed by the new creation of non-carnivorous life (as at the end of time prophesied in Isa. 11). All this could have been witnessed and remembered by intelligent human beings outside of the area of Eden (by the distorted, bestial and predatory earlier forms) (White 2001, 58-65).

The breakdown of the Garden of Eden would then have logically exposed both animal and human life (created, as in Gen. 1, in a non-carnivorous state) to interbreeding with forms of life that were distinctly carnivorous and violent, and the “fall” of man would then ensue—not his physical death but his spiritual death. This would then mean that Adam’s “fall” would have brought a curse upon Edenic life, adding to the earlier “fall” of all creation outside Eden. It would thus continue the global struggle against the corruption and evil of Satan’s doing, that is, good angels working together with reconciled man in a struggle against satanically inhabited darkness. This is essentially the story of the Bible as well as the last two millennia.

Mission and evangelism then can be seen as a means of recruiting and renewing humans in a struggle which is not basically between God and man but between God-plus-redeemed-man against the kingdom of Satan and his works. This is a battle to restore in people’s minds the glory of God by helping people to see that not only human but angelic evil is to be identified with satanic initiative and not God’s initiative—a fact widely and extensively misunderstood in Evangelical circles today, witness James Dobson’s earnest but misleading book, *When God Doesn’t Make Sense* (Dobson 1997). Or, witness a Harvard professor’s unchallengeable statement: “If the God of Intelligent Design exists he must be a divine sadist who creates parasites that blind millions of people.” Or witness the sad testimony of a world famous professor of biblical studies, a Moody Bible Institute and Wheaton graduate, the prolific, erudite professor at the University of North Carolina, Bart Ehrman:

This made me think more deeply about my own understanding of why there is suffering in the world. Finally, because I became dissatisfied with all of the conventional answers I decided that I could not believe in [a] God who was in any way intervening in this world given the state of things. So that's how I ended up losing my faith
(<http://www.beliefnet.com/columnists/blogalogue/2008/04/why-suffering-is-gods-problem.html>).

In order to glorify God we must then urgently resist the common idea that all events are initiated by God. We are to rejoice in and praise God in all things but not rejoice and praise God for all things. That is, we can be confident that with God "all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28) without believing that all things are his initiative. As long as angels and men have free will God is not in the usual sense the initiator of all things. This scenario is the very opposite of sitting back and assuming that God does all things both good and bad. Rather, it explains the urgent and momentous obligation to distinguish evil from good and to fight all evil and every evil with everything in our command (not just using First Century knowledge).

The scope of the Christian mission that then devolves on every follower of Christ is to seek constantly what is the maximum contribution he or she can make to glorifying God and fighting evil. This includes healing the sick, rescuing those who are suffering for any reason, preventing disease and malice, and eliminating or eradicating sources of evil and disease. It requires us to engage meaningfully in the global battle against human slavery, corruption in government and private enterprise, family breakdown, and so forth.

In most cases it is necessary to organize. It is good but it is not enough for individual believers to do good deeds. Individuals can do much but many things require group action. In some cases groups, such as mission agencies, already exist. In many cases new organizations need to be initiated. It is not necessary to fly a church flag, or even a "Jesus" flag. In the long run God will get the glory. Otherwise what we do may be interpreted as a means of aggrandizing our particular faith tradition. But clearly, fighting evil provides instant common ground with every group and society in the world. By contrast, winning people over to our religious/cultural tradition is not.

Afterview

Is Christian Faith Blossoming Around the World Today, Only to Fade Tomorrow When It Faces the Hard Questions of Today's Anti-Religious Onslaught?

The exploding power of both Muslim fundamentalists and the Evangelical movement has elicited an almost equally powerful backlash against religion in general, and in particular against those who are sincerely religious. It is the sincere who are considered the most dangerous! They are the ones who blow themselves up or shoot abortion doctors!

The anti-religious backlash is intelligent, widespread, and desperate, fully confident of its cause. Science is felt to be more trustworthy than religious dogma. Young people by the thousands, even those from devout homes, are being carried away by assaults on both the Bible and the Christian historical record. Probably the most vexing and ineffective Christian teaching is what we come up with in the face of tragic and evil events. Why does God allow such things?

One young person after his freshman year at college said to his dad, "There is so much evil, suffering, and injustice in the world that either there is no God at all or there is a God of questionable power or character." This idea is all the more devastating when Evangelicals, having essentially given up believing in an intelligent Enemy of God, take to explaining tediously that all this evil must be because God's ways are simply mysterious. Satan, rampant and powerful in the New Testament, has mainly disappeared from significance following Augustine's injection of some neo-platonic thought into the Christian tradition.

Even more common, if possible, and equally destructive is the common saying that the Bible is clearly of no value as long as it baldly proposes that the universe is only 6,000 years old. In other words, here are two significant barriers to Christian belief: the rampant evil in this world if there is no Satan behind it, and a Bible with the feet of clay beginning with Genesis 1:1.

Both of these obstacles to belief can be dealt with in an unusual way. Thus, what was first described is a brief scenario that attempts conjecturally to interpret Genesis in such a way as not to conflict with the very latest scientific views. It may be helpful in dealing with either non-Christians or Christians about to lose their faith, people who believe current science is mainly correct in regard to 1) how old the earth is,

and, 2) how long ago humans first appeared, but for whom these two things are difficult to square with the Bible.

What has been explained above is also intended to be helpful to anyone who is confused about why and how radical evil appeared in our world. This scenario does differ from the view of many scientists in that it explains the development of life by a means quite different from a Darwinian style random process. Furthermore, it allows for much of both the so-called “Young Earth” and the “Old Earth” perspectives. Most of all, it highlights a strikingly new dimension in the definition of Christian mission. The key stages in this story derive from my own growing up experience.

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Chapter Six

Dan Fountain: Physician, Pedagogue, Prophet

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Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well (3 John 2).

Just before it banged shut, Dan's fingers appeared at the edge of the front door, arresting its swing. He poked his elfish head back through the crack, and his eyes bored straight into me. I almost took a step back.

"Feed the sheep," he charged. An ephemeral half smile danced on his countenance. Then he was gone, trundling across the grass with agility surprising in an octogenarian. Miriam, Dan's diminutive wife, ushered him into their Jetta wagon and they rumbled down the rural Appalachian driveway. Dust lifted from the gravel and drifted across the horse pasture like a tattered veil.

I cogitated over Dan's parting comment. "I guess I understand why he said that. I think. . . Seems kind of obvious and yet somehow profound at the same time. . . He thinks what we're doing is really worthwhile—that shepherding these folks is something that'll make a difference for the kingdom. Well, good. . . I'm glad he approves. . . At least I know he doesn't think he's wasting his time driving all the way up here from Florida."

I wandered back into the sprawling house we had appropriated to host a seminar in global health. The intended audience was hopeful missionaries to be—mostly medical students who wanted to know more about what the Bible teaches about health. Dan loved these students as much as I did. And they loved him—his paternal smile, his idiosyncratic shuffling and mumbling, his droll sense of humor, his quaint mannerisms, and his incisive mind and impeccable memory. But mostly they loved him because he had answers to questions that troubled them deeply, and he delivered them in the endearing spirit of a rebellious but respectful conscientious objector.

They too felt like conscientious objectors. Though early on in their medical education, they already intuitively sensed that the bio-chemical-mechanical model of man they were force fed at the university was incomplete: that what passes for modern medicine has no answer for many things that plagued sick people; that their professors at the university didn't know what a flourishing person was, because they didn't know what a person was, because they didn't know who God was and what God intended for Creation. I sometimes joked with our students that the seminar was "everything you wished you learned in medical school but didn't." Or perhaps more correctly, "everything that, as a believer, you wish they taught in medical school, but they don't—because the medical school is tacitly atheist."

Dan was not only willing to engage with students over their deep questions. Dan had answers, and those answers came from a trustworthy source. Dan always started that seminar by waving his worn black Bible over his head and proclaiming with a winsome grin: "This, is the best textbook there is on health!"

I spent a few hours cleaning up coffee urns and the remnants of donated sweet rolls, and then packing borrowed folding chairs into a borrowed truck. The weeks-long seminar was wrapped up. Matters were settled. We could take a break!

My wife and I were exhausted. We talked little on the twenty-minute drive home. Though the mid-summer sun had just recently drifted below the horizon, I wandered into my bedroom and flopped into bed. I mused over Dan's parting shot. I contemplated a question a student has asked him, "What IS health?" I drifted, and then slept. And then I dreamed.

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When I woke, it felt just a short while later—less than an hour. I glanced out the window. The barest hint of lighter blue on the western horizon signified a just-now-departed sun. I was in my bed, but somehow things felt somewhat unfamiliar, as if reality were pliable in some way. My wife wasn't there. I got up and canvassed the kids' rooms. They weren't there either. But strangely their beds were made, and their rooms were all picked up—spotless in fact. That was a rare enough a phenomenon to seem hardly possible—no impossible. The kids' rooms all clean on the same day? What was going on? "Wait a minute," I realized. "This is a dream."

A voice sounded in some far off corner of the house—a serious voice—the voice of someone conversing over a serious matter, but quietly. Whoever it was didn't seem to be talking to me. I headed back

to my bedroom, half expecting to discover my high school locker-partner playing hopscotch with a three-headed gnome—or some such fantasy-world nonsense. This felt like that sort of dream. There was no one there. My bed was made now too. “This is definitely a dream.”

I heard the floor creak downstairs. I went into the hall. Light leaked up the staircase and splashed onto the passageway wall. Someone had turned on the lights in the living room. I pondered, “What if the devil is sitting in the rocking chair, as they say happened to Martin Luther?”

But this didn’t feel like that kind of dream. I resolved to investigate. Knowing that the aged stairs would squeak, and thus the downstairs dweller would hear me coming, I girded up my loins and began the descent.

I paused at the turn in the stairs—at the point where you know that anyone in the room below can see your legs, but you cannot yet see them. Unseeing, you are seen. My doubts returned.

“What if it’s something... something bad down there?” I thought. “Well, they’ve seen me by now, and they can see me deliberating on the stairs, and if it were a shark-headed dragon down there waiting to swallow me whole, it would have started that already, so it probably isn’t that, and besides not knowing is probably worse than the reality, and on top of that it’s probably nothing and I’m standing here starting to look cowardly, or at least silly by now, so I’d better just get on with it. If it’s a monster I’m not going to save myself by standing here reflecting. Too late for that.” So down I went.

It wasn’t anything bad.

It was Dan Fountain. He was sitting in the rocking chair, but he was no devil. He looked very pleased to see me. “More like a leprechaun than a gnome or a fiend,” I mused to myself. “And only one head.”

My foot remained poised on the last step, my hand perched on the banister. It’s not that easy to approach a mysterious visitor in your living room at night—even if you know and love him. Even if it is only a dream.

I approached cautiously and paused at a safe distance. After all, this could still be some devilry just disguised as Dan Fountain.

“That was a good question,” he offered.

I needed to have some questions answered before I engaged in philosophy. “You’re a dream right?” I queried.

He only smiled—a very affable smile.

“If this is a dream,” I tilted my head in wariness, “Are you an apparition?” I felt a little panic boiling up. “Are you dead? Like a ghost? Oh no! Did you die on your drive home?”

Still smiling, Dan replied, “No, I’m not dead. And yes, this is a dream.” He paused. “Do you ask everyone in your dreams if they’re a ghost? That would be strange. That’s not what most people do, you know. Most people assume...”

“Well,” I interrupted, something I did not usually do to Dan Fountain, but at this point I felt I had the moral high ground. “This is pretty strange.”

He only shrugged and kept smiling. He glanced at the sofa across the coffee table from him. “Tea?” he offered.

A tea service seemed to have appeared on my coffee table. I was pretty sure it hadn’t been there a moment before. And, it wasn’t a tea service from our house. We don’t even own a tea service, unless you count toys. This looked like real china.

“Where did that come from?” I didn’t say it out loud.

Dan often drank tea at bedtime. I always thought that was kind of a European thing. It was just another of his many quirks.

I didn’t take any tea. I sat down—slowly—and on the edge of the sofa—the way you sit if you might have to jump up any second because you might discover something untoward lurking under the coffee table.

“It’s a dream. What do you expect?” Dan shrugged. He did that a lot.

I shrugged back.

He sat smiling at me for a while, the way your mother will smile at you and just look at you the first time you come home from college or being away for a long time.

“You’ll get used to it,” Dan said enigmatically.

I looked around the room to see if anything else was weird. But except for Dan, and the tea set, it being the middle of the night, and some other creepy stuff, my living room looked pretty much like it always does—except there weren’t any matchbox cars or Legos on the floor and the remotes were actually where they belonged.

“So, I thought it was a good question,” he repeated after a while.

“Which one?”

“‘What is health?’ That one. It’s a great question. A great way to get at the point.”

I was starting to get more comfortable. “Yeah. I think so too.”

I paused. Sometimes I wondered if I should say anything when I could tell he wanted to tell me something. And I definitely could tell he wanted to tell me something.

Dan just sat there smiling and sipping his tea, so I launched in. “Yeah. You know I wonder if that wouldn’t be a great way to start your seminars.” (I always called them his seminars when I was talking to

Dan. But I called them ours when I was telling someone else about them and Dan wasn't there. It wasn't until after Dan passed away in 2013 that I sometimes dared to call them mine.)

I went on. "I love to ask that question of medical students—especially ones that are about to graduate. Because they usually just stare back at me—until they realize that it's embarrassing that they don't have a ready answer for that. Then they either look uncomfortable, or mutter to one another, or make a joke, or worse yet, make up some baloney on the spot. Then I get to say to them, with only a little glee, 'Do you mean that you have just spend a quarter of a million dollars, and four years of your life, and you are about to spend four more years in indentured servitude to the medical system, and you haven't thought hard about what it is that you're supposed to be aiming at?'"

Dan's smile broadened to a grin. "Then what?" He set down his teacup and leaned in.

I continued, "Well they usually laugh at themselves a little at that point, because they know I've got 'em. Sometimes they make excuses, but usually they're too polite, and besides, they know I've already got 'em. So I make some of the typical medical school party-line excuses for them, like, (I slipped into my protocol-zombie administrator doofus voice) 'Well, there are no board questions on that'—and there aren't—or, 'Well, you know everyone has the right to define health for themselves—people should be able to do what they want to do—to do what makes them happy—to make what they want out of their lives.'"

I paused, hoping to get a little chuckle as encouragement. Dan chortled courteously.

I went on, "Then the students do some, 'Yeah, you're right about that one,' kind of nodding and giving each other knowing looks. It's great, all you've got to do is make fun of administrators a little bit and you've got their attention."

"And then?"

"Well, I continue the charade. I say, 'OK, you guys, seriously. You mean you haven't thought about this?' After they figure out I'm going to keep letting that accusation just hang in the air, usually one of them will pipe up. The courageous ones have had enough time to come up with something coherent by now. So I let 'em give an answer. And then we talk about what is good and bad about their definition."

"How's that go?"

"Well, usually I have to start out by talking them out of their relativism. But that's not too hard. They see pretty readily that there are lots of things that we all agree on about what makes for a flourishing

person. Then we talk about those things. And pretty soon they all find themselves talking about stuff that they never talk about at the medical school—like the soul.”

I paused. “It works.”

“Yes. That is good,” Dan concluded. “That’s a great way to start.” He leaned forward expectantly and clasped his hands together just above his knees, weaving his fingers together in an alternating pattern. He gazed at me intently but said nothing more.

The silence lingered. I vacillated between returning his gaze, waiting for him to speak—this all seemed to be his idea, after all—and pretending to study the details of the room, searching for the imaginative inconsistencies that the dream-world inevitably invents.

After a long while, Dan set down his teacup with a firmness that indicated it was now empty. “Let’s take a walk,” he suggested.

He didn’t wait for any kind of answer. He leapt up and headed for the door with an alacrity that I always found surprising.

I glanced down at my bare feet, considered protesting that he was dressed and I wasn’t, and decided, “Well, it’s the dream world. Something will probably work out.”

He was already outside when I got to the door. He wore his usual twenty-years-out-of-style, but clean and trim and wardrobe. His clothes somehow appropriate on him despite being anachronistic and a little worn out. He wore “slacks” and a 1970’s windbreaker with an esoteric motto in some African language emblazoned on its breast, and his feet were shod in those black shoes that look like nursing shoes except they’re black. (Where do old guys find those things anyway?) He shuffled briskly up the driveway as I closed the door behind me. He had a way of making you feel like if you didn’t hurry up and get on board, then you were going to be left behind.

I ran after him. He was over forty years my senior and nine inches shorter, so despite being fast for his age, he still wasn’t hard to catch. Predictably, he didn’t look up when I arrived at his side, but instead kept his nose pointed toward the road ahead.

“So where are we going?” I breathed.

He glanced over and appeared to survey my attire.

I looked down too. My apparel had mysteriously transformed into my normal street clothes, including shoes. Handy.

“We’re going to look for the answer to your question.”

“Whaddya mean?”

“We’re going to talk to some people.” He seemed to pick up the pace. Man, this guy was fast—and driven.

“Who?”

“You’ll see...”

I thought about asking him why he always had to be so mysterious.

...

“We’ll start where I started,” Dan announced. I looked around. Somehow we had been transported into what appeared to be a hospital ward—in the 1950’s. A long room lined with tall windows and rows of metal beds, all full of pale people huddled under paler sheets. Nearly everything was white. Nurses hurried about in those quaint white uniforms with the skirts and endearing hats. They shuffled silently around us without seeming to notice our presence. A small crowd stirred at the distant end of the room.

I opened my mouth, but so many questions clamored to be asked at once that nothing actually came out.

What eventually did come out surprised me, “You are like... like... the Ghost of Christmas Past... right?” I stared about agape. “Like in Dickens.”

Dan looked pleased with the astonishment this fantasia was engendering in me.

“More like Socrates—in the Allegory of the Cave.” He nodded firmly in approval. “Plato.” He gazed at me to gauge whether I was following.

“But yes, you’re right. I’m taking you on a tour of history—my history.”

I tore my eyes from the fascinating scene long enough to ask the question “Why?” with just my eyes.

He didn’t answer, but went on enjoying my astounded countenance.

After a minute’s silence, I filled in the blanks. “We’re answering ‘What is health?’ aren’t we?”

“Discussing it,” he corrected. “Dialogue.”

I couldn’t help but chuckle at the way he managed to play the self-satisfied Socrates. Rather than come off pompous and austere, he somehow made it winsome and whimsical, like a cross between the Cheshire Cat and Mr. Miyagi.

“Come on!” he declared, fixing his eyes on the assemblage at the far end of the ward.

They turned out to be a surgeon and his emblematic entourage of interns and residents making morning rounds. The elder physician sported a three-piece suit while he pontificated at the bedside of a patient—a withered and very yellow old man. The underlings were all

dressed smartly, but even so managed to look ruffled and sleep-deprived in their short white coats.

Taking my cue from Dan's jocular manner, I couldn't help making a jibe, "Napoleon presides over his aides-de-camp," I whispered.

"You don't need to whisper," Dan whispered. "They can't hear us. Or see us," came Dan's paradoxical advice. But I could tell he was just trying not to drown out the diatribe upon which we eavesdropped.

"Look!" he gestured toward a diminutive man in a skinny black tie who had just spoken up. The facial nerve palsy and lopsided mouth which Dan had borne his entire life marked the speaker as Dan himself, lithe and even more vigorous in his late twenties.

"But Dr. Jones," said the younger Dan Fountain. "This is Mr. Hebert. The same Mr. Hebert that was here last Saturday. And the whole month before that! You know him. We all know him."

Dr. "Pomposity Incarnate" moved his gaze from the abstract spot in the upper corner of the room just long enough to look askance (and necessarily down his nose) at the young Dan. The rest of his posture did not change an iota.

Dan could tell he was on thin ice, but he blundered on. "We already decided he's not a candidate for surgery. He couldn't survive it." Dan paused, wondering how much further down this dangerous path he dared tread. He decided to risk more yet, "What Mr. Hebert needs is to stop drinking."

Dr. Jones' head whipped around, brows inflamed.

"And if he's going to do that," the younger Dan went on, though somewhat more weakly, "He needs to figure out *why* he's drinking, and..."

"That is not our concern!" came the inevitable interruption.

By now Dan's junior colleagues, who had at first displayed hesitant head nods and other very tenuous signs of agreement, all now actually physically took half a step away from Dan, as if to avoid collateral damage.

"... and deal with it," finished Dan in nearly a whisper. It appeared to take all he had to keep his head up rather than lower his chin to his chest.

Beneath the stormy brows of the despot the eyes flicked to the surrounding crowd of subalterns. Two of them stared down at clipboards, but the others literally scattered under that dark attention, suddenly taking interest in emptying bedpans or any other excuse to move out of the line of fire. "Bad move, Daddy-o," one of them

muttered as he passed me by to fuss over a suddenly pressing urinary catheter bag across the aisle.

The demagogue took a deep breath. “Dr. Fountain, I believe we have been over this before. In fact I am quite sure that we have been over it any number of times!” He boomed, “The most ethical—the most caring thing we can do for Mr. Hebert, is to know what the hell we are doing!”

Dan composed himself. “Dr. Jones...”

“I suppose now you’re going to tell me again that there is some spiritual reason—some wound in the soul—that underlies Mr. Hebert’s pathology. Well, we here at University Hospital, do not concern our selves with such flights of fancy. That is what they are. Pure fantasy. There is no spirit. There is no soul, as far as Science is concerned. And that is what we do here, Dr. Fountain. Science. Please leave your illusions about immaterial things at the door, and do not bother us with them here at the Hospital. The Hospital—where we deal with people who are physically sick. We deal with physical diseases, Dr. Fountain!”

He stormed out of the ward with solemnity, followed by a scurrying company of underlings, one of whom—the same one who had brushed by me a moment ago—whispered to the young Dan with a conspiratorial grin as they filed out, “There are more things in heaven and on earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

The grinning Dan of my dream turned to me and raised his eyebrows. He turned and tailed the entourage out into the passage. I trailed after him. As we passed into the hallway, our surroundings shifted.

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The first thing I noticed was that my legs felt cold. Seized with a momentary panic, I leaned forward in an exaggerated way to examine my lower half—to make sure that I had pants on. (The fear of forgetting one’s pants seems to be nearly universal in the dream world.) To my relief, my jeans were still there. Between my feet I observed the pattern of concrete—the kind of sidewalk concrete with a lot of tan-colored pea gravel in it common in the American South.

I uprighted myself. My new environs came into focus. We stood at the foot of a pavestone staircase leading up to the façade of a stately brick church. It was a spectacular spring morning. Blooms and the aroma of flowering trees gamboled in every direction. The era didn’t seem to have changed much. American automobiles, bedecked with two-tone paint jobs, gull wings, whitewalls and lots of chrome packed the parking lot like a phalanx. A masonry-butressed signboard

announced the name and details of the church. All around us daffodils in full bloom danced in a cool spring breeze, recently withered crocuses lying prone at their feet.

The clack of a hefty door lock signaled that the action was commencing. Oak-paneled gothic-arched double doors swung open at the top of the stairs. Each door was manned by a perfectly cropped and shaven gentleman who managed to shove the weighty door open without actually stepping outside. The congregation poured out onto the stairs, ladies in pastel church hats and spring dresses in great evidence and unmistakable contrast to the men, all in stern gray suits.

As the flood of congregants began to abate, the same Dan Fountain, perhaps a decade older, appeared at the top of the stairs. He wore his hair slightly longer than everyone else's, but plastered across his forehead in a way that indicated that he probably wore a pocket protector on weekdays. Dan talked and gesticulated with great animation as he addressed an older gentleman who carried himself with gratified authority. He had his full attention.

I looked at Dan the elder. He communicated with a glance at me and a thrust of the chin that I should be listening.

"Reverend," Dan was saying, "Think about how often Jesus does NOT do what people expect him to do..."

"Doctor," the minister replied (it seemed odd to me to hear a man over twice Dan's age to address him as "doctor" in a church setting.) "What you say is all very well and good, and I'm sure that it applies to you doctors and your medical work, but I hardly think..." he paused and gazed at a spot just above the horizon, "I hardly think the church is the place for... for this kind of thing."

Dan politely held his hands together in front of him, one palm over the back of the other with arms relaxed, in a submissive posture. The other man still wasn't looking at him. Dan took a deep breath as if he were about to sigh. Instead he stifled the gesture and exhaled silently through his nose, his eyes and mouth impassive.

The elder man turned to Dan, "Doctor, consider Jesus' actions in the first chapter the Gospel of Mark. It says that after Jesus healed the sick amongst the crowds, the next day, when many other sick people were still waiting to be healed and the disciples were looking for him to do so, Jesus left Galilee. When the disciples found Jesus and told him that everyone was looking for him, Jesus replied; 'We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them, too. That is why I came.'"

He stopped and looked Dan the younger before continuing, "Jesus came to preach the good news as his primary mission. That was his

highest calling. Healing sick people was important—is important doctor—but Jesus knew that the most important thing was to preach...”

The minister paused dramatically. Dan filled the pause, “But—preach what?”

The affability disappeared from the preacher’s countenance. For a moment it was replaced with dismay and a hint of distrust. But then immediately shallow congeniality replaced his consternation. “Why Doctor Fountain!” His Southern accent suddenly grew so strong as to seem affected. “Salvation! Jesus preached salvation! To deal with the spiritual sickness of the people.”

Dan opened his mouth to say something, but the preacher’s momentum was too much to override. The elder man ploughed on, “Why look at the paralytic whose friends lowered him through the roof of the house. (That’s just a few verses later in chapter two of the Gospel of Mark). His friends brought the cripple there with a mind to have his body healed, but Jesus had his mind on higher things! They only wanted to see him walk. Instead, Jesus took one look at him and said, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’ Jesus was primarily interested in salvation!” He clenched both his fists in front of his chest. “Now doctor, I hold your profession in the highest possible regard, but you must see...”

Dan’s question was firm but soft and respectful, “Sir, have you noticed the words Jesus used just before the phrase ‘your sins are forgiven’?”

The minister turned and looked at him but did not reply.

Before the silence grew uncomfortable, Dan offered politely, “Jesus calls him, ‘My son.’ He calls the man, ‘My son.’”

“We are all—each and every one of us—a child of God.”

“Why do you think Jesus takes the trouble to say it then?” Dan managed to sound more inquisitive than pert.

“It is not for me to say...” the minister trailed off, appearing to be at a loss for words.

Again with total respect, as if he did not deign to teach his elder but simply to remind him, Dan said, “Jesus didn’t ignore his physical sickness. He didn’t ignore what has going on inside the paralytic either—his fear, his feelings of hopelessness, his experience of feeling outcast and valueless. He included him. He called him ‘son.’ He said—publicly—this man is mine. He’s in my family.”

This earned Dan a sideways glance of mixed mistrust and regard. The pastor pursed his lips but said nothing. The silence lingered while Dan bit his lower lip.

“What a mighty God we serve,” concluded Dan. “A Christ who preached the good news of the kingdom—a God who did not separate the spiritual and the physical. A God who dealt with the body, the soul, and the spirit of his broken children.”

When the elder man did not reply, Dan added, “The kingdom of heaven is more than spiritual salvation. And it is more than physical healing or social justice.”

The older man resolved to choose a path of less resistance. He changed the subject. The conversation turned to the potluck for visiting missionaries that the church would host later that evening. The pastor assured Dan the younger that everyone would be thrilled to hear more stories of his service in the wilds of Africa.

Meanwhile Dan the elder gave me a conspiratorial wink and lopsided grin. It reminded me of the time I heard a medical student compare Dan Fountain to Yoda. He stood on tiptoes to stretch his arm over my shoulders, and he guided me toward the road. As we turned, the oaks, dogwoods, and azaleas blurred, then morphed.

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North American fauna was replaced by tropical rain forest. Though I had never been there before, I immediately knew where I was. Dan and Miriam served as missionaries in the Congo for 35 years until they returned to the U.S. in 1996. After that, they traveled the world teaching a biblical understanding of health to church leaders, health professionals, and missionaries. It was an easy guess that Dan had landed us in Congo.

A line of Africans dressed in their Sunday best filed by on a footpath. A woman with a stately demeanor and festooned in bright oranges and yellows led a parade of equally bright children. Next came a pair of young men in serious dialogue. They featured Western style suits, but in colors more suited to an African sensibility: electric blue and purple.

Already beads of sweat appeared on my brow and moistened my clothing. I grasped my shirtfront between thumb and forefinger and fluttered it to ventilate my torso. Dan gave me a knowing look that said, “The Congo.” We joined the cue marching into a typical African village. Dirt paths wound haphazardly between mud huts with thatch roofs. An emblematic population of chickens, goats, and bush dogs acted out their ubiquitous drama of class hierarchy in the dust.

“What year is it?” I ventured.

“Around 1980.”

“How do you know?”

“This is my tour, isn’t it?” Dan was clearly enjoying himself.

We skirted a circle of huts and arrived at a bit of a clearing. The people converged on a mud brick building with a metal roof that clearly proclaimed itself as a church. Dan and I filed in with the rest and took seats in the back on the right side of the aisle where in fact all of the men in the room were sitting. Very soon a small group stood up and led the crowd in a series of songs. They were promptly followed by more groups and more songs. This went on for hours, in a style with which Dan and I are much accustomed. We sang and clapped and even managed to at least move our feet and hips a little bit—in pathetic imitation of the more vivacious dancing of the other congregants. We relished worshipping with our African brothers and sisters.

Eventually an older man got up to preach. He preached from Ezekiel, and explained about how the Israelites were unfaithful to God, and God therefore chastised them. “God is all powerful, and he does what he wants to do!” he proclaimed.

“We look in chapter 16 of Ezekiel, where the prophet describes the unfaithfulness of Israel. It is horrifying. And so God punishes them. In chapter 16 God tells the Israelites: ‘I will strip you naked in front of them so they can stare at you. I will punish you for your murder and adultery. I will cover you with blood in my jealous fury.’”

“God is furious with them! They will get what they deserve! Now look at chapter 24! God kills Ezekiel’s wife, just to show how serious he is! Let me read it to you: ‘Then this message came to me from the Lord: “Son of man, with one blow I will take away your dearest treasure. Yet you must not show any sorrow at her death. Do not weep; let there be no tears. Groan silently, but let there be no wailing at her grave. Do not uncover your head or take off your sandals. Do not perform the usual rituals of mourning or accept any food brought to you by consoling friends.” So I proclaimed this to the people the next morning, and in the evening my wife died. The next morning I did everything I had been told to do.’”

“Do you see?” expostulated the preacher. “God does what he wants to do. And what can Ezekiel do about it? Nothing! God takes away his dearest treasure, his wife, and Ezekiel can do nothing about it!” he paused dramatically. “But Ezekiel obeys God. He is faithful, and he does everything he is told to do.”

“Do you see? We have been unfaithful. So God is punishing us!” He stared around the room, eyes wide. “He is taking our dearest treasures—

our wives and our children! This terrible disease is God's punishment on his unfaithful people!"

Now it occurred to me where he was going with all this. I turned to Dan. "Is he talking about HIV?" I ventured.

Dan never took his eyes off the preacher. His face had lost all the spritely enjoyment he had exhibited thus far on our tour. Tears welled in his eyes and spilled down his cheeks as he nodded slowly. I kept my eyes on him, just watching his countenance turn to grief. The tears came more readily from the flaccid side of his face.

I blinked away my own tears and swallowed hard. This was a big deal—a really big deal.

The pastor went on, "This is God's judgment on us! What can we do?"

The question hung in the air.

"What can we do?!"

The silence was awful. No one stirred.

I moved only my eyeballs as I peered over at Dan. I watched his lips mouth the preacher's next words—words had apparently echoed in his mind for years.

"There is nothing we can do!"

The man's shoulders went up in an exaggerated shrug.

"There is nothing we can do!"

"God did not give Ezekiel something to do! He told him not to do anything. To just go on."

Dan still mouthed the words as the man went on. "We must just go on!" Dan's eyes closed. He lowered his chin to his chest. He just stayed there like that for a long time—long after everyone was gone.

Eventually he noticed that I was getting fidgety sitting there on the pew with nothing to do. "There's nothing we can do," he repeated in a half whisper. He opened his eyes and turned to me, but said nothing more.

"Do you get it?" His eyes probed mine. Then he got up and strode out.

A short, silent walk took us to a different neighborhood. There we discovered a circle of village elders gathered for a meeting in the shade of a huge mango tree. The younger Dan Fountain was amongst them, seated in one of the rickety wooden chairs that had been carried from nearby huts. Dan was gesticulating as if he were explaining something, but he did not stand in the authoritative posture of a teacher. He sat as they did. When we drew near, we were able to hear the response of one of the elders.

“But doctor, what can we do?” the man matched the shrugging gesture of the pastor we had witnessed thirty minutes before.

“You must do as I have just explained to you,” answered the young Dan calmly. The inquirer just seemed to stare at Dan blankly.

“Doctor, please let me explain for my brother,” offered another man, gesticulating to his compatriot across the circle. “We understand the instructions you have given us. It is you that do not understand us.”

The young Dan’s face registered a glimmer of understanding. He squinted at the speaker as if listening very carefully.

Emboldened by Dan’s openness, the man went on, “My brother is not asking for further instructions. He is saying, ‘What can I do? I am just a poor man.’” He turned and offered a sympathetic bow to his brother. “I understand this. I too am a poor man. Our whole village is poor. We don’t have the money, and cars, and resources that you missionaries do. We don’t understand this disease. We don’t understand this virus that you speak of.”

Though he kept his face expressionless, the younger Dan’s shoulders slackened in defeat. Again, I watched him seem to stifle a sigh.

“You missionaries understand this thing, this disease, this curse. You discovered it. You have medicine. Is it not possible for you to fix this problem?”

Dan remained silent, looking the man in the eye, impassive.

“You could build a clinic. You could bring doctors and nurses from America to care for the people. You could bring medicine. You could teach us what to do when people are sick.”

Still no response came from the younger Dan.

The speaker humbled himself again, saying what all were thinking, but no one else was willing to verbalize. “Doctor, I am a poor man. Really. What can I do?”

Finally Dan smiled. “May I visit you again next month?”

“Of course, doctor!” was heard all round.

“I have some thinking to do—and some praying.” Dan smiled again, and made his exit.

Dan the elder was already eyeing me closely when I turned to him. He was still morose. He raised his eyebrows, one much more than the other, and observed: “Young buck’s got a lot to learn!”

I tailed after him as he took off on what seemed a random trail. Less than a minute later, the scenery changed again.

...

We found ourselves in another African village, much the same as the first one. Dan didn't even slow down as our surroundings morphed around us, though he offered over his shoulder, "It's 1990." He was always able to anticipate my questions.

In a few steps we discovered another circle of village elders encamped beneath a stately mango tree. Again, Dan Fountain the younger was amongst them, looking a few years older, but as energetic as ever.

Dan the elder explained to me as we observed, "In the ten years since our last stop, I, he (he gestured to his younger self) has been to John Hopkins for the MPH [Masters of Public Health degree]. But you know I never used much of what I learned there. As I've always said, what I learned there was more what not to do." His good humor seemed to have returned. The twinkle was back in his eyes.

