

# Connections

**The Journal of the WEA Mission Commission**

A GLOBAL WRITERS' ROUNDTABLE SPEAKING INTO  
THE CHALLENGES OF WORLD MISSION TODAY

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## Mission in Contexts of


Suffering, Violence, Persecution and Martyrdom

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# From the heart of the mind of the editor



William D. Taylor, Editor

Pascal: “I believe those witnesses who get their throats cut”.

## Initial thoughts and word pictures

This is a difficult and painful journal issue craft, because essentially its contents are laced with challenging, painful and discouraging realities. Writer Harry Hoffman (coordinator of the Mission Commission Global Member Care Network) says it well in his terse article “Too many sad stories”. The missional church faces multiple challenges as we grapple with the multiple reports of Christians encountering extraordinary challenges, conflicts and suffering in mission, perhaps because of their personal discipleship journey or as a result of their specific context and ministry focus.

Some have queried me on the four-fold foci of this issue, “Why are you including the huge categories of suffering and violence? Why not just deal with the persecuted church in mission, with some comments on martyrdom?” So let us affirm at the outset that we purposefully present **Connections** with these four different, and perhaps messy, categories. While they are distinct from each other, they overlap, and many times emerge in a progression. Suffering is a megaweb universe, coming from many sources: some self-caused or other-caused; from stuff we bring when we move into cross-cultural

## casting the context for our discussion on mission in contexts of suffering, violence, persecution and martyrdom

mission and what happens to us there, on-site. We thank God for the thoughtful ministry of dedicated member care providers—from the local church to field-based teams—that provide healing ministries of the living Spirit of God. Yet we are all-too aware that we all live with brokenness. That is bottom-line reality.

In this issue we consciously inject suffering in the context of the other three dimensions and the realities of the church on mission—violence, persecution, martyrdom. I posed myself the question, and sought the counsel of others: “Is persecution and martyrdom increasing or do we just have more immediate information and reporting?” The answer is, “both”. It is increasing, obviously and subtly, on a global scale. And the vast communications networks that feed cell phones and the Internet broadcast immediate news, and also overwhelm us with information.

Also, we recognize the very different experience that the suffering national church has compared to expat-cross-cultural workers—for most of the latter can rely on their passports to depart rapidly, especially if they come from a country with power. The church stays there and lives out the rest of the story—but will also receive the just reward in heaven.

Since we first conceptualized this issue of **Connections**, deciding early-on to convert it into a “double-issue”, we upped our global radar, relationships and networks to generate real information

that would guide our reports. We commissioned some key writers to address issues from a reporter’s eye, as well as practical, pastoral and missiological perspectives.

We present this issue as an appetizer of a full-length Mission Commission book to be released in 2009, including some of this content but with time and space to address many more issues. Again we present a journal that purposes to live out its commitment to serve as a global writers roundtable, confirmed by the presence of some 40 writers from 27 nations. This is a unique journal and we are thankful to God to offer it as a gift to the global church on mission.

## It’s a litany of difficult realities, sad stories and disturbing news

As we sketch the broader landscape of specific recent ongoing stories we well remember.....

- The martyrdom of the three servants in Turkey, one a German expat worker and two Turkish converts to Christ;
- The story of the Korean short-term missionaries kidnapped, and two killed, in Afghanistan, and the subsequent reactions within the Korean media and church as well as the global church in mission. It was global news for weeks. It will permanently change the mission landscape in Korea;
- The murder of the young YWAM missionaries in Colorado, USA, with a shorter news-span;
- The bombings of Christian churches in Pakistan and ongoing systematic persecu-

tion in the Indian state of Orissa;

- The assassination in Iraq of Paulos Faraj Rahho, the Chaldean Catholic archbishop of Mosul, whose body was soon found in a shallow grave;
- The kidnapping of other expatriate Christian relief and development workers in Afghanistan;
- The violence breaking out in Kenya just after the rigged elections, but disturbingly revealing the deeper hostilities and the trumping power of tribalism, apparently stronger than even Christian faith. This tribalism factor lives out its nasty DNA in too many nations around the world—and not only in the Middle East with its millennia-old tribalism leading to vengeance and reprisals. Again we are forced to deal with the question: Just what does it mean to be truly Christian in a tribal society?
- The report from a mission agency leader, a personal friend who told me even as we spoke, that field colleagues were in delicate negotiations to seek the release of a kidnapped missionary in Africa;
- Pope Benedict XVI’s statement on martyrdom within Catholic theology and practice—which we have included in this issue of **Connections**;
- The very recent updating work by many mission agencies of their own policy statements in contexts of violence and persecution
- Some churches who were the sending agency for their missionaries have had to craft

their own guidelines in these contexts, though most confessed that they did not have any policies yet. This is not good news for those church missionaries;

- The clear awareness that these multiple stories, events and case studies reflect the natural outworking of our discipleship to the suffering and crucified savior, who purposefully walked the path of downward mobility, but who knew the Father would resurrect him. This is our path and our hope. Suffering, violence, persecution and martyrdom have characterized the entire narrative of the obedient people of God through church history.