"Well Grandfather, what do other people, the people in the next village, believe about what causes illness?" Dan the younger inquired.

Another man spoke up. "Oh, that's easy. They believe that another person who has something against you sends an illness. Say you owe your uncle money and you haven't paid. Then he might put a curse on you. And then you will become sick." He looked around the circle and was met with nods of affirmation.

"Or if it's a lot of money, then he might pay the shaman to put a really bad curse on you."

"Or you may have offended the ancestors," offered a third man. "By something you have done or neglected to do." Murmured agreement emanated around the circle.

"Also," presented another, "It can be from people from another tribe or clan who send an evil spirit to afflict you. It might make your child sick. Or your animal. Or you." This incited a more voluble agreement.

"If I am understanding you," began Dan cautiously. "Most people believe that illnesses come from evil spirits."

"Yes," they agreed. "Evil spirits. But you can't see them. Not usually."

Dan paused.

I knew this story. This village was Mayoko, and Dan was here to discuss the problem of diarrheal diseases and intestinal parasites amongst the children. This story was one that Dan often told in his teaching. In this pause, the younger Dan at first looked stumped. He prayed a one-word prayer: "Help."

He was answered almost immediately with an eminently useful revelation—a link—between his worldview and theirs.

“Well grandfather, you are right about this: Disease is caused by things you cannot see—evil things.”

Surprise at this affirmation erupted around the circle.

“These evil things that you cannot see are making you sick. I have spent much time in the university, getting an education about this. Modern science agrees that illness is caused by bad things that you cannot see!”

The men were thrilled to find out that Dan did not spurn their belief in the spirit world. They were eager to hear what he would say next.

Dan went on to explain to them that according to science, disease is caused by microscopic pathogens, except he just called them “germs.” He complemented them on their wisdom in realizing that disease comes from evil things you cannot see.

“Well doctor, what can we do to prevent our children from becoming sick? Our children are too skinny and frequently have diarrhea.”

“Well, you know about latrines, right?” asked Dan.

“Oh yes,” they agreed. “Those are for the Belgians to make money.”

Dan’s look of puzzlement elicited an explanation. “Oh sure. The officers from the Belgian government came around a few years ago and told us that every family had to build a latrine. And that every family that didn’t build one would have to pay a fine.”

“That’s right,” continued another. “So many of us built them—those who could afford to. And when the Belgians came around to inspect, then fined the people that didn’t have them. That’s one of the ways the Belgian government gets money.”

“But you don’t use them?” asked Dan.

“Oh we use them. They make good places to store your tools and other things.”

“But you don’t use them to... to relieve yourself?”

After an awkward pause, someone offered, “No, they’re really just for you white people you know.”

Dan the younger was quiet for a moment. I knew, from knowing this story, that he again offered up the one-word prayer: “Help!”

Again, he was rewarded with an almost immediate answer—from Deuteronomy 23. Dan knew that a large proportion of the people in this village considered themselves Christians, and they would be interested to hear what the Bible had to say about this.

“Elders, did you know that the Bible has a teaching about this problem—about latrines?”

“No,” echoed around the gathering.

“Indeed it does,” said Dan. “You see, God is the Creator, and he knows all about his creation, and germs, and the laws that govern them. God made the laws, right?”

They clearly wanted to hear where Dan was going with this.

“Oh yes. And because of that, in Deuteronomy 23, God gives instructions to the Israelites about what to do to avoid diarrhea and worms.”

“He does?”

“Does anyone know it?”

A younger man, who had thus far said nothing, timidly raised his hand. “Yes, I think so,” he ventured. He took his Bible from inside his tattered navy blue blazer and turned to the Old Testament. He read from Deuteronomy 23: “You must have a designated area outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself. Each of you must have a spade as part of your equipment. Whenever you relieve yourself, dig a hole with the spade and cover the excrement.”

“That’s it!” celebrated an overjoyed Dan.

“The Bible teaches about latrines?”

“Well the Belgians never explained what they were for!”

“What does it mean?”

Another elder answered. “It means latrines! We must build latrines,” he concluded. “That is something we can do.”

“And it won’t be because the government or some outsider told us to,” said an excited man who looked as if a light bulb had just illuminated his thinking. “We will tell people how to make them. You can tell us how to do it correctly, right doctor? And we will build them with things from right here in our village. And we will inspect them ourselves. And we will make sure that people use them... for the right thing.”

“This is something that we can do on our own!”

Approval circulated around the gathering. Dan the younger wore a look of thorough gratification.

Dan the elder regarded me with a look that said, “See? Just like I always told it.”

He turned on his heel. “One more stop in Africa,” he foretold.

...

The last place we visited was the Vanga hospital, from whence Dan and a team of Congolese nurses and midwives built a comprehensive

primary health care system that served as a model for decades and in many countries as a method for getting basic care for thousands of people spread over vast rural areas.

We materialized on the hospital grounds, in a courtyard lined by bougainvillea. Right away I suspected we were at Vanga. I murmured the word to Dan as I gazed around.

“Indeed,” he said. One thing I loved about him was the way that he could get away with talking like that. If I used the word “indeed,” all by itself, as it’s own sentence, then I would sound pretentious. But Dan could pull it off.

We described a circuitous route amongst the many buildings and courtyards. I could barely keep up with him. “So why are we doing all this?” I asked.

He stopped.

Turning to face me, Dan answered, “Two reasons. One, you were wondering ‘What is health?’ before you fell asleep.”

“Good point,” I agreed. But Dan had already taken off again.

“What’s the other reason?” I inquired of his back.

“You’re going to be asked to tell my story someday,” he called over his shoulder.

“What do you mean? Like in a book?”

“Something like that!”

“Well...So?”

“I wanted to give you something good to put down! I couldn’t stand it if somebody wrote my story in the manner of some dry historical biography.” He assumed a pedantic tone, “Dr. Fountain graduated from such and such school. And then he did so and so. And then he met Miriam and they had three kids, and they went to Congo. And in 1965 they did this. And in 1975 that happened. And then in 1985...”

“Yeah, I guess that wouldn’t really be quite your style would it?”

“It wouldn’t be Jesus’ style either!” he quipped. “Jesus told stories. Good ones. They fascinated people.”

When I didn’t reply, he stopped again and stared at me as I padded up. I had been three steps behind him, as always. His good eyebrow asked, “So?”

“OK, I get it.”

He didn’t look at all satisfied.

“I’ll try... What do you want me to say?”

He just grinned and jetted off again. “You’ll do fine!” he rejoined.

We arrived in a classroom, where an aged Congolese man presided. Unlike most classrooms, the seats were not in rows, they were arranged

in a circle, and the teacher was not standing up. He was seated like everyone else. He was obviously the facilitator because he appeared to be four times more aged than the twenty students in the room. That, and they were all wore crisp white nursing uniforms while he sported an orange and brown African style shirt with rich embroidery around the neck.

The younger Dan Fountain was not in evidence.

Reading my glance, Dan explained, "It's 1997. I've gone back to America for good."

"Oh."

"I wanted you to meet Mr. Masiti."

"That's Mr. Masiti?"

"Yes."

I well knew that Paul Masiti had been Dan's close partner in Congo. Apparently Dan was showing me his legacy. We listened in.

"Those nice people from the Western aid organizations," explained Mr. Masiti. I don't have to tell you that they don't understand Africa, and they don't understand Africans. You know that. Even the little children in the village know that." I glanced at Dan again. I had never had the chance to hear what Africans really thought of us.

Mr. Masiti went on, "Like it or not, even the Christian foreigners don't believe in the spirit world. They behave as if only the material world affects our health. They think the spirit world is up here," he described a circle in the air over his head. "And they think the material world is down here," he made another circle down by his knees. "And they don't mix."

He folded his hands over his knees. "Now they won't tell you they think that way. They will say, 'Of course our spiritual life affects our physical health.' But you watch them. They may say that. But they don't behave as if they believe it. They behave as if the material world is all that matters. At the end of the day, they are materialists with a Christian skin on!"

The students looked shocked. They couldn't believe how frankly Paul Masiti spoke. Finally, into the embarrassed silence, someone joked, "And some of them don't even have a Christian skin on!"

The laughter broke the tension.

"And what about us?" Mr. Masiti pressed. "What about us Africans?"

No one dared answer.

"Do we have a Christian skin on?"

Prolonged and very awkward silence ensued. Mr. Masiti intertwined his fingers behind his head. He waited.

“Well?”

“I suppose, professor, that you are going to tell us that we do,” ventured a student bold enough to speak, but not bold enough to look at him.

“We do.”

More silence. Then he leaned way forward with his hands on knees and elbows splayed out, squinting at them each in turn.

“The real question is what is beneath that Christian skin!”

They wouldn’t even make eye contact with him now. They all stared at their shoes.

“Come on students! What do you think?”

Silence.

“We Africans are fatalistic animists with a Christian skin on! We haven’t left our old ways of thinking!”

He wasn’t getting a lot of buy in. I looked at Dan. He ignored me.

More silence.

“That’s why we behave towards technology like we do. Think of your patients. How do they think of pills? What about injections? Now that’s strong medicine. What about surgeries? What about surgeons for that matter?”

“Now think of yourselves! How do you view those things? Are you really any different?”

They were really getting uncomfortable now, shuffling and staring off into nothing.

“We think of all these medical technologies as we think of our own traditional witchcraft!”

A young woman actually gasped.

“Oh yes. We think of them as more poultices and incantations from the shaman. They are exercises in power—power over the material world and power over the spiritual world. Just like the witch-doctor’s spells!”

“And guess who the witch-doctors are!”

Mr. Masiti was clearly the only one willing to speak. “Worse yet,” he went on, “We are fatalistic animists. We think we can’t do anything about our problems. That we are victims. That life is in the control of spirits, and that they are not necessarily good. That we don’t have the power needed to get well, or to better ourselves. Or to better our villages. We have no hope and we live in fear. We fear that we have to appease the spirits. Or the ancestors. I know that most of you—nursing

students at this prestigious school—still go to the witch doctor if you get sick.”

The students looked sick themselves by this point. Several of them looked like they might actually vomit.

Finally a student broke the silence. He tried to change the subject, “Well, what you said about the Americans... and technology. That’s not what they think about their X-ray machines and injections and operating rooms.”

“Only an American could imagine that all this medical technology they bring us is morally neutral. We Africans know that is nonsense. The spiritual world and the physical world are intimately connected.”

A female student jerked her head up with a realization. “Professor,” she began. “That’s like health—the way the Bible teaches it. You’re about to tell us that this applies to the health of a person too aren’t you? And even of a family or a community. Physical health affects spiritual health, and spiritual health affects physical health.”

Paul Masiti rocked back in his chair, smiling broadly. “You’ve got it Michelle. Actually, all Africans know that, right?”

The tension in the room flooded away. I could tell that Mr. Masiti had spent a lot of time with Dan Fountain.

A student with a deep baritone voice joined in, “And Christ gives us an answer to this fatalism—to this victim mindset—to this poverty mindset that plagues our culture! In him, we are no longer victims. God is in control of our lives. And he is good and trustworthy!” He stood up. “We have hope. We have meaning. We don’t have to live lives of fear. Our lives are sacred. We have a destiny in him and with him.” He grinned at each of his fellows in turn.

“I think you will be a preacher as well as a nurse!” proclaimed Mr. Masiti.

I turned to Dan to say something, but as I did, once again the world shifted around us.

...

We landed back in my living room. Dan yawned and settled in the rocking chair. We just regarded each other.

Eventually, he glanced at the stairs and said, “You’ve got three little ones who will be up in couple of hours. You’d better get some shuteye.”

And so I did.

Chapter Seven

Mother Teresa and Ramesh

Ravi Jayakaran

Dr. Ravi Jayakaran has over three decades of experience in poverty reduction and providing strategic support to development programs. He is currently the Senior Associate for Integral Mission for the Lausanne Movement. This chapter is excerpted from his book, *Stories of Transformation*.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy (Matthew 5:7).

Of all the stories I have shared, perhaps the one most shared, has been the story of Ramesh. Despite this, even now, as I write it, I feel excited and can feel the goose bumps on my skin. It is a story that involves Mother Teresa, and I had the privilege of sharing it with her. She in turn, quite typically, said she could not remember the specific experience, because she had had several experiences like that! Well, let me not run ahead with my story. Let me start at the beginning, and share with you how it all came about.

In the mid eighties, I was still working with the Usha Martin Group of Industries in Bihar. With my team, I was in the process of revamping the organization to make it relevant to the needs of the local communities of Oraon, Munda, Mahtos and other people groups who were small scale farmers. We were in the process of studying as many different approaches as possible, and testing out new means for subsidiary income generation. I had just returned from a trip to one of the North India states studying their Animal husbandry Programme, stopped over in Delhi to see a special project where someone was introducing high producing Italian honey bees, and was at the Delhi airport waiting to catch a flight back to Ranchi.

I remember that I had hurried to the airport to catch my flight only to be told that the flight was delayed. When it got close to the time of the rescheduled time they announced another delay! I had just heard this, and was irritated getting back to the waiting room when I saw an old friend from my student days—Dr. Vishal Mangalwadi. Vishal is a well-known activist, contemporary thinker, and prolific writer who had a

great deal of constructive input into my life as a student, especially my spiritual life. I was glad to see Vishal and now the delay in the flight didn't seem like such a bad idea, as I could catch up with what he was doing.

Vishal too was waiting for a flight, and introduced me to a friend of his, who was waiting for her husband to arrive on the flight that Vishal was planning to catch. We found some vacant seats, and gave each other a quick run through on what had happened in our individual lives since we had last met. Then Vishal told me about the lady who was waiting with him. She was, he told me, the wife of very big business magnate. Her husband was the one who owned (as part of his many businesses) the dealership for a major brand of soft drinks for the whole of North India. However, this was not the thing that was special about her, Vishal told me, but that she was a person with a very big heart. I listened silently, waiting for more details. Thus began a most unusual story—the story of a lady, her husband, and their incredible experiences. I am sure I was told her name, but the incredible details that followed, drove that from my memory.

The lady and her husband had a son. And as was expected, when he was born they gave him everything he wanted. He was brought up in the lap of luxury and his parents loved and adored him. In fact their love and devotion was so strong toward him, that they feared that at some stage if they had other children, they might not love him enough. Thus, both of them took a decision to get a “family planning” operation done so that neither of them could ever have children again! They would love their son with all their heart, and do for him all that was physically possible. The boy, understandably, grew into a spoilt brat, often demanding his own way. The parents on their part, danced to his tune, pampering him and giving him everything he wanted. Their whole life revolved around him.

When he was twelve years old, he demanded a special birthday present from his parents. He wanted to take a pony ride in Kashmir. His wish was, of course, their command. The family was soon off in Kashmir, taking trips on the Dhal Lake in Shikara boats, and pony rides alternately. On one of the days, as their son rode a pony on the mountain road, a truck turned the corner and blew its horn. The sudden sound caused the pony to sprint, freeing itself from the control of the pony owner. It ran uncontrollably, tripping over the barricade and into the valley below.

The parents who were following him ran in fear looking over the side of the road. Way down, hundreds of feet below, lay the pony and

the boy. They ran down the hill screaming and fearing the worst. When they finally reached the spot, both the pony and the boy were dead. The lady clung to her son's lifeless body and wept uncontrollably. Nothing anyone said could console her. She clung to the body, refusing to let it go, and had to be sedated as her husband made arrangements for them to fly back to Delhi where they lived.

"Time," her husband was told, by one of those who came to the funeral, "heals all wounds." But this was not apparently so in their case, because every night his wife had to be sedated, and only woke up again weeping the next morning. Both of them were shattered by the loss of their son, but the wife seemed to show no signs of recovery from the event. The husband tried everything, even hiding his own grief, but to no avail.

Finally, in desperation, he remembered that his wife had a classmate living in Calcutta who had been very close to her before they married. He rang her up, and requested her to come and try to help her friend. With the arrival of the friend, there was a new round of weeping. In her bid to console her weeping friend, she had inadvertently suggested to her to take heart because they could have more children. She was of course not aware of the decision her classmate and husband had taken, not to have more children so that they could give their undivided love to their only son. Now, with him gone, they were apparently hopeless.

With the utmost caution, she told them about a project that she was involved in, back in her hometown Calcutta. She was a regular volunteer at Mother Teresa's Shishu Bhawan where they worked with abandoned children, including helping them find foster homes to get adopted into. To every one's surprise, the idea caught. The lady suddenly stopped weeping—the first time in days. She suddenly seemed to have a new hope and purpose in life. She wanted immediately to go to Calcutta, and meet Mother Teresa, and ask her to immediately give her a child to adopt. She would shower the child with all the love in the world and never let it ever feel abandoned. Her husband was relieved to see that she had once again found a purpose for living. He was willing to support any effort that would help the healing process for his wife. They were soon off to Calcutta on the first available flight, and after some quick phone calls, had an appointment to meet with Mother Teresa herself.

Mother listened to all that the lady had to say as she shared why she wanted to adopt a child and that too as soon as possible. When she had said her piece, Mother looked at her with great admiration, telling her that she was a person with an incredibly big heart, capable of immense

love. She however said she wanted the lady to do something for her before she gave her a child to adopt. She took them inside the Shishu Bhawan, past all the infants and little babies to meet a slightly older child.

As soon as she entered the room, a little girl got up and hugged her. “This child,” Mother said, “has been here with us ever since we found her abandoned. She was born like this, with a distorted face. No one wants her because of her appearance. No one wants to take her and get her treated and operated to repair her features. Every one wants to get a perfect child. She paused a moment as she held the little girl close to her heart, then said, “I can see you are a person with immense love. I want you to at least help two children like her before you take a child to be your own.”

The lady spoke to her husband over the phone. With his consent, they took the little girl back to Delhi. They had soon contacted leading plastic surgeons around India. The girl went through a series of operations to have her face restored, and in a short period of about a year shaped up to be a beautiful girl. This time her husband joined her as they took the little girl to show her to Mother Teresa. Mother was pleased as she saw the child. When the lady asked her for a child to be given to her immediately to adopt; Mother Teresa reminded her of her commitment to help two children.

This time she took them to see another child. The boy’s name was Ramesh, and he was a little over two years old. Ramesh was an unfortunate child whose Father suspected him of having been conceived illegitimately by his mother. One day in a drunken fit, he had grabbed the little boy and thrown him in a well. The little child sustained countless fractures as he fell. He was in constant pain and kept groaning. Even breathing was an ordeal for him. His greatest misfortune was that he had survived the fall. Even the doctors felt it was futile to do anything for him. There simply were too many fractures. “Restore this child,” Mother said, gently patting his hand, “and I will give you the child that you so greatly yearn for.”

The couple went back with the child, strapped to a special stretcher, and a nurse taking care of him during the journey. For two years they had taken him from hospital to hospital, from one expert surgeon to another. Because of the immense wealth at their disposal, they had been able to give him the very best treatment available anywhere in the country. In the early stages, she had fought with one or two doctors who had told her she was wasting her time on a child who at best would become a cripple. She had known what it was to lose a child. She had

known how desperately she had wanted to see her son in his broken body restored to life. She knew the value of life, and how precious it was. There was nothing that was ever going to stop her as she worked to help restore Ramesh to wholeness.

I listened to this incredible lady, absolutely transfixed. What incredible love, what determination! I was also suddenly conscious that the announcer was calling passengers on my flight to Ranchi to check in. I cleared my throat, wishing there would be another delay of my flight. "I've got to ask you something," I said. "What is it that has kept you going all this time, facing all these odds and hurdles with Ramesh's treatment?" She was surprised at my question, and seemed to ponder over it a moment. Then with an amazing gleam in her eyes, she looked straight into my eyes and said something that I will never in my life forget "Dr. Jayakaran, I have seen a vision of Ramesh running, and God help me, I will not stop till I see that become a reality!!"

Those words still ring in my ears after so many years. I have shared this story with well over a thousand people over the years. On every one of those occasions when I have shared it at a meeting or a workshop, I've had people come over to me moved to tears, wanting to share how that story had inspired them to persist with something that they had given up on. Personal example is a trigger for transformation. Seeing someone first hand persisting against all odds can inspire, motivate, and completely change the perspective of people. Trace back from a place where you have seen transformation, and you will be sure to find a highly motivated individual as the cause for it.

Ask God to give you a vision of the transformed community He has called you to serve.

Chapter Eight
Rabbi Daniel Zion:
The Salvation of the Bulgarian Jewish Community
1943–1944¹⁰

Bill Bjoraker, PhD

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*No not I, No not I, only you are Yeshua in me!
Only you bring me before the God of my fathers,
Only you can heal me from every evil illness,
No not I, No not I, only you are Yeshua in me!
Only you teach me to love all creation,
Only you teach me to love even the enemy,
No not I, No not I, only you are Yeshua in me!
For this reason I will stay in your love,
For ever will I be within your will,
No not I, No not I, only you are Yeshua in me!*
—Rabbi Daniel Zion

Introduction

Born in 1883 in Thessaloniki, where there was a large Jewish community, Rabbi Daniel became the answer to the plea from many Jews who had immigrated into Bulgaria after the Balkan war in 1912. In answer to a plea in 1918, to “send rabbis,” The head of the yeshiva in Thessaloniki send his son Daniel (age 35) to serve the Jewish

¹⁰ A more detailed account of the story of Rabbi Daniel Zion can be found on Rabbi Shulam’s website from which much of this account is taken: “Rabbi Daniel Zion: Chief Rabbi of Bulgaria during World War II” (<http://www.petahtikvah.com/Articles/RabbiDanielZionChiefRabbiBulgaria.htm>).

community in Sofia. Daniel served the community well as a rabbi in the 1930s and was eventually elected to be the Chief Rabbi of Bulgaria during the early years of WWII.

Early Years as a Rabbi Embracing Yeshua as Messiah

In the early 1930s, a Christian mystic, Peter Dunnov, invited Rabbi Daniel to visit him. Daniel was impressed with the spiritual disciplines Dunnov practiced, one of which was praying at sunrise. Sometime during this period, Daniel was praying at sunrise and saw a vision of Yeshua the Messiah. He asked other rabbis what it meant. They couldn't say, so he finally went to the Bulgarian Orthodox Metropolitan Bishop Stephen, who wisely told him to forget about Christianity and focus on Yeshua.

Rabbi Daniel never converted to the religion of Christianity, but instead continued living an orthodox/Torah-observant life. His faith in Yeshua as Messiah became known in Sofia, but he was such a respected rabbi, who lived a strictly orthodox/Torah observant life, that his opponents could not do much against him. Each Shabbat afternoon, Rabbi Zion studied the New Testament with a small group of Bulgarian Jewish community leaders in his home.

The Salvation of the Bulgarian Jewish Community 1943–1944

It is not an overstatement to say that Rabbi Daniel saved the Bulgarian Jewish community from the Nazis. When in 1943, the Bulgarian government began the expulsion of Jews, Rabbi Zion called the Jewish people to gather in the central synagogue in Sofia, to pray for the edict to be rescinded. When they came out of synagogue, they were attacked with truncheons and 250 men were arrested. But due to the good relationship that Rabbi Daniel Zion had cultivated with the Metropolitan (Archbishop) Stephen of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church, he was able to ask Stephen to intercede with the king, Tsar Boris III.

When there was talk of shipping the Jews to Germany, Rabbi Daniel and his secretary wrote a letter to the King begging him in the name of Yeshua not to allow the Jews to be taken out of Bulgaria. In the letter he told the King he has seen a vision of Yeshua who told him to warn the king against delivering the Jews to the Nazis. The next day, King Boris was to go meet personally with Hitler.

In Rabbi Daniel's sermon on the Shabbat after they visited the King's palace, he said,

Do not be afraid, dear brothers and sisters! Trust in the Holy Rock of our salvation ... Yesterday I was informed by Bishop Stephen about his conversation with the Bulgarian king. When I went to see Bishop Stephen, he said: "Tell your people, the King has promised, that the Bulgarian Jews shall not leave the borders of Bulgaria." When I returned to the synagogue, silence reigned in anticipation of the outcome of my meeting with Bishop Stephen. When I entered, my words were: "Yes, my brethren, God heard our prayers"
(<http://www.petahtikvah.com/Articles/RabbiDanielZionChiefRabbiBulgaria.htm>)

The Bulgarian King never did comply with German demands for Jews to be deported to concentration camps. Although more than 10,000 Jews were sent to provincial Bulgarian cities, and 3500 to labor camps (not death camps), 2300 Jews were allowed to remain in Sofia. The Bulgarian Jews were not murdered in extermination camps, as was the case for the Jewish people in so many other European countries.

During the Nazi occupation of Bulgaria, while he was still Chief Rabbi, the Nazis would take Daniel out and publically flog him, in front of the Great Synagogue in Sofia. Bulgarian Jews knew their rabbi (Daniel Zion) took the stripes that were intended for all Bulgarian Jews. They remembered the cattle cars packed with Jews from Thessalonica and Greece traveling through Bulgaria en route to death camps. The Bulgarian Jews sought to help their fellow Jews in any way they could. They knew that their rabbi had spared them from a similar fate, taking the punishment for them. What they didn't know was the vision that Rabbi Zion had before he met with King Boris. As a result, Rabbi Zion received full credit for saving the Jews of Bulgaria, for which he received many beatings from the Nazis.

After the War

After the war Rabbi Zion knew that there was no future for the Jewish people in Bulgaria, even though the Bulgarian people had bravely defended the Bulgarian Jews. With communism coming to power, Rabbi Zion realized that the only place of sanctuary for the Jewish people was in Israel. He organized the Jews of Bulgaria, who respected him as the man who kept them alive during the Holocaust. Standing before them, he said, "My brothers, my dear sisters, we are now going to make mass *aliyah* [immigration to Israel]. We are going to go up to the Land of Israel. We are going to ascend to our destiny."

They followed *en masse*. Rabbi Zion came to Israel as a hero. His followers were willing to listen to their rabbi's explanation that their lives had been saved by Yeshua

(<http://www.petahtikvah.com/Articles/RabbiDanielZionChiefRabbiBulgaria.htm>).

Rabbi Daniel's actions in saving the Bulgarian Jews from the Nazis won him the respect to be heard when he spoke the message of the Gospel of Messiah Yeshua. First he helped save the Jews from physical death during the Holocaust, and then he was able to give them the message of salvation from spiritual and eternal death.

The Apostle Paul stated this principle in 1 Corinthians 15:46, "First the natural, then the spiritual." (Though he was speaking of the first Adam and his natural descendants and the last Adam, Christ, there is a sense in which this principle applies to Rabbi Daniel Zion's life work.

Thus, Rabbi Zion's life is a living message to the truth that God cares about both human flourishing and *shalom* in this world, and about eternal salvation in the world to come. Both social/humanitarian action and evangelism are aspects of the Gospel of the Kingdom of God.

Later the government of Israel officially thanked Bulgaria for its defiance of Nazi Germany. This story was kept secret by the Soviet Union, who took control of Bulgaria after war. The communists would not publicly recognize the role of the King and the Church in saving the Jews, as the royal and church leaders were considered to be enemies of communism. As a result the documentation of the story of the Bulgarian Jews only became available after the end of the Cold War in 1989. The number of 48,000 Bulgarian Jews was known to Hitler, yet not one was deported or murdered by the Nazis

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Jews_in_Bulgaria).

Life in Israel (1949–1979)

In Israel Daniel Zion was immediately accepted as the rabbi of Bulgarian Jews. Even though a rabbinical court had stripped him of his rabbinical credentials because he refused to stop talking about his faith in Yeshua, he continued to be a rabbi first in Jerusalem, then in Jaffa. At the same time he continued to live and worship as an orthodox Jew, while leading orthodox synagogues.

Although he did not preach openly about Yeshua in synagogue services as he had done in Sofia, each Shabbat afternoon Rabbi Zion continued to study the New Testament with a select group of Bulgarian Jews in his home, and often any who wanted to join them.

Rabbi Zion gave a radio interview in Jerusalem in 1952 on the national Israeli radio station, in which he expressed his faith in Jesus as the Messiah. According to Jacob Gartenhaus, a Jewish believer who worked with Southern Baptists and was later the Director of the independent International Board of Jewish Missions:

God opened the door through “Kol Yisrael,” the official radio broadcasting station of Israel, for Rabbi Daniel Zion to preach the Good News of the Lord Jesus Christ, the One and only True Messiah of Israel, from the inspired, preserved, inerrant word of God. This was the first time that any person was given the privilege of preaching the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the true Messiah, on “Kol Yisrael.”

(<http://www.messianicgoodnews.org/rabbi-daniel-zion/>).

Legacy

Rabbi Daniel Zion came to faith through a vision, and never went through the tunnel of cultural and religious conversion, thanks to the wisdom of his friend, Stephen, the Archbishop of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church. The Archbishop told him he did not have to convert to Christianity, but could simply embrace Yeshua as Messiah, and that is what Rabbi Zion did. If there had been many Christian clerics over the centuries with Stephen’s view, how many more Jewish people may have embraced their Messiah?

In 1979 Rabbi Zion went to be with Yeshua at the age of 96. The Bulgarian Jewish community in Israel gave him full military and state honors. His casket stood in the center of Jaffa with a military guard and at noon was carried by foot all the way to the Holon. He was buried as the Chief Rabbi of the Bulgarian Jews, who saved them from the Nazi holocaust. He was 100% Jewish and 100% follower and disciple of Yeshua the Messiah
(<http://www.petahtikvah.com/Articles/RabbiDanielZionChiefRabbiBulgaria.htm>).

Rabbi Daniel never converted to “Christianity” as a religion. He embraced Yeshua as Messiah and remained faithful to the Torah-observant life style. His religion was always traditional Judaism, but his faith was in Messiah Yeshua. In this sense, he was not a “Messianic Jew” as we usually define them in the contemporary Western and American movement that emerged since the 1960s. He lived before the modern Messianic Jewish movement. Nor was he a “Hebrew Christian,”

as Jewish believers in Jesus used to be called before the modern Messianic movement, because he did not identify culturally as a “Christian.” He never had to re-affirm his Jewish identity or religion; he never lost it. He was born, raised, and lived out his life as a traditional Jew. His story has been a hidden one that needs to be told to the Jewish people and to the world, a story of faithfulness and courageous witness through living and suffering for the Messiah he loved.

A Hebrew poem that Rabbi Daniel wrote, using an acrostic of the Hebrew letters (in parentheses below) that spells his name, well sums up his faith and devotion:

*The (Daver) Word of God is my path,
The (Ner) Lamp of God is my guide,
The (Ira’at) Fear of God is the beginning of Wisdom,
The (Ahavat) Love of God is my Life,
(La’asoth) Doing the will of God is my aspiration.*

*(Zedek) Righteousness and Justice are my goals,
His (Isurim) Suffering is my atonement,
He will (Oo yagen) protect you in all your ways,
The (Nezach) Eternal one of Israel is my comforter.
(<http://www.petahtikvah.com/Articles/RabbiDanielZionChiefRabbiBulgaria.htm>)*

Chapter Nine

Luis Bush: Transform the World!

BJ Jeoung

Co-worker with Luis Bush; member of Frontier Ventures and Band Barnabas

We all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Introduction

During this period of time in which we are seeing a changing church engaging a changing world with a changing mission force and focus, Luis Bush has emerged as a change agent catalyst. While Luis is best known for introducing the concept of the 10/40 Window to the Church, and as the founder of Transform World, he also has a long history of catalyzing initiatives and promoting grass-roots participation of churches and organizations throughout the world.

Background, Early Influences, and Ministry Training

Luis Bush was born January 9, 1946 in Buenos Aires, Argentina into a close-knit, multi-cultural family. Luis's mother was born in Hong Kong, and was of British descent. His maternal grandfather was a New Zealand born, Scottish trained medical doctor and his Australian-born maternal grandmother was trained as a nurse; they met and married in Egypt. The family eventually moved to Argentina where Luis's mother met and married his father who was Argentinian, with a Uruguayan mother!

In 1967, Luis returned to Argentina from his studies abroad for his compulsory military service and began courting his future wife and life-long partner in ministry, Doris Keeton. They shared a similar background, as Doris was also raised in an Anglo-Argentine

community. Luis took Doris to Brazil to meet his parents and they were married in the United States on January 31, 1971.

Early religious influences had shaped Luis's formative years. The Anglican/Episcopalian heritage of his family, with its high standards for morality, was reinforced during his eight years in a British boarding school in Argentina. However, it was Luis's older brother John who was instrumental in bringing about a change in the course of Luis and Doris's spiritual journey. While visiting the Bush family home in São Paulo, John shared that he had had a born-again experience during a silent retreat at Cambridge University in England. As a result of John's testimony, Luis and Doris began attending church with John and began to read the Bible.

Luis remembers later hearing the seminary professor Howard Hendricks speak at a business luncheon in São Paulo. Luis asked Professor Hendricks after his talk, "Can you believe what is in that book?" He was referring to the Bible. "Every word!" was the immediate reply. Luis recalls this as an influential moment, which eventually led him and Doris to approach Dick Schurtz, a missionary in Brazil, who led them to Christ. His life changed dramatically, Luis says. "It was like God gave me a new mind and a new framework for living."

Luis completed his undergraduate studies in economics at the University of North Carolina. After graduation he worked at the management services division of the accounting firm then part of Arthur Andersen & Company, now known as Accenture Corporation. Luis enjoyed business consulting in Chicago; after five years, he was being groomed to return to Brazil in a managerial position.

Two key influences in 1973 changed these plans and set him on a course toward full time ministry. The first occurred at a Basic Youth Conflicts Seminar in Chicago, which Luis remembers as a "key spiritual formation moment." He received the call for full-time Christian service shortly after the seminar. The second influence was the ministry of Pastor Warren Wiersbe at Moody Church. Pastor Wiersbe would have a deep impact on both Luis and Doris during their time in Chicago through his clear exposition of the Scriptures.

Luis enrolled at Dallas Theological Seminary and pursued a Th.M. in New Testament studies. His time at Dallas Theological Seminary was foundational for his future ministry. His experience pastoring a Spanish and English speaking church in West Dallas prepared him for his pastoral ministry in Central America. By that time Luis and Doris had three daughters, Jeannine, Stephanie and Naomi. On graduation day in

1978, Luis and Doris received an invitation in the mail to pastor a church in San Salvador, where their son Daniel later was to be born.

Iglesia Nazaret; *Misión* 84

A new phase of Luis's life began when his family arrived in El Salvador. As the new pastor of Iglesia Nazaret, Luis began ministry in the capital city of San Salvador. These years were fruitful for the growth of all the evangelical church in El Salvador; the percent of evangelicals in El Salvador grew dramatically. During his seven-year tenure as pastor of Iglesia Nazaret, the church grew to 1,300 members; the congregation planted 7 daughter churches and supported 35 missionaries.

During this time, the congregation gained a vision for cross-cultural mission. In 1984, Iglesia Nazaret organized and hosted *Misión* 84, a mission conference with 1,000 participants from eleven Latin American countries. Luis also founded the first Salvadoran cross-cultural interdenominational missionary agency, MIES (Harvest). The organization drew its inspiration from the words of Jesus in Matthew 9:37-38, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few, ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." With church leadership support, Luis also founded the Salvadoran Bible Institute and served as the regional coordinator of Christian Nationals for Latin America, which is now known as Partners International.

After *Misión* 84, Luis's work would expand to an even larger scope. The time was ripe for a mission mobilization movement that would span all of Latin America.

COMIBAM

Various mission leaders throughout Latin America recognized that there was an important shift occurring across the continent. In 1983, Jonathan dos Santos, the president of the *Associação de Missões Transculturais Brasileiras* (Brazilian Cross-cultural Missionary Association), suggested the idea of an Ibero-American mission conference to Luis. The following year, *Misión* 84 provided an opportunity to assess the interest in a continent-wide mission conference. In addition, international mission leaders had challenged and encouraged Latin American leaders to organize a gathering that would unite the continent.

In December 1984, the *Confraternidad Evangélica Latinoamericana* (Latin American Evangelical Fellowship) meeting discussed the

feasibility of a continent-wide mission conference, which would eventually be realized as COMIBAM, Congress on Missions for Ibero Americans. Church leaders felt that such a conference should emphasize world evangelism and the sending of missionaries. Furthermore, the conference should focus on launching a process rather than holding another event.

At this meeting Luis was appointed president of the coordinating committee. The coordinating committee formulated a declaration stating:

- (a) the need for churches and pastors to experience a missionary awakening,
- (b) the need for biblical and theological reflection,
- (c) the inclusion of missiology in theological training,
- (d) the need for research about current missionary methodology and about unreached people groups, and
- (e) the need for cross-cultural training for the missionary task.

In 1987 the first Ibero American Theological Conference was held in Antigua, Guatemala and introduced the topics that would be further discussed at COMIBAM '87.

The COMIBAM '87 consultation included over 3,100 leaders from throughout Latin America, and was instrumental in mobilizing Latin American missionaries and churches for cross-cultural mission. It was a key moment in the mission of the Latin American Church. Ralph Winter called it the "Mission Meeting of the Century." COMIBAM served to cast the vision by creating enthusiasm among Latin American evangelical leaders, and by providing connections for the future. The planning for the conference had laid the foundation for a mobilization process. After the conference in 1987, COMIBAM became an international organization.

Partners International

In June 1986, Luis moved his family to San Jose, California so he could serve as the Chief Executive Officer of Partners International. Luis had served as the regional coordinator in Latin America, and would serve in the CEO role until 1992. Reaching the nations with indigenous partners since 1943, the mission of Partners International, which changed its name from Christian Nationals during Luis' time as president, has as its mission connecting the global Christian community to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the least reached, least resourced nations on earth.

In October 1986, Project 2000 was launched. This was an effort to plant 2000 churches among 2000 unreached people groups by the year 2000 through partner ministries. Seventy partner ministries from fifty countries were involved.

AD2000 & Beyond Movement

In May 1987, Thomas Wang, the former International Director of the Lausanne Committee on World Evangelization, posed the question: “The Year 2000: Is God Trying to Tell Us Something?” in an article for the *International Journal of Frontier Missions*. This article described the various mission movements and initiatives that focused on the year 2000 as a goal. This article germinated the seed for the AD2000 & Beyond Movement. Thomas Wang asked Luis Bush to write an article on the principles for world evangelization by the year 2000, which would be distributed to Christian leaders around the world. Luis based these principles on those found in the book of Exodus and the eight principles for COMIBAM – the principles of spiritual movement, indigenization, consultation, involvement of every population segment, research of the harvest field and the harvest force, the principle of order and cooperation, encouragement, and major event focal point.

In 1989 Luis assumed the role of CEO and International Director of the AD2000 Movement, with the approval of the Partners International board of directors. Along with his responsibilities at Partners International, Luis worked closely with Thomas Wang to coordinate the AD2000 Movement. Its rallying cry: “A church for every people and the Gospel for every person, by AD2000.” It soon became evident that serving as both CEO of Partners International and International Director of AD2000 was too large a task. Luis left Partners International to become fully involved with the AD2000 Movement in 1992.

In its structure, AD2000 differed from other mission organizations. The AD2000 structure was essentially a flat network. Common purpose, vision, and relationships held the network together, rather than a hierarchical arrangement. This was particularly catalytic in involving those from the Majority World, because it corresponded with the typical way of relating within these cultures. These relationships were forged through two areas of affinity: common ministry interest in the resource networks, or geographical focus in the national initiatives. Leaders clustered and bonded by mutual interests in ministry. Over the course of time, there were twenty affinity tracks in AD2000. These were called

resource networks in that they sought to resource the area of affinity worldwide.

Ralph D. Winter, founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission, called AD2000 "the largest, most pervasive global evangelical network ever to exist" (<http://www.ad2000.org/celebrate/bush.htm>). Patrick Johnstone, author of *Operation World*, wrote about AD2000, "I believe that God has given us the best opportunity in all history to gain a wide level of support among Christians committed to world evangelization in the AD2000 vision." Peter Wagner also noted, "The AD 2000 & Beyond Movement has become the central catalytic movement of the decade for synchronizing the numerous worldwide forces for evangelism that God has been preparing for these times."

10/40 WINDOW

Simultaneous with his involvement with the AD2000 network, Luis conceived the 10/40 Window, a concept that was to quickly become a major focus of mission efforts throughout the global church. Luis asked Pete Holzmann to help him better visualize and understand the global geography of unreached peoples. Using newly-released data assembled by Bob Waymire when the ministry he started, Global Mapping International (GMI) served as a "task force" to develop global databases of strategic church and mission information around the world, Holzmann produced a series of maps that displayed, by country, variables such as religion, evangelization, and poverty. This area extended across North Africa, much of the Middle East, Central Asia, much of South Asia, and parts of China and Southeast Asia. Luis defined this belt by latitude numbers, and thus the concept of the 10/40 Window was born.

Speaking at Lausanne II, held in Manila in 1989 with the plenary theme "The Challenge Before Us," Luis noted that most of the unreached people groups "live in a belt that extends from West Africa across Asia, between ten degrees north to forty degrees north of the equator. This includes the Muslim block, the Hindu block, and the Buddhist block..." Luis called for a refocus of evangelism efforts in this region, the 10/40 Window.

In the process of mobilizing prayer for the 10/40 Window, under the chairpersons of Michael Little, President of The Christian Broadcasting Network, Inc. (CBN) and Vonette Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ (now known as CRU), the committee decided to include several additional countries, such as Indonesia, that are close to 10 or 40

degrees north latitude and have high concentrations of unreached peoples. Approximately 4.75 billion individuals residing in an estimated 8463 distinct people groups are in the revised 10/40 Window. 5915 of these people groups (62.5 %) are considered unreached and have a population of 2.91 billion. The vision to see sustained, strategic, and informed prayer transforming unreached people for Christ in the 10/40 Window has continued to the present under the direction of Bev Pegues of WIN 1040.

Joshua Project

In December 1995 Luis convened a conference of leaders from 77 countries in Colorado Springs and introduced Joshua Project 2000 (JP2) to focus on the largest unreached peoples and engage in a united effort to research, prayer for, and foster a church planting movement among each of the peoples by the year 2000. Joshua Project 2000 was a global cooperative strategy, focused on the least evangelized peoples of the world, which sought to engage every church, agency, denomination and Christian from every country in the world in an effort to implement the goal of “A Church for Every People and the Gospel for Every Person by AD2000.” The goal of Joshua Project 2000 was to establish a pioneer church planting movement within every ethno-linguistic people of over 10,000 individuals within every country of the world by December 31, 2000. At the heart of Joshua Project 2000 are approximately 1,700 people groups whom mission leaders have agreed are most in need of a church planting effort. Of these 2.2 billion individuals among the “Joshua Project Peoples,” nearly 90% live in the 10/40 Window.

This was a joint effort by mission strategists to quantify the definition of unreached people groups. An unreached people group was defined by missiologists as “a people group within which there is no indigenous community of believing Christians able to evangelize this people group”

(https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/has_everyone_heard). After considering sociological trends suggesting that 2% of a population can have a significant impact on the whole, mission leaders settled on the criteria for “unreached” as less than 2% true Christ-followers and less than 5% Christian adherents.

When the office of the AD2000 Movement closed in the year 2000, Dan Scribner established the Joshua Project as a research initiative seeking to highlight the ethnic people groups of the world with the fewest followers of Christ. The overall goal of the Joshua Project is to

facilitate the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom to all the nations in anticipation that there will be some from every tribe, tongue, nation and people before the throne (Rev. 5:9).

World Inquiry

“Where do we go from here, in world evangelization?” This question was on Luis’s mind as the last months of the AD2000 Movement were drawing to a close in 1999. He chose to pursue doctoral studies at the Fuller School of World Mission and write his dissertation on catalysts of world evangelization, with the AD2000 Movement serving as a case study.

By examining Scripture, theology, missiology, church history, the history of global mission conferences, and Christian leadership, Luis observed that catalytic impulses of world evangelization include several elements: a God-given purpose, renewal as a means, conferences leading to structures, and human leaders as agents.

This examination of catalysts of world evangelization led to a World Inquiry conducted from 2002 to 2004, involving almost 7000 Christian leaders in 850 cities from various countries around the world. Sponsored by Fuller Seminary and in collaboration with the Lausanne Committee, the results were presented at the Lausanne Issues Forum in Pattaya in 2004 in six books that were distributed to each of the participants. The main focus of this World Inquiry was the question, “What is the Spirit of God saying to His Church at the beginning of the 21st Century through His servants?” The objectives for this World Inquiry were: to listen to what God’s people are saying; to discover the city-wide, country-wide, continent-wide and global current realities, including the obstacles and opportunities for evangelization; to collect insights, beliefs, and attitudes about issues, leadership, and structures related to world evangelization; and to identify a unifying paradigm of mission.

The participants were asked five basic sets of questions:

- 1) What are the major external challenges facing the Church regarding evangelization in our city or country?
- 2) What are the major obstacles internal to the Church to participate effectively in world evangelization (beyond the city)?
- 3) What do you believe God is calling His people to do in world evangelization over the next 25 years?
- 4) What would be a suitable phrase (watchword) to capture the essence of world evangelization to serve as a unifying paradigm for the next 25 years?

5) How important are the following for Global Evangelical Structures to provide to local believers to enhance world evangelization efforts? The last set of questions focused on the various types of evangelism that influenced their decisions to become followers of Jesus Christ.

The World Inquiry was a consultative process with Christian leaders, especially from the non-Western world, in order to construct a missiology for empowering the global church to participate in God's mission for the twenty first century. The participants for the World Inquiry were selected according to spiritual authority, flexibility, a learning posture, and the scope of their influence. The participants included pastors of churches, denominational leaders, mission agency leaders, younger emerging leaders, lay leaders and Christian service organization representatives. Over 90% of the participants came from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Most of the respondents are male with only 16.6% being female. Almost half of the respondents were between 36 and 50 years of age.

The results of the World Inquiry show that there was an almost universal desire to be part of a global evangelization movement. There also exists a desire to collaborate with others on a global level to some degree in world evangelization. The World Inquiry also identified key external challenges facing the global church in evangelism, including globalization, racial tension, pluralism, illiteracy, post-modernity, religious fundamentalism, injustice and persecution. Internal challenges to world evangelization were also identified, including a lack of money or effective leadership or vision or workers or training of workers. The World Inquiry signaled the emergence of a new paradigm of mission as transformation.

Transform World Connections

After three years of conducting the World Inquiry, 120 Christian leaders met in May 2003 in Seoul, Korea. Afterwards, a number of participants from different countries decided to organize national events, including Iman Santoso and Djohan Handoyo from Indonesia. The first national event was planned in Indonesia, which led to Transform World Indonesia in May 2005. Christian leaders from Africa and Latin America met with Indonesian leaders in February 2004 to prepare for the event. These leaders decided to convene a group of 12 respected Christian leaders from different continents to hear from God regarding the growing number of transformational initiatives around the world.

This group of 12 Christian leaders met in London September 7-9, 2004 for a time of sharing and seeking God. Their findings were presented to all the participants at the Transform World Global Summit in Indonesia. Their conclusions focused on three themes: the world is changing radically: demographically, economically, politically, and religiously; a new epoch of missions is unfolding before our eyes at the beginning of the twenty first century; transformation has become a unifying vision of the Church's mission.

After the Transform World Global Summit in Indonesia in 2005, Luis was asked to serve as the international facilitator for related events and processes for a new organization, Transform World Connections. Based in Singapore, Transform World Connections attracted a community of servant-catalysts engaged in God's mission of transformation that results in the healing of the nations. The term connections underscores the mission of Transform World to catalyze and connect God's servants through focused gatherings including summits, consultations and conferences, by conference calls, and electronic communications in order to work together in their nation in their respective spheres, mountains or domains of cultural influence including the family, the arts, education, business, church, governance, media, and the next generation on God's mission of transformation resulting in a transformational movement in response to the major challenges that they are facing.

It was a transformation vision rooted in the theology of the mission of the Kingdom of God and seeks to express the Lordship of Jesus over every aspect of life, economic, religious, personal, and political. It does not give priority to any area of life as an area for mission . . . but this change will be effected whenever people address issues of life directly, rooted in a gospel perspective. This theme of transformation first emerged as a key missional paradigm at the Lausanne Issue Forum in 2004. It had become evident by this time that God is calling His servants to act as catalysts in mobilizing the whole body of Christ to bless the nations through the transformation of people, churches and culture in response to the great challenges of our time through every sphere of cultural influence on a collaborative venture engaging the generations in transforming nations. This understanding was confirmed at the first Transform World global event in Indonesia in 2005, which focused on six streams of transformation that had emerged in the nations.

Transform World 2020

At the 2012 Transform World Global Summit in Bali, Indonesia, a seven-year initiative to respond to seven global challenges was launched adding focus and a sense of urgency. These seven global challenges include:

- (1) the ideological challenge of Islam;
- (2) the family challenge, giving strength to the core of society;
- (3) the orphan challenge, together for a world without orphans;
- (4) the poverty challenge, giving the poorest of the poor a hand up to self-sustainability;
- (5) the human rights challenge, constructing societies that respect human dignity;
- (6) Christ's missional challenge, accelerating breakthrough among the unreached;
- (7) the celebration challenge, a trumpet call to all the nations.

Focusing on the theme of transformation in responding to these global challenges has the potential to lead to a transformed world in which the power, the presence and the shalom of God is experienced by all people. Without an adequate response to moral challenges, historian Arnold Toynbee has shown, people lack confidence in the ability of their civilization to provide order and structure for their lives, and civilizations eventually disintegrate.

The Transform 2020 movement encourages catalytic agents of change to respond to five factors that Toynbee observed:

- (1) a crisis in the culture with disintegration at the core due to a failure to adequately respond to important moral or religious challenges of the day;
- (2) a catalytic *kairos* or God-given moment of challenge and opportunity becomes a divine appointment.
- (3) a catalyst calls for change with a clear prophetic voice of a moral leader;
- (4) a committed minority with creative power spark a challenge-response initiative;
- (5) a convinced majority causes initiative to become a challenge-response movement that results in culture change. The Transform World 2020 movement sees this point in time as a *kairos* moment for raising up catalysts in communities around the world. The goal is the emergence of a convinced majority by 2020, which sustains the dynamic for the spiritual and social transformation in their community.

4/14 Window Global Initiative

Transformation of a community must include the children, and, in fact, can be initiated and catalyzed by children. Following the official closure of the AD2000 Movement office, Luis waited on the Lord to learn what He wanted him to do with the rest of his life. God revealed the nature of His commission – to raise up a new generation. God showed him a vision of a missional movement that was to be focused on the next generation as instrumental to bless the nations and transform the world.

Luis reflected on what God had been saying to him for several years. Dr. Bryant Myers had presented data at an EFMA conference in Colorado Springs in 1993 showing that 85% of people in the U.S. who will ever make a decision to follow Christ will do so between the ages of 4 and 14. The Global Consultation on World Evangelization 1995 (GCOWE '95) event in Seoul, Korea had highlighted the vital role of children in intercession. In 1996, Dan Brewster, then Program Director for Compassion International, published an article called, “The 4/14 Window: Child Ministries and Mission Strategy.”

Several years later in 2008, Luis met Pastor Nam Soo Kim of Promise Ministries in Flushing, New York who explained that he had a vision focused on the world’s children. Promise Ministries was fulfilling this vision locally, but he was still awaiting the birth of a global children’s movement. Pastor Kim said, “Luis, this is my burden. Would you join me in seeing this vision fulfilled?” This shared vision confirmed the work that God had been doing in Luis’s spirit and heart. Luis and Pastor Kim shook hands across the table, securing their mutual commitment to a global children’s movement.

The next step was to begin the research that led to the publication of a book on raising up a new generation from the 4/14 Window. And not just to reach them, but to empower and enable them to change the world. In September 2009 the 4/14 Summit in New York was an historic event. Between 100 to 150 people were expected, but more than 350 people from 70 countries participated, including 250 from outside the United States. Seventeen strategic tracks worked to develop plans and strategies to reach and mobilize the 4/14ers as full partners in God’s mission to the world. They took away visions, commitments and concrete plans to mobilize and catalyze their colleagues in their nations and regions across the world, to raise up a new generation to transform the world. These participants shared the vision of the 4/14 Global Initiative in their respective countries, which has resulted in national 4/14 initiatives around the world.

Conclusion and Future Directions

Luis learned that future-directed waiting on God's leading opens the way ahead toward His purposes as a change agent. Each time Luis has sought to respond to a call to collaborate with God's kingdom purposes as a servant catalyst on His mission. "I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it?" (Isa. 43:19) invites his servants to discern the times and respond as catalysts on His mission, since His ways are not our ways. As Luis' journey unfolded it became clear to him that God has times and seasons in which he raises up new wine skins to serve His initiatives: including COMIBAM, the AD2000 Movement, the Transform World Movement, and the 4/14 Movement.

Now, in addition to his interests in the challenge of Islam and the Back to Jerusalem movement, Luis looks forward to seeing the results of an initiative in Colombia and Latin America on the Mission of the Church in *missio Dei*—the mission of God. The vision of the missional church is a transformed community which transforms people and culture through contextual mission in the seven spheres of cultural influence in society, through cross-cultural missions, and through next generational mission, raising up a new generation from the 14/14 Window to transform their world.

Luis is persuaded that God leads us on this earthly pilgrimage to do His will His way with His people in collaboration, so that, as Jesus prayed in His high-priestly prayer, "I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:23).

Chapter Ten

Being an Alongsider

Don Roslyn
An “alongsider” in a Muslim country

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Editor’s Note

This story of an “alongsider” is an example of an “agent of shalom” who found ways to help Muslims follow Jesus without giving up their culture and community. To the extent that a society lacks the foundation of a strong core of people with faith in God through Jesus, to that extent the society is open to the deceptions and influences of the evil one. Whole societies are held back due to lack of knowing and following God’s principles for societal development. These include the fruits of the Spirit that allow people to work well together to meet the needs of their communities—patience, kindness, peace.

Introduction

Our adopted country has a sizable Muslim population, growing in militancy. We did not go there specifically to work with Muslims, but over the years, through relationships with some key leaders, we have found ourselves in the role of what John Travis has called “alongsiders” (Travis and Travis 2013, 161-69) within three separate movements of Muslim background believers (MBB’s).

Movement A has grown sizably and is led by a very articulate and gifted MBB who has thoroughly integrated Muslim thinking with a deep understanding of biblical theology.

Movement B is led by an evangelical who had an extraordinary call to ministry among Muslims and a supernatural start. Because of his background, his movement has been more closely tied to the evangelical

community. This has been a mixed blessing. In fact, his movement has recently split over the issue of contextualization and this has been a painful transition.

Movement C is a new and smaller movement also mentored, though not led, by a local evangelical leader. They have their own fledgling leader, an MBB, relatively new in his faith in Jesus. The mentor of this movement and I are hoping to encourage the leaders to let this movement remain as much as possible within the Muslim community. This paper reports what we have learned about attitudes and approaches of alongsiders that can be helpful.

The Role of Alongsiders

Travis has described many different roles of alongsiders. We probably fit best into the category of “friends and mentors,” although even mentor feels like too strong a label. We feel our most important contribution has been to validate the new things that God is doing among these movements while at the same time helping them to understand and assimilate God’s previous revelation, the Bible, into their culture, so as to avoid syncretism. This is a far more delicate task than is sometimes appreciated.

Our observation is that spiritual and stylistic qualifications are as important as theological ones. Effectiveness is based a great deal on friendship and trust, and especially the ability to listen discerningly. The largest barriers to such relationships are when evangelicals “know too much” to listen, or when they don’t recognize the extent to which their own ideas are also colored by Western thinking, which tends to be individualistic, cerebral, pragmatic, and perhaps less spiritual than that of the people they are reaching out to.

Sometimes Western evangelicals have difficulty accommodating themselves to things that are new and unfamiliar to them such as demons and the occult on one side, and signs and wonders on the other. This doesn’t mean that a good grasp of biblical thinking isn’t important. Syncretism is always a danger in such new movements that are arising in different cultures from our own. But an effective alongsider needs to be flexible in thinking and patient in learning how people from the other culture see things. To help them grasp the Good News from their own perspective requires a certain respect for their culture and thought patterns.

Alongsiders can help a movement in different ways according to its needs and characteristics. Movement C is very young and also very teachable. They are thirsting for more biblical and practical knowledge. Our role there is to help them get a basic grasp of the message of the Bible, while continuing to emphasize the importance of their staying closely connected with their communities. Movement B already has strong biblical input from its leader. There we have aimed to help them take next steps in becoming effective disciple-makers and in developing wholistic outreach in ways that are not characteristic of their parent denomination. We have also played a role in helping them navigate their difficult relationship within that denomination. Movement A has very sophisticated and mature leadership and has many Muslims in it who are scholars and leaders in their communities. They need a different kind of help, appropriate to their roles and the questions they are grappling with.

These are examples of the different kinds of things alongsiders can help with. Though we do not lead any of these movements, we have been able to provide a kind of mentoring to MBB leaders which has enabled them to think through specific “hot” issues in their communities, guide their home-sized gatherings toward maturity, give pastoral care, and raise up other leaders. The movements we work with constantly express gratitude for this encouragement and perspective, and welcome us very warmly. This makes us believe that our role with them is important and that it is important for others to learn the skills of being an alongsider.

Beginnings

In retrospect, the fact that we had other ministry goals when we arrived may have made it easier to connect with leaders working with Muslims. When someone targets a specific group they can work too hard to connect with them and the target group senses that. People don't like to be targets. Our connections grew out of what would seem to have been casual connections. We did not need to reach them in order to justify our ministry in the country. Because we were not selling anything or using them to further our own goals, friendships and trust could develop naturally. Little by little, as we formed relationships with some of the leaders involved in these movements, they became interested in what we were doing, and got to know us personally. When they finally invited us to work with them, it was at their initiative.

A second factor that gave us an entry is the fact that the leaders or mentors of these three movements came to believe that we had something to offer that they wanted. They felt that we had some fresh understandings about the Bible. They wanted to learn more about how to disciple people in their own ministries. They are particularly intrigued by what we have done in the area of economic development and want to learn more. Conversely, I think they sensed our genuine desire to learn from them.

A third principle we have sought to follow has often been stated in the missions community: find out where God is working and join it. We find ourselves amazed at how little many missionaries in our country know about the big things God is doing there. They tend to get connected to Christian educational institutions or the larger denominations, which become the channels through which they get their information. However, the “big things” are often “out in the field” where many missionaries don’t necessarily go, or with people that are not so well connected with the Christian establishment. In our country some of his greatest work is among people far outside of traditional Christian spheres including those of missionaries. Alongsiders look for and seek to join and bless God’s work wherever it is happening.

One thing that hinders this is our human difficulty in understanding that the way God is working may not be the way we expect. In our country the way God is working includes dreams, visions, and miracles. In one recent seminar of 32 MBB leaders, when I asked how many of them either started their journey toward Isa al Maseh (Jesus the Messiah) because of a dream or vision in which Jesus appeared to them, every hand went up. They also experience exorcisms and confrontation of occult powers. Some evangelicals are uncomfortable with these things—and with people who have come to Jesus by a different path than they did. But we lose opportunities if we try to shift the agenda to reduce our own discomfort. We risk building barriers between ourselves and the people we wish to reach. This may interfere with God’s drawing people to himself.

The genuine work of the Holy Spirit is often imperfect and messy in the beginning. All the I’s have not been dotted, nor the T’s crossed. People whom God is drawing may still have a mixed theology. The key is to be sensitive to (a) whether God is at work, (b) where the people are on their spiritual journeys, (c) how hungry they are to learn and grow, and (d) how we can help them make progress in small steps that will lead to a full and rich relationship with Jesus grounded on the revelation of the Old and New Testaments. Alongsiders also have to be sensitive to

the fact that Western evangelistic methods deal with questions that are often different from the ones non-Westerners are asking.

The Story of Movement A

This movement is led by an MBB. His interest in Jesus was sparked by an outstanding miracle in his home, followed by a dream in which Jesus appeared to him. His curiosity led him to an evangelical Bible school that didn't know what to do with him. He was unable to understand what they were teaching and frustrated with the evangelical culture. He was ready to leave and give up the whole project of finding out about Jesus. Another last-minute vision encouraged him to stay and God supernaturally opened his mind. Since then he has been able fully to integrate Muslim and biblical thinking, without syncretism. He has become one of the most articulate MBB spokespeople in his country and has baptized thousands of Muslims.

My connection with this leader began purely out of my curiosity. I wasn't trying to "reach" him or his people. We just got together to talk—eventually a lot. At one point I invited him to a small group of leaders who were meeting to talk about the kingdom of God. We spent a whole weekend together on this topic.

After the weekend he became consumed with wanting to know about the kingdom of God. We would meet in cafés for hours while he peppered me with questions. He had marked up my notes until they were almost unreadable. In turn, it was my opportunity to ask him questions about his point of view on the relationship between his movement, Muslim thinking, and the Bible—which he had mastered amazingly well. It was a time of spirited communication. We were coming to understand how we each thought. And we were becoming friends.

I think part of the reason it worked is that we weren't trying to persuade each other about anything. Since he wasn't a target I felt free to learn many of the nuances in his thinking. I was able to do so uncritically. It didn't mean there weren't hard questions—both ways. But each of us allowed the other to be who he was and respected the other as a deeply committed follower of Jesus.

One day I asked him about his obsession with the biblical idea of the kingdom of God. I'll never forget his answer, "This is the message that every Muslim has been waiting to hear." In that moment it flooded over me. The rule of God is the most important thing to every devout Muslim. The extreme elements of *Sharia* law are misguided efforts to

promote an idea common to both Christians and Muslims, namely God's rule on earth. In coming to understand the Bible from the perspective of the rule of God, he found an exciting new entry point to the Muslim mind and community, which he has been using ever since.

"This is so much easier than trying to start with the cross. Even Jesus didn't start with the cross with his own disciples. They began to follow him because they were convinced he was the Messiah and they wanted to be part of his coming kingdom. They didn't come to understand the cross until after the resurrection. Why can't you evangelicals," he says with a twinkle in his eye, "let us take the same route that Jesus' disciples did?"

In spite of this friendship and the fact that we were together frequently, it was more than 5 or 6 years before he invited me to meet his top leaders. He is rightly very sensitive to the way evangelicals approach Muslims in his country. He keenly feels the pressure they exert on Muslims to leave their communities and their identities in order to become more evangelical. So although he has many cordial relationships with evangelicals, his mistrust is high. At last the moment came. I found myself in the midst of about 30 sheikhs, Muslim scholars, chiefs of Muslim villages, and, interestingly, several of their wives. We were together for several days.

I began with what I thought would be a bit of an ice-breaking discussion of what God was doing among Muslims around the world. I didn't realize that they were isolated enough so they had never heard that God was doing things similar to what they were experiencing in many other places. It caused spontaneous outbreaks of "*Allah akbar!*" (Praise God!) I realized that just the knowledge that they were not alone, that God was working in other Muslim communities throughout the world, was very heartening to these brothers and sisters.

Then we discussed the whole issue of identity. I imagined that this might be a big struggle for them. Many of them had become followers of Jesus, or at least had their beginning experiences, through miracles, dreams, and the like. Often these were dramatic starts. But they were Muslims. How did these experiences fit with their whole self-concept?

Immediately it became apparent that this was a huge question on everyone's mind. Since then I have often wondered how I would feel if one night I had a dream in which Mohammed appeared to me, told me that I was on the wrong spiritual path, and commanded me to give up my reliance on the Bible and begin to follow him and the *Quran*. What would I be thinking the next morning when I looked in the mirror? What would I say to my wife and children? My colleagues in ministry? My

employer and co-workers? This has helped me grasp to a small degree what a perplexing experience many of these brothers and sisters had been through.

I started that discussion by offering a way that they might find helpful to think about this. “You are a special group that God had called to bring the new light of Jesus, the Messiah, to your Muslim community. This is a special calling of God. We all know that what God calls us to do we must do. You will not be understood fully either by your Muslim families and villages, or by Christians. The former will be somewhat threatened because your message and lifestyle will be new and different. You won’t completely fit in there. No matter how loyal and faithful you are, no matter whether you attend the mosque or not, they will always wonder about you. On the other hand, you will not be understood by Christians either. They will always think that since you are now followers of Jesus, you ought to leave your community and join them—or at least do things in the evangelical way. They will always mistrust your commitment to Jesus, even though it may be as deep or deeper than theirs. They don’t suffer for their faith like you sometimes do. However, this is a unique time in God’s work in the Muslim world, unlike any time since Mohammed. It is a wonderful honor to be called by him at this point in history to communicate his message to those who are dear to us. That is how I would see it,” I said. “What do you think?”

The excitement was palpable. “Yes, that is right. We will follow this path! We see now that it is the will of God! Indeed, he has honored us in calling us to this mission. We will do it even if it means suffering and death because it is the will of God and he will reward us for it!”

Then we got into what this would mean. “You must not turn from walking the straight path¹¹—because it is the will of God for you to follow it. The guard rail on one side of the path is the importance of your staying in your communities as much as possible. Even if they misunderstand. Even if some oppose you. Others must hear and if you are not there they may not hear. You must stay Muslim.”¹² (This group understood that I meant they should stay Muslim culturally as much as it doesn’t conflict with God’s revelation in the Bible.)

¹¹ The idea of the “straight path” is something familiar to all Muslims. It is taken from the first chapter (*sura*) of the *Quran*, which is a prayer that God would help us to walk on the straight path.

¹² Along with many people who work with contextualized MBB’s we understand that there are some people who, for various reasons, want to stop being Muslim and want to become Christian, culturally as well as spiritually. We do not want to prevent that if that is their sincere desire.

“But there is another danger on the other side of the straight path. You must not neglect to bring God’s full revelation into your communities. You must bring it in and explain it in your own way so that your people will understand it and join you in following Jesus the Messiah.

“His first revelation came to the Jews. You may not like Jews.” Nods around the room. “But whether we like it or not, that is the first place that God gave revelation. And if he gives it there, that is the will of God, and we may not question it.” There were mumblings of agreement. “So you must take that revelation as from God himself and teach and explain it to your people.”

“Then there is a second revelation that God gave to people who would become Christians. Again, I know that many of you may not like Christians.” More mumblings of agreement. “You may not like me because I am a Christian. I cannot help that I am a Christian because I was born into that culture and it has shaped me. I am who I am. Although I was born in a Christian home and in a Christian culture, I was not really a follower of God until I personally surrendered my will and myself to God and Jesus. It is no different from what you need to do in your culture. I found that there were things from my culture that I had to reject because they had crept in against the teachings of Jesus. You will have to do the same. But neither you nor I can ever really change the way we have been shaped by our cultures, and thanks be to God, he is not asking us to do that.

“But the revelation that came to my community—the Christians—is also powerful revelation about Jesus the Messiah. It expands greatly on what you already have in the *Quran*. You must read it, study it, and find ways to explain it to your people so that they can become his followers as well. This is the will of God and what he wills, we must obey.” Again, nods and expressions of affirmation.

Then I allowed for time for this to sink in and for some reflection from them. One *sheikh*, with great emotion, said, “I never thought I would meet a Christian who understood our pain.”

Another said, “Thank you for allowing me to be Muslim. That is where I was born. That is who I am. I don’t think I can be anything else. But you have encouraged me to be who I am. Thank you.”

Finally, one perceptive young man spoke up. “Wait. I need to ask you an urgent question. You say you are a Christian. You are very open about that. And we are Muslims. What does that make of us together?”

“Ah, there is wonderful news about that,” I began. “Because of what Jesus has done, he has broken down the wall of enmity between us. That was part of his calling and work. So here is how one of his followers put it.” I said the following slowly, so that the full impact would sink in.

“‘There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female,’ and then I added, neither Muslim nor Christian, for you are all one in Jesus the Messiah. What that means, is that in spite of our cultural differences, we are brothers and sisters.” I could say no more at that point because the meeting broke up with hugs, tears, and joy all around the room.

“Listen, brothers and sisters,” I eventually went on. “God has given us both a mission. He is bringing great light to the Muslim community—like never before in your history. He is using people like you to do it. But there are also clouds on the horizon. There is great violence within the Muslim community. Jesus has plainly called us all to be peacemakers. That is also part of his calling for you.

“There is also great conflict between your community and mine. I will have to go to my Christian friends and tell them that they must stop hating Muslims because I sat in a room with Muslims who share our same faith in Jesus and are therefore our brothers and sisters. And you must also be peacemakers when people in your communities urge hatred and death to Christians. Who knows but that God has called us for this task when the world is increasingly divided—so much so that it is bringing death and destruction to thousands? Who knows but that God has prepared us just for this moment? So you must pray for me as I plead with my people. And I must pray for you as you plead with yours, that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, will prevail.”

Their leader was very grateful for this discussion, apparently unlike any they had had before.

That led me to ask him, “I’m very honored that you trusted me to speak with your people. But why did you invite me? There are missionaries in this country more knowledgeable than I am and that are very interested in reaching your people. Why didn’t you invite them?” I even named a few that he knew.

His answer was very revealing. “No matter how hard they try, there is always something about them that wants to make evangelicals out of my people. You don’t. That is why I trust you.”

During the rest of the seminar we talked about the kingdom of God. My friend was right; they were very interested. There was no doubt about their commitment to share the Good News in their Muslim families and villages. It was interesting to me that among those present

were leaders of five MBB sub-movements in people groups that evangelicals consider unreached. It may be that we underestimate what God is doing.

In my most recent time with them we talked, at their request, about *jihad*. Radical Islamists have been coming into their communities trying to recruit people to their cause. Thankfully, they are not yet directly connected with groups such as ISIL or *al-Qaeda*. We talked about how the new MBB's should respond to this. How should they speak to their sons and to their people about this? How should they answer the people who are stirring things up? As I realized in my previous visit, they have very little access to outside information. I am grateful for several experts we know whose wisdom we have drawn on. They have helped me gather information and perspective on this topic. I would normally seek to bring people like them into this group, but so far, we are the only alongsiders that have won enough trust to be invited to be with them at this level.

The Story of Movement B

The second group that we work with is led by an evangelical from within the country where we serve, who had several supernatural experiences through which he believed God called him to leave a high-level job in his denomination and devote himself fully to ministry to Muslims. He had no idea what to do and had no connections. He began to study and pray that God would give him an opportunity. His ministry began abruptly when a prominent *sheikh* who had had a startling vision of Jesus came to him. Since then he has been powerfully used to communicate the Good News to many other Muslims and his network has grown considerably.