Light and hope triumphed in the mist of our editorial work and it came again through the counsel from the persecuted church. One Vietnamese pastor wrote: "We have learned that suffering is not the worst thing that can happen to us. Disobedience to God is the worst thing." In addition, the New Testament is so clear from Jesus through the apostolic testimony that suffering, persecution and even martyrdom are not strangers to discipleship; rather, they are to be expected and even welcomed. It has struck me again and again that the New Testament was written by persecuted believers to persecuted believers. By the time the last epistles and Revelation are penned, probably every First Century believer knew of somebody who had suffered extreme persecution or was martyred. And we have no time to revisit church history, laced with countless of reports of these realities.

As we designed and constructed this issue, we sought the counsel of many both within and outside the World Evangelical Alliance and its Mission Commission arenas. Readers will recognize the

voice of many colleagues throughout the journal.

We are glad to announce that during this editorial process the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) was confirmed, whose *"...purpose...is to encourage and nurture partnering and collaboration among Christian organizations focused on religious liberty. The RLP will more intentionally work together in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious persecution globally."* We are grateful for these resources now reflected in a unique strategic alliance.

Global Connections in the UK represents one of the more forward-thinking national mission networks that has created solid policies and guidelines for its members. They offer a template for national mission movements, agencies and churches around the world. Thank you, Martin Lee, for graciously giving away these documents. They provide robust policies and guidelines to be studied, adopted and adapted by churches, sending agencies and other national mission movements around the world.

We are grateful to the mission agencies that sent us copies of their official policies on ministry in these contexts, though they rightly asked to remain anonymous. They work, along with other key documents must imperatively be worked into the mission training curricula of our schools and centres around the world. Mobilization leaders around the world must be more truthful in the reality of ministry in a dangerous world

We thank Crisis Consulting International for its seminal work. Based in the USA, it is creating high-value material to be studied and adapted around the world. *CCI's mission is to assist the global Christian community in fulfilling the Great Commission by providing secu-*

*arity and crisis management services.* Established in 1983, its purpose is as follows:

- Providing security-related training, site surveys and risk assessments, and consultation services.
- Assisting Christian organizations with specific needs such as event security, protection of personnel and investigation of hostile acts.
- Serving as consultants and hostage negotiators for Christian organizations during crises such as kidnappings.

### Offering a final review of issue

Open your issue to the table of contents and notice the structure of this extended issue of **Connections**.

- Bertil and I set the stage with our initial editorial comments;
- Then you encounter the rich substance, starting with anchoring missiological reflections by Tonica van der Meer, Rose Dowsett and Glenn Penner;
- Thoughtful writers comment in light of some of the contemporary trigger events and subsequent statements and articles from around the world;
- A singular global correspondence conversation addressing questions of agency pre-field preparation of missionaries, contingency plans, policies on kidnapping and ransom, post-trauma care, missionary training and general member care. We listen to the voices of agency leaders from both Global South and North, and those of national mission leaders. A pastor writes candidly.
- A series of other global reports and reflections on the topic, opening the writers table for other of our Mission Commission network leaders;

- Samples of Best Practice Commitments;
- Other related news and developments;
- A table laying out some strategic resources and reviews;

### Final thoughts from the heart and mind of this editor.

As we look into the future for **Connections**, we are grateful for Anton Smeele, our Holland-based publisher, and the recent arrival of Willem Griffioen, now based in the USA and guiding the production process for our journal. Thank you, Anton, and welcome Willem! We affirm your vision for the future of our writers roundtable.

The next issue of **Connections** will feature new reflections and reports on contextualization, and the one after that will focus on the singular and delicate themes of mission and spirituality. These three issues will guide three working teams at the Mission Commission's global consultation in Thailand, to be held just after the World Evangelical Alliance General Assembly. The teams will then produce the MC's Commission's three next books, for release during 2009-2010.

If you wish additional copies of this current issue, or a bulk order for your leaders to read and study, write William Griffioen directly at [wgriffioen@mercazz.com](mailto:wgriffioen@mercazz.com).

Good reader, may God stimulate, encourage, challenge and stir you as you work through this rich feast! <<

**William Taylor** is Ambassador at large of the WEA and editor of *Connections*. Born in Latin America, he and his wife, Yvonne, served for 17 years before a move to the USA. He is the father of three adult GenXers born in Guatemala.

# From my corner...



*Bertil Ekström*  
Executive Director

Persecution has always been part of the expansion of the Gospel. As a child, I remember stones being thrown, by orders of the Catholic priest, at the tent my father raised to start a new church in one of the neighbourhoods in Campinas—incidentally the same area where my office is now. Swedish missionaries had invaded Catholic territory, ignoring any “comity” law, and in the early 1960’s there was no dialogue between Evangelicals and Catholics in Brazil. Thirty years later I experienced the same hostility from representatives of the majority church when preaching in the interior of Paraguay.