My friendship with him started in an inauspicious way. One day I invited him to breakfast. I was even hesitant to do this because given his position of responsibility in the evangelical community, I presumed he was very busy. We just had a friendly conversation. I didn't ask him for anything. I didn't volunteer to do anything for his ministry. We just talked. As he drove me to my next appointment he warmly thanked me. "No other missionary has ever asked me just to have breakfast together." Perhaps many of us are too busy for simple friendships.

On another occasion I felt the Lord leading me to offer to pay for him and his wife to take a week-long retreat at a nice hotel on one condition: that they would turn their cell phones off for the entire time. I was not in the country at the time and had no idea about what he might

be going through. When I later saw him, he was not only grateful, but told me about the extreme stress he felt under at that time. “I felt like I was going to have a nervous breakdown. Or else I would have to resign my position. The pressure felt unbearable. Then, right in the middle of that you made this provision for me. It was a life-saver. It was a deeply refreshing time and I again feel I am able to face these pressures.”

How did I know to do that? I didn’t. I mention it to illustrate the importance of not being so programmed, so caught up in our goals and ministry that we don’t hear the gentle voice of the Spirit giving us the momentary guidance we need. I am realizing my need to learn to be more sensitive to such promptings.

At any rate, we increasingly became friends. We shared meals, often in nice hotels, often at his expense—which is very unusual in this country where the deepest pockets are expected to pick up the check. Then one time, out of the blue, he invited me to visit a group of *sheikhs* with him. He had brought them to his city and was hiding them. They had all been persecuted for their new-found faith in Jesus and had to flee. They didn’t even know what was happening to their wives and families.

This was actually my first live contact with a group MBB leaders. I was deeply moved to experience their worship, done in Muslim style. It was a kind of antiphonal chant. It sobering to realize that in spite of persecution, these men were deeply committed and worshiping Jesus. My friend invited me to share with them. Then there was time for questions and answers. They asked me a lot about the Bible which I tried to answer as best I could. Finally, there came the last question. “Could you get us some Bibles?” I turned to my friend. “Do they mean they don’t have Bibles in their own languages?”

“No they don’t,” he replied.

“So how did they come to Jesus?”

“By word of mouth.”

It again moved me to realize that these men had risked everything to follow a leader whose words they had never read in their own heart language.

Once my friend’s ministry began to grow, he found himself needing more resources. Persecuted and even beaten Muslims were often in his sparse home to escape or recover. Thousands of Muslims were becoming followers and he was hard pressed for resources to train and disciple them. It was natural for him to turn to his denomination for resources. He also turned to the international evangelical community.

Though many of the leaders and missionaries he sent out were from evangelical background, he had a vision for having his movement remain contextualized. He found that where followers stay in their communities they grow, both numerically and spiritually. Where they come out, they tend to stagnate. However, because of his evangelical connections he and his workers experienced strong pressure to bring converted Muslims out of their communities and have them form or join churches that belonged to his denomination. As a result, his movement's growth was leveling off.

He struggled greatly over this. I was with him when he finally made his decision. He told me that when God called him to this ministry, he understood that those who became followers of Jesus should stay in their communities as much as possible. However, his converts were being pulled to varying degrees into evangelical circles. He realized that his movement could not have it both ways. He immediately began the process of "calling the question" with all 100+ full-time workers in his movement. That same week, while his leaders were still together, he gave them all a choice: work within the Muslim culture and stay in the movement, or work within the evangelical culture, find support from evangelicals elsewhere, and leave his organization. Since then he has skillfully worked toward dividing his movement. Most of the evangelical-background workers have left and most of those who remain are now MBB's. Though there is peace now, it has been an agonizing and costly process.

There is a lesson to be learned from this. Relationships between evangelicals working with MBB's can be complicated. Evangelical finances may represent short-term help with unforeseen long-term consequences. Those of us who are alongsiders need to help local MBB leaders look down the road and avoid situations like this which could be painful and which could hamper fruitfulness in the long run.

The Story of Movement C

The third movement my wife and I are involved with began when a colleague met a group of brand new followers from one particular rural area who were looking for guidance. More than half the leaders came to faith through dreams, visions, and other supernatural experiences. They were excited about Jesus, but very unformed and immature as followers. He invited me to join him in working with them because he had become convinced of the value of keeping such movements within their communities. The attraction for both of us was the opportunity to work

with a young movement before it was “formed” in ways that would later have to be undone.

The movement has ten main leaders and about 230 men involved. (In such contexts it is crucial to work with men first and then allow them to reach their wives and children. Not only is our Western idea of egalitarianism not present in their communities at the beginning, but ignoring this principle can result in violence. A local missionary was killed not so long ago when he led a woman to Jesus without first talking to her husband. Egalitarianism grows among followers. In Movement B, one of their regional directors is a woman and she has baptized men. But this may take a while to come about.)

In addition to giving spiritual input, we helped this group develop their own leadership structure. They have an overall leader, a good and mature man, and they now have a communication structure. They have divided both followers and inquirers into small groups and are doing good beginning discipleship. As a result, there have been profound lifestyle changes in their people. Even their economic situations have improved, which has won them a great deal of respect.

Because we have seen unfortunate results from connecting certain evangelicals with contextualized MBB’s, we hoped to keep them as disconnected as possible. Early on we began to talk with them about making a covenant that would guide their future relationships with one another, with us, and with others. It included a commitment not to accept evangelical money and not to accept evangelical efforts to draw them out of their communities.

Unfortunately, there are some evangelical organizations that seek the status—and the fundraising leverage—that comes from being able to point to former Muslims who have converted to Christianity and who are in their ministry. This process often ruins the relationships between these converts and their Muslim communities. A young movement like this could be very vulnerable to offers of financial help from such organizations because many people in it are poor.

They are also vulnerable because the prospect of persecution makes them want to cultivate relationships with evangelicals “just in case” they need to run away. However, that security may come with a price tag. Some evangelicals inadvertently put pressure on such believers to become more evangelical culturally, which alienates other Muslims. Furthermore, it may be tempting for these believers to respond even to mild pressure by leaving their communities too quickly. In fact, many in this situation do, expecting the evangelicals to protect them and often to support them financially. This is not healthy for either community. We

are all sympathetic to the pressures of severe persecution and want do our best to help in such cases. But, as much as possible, it is good for MBB's to stay in their communities, being willing to accept a certain amount of pressure. That way they will retain their connections with their families and friends through which the Good News can flow, and keep their means of earning an income.

When these things were first discussed and these brothers realized that they would not be as able to turn to evangelicals for help, they balked at making this commitment. They spent many hours that night praying together, in our absence. By morning, they were ready to sign the covenant, regardless of the risks.

The wisdom of this choice became clear to them during the following Ramadan. Four leaders were seized and jailed. The charges against them had no basis whatsoever. The real motive for the arrest was that people in their community sensed that there was something different about them. The case was finally bumped up to a higher court. The judge there demanded that they produce materials to show how where they were getting their ideas. What they gave him included some of our own materials. Though there are things that we share orally that might be problematical in a Muslim court, we are very careful that what we write contains nothing disrespectful to Islam or contradicting the *Quran*. The judge looked at the material and concluded, "There is nothing here that should be offensive to Muslims." He dismissed the case. Also, though it was not specifically brought out, there was no evidence that they had adopted evangelical cultural practices or received evangelical money. There was really nothing that could legally be held against them.

This had a profound effect on all the leaders in this group. They began to have more confidence that they could exist and thrive in their villages. In fact, three of them have recently been elected into positions of leadership in their villages, and they have successfully made peace between radical extremists and more traditional members of their community. This was to them another example of how followers of Jesus can not only advance but be used by God in their own cultural situation.

Their lifestyle changes have now caused a hunger on the part of their wives and other women in their villages to learn more. That is another opportunity among them.

It may be argued that our contact with them as outsiders taints them. However, we meet discreetly, in places removed from their villages so that it would be hard to trace a contact. More importantly, we have no

direct leadership relationship with them. We are simply friends. It is not unheard of for Muslims to have Christian friends.

Though we have been a bit more active in helping this movement with basic spiritual formation than with the other groups, given the inexperience of their leaders, we still are not leading them. Our roles have been to help them find and be secure in their new identities, to help them work through their relationships with evangelicals, and to guide them through the process of defining their common vision and commitments. We also cover part of the costs of their trainings with us—though never all the costs. They are specifically committed to becoming self-sustaining financially, a discipline we see as essential if they are going to thrive in their present mode.

Conclusions about the Roles of Alongsiders

Alongsiders can have a very important role in the formation of MBB movements if they relate appropriately to them. Alongsiders can help them avoid obstacles to continued multiplication and guard against syncretism.

Alongsiders who work in a fundamentally relational way are able to connect with people easily and listen well. They establish true friendships.

They do not need to use people as ministry opportunities, although they should be willing to help when they are called on and when their gifts match the opportunity.

They are personally secure in their identity and in their worth in God's kingdom with or without additional ministry opportunities. That makes them free to care about people personally, especially those they work with, whether or not it improves their own status in ministry.

They are discerning and snoop out where God is working even when it is off the beaten path. They seek to be part of what he is doing even if it is different from what they expected or planned. They recognize hunger for God and love for Jesus even when it is packaged differently from what they are used to.

They understand that when God starts to work a lot of things may be messy and incomplete. They have a tolerance for that. They are even tolerant of big discrepancies as people are learning and growing.

They are interested in whether people are facing and moving toward Jesus more than where they have come to at a given moment in time.

They are concerned about syncretism but are careful about what that means. They don't confuse syncretism with innocent cultural difference.

They lean toward a contextualized approach wherever possible. They understand how much of their own outlook and expectations are colored by their own religious cultural background.

They understand deeply the biblical principle that God is providing a way for all people to come to him without leaving their own cultures. This doesn't mean that there aren't things in all of our cultures that need to be rejected. No culture is perfect. But following Jesus can work in almost any culture.

They understand that some people have become so disillusioned with the Muslim culture that they want to leave it. In that case, they bless them as they leave. However, they also understand that this will usually minimize their opportunity to reach other people in that culture.

They understand that the goal is for people to come into a living relationship with Jesus and the path to get there may be different from their own because those people are starting at different places than they did.

They are sensitive to Westerners' proclivity to seek quick results and their willingness to buy it with money even when it interferes with the development of locally sustainable growth.

This has been a fascinating although unexpected journey for us. It is evident that in our country God is doing a great work in the Muslim community. Dreams, visions, and miracles continue to happen. There is a great thirst to learn more about the Bible. We have been very grateful for the help of experienced friends as we have navigated our course and prepared our materials. We have been honored by the trust that has grown between us, our colleagues, and the Muslim background people they mentor. It has been an overwhelming joy to worship with these recent Jesus followers and to feel their devotion and excitement.

Chapter Eleven

The ACTS Story

Ken Gnanakan

Founder of the ACTS Group of Institutions which includes primary and secondary schools, colleges, and a private university, Dr. Gnanakan is an Indian educator, environmentalist, and theologian who is a frequent speaker worldwide at workshops, seminars, and conferences.

A man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, "Look at us!" So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them. Then Peter said, "Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk (Acts 3:2-6).

The Need for Development and Transformation

Development is an oft-used word, but perhaps not understood in the same way by everyone. The word is often used in international discussions in terms of some countries being more "developed" and others which are less. The criteria is normally based on parameters of wealth, infrastructure, resources etc. But that is not what we want to write about here and therefore need to make clear what we mean by the term in this essay.

In the biblical sense of the church's responsibility, we are speaking of transforming people's lives by removing barriers of injustices, exploitation, or the lack of an enabling environment where they can attain their full God-given potential. We are called to empower people to live with dignity and so that they can improve their well-being. We do this especially working with the most vulnerable, eradicating poverty, and improving social and environmental structures. It is then that people are able to make right choices to impact their futures.

Lack of education, unemployment, inadequate housing, and an overall enabling environment are some basic areas that need attention.

People need to be transformed to the point where they see such basic needs and strive to attain them through their own efforts. On the whole, development moves away from the older culture of a free handout, and is a commitment to long-term sustainability.

The ACTS Story

However, ACTS didn't start with such clear definitions nor with any theological enquiries into the significance of the terms. Neither was there a plan of action that implemented a development agenda. It all started with a personal vision. I was completing my doctoral research in London University, and preparing to return to India. I happened to open the Book of Acts and began reading. Soon I was devouring chapter after chapter, captivated by the life and dynamism of the Early Church. I re-read chapter three, wanting to pick up some of the details of the account of Peter healing the lame man. The words suddenly came alive — “Silver and gold I have none ...” I stared at the verse, and soon read the words “in the name of Jesus rise up and walk.”

The Lord got ahold of me and began to show me things I hadn't realized before. What was the lame standing up in the name of Jesus really all about? I thought of the millions in India. I thought of the lame Church in my dear land. The Lord seemed to say—“See so many poor and helpless people in India! Go back and help the church to rise up and walk.” I waited, wonder-struck.

“Lord, what is it? What are you saying to me?” I felt a driving compulsion within me and continued to speak to the Lord as I hadn't done in recent months.

“I'm willing to do whatever you say,” I found myself saying with great eagerness. And sensing God's presence, I heard the words:

“Go back to India and set up the ACTS Institute.”

“ACTS Institute?” I wondered. The words just kept coming back. No audible voice or any miraculous vision, but that driving inner compulsion urging me in a direction I had never entertained earlier.

I looked around for a paper and a pen as I knew that I had to write it down. The next half hour was a Spirit-led scribbling of something God was saying to me. I sensed a bit of what the early writers of what we know as the word of God must have experienced. There was a growing conviction and I knew some life-changing facts were being laid bare before me.

Wonderful! In those few moments the Lord made me see the need for a practical demonstration of the gospel. It was all to do with

development—transformation—people working with dignity, although I still hadn't come to grips with everything. I knew it was to do with rising up, standing up, practically walking in the name of Jesus. We had had enough of preaching, and this was time for something very concrete and practical.

I knew the vision was for a training base where not only the Bible but also some practical skills were to be taught. There were enough of mere scholars, even evangelists, all who believed in the power of the pure preached Word. But ACTS was to be a very practical base. A program like this was very remote from my thinking, having been in academics for about six years. I couldn't remember having seen anything like this anywhere. Yet there was a conviction, knowing that God had spoken and I had to obey.

Returning Home

The Lord gripped me with an eagerness to get back to India and to implement what God had spelled out so clearly to me. God had touched me afresh. I still had about a year to complete before I submitted my doctoral dissertation, and I could have stopped right there! But God gave me the patience and I survived the year!

Coming back to India was exciting. I was eager to start unpacking the vision. I met up with friends who were like minded, and got down to implementing the vision step by step. I tried my best to articulate what I thought was the program—We are to raise up people to stand on their own feet—we must teach them the Bible, but train them in a skill as well—But where is the building? What about the training workshops? my friends asked. “We start with what we have,” I kept stressing.

But there was an immediate challenge. Christian workers had grown up to depend on the West for their survival. They had gotten used to the unhealthy practice of free hand-outs which had been started by the missionaries. Following them, even national agencies continued the practice, “raising” money from the West and handing out to our people. And all this naturally bred to the problem of dependence.

ACTS was in the right direction. The Lord gripped me with an eagerness to set out and do what he was saying. God had touched me afresh. But we had to face deep rooted expected attitudes. “Why do we need to work?” some asked. “We need to live by faith and not works!” “We can raise funds and have more time for God's work.” These were wrong attitudes that we needed to eliminate. Self-sufficiency has always been our message.

It has now been 35 years since we started the program. ACTS is today a multi faceted organization—Agriculture, Crafts, Trades, and Studies. It is a holistic, integrated program—a development agency for want to a better word—and has become known as a successful self-sustaining model. Christian agencies are gradually beginning to see the need to work towards self sufficiency in order to sustain their programs.

And then we were confronted by the other challenge—that of poverty. If development is the word, we've learned it as we've grown. It has been largely to do with tackling poverty. It is about transforming lives to become productive in society, in their families, in their church. The learning experience has grown as we've unavoidably had to encounter the poor. We saw basic needs—for better health, adequate education, employment to support their families. Poverty bred habits such as drinking, gambling, stealing, and other such incapacitating practices that deprived their families of dignity. In fact these are diseases in the whole of society.

Development had to bring about a better environment so these challenges would be faced proactively. Poverty was not just an individual manifestation. India, the second most populous nation on earth, is home to over 1.2 billion people, with around 65 percent living below the poverty line. The population density, particularly in the slums, is a problem and basic resources such as clean running water, electricity, basic sanitation, adequate housing, etc., are urgently needed. And added to this, education, employment, and health are severely lacking.

Education, The Key

The vision of ACTS started on the firm foundation of education, which is now being confirmed as the basic essential for all development. But it has to be the right kind of education that relates to the context of real life. As stated earlier, the vision was to do with education—training—practically integrating the Bible into the context around, equipping young people for whole life, all its challenges and even income-generating employment. Over all it had to do with self sufficiency, enabling people to stand on their own feet' to “rise up and “walk.” In a very fundamental way I was grappling with what true education should be. The heavy emphasis on pure academics inherited from the colonial era was what needed to be challenged.

The one thing that became clear was that while education was crucial, appropriate education was needed. Every area we were

addressing in our ministry was beginning to have a strong component of education. For instance, better health required teachers who would teach families in such a way that they would make an impression that would bring change in the individual. Classroom education needed to address all these basic challenges, rather than merely go through subjects be it math, history, or geography.

I gradually began to see how the present school syllabus hardly paid attention to this crucial aspect. The usual subjects were essential—people need to study the sciences, math, language, or whatever. But all the crucial developmental issues could be integrated into regular curricula and that could make the difference. Teach them geography with an emphasis on the environment. Let their language lessons include stories on people who were concerned for better health, life changing values, a better society. Integrate important issues into the prevailing syllabus. The concept, of “Integrated Education” was born!

Today, “Integrated” education has become the foundation of all my efforts in development, committed not only to transforming education in institutions, particularly the kind our children are receiving, but also underlining the role it plays wherever we are trying to lift the plight of people from poverty to productivity, from ignorance to involvement in bringing change. “Integrated Learning” is defined as education that promotes learning and teaching in non-fragmented ways that embrace notions of holism, relevance to real life, and therefore exploring interconnections between subjects. It strives to discover links, rather than continuing the walls of divisions.

As we have grown in the ACTS experience, I’ve discovered the solid foundation that the right kind of education provides for development. Appropriate education was absolutely essential. So we started schools for the poor. With the chief intention of the schools being self-supported, they could not be free schools as has been the practice even today. We charged fees, no matter how small. This was resisted, as people are used to free hand outs. But we kept at it and see results today. Some of these schools have turned into completely self-supporting schools, some even providing subsidies to those who genuinely need them.

Our results speak for themselves. Very subtly, even unexpectedly, development has taken place right before our eyes and sometimes unnoticed. Cleaner villages have become apparent and people are trying to make their lives more meaningful. Today poor slum dwellers have been transformed into respectable small-scale business people, young

people are opting to become teachers, nurses, and so on. Truly, we are seeing people rise up and walk!

ACTS Adopts Health Education

Convinced that education was key to development, we set out and saw success. Our students went around conducting literacy programs—basic learning that would help people become better individuals in their communities. And along the way we saw the need for addressing health concerns. Poverty did not only mean lack of education. It was also poor health and poor access to health care. Individuals needed to be taught and empowered to care for themselves.

We enrolled a small team of doctors and nurses and got them into some principles of community health. Most were still stuck to their curative health practices—tablets, medication, and minor surgeries. I continued to stress—“No, let’s see how we can teach them to avoid these minor ailments. Cleanliness, clean water, cleaner surroundings.” They gradually got it.

Our teams went out. They prepared slideshows, charts, pictures—everything to make people aware that some diseases could be avoided. A cleaner surrounding meant a healthier life. We began to see change. Children were healthier. They were gaining weight. They looked brighter. They even studied better! They played better on the fields. We were discovering what holistic health was all about—health and wellness when all life was well integrated.

Growing Environmental Awareness

But even more was happening! The more we practiced these approaches to education, strangely, the more we were developing a positive attitude towards our environment. My commitment to environmental issues didn’t come merely by reading about all the problems we are facing globally and locally. It started with the fact that for improved health of people living in poverty, a cleaner surrounding was needed. The dirtier the surroundings the more were the complications of ill health. The growth in my thinking was progressive. It was logical. An individual or a family was not an isolated entity in the world. There was an immediate surrounding which needed to be wholesome and healthy. And how much this clean surrounding added to a healthy individual, healthy family—and indeed a healthy world—was beyond measure.

With environmental issues becoming dominant, we started where it was best to start. With children! ACTS launched a school Environmental Program (PEAS – Program for Environmental Awareness in Schools) Again education was in the forefront, and this time we were looking at education from the environmental perspective to see how best to make an impact. I began training teachers. Don't wait for environment as a separate subject," I urged them. "Start integrating it into your sciences, into your language studies, anywhere possible."

One government office challenged me—"Dr. Ken, we can integrate environmental concerns into many subjects. But not into Arithmetic!" He thought he had me cornered. I immediately got myself thinking and replied "Well Sir, I remember my arithmetic. It was all to do with the market. So many apples, so much rice—so much money made! Can't we change this—so many people, so much oxygen, so many trees. Or even so many babies born every minute! How many babies born every hour! How many babies in a day? In a month? In a year? He changed quickly and later began using this example everywhere he went.

The right kind of education will bring the desired changes in our society. This is what development is all about and this is the way we must go. Crucial issues we are confronting need to be tackled from the roots. We need to start with the education of children. Not only are they the future, but they are strong voices even at present. When children speak, adults listen!

An Integrated Approach Towards Food, Energy, and Water (FEW)

As children grow, even our environmental actions grew! Apart from PEAS, we did several small and large integrated initiatives. ACTS has launched an integrated holistic program that links food, energy, and water—FEW. These are basic needs in Asia and Africa. Our ecosystems are suffering from centuries of unrestrained exploitation, resources are depleting. Populations are growing. Food and water shortages hit us hard, the energy crisis aggravates, and dire consequences could be irreparable. Unrestrained population growth is affecting the overall balance of the earth. While the rich get richer in their consumer culture, the poor are the ones who are worst hit.

Our over dependence on fossil fuels has been the root of many problems and immediate sustainable solutions are required. What we need are eco-sensitive and multi-supportive solutions. Integrated, holistic, and proactive measures are required for a sustainable future.

The environmental crisis and the economic crisis are the two major critical situations challenging our world currently. Although seemingly separate, they are closely interconnected. This interrelatedness needs to be considered as we address the many pressing needs related to the survival of the poor. The three areas—Food, Energy and Water—are abbreviated as FEW, and referred to as the FEW factor. ACTS is launching an education and entrepreneurial program in collaboration with a Pentecostal denomination in Africa and Asia.

Some of the initiatives being considered are...

- Environmentally sound food production methods
- Use of all types of land, even arid and unusable, in scientifically appropriate ways
 - Reuse and recycle of organic waste for nutritious natural food production
 - A “scientific” approach from the community for active engagement in solutions
 - Cheap wind and solar energy
 - Turning waste to energy
 - Water harvesting and recharging of water bodies
 - Waste water reuse
 - Aquaculture with emphasis on fish
 - Simple safe water efficient toilet systems

Ecological Engineering

One of the scientific areas we are exploring as we advocate eco-sensitive solutions, one that deals with life as a whole, is called ecological engineering. Offering some very effective steps, the field has evolved over the past decades bringing ecology, economics, and engineering together. Life in all its diversity is being addressed, with health and wellness becoming central to this integrated science.

Ecological engineering is based on integrated systems. Integration, we have already underlined, is a word used today for bringing together otherwise fragmented parts. It is based on the theory of holism where the whole is seen to be greater than the sum of the parts. Rather than considering piece-meal solutions, ecological engineering looks at the whole. It discourages the addressing of the immediate issue and attempts to get to the root problem as the whole context is considered.

The ACTS Group and its member, William Carey University, is employing an integrated approach that will benefit economic, social, and environmental approaches. These include Appropriate Education,

Ecological Engineering, Sustainable Development, and Social Transformational approaches through community mobilization as well as individual action. The emphasis is on practical implementation for the benefit of both people and their environment.

Conclusion

In all, ACTS has gradually grown into a development framework as it seeks to embrace life as a whole and seeks solutions for improved lifestyles for the poor and marginalized. Close to 40 per cent of the population of the developing world lived in extreme poverty only two decades ago. Since then, the world has halved extreme poverty, with various international initiatives greatly contributing to this progress. Urgent action is necessary from Governments and NGOs.

UN's Millennium Development Goals met with significant success. But there was need for more and the UN is now preparing an ambitious post-2015 sustainable development agenda to eradicate poverty. The process aims to help define the future global development framework that will succeed the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Named Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) they seek to address the key challenges of sustainability. Some of the goals include poverty, hunger, food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture, health and well-being, water and sanitation, energy etc. And this context shows that ACTS is very much heading in the right direction.

Chapter Twelve

International Development and NIBC

Hakchul Kim

Founder of NIBC; Professor Emeritus of Architecture, Handong Global University, South Korea

I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me (Galatians 2:20, KJV).

My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest (Isaiah 32:18).

Editor's Note

The author of this chapter inspired and disciplined a movement of Korean students, beginning with small group meetings on the campus of Handong University. They called their movement NIBC, standing for "Not I But Christ." Dr. Kim mobilized students majoring in architecture and education to study for a semester or more in Cambodia and to go there after graduation to start schools and design whole cities to help that country develop. At the center of all NIBC projects is a commitment to putting Christ first. Over the years, NIBC has come to stand for other phrases. Currently a branch of NIBC (New International Builders' Community) is located in New Zealand where they envision starting a movement to found 300 universities in the southern hemisphere.

Preface

"How can a rose bloom in the midst of a garbage can?" In 1953, three years after North Korea invaded South Korea, with 5 million people killed or wounded and more than 16 countries involved in the fratricidal war, the entire country was in ashes. Beggars and orphans crowded ruined streets and Koreans were overcome with a heavy sense

of shame, asking, “what can a brass coin do?” (A brass coin = a small Korean nose compared to Western noses).

However, in the following six decades, the flower of the Republic of Korea (also known as South Korea or simply, Korea) has bloomed beautifully. Modernization through industrialization of the entire country has led South Korea to become a great economic power ranked 10th place in the world as well as being a country of political democracy. How was this miracle even possible? Is it possible for other ruined countries to have this experience?

My Encounter with South Korea’s Resurrection Experience

About 20 years after the end of the Korean War, at the age of 28, I went to America to study. Twenty years later, as a successful architect, I returned to visit Korea. It was like being in a different country from the one where I had grown up. A friend who taught economics explained that what Korea had experienced in the past 2 decades was equivalent to 200 years of changes in European countries. Moreover, he said, even though the economic policies Korea had implemented during those 20 years were terrible from an economist’s standpoint, still, the whole situation had turned evils into blessings. Even non-Christian economists called the situation unexplainable without God’s intervention and help.

The establishment of the Republic of Korea was the result of many believers’ prayers. The first President, Dr. Seung Man Lee, confessed his Christian faith in the public. Just as the Puritans went to the New World to found a country with Christian principles and freedom of religion, the Republic of Korea was established by Christian leaders with good faith.

However, Korea was facing a huge food problem back then as a result of the Japanese occupation and then the Korean War. America and the United Nations provided emergency aid and food supplies and as a result, many Koreans were able to receive precious and timely help.

Our country also received a great deal of assistance in the area of education. After the outbreak of the Korean War, the UN agency UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) built a printing factory to supply textbooks to many students. They offered guidance for Korean education by submitting a report of “Agenda for Korean Education Reconstruction” and established many technical institutions and schools to help Korean people live a self-supporting/sustaining life.

What about Developing Countries Today?

South Korea has established and achieved outstanding breakthroughs as a result of being supported by prayer, led by leaders with a Christian worldview, and with help from the international world. However, the countries that need international development today are not in the same position that Korea was in, with a new Christian leader who established a whole new country out of faith. Also, current developing countries would like to receive advanced knowledge and information necessary for them to live a sustainable life, rather than unilaterally receiving one-way provisions from developed countries.

To apply the lessons of Korea's development to countries in need of development today, two things are necessary. International development needs to focus on conveying advanced knowledge and information to enable people to live independently, and there is a need to nurture local future leaders to have a Christian worldview from childhood, so that when they grow up, they will be able to work in various aspects of their country to bring about needed internal core changes.

We believe that we can experience *Jehovah Rapha* (God our Healer) and the grace of God when serving the needy with a pure heart, putting Christ first, gathering believers to be part of a fellowship, developing the community, founding a college, and finally developing a whole city.

In this regard, the mission I have implemented in South East Asian countries has passed through five "C Stages":

1. Christ Centered
2. Church
3. Community
4. College
5. City Development

1. Christ Centered

In order for the ministry to be the work of God, as Jesus said, we have to believe in the one he has sent (John 6:29). We have to put Christ at the center of what we do. Handong University in South Korea trains students through the integration of faith and learning to live out their faith through application of knowledge, with the help of the Holy Spirit. A good example of the integration of faith and learning in the field of architecture is the work of Anoti Gaudi. A great Spanish architect, his faith was reflected in his architectural pieces that served the needs of local people. When I taught my students at Handong, I trained them during the semester and let them practice in outreach during vacation by

using their talent as architectural students in relevant works, such as helping with the reconstruction of ruined countries struck by a natural disaster, providing pre-fabricated houses for victims of a tsunami in Myanmar, and implementing their project called “eco-city.”

At the beginning, the NIBC ministry did not have such a large city-building vision. It started with missionary Yang Byeong Hwa who set out to serve the least of brothers (Matt. 25:40), going to Thailand in 1982 to search for Hansen (leprosy) patients. The plan was to serve not only Hansen patients, but also drug addicts and AIDS-infected patients by building a general care center. Eventually NIBC was able to establish a hostel to provide daily food and a place to sleep for the patients’ children and homeless street children. In a hostel, we grouped not more than six children in each room according to their age, and assigned a leader to lead morning meditation and evening prayer meetings to train the children to follow Christ in character and spirit. When the children became adults, they went back to their home towns to share the gospel, plant churches, and some even went abroad as missionaries.

2. *Koinonia* of Christian Faith (Church)

When deciding where to first start the hostel, we purchased land in a main city where there were already local elementary, middle, and high schools. Children were sent to these schools during the daytime, and then after school were trained in character and spirit through community life when they came back to the center where the hostel was located.

In addition to the hostel, it was also necessary to have a place where all the Christians in the village could gather for worship and *koinonia* fellowship. With support from the Onnuri Church in Korea, where church members are Hansen patients, church buildings were built.

Church + Dormitory + School = Mission Strategy

3. Social Services (Community)

From education and church planting, we were able to expand our mission to social services covering homeless ministry, a nursing home for elderly, and rehabilitation ministry for drug addicts. In a drug rehab center we used our own healing method to contribute to regional development. The healing method used in the first month is clearing out the drugs in the muscles by exercising and showering often. In the process, there may be withdrawal symptoms such as twisting of the body. These symptoms were cared for in love and touch by giving

massage therapy. The next step is to inscribe Bible messages in the hearts to fight the drug in faith. Then lastly, we test the patients by letting them go outside, to see if they try drugs again and decide whether they can be released to go home. The advantage of this method is that the patients often don't do drugs again because of experiencing the pain of severe withdrawal symptoms.

4. College

Developing countries unable to provide adequate social services such as these, are more in need of knowledge and information support rather than physical supplies. Therefore, sponsorship through a university can be effective. The problem, however, is that the secular mass production education system of the industrial era can be unsuitable for teaching Christian values and worldview.

In order to establish a Christian college, the potential students need to have grown up with a Christian worldview and values. So NIBC established kindergarten and elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools to educate students until they are ready to go to college. The hostel in Bangkok has successfully nurtured thousands of students with Christian values. After graduation, some of these students were able to study abroad, as in the United States.

Connecting the successful experience of education for children in Bangkok and Handong Global University's educational philosophy of "integration of faith and knowledge," NIBI (New International Bethany Institute) was established in Cambodia to provide a Christian environment for college-age students that integrates spiritual and character training with intelligence and skill training. NIBI aspires to develop global leaders to have exceptional abilities within their professions as well as a servant heart, who will serve the nations and the peoples of Southeast Asia and Cambodia. All students are required to go through an Education Enterprise Program that provides practical work experience and prepares them for life in the working world. NIBI is linked with companies, NGOs, and schools for internship programs not only in Cambodia but also outside of Cambodia.

The Institute provides programs in ESL, General Education, Business (in management, marketing), Graphic Design, Early Childhood Education, and Computer Skills. NIBI believes that a firm foundation of character, integrity, and organizational leadership skills are important attributes required for all servant leaders. A moral-based living and study environment is critical in the training of leaders with a conscience

and a heart for promoting justice, particularly in the developing countries where the practice of morality and just leadership is seen as impractical to attaining wealth, status, and position. NIBI seeks to show that the long-term consequences of corruption and crime thwart the best interests of national development and positive change.

At NIBI, honesty, zeal, and compassion are practiced through community life, work duty, social service in the community, and the Honor Code. NIBI is training men and women to stand upright before God and make a difference in the development of their societies.

5. City Development

For a developing nation, even the poor must serve as a resource for economic development. In Cambodia, this calls for the following: (1) the prioritization of developing quality education, (2) efficient farming practices so Cambodia can be self-sufficient, (3) development of an environmentally sustainable tourism that preserves, protects, and promotes Angkor Wat human heritage sites and Khmer culture, (4) institution of Information Technology and English Language education to minimize the socio-economic gap between Cambodia and other countries and to globalize local education. All of these factors have been taken into consideration in NIBC students' eco-cities projects.

Food Determines the Fate of City Development

Historically, cities were developed near the mouth of a river where food could be easily obtained. This phenomenon naturally led to an agrarian society. As a society enters into an industrialized era, cities are developed around transportation hubs where food products are carried around easily. As the cross-border trading becomes active, cities are developed around port areas. These become the central area of not only economics but also politics and culture.

City development will be delayed if the everyday food supply for urban residents is not circulating smoothly. An example of this is the need for North Koreans to have their desolated land healed in order to produce enough food to sustain development. Its fertile topsoil has been swept away by frequent floods and needs to be cultivated through the development of new agricultural technology using local enzymes. This is one way NIBC is preparing to serve North Korea when reunification takes place.

Relationships Determine the Fate of City Development

Therefore, the problem of the city will be solved when we understand the relationships between the Creator, God, nature, and people. Confucius, the wise man of Asia, replaced the relationships between humans and nature, and between humans and God, with teaching that was only about human relationships. “The three Bonds” (allegiance to father, king, and husband) shaped the ethics, law, and society of traditional Asian societies.

How can we all understand God’s great wisdom? How can we understand the blueprint of future cities that God is delicately planning and preparing? The tourist city of Siem Reap is an example of our students’ research and proposals that illustrate how NIBC is trying to demonstrate what God’s will can look like in a city that needs development.

Siem Reap

Water Supply and Sewage System of Siem Reap

Since there is no sewage system in Siem Reap, all the sewage and drainage water flows out to the waterway, and the unpurified water heads to Siem Reap River and Tonlesap Lake. The filtering of sewage at the soil layer is very important to the people of the village who use the underwater resources. The only sewage pipe, that is 4km long, was made in the 1950s and it only goes through the center of the city.

The first water supply system used from 1930 to 1960 was a French system operated by filtering the water of Siem Reap River. From 1960 to 1995 the old French system was changed into an American system that has the capacity of 300 m³/day and it was used until the function of the facility declined. In 1999 a system was installed that can provide 1500m³ underground water, however the price is a little bit expensive for the local residents.

Due to the development of large sized hotels, the use of underground water is rapidly increasing. This is resulting in lack of water for agriculture and is causing sinking of the Angkor Watt Temple site, so strategies for protecting the water resources and finding new water resources are needed.

Energy Situation of Siem Reap

In addition to an inadequate water supply, Siem Reap does not have a power plant, and is drawing electricity from Phnom Penh. The supply

of electricity is unstable, so big hotels and hospitals use their own generators. Due to a radical increase of tourists in Siem Reap City, the number of hotels is increasing and the use of electricity will also increase. Developing a sustainable energy source is an urgent problem.

Economic and Traffic Situation of Siem Reap

The economy of Siem Reap is based on tourism. New hotels are being built, which provides employment and affects the regional economy in a positive way. During 2000 to 2020, the population of Siem Reap Province is estimated to show an annual increasing rate of 2.6%. The daytime population is estimated to increase from 134,000 to 275,000 people due to tourism.

The increase of hotels and tourists coming to the Angkor heritage is resulting in an increase in traffic. A rapid increase of traffic and the climate of Cambodia is making it hard to maintain and conserve the roads. Traffic accidents are frequent because of diverse forms of transportation all mixed up in the roads such as motorcycles, bicycles, cars, and *tuktuk* are.

Summary of NIBC Efforts in Cambodia

NIBC students have taken these and many other factors into consideration in their proposals for improving the water and power supplies, road systems, urban grids, ecological agriculture and more. But most of all, for Cambodians to find the right way to develop their country, they need worldview education, biblical values education, and attitude or character education. NIBC has started many schools from kindergarten through college in order to provide a fresh start for the people recovering from the psychological and physical destruction caused by the Pol Pot regime and the killing fields. Through the love shown to the people and the knowledge offered and examples shown, perhaps Cambodia can become a nation that honors the Lord and bases its development on biblical principles, as Korea did when it began to recover from its disasters.

Chapter Thirteen

Deborah Hsu: A Catalytic Leader in the Chinese House Church Movement¹³

Yalin Xin

Director of Graduate Programs, William Carey International University, and
Editor, *William Carey International Development Journal*

...Be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord (Ephesians 5:18, 19).

Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts (Colossians 3:16).

History has witnessed the phenomenal church growth in China for the past three decades from almost ground zero at the end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 to the estimated 70-80 million Christians now. Prominent in this growth are the house church networks in central China, which have grown to be significantly large in membership. The Word of Life (WOL) church is one of the largest house church networks that originated in central China four decades ago. It is also among the most dynamic Christian movements in the history of the Chinese church, with its network of house churches extending to all the provinces in China, its ministry covering significant portion of China's rural population, and its membership in tens of millions (Johnstone 2001, 160; Hattaway 2003, 63; Aikman 2003, 86).

One of the key elements in historical Christian renewal movements is the role played by key leaders (cf. Snyder 2004, 209-36). Women leaders at all levels in the WOL have been the backbone of the

¹³ This paper is an updated version of the chapter previously published in *Evangelical and Frontier Mission Perspectives on the Global Progress of the Gospel*, edited by Beth Snodderly and A. Scott Moreau, 136–59. Oxford: Regnum, 2011.

movement since the beginning three decades ago. Transformed by the Spirit of God, these women dedicated themselves as ready vessels to God and played important roles in this dynamic Christian movement among the rural population. Among these female leaders, Deborah Hsu stands out as the recognized “aunt” of the network, who has had significant influence on the direction, operation, and result of the movement.

Deborah Hsu served in the WOL movement as an evangelist, teacher, counsellor, leader, theologian and a role model. She started to engage herself in Christian ministry in her teenage years and has served in the house churches for five decades. She made herself available for Christian ministry as she felt called of God and became catalytic in the WOL movement. She is looked up to as the top female leader of the movement, an inspiration to those in ministry, and a role model for many female Christians in the network.

Early Years and Family Influence

Deborah was born in 1946 in a well-to-do family in Nanyang, Henan Province in central China. Her grandparents became the first Christians in the family during the time when Marie Monsen, a Norwegian missionary, was ministering in Henan. One of Deborah’s great aunts was disciplined through Marie’s ministry and became a strong believer who in turn influenced the rest of the family. Deborah’s grandmother and mother both demonstrated strong ties and devotion to the Christian faith and set examples for the younger generations such as Deborah and her brother, Peter.¹⁴ In her early childhood, then, Deborah was fully imbued in the teaching, preaching, hymn-singing, and witnessing of the adult members of the family in her own house.

While the modernist-fundamentalist controversy was going on in China in the early 20th century, Marie Monsen’s ministry seems to have left more distinctive marks on the parts of China she served for the majority of her missionary career—Henan Province, where Deborah was born and grew up. Though Deborah was never able to meet with Marie Monsen in person, Marie’s influence as a powerful revivalist and teacher in Henan and northern China greatly inspired Deborah even at the beginning of her faith journey. Characteristics of Marie’s theology

¹⁴ Peter Xu is Deborah’s elder brother who is recognized as the founding leader of the Word of Life Movement. He is presently residing in the US and serves as the president of the Back to Jerusalem Gospel Mission.

and ministry were evident in Deborah—a tradition, or ripples of renewal, that was passed on to her through family members of faith who were fruits of Marie Monsen’s ministry.

Marie Monsen—Norwegian Evangelical Lutheran Missionary to Henan

One of the cultural tendencies of the Chinese is the emphasis on the past—historical figures and events. In conversation with believers about the history of the WOL church, Marie Monsen is often mentioned with appreciation and respect, as someone who dedicated herself to mission in central China as well as a role model in ministry that has had significant impact on the WOL movement. She is part of the story, and continues to be remembered as the spiritual mother of the Christian faith tradition in Henan.

Who was Marie Monsen? *The Norwegian Journal of Gender Research* has this to say about Monsen,

One prominent Scandinavian woman missionary who became a successful religious authority in her own right was Marie Monsen (1872–1962) in the Norwegian Lutheran Mission. Her Christian calling and personal religious experience legitimized her own roles as a preacher for men as well as for women and children in China, and as spiritual counselor for male Christian leaders (Okkenhaug 2004).

Marie Monsen was born and grew up in Bergen, Norway. Her mother was among the advocates in the popular movement led by Hans Nielsen Hauge (1771–1824), which inspired women in ministry and an evangelical missionary movement (see Soltvedt 1999, 1-4). Marie responded to the missionary call and joined the Norwegian Lutheran Mission (Mikaelsson 2003, 121). She went to China in 1901 and was stationed in Nanyang, Henan Province. She engaged in educational ministry there, running a girl’s school and training Chinese Bible women. In the later part of her time in China, because of evacuation of the Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) from Henan due to social and political instability, Marie Monsen travelled extensively in Northern China, preaching in churches and organizations, instrumental in “instigating a religious awakening among missionaries and Chinese church leaders” (Mikaelsson 2003, 125).

Marie Monsen was regarded as the catalyst for the famous Shantung Revival that swept multiple cities and counties in Shantung Province and sent its ripples back to Henan Province where she had served in the previous years. Leslie Lyall acknowledges the spirit-empowered role Marie played in the revival,

The pioneer of the spiritual “new life movement,” the handmaiden upon whom the Spirit was first poured out was Marie Monsen of Norway. Her surgical skill in exposing the sins hidden within the Church and lurking behind the smiling exterior of many trusted Christian—even many a trusted Christian leader—and her quiet insistence on a clear-cut experience of the new birth set the pattern for others to follow (Lyall 1961, 21).

One of Deborah Hsu’s great aunts, who came to faith through Maria’s ministry, often shared with Deborah about how Maria Monsen, empowered by the Spirit of God, led revival meetings and ministered among women in Nanyang. In her ministry, Maria placed great emphasis on the confession of sins from the people to whom she ministered. After each revival meeting she would talk with members of the congregation one by one, checking to make sure that he/she was saved and finding out those who only pretended to be saved by imitating others in their confessions. Marie stressed what she called the experience of “suffering from the disease of sin,” that someone, on hearing the message of the gospel, felt it spoke to the heart and became troubled by it, which led to confessions, repentance, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Hsu 2009).

Marie Monsen’s influence went beyond the Chinese Christians she ministered to in the early part of the twentieth century. Her spiritual DNA was passed on to generations of Christians in the central and northeastern part of China. Her ministry embodied “an unusual blend of feminist commitment, religious fervor, and educational zeal. ... Marie Monsen’s career is a demonstration that spirituality is a sphere open to be negotiated by women, provided they have the charisma or the type of religious experience that is acknowledged as valid and reliable also by the powerful men in their organization” (Mikaelsson 2003, 123).

Family and Extended Family

Deborah Hsu is an example of another woman acknowledged as a dynamic spiritual leader, who received Marie Monen’s spiritual DNA

through her family. In rural China, members of a family, and sometimes of extended families, live under one roof or in close vicinity. Children imitate and learn from adults from an early age in participation of their share of responsibility of farm and housework within the family. They also, in the meantime, pick up religious beliefs and ethics from the teaching and modeling of the adult members of the family. By the time Deborah was born, her family had been Christians for three generations. Those family traditions and examples of faith would help ground Deborah solidly as a follower of Jesus Christ as she grew up and became one of the most dynamic female leaders of the house church network.

Great Aunt, Mrs. Lin

Deborah's great aunt, Mrs. Lin, was an eager student of Marie's teaching and often attended the chapel where Marie was ministering in Nanyang. Mrs. Lin would often share with Deborah her conversion experience through the ministry of Marie Monsen, which naturally shaped Deborah as she grew in knowledge and faith. Deborah today vividly recounts her great aunt's born-again experience:

One day she felt 'caught' by the Spirit, feeling urged to confess all the sins in her life. She was not able to open her mouth, however, and her face was pale, obviously under attack from the devil. She struggled so much, recognizing herself as a pool of filthy water, shining on the surface, and yet rotten and stinky under. The Spirit had just made a stir of that dirty water, and she was feeling sick. After this experience, she felt completely released from the bondage of sin and was born again, laughing and rejoicing (Hsu 2009).

Mrs. Lin became a transformed person through Marie's ministry. She remained a strong Jesus follower and a witness to God's faithfulness. In the 1960s at the height of the Cultural Revolution when China was going through great nationwide turmoil, every aspect of people's lives, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, were disrupted. The rural population was affected even more when natural disasters, mixed with consequences of government policy errors, left people with nothing but hunger and poverty. Where all hope seemed to be lost, Mrs Lin bore witness to her fellow villagers how Jesus could bring peace and joy even in the thickness of hardship of life. Deborah recalls,

Even in the 1960s, my aunt would always sing hymns wherever she was, working in the fields, doing housework at home,

visiting neighbors, and took every opportunity to share the gospel with people. She started to hold meetings in her house, and people would gather around her listening to her telling the Bible story. Often times at the house church meeting, she would heal people of sickness and command the evil spirits to leave the demon-possessed (Hsu 2009).

As Deborah often followed her aunt to the meetings, she would serve alongside her aunt, reading from the Bible, teaching, praying and healing. Sometimes when needed, Deborah would go to the neighbors herself to teach and conduct healing on behalf of the sick, an important experience of internship for young Deborah.

Grandmother

Another figure in the family who had had great influence in Deborah's faith was her grandmother. Grandma came from a big family with some of its members working as local officials. She was good in Chinese literature, well versed in ancient Chinese poems, and was able to quote freely from Chinese classics. Grandma became a Christian during the time when Marie Monsen was serving in the region, and was inspired by Marie's championship of both education and feminism. Grandma was known as an advocator of feet-unbinding and education for women, and was respected in the area as an educated, righteous, and good Christian. As an educated and influential woman in the neighborhood, Deborah's grandma always drew attentive ears to her sharing from the Bible. Deborah was among the most faithful audience of her grandma's preaching. "She often emphasized words and phrases such as 'life,' 'born again,' 'repentance,' and 'sin.' She would also often sing and teach people to sing from a Lutheran hymn book" (Hsu 2009). All of these were identifiable characteristics of Marie Monsen's ministry.

Rural people were sensitive to the evil spirits which, they believed, were often involved in disturbance, sickness, and misfortunes. Local remedies for these problems generally included appeasing the evil spirits by burning incense in the local shrines or temples. Grandma, however, bore witness to power of God over evil spirits in her reaction to such incidence. Deborah recalls,

When my grandma heard the village bells ring during the night—an indication, which was generally believed by the locals, that the evil spirits was making a stir, she would sit up the whole night long singing Jesus' acts as recorded in the

Bible. When the evil spirits disturbed, she would command them to leave with authority. At night when crossing the fields grandma would sing “Jesus’ Soldiers” at the disturbing evil spirits so that people would not fear, recognizing Jesus had power over the evil spirits (Hsu 2009).

As a woman of strong faith, Grandma was a great influence on Deborah as well as on the rest of the family. Deborah’s brother, Peter, was full of gratitude when he remembered his grandma and called her the Abraham of the family and a witness for God.

Mother

Deborah’s mother was also active in evangelistic work in the neighborhood. She was very good at teaching hymns in the house church meetings and instrumental in spreading the gospel in the neighborhood. When Grandma was old and could no longer walk on her own, Deborah’s mother would carry her on her back to worship in the local chapel that was four miles away. People were touched by their faith and testimony and even years later they still talk about how the mother carried the grandmother on her back and walked for miles in order to attend Christian meetings.

Growing up in such a family of faith, Deborah was presented with good examples to follow even from a very young age. Her own faith grew even as she naturally imitated the adults in the family in what they exemplified in life and ministry. She received much support in her faith journey because of the opportunity she had to be born in such a family of faith.

Beginning of Ministry

Deborah stood out in the family and in the village as bright and gifted. Coming to Christian faith at a very young age, she learned from the role models of the women in the family. Deborah was known for her kindness toward others and seriousness about her faith. Siblings would often find her on her knees in the dirt of the fields or behind the hay, committing herself to long prayers, totally oblivious of the things that were going on around her. Her older sister recalls, “she would always unreservedly point out the sins in us and urge us to repent before the Lord in prayer. She would also encourage us to have faith. She was an encourager, sometimes like a big sister instead of the younger one” (Sister D 2010).

Deborah would also give up her own things to her siblings or whoever she saw as in need without ever seeming to be concerned for her own need. She would sleep on the hotel floor so that others in company could sleep on the beds. Once Deborah saw Sister M appearing cold on a winter day. She went quietly inside the room, took off her own sweater and offered to Sister M, who, when putting it on, still felt the warmth in the sweater (Sister D 2010).

In 1963, at the age of seventeen, Deborah prayed a prayer of dedication to the Lord as she later wrote down on one of the calendar pages: "Lord, you love me so much. How can I repay the love you have shown to me? I promise you this day that I will remain celibate all my life to serve you." Her brother, Peter, found the note folded in a Bible by accident. Tears ran down Peter's face when he read this prayer note and he thanked God for Deborah's dedication and the blessing she was later to bring to the church (Xu 2010).

As a teenager, Deborah took over the responsibility of teaching the children after school. Every afternoon, children in the neighborhood would gather around in the yard waiting for Deborah, who would tell Bible stories, teach songs of praise, and share from the Word of God. Many of these children were to become future evangelists and co-workers among house churches. This experience in teaching and leadership proved to be valuable preparation for Deborah as she devoted herself to more extensive involvement in the house church ministry once churches started to grow significantly in number and size in a wave of revivals during the 80s.

Like everybody else in rural China, as a young adult Deborah would go to work in the fields daily with the rest of the villagers. Her maturity and kind-heartedness won her the trust and support of the young girls and their parents in the village. They respected her as an older sister with wisdom and character. So young girls would come to visit Deborah with questions and open hearts, which provided an opportunity for Deborah to teach these young girls from the Bible and lead them to faith in Jesus Christ. Soon, some twenty girls became regulars in the house church meetings with Deborah being the leader, where they would engage in prayer, singing, and listening to what Deborah would share from the Bible.

Later on, young people from other villages also came for the meeting at Deborah's place, and it became necessary that meetings be organized in multiple places to meet the growing need. Deborah then took some helpers with her to the neighboring villages to organize house church meetings. These meetings were always filled with people.

As more house churches were established in the nearby villages, Deborah started to make itinerant visits to each of these house churches within the county boundary. The teaching in the house churches revolved around the theme of the cross. She always identified God as the source of revivals as the house churches started to grow. “The Spirit of God worked mightily in these meetings, drawing people to the house church meeting from every home.” Very often the house was filled with people, in the living room, bedrooms, walkways, and courtyard. People would use loose bricks as stools to sit on in the courtyard. As the crowd grew when there was no longer any room inside the courtyard, loud speakers were used.

The presence of the Spirit was evident. Some sick were healed as they were still on their way to the meeting place. The weeping of those in repentance was loud and touching as the Holy Spirit “made a stir in the hearts of the people. Open confessions were commonplace in the revivals and people came out of the meetings completely changed. This was how the Spirit worked in the house church gatherings in the 1970s” (Hsu 2010).

This was the period of time that was also referred to as the period when “revival furnaces” multiplied in the early 1970s. Revivals started through Deborah’s (and her mother’s) ministry were like a “revival furnace,” producing heat to its surroundings and drawing people to it. Soon the whole neighborhood became Christian. Without notice, the “revival furnace” spread outward and more “furnaces” were created (Xin 2009, 83).

When the local authorities started to come to disturb the meetings and make arrests, Deborah and her co-workers would move from place to place to avoid being targeted. Wherever they went, they would continue leading the revival meetings. Thus more house churches were established as they ministered in new areas.

Leader of the House Church’s First Trans-provincial Mission Team

Foundational to the dynamic of the WOL movement was its three constituent parts: the house churches, theological education (underground seminaries or training centers), and the Gospel Band (an evangelist sending agency). These three parts worked together to sustain the movement and enable it to continue to grow.¹⁵ This movement

¹⁵ For a more detailed description of the WOL structure, see Xin 2009, 137.

structure gradually took shape in the early 1980s after the first WOL trans-provincial mission.

In the early 1980s, Henan experienced great Christian revivals, and the house churches multiplied and expanded geographically. Nanyang district in Henan where Marie Monsen was based during the first quarter of the 20th century became the center of the revived house churches and the base where future ministry was directed. “Macedonian calls” came from other parts of the country for evangelistic teams to be sent. In prayer and fellowship the WOL leaders decided to send out their first trans-provincial evangelistic team to Sichuan Province, the hometown of Xiaoping Deng, then paramount leader of China.

In the early 1980s, seventeen young evangelists were chosen to form the first evangelistic team to enter Sichuan province. Deborah was the leader of the team of evangelists who were then designated as “Messengers of the Gospel” (hereafter, MGs). They got on the train with one-way tickets to Sichuan. The team had one contact in Sichuan. Their aim was to share the gospel with the people in Sichuan. They did not have a guaranteed financial provision for the duration of their mission; neither did they have money for the return tickets. All they had was a goal, trust in God, and prayer. But the result was a big boost for the faith of believers and encouragement for further mission efforts in the years to come.

As soon as the team arrived at Sichuan, they started to busy themselves in preparation for the work. Through arrangements the team was received into a hospitality family where they started to host evangelistic meetings as well as sending out evangelistic pairs to the neighboring villages.¹⁶ Deborah went with local Christians to the homes of new believers and seekers to get rid of the idols in forms of paintings and statues. This was an integral part of the house church ministry at that time because it was common for rural homes to have idolatrous images and altars even after the households had begun coming to faith. The WOL leaders ruled that it was unacceptable to have images and altars which hindered the work of the Holy Spirit in the lives of new believers and seekers. The team also evangelized people on the streets and entered every home where they were invited to share the gospel message. All of these MGs carried portions of the Bible, hymn booklets,

¹⁶ Hospitality Family (*jie dai jia ting*) is term commonly used among the house churches in central China referring to devoted Christian families that open their houses or other properties for the purpose of holding various house church meetings, trainings, and receiving co-workers, etc.

and gospel tracts on their backs as they went from place to place, distributing them as they saw needs.

Deborah and her teammates were in prayer most of the time as they walked to a new village. They took every opportunity to share the gospel message with anyone they met, on the streets, outside peoples' houses, and even in the fields. Sometimes, after interacting with people for a while, they were invited into the house. Often the host family would go out and invite extended families and neighbors to the meeting. "This was where we bore most of our evangelistic fruits. People would come to a house church meeting, heard the truth from the Bible, opened their hearts to the Lord Jesus and were saved. Each new believer received portions of the Bible and other materials. We then laid hands on some who already had the calling and gifts for leadership roles. Thus a house church was established" (Hsu 2009).

In less than a month, sixteen house churches were established through the ministry of the evangelists (Xin 2009, 87). Even the village's Party Secretary's house became a house church. Hospitality families were established so that future evangelists could be received and discipleship trainings could be housed there. Deborah attributed the result of the evangelistic effort totally to God,

Then one day all seventeen MGs were rounded up and arrested in Sichuan by the local authorities. One female team member claimed responsibility for the Christian literature in the team's possession. As they were detained in the local police station, all seventeen MGs fasted for seven days and nights appealing to God in prayer for each other and for the situation. They were then sent back to the detention center in Henan where they served terms of differing lengths. All of them were released before the Chinese New Year in February 1983. This was the beginning of the Gospel Band in the WOL church as it started to explore strategic evangelization into the surrounding regions and provinces. The stories and examples of the church's first trans-provincial mission have become part of the training and reference for future MGs.

Upon release, the MGs came together for fellowship and reflection, and felt God was teaching them the spiritual value and significance of service and ministry in the Lord by means of chains and imprisonment. "Our faith increased because the mark of the cross, which we saw as a reward, was added onto our physical bodies. And the Macedonian call became louder to our ears" (Hsu 2009). After that evangelistic teams were dispatched back to Sichuan on many occasions. Deborah was able to reflect on this mission experience and use it in her teaching and training of evangelists in the years to come as she found

herself speaking at leadership training sessions, co-workers' retreats, and providing counsel to female evangelists.

WOL Training Manuals

The WOL house church network is known for systems of training and organizational structure that were developed to meet the need of the growing house churches under its umbrella. The training system involved a series of deliberate training sessions at the beginning of one's faith journey, which typically included evangelistic meetings, Life Meetings and Truth Meetings. These were followed by more intentional training of selected few in the underground seminaries of various levels and vocational purposes. For example, there was training for MGs, as well as training for pastoral and administrative elders of local house churches that were called Pillars' Theological Education.

This training system was supported primarily through Theological Education (TE), one of the three constituent parts of the WOL movement. As the network started to grow significantly, there was great need for training manuals that could be used in training and teaching. Commissioned by the church, a committee was formed, with Peter Xu as the leader and Deborah as one of the key contributors, to reflect biblically and theologically, write and edit the first training manual for the house church. The work came out in handwritten form in 1984, titled, 'Seven Principles'. It basically addressed seven areas of theology and ministry that the WOL Christians judged as important and relevant: (1) salvation through the cross, (2) the way of the cross, (3) discerning the adulteress, (4) building the church, (5) providing for life, (6) interlink and fellowship, and (7) frontier evangelism.

When the manual came out, it was immediately hand-copied into multiple copies and used in leadership trainings and retreats, and received very positive responses. Soon the manual was revised for print, so that, from 1985 on, thousands of copies were available at network conferences for leaders from various regions to take back to their home areas for teaching and training purposes. The manual was designed to be used in all levels of ministry within the WOL network, from Life Meetings, Truth Meetings, short-term training, to all levels of TE training. From time to time special committees were organized for revisions and additions to the manual as Christians in the network constantly reflected on the Word of God in ministry.

As a recognized leader and mentor in the network, Deborah was always sought out by younger co-workers in the network for sessions of

consultation on both spiritual and physical concerns. Almost on top of the list of common questions and doubts that many young evangelists had was about marriage. As a simple matter of fact, the backbone of the WOL house church network was the young adult evangelists, and the majority of these young adult evangelists were female. It was only natural that these young evangelists became attracted to fellow co-workers of the opposite sex and started dating. And issues would then emerge.

The WOL church encouraged those serving in different levels of ministry to remain celibate while in service. Leaders of the WOL network, such as Deborah and many other female leaders, including regional, district, and even area leaders primarily consisted of those who were committed to remain celibate for the sake of ministry. The rationale for this appeal was based on practicality and not on theology. “When remaining single in Christian service, one would devote himself/herself more wholeheartedly to the work without being distracted by issues that families tended to have” (Hsu 2009). Of course, the theological stress on imminent eschatological expectation at least played its role here as well in a community whose theology leaned toward a pre-millennium, dispensationalist view.

The WOL church had passed a “Co-workers’ Code of Behaviour” that clearly discouraged casual dating and marriage proposals without first seeking God’s will and the approval of the church (CCSC 1986). Sometimes young evangelists were disciplined and stopped from their ministry for dating without consultation with leaders of the church. This caused a lot of frustration among the young co-workers. In the face of these issues and concerns, Deborah went on her knees praying to God for wisdom and instruction. She studied the biblical teaching on the topic and reflected on the reality of the WOL church of the time, before she committed herself to writing a training manual, *Marriage and Celibacy*, that was later pervasively used in the house churches. Issues were dealt with and agreement was achieved in the community.

The manual recognized that marriage was instituted by God as a blessing for humans and should not be treated lightly. Biblical references were provided to affirm the blessing (i.e. Matthew 19:4-6, Genesis 2:18, 24-25, 1 Corinthians 7:1-3, 9-28, Proverbs 18:22, and Proverbs 19:14), while it also warned against casual pursuit of the opposite sex as it was modelled in Genesis 6:1-3. The manual paid attention to culture and cultural traditions as it addressed various aspects in marriage including the significance of marriage, the objective of

marriage, proposal in marriage, engagement, and wedding from a biblical perspective.

In the face of the emerging reality of disproportionate ratio of male and female composition in the WOL movement, thus posing a problem for marriage within the Christian community, Deborah prayerfully asked God to raise more brothers in the church. She appealed to those who dedicated themselves as MGs, in conjunction with the church's call for more devoted ministry through celibacy among its leaders: "May there be no marriage in the church that is outside the biblical principle and God's will. If God does not change the reality of the shortage of brothers, sisters need to accept this blessing and dedicate themselves to Christ as virgins, so that Deborah the Prophetess' wish be fulfilled a hundred fold" (Hsu 2009).

Teacher, Revivalist, Leader and Model

As a woman of faith, knowledge and experience in walking with the Lord, Deborah was recommended as one of the first faculty members, leading the first training classes of the underground seminaries that were to be established in the next few years, first in Henan, and later into other provinces.

Unique in the WOL network, leaders exerted great emphasis on biblical and theological training in ministry. The initial organized training started in the beginning of 1980s when intensive training sessions were often organized to equip committed believers for effective evangelism and church ministry. The trainees would then return to their home churches to involve themselves in evangelism as well as discipling new converts. This went on until the time was ripe for establishing more formal theological training schools. Toward the end of 1985, the first house church seminary, locally termed Theological Education, was established in S County, Henan. It was a three-month intensive training program and was known as 'the Seminary of the Field' through published literature on the underground church (CCSC 1986).

Seminary and Theological Education

Deborah was actively involved in taking charge of the ministry of establishing the seminary. This included meeting with potential trainers for fellowship and interviews (which often involved training), finalizing location, organizing prayer support chains, and supervising trainee recruitment, etc. She both gave leadership to Theological Education and

taught at the training sessions. Often these trainings took place in hospitality families in more remote villages. Students were in the closed-up location for the entirety of their training, totally immersed in the learning, devotion, prayer, worship, and community. As the teacher of the seminaries, Deborah would also take on the responsibility of counselling the student trainees. God had given her the gift of counselling even when she was still a teenager in the village, and now the experience had helped her to be more effective in mentoring these devoted young Christians who would soon go out as MGs into frontier evangelism.

Revival

The end of the Cultural Revolution in 1976 saw a relaxation in government religious policies and a change in people's attitude toward Christianity. This was followed by many stories of Christian revivals in various parts of the country. Obviously, God the Spirit is the ultimate source of revivals, as Tony Lambert observes, "The church in many areas of China is growing at a staggering rate, as we have seen... the spectacular growth of the church in many parts of China is evidence of a remarkable work of the Holy Spirit" (Lambert 1994, 156). But then human response, Christian response in particular, at time of socio-cultural and political change, equally became part of the Spirit-undergirded revivals.

The WOL church was able to make use of the freedom of the time to engage more broadly in evangelistic ministries in Henan and surrounding areas. As the church sent out evangelistic teams to various regions, with some ground work done, they would organize evangelistic meetings, followed by Life Meetings, Truth Meetings, and short-term training. In the process house churches were established, local leaders were chosen, and dedicated believers were selected for more training to be future MGs. Thus, a cycle of ministry was gradually taking shape that was to become the norm of WOL ministry in the years to come.

Revival was taking place in multiple regions among the WOL house churches and the ripples of revival naturally expanded outwards. Typically in the ministry pattern of the WOL system, MGs were instrumental in the revivals as they travelled from place to place ministering among the people.

Deborah provided support for the MGs who were responsible for leading the revival meetings, typically through prayer and encouragement. She identified prayer for God's Spirit to work in these meetings as basic to yielding fruits. So she was on her knees multiple

hours a day on her own and with fellow co-workers petitioning and interceding. Fasting was a common practice for the WOL co-workers in ministry like this. Very often those who were involved in leading the revival meetings would fast two to three days before the events ever took place. “Without prayer, there is no power,” as Deborah often stressed.

Deborah recalled one of the series of revival meetings in the mid 80s in Henan,

Every night baptism in hundreds for two months. Sometimes when the Holy Spirit had already prepared the hearts people were saved even before the preaching. Hospitality family would cook all day long with smoke coming out of the chimney all the time. Police noticed and came to disturb. When they entered the courtyard, they were overwhelmed with headache. One police head was sickened with cancer. A believer went to evangelize him, asking him to cry out to God for healing and help, and he came to faith (Hsu 2009).

Deborah was a role model for many women leaders of the WOL network and other house church groups. She was often looked up as gifted, devoted, and empowered for ministry. She was also a big sister, aunt, and someone who was always ready to support others. Many of those who came to faith through Deborah’s ministry eventually became co-workers in the house churches. “She was a trumpet of God, calling people to service. She was an encourager of believers for ministry,” as one of the former MGs said. The MGs who came back for retreats would always gather around Deborah with stories and questions. And Deborah would deal with the questions in Bible studies she led in retreats.

Solidarity and Leadership

With the imprisonment of her brother, Peter, in 1988 due to plans to meet with Billy Graham, the responsibilities of the movement leadership naturally revolved around Deborah and Sister J, who sought every decision from God in prayer and fellowship. Together they took on the leadership roles in the network, organizing national and regional co-workers’ meetings, directing training affairs, visiting with leaders of various levels, etc., when Peter was not around.

When opposition became fierce, revivals took place all the more as house church gatherings were intensified and underground training strengthened. Deborah travelled from place to place, holding leadership

meetings, teaching at training centers, and preaching in revival meetings. Her brother's imprisonment actually became an encouragement for Deborah, as well as for others serving in the network, to persist in what she felt called to do, ready to bear marks of suffering.

In trials like severe external opposition against the church and internal difficulties, Deborah demonstrated herself as a leader of wisdom and strong faith in the Lord. She encouraged fellow Christians with examples of the early church in Acts, how, in prayer, fellowship, encouragement and support, Christians stood in solidarity with one another. In one of the interviews Deborah shared the story of one female MG, Sister L, who was planning to return to her hometown for a visit with elderly parents and siblings after years of ministry away from home. On hearing of the news of Peter's imprisonment, Sister L immediately gave up the furlough opportunity and continued her ministry where she was. To WOL Christians, harsh times as such were the moments when they especially needed to stay with "family." In the process of exercising biblical solidarity, Deborah's leadership position was established.

On one occasion, in the mid-1990s, Deborah organized a month-long annual conference that involved representatives of WOL pastors from across the country. She was responsible for coordinating the speakers for the conference, making sure of the hospitality family and supplies were ready for the event, setting security precautions, and making necessary communication, etc. During conference, Debora led prayer meetings as well as participating in fellowship and consultation with pastors from different regions who came with reports as well as questions. This was typically a time when the network examined the work in different parts of the country and reflected on the ministerial experience. Visions and directions of the movement were also shared in the meetings as participants engaged in reflecting on the Word of God together. Deborah's room was always full of people day and night, sharing, consulting, studying the Bible, praying, and singing.

On his release from prison in 1991, Peter heard reports from regional leaders, and he realized that the WOL network was growing even during the three years when he was locked away. Persecution was often identified as a factor for church growth. But then faithful Christian response to contextual needs, in this case, solidarity, in times of opposition, and persistence in ministry empowered by the Holy Spirit, such as preaching, evangelizing, teaching, serving and loving played its integral part.

Deborah's teaching and preaching often stressed the repentance of sins and importance of possessing new life in Christ through rebirth. One of verses she often quoted in her sharing was from Acts 2:37, "When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" She would train those serving in the house churches to prepare sermons that allowed the Spirit of God to cut right to the hearts of the congregation, to convict and revive. In time this emphasis naturally became a measure by which believers evaluated preachers—whether or not the message cut to the hearts. Deborah recalls, "everyone wanted to hear more when the message cut right to the hearts, and felt disappointed when it did not" (Hsu 2009).

Deborah shared from her experience of identifying those who did not possess new life through the rebirth experience. "You find such in all levels of the church ministry who seem to be able to teach and speak, and yet without life, sooner or later they will fall into temptation and bring damage to ministry. So it is important to identify those who need to be born again before they can be trusted with any forms of ministry of the church" (Hsu 2009). As a frequent speaker in leadership training sessions and retreats, Deborah made sure that those serving in the ministries of the church got the message so that not only leaders themselves re-examined themselves constantly of their relationship with God as they served, but also they would, in their ministry, partner with God in harvesting "born-again" rather than the merely "saved" Christians.

This emphasis seems natural when we take into consideration of the legacy left by Marie Monsen in her ministry in Henan and her role in Shangtung Revival in the early 20th century, when she was known for her radical insistence on a thorough repentance of one's sins and being born again of all true Christians. It was then quite common a phenomenon that in revival meetings Marie conducted, "The people were struck to the bone with God's conviction, were sickened by their sin, and revival broke out," while Christians were renewed through a thorough repentance and rededication of their lives to God (Hattaway 2002, 4).

Prayer

Deborah is known as a woman of prayer among fellow house church believers. She is on her knees for extended long prayers and intercessions daily, on her own or in fellowship with believers. Prayer is where Deborah receives wisdom and strength, comfort and

encouragement, affirmation and promises. It is a prioritized part of her life and daily devotion when she engages in intimate communion with the living God.