The scenario of violence, suffering and persecution is of course much more complex than the stoning of a rival Christian group that more or less aggressively challenges the established church. On the other hand, the fact that not even Christians can handle conflict situations without using violence shows the decadence of humanity and the triumph of the Enemy, dividing families, clans, tribes, religious groups and nations. There was something prophetic about the conflict between Cain and Abel as a preview of what would

characterise humanity after the fall. Later, the sins of Abraham would create a new pair of brother-conflict between Isaac and Ishmael, with consequences felt up to today. Brother against brother, tribe against tribe, nation against nation, religious groups against other religious groups.

Some would like to paint the conflicts in pure spiritual terms and identify particular nations and religious groups with Satan. Automatically some of our nations should be considered representatives of the Christian faith and bearers of a “manifest destiny” of saving the world. Unfortunately, the sinful mind and the lack of true love have affected us all. As Evangelicals we believe that the transforming message of Jesus Christ is the only truth and that the whole world needs to be confronted by it. However, that does not give us the right to neglect our own evil behaviour in relation to others, independent on which religion they profess or nation they belong to.

As I write this text, the conflicts in Kenya and in Chad are matter of deep concern. Friends of ours, many of them linked to the Mission Commission, are suffering, and their families are among the victims of uncontrolled violence. Many other examples could be mentioned of unnecessary suffering owing to the interest of a few who want to dominate over others. It is not uncommon for outside economic and political interests to have a strong influence in the conflicts, and innocent people pay with their lives as marionettes in the globalised theatre of power. But

also, unresolved historical tensions, colonialism legacies, the nation-state system that forces ethnic groups into the same government and divides others between political nations, and the advance of religious groups using violent means to convert people have also played a significant role in creating situations of discord and war.

The blend of religious, economic and political motives has given many throughout history the excuse for armed conflict. It seems that the submission or even extermination of those who think differently is the only way for some religious paladins to accomplish their mission. The Christian message, however, says something completely different. The apostle Paul affirms that Christ “*came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near*” (Ephesians 2:17). Both Jews and Gentiles were objects of the same message of peace. And Paul continues to say that the result was the reconciliation between both peoples and that both now have access to the Father. Incidentally (or maybe not), I have an Arabic bookmark on that page of my Bible. As Christians, we continu-

ally need to be reminded of the counter-culture that the Gospel represents and the ministry of reconciliation that we have been entrusted with.

This issue of Connections focuses on the whole issue of persecution, suffering, violence and martyrdom. Many of our sisters and brothers are really suffering because of their faithfulness to the Lord. Others are victims of violence resulting from armed conflicts and the high rate of criminality in many of our cities of the Global South. Independent of the reasons for suffering, we need to stand together as a Christian worldwide family, praying for each other but also fighting together for justice, peace and for the coming of the Kingdom in its fullness. <<

**Bertil Ekström** is the past president of the Brazilian Association of Cross Cultural Agencies and COMIBAM, the Latin American Continental Missions Network. He serves the WEA Mission Commission as Executive Director. He is a staff member of Interact, a Swedish Baptist Mission, and is also with the Convention of the Independent Baptist Churches of Brazil.



When we look at the missionary challenges of our day, we see that suffering is a necessary ingredient. We are called to serve people who suffer, in contexts of war, extreme poverty and persecution. And those willing to go will not only suffer because of living in such contexts, but because they witness the extreme suffering of the local people. And often the missionary presence and service will seem insignificant in facing the huge challenges of such a context.

# Biblical Reflections on Ministry and Suffering

Antonia Leonora van der Meer

I served as a missionary in Angola, from 1984 to 1995, during a war and under a Marxist government. It was not easy to serve there, or to set limits to a sense of responsibility to respond to the needs and demands for help which came from the local people.

There were only a few protestant missionaries; during the best year (1991, a short time of peace, before the worst war) just over a hundred from any origin and nationality, and during more difficult years we were around thirty, most of us Swiss and Brazilian. There were Roman Catholic missionaries as well, serving with love and perseverance.

Most Brazilians had not received training for transcultural mission. I was the happy one who had the opportunity to study at All Nations Christian College, U.K. Most of my friends had done a Bible Institute or Seminary, with no emphasis on cross-cultural issues. As a consequence, they suffered more from culture shock, and made mistakes which caused problems, because they had not been

prepared. And there was no member care. During those ten years, we received only one visit, of Rev. Elben Cesar, who went to visit his missionary daughter and lead a retreat for Brazilian missionaries. It was good! But not enough to keep us going in the midst of great stress and suffering. Two of our missionaries were kidnapped by the guerillas, several of us were caught in cross-fire during the war, some were evacuated when things got really bad.