Even as a young teenager, Deborah was already exercising intimate communion with God in her unique style, spending time wherever and whenever she could on her knees. This was often witnessed by her siblings and peers. She cultivated a habit of communicating with God multiple times a day, praising God, letting God know her inner thoughts and struggles and questions, asking God to show His will in decisions she needed to make, blessings on the things she intended to do, and interceding for the needs of others, spiritually and physically.

Later on as she started to take on more responsibilities of the house church network, her prayer life became more evidently witnessed and appreciated by co-workers around her. ‘She would seek God’s will in prayer for everything before she makes any move or decision, which is also an emphasis of the WOL teaching, that in everything we seek the will of God in prayer until the Spirit brings unity in community so that everyone is on the same page as to what measures should be taken’, said Sister S.

In almost every kind of meeting of the house churches, i.e. prayer meetings, Bible studies, co-workers’ meetings, retreats, leadership meetings, fellowship meetings and underground seminary training, people would often find Deborah already on her knees in prayer well before the meeting started. And fellow Christians respected Deborah as a powerful prayer warrior because in her prayers she was able to engage God’s promises in Scripture. ‘She prays with the Bible’, as one of her fellow co-workers said. Years of prayers on her knees left clear marks on Deborah: thick callous on the knees. To Deborah (and many other Christians in the house churches), praying on her knees was a natural expression of humbleness when approaching a holy God in honor and respect.

Confession of Faith of House Churches in China

In 1998, Deborah, representing the WOL house church network, participated in the drafting of the “Confession of Faith of House Churches in China.” Representatives from four large house church networks came together in Beijing studying, praying, and reflecting on the Word of God for the sake of drafting a united declaration of faith. The rationale behind this effort was, first of all, a practical step in the unity process. After separating from one another for more than a decade,

leaders of house church networks came back together for fellowship and unity. “A spirit of unity prevailed among them, believing that it pleases the Lord for them to come together as members of the same body of Christ and to promote spiritual unity among them for more effective evangelism in the next century” (Aikman 2003, 295). Since then, there had been some collaboration in ministry across the different house church networks such as joint training sessions and mutual fellowship meetings. Secondly, this Statement served as clarification over controversies, including misunderstanding and accusation from various sources including the local authorities against these large house church groups.

In order to arrive at a common standard of faith among house churches in China, in order to establish a common basis for developing unity among fellow churches in China and overseas, in order to let the government and the Chinese public understand the positions of our faith, and in order to distinguish ourselves from heresies and cults, top leaders of a few major house church groups have come together in a certain village in North China in November, 1998, to pray together, to search the Scriptures, and to draft the confession of faith as shown below (Chao 1998, 2-4).

The Confession dealt with seven doctrinal categories that reflect the basics of orthodox historical Christianity: The Bible, Triune God, Christ, Redemption, the Holy Spirit, the Church, and the Last Days. Jonathan Chao, the late president of China Ministries International (CMI), helped organize and facilitate the important work. The committee of representatives convened for three days, reflecting on the important biblical and theological themes, each from a slightly different perspective, and yet reaching unity in the process of fellowship with one another. The Statement of Faith came out in published form in CMI’s journal, *China Prayer Letter and Ministry Report* in February, 1999 as an expression of the unity movement among the house churches as well as a defence of their orthodoxy in theology in the midst of controversies on heresies and cults, as well as accusations against the house churches.

This was a significant step forward for the house church community in that they could come together for commonality and affirmation of their Christian faith—essential for developing unity among Christian communities. Additionally, in doing that, they also found confidence in the fact that their confession was built upon the foundations of the biblical Christian faith, which both greatly encouraged Christians in the

house church networks and defended Christian faith against misunderstanding and heresies.

Back to Jerusalem Ministries

Spreading the Gospel back to Jerusalem (BTJ) has been considered to be a call from God, by many Chinese Christians, to carry on the task of evangelization to all the remaining unreached areas in the world west of China, which, in strategically planning, includes several ancient Silk Roads that link China to Europe, North Africa, Middle East, and Asia. Nations along the Silk Roads are believed to be the greatest strongholds against the advance of the gospel—Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism (Hattaway 2003, 80). Although the original vision was not clearly defined and promoted, in comparison to the BTJ vision as it is understood presently, in the first attempts by Christians from several different institutions and churches in the 1930s and 1940s, testimonies of their convictions, success and failure, suffering, and perseverance continue to impact believers. Simon Zhao was one such example, whose calling and experience had inspired many people. He had continued to minister after his release from prison where he spent many years of his life for the sake of spreading the gospel to the western part of China and beyond. He was among the few first-generation BTJ evangelists who was still living in the 1990s.

In the renewal of the BTJ vision, however, Deborah played an integral role in that she was instrumental in reconnecting the key figure in the early BTJ movement in the 1940s with the house church community in central China in the 1990s. Here is the story:

Bringing Back Simon Zhao

When MGs from Xinjiang came back to report on what they heard about the BTJ vision, and stories about Simon Zhao's experience and testimony in the early BTJ mission, leaders of house church networks assigned Deborah and Sister L the task of going into Xinjiang to bring back Simon Zhao to the house churches in central China. This was an important task because house church networks had just started to explore ways for unity after having been separated from each other since the mid-1980s. Bringing back Simon Zhao to rekindle the evangelistic vision given to the Chinese to take the gospel back to Jerusalem was the common desire shared among the leaders of different house church networks. And therefore, Deborah and Sister L left for Xinjiang as representatives of united house church networks in China.

Without the knowledge of Zhao's exact location, Deborah and Sister L went through county after county looking for Simon Zhao. Due to the poor transportation system in that part of the country and also lacking supply for themselves, they frequently had to ask for rides on construction transportation trucks to take them wherever possible and covered the rest of the journey on foot. It was weeks before they eventually found Zhao in a meeting one night where he was preaching. They waited until the end of the gathering before confronting him with their intent. Deborah assured Zhao the confidence and conviction of Christians in China's Midland (Henan Province and its surrounding areas) that it was God's appointed time for the BTJ vision to be renewed among the house churches. Zhao listened carefully without a response, as he always waited upon what he received from the Lord before making any decision. The group prayed together, and in prayer they sought God's blessing as well as spiritual unity among them in this effort.

Early the next morning, Deborah saw Zhao on his knees in the grass on the nearby hill. He came back and kept quiet before God and wept in prayer. Everyone present knelt with him in prayer realizing that God was dealing with him. Scriptural verses poured out from Zhao's prayer, from which Deborah joyfully sensed that God had sanctioned her mission to bring Zhao to the house churches. Rising from his prayer Simon Zhao informed Deborah of his decision to go to Henan to meet with the house church saints there.

Because Zhao needed time to make proper arrangements for his ministry before he could travel to Henan, and Deborah had to leave without him for her responsibilities in TE-3 training at the house churches. She left money for Zhao, who was in his 80s then, to take a sleeper train to Henan, and made arrangements for him to stay with hospitality families in L City when he arrived. Deborah later understood that Simon Zhao never took a sleeper, nor even a seat. He just found some space on the floor of the train all the way from Xinjiang to Henan and donated the rest of the money to someone in need! Christians in the house churches were greatly touched by the testimony of Simon Zhao even before he spoke about the Back to Jerusalem vision.

Zhao was taken into different house church gatherings to share about his experience and the BTJ vision. He was in high demand from revival meetings, leadership meetings and underground seminaries. In one of the training sessions at a seminary of the fields, Simon went in and wrote "Antioch" on the board as he started immediately to narrate the acts of the apostles. Eloquently as he spoke, students and teachers were

much encouraged by his knowledge of the Bible, richness in his teaching, and confidence in the fulfilment of the BTJ vision.

Deborah made arrangements for Simon Zhao's itinerary while he was in Henan. Zhao spoke primarily on the BTJ vision as he also shared and taught many of the poems and hymns he had written in prison. He became a key advisor for the WOL and other networks and was mightily used by God at the time when he was able to provide much-needed insight to the leadership of the WOL from his experience and faith. Christians looked up to him as a model of what God's workers should be, and loved him dearly. Leaders constantly went to him for fellowship and advice. As Simon Zhao frequented revival meetings, leadership meetings and other forms of fellowships among the house churches, his presence brought great encouragement and affirmation to the house church Christians. Zhao went to be with the Lord on December 7, 2001, in Pingdingshan, Henan Province, among the Christians he loved and who loved him. He left behind him stories, testimonies, songs and poems that Christians continue to tell and share, and find encouragement from.

"Prayer Warrior" of BTJ—Mission Continued

Deborah has always been a woman of prayer. Since the early years of her Christian journey she developed a life of dependent prayer. Since coming to the US she has been actively involved in prayer support, among other speaking and teaching responsibilities, for the Back to Jerusalem ministries. She typically spends many hours of her day in prayer, and sometimes the entire day. She is convinced that God will fulfill his promise through agents he has called in mission with him. And above everything else, she sees prayer as the prerequisite for any ministry attempt.

Her prayer almost always starts with a sense of humility before God, and thanksgiving for his salvation. She always grasps God's words in the Bible and claims the promise there. In humility she acknowledges herself as an unworthy vessel God graciously chooses to work with; in faith she dares to claim victory based on the promises in the Bible. To Deborah, spreading the gospel all the way back to Jerusalem is already assured and will be fulfilled in God's timing.

Deborah is also actively involved in establishing and participating in prayer groups in North America where she has been since 2005, frequently speaking in churches and fellowship gatherings, testifying to the miracles of God in the China, advocating the BTJ vision, and encouraging young Christians for dedication to Christian service.

Whenever she prays, fellow Christians take note of the charisma and authority that accompany her prayer. In one of the prayer groups specifically for BTJ ministries, fellow Christians who are encouraged by the presence of the Spirit within Deborah call her ‘Prayer warrior’. Deborah hopes to establish a prayer base in Jerusalem in the near future, where she could pray, and invite others to join her in prayer, for God’s provision and empowerment of BTJ ministries through which the gospel may be preached to unreached nations all the way back to Jerusalem. As a leader and member of the renewed community of house churches in China, Deborah continues to make herself available to God in channeling the ripples of renewal to the global church.

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Chapter Fourteen

The Local Congregation: God's Instrument to Demonstrate *Shalom*

Brian Lowther and Beth Snodderly

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Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health, and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well (3 John 2).

As a sign of the breaking in of God's Kingdom, overcoming darkness, fighting back against the death-dealing works of the devil, what is the role of the local congregation? Lesslie Newbigin called for local congregations to "renounce an introverted concern for their own life, and recognize that they exist for the sake of those who are not members" (Newbigin 1989, 233). Charles Van Engen echoes this by saying, "local churches cannot be ends in themselves" (Van Engen 1991, 111).

Ed Stetzer admonishes, "We are far too pleased with the comforts of the church rather than the work of God's kingdom" (Stetzer 2012, 48). It is the age of country-club Christianity, where funds are used to please and entertain those who pay their dues (tithes) and to compete with the other religious country clubs for new members by offering nicer amenities such as attractive facilities and special programs. The question becomes, if your church were gone tomorrow, who outside of the members would be affected? If a country club disappeared, only its members would care. But the local congregation is to be an intentional outpost of God's Kingdom, a witness and example in its location.

This witness is about more than talking to people about their spiritual needs. In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught his followers to pray for physical needs (daily bread) to be met before spiritual needs could be recognized and met ("forgive us as we forgive others"). Ideally, in a wholistic approach to meeting spiritual needs, "a church's relationships

and ministries offer participants and visitors a foretaste of the redemption and reconciliation that is God's full salvation" (Branson and Martinez 2011, 39). Ed Stetzer urges the church to see itself as "the instrument God uses to lead others into his kingdom through our proclamation and demonstration of his saving, transforming gospel" (Stetzer 2012, 205).

Nigerian-born pastor of a mega church in the Ukraine, Sunday Adelaja, is passionate about the role of the local church in transforming society:

The church fulfills its mandate when it changes society, not when it's confined to its sanctuary and Sunday school classrooms... The Kingdom must overflow into streets and workplaces, governments and entertainment venues. That is its nature, to grow and take over. If you try to keep it to yourself, you lose it (Adelaja 2008, 7).

An example of local churches overflowing in demonstrations of God's will for people to live in right relationship with God, enjoying good health and healthy relationships, is Saddleback church's AIDS initiative in Rwanda. There, local pastors are empowering members of their congregations to receive training for giving information about prevention, primary care, and treatment for those suffering in the AIDS pandemic. Recently the Rwandan leader of this initiative was invited to speak to the international AIDS conference, for the first time giving that group of health care professionals a glimpse of how the body of Christ, at the local congregational level, is able to better deliver primary health care and prevention than the professionals in their clinics. Every village has a church of some kind, and a pastor the people can trust with their stories. People are far less likely to trust, or have access to, a doctor in a distant town, for receiving medication, vital information, and follow-up care.

In this case study, a large local western church is partnering with many local churches in another country to demonstrate signs of *shalom*, bringing signs of the Kingdom to a whole society that "lies under the power of the evil one" (1 John 5:19). Saddleback's AIDS and Orphans coordinator, Elizabeth Skyffe, explained that 100% of children die by the age of five whose mothers and grandmothers have HIV/AIDS or have already died from AIDS themselves (communication to author). In such a situation, how can the church say, "be warmed and fed," without also offering the health care services so desperately needed?

If the mission of God is to restore right relationships, then health professionals—psychologists, nurses, doctors, public health workers, medical researchers—are vital to the Church which is God’s agent in this world. These workers are bridging the gap between the “already” and the “not yet” Kingdom. They are demonstrating God’s loving character to the wounded, sick, and dying, the victims of the adversary’s sniping attacks. When Jesus’ followers participate in the *missio Dei*, God can get the credit and the glory as people recognize God’s character through the actions of God’s people. As Richard Stearns, President of World Vision, said about believers joining God together to combat massive world problems,

[It] would be on the lips of every citizen in the world and in the pages of every newspaper—in a good way. The world would see the whole gospel—the good news of the kingdom of God—not just spoken but demonstrated, by people whose faith is not devoid of deeds but defined by love and backed up with action. His kingdom come, His will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. This was the whole gospel that Jesus proclaimed in Luke 4, and if we would embrace it, it would literally change everything (Stearns 2009, 219).

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Chapter Fifteen

A Model for Sustainable Transformation: Lessons Learned from Ethiopia

Ron and Carolyn Klaus
Hope in View, Ethiopia

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14-16).f

Our Start

We stumbled into cross-cultural work late in our lives. Our initial efforts were targeted at the AIDS pandemic because of Carolyn's medical background and experience in treating people with this disease. It seemed clear to us that the Church is the logical institution to lead the way in dealing with this pandemic. We now believe the Church is the best possible agent, in fact, to do development of all sorts. But today's Church seems far from doing this, except in a token way. We now believe that only a very different kind of Church will accomplish the radical transformation of vulnerable people that God yearns to bring about as part of his kingdom's coming.

I (Ron) was teaching engineering and computer science at an Ivy League university while Carolyn was working as an internal medicine physician. Carolyn had always been interested in missions. Her first chance actually to do missions was only a subway ride away. She and other members of our church community founded Esperanza Health Center in a Latino community that was a center of drug abuse in our city. This experience, which she has described elsewhere (Klaus 2008), taught us important lessons we could not have learned otherwise: We came to grips with the fact that God is interested in healing whole persons—body, soul, and spirit. Such ministry is best done by a Christian community, not just by individuals even if they work together.

Such ministry should be directed by those receiving ministry, not just imposed by outsiders. Our most important lesson was that God directs and provides for his work in ways far beyond the capacity of the weak and flawed individuals he chooses to use so that he receives the glory.

This experience also made Carolyn and all the other staff there experts in the treatment of HIV/AIDS, which was prevalent in that community. One day a number of years later, Carolyn came across a flyer advertising a team going to Ethiopia to teach pastors about AIDS. “What would you think about my going on this trip?” she asked Ron. “Sure, go!” I tossed back, never dreaming of the adventure this would begin for us.

Carolyn arrived in Ethiopia a few days before the rest of the team get first-hand information about how HIV/AIDS was affecting the country and what was being done to stop its spread. During that time she visited the head of infectious disease at Addis Ababa University Hospital. He had just been notified that the government was soon going to start providing anti-retroviral drugs and that he had been designated to head up this new initiative. None of the doctors there, including him, had any experience with these drugs. For the next two days Carolyn found herself lecturing the medical residents and staff on the use of these drugs. The professor told Carolyn, “God sent you.”

The seminar with pastors was also a success. Two years later the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFE) asked Carolyn to return and give another training to AIDS workers from all their major denominations. Though the Church had been mostly on the wrong side of this epidemic, stigmatizing and rejecting people living with HIV, it was beginning to become open to change. She would have 40 hours in five days with which to equip these workers. That seemed like a lot of work to me. I volunteered to go along to provide logistical support. She persuaded me to do some of the teaching on how to think biblically about HIV.

A day or two into her seminar, Pastor Siyum Gebretsadek, at that time General Secretary of the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia, dropped by to see what she was doing. His organization, which was sponsoring the seminar, encompassed almost all Protestants in Ethiopia. “We Ethiopians are great at evangelism—better than you Americans,” he quipped to me, “but we are not doing well with discipleship.” A few days later we met with his senior staff for an animated discussion. They invited me to return to develop our community-based discipleship model in Ethiopia.

So on my second trip I started with a room full of denominational heads or their representatives, all personally invited by the General Secretary. What made us realize that ECFE was serious was that ECFE picked up the tab for the seminar, which included elaborate lunches for all participants for all days as well as the rent for the meeting place. This was the jump-start to our 11 years of ministry there, always at the invitation of Ethiopians.

Frequent short trips proved to be cost-effective because they allowed us to keep our Ethiopian overhead low (we didn't need a long-term home) and we could maintain our income-producing jobs in the USA. The frequent short trips had another advantage: we could not do any projects ourselves, but were forced to work through our Ethiopian colleagues. The fact that we did not have very much money to give away proved an additional blessing in that we quickly learned which Ethiopians really wanted our friendship, experience, and mentoring and which ones only hoped for financial support. Though our trips have gradually grown in length, these factors remain important.

Tackling HIV/AIDS

At first, we worked separately. While Ron worked with churches that wanted to improve their disciple-making, I (Carolyn) pursued the many opportunities for AIDS ministry. I helped the university hospital develop protocols for treatment. I gave many seminars on AIDS. I encouraged and mentored workers in numerous AIDS ministries. I was able to facilitate a process through which 16 denominations prepared a unified curriculum on HIV for pastors and Bible school students.

This all reminded me that AIDS is a particularly challenging disease. It is inherently multi-faceted. It involves dysfunctional families and societies, economics, education, relationships, caregivers, legal issues, stigma, transportation, and even food availability. To make progress in one aspect of AIDS work requires simultaneously working on the other areas or forming strong partnerships with others who are doing so.

It seemed clear to Ron and me—and to many others of that era at the International AIDS Conferences I attended—that religious bodies are in a unique position to help control the epidemic for several reasons: they are the most cohesive social structures in the country. They have wide geographical reach and a potentially large volunteer base. They could provide education and social support. They could shape worldview and

behavior. Churches have a particular mandate to show compassion and heal the sick.

Unfortunately, despite hundreds of thousands of dollars of donor money intended to help churches do this, and despite all the church leaders who attended my seminars, we saw relatively little action from churches.¹⁷ What we did see was that most churches did not see this as part of their mission and were only peripherally involved at best. Part of this was a narrow view of the gospel; only spiritual things were important—and only those doing spiritual ministry were worthy of financial support. Part was the lack of discipleship that allowed interpersonal conflicts and ethical breaches to tear apart the good efforts that churches did make. And part was the financial dependency that Western organizations had helped create which made many Ethiopians conclude that HIV/AIDS was a problem for Westerners to solve.

In other words, though the Ethiopian Protestant Church was growing numerically, it was as a whole poorly equipped to tackle the big issues of society. It was often not even equipping its members to face their personal challenges in a godly way. We saw that our own HIV/AIDS ministry, in spite of its many activities, was failing to produce long-term results. If we were serious about expecting churches to create social change such as defeating AIDS, we needed a new model of Church—one that produced true disciples in larger numbers.

When we looked at the Christian parachurch organizations working with HIV—including the church-owned “development” organizations, we did not see much better results. Though many had more comprehensive programs, they were forbidden by Ethiopian law to do spiritual care. They often did not work well together. We found in one building two Christian AIDS organizations that did not know about each other. Furthermore, the short-term nature of their funding often kept them from doing long-term follow-up. When one grant was finished they had to scurry for another, and shift gears to whatever activities the new grant would underwrite. Despite much talk about sustainability,

¹⁷ The small Ethiopian Catholic Church forms a notable exception to this. Far out of proportion to their numbers, the Sisters of Charity, the order started some years ago by Mother Theresa, has done outstanding and very inspiring work with people living with HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia. The same may be said for the Catholic Relief Services of Ethiopia. We do not here attempt to comment on the HIV ministry of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which has some bright spots even though their impact on the AIDS epidemic has not been in proportion to their 47% of the population

CFO's of two large NGO's in Ethiopia told us that when grant money expired their projects inevitably stopped. We have strong doubt that the work of most NGO's in Ethiopia has had great long-term impact. They engage in many activities. But donors are usually unwilling to pay for real data to track long-term results and are satisfied instead with a few heartwarming anecdotes that may not be representative. It began to dawn on us that something was fundamentally wrong not only with the way AIDS work was being done, but with the whole development model as it exists in Ethiopia—and perhaps many other developing countries as well.

The Search for an Alternate Model

By now we had friendships with apostolic leaders¹⁸ from a variety of Ethiopian denominations and organizations that had invited us to work with them. They shared our concerns. As we and these Ethiopian colleagues considered these facts, we realized that there would be no quick fixes. Not only would churches need significant re-thinking and re-formulation to become centers of people development, but an entirely different model of transformational discipleship would have to take root.

We spent many hours discussing with these brothers whether the decentralized model for discipleship and ministry that we had seen in the USA could work in Ethiopia. How would it need to be contextualized for this country?

The model had several fundamental elements: a theology of the kingdom of God, an emphasis on small interactive discipleship groups, a shepherding network that provides for ongoing supervision and training of everyone leading a group, and the concept that kingdom ministry is wholistic ministry.

A Theology of the Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God has become a kind of buzzword that many Christians talk about and claim they are working toward. But there is more to it than many of us realize. The Good News of the kingdom is neither primarily about how to get our sins forgiven in order to go to heaven, nor primarily about solving social problems as many activists advocate.

¹⁸ We use this term to designate men of strong vision and wide influence on more than one church.

The Good News of the kingdom of God is that through Jesus, God's reign on earth has begun in a new way. The power of the age to come has entered our present world to bring it back to what God originally intended it to be, a process which will culminate in Jesus' return as King of Kings. Most specifically, it means that God is creating a new redemptive community from people of all ethnic groups through which he will establish his kingdom in the midst of this present dark world, otherwise dominated by Satan, the prince of this world. He invites us all to live in this community now under his rule and covenant. It is redemptive to its members because they are learning to obey Jesus' commands and share their lives and abilities with one another in loving ways. Through their interaction with each other and the power of the Holy Spirit God restores them to the persons they were created to be. It is redemptive in the world because every member is mobilized to bring God's *shalom* (his peace and reconciliation) to those around them.

By the witness of this community and the quality of its life together, the presence of God's kingdom becomes visible to the surrounding world. By its vocation, it changes the world and increasingly brings it under God's rule and blessing. Those in it are the salt of the earth, the city on a hill that can't be hidden, whose good works are seen by earth's people. These good works are what causes others to glorify our Father in heaven (Matthew 5:14-16) and what speeds Jesus' return (2 Peter 3:12). On the other hand because most people on earth love darkness more than light, those living in the kingdom are also despised and opposed, even by families and by many traditional churches (Matthew 10:34-36). To be in God's kingdom, therefore, also means to follow Jesus to suffering and death (Matthew 10:37-39), although even this suffering turns out to be life giving (John 12:24-25, 2 Corinthians 1:5-11).

God's kingdom in its present manifestation does not come on earth all at once. It is like a mustard seed which, though seemingly insignificant, grows into a large tree which will dominate the landscape, or yeast in a lump of dough that gradually leavens it all (Matthew 13:31-33). This is because it is not a kingdom imposed by force. It depends on winning the hearts of free people so that they voluntarily submit to God's rule out of love, not compulsion. This is why it takes time to advance. But from Jesus' time till now it has been advancing steadily, despite persecution and setbacks, until now those who claim to follow Jesus make up the world's largest religious block.

We have found four ideas helpful in explaining how the kingdom of God works.

First is the idea of *reconciliation*. At its center, to those who accept it, the atoning work of Jesus on the cross achieves our reconciliation with God. But reconciliation is not limited to that. It works its way out to the restoration of the other three harmonies that were broken in the Genesis fall: harmony with ourselves, with each other, and with the world. The latter includes not only harmony with nature, but also harmony with or an ability to live with and purify even the existing, deeply distorted world systems. We come into this reconciliation through repentance, faith, baptism, and the indwelling, empowering Holy Spirit.

The second big idea inherent in God's kingdom, one that is almost completely neglected in today's individualistic Western culture and churches, is *community*. It is into the community of God's people that we are baptized (I Corinthians 12:13). Churches are not intended to be audiences, but networks of relationships in which we all learn to be reconciled with people including some that are very unlike ourselves. Unfortunately, the "fellowship halls" in our buildings are usually just places for social connection over refreshments—not bad in itself. But they rarely produce New Testament *koinonia*, a deeper growth-producing sharing of ourselves and our life experiences. That kind of sharing can only take place in small, conversationally-sized groups. True community does not take place unless the "one anothers" of the Bible can actually be lived out and, as in 1 Corinthians 12–14, the gifts of all members can be shared. In fact, visible love between Christians is, in Jesus' view, the one mark of discipleship (John 13:34, 35).

Third, within the context of community, *transformation* ought to happen (Romans 12:1-2). Only a profound transformation—not merely a minor touch-up of our ethics and ways of thinking—will allow us successfully to live together as the community of God's people and be empowered to do the work of the kingdom. Many of us underestimate the need for such transformation because we do not see how different the culture of the kingdom of God is from the cultures we have grown up in—including the cultures in many evangelical churches. Though all cultures have elements of richness which can contribute to the expression of the kingdom of God, every earthly culture also has many areas in which God's rule requires a very different way of thinking and relating—which most of us learn slowly and often painfully. It involves a deep inner breaking of our in-born selfishness that is often hidden from us under a cloak of respectability. Such transformation does not

happen primarily through theological study or any kind of academic teaching alone—not that these aren't useful. Such training informs but does not necessarily change our habits or character. This transformation is spiritual formation that proceeds best—by far—through personal interaction with peers and qualified mentors, those that have gone before us and been deeply transformed themselves.

The final dynamic in this summary of the kingdom of God is *deployment* or finding God's particular calling for us. We are citizen-soldiers in God's kingdom, not merely spectators. His kingdom is in a titanic battle with Satan's, which resists it fiercely. Everyone has a unique contribution to make, and everyone needs to be mobilized. There is no room for slackers or nominal combatants. We are on the front lines and that has great implications for all of our lives. It is not a question of whether we should become involved, but where.

If traditional evangelicals major on the first part of the first aspect, reconciliation with God, social activists often major on this last step. They may therefore wind up deploying individualistic, untransformed people. They may not see the importance both for them and for the people they are helping of participating in a visible community of God's people. They may not see their own need for deep inner transformation—nor the same need in those they are helping. Without these, their development activities become essentially secular. In fact, rightly done, the spiritual part of development is the part that changes worldviews and makes progress permanent. Without it, developmental activities are limited in their effectiveness. Furthermore, without roots in a community of faith, such activities tend to be done by small numbers of dedicated but inadequately supported people, resulting in burnout, or by paid professionals, resulting in dependency and results that evaporate when funding is withdrawn.

One further word: the gospel of the kingdom is not a triumphalistic gospel. Though Jesus has really begun to reign, powers exist that do not yet acknowledge his reign, and their battle against his rule is fierce. It will grow fiercer as the day of his return grows closer. To belong to Jesus is to participate in this battle. But finally he will indeed return, defeat those who oppose him, and establish his victorious kingdom forever.

Transformational Small Groups

Built on this theology, the most important structural element of our model is a network of small groups that are interactive transformational kingdom communities, not just small church services or even merely

Bible studies. We try to keep these groups no larger than 12 people so that everyone can participate in the conversation. Though we encourage regular larger meetings for teaching (Acts 2: 42), we try to get church leaders to view the weekly small group meetings as the most important events on their church calendar.

These groups have five main activities:

1. *Koinonia* fellowship as the groups become safe places for sharing and real community is cultivated.
2. Inductive Bible studies (not sermons or long teachings)—teaching people to think for themselves about what the Bible says.
3. Prayer, both listening prayer as well as intercession.
4. Mission, with every small group finding ways to reach out to people in need both spiritually and practically.
5. Accountability for personal growth and ministry.

Shepherding Networks

Not all small groups are transformational, or even healthy. To help them become so we rely on a network of supervisory relationships such as Jethro recommended to his son-in-law Moses early in Moses' career as a nation-builder (Exodus 18). Jethro recommended that the entire nation be broken down in to units of 10, with each leader of a small group himself being accountable to a fellow leader. We have adopted this model. Each leader at each level receives training, oversight, and accountability for both his personal life and his ministry from some other leader who has more experience and has demonstrated success as a pastor-coach. In turn, these leaders are themselves supervised by more experienced leaders. No one leads alone. No one leads who is not being continually encouraged and further trained. And no one is responsible to provide this kind of intense pastoring for more than 10 people. We have seen this kind of structure produce healthy groups on a large scale, significantly transforming both the individuals in the groups and their communities.

To keep everyone in a group of 12 or less people when a church is growing requires generating at least 1 new leader for every 11 people who join the church—a major challenge. However, ongoing training and mentoring makes it possible to mobilize new leaders quickly. They don't need to know too much to get started if they are constantly coached. Furthermore, monitoring and evaluation can take place

throughout the shepherding network. Problems can be detected early and gifted people who can be developed can be discovered.

The growth of such networks is based on the concept of emerging leadership. Leaders in such a structure do not advance by election or even by academic credentials alone. They advance through proven effectiveness. We don't imply that leaders who have the gifts of facilitating discipleship growth are the only gifted people in the body. But the most effective disciple-makers are the ones that should be chosen to lead what is essentially a disciple-making network.

Wholistic Ministry

From the very beginning of any outreach we and our colleagues teach that salvation involves not just restoration of harmony with God, which is fundamental, but restoration of all four harmonies—with God, with ourselves, with others, and with the world. As a friend said to us, “God doesn't save souls, he saves people!” We seek to make sure that this view of salvation gets incorporated early into the DNA of any group we work with extensively.

When people grasp this early in their discipleship process they often create their own imaginative wholistic ministries, often with no further specific encouragement.

We always begin with basic discipleship as a foundation. We do not introduce more organized economic development until after it has become normative for people to be in a discipleship group that is part of a well-functioning shepherding network. If these are not solidly established first, then wholistic community development tends to replace this kind of community life and discipleship, rather than build on it.

People can only assimilate things at their own pace. We try to do things in the right order, and not teach more than can be integrated into people's lives and practices without compromising what went before.

What Our Implementation of this Model Looks Like

Our role in Ethiopia has mainly been to work with and mentor the apostolic brothers that God has brought into relationship with us over the years. We have established close relationships with ten such men, all but one of whom speaks English. Each is a man of high integrity and significant giftedness who works in a different organization or movement, often supervising large numbers of churches. Each sought us out in one way or another, mostly early in our Ethiopian adventure,

because we had done something in the USA that resonated with them and seemed relevant to their own ministries. They liked our teaching but loved our stories, both those about our successes and those about our failures. As we have served their ministry goals, we have become friends.

As a matter of present policy we do not support any of these people financially on a full-time basis.¹⁹ However, as our ministry opportunities have expanded, we now pay some of them for their time and expenses in direct support and follow up of ministry we have done together. But this is only after they have first demonstrated their commitment and skills by doing this kind of follow-up effectively and for free. Furthermore, in the interest of sustainability, they understand that this support will phase out as the churches they serve pick up that support.

These men are giving us the opportunity to do something transformational, not just incremental. Our experience with them argues that mission agencies might do well to send seasoned Christian leaders abroad, as well as young people. It also argues for focus on relationships, not just programs or ministry. Together with these colleagues, we have seen God work in the following areas.

Protestants

The evangelical Church, forced underground by the Communist regime that ruled Ethiopia for 17 years, grew rapidly during that period and continued growing when that regime fell in 1991. In their great joy at being able to worship publicly, most denominations immediately dropped the underground house churches through which persecuted believers had found fellowship, strength, and growth. However, though the large celebration services were exciting, they began to professionalize ministry. Most people who attended such services were essentially passive spectators. Furthermore, as these services were more impersonal, increasing numbers of people became less tied to a particular church through relationships and have felt free to migrate to whatever church is having the most exciting meetings. This trend has accelerated even during the past year, during which many prosperity-gospel churches have sprung up. Without relationships and without accountability for obeying what was preached, more and more people have begun to get their inspiration for the week without making any life-style changes. Even over the time we have been coming to Ethiopia,

¹⁹ We are just now moving to support one gifted Ethiopian woman to provide administrative support for our ministry.

church leaders have told us that spiritual fervor among Protestants has been sliding badly and shallow Christianity has been expanding. They are very concerned about this. (It is not so different from what happened in the fourth century when Constantine made Christianity legal and started building cathedrals.)

In this context, small and mid-sized churches or groups from perhaps a half-dozen Protestant denominations have asked for our help in “becoming renewed” through small groups. This work has been moderately successful. We have seen that long-term mentoring is important to this because discipleship ministries typically go through various stages, in their development, each with its own opportunities and risks.

After several abortive beginnings, we have also seen four megachurches from three denominations make major changes in their structure in order to implement this model. In one, a small group consisting of 9 top-level pastors gave birth to 9 small groups, each with 7 members, who in turn began to lead 63 small groups of 7 members, many of whom now lead one of over 250 small groups in that church and another. The church no longer will marry anyone or provide recommendations to anyone who does not participate in a small group.

In a second church, the entire congregation is now divided geographically into small groups led by a 3 or 4 level network of shepherds who are providing personal pastoral care to those immediately beneath them. A third large church is gradually converting their traditional small groups (with meetings like miniature church services) into interactive times in which each person has the opportunity to share his or her ideas, joys, and problems and both give and receive ministry. A fourth church, prepared over years by the relationship one of our colleagues had cultivated with the senior pastor, is now making rapid strides to train enough small group leaders so that each member of the entire 1500 member congregation can be in a small group. In each case, the senior pastor has been vocally and visibly leading this change, a factor that seems crucial. The importance of these transitions in these churches is not only in the numbers of people that now have a better chance of being more thoroughly disciplined, but that these churches are widely known and promise to be models for others.

An even greater joy has been to work with some “people movements,” groups in which many people choose to become followers of Jesus within a short period. We are now working with three such movements, all in areas nominally Orthodox or Protestant but still under the influence of animism (traditional African religion). These

movements were already growing when we met them, largely due to local leaders whose passion, persevering prayer, and costly labor deserve our honor. However, unlike most church planters, early on they structured their movements around small groups with shepherding networks. One association of 7 churches 8 years ago now has 65 churches and 695 small groups containing 15005 members. Another group, started a decade ago by a new convert barely out of his teens, now has 23 churches, around 200 small groups, and above 5000 members. A third group of 40 churches is just beginning on this path with great urgency, aware that once new converts get used to just listening passively to preaching, it will be hard to wean them from that into a more demanding but more fruitful kind of discipleship. We have been invited to work with these movements to help them improve the effectiveness of their groups and to train them to raise up more leaders.

What is significant about these movements are the enormous gains in education and social progress which the small groups are achieving, without outside subsidy or a lot of outside input. The movement cited above that is a decade old consists of very poor farmers. Now all of their children are now in school (and three have Master's degrees), all their children are wearing shoes, women are being treated with respect, female circumcision and alcoholism have been eliminated, farming methods have improved, and a number of people are saving and starting small businesses from their own savings. Their pagan neighbors even call upon them to mediate conflicts within their villages. This movement is by no means problem-free, but it demonstrates the transformational power of the gospel when ordinary people are helped to discuss God's Word among themselves. Our challenge in all of these movements is to raise up enough local mentors to train and oversee leaders for the large number of new small groups that are forming.

The Ethiopian Catholic Church

Fifteen or more years ago, Getachew Yosef, a Catholic high school student, came into a vibrant relationship with Jesus through a Bible study with some Protestants. To their disappointment, he refused to leave the Catholic Church, believing that God had spoken to him to "stay in his house." Over time he became a catechist, responsible for training priests and other workers. Eventually there were 40 priests throughout southern Ethiopia joyfully bringing their parishioners into living faith. When the official hierarchy heard what had happened, they managed several times to get him jailed. But they couldn't stop the little group from telling what they were experiencing.

About 7 years ago Pastor Getachew approached a major Protestant ministry in his area. “We are Catholics who love Jesus, but we don’t know the Bible well. Can you help us?” The leader of that ministry referred him to one of our colleagues, who scheduled us to meet with him and his team of 40 leaders. Not quite sure what we had gotten involved in, we asked them to tell us their stories. Only then did it dawn on us why God had selected us, out of all the Protestants in Ethiopia, to meet with them. Forty years previously through some unusual circumstances, we had become involved in the Catholic Pentecostal movement in the USA. When one small group within that movement lost their meeting place, the priests, nuns, and dedicated lay Catholics that were part of it moved into our living room. When I (Ron) told these brothers and sisters our story, they practically gasped. “You understand! You know what we are going through! Are we Catholics? Are we Protestants? What does God want us to do?”

We encouraged them to remain culturally Catholic as much as possible, and to maintain relationships with their Catholic family members and friends. “It is not a sin to make the sign of the cross when you are in church,” I told them, a bit tongue in cheek. “If you become Protestant, you will lose many opportunities to share Good News with other Catholics. God has raised you up to bring light to your families and friends in that Church.” They were elated. We also taught them about small groups as a means of discipling the many people who were coming to them.

A few months later we met with them again. “We have discovered something!” they told us. “We thought small groups were for helping others. But we have found through our small groups that we are sinners too! We also are learning to repent and change!” It did not surprise us to hear that the small groups springing up throughout their movement were transforming the lives of many as they cared for and taught one another, prayed for the sick among them, visited one another, and shared what they had. Many people were becoming evangelists. In one of our meetings I asked them what they considered their biggest challenges. They replied that it was the influx of Protestants who were leaving their dead churches to participate in their groups. However, they have been acting with great integrity about this, discouraging newcomers from leaving their previous churches and informing their pastors when they nevertheless choose to join them.

This movement now consists of 31 prayer houses (called such to minimize competition from official Catholic churches) and about 123 small groups. Though their relationship with the official Catholic

Church has improved to the point that Pastor Getachew got married in the same parish church whose leaders had previously jailed him, the renewed group members still experience pressure from the official Church to leave this movement. They are not eligible for jobs within the Catholic establishment, nor for subsidy of a variety of sorts funded by the Vatican.²⁰ Given their poverty, this has been a serious problem.

After a great deal of discussion, Pastor Getachew made the courageous decision to commit the movement to becoming self-sustaining—if we would help them achieve that. We are currently in an extended process of strengthening their shepherding structure, helping them teach about tithing, and helping them collect the financial and other data that will help them create policies that will lead to sustainability. As they complete these stages, we will also help them with economic development as we are able through self-help savings groups and other means.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which claims as members 47% of the population of Ethiopia, is the second largest Orthodox Church in the world, smaller only than the Russian Orthodox Church. Dating from the third century, it has helped Ethiopia maintain Christian values for over 1700 years and resist the tide of Islam which has swept over much of northern Africa. Unfortunately, many monks and priests are poorly educated (and equally poorly paid), and legends, myths, and honor to saints have often overshadowed the good news of Jesus. This has made much of the Church vulnerable to syncretism or mixing of Christianity and paganism. (In some parts of Ethiopia priests who teach in churches on Sunday serve as witchdoctors on Wednesdays.) Because much of the growth of Protestantism over the last couple of generations has been at the expense of the Orthodox Church, relationships between these two groups have often been tense, even resulting in violence at times. However, we have seen God at work in this Church on several levels.

Thanks to the work of the Ethiopian Bible Society, a joint Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant venture, the official Orthodox Church has recently taken a cautiously positive stance toward Protestants and Bible study. One teacher who reported directly to the Patriarch introduced himself to us as Director of Evangelism for the Ethiopian Orthodox

²⁰ The Ethiopian Catholic Church is not officially part of the Roman Catholic Church but has a “fraternal relationship” with it. They receive quite a bit of subsidy from the Vatican.

Church. His idea of evangelism was indeed much the same as ours: “We now have dozens of priests who stand on the street corners and read Scripture. The people love it!” he told us. He has taken some of our Bible study material and circulated it widely through his networks. Others from the Ethiopian Bible Society have invited us to teach inductive Bible study to mixed groups of young leaders from Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant circles, and they have all been excited to find out that they could do this together without conflict.

This official Orthodox stance, unfortunately, is not implemented uniformly throughout the country, and persecution of those who advocate Bible study still occurs. We know hundreds of people in many areas of Ethiopia who have felt forced out of the Orthodox Church because of what they have discovered on their own through such Bible study. In some cases they have sought to retain the cultural aspects of Orthodox worship. In other cases they have formed themselves into new church movements and have associated themselves with a Protestant denomination. Several such movements that are rapidly growing have asked for our help in disciplining their members and have responded eagerly to our trainings about small groups and shepherding networks as methods for teaching good citizenship in the kingdom of God.

Others have chosen to stay within the Church, despite opposition, in order to try to help seekers there come into a living relationship with Jesus. This can be delicate work, depending on the local situation. In addition, some of these newly ignited believers tend to start by attacking the things they believe are wrong with the Church, rather than building bridges with things held in common. One brother we work with has trained over 600 Orthodox clergy in how to develop their own personal relationship with Jesus and help others do the same. We are trying to help him develop networks of such clergymen within the Church who can encourage and strengthen each other, who can utilize the small group structures already present in the Church for Bible study, and who can allow people to discover what the Bible says for themselves without their having to preach against the teachings of the Church. This has been slow and painstaking work both for him and us, but we are encouraged by some recent progress.

Animists

Few pure animists remain in Ethiopia. Those who do are rapidly being reached with the gospel, most often by indigenous missionaries. Anyone able to cast out demons and heal sick people can plant churches quickly among them. What happens to their converts thereafter,

however, is an open question. Often the evangelists are not as well trained in disciple-making as in initial church planting, and many such churches do not survive—or else produce little lifestyle change in their members. When such missionaries are supported by agencies who promise short-term funding, say for only three years, with no plan for the future after that, such churches are often not able to become spiritually mature. We have seen entire movements of rapidly planted churches slide back into their previous belief system when there is inadequate follow-up.

One brother we work with, however, has taught small group discipleship to a large movement of newly converted animists. The 40 indigenous missionaries whom he has overseen (funded by another American agency) has within the past three years started 81 churches, with over 1000 small discipleship groups overseen by 235 coaches. The lifestyle changes among them have been substantial already.

Seize Practical Opportunities that Can be Turned to Fruitfulness in Reaching the Unreached

Ethiopians can freely come and go into many Arab countries. An ancient king of Ethiopia received and protected some of Muhammed's relatives. He was so grateful that in the Hadith he directed, "Leave the Abyssinians [Ethiopians] alone unless they become violent." Thousands of Ethiopians who speak Arabic and understand their culture now hold jobs in this and other countries as domestic and other workers. Christians are preferred as domestics because they are known to work hard and be honest. There is even an Ethiopian church in a Saudi Arabian city that operates openly.

One friend of ours sought to capitalize on this by forming an employment agency which would send Christians into Arab countries for work. He invited us to help prepare some of these to survive spiritually in countries where they would not receive much spiritual support. Should we not seize on such opportunities where there are cultural connections, even though they aren't through us Westerners?

Another set of opportunities arise when there are natural or other disasters which cause the countries involved to welcome outside support. Acts of kindness, even simply visiting and being with victims of these tragedies, creates important good will. It is even better when there are churches or other Christian organizations in those places that we can work through. This is showing the love of Jesus in practical ways.

Ethiopia's endemic poverty gives us yet another opportunity to love its people, not by handouts which can cause dependency, but by relationships and training that helps people improve their own economic conditions and lives. We have seen self-help savings groups make a remarkable difference in people's lives without outside subsidy. We are encouraging the formation and good training of such groups wherever we work.

On a more advanced level, Bob Lupton has documented the huge impact that well-run larger businesses could have in environments of chronic poverty if in fact they provide decent jobs along with health insurance and educational benefits that raise standard of living (Lupton 2015). Even in the USA, Cardone Industries has demonstrated a business model that not only has provided thousands of jobs for low-skilled workers but has also planted more than 6 churches among its immigrant employees (Cardone 2009). Business may be the best method for reaching many unreached people groups.

We do not disparage Westerners who do jump the cultural barriers, who go to hard places, learn the language and customs, and struggle to plant a beachhead there. This is difficult work and to be honored. It is sometimes necessary. But the main strategy we are advocating for reaching unreached people groups—because we constantly see it on the ground in Ethiopia—is for churches to focus on discipling people, not just making converts; giving priority to where God is already working; becoming redemptive communities which continually multiply disciples; help people reach the unreached people culturally close to them; and seizing the unusual practical opportunities that God provides.

Conclusion

In our many extended times in Ethiopia we have seen God do amazing things. We have seen that the Church can become an important instrument of transformation not only of individuals but of entire communities, affecting major social issues. We have also seen that many evangelical churches are not doing this effectively—and in fact are losing ground numerically and spiritually. But we have begun to see a model of church life rooted in the theology of the kingdom of God—small groups, shepherding networks that oversee all leaders, and wholistic ministry—beginning to be implemented in several demographic segments in Ethiopia, with promising results. It has given us hope for the Church in Ethiopia. Perhaps this model could also help

the Church elsewhere become more of an agent of transformation as well.

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Chapter Sixteen

Short Stories of People God Is Using as His Agents of *Shalom*

God's agents of shalom are not always widely known! "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Psalm 37:11; Matthew 5:5). Here are ten accounts by or about people associated with William Carey International University, or friends of WCIU's constituents, giving an encouraging glimpse of how godly women and men are working at discovering the roots of human problems in order to bring God's blessing to the peoples of the world.

A CONTRIBUTION TO PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHERN MALI

Abdou Maiga, WCIU PhD Associate

It is crucial that we not underestimate the impact of the world's nongovernment agencies ... seeking to make a difference cross-culturally (Winter 2004, 75).

INTRODUCTION

As an agent of international development and peace, I am offering in this essay my analysis of the problems and my hopes for peace and safety, *shalom*, for my people in Northern Mali. The importance of Northern Mali cannot be over-emphasized for the stabilization of Mali as a whole and indeed to the entire troubled Sahel region (those countries across Northern Africa just south of the Sahara desert and a few degrees north of the equator).

What are the challenges preventing peace and development in Northern Mali and the Sahel region? How can these obstacles be eradicated? The quest for peace in this region has never been more urgent. It has become the home of Islamist violence and prolonged conflicts across the breadth of Africa that have caused much suffering and blocked any meaningful socio-economic progress. The role that humanitarian non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can play in bringing peace and stabilization to this region is crucial.

CONTEXT

The conflict in the Northern part of Mali started in the first hours of Mali's independence in 1960. Since I was born in the region of Timbuktu, I am personally concerned with the challenges of the Northern region of Mali regarding peace and security and effective development. Due to the geo-strategic position of Northern Mali, the immense desert, its neighborhood with countries like Algeria and Niger, and the cyclical conflicts and wars that have characterized the region, peace will not be possible in Mali as a whole and indeed in the Sahel region, unless there is peace and stability in Northern Mali.

If we define peace to mean the "absence of war", we can say that the situation in the region is now better than it was last year. This, however, does not mean that Northern Mali has achieved stability. Its location close by such neighbors as Algeria, Niger, and in some sense Libya, means the current situation remains very fragile because of the threat of the Islamist groups, Al Qaeda and Boko Haram.

Recent negotiations have generated much enthusiasm and optimism in the international community. A pact for security and development in the Northern Region of Mali has been initiated by the leaders of Tuareg rebels, the government of Mali, and the government of Algeria. The biggest challenge is to find synergies in this architecture to encourage sustainable peace and stability in Northern Mali. Most initiatives in the past have approached the many conflicts on a case-by-case basis and therefore focused on the effects of the conflict and not on the causes, in trying to find solutions.

CHALLENGES

There are three main challenges that we in Northern Mali face in the search for peace, stability, and development:

Challenge 1. The persistence of a climate of tension and mistrust between the Tuareg leaders and the Government of Mali.

The problem of peace and security in Northern Mali is part of a series of conflicts mainly related to the Tuareg tribes. The fragile order in the northern regions of Mali and the absence of economic infrastructure have left us with a multi-faceted and desperate situation. In January 2012, the Tuareg rebel militia, National Movement for the Liberation of Azawad (MNLA), confronted the Malian army in armed conflict. The MNLA's main claim is self-determination, even to see the independence of Azawad, which consists of the regions of Timbuktu,

Gao, and Kidal. To preserve the integrity of Mali, the Government of Mali has refused to yield to these claims.

Challenge 2. The presence of many Islamist groups along the border with Algeria.

Several groups advocate the establishment of an Islamic Republic with a strict application of shari'a law. The interests of the Islamist rebel group, Ansar Dine, are related to the Sahelian branch of Al Qaeda, known for its fundamentalism in the application of Islamic law. However, the motivation of Tuareg leader-turned Islamist radical, Ag Ghali, can be seen to be for economic rather than doctrinal reasons.

Challenge 3. The population displacement and its economic difficulties.

One thing is certain, adverse consequences of all these conflicts for the population of Northern Mali is evident. Thousands of people are forced to take refuge in neighboring countries (Mauritania, Algeria, Niger, and Burkina Faso). These massive displacements create other consequences in terms of food and other basic necessities.

MY OPINION: OPTIONS FOR ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES

Evil must be dealt with in a comprehensive way, because this endless series of conflicts and the persistent instability in Northern Mali is caused by the lack of economic resources and endemic poverty, by mistrust and suspicion between the Mali government and Tuareg leaders, all of which are aggravated by massive human rights violations, marginalization, and the proliferation of armed Islamist groups.

Following are some of the factors that must need to be put in place to lead to peace and safety in this region.

- The new security pact currently being negotiated will require Algeria, who is the “godfather,” to cooperate at all levels with the view to disarming rebel groups and to promote security on its border. Serious efforts must be made to search for and eliminate weaponry scattered throughout the northern regions of Mali that adjoin Algeria. It is essential to properly negotiate the current agreements in Algeria and to establish a viable monitoring mechanism.
- The peace process and resulting agreements must be accompanied by real development projects, to be carried out under international supervision to avoid the diversion of resources for personal gain or the possible re-arming of radical militias.

- The government of Mali and the Tuareg rebel leaders must provide evidence of their good faith engagement in the peace process, avoiding unnecessary provocations and promoting actions which eliminate mutual distrust. The appointment of a Tuareg Prime Minister, or at least a Foreign Affairs Minister, for three to four years could be a very strong gesture on the part of the Malian authorities.
- Among the Tuareg tribes, serious efforts should be undertaken by their leaders to promote inter-tribal unity, because tribal divisions can lead to the fragmentation of interests and slow peace efforts due to the difficulty of finding credible interlocutors. As one Tuareg intellectual said: “Although Mali and the international community want to bring peace to the North, they have to bring peace between the tribes first” (Ahmed, 2015).
- It is imperative to consider all feasible efforts for the return of displaced populations in neighboring countries. Thus, all refugees and victims of the successive conflicts in Northern Mali should receive particular attention from specialized organizations for repatriation, resettlement, and rehabilitation programs, with a view to resolving and preventing all conflict-related displacements. Countries neighboring northern Mali must realize that if stability and security do not return in northern Mali, their country could be impacted as well.
- There is need on the part of all parties to learn from the lessons of the failures of past peace efforts, in order to be better prepared to face the current challenges. It is my view that the failures of past peace efforts were mainly due to such factors as the consideration only of the political aspects of the conflict, rather than also addressing the economic aspects.
- It seems to me that the foundation of the long-standing conflict is more economic than racial or religious. Tuareg tribes have shown that they are committed to the multicultural character of Mali by marriage alliances and their involvement in different levels of the society. Hence the necessity to involve all parties related to the conflict in trying to address the economic nature of the conflict, instead of intermediate and sectorial solutions.
- We have to fight poverty and stop all that perpetuates it, such as uncontrolled food distribution and ad hoc support to certain humanitarian organizations. It is sad to admit that several humanitarian organizations operating in the northern regions of Mali have no fundamental interest in eliminating the root causes

of poverty and under-development, which are primary causes of these on-going conflicts. Instead, they are more interested in maintaining the structural dependency conditions in order to ensure the survival of organizations and the loyalty of donors. Through raising awareness of this dysfunctional aspect of humanitarian organizations, I am able to make a contribution to peace and development in Northern Mali.

- The fight against poverty significantly reduces the field of action of radical Islam. This is why it is important to highlight the socio-economic considerations through development of the private sector, job creation, greater involvement of women in economic life, and the promotion of justice and good governance, if we truly want to bury the conflict definitively.
- Intensive development of the agricultural system in northern Mali by the use of Israeli technology due to the aridity of the soil and the vast desert can be a key to the development and the fight against poverty. Poor agricultural performance has contributed to high rural poverty. “Countries that have increased their agricultural productivity the most have also achieved the greatest reductions in poverty” (Department for International Development 2004).

CONCLUSION

Although the peace protocol under consideration is criticized by many people in Mali, I believe it provides a basis for peace and elimination of many negative factors, if all the parties will respect and implement its terms. This requires the highest level of political good will on the part of both Tuareg leaders and the Mali government and the active support of the international community. It is important to stress that the current situation in Northern Mali presents an opportunity for finding a durable solution to long-standing challenges relating to peace and security.

This implies the need to implement real conflict prevention mechanisms that encompass the framework of a collective vision of the well-being of all spheres of the society. The vision must aim to transform the region from a zone of hostilities, conflicts, and underdevelopment into a zone of security, stability, and development. The major challenge that remains is to negotiate a mutually beneficial pact and to have the courage to translate those agreements and commitments into action. The

Tuareg rebels, the Government of Mali, and Algeria must all have the political will to consider the issues that impact the peace, stability, and well-being of the people.

But the area in which I can make a contribution is to influence faith-based NGOs to improve their service by ending the cycle of my people's dependency on these NGOs for basic necessities. Instead the NGOs need to re-focus their efforts on providing desert farming skills, job creation, and demonstrating biblical values of *shalom* in their relationships with the various factions that have been at war for all these years.

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A CORRELATION BETWEEN AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGIONS AND THE PROBLEMS OF AFRICAN SOCIETIES TODAY

Chris Ampadu, WCIU PhD Associate

Chris Ampadu studied Sociology of Religion at the University of Ghana. He was a pastor of a Pentecostal church for 12 years and now works with Harvest Foundation to train pastors and church leaders across Africa in the area of wholistic ministry and biblical worldview.

Africa, despite its rich natural endowments, is a continent ravaged with poverty, disease, corruption and conflicts. For years, international aid and development agencies have tried to deal with these problems—with limited success. A predominantly animistic worldview holds sway over the minds of many Africans—a worldview that sees man as a victim of nature, of other people, or of fate. This mindset shifts responsibility for Africa's social ills to the spirit realm, leaving

individuals little hope or motivation for working towards a better future.

Even though the church has experienced tremendous growth on the continent over the last two centuries, all too often the church is disengaged from the crying needs of the community—focusing primarily on spiritual concerns. Despite the fact that Christians are the majority in many African communities, poverty, disease, conflict and environmental degradation still abound. The church is often seen as irrelevant by non-believing community members. But the fact still remains that the church is God’s principally ordained agency for social and cultural transformation. It is perhaps the single most important indigenous, sustainable institution in any community, with members in virtually every sphere of society (the arts, business, governance, education, etc.). This is particularly true of Africa where statistically almost 50% of the populations (about 400 million people) are Christians and where an estimated four million churches exist.

Yet for the church to effectively advance God’s intentions, its leadership needs fresh vision and insight. An understanding of African Traditional Religion is critical in understanding the problems of Africa societies today. Many governmental agencies, including development agencies, non-governmental organizations, multinational and bilateral organizations like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, have disregarded the prominent role of African Traditional Religion and have been adopting various economic and political strategies and policies to try to solve Africa’s problems. But Africa, with her enormous natural and human resources, continues to be regarded as the dark continent where there are wars, hunger and poverty. In the face of these needs, much of the work of the African church continues to be confined to the area of spiritual things, especially in the areas of deliverance from the powers of devils and witchcraft, healing and saving of souls for heaven—all akin to Traditional Africa Religion. However, the social and physical impact in terms of loving one another and the physical development of individuals and communities has rarely been seen. Large churches have been built and thousands of people go to church each Sunday but transformation of communities has not occurred. Even when people talk about the church, the discussion is typically related

only to spiritual issues and all other events and everyday happenings are given spiritual meaning and importance only. This can be attributed to the overwhelming animistic perception in Africa where all natural events are viewed as ordered by the spirits, gods, and ancestors.

Traditional African religion was the indigenous religion of the African before the introduction of any other religions on the continent. It is the aggregate of indigenous belief systems and practices which existed in Africa prior to the coming of Christianity and Islam and to which millions of Africans still adhere covertly or overtly. The term “traditional” is used to refer to the technique of cultural transmission, that is, oral tradition— stories, myths and proverbs—that are used in passing this religion from generation to generation. Beliefs are passed on to posterity through songs, folktales, dances, shrines, and festivals. African scholar K.A. Opoku explains that the term, “traditional” indicates a fundamentally indigenous value system that it has its own pattern, with its own historical inheritance and tradition from the past. “African traditional religion is practiced by millions of Africans in our time and it is therefore a contemporary reality which exists objectively and in fact. It connects the present with infinite time.” (Opoku 1978, 9)

WHOLISTIC NATURE OF AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION

The African traditionalist is influenced by several forces including God, the ancestors, the lesser gods, spirits, and others like witches, sorcerers, and magic. According to Opoku, “Religion therefore becomes the root of the African culture and it is the determining principle of the African life. ... It is no exaggeration, therefore to say that in traditional Africa, religion is life and life, religion. Africans are engaged in religion in whatever they do—whether it be farming, fishing or hunting; or simply eating, drinking or traveling, Religion gives meaning and significance to their lives, both in this world and the next” (Opoku 1978, 1).

The African Traditional Religion is very wholistic since it impacts every area of the African traditional life, whether in the city or village, in the office or in the farm, in the building of a structure or in marriage. Prof. Mbiti in talking about the African religious heritage says, “Religion is part of the cultural heritage.... It has dominated the thinking of African people to

such an extent that it has shaped their cultures, their social life, their political organizations and economic activities” (Mbiti 1969, 10).

CORRELATION BETWEEN WORLDVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT

“Ideas have consequences” says Darrow Miller (Miller 2001, 34), and “as a man thinks, so is he” (Prov. 23: 7 KJV). These sayings reflect the truth that a person’s (or people’s) beliefs impact their attitudes, and their attitudes in turn, impact their behavior, which brings forth consequences (either positive or negative) in their lives. Worldview can be defined as “a set of assumptions held consciously or unconsciously in faith about the basic makeup of the world and how the world works” (Miller 2001, 38).

There seems to be a close relationship between the traditional African belief systems and the total development of the African continent.

Africa’s problems include poverty, hunger, diseases, malnutrition, unemployment, HIV/AIDS, malaria, wars and others. If granting of money and offering various forms of assistance could solve these problems, Africa’s problems should have been solved by now. But instead, Africa’s problems are getting worse. There is the need therefore to look critically at the reason why so many resources have gone to Africa with relatively little impact on the economy or people of the continent. Policies and strategies and proposals that have worked so well in other parts of the world do not work in Africa. Why?

I think the problem lies in the belief systems of Africans since belief systems give birth to the culture of people and culture also determines the attitudes and behaviors of people which in turn determines the laws, education, economics, lifestyle, politics, environment, arts and family life of the people. The African story, or worldview, has been unable to transform our lives as individuals, communities, or nations. The traditional belief system is based on power, control, and fear of death rather than on love, service, and reverence of life.

Animistic traditional religion believes in millions of gods that are capricious and unpredictable. The gods can be bribed, they can change their mind, and they are very discriminatory and very selfish. As a result, the priests, believers and people of

the gods take after the likeness of these gods in their behavior. Some of the elements of this animistic worldview and their potential impact on societal development are described here.

Witchcraft: African traditional religionists believe that diseases, barrenness, and sudden deaths are all the works of witchcraft. Such people are not interested in scientific solutions or medical attention since they believe their problems are caused by witches who must be appeased. Due to these beliefs, promoting personal hygiene is a challenge and environmental conditions are a disaster. Preventable diseases like malaria have become the number one killer in Africa, but environmental considerations are generally not pursued due to the belief in witchcraft and magic. Valuable time and money are wasted on measures to counteract the activities of spiritual forces. The fear of witchcraft is so widespread that many people consistently live in fear. This dominant fear seriously inhibits progress and development in communities. Any attempt by persons in these traditional societies to lift oneself above others in terms of good education, business, or even an attempt to build oneself a house will attract the vindictiveness of some of these witches.

Political mediocrity: In the political sphere, traditional religions have traditional rulers who hold all power and authority, assisted by family heads and a council of elders. The chiefs, who ascend to their positions by inheritance, derive their power and authority from the gods, ancestors and the spirits. Even though in modern times a few highly trained people and intellectuals are ascending to chieftaincy, a majority of them are illiterates and do not have the know how to be effective leaders. Some are oppressive authoritarian despots, and enemies of development.

Fatalism: The African worldview is deeply rooted in fatalism that says “we are what we are because we were made so and can do nothing about it.” This worldview produces a “dependency” mentality—always looking and waiting for solutions outside oneself and not taking responsibility to improve one’s circumstance or situation. Such a worldview surely will often lead to underdevelopment because people are not motivated to be creative or innovative, and will not do much to help themselves unless somebody from the outside brings help.

Corruption: One of the causes of underdevelopment is corruption, and indeed Africa is plagued with so much corruption that nearly everybody is involved, including Christians. In some cases, it is actually seen as an abnormality when one disassociates oneself from accepting bribes. In Africa corruption often means getting a contract approved and then doing a job haphazardly because the very officers who are paid to inspect the work are also bribed. For me, this is deeply rooted in African worldview and beliefs since the African gods are thought to be capricious and can be “bribed” through the giving of various forms of sacrifices, offerings or appeasements. Through the giving of “drinks” or some form of sacrifice, these gods can be bribed to kill, spoil, or destroy life or property. Corruption is a problem deeply rooted in the capriciousness of the African gods with the direct result of underdevelopment.

Concept of time: Another African worldview that leads to underdevelopment is the concept of time. This is also rooted in the animistic belief system in which the gods have no respect for time. When they are consulted much time is spent drumming, singing, dancing and incantations before the presence of the gods is recognized in the priests and prophets as they become possessed. This worldview has been passed on to the people who do not regard and respect time. This attitude is surely related to underdevelopment because it means that people are paid for what they did not work for or their jobs just do not get done. Benedict Opoku-Mensah recognized this problem when writing in the *Daily Graphic* of Ghana on June 11, 2008, “the route to a nation’s success is hard work, determination, sacrifices, punctuality, and love for one’s country. Our poor attitude towards time is drawing our development as a nation backward.”

Technology: Animistic beliefs have a great impact on technological development. The African traditional worldview believes floods, earthquakes, drought, and other forms of natural disaster are the physical manifestation of irrational forces. Bad things happen when the gods are angry. With this in mind no attempt is made to find scientific and technological remedies. Instead, the solutions are perceived to lie in constant appeasement of the gods. These are the ingredients of underdevelopment; they are the yeast that helps to ferment poverty and the catalyst that speeds up the collapse of a nation.

CONCLUSIONS

In a nutshell, Africa's problems arise from the roots of belief systems which are foundational in understanding poverty and hunger in the midst of abundance and plenty in terms of natural resources. For most agencies, including governments and even mission agencies, the causes of African problems have to do with the visible "fruit problems" that include poverty, hunger, deprivations, malaria, HIV/AIDS, wars, and general underdevelopment. Many measures, strategies, and billions of dollars have been poured into this continent by the West, and yet instead of improving the development of African countries, some are even getting worse. For most mission agencies and churches, the perceived solution lies with evangelism and discipling, which has been taking place for over two centuries, and yet, our problems persist. The majority of believers live in poverty and hunger and some are very corrupt, so that it appears as if Christ came only to save souls and not lives. The solution, in my opinion, can only be found through a critical examination of the roots of belief systems and the lies of the culture that have resulted in enslavement, bondage, and poverty instead of wholeness, dignity, and transformation.

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MY JOURNEY AS AN AGENT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND *SHALOM*

May Nor Clara Cheng, PhD

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I would like to share with you the story of what led to my ministry in person-formation. When I was studying at my first seminary, I was trained to be a local pastor. I was not equipped to be a cross-cultural worker. After having pastored a local church for four years, I joined an international agency and was sent overseas cross-culturally for five years. By the end of my first term of service, I was badly burned out.

My personal experience in this first cross-cultural assignment was like a bottle of water with a layer of mud at the bottom. The layer of mud was the damaged emotions I carried from my past to the country where I was serving. It handicapped my cross-cultural adjustment and also my social wholeness in dealing with my assigned roommate. When the bottle was standing still, the water was clear. As it was shaken up from being transported, from challenges and frustrations, the water became muddy. It took much pain and time to filter the muddied water.

It is out of this background that I was motivated to devote myself to advocating preventive care for cross-cultural workers. Ten years after the burn-out, I underwent a thorough process of personal counseling during doctoral studies at Fuller Theological Seminary. When one of my professors, Dr. Edgar Elliston, and I were discussing what I would like to focus on in my doctoral research, we coined the term “person-formation.” A definition for person-formation, extracted from my dissertation, states that “person-formation” is the development of people, in this case [cross cultural workers], in the well-being and wholeness of their hearts. It is the process by which people gain spiritual, emotional, and social strength and maturity (Cheng 2001, 11).

To enhance the process of the ... students’ person-formation ... trainers incorporate in their training program a deliberate effort of spiritual formation in the students’ development of intimacy with God and sound spiritual wholeness. They aim at equipping prospective [workers] to lead their social life with cross-cultural skills and personal security by enhancing the awareness of their own national character and integrating spiritual and emotional wholeness in their social life (Cheng 2001, 12).

After doing these studies I rejoined the agency I had worked with before and I was assigned first to the Philippines and then to Taiwan. In both countries, I taught person formation to national and international students who were engaged in cross-cultural work. I also observed how my sending agency conducted international development in those two countries. I continued to grow in maturity in my spiritual life, as an international worker who had to adjust to various living environments. From time to time, I offered an intensive course on the subject in my home city of Hong Kong. Eventually my health condition did not allow me to be on the front lines anymore. I started to be concerned about who would continue to teach my material in person-formation. I returned to the U.S. and joined the faculty of William Carey International University. I am very privileged to have this unique opportunity in contributing to the nourishment of international development workers in a much more permanent form through the university. It is my aspiration to help students mature in their spiritual, emotional, and social wholeness (Cheng 2001, 6).

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FROM AN ORPHAN, TO A BISHOP, TO A PROFESSOR

By and about Onang George Purkweri, WCIU PhD Associate

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jeremiah 29:11).

This poor man called, and the Lord heard him; he saved him out of all his troubles (Psalm 34:6).

GENEALOGY

I was born into a very humble family in 1966 in a village in Uganda called Swagere, in Kaberimaido District, by Mrs. Alice Norah Elelu and Pastor Silas Elelu who are Kuman by tribe.

Pastor Silas Elelu was a son of Abraham Olir, an adopted son of Mr Ojobi and Mrs Angwaro.

These people lived in Soroti district in a village called Lale, in a parish called Akoyo a long time ago. Abraham Olir was the only boy born to his mother Angwaro hence he had no brothers apart from step brothers. He grew up as an adopted son in Ojobi's family but he was not very much loved by his step brothers. He was segregated and hated since he hailed from another clan called "Jo Agol," while Ojobi and his other sons were from the clan called Angorok.

The time came when Abraham Olir got married to his first wife named Apako, but she was taken from him by force and given to his step brother called Onang, who is the person I am named after. This was a very painful experience that left my grandfather with a wound in the heart. Later on Abraham Olir married another woman named Atolo Miraca and they had ten children (three of whom died), including my father, Elelu Silas.

Mr Elelu Silas was an Anglican Pastor and a carpenter by profession. He also served as a Primary school teacher at Swarage P7 school where I was born.

EARLY LIFE

As a young boy I had many experiences in believing God and dedicating my life and even my banana leaves to Him. By the time I was 14 years old, I had a congregation of 34 believers under my leadership, including his family members whom I had led to Christ. Most of them are now serving God in different capacities. In introducing myself, I would often say, "I am just like the wooden handle of a hoe that God has used to clear the garden" (so that these people could become followers of Jesus). In the local heart language the "wooden handle of the hoe" is called "Purkweri Obanga." So instead of using my real names, Onang George William, people nick-named me "Purkweri Obanga." This was prophetic in nature since God has been using me throughout my life the way a farmer uses the handle of the hoe in his farm.

MY EDUCATION

After the death of my father, one of my uncles paid for me to attend primary school for three years, then left me on his own. Being an orphan, I lived by the grace of God and the works of

my hands since there was nobody to take care of my educational or even medical expenses. I became a gardener: planting bananas, cassava, and maize to raise money for school fees. One day I climbed on a tractor lorry to move into a nearby town to get secondary education. I continued working to pay for school and a place to stay.

Because of my reputation as a hard worker I was elected the Minister of Agriculture in Lira Town College in 1985. I sat for ordinary examination papers and passed the advanced level. Next I was able to study with a seminary about the time I got married, and later I obtained a Master's degree from a school in the UK. Now I am working on a PhD with William Carey International University.