Persecution usually was not very severe. But in my ministry with university students we faced some struggles which caused them suffering (one was imprisoned, seven were expelled from the university and forced into the army to fight on war fronts, others suffered threats). This helped me to understand the need to be wise, ministering in such a context. I also learned that there are always opportunities to share our faith, even though there is no official freedom.

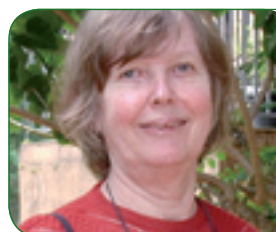
When I returned to Brazil, I decided that I needed to help our missionaries to be better prepared to go to the field and to

receive member care so that they could persevere. On reading the book: "Too Valuable to Lose", I saw suffering in missionary lives in many contexts, and the resulting attrition. This made me decide to do the research for my Doctorate in Missiology – which I did at the Asia Graduate School of Theology in the Philippines, on the issue "Understanding and Supporting Missionaries serving in Contexts of Suffering". I did an in-depth study on suffering in the life of Jesus and of the apostle Paul, and also field research, with questionnaires and interviews with missionaries working in areas where there is much suffering. I visited East Timor, Angola and Mozambique, and other missionaries participated by e-mail. I interviewed leaders from several agencies and churches. I had one hundred and twelve responses from missionaries and twenty-seven from sending leaders. What follows is a necessarily brief resume of the research.

## Learning from Jesus as our Model in Suffering

According to Burkhard Gärtner (1986:724): "Christ's vicarious suffering means...for his followers not deliverance from earthly suffering, but deliverance for earthly suffering...he is our pattern and example. His suffering requires us as his followers to tread a similar path" (1 Pe 2:21).

The crucified Christ is the Christ of the



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poor, who took the form of a slave to be with them and to love them. The call to follow Jesus is a call associated with His suffering, so to follow Him means to deny ourselves, take His cross and share His suffering (Moltmann 1973:46). Jesus suffered and was rejected. One can suffer and be admired but rejection takes away the dignity of suffering; the cross is about dying as an outcast. To be crucified with Christ means persevering when there is no support at all (Moltmann 1973:49-63).

To understand the need of the cross we must see not only our sin and guilt but also the just reaction of a holy God against these things. Just as grace refers to God's gracious holy personal activity, wrath stands for His personal hostility to evil, which does not diminish His simultaneous love for the offender (Stott 1986:102-109).

God and Christ took the initiative together to save sinners. God was unwilling to act in love at the expense of His holiness, or in holiness at the expense of His love. He satisfied His holy love by dying our death and bearing the judgment which we deserved. Our substitute was neither Christ alone, nor God alone, but God in Christ. In giving His Son, God was giving Himself. Divine love triumphed over divine wrath by divine self-sacrifice (Stott 1986:145-147, 156-160, 214-215).

Jesus' life was marked by suffering and rejection, which did not make Him a pitiful figure, for He was always clearly in control and gave Himself consciously and voluntarily out of His great love for us. Jesus brought new life through His death and suffering and prepared the way for us to follow in His footsteps, if we want to be instruments of God's restoring grace.

### **The Meaning of the Cross for Jesus' Followers**

Jesus explained that commitment to the kingdom will often cause trouble. Jesus had consciously chosen the way of the cross, and His disciples need to be ready to follow Him. To be a disciple is to give absolute priority to Christ. Anyone not willing to carry His cross daily cannot be Jesus' disciple, so the cross is the defining characteristic of the lifestyle of the disciple, called to suffer the hostility of the world, for the cause of the kingdom (Lk

9:57-62; 14:25-35; Mt 8:18-22; 10:34-39; Yoder 1975:126-128).

To become Jesus' disciple is to accept the sacrifice and suffering to be endured in His service. Without self-denial, a taking up of the cross and following Jesus, there is no discipleship. Jesus' commitment to the Father and His acceptance of the shame of the cross became a model for His followers. To bear the cross is the only way to triumph over suffering. Jesus was preparing His disciples for global mission, for the building of His church among the nations. He knew that the kingdom of evil would declare war against His church, so He taught the disciples how to meet the violence which they would suffer (Mt 16:18, 24-26; 17:12; 23:33-36; Mk 6:4; 8:34-38; Lk 9:23-26; Bonhoeffer 1967:96-103; Josef Ton 2000:85-89).

The salvation of the world consists of two parts: the suffering of Christ for the sins of the world, followed by the proclamation of His salvation to all nations. This salvation will not reach the nations without the self-sacrifice of the messengers. When Jesus' disciples hear the call of God and preach the good news to the nations, live in humble obedience and love other people, they are sacrificing themselves for the salvation of the lost (Ton 2000:102).

The cross of Christ is the symbol of suffering service, a stimulus to patient endurance and the path to mature holiness. It becomes clear that suffering is indispensable to effective service. The place of suffering in service and of passion in mission is rarely taught today, but the secret of missionary effectiveness is the willingness to suffer and to die. Suffering and service, passion and mission, belong together, both in Jesus' experience and in that of His disciples. To share in His sufferings is to share in His glory, but the hope of glory makes the suffering bearable (Stott 1986:315-317, 320-323).