MEETING THE SERIOUS NEEDS OF NORTHERN UGANDA

The puzzling central question has been why does a nation like Uganda, which Winston Churchill called the Pearl of Africa, constantly suffer from absolute poverty? Uganda has abundant natural resources such as deposits of phosphates, hydro electric potential, natural gas, petroleum, and solar and wind energy potential. Uganda has a rich heritage of beautiful people who have the spirit of community and family, generosity, ingenuity, different styles of dance and music, rich colors, celebration, perseverance, and respect for the elders. Billions of dollars of foreign aid has been poured into Uganda. So one would wonder why on earth could such a country still live in extreme poverty where people's living standard is declining at the rate of 1.2% a year, the gross domestic product (in per capita terms) has declined up to 2.2% and is even lower now.

Assuming this could be the result of both spiritual and physical calamities that need to be addressed through demonstrating a practical gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, I founded Forward In Christ Ministries Inc to try to address the root cause of this dilemma. This Ministry aims to bring about holistic transformational development in all areas of human life and society: spiritual, physical, social, and mental.

Based on the conclusion made by the World Bank that, even in the wealthiest countries, human capital accounts for three-quarters of the producible forms of wealth, Forward In Christ Ministries aims to empower and motivate the indigenous poor

community to maximize the use of their own capital human and social capital.

This organization was officially registered with the Government of Uganda; Registration number 5914/3981 and the Lira Local government Registration number L/143 in the year 2002. It was intended to cover mainly the war torn zones of East Africa: Northern Uganda and some parts of Southern Sudan, Eastern Congo (Zaire) and Rwanda but we hope to go as far as the Lord will lead us in future.

Our Mission Statement is to draw people to God and restore their broken relationships with God, man, and themselves through Christ; to integrate them in to the family of God by teaching them to live Christ's like life style through spiritual, mental, social, and physical transformation; and send them for mission to the world.

The Target Group for this ministry constitutes mainly the vulnerable people such as orphans, school dropouts, abducted returnees, HIV/Aids victims, widows, disabled, street children, rural pastors, and the general community of the lost, the least, and last.

Our Main Activities:

1. Economic Empowerment

a. Micro Credit Schemes. We provide "Banking for the poor" where grants are given in the form of a loan to trained groups of people to help them start off small income generating projects. They are expected to pay back every month with low interest of 5%,

then the money is loaned to other people on the waiting list. We have disbursed over 5.300.000 Uganda shillings so far to about 260 beneficiaries.

b. Goat, Poultry and Piggery Projects. Orphans and widows receive two female animals: one to keep and one to pass on to another person in the waiting list. Jesus' ministry was to the people on the edge of society, including the poor. So Forward in Christ emulates this ministry by reaching to those on the edge of society.

c. Animal Traction and Transport Means. Ox ploughs and oxen have been given out to Christian leaders to begin rice growing projects. Some pastors have received motorcycles to ease their transport.

2. HIV/AIDS programs

The challenge of HIV/AIDS is a serious one in our country. So our organization is working hand in hand with the government, and other Non Governmental Organizations to combat its spread through sensitization, provision of basic material needs like nutritious food items, and treatment, in addition to giving biblical counseling and visitation to families of the infected and affected persons.

3. Training & Capacity Building Programs

Through Forward School of Mission, as a way to demonstrate God's love and Kingdom, we train vulnerable people, including war returnees in both developmental and business projects. These include catering and hotel management, tailoring and garment cutting, mushroom growing, knitting, painting and decorations, in addition to the Bible and theology courses.

4. Radio Program

This has been an effective tool that God has used to transform the lives of multitudes of traumatized, war affected, heartbroken, and poverty stricken people in northern and eastern Uganda and a part of eastern Congo and Southern Sudan where the FM radio signal can reach. Many people have confessed Christ as their Lord and Savior and testified that their hopes have been restored, faith revived, and lives changed or transformed through the radio program. The ministry works actively towards the restoration of people's marred identity and helping them to rediscover their true vocation as faithful stewards of God's gifts and potentials put in them. Our success is evident by the way the listeners, both the poor the non-poor are responding. Even members of Parliament are raising funds to sponsor the radio program.

5. Support to Orphans and Widows

We are supporting the education of total orphans through paying their school fees, and provision of other scholastic materials and bedding. Many of them have completed their education and are now working.

The ministry has been actively functioning in northern Uganda to meet the spiritual and physical needs of the people living in camps for Internally Displaced Persons. It has succeeded in the resettlement of vulnerable people back to their homes after the war in collaboration with other local churches and organizations.

6. Church Planting & Discipleship

This has been going on very well and within 6 years now we have planted over 37 indigenous African independent Churches called Forward Pentecostal Churches all over northern Uganda. These churches are founded on indigenous worldviews rather than on imported world views from people of a different culture. Our sole aim is to reach deep to the felt needs of the people in ways that are less culturally foreign. Many traumatized people who had lost hope in life have confessed that they are now able to continue with life struggles.

FOUNDING EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING MINISTRIES

Under the affiliation of New Covenant International University USA I founded a Bible school in Lira called “All Nations Berea Bible College” and served as the first principle from 1995–1997. After this I founded another Bible school called “Forward Bible and Vocational Training school” offering diploma in Bible and vocational training under the affiliation of DCI Trust school of Mission in U.K. Through this vocational school we have been training church leaders, orphans, and vulnerable ladies.

As a promoter of Equip Leadership training through Samaritan Purse International Relief I translated the 6 books of Equip Leadership into the local heart language and trained many Christian leaders in the internally displaced persons camps during the 20 years of insurgency in northern Uganda. Our ministries have used Light of Africa Leadership teaching materials to train pastors in the internally displaced persons camps from the year 2004 to 2007. In the year 2010 George I headed the African Bible Institute in Lira. Currently I am one of the trainers with Transforming Nation Alliance Uganda.

Currently we are building a “Forward School of Integrity”—a boarding primary school in Omito-Lira with the aim of raising up a generation with high morals and integrity through education since integrity and moral is dying so fast in Uganda. Our big picture is to empower potential leaders to run with the gospel of our Lord to the poorest of the poor since the harvest field is so ripe.

INTERPRETERS AND CHAMPIONS AS “INSIDE” AGENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT

Jim Harries, PhD

WCIU Adjunct Faculty and long-time cross-cultural worker in Kenya

As a 10-year-old boy, I once used a public bathroom. After completing my task, I faithfully rinsed my hands, as teachers and parents had instructed me. An old man was in the bathroom on a similar assignment to mine. “Well done for washing your hands” he told me. I had never seen him before.

Subsequently I pondered on what the old man did. I wondered—if I had not washed my hands, would he have told me off? What business of his was it what I do with my hands after I had completed the necessary? What did he care about me, given that we had never met before (or again, as far as I know), and he did not even know my parents?

Living in Africa, I am a bit like that old man. Sometimes I agonise over what to say or not say. Sometimes I am with other Westerners in African contexts. Should I tell other Westerners when they do things wrong? Are there even wrong ways of doing things? Why should I care whether they say or do silly things? Who am I to speak to them? This task seems to be endless. It is certainly many faceted. I want to give just a few simple examples from personal experience, having lived and worked amongst native Africans since 1988.

TO INTERPRET OR NOT TO INTERPRET AFRICAN CUSTOMS TO WESTERNERS?

People in my home community in Africa are usually very careful not to carry food openly when other people are around, unless it is covered. For example, a loaf of bread should be

carried in coloured bag or basket so that it not be identifiable as a loaf of bread. Local people do this to avoid jealousy and the evil eye. In such a community is it wrong to carry food uncovered? It “seems” wrong because everyone else avoids doing it. When someone does it all eyes are on them. Should I tell visitors “make sure you always cover food that you carry”? Or should I actually encourage visitors to carry uncovered food so as to counteract witchcraft beliefs?

Long ago I was to hold a Bible class with some African people. The books we were to use cost about \$8.00 each. I asked if people were ready to pay, they all said “yes.” I asked who had the money ready, they all said “no.” In order to facilitate the class, I paid for the books, thinking that people would pay me back later. I gave out the books. No one paid me back. That seems to be a common pattern. So then, if someone else comes to start a Bible class, what should I do? Should I advise them “don’t believe the people. They will say that they will pay but they won’t”? Or should I just suggest that they insist on having people pay up front before handing out the books? Or should I just leave outsiders to learn the hard way by giving out books and then not getting their money back?

There is a wedding coming up the next day. Everyone wants to go to the wedding. The American visitor hasn’t realised this, so she invites people to visit her at her home that day. People do not like saying “no,” so when the visitor asks, “you will come to my home tomorrow won’t you?” the response given is “yes,” so as not to offend her. But everyone will be at the wedding. Do I say to the visitor that “yes” means “no” and make her angry, thinking that I am accusing African people of lying? Should I say, “I will not come tomorrow because there is a wedding,” and spoil the congenial atmosphere? Or should I, like my colleagues, say “I’ll come tomorrow,” and then later excuse myself by saying, “but there was a wedding”?

Overseas visitors from the West usually believe profoundly in equality. They come to Africa wanting to prove that old missionaries are paternalistic. Some think that local people would be perfectly capable if the foreign missionary would just get out of the way. As an “old missionary,” should I agree with them? If I do, and “African people are just like us,” the gospel seems to have little left to do. Do the people and society really need transforming? Why am I there anyway? Or should I

explain that the reason people love the Bible is exactly because they are very aware of their shortcomings and their society's shortcomings? The people are different from us after all, so we are not all "equally capable" at everything, which is why "they" do have something to learn from us. (For educated wealthy Westerners it can be harder to see just what we should learn from them.)

"Does money help?" seems to be a never-ending question in mission. Wealthy, influential, and generous donors want to hear a resounding answer "yes." The reality is more complex. Outside money can rob people of a great deal—such as ownership and initiative. Do I dare say "no," that money does not necessarily help?

VULNERABLE CHAMPIONS

These examples illustrate just a part of my work as an agent of international development and shalom in East Africa where I serve as an interpreter and "champion" for the people among whom I live. I define the characteristic of a champion as being the practice of vulnerable mission, which is itself defined as the use of local languages and local resources in ministry to the people being reached.

A champion who represents Christ is one who (after acquiring contextual knowledge of the life of others) endeavours to translate the gospel to them. This is not the role of a conqueror or someone who is "better" imposing onto the lives of those who are ignorant, but instead it is a sharing of the power of God in a context of personal weakness with those who are to be reached.

For example, a local church had invited me to share in some door-to-door ministry in a part of Tanzania. When it was time to leave, a motorised rickshaw was sent to pick us up. I got in and said nothing. My hosts paid for my trip back. I was told that a few years earlier they would have expected a white person like myself to pay for my own trip. My failure to offer to pay transformed me from being an agent from the outside, into a servant under local leadership, who could potentially be entrusted with sensitive local information.

As a champion for the Luo people, I am aware of sensitive information that outside speakers are not able to know about. Coming into western Kenya, outsiders are usually ignorant of a

very pernicious and troubling problem, known locally as chira. This Luo-language term describes the outcome of people's failure to follow ancestral decree. Outsiders' unfamiliarity with the details of what causes chira can prevent them from intelligently articulating and dealing with it. My own position of having learned the Luo language and culture in-depth, and my ability to communicate using the same language, have enabled me to apply healing balm in the form of Christian teaching to this gaping wound in the worldview and conscience of the Luo people.

A champion can also give feedback to the West, as shown in my earlier examples. Such feeding back must be done with sensitivity. Any implication that funding may be reduced or withdrawn as a result of the words of champions puts them into a very delicate position. Hence, in communication back to the West, perhaps the main thing a champion can do is simply to encourage others to be champions, that is, as I am here defining champions: those who use local languages and resources as the basis for at least a part of their work.

Given that dominant models of intervention into the majority world have been found wanting (Africa certainly being a case in point), there is certainly a need for champions. This raises the question of how one is to find these "champions" who can follow alternative "vulnerable" means of intervention. I believe it is biblical teaching and the power of God's Spirit that produces true "champions." The deep influence of Christian teaching in the West over many centuries has continued to influence our secular era. As a result, even many Western people who no longer confess Christ have been so profoundly affected by this kind of ethic as to be able also to appreciate the role of champions. The closer people are to their Christian roots, the more likely they will be able to express this kind of behaviour. The church can, through the production of champions, begin to counter the problems that still plague the people in the developing world who are disenfranchised and dependent.

LOVE AND DEVELOPMENT

Kenton Moody, WCIU PhD Associate

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud (1 Corinthians 13:4).

“I know who my dad is!” Toño blurted out to Anna and Julia, his sisters. They just looked at him, questioning his statement. I was a bit shocked because I knew both he and his half siblings were products of their mother working as a prostitute and all came from different unknown men. When his sister finally asked him who it was, his triumphant reply was, “It’s Brother Kenton!” His sisters immediately responded, “He’s my dad too!”

Five years working in squatter communities around Santa Ana, El Salvador has brought a new enlightenment who the poor are and what their real needs are. For Toño and his sisters, their primary need is a father figure. Proverbs 10:5 (NIV) says, “Poverty is the ruin of the poor.” If people are already down and out, trapped, and enslaved by being poor, how can poverty ruin them? We began to learn that poverty is not simply an economically equation, but rather spiritual, emotional and physical oppression brought about by Satanic forces.

Prior to moving to El Salvador, I directed the international arm of a mid-size Christian NGO. Sustainability, best practices, self-sufficiency, dependency, and many other terms were used to define goals and outcomes for helping the poor. We formulated community assessments, planned entrance and exit strategies, but many times I felt that we paid little attention to the individual needs of children like Toño, Anna, and Julia. It seemed more important to focus on the big picture and numbers.

We’ve done the social projects, building provisional homes, potable water projects, food distributions, a school targeting the poor, and a before and after school program in a gang-infested community. We’ve helped people plant fruit trees and vegetable gardens so they could be self-sustainable. First Thessalonians 4:11, 12 says, “Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands...so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.” This is a biblical method for community development.

However, we've observed that the before and after school programs aren't enough. The feeding programs only fill the stomachs and stave off hunger. The houses we've built give shelter, but don't make a home. The medical clinics provide care and medicine for the body, but don't heal the soul. The desire to end world poverty and to help the poor is a worthy ambition, but many times doesn't reach their real need.

I believe three spiritual ingredients are necessary to really see lasting change. They are found in 1 Corinthians 13:13. *Faith* is the first. Faith sees the invisible, that which hasn't come yet. Faith believes the impossible, no matter how bad or how badly broken the life or society is. Hope is the second. *Hope* continues when others quit. Hope knows that God is working on the inside even though the outside seems impenetrable. Hope never fails. The third is an ingredient very seldom found in community development manuals or action plans. It is *love*. Love breaks all barriers because it is trustworthy, without limits, and is our bridge to God. Love builds trust, which builds family, which builds community.

When we look back over the past five years, sometimes it takes our breath away to see what God has done. The wooden houses deteriorate over time. The water projects need constant care and maintenance. The school requires a mountain of paperwork and finances to keep going. Love, however, wherever we've sown it, has brought a harvest.

INTERNATIONAL GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LEADERSHIP IN THE PHILIPPINES

Kumar Aryal, WCIU PhD Associate

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:19).

The International Graduate School of Leadership (IGSL) is a holistic leadership development institution, which is very actively involved in International Development. IGSL was founded by Dr. Bill Bright to develop servant-steward leaders for key sectors of society. It is a graduate-level leadership school based in Manila, Philippines with a mission to help build up leaders for movements of transformation in Asia and other parts of the world. IGSL envisions a growing network of Christ-

like leaders building spiritual movements, exerting moral influence, and transforming nations for the glory of God.

HISTORY OF IGSL

The International Graduate School of Leadership (IGSL) was built on the vision of its founding organization, Campus Crusade for Christ, to equip and mobilize Christian leaders around the world to fulfill the Great Commission of Christ. This commitment to develop men and women as effective leaders led Campus Crusade to establish the Institute of Biblical Studies (IBS), a short-term, graduate level training program for deepening participants' knowledge and application of the Word of God. In 1973 IBS was allowed by the State of California to grant certificates. In 1978 it expanded to become the International School of Theology (ISOT). At the same time, the Campus Crusade leadership in Asia started assembling faculty and administration for the establishment of a school in Baguio City, Philippines. In 1980 Dr. Somdee Poosawtsee of Thailand was chosen as Director of ISOT-Asia and Dr. Ananda Perera of Sri Lanka was selected as Dean. Under their leadership the school officially opened on October 5, 1981.

To have greater impact in a more strategic location, ISOT-Asia moved to Manila in 1990. In 2006, to emphasize its thrust toward the development of leaders for the Asian church, ISOT-Asia changed its name to International Graduate School of Leadership. IGSL's campus now has over 10,000 sq. m. of dorms, offices, library, and classrooms on a one-hectare property in Manila, Philippines. The resident school population now includes about 300 students from 20 plus countries. One-half of the degree students come from outside the Philippines, from countries most in need of hearing the gospel of Christ.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES OF IGS

Aside from formal teaching in a classroom setting, IGSL provides various community, character and ministry development activities for students, faculty and staff. All these activities are geared toward holistic development of the IGSL community.

Community Development

The colorful multicultural community of IGSL serves as a caring family to the students who come from various parts of the world. Every Tuesday, from 11:50 a.m. to 12:40 p.m. the IGSL family gathers at the chapel for Community Time. It takes many formats—from extended praise and worship, to sharing, to addressing specific issues or topics raised by the student body. Community Time helps strengthen the school's unity and vision. There is also Dawn Watch and Night Watch to offer prayers, both personal and global. Once every school year, the entire IGSL community goes off for worship, reflection, fellowship, and fun. For three days, everyone takes a break from the rigors of academics and ministry to develop deeper relationships and foster richer community. The retreat is an opportunity for each one to personally commune with God.

Character Development

IGSL provides a unique experience for students through a weekly discipleship meeting called Iron-Sharpening Group (ISG). Led by a faculty member, the ISG meets for mutual encouragement, prayer, and Bible study, and sometimes just for fun. It provides a forum for discussing personal issues, interacting in an informal situation with faculty, and developing closer relationships with fellow students. As part of the personal development aspect of the curriculum, these groups form an integral part of the growth and training of IGSL students.

Ministry Development

To enable the students to apply what they learn even while they are at IGSL, IGSL provides three real-life ministry environments: Target Area Ministries, Ministry Weeks, and Team Leadership Practicum. Each student is required to be involved in a specific area of ministry and empowered to take initiative and leadership in winning, building, training, and sending disciples. Currently, the school has target area ministries in the campus, church, marketplace, and government. Two times each school year, IGSL closes its doors and the IGSL family goes out for a week of outreach ministry called Ministry Week. Teams of students, faculty, and staff assist local churches in evangelism and discipleship. This provides an opportunity to develop vision, skills, and relationships in the context of fulfilling the Great Commission. Each student is exposed to personal and mass evangelism, participates in

training believers, and is challenged to see beyond his own ministry. First year students go for a three-week ministry experience during their first summer at IGSL, groups of during which they learn Christ-like team leadership skills including team building, decision making, and conflict resolution.

IGSL'S INVOLVEMENT IN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

IGSL is an international leadership school, which contributes greatly in International Development by building servant-steward leaders for the transformation of the key sectors of society. Over its 33-year history, the variety and scope of its ministry activities, programs, number of faculty, and the corresponding impact of the school have greatly increased. Extension programs now reach almost 2,000 people each year through short-term training programs for rural pastors, seminars for Christian leaders in various Asian countries, and evening classes in Metro Manila. IGSL enables and equips leaders to grow in their knowledge, character, and skills through its well-balanced curriculum and its faculty mentors. It is committed to purposefully bring Christ's message and model of transforming leadership to key sectors of society.

IGSL graduates serve in significant ministries around Asia. They participate in urban church planting, tribal outreach, ground-breaking gospel teaching among unreached peoples, rural pastors training, missionary training and mobilization, and Bible school leadership. Some of them are leading nonprofits and organizations in key sectors of society. Ninety-seven percent (97%) of IGSL's graduates continue in full-time ministry. IGSL continues to fulfill a strategic role in equipping Asian Christian leaders to help fulfill the Great Commission in our generation. One of the IGSL alumni, Nerissa R. Mamburam, says, "I want to teach leaders to be effective ministers in the workplace that can transform their company and the society for Christ. I want to see people in the workplace applying God's Word in their day-to-day lives. Through God's enabling power, I know that this is not impossible."

**GOD'S IMAGES-BEARERS AS AGENTS OF
TRANSFORMATION: HOW GOD SHAPED MY
THINKING**

Lois Ooms, Mission to the World

*O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the
earth,
Who have set Your glory above the
heavens!*

*Out of the mouth of babes and nursing
infants
You have ordained strength,
Because of Your enemies,
That You may silence the enemy and the
avenger.*

*When I consider Your heavens, the work
of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have
ordained,*

*What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?
For You have made him a little lower
than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory
and honor.*

*You have made him to have dominion
over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet,*

*All sheep and oxen—
Even the beasts of the field,
The birds of the air,
And the fish of the sea
That pass through the paths of the seas.*

*O Lord, our Lord,
How excellent is Your name in all the
earth! (Psalm 8, NKJV)*

Many people have asked me how I came to the thinking in my workshops in which people from over 20 countries are discovering a biblical worldview that offers them the hope and dignity to find for themselves solutions to their problems. It has been a process spanning over 25 years as the Holy Spirit has shaped the thoughts of people who have interacted with me during the workshops or individually. The process continues on as each time I lead a workshop or class I find new insights to add.

This process has deep roots in my early years being taught a biblical world and life view, even though I didn't "understand" what it meant in the messy reality of life. The roots began to grow while I was working in the inner city in the mid 60's during the race riots—seeing people respond to the Gospel as we built relationships with their children—giving them an opportunity to enjoy and hope for something more than the dangerous streets of the city.

By profession I am an "antique" Biology and Chemistry teacher—studying as DNA was being discovered. After teaching in rural Kenya for 8 years, I began working with young people. Later, when a health center was started in 1980, I found that the women with whom I had worked as young people were spending scarce finances on health care for preventable sickness in their children. I began leading a small group, teaching them the importance of washing their hands, building pit latrines, and using safe drinking water to prevent 70% of the sickness with available resources. As I taught I discovered that many of the "unhealthy" practices were not the result of "ignorance" but were deeply rooted in cultural beliefs and worldview that had to be dealt with before seeing real change. The neighboring villages began to ask that I come to teach their women and by 1985 I was committed to community development.

I took a few seminars on Community Health Evangelism from MAP (Medical Assistance Program) and Life Ministries, learning some of the basic principles. As I tried to implement, I found some things didn't always work so well. One of my mentors, Dr. Roy Shaffer, said, "Change it so it works." I enjoyed creatively modifying programs to fit the situation as well as holistically integrating Scripture and health lessons. I continued learning with summer courses at Wheaton College Grad School and a multicultural one that was held in Nairobi.

My biblical understanding of holism and development deepened as I began to see the implications of man created and crowned with honor and dignity (Psalm 8) and how that affected my approach to change—focusing on people and their resources rather than “needs” and programs. I continued learning how to give people dignity by involving them in making their own decisions, designing their own programs, and implementing them in their own way.

Slowly, I put together some simple lessons to train Kenyans to carry on the work. In 1995 the pieces were in place, and I left Kenya and moved to Eritrea to begin again in a community that had more than doubled in size with refugee camps of those returning after Eritrea won the war for independence from Ethiopia. In that context, I found that training for Reproductive Health Assistants (formerly Traditional Birth Attendants) was crucial among women with very low self-esteem.

After two years the government asked us to leave Eritrea but I was invited by Litein Hospital (an all-Kenyan Hospital of the Africa Inland Church) to pick up the pieces of four community programs that “died” when the finances and leaders left. They asked me to design a program that they could carry on without outside resources. Joshua Tonui, the Kenyan hospital director, became a mentor to me on sustainability. After five years of trying, adjusting, changing, seeing how at the end of the day “incentives” greatly hinder sustainability, etc. Joshua was confident they could carry on the programs on their own. After that, the Africa Inland Church Kenya asked me to be the director of community development with the goal of multiplying what had happened at Litein to health units all over Kenya. As HIV/AIDS issues rapidly increased, the program shifted to HIV/AIDS prevention, and home care for the sick, orphans, and widows. In the process, Kenyan church planters discovered transformational development was a great tool for planting churches. I continued to learn. The Chalmers Center in Chattanooga Tennessee taught me about micro finance from the same biblical perspective I had. Micro finance savings groups became a powerful tool in giving hope to the hopeless.

Attending the consultation on Health and Wholeness for the 21st Century in Thailand in 2003, I met nationals and ex-pats from more than 15 countries using the same approach. Reflecting on Darrow Miller’s and Vinay Samuel’s talks on the

biblical basis for holism, implications of being created as image bearers of God, and the challenge to deal with worldview, I adapted my teaching to these new insights. I found people responding and implementing on a deeper level.

As missionaries saw what self-sustaining programs looked like, I began receiving requests to travel to neighboring countries. At the same time a team of Kenyans began taking “ownership” of the material, growing in facilitation skills as they taught the basic training material to others.

In December 2007, the time came for me to leave Africa, with the blessing of my Kenyan colleagues, to explore multiplying the model to other countries in Africa. As I write this there are people trained in more than 17 countries of Africa, as well as S.E. Asia, and Central America. A new challenge is emerging – how to apply the principles in North America on Native American reservations, in deteriorating and changing neighborhoods, refugee resettlement programs and among upper middle class people. Each place has a unique story of how the Lord opened the door.

The Kingdom continues to grow in ways that I never imagined. My thinking has been profoundly molded by my African colleagues as well as learning from mistakes. I am deeply grateful for the Lord’s forgiveness. The Kenyan team has adapted the workshop material to work toward peace and reconciliation between warring factions of the post-election violence and between tribes that are traditional enemies. A colleague is exploring palliative care and transformational development in a sensitive area. Kenyan missionaries are adapting the principles to church planting. In Lesotho pastors/farmers are incorporating biblical concepts in their sermons about farmers. Their people have filled in huge gullies and found ways to prevent erosion with “Farming God’s Way.” In Madagascar a team is working with University students of the Christian Union, broadcasting lessons on the radio, training groups to go into unreached areas. A team in a creative access country is exploring teaching English using the principles of transformational development. A couple of churches in the U.S. are asking the question, how can this material help in dealing with an entitlement mentality?

My thinking continues to be shaped by interacting with people in new areas of the world: discussing the theological

foundations with Gerrit and Judy Veenstra; reflecting on the challenging “how’s” of John Rollo, my supervisor at Mission to the World; learning from Margaret LeMaire, who kindly volunteered to help with editing and insights from her experience in Africa and the U.S.; being challenged by Eleanor Protheroe who helped to clarify thinking for those who are beginning to understand the concepts and got me focused on teaching others to facilitate; gaining insights from Judi Troutman and her passion to see dependency unraveled and transformation thinking applied to institutions like Bible Schools, hospitals etc. People like August Basson and his Basotho pastors taught me how to integrate transformational thinking with “Farming God’s Way.” Brian Fikkert and those at the Chalmers Institute taught me micro finance. Then there are the whole “cloud of witnesses” that are not aware how a small remark or question has opened new reflections.

All glory and honor belong to the Lord as we are all His Image Bearers, reconciled to Him through the blood of Christ and led by His Holy Spirit who molds our thinking.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF MY WORK AS AN AGENT OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND SHALOM

*Lois Semenye, Kenyan Scholar and Educator; Board member,
International Council for Higher Education*

Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these” (Matthew 19:14).

Immediately after coming to know the Lord while I was in high school, I became interested in teaching Sunday School. In the process, I noticed the need for relevant and authentic Christian materials that would address the needs of my Kenyan students. Specifically, the illustrations in the materials were foreign and difficult to understand. Sometimes it was easier to just explain the Bible passage without the foreign illustrations. I knew I needed more education to be able to help in this.

I was very fortunate that some missionaries decided to invest in my education and helped me secure a sponsor who paid my

way to a Christian University in the USA. At Covenant College, I further developed my love for teaching felt a strong desire to promote Christian education in my home country. Upon my return to Kenya, I helped set up a Christian Education department in a local church. The more I taught and train others the more I felt the need to further my education. In 1980, I joined the Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson Mississippi through the help of the missionary organization. I was awarded MCE in CE in 1982. This opened up more opportunities for me in Kenya. I was not only serving in a local church but also I was asked to help in developing a Christian University in Kenya.

At the University, I was able to promote Christian education and particularly the integration of faith and learning and living. Again, I felt the need to pursue further education, so between 1987 and 1990 I attended Biola University and I was awarded PhD. Upon my return in Kenya, I continued to teach at Daystar University. As the head of Education Department, I was able to conduct seminars for faculty that encouraged integrative teaching of faith, knowledge, and living. However, the need to develop relevant Christian curriculum for our churches was still there.

In 1997, Christian Learning Materials Centre (CLMC) invited me to head the organization and oversee the development of Christian materials across Africa. CLMC is a project of Association of Evangelicals in Africa that produces Christian materials that are relevant to the African culture. Besides production of materials, there was also a great need to train the teachers on how to use them. This made me trek across Africa training teachers and holding seminars for Sunday School teachers and pastors to challenge them to take children's ministry seriously. I wrote a book targeting the pastors on children ministry-Let the Children Come. The book included the following chapters:

Introduction

What the Bible says about Children

Importance of Children's Ministry

Defining the Child

Social Factors Influencing Children

Characteristics and Needs of Children

Organizing a Children's Ministry in Church
Teacher Commitment
How to Teach the Children
Who should Teach Children
Teaching Methods
Teaching Aids
Recruitment of Children's Teachers
How to Lead a Child to Christ
Discipline
Characteristic of Children Living in Poverty
Characteristic of Children Living in Affluence

I was able to hold seminars in different churches and denominations and in some of these churches the ministry to children increased dramatically. In 2003 I joined the faculty of International Leadership University where I taught in the department of Christian Education and Formation. God was able to use me to influence a number of pastors to invest in children's ministry. I can think of one who started a ministry to children in a slum in Nairobi. This pastor was so motivated that he did not only improve in teaching children on Sunday in the Sunday school but also started a primary school where he engaged Christian teachers to teach the pupils. The ministry is growing and the children are learning to fear the Lord.

I have been presenting papers and writing articles in the area of Christian education including, "The Theological Context of Children in Africa Today," "Christian Worldview: Implication for Educational Curricula," "The Challenges of Christian Higher Education in African Context," "Spiritual Formation of Christian Leaders," "The Challenge of Literature in Africa: Analytical Study of the Production, Distribution," and Effective Use of the Written Word in Evangelism and Missions in Africa." I was among the 72 African Theologians to contribute to the African Bible Commentary. I wrote an article on Christian Education in Africa and wrote a commentary of the Book of Esther.

These papers and articles have given me platform to speak to various leaders and consequently influencing them and in return they influence their own constituents to the glory of God. I have been discipling, mentoring, and coaching many young people throughout my Christian faith. Some of those I have mentored have even named their children after me. Wherever I am I believe I should have a young Timothy that I am mentoring in the importance and methods of Christian education

ALEM'S STORY

Carolyn Klaus, M.D., Hope in View, Ethiopia

The King will reply, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).

Alem is a volunteer in our child sponsorship program here in Addis Ababa. By day Alem sweeps streets with a broom and picks up garbage, 7 hours a day, 7 days a week. It is a job for which she gets paid the equivalent of \$40 per month. With this and a bit more when her husband can get work as a day laborer, she and he support two children. She is not exactly on the highest rung on the social status ladder.

By night she mentors a group of 21 people, all living with HIV, all of whom must attend the group as a requirement for their children to be sponsored in our program. It is a job for which Alem has never been paid a birr. She began working with some of them more than 10 years ago when Genet, the leader of her basic discipleship group and our child sponsorship social worker, taught her and her friends that to follow Jesus is to serve people in need. Little by little, thanks to Genet's example as minister to people living with HIV and her personal mentoring, Alem has picked up leadership skills. For the last 4 years she has met with this group every other week, coaching them on how to parent well, how to stay healthy, how to maintain good hygiene, how to handle money, and how to love each other. Though they are all from non-Protestant backgrounds, she has also taught them to learn from the Bible together and pray for one another. Between meetings she walks to visit up to 9 of these families every week in their homes to see how they are really doing and encourage them personally. When she has left-over cleaning supplies from her job she breaks them down into small parcels and shares them with the group members. Following her example, the group members now visit one another regularly, providing food or money or childcare or transportation to the hospital or simple camaraderie when one of them is in difficulties.

In 2013, under Genet's tutoring, she began to teach her group to save money together. Each time they met, every person would contribute five birr towards their group savings plus one birr to meet social needs of the group. Gradually the money accumulated. Over the past year six of the group members have taken small loans from this fund, from which all six have started profitable small businesses. All of these loans have been

or are being paid back on time with interest. The others all want their turn to get loans now. She told us today that their attitudes toward work have changed drastically. “They want to work hard and produce their own income, rather than get handouts—and they believe they can do it!”

They have also become healthier. Alem attributes this to five things (none of them, I notice, medical): Their previously dirty homes are now clean. They know and are practicing good health habits. They are far less stressed, knowing that if they die, their children will continue to be sponsored. They love one another deeply. And they pray for one another.

And oh yes, Alem has a third job: in her spare time she’s attending a distance-education program to enable her to complete 9th grade.

Epilogue

Beth Snodderly

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).

Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves (Romans 12:10).

Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (Romans 12:21).

Agents of God's blessing in the world have common characteristics. In this book the most outstanding characteristics are those of a special sense of calling that results in perseverance and loving relationships.

The agents in this book **have understood themselves to have a special destiny**. This was true of Joseph in the Bible who refused to pity himself, but instead allowed God to use him to be a blessing to the nations. William Carey expected great things from God and attempted great things for God, in the face of many hardships and sorrows. Ravi Jayakaran's principle supports this: "we should put all our energy and effort into facilitating transformation, and countering everything that intends to prevent it." Alem, in our last short story, is an example of someone putting everything she has (and then some) into facilitating transformation in her community.

Agents of *shalom* are people who **persevere in the face of hardship and work toward goals that may seem impossible**, as with Dr. Hakchul Kim's dream of planting 300 universities in the southern hemisphere, or Rabbi Daniel Zion's efforts to protect the Bulgarian Jewish community during World War II. Ravi Jayakaran principles remind us that "transformation is labor and time intensive, and requires persistent effort. Being an agent of transformation is sometimes at tremendous personal cost."

The agents of international development and *shalom* in this book are **self-sacrificial and constantly thinking of ways to help others**: developing leaders; developing person formation in cross-cultural workers to help them gain spiritual, emotional, and social strength and

maturity; developing and teaching workshop material to work toward peace and reconciliation between warring factions in Kenya. They are always mentoring others.

Above all, those who display God's will on earth demonstrate loving relationships. They are display windows through which we can see a sample of what it means for God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven.

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters. If anyone has material possessions and sees a brother or sister in need but has no pity on them, how can the love of God be in that person? Dear children, let us not love with words or speech but with actions and in truth (1 John 3:16-18).