Jesus sent His disciples as sheep among wolves, as those who, at the same time, need to be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. It is not a question of violence against violence, but of readiness for martyrdom. It is to be prudent and sincere, not seeking harmful solutions (Lk 12:3-12; Mt 10:16-33). Jesus was concerned with the preparation

of His disciples for their participation in His mission, to help them to be aware of the persecution they would face and to teach them how to react to it. (Mt 10:17-18; Ton 2000:70-71). During persecution it is easy to lose one's self-control and do foolish things or provoke the authorities. Wisdom and innocence are absolutely necessary under persecution. Disciples will be hated by their family and by all men. In such a situation, the answer is not bitterness but persevering love (Mt 10:34-39; Ton 2000:75-81; Bonhoeffer 1967:237-239).

### **Learning from Paul in his Suffering in Ministry**

Soon after his conversion, Paul was told that he had been chosen to carry Jesus' name before Gentiles and the people of Israel and that this mission would involve much suffering. Paul never sought suffering or provoked it unnecessarily through lack of wisdom. He used his rights as a Roman citizen to protect himself from being flogged by the Romans and from being lynched by the Jews (Ac 22:25-29; 23:16-24; 25:9-11). But he was willing to suffer when it was necessary to fulfill his calling.

Paul was ready to suffer for the proclamation of the gospel and was not ashamed of the consequences, for it was an honor to suffer for Christ. He wanted Timothy to follow his example and to be ready to suffer, because no one can preach Christ faithfully and escape persecution (2 Ti 1:11-12; 3:12; Stott 1977:42-43; Kelly 1983:154-155).

Paul showed that a biblical theology of glory is inseparably linked to a theology of the cross. God's way of action is through weakness, suffering and self-sacrifice, and this applies to Christians as well. Christ was humiliated and despised. So was Paul and so will Jesus' servants be (David Prior 1985:65-66). Paul understood that God had determined that the apostles should be willing to die as martyrs, something not to be seen as a tragic event, but as a commission given by Jesus (Ton 2000:148, 156, 165). As martyrdom is becoming a present reality for many Christians, we cannot continue to ignore this possibility and its implications as we interpret these texts. Tension and suffering are part of the body of Christ even today.

Paul expressed his deepest humiliation in the context of his experience of highest exaltation. About the precise nature of the “thorn in the flesh” it is probably best that God decided to leave us in ignorance. It was clearly very painful and humbling. So we can identify the thorn with our own deepest humiliation and pain. Paul’s thorn crippled his life, draining his energies. But it was permitted and overruled by God for His servant’s good. Its purpose was to keep Paul humble and dependent on God, and it taught him the secret of Christ’s power manifest in weakness (2 Co 12:7; Hughes 1977:441-442, 447; Barnett 1988:177-178; Carson n.d.:175).

Paul did not seek suffering but accepted what came to him from his Lord, because he knew that human weakness provided the opportunity for divine power. The weaknesses Paul took pleasure in were the ones which had to be endured for Christ’s sake; he never sought suffering to receive merit. We learn from Paul to discern God’s hand in painful circumstances, knowing that He remains in control. The answer to Paul’s prayers was the promise of more abundant grace to be able to live with his painful thorn (2 Co 12:9b-10; Hughes 1977:452-454).

In 2 Corinthians 4, Paul described how unbelieving people have their minds blinded by the god of this age and how God may enable them to believe, making “his light shine... to give [them] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ” (4:6). This is the treasure which Paul carries in a weak earthen vessel. His tribulations and daily dying are for Jesus’ sake in order to spread the grace of God. As he suffers for the gospel, the truth shines, penetrating the blinded eyes of unbelievers (Ton 2000:145-147). The way Christians react to suffering is a powerful witness.

The above overview of suffering in the life of Paul reminds us that he was a true servant of Christ, a shepherd with a loving heart, a man conquered by Christ’s great and undeserved love. He was the apostle who worked the most and who took the gospel to many new lands. One of the secrets of his continuing perseverance in ministry and of his unbroken spirit was his willingness to suffer for Christ, with no restrictions.

### What Does this Teaching Mean to Missionaries Today?

If we consciously follow Jesus’ model, we will learn to bear with any difficulties in team relationships with patient endurance, be ready to forgive and not to hold on to hurts in our heart, and be able to love those who are less loveable, not in our own strength, but by asking for His Spirit to shed His love in our hearts. We will be able to pray for those who persecute us. We will not seek our own glory and respect, but God’s glory. We will express our hurts and pains to our loving Father, but continue to be submissive to His will, knowing that He is Sovereign, and our present pains for the name of Jesus will bring us a reward of glory beyond all understanding.

If we follow Jesus we will be sensitive to the needs and hurts of others, listen to them with love and respect, identify with them and speak words of comfort and encouragement, serving according to their needs and our possibilities.

Those who suffer serving Jesus and spreading His kingdom may be very sure that they are never alone, for Jesus promised to be with us always, and He will keep His promises (Mt 28:18-20; Heb 13:5-6). We may not always feel His presence, because our suffering does hurt and sometimes nearly crushes us, but He will be near and not allow our sufferings to exceed our strength to bear them (1 Pe 5:10; 2 Co 4:7-11). This is a great encouragement for missionaries, especially in times of danger or extreme pressure.

### Some Glimpses of Issues Raised by Missionaries serving in Hard Contexts

Of the agencies represented by the missionaries who took part in the survey, fifty-six came from interdenominational agencies, thirty-one from denominational agencies and twenty-five were sent independently by their own churches.

If we look at the attached Figure 1 and 2, we can see that those who were sent independently, with less training and guidance, felt greater needs in the area of pastoral and psychological care, in guidance for their ministry, in relationships with national leaders, in the studies of their children. And they

give similar reasons for possibly giving up, including burnout and feeling unable and rejected. These are people who have to cope very much on their own, learning on the job. Those sent by denominational agencies had more support and guidance, but still felt keenly a lack of available aid in times of crisis, concern for the security of their children, and the need for a more holistic support, and

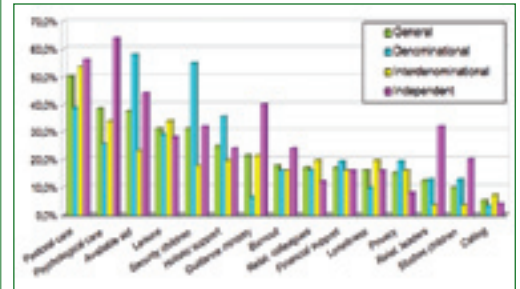


Figure 1: Needs of missionaries according to agencies

gave as possible reasons for giving up very similar needs as well as their struggle with bureaucracy and corruption. So these agencies still need to improve their support for their missionaries as well. Those from interdenominational agencies were better cared for on the whole, but felt a greater difficulty in relationship to colleagues, often living with multicultural teams without knowing how to solve conflicts. These give us some ideas about how to improve our service to them.

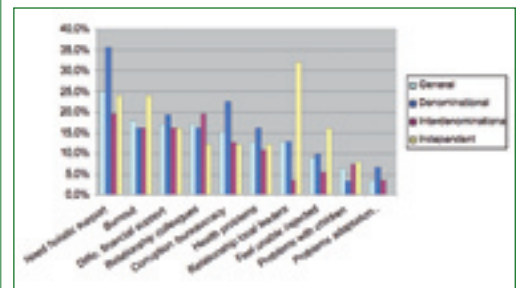


Figure 2: Reasons for attrition according to agencies

Some of the needs mentioned by Brazilians in contexts of suffering were:

**Healthcare:** This is one of the main concerns of missionaries. While thirty-five answered that they received healthcare, many still have no provision and, in emergencies, suffer greatly. Some may even die because of the difficulty in finding available aid. When asked what reason they might consider returning prematurely, fourteen answered “health issues.”



**Pastoral and Psychological Care:** Fifty percent of the respondents expressed the need for pastoral care and thirty-eight percent, the need for psychological care. Twenty-seven missionaries answered that they receive pastoral care. Few agencies and churches understand what life looks like in a context of violence and war. This makes it hard for the missionaries to share their needs and the suffering of the local people.

**Emotional Needs of Missionaries**  
Loneliness was mentioned by eighteen missionaries, mostly single and married women. Single women feel lonely when they do not find deep fellowship with others, and they miss their family, friends and church very strongly. Missionary wives suffer when they do not have a specific function, being seen as mere appendices to the husband's ministry and not as "real" missionaries.

Depression or sadness was mentioned by twenty-one of the missionaries.

**Family Issues, Security and Children's Studies:** These are among the main concerns expressed by missionaries. They need wise guidance, starting during pre-field training. Most children will cope well, and grow through a transcultural experience, but some families suffer and may need to return home and receive special care. There is also a need to care for couples, especially during periods of stress in their relationship. Such help must be available on the field, and sometimes it may be desirable to send the couple back home for a time of restoration.

**Relationship with Colleagues:**  
Relationships with missionary colleagues were mentioned by nineteen missionaries as a reason which could make them return prematurely. They need to be prepared for living and serving in teams. There are too many incidents of stress and discouragement because of difficulties in relationships with other missionaries because of a lack of preparation to listen to others, to solve conflicts and to forgive.

**Transcultural Adaptation, Relationship with Leaders on the Field:** Relationship with national leaders was mentioned by fourteen missionaries as a possible reason for returning prematurely. Patterns of leadership change from one culture to another. Missionaries



and national leaders may behave according to their own culture, and feel a lack of respect on the part of the other. Missionaries need to take local leaders seriously, listen to them, respecting them and refrain from acting or speaking in a non-contextual way.

**Needs of Single Ladies:** They have a greater freedom to serve, to travel, to interact with local people and even to face dangerous situations. They usually integrate sooner, learn the language better, develop good relationships and find satisfaction in their ministry and friendships. The issue of remaining single is a great challenge for many women. If missionaries are not well prepared and do not receive proper member care, they may enter into troublesome relationships, which may

and their family, unable to reach out to family, friends or their own church fellowship, and are often under great pressure. And the needs, suffering and violence affecting the lives of their local friends affects them as well. They may become beacons of hope, and share God's comfort.

It became clear in the survey that our missionaries need more consistent member care, appropriate training and guidance about their ministry. If we offer them continuing loving support, listen to them, help them in practical ways and also with their emotional needs, missionaries will feel strengthened to continue to serve, whatever the difficulties of their context. <<

even mean the end of their service.

These issues are not entirely different from what other people go through. Missionaries are normal human beings, but they live in contexts that are unfamiliar, feel threatened by dangers to themselves

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# Deliver us from evil

## missiological reflections

A mob of about 150 Hindu extremists attacked a church in Mandwa village near Jagdalpur, Bastar District in the state of Chhattisgarh, on November 19 (2007). They destroyed the Bastar for Christ Missionary Movement church building, beat Pastor Suduru Kashyap and his associates, and kidnapped 21-year-old Aayatu Kashyap, who was later found dead. Despite the fact that Christians present there immediately provided names and the license number of an extremists' vehicle to the police, the police waited until the next day to file a complaint.

The extremists were armed with hammers, iron rods, and other heavy equipment. At about 5 pm, they descended upon the newly reconstructed church building and tore it down. Some of the extremists entered Pastor Suduru's quarters nearby and tied up Pastor Suduru (35) and his associates. The extremists beat them and tried to kill Pastor Suduru by throwing a heavy stone on his head. The mob also threatened the pastor to never hold church services there again.



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This report was emailed by Rev. Dr. Richard Howell, General Secretary of the Evangelical Fellowship of India, based in New Delhi. Over recent months, similar reports of serious attacks on Christian believers in different parts of India have arrived with depressing frequency. For these our brothers and sisters, suffering, persecution and even martyrdom are no abstract theory to be debated, but the immediate context within which every day they must bear witness to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rose Dowsett

It's a normal Sunday morning in London. A service of one of the largest congregations in Europe is in full swing. Several thousand people, mostly African and Afro-Caribbean, listen enthralled as the senior pastor thunders out his message. 'Bring your offerings! Make them big! Empty your pockets! If you give and give and give, then the Lord promises you that you will be rich, that you and your kids won't get sick, that you'll be driving a big car.....Give, and God will reward you a hundredfold!' The auditorium rings with 'Praise the Lord!' and 'Hallelujah!' and 'Yes, Lord!' The stewards stagger under the weight of the money collected, though most of those present are in fact in very poorly paid jobs, or unemployed, or migrants and asylum seekers. Many of them have experienced the violence of war, rape, famine, forced displacement from their ancestral lands. Many are HIV positive, or already have full-blown AIDS. Their stories are painful. 'The pastor's message gives me hope,' says one young man. 'Jesus is going to deliver me from all my problems!'

These two true stories could both be replicated many times over, and around the world. On the one hand, from many parts of the world come attested reports of persecu-

tion, martyrdom and great suffering; not simply the suffering that is endemic in a fallen, groaning world, but specifically suffering that is a direct consequence of faithful Christian discipleship. On the other hand, there are parts of the church which teach that God's promised *shalom* encompasses the here and now in such a way as to ensure health, wealth and safety for any Christian walking in his will; to miss out on these things is evidence of lack of faith and obedience. 'Name it and claim it' and all will be well.

The fact is that there are vibrant believers who can be found in both these categories (and of course there are many between these poles). It is not easy to harmonise these very different beliefs and experiences. There are committed Christians who prosper (in every sense of the word); and there are committed Christians whose lives are lived entirely within the boundaries of acute poverty, chronic sickness, and unjust suffering.

### The teaching of Jesus

It is true that Jesus healed many sick people, and that he expected his disciples also to be able to cast out demons and heal the sick as signs of the Kingdom (see, for instance, Mark 16:15-18). It is also true that in Matthew 6:28-34 Jesus links faith with provision of food and clothes: 'Seek first [God's] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well' (Matt 6:33).

Yet a far stronger thread in Jesus' teaching is of a more sombre character. He insists that persecution will be inescapable for his disciples: 'All men will hate you because of me.....When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another' (Matt 10:22-3). Or again,

‘they will lay hands on you and persecute you. They will deliver you to synagogues and prisons, and you will be brought before kings and governors, and all on account of my name. This will result in your being witnesses to them.....’ (Luke 21:12-3). In both these instances, persecution and suffering is directly linked to testimony to unbelievers.

Even more fundamental, and integral to authentic discipleship, is the command to ‘take up your cross and follow me’ (Matt:16:24); that is, identifying with, and sharing the experience of, the shame and unjust condemnation and suffering of the Lord in his death at Calvary is absolutely central to being a Christian.

### The example of Jesus

It is no accident that one of the most powerful messianic prophecies, to be found in Isaiah 52:13-53:12, is entitled ‘The suffering and Glory of the Servant’. Suffering and glory are inextricably intertwined. And, as from this side of Christ’s earthly ministry we are able to see, every last detail of that prophecy was fulfilled in his life, death and resurrection. The Son of God did not come in wealth and power and earthly triumph, but in weakness, rejection and suffering. ‘Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light.....’ says Jesus (John 3:19-20). The more his light shone, the greater the hatred of his enemies, and the more committed they became to destroy him.

Well, says Paul, the one who ‘was rich beyond all splendour’ chose ‘all for love’s sake’ to embrace poverty and powerlessness, and submit to a cruel death; ‘Your attitude should be the same.....’ (Philippians 2:5-11). At the very heart of our faith is sacrifice, supremely of the ‘Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world’. Followers of Christ must also, in response to and imitation of that once-for-all perfect and complete sacrifice, voluntarily live in a mindset and practice of sacrifice, offering up our lives in the mundane and the extraordinary in the love of God and service of our fellow human beings. If that leads to the literal laying down of our lives, so be it.

### The experience of the Church

Very soon after Pentecost, the first Christians entered the furnace of persecution. Stephen was the first among many who gave their lives as martyrs (Acts 7:54ff), but already others had been beaten and suffered for bold witness to the identity of Jesus, and to the significance of his death and resurrection. After Stephen’s death, the whole of Acts has the recurrent motif of the persecution that disciples experienced wherever they went. It was consistent rather than sporadic, though not continuous in any one place. The Epistles, especially those of Peter, refer frequently to the prevalence and depth of suffering for the name of Christ. We know that many of Jesus’ closest earthly friends died as martyrs. There must have been many more, names unknown to us but recorded in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

The first centuries rapidly produced a long list of those who died bravely because they refused to recant their faith, or to give to Caesar the honour which belonged alone to Christ. Eyewitness accounts circulated – for instance, of the torture and death of the saintly old bishop Polycarp, of the martyrdom of the young mother Perpetua and her slave girl Felicitas – and these testimonies inspired many contemporaries and others down through the centuries to stand fast even in the face of diabolical treatment and finally death in the cruellest ways imaginable.

It was not always quite like that. There were many, too, who could not face the suffering, and turned away from Christ. That, too, has been the pattern down through the centuries. At times, as Tertullian wrote, ‘the blood of the martyrs is seed’, and the harvest was many who came to faith. At other times, in the face of persecution the Christians became divided among themselves, or compromised, or returned to their old religions.

In the twenty centuries of the church, and wherever the gospel has been taken, there has been a similar story: hostility and violence against those who have brought the faith, and yet some whose hearts have been opened by the Holy Spirit and who have become believers; a beach-head for the gospel; the ebbing and flowing of faith. Mission history and church history, and the experi-

ence of Christians worldwide to the present day, echoes this same pattern. There are very few places indeed where the gospel has come to a people group without resistance, or without messengers and early converts suffering. Some church traditions, especially the ancient churches, commemorate many of those who have suffered or died in the cause of the gospel as ‘Saints’, so that the annual calendar reminds their people over and over again of the cost of faithful witness to Christ.

### The subversion by Christendom – and the new reality

When Constantine in the early C.4<sup>th</sup> fatefully adopted Christianity as the protected religion of the Roman Empire, the church became seduced by power, wealth and ease. There were of course always those who retained their prophetic voices, and especially those pioneering at the frontiers continued to lay down their lives. But from then onwards it became increasingly easy for Christians, of whichever tradition, to expect protection from the State from persecution. All too often, the example of the church was not that of sacrifice but that of protecting its own interests. It was a short step to sanctioning violence to achieve or maintain dominance in the name of the Christian faith.

For most of its history, the church expanded territorially by wielding power rather than righteousness, on the back of political empires. Yet, in the sovereignty of God, imperialism itself has always been an ambiguous phenomenon, and there is plenty of biblical testimony to God’s willingness to shape and use even wicked empires for his own purposes of grace or judgement. So, especially when we look at the modern missionary movement of the past two hundred years, there have been pluses as well as minuses as empires have opened up by force or commerce parts of the world previously untouched by the Christian faith. Further, the motives of huge numbers of missionaries are beyond dispute: they did not cross the world in the cause of empire, but genuinely in the cause of the gospel. In some cases, as in India, it was for a long time with western power pitted against them, not enabling them. In other cases, as in China in relation to the opium trade, it was missionaries who led the fight against their own governments’

appalling policy and practice. Large numbers sacrificed their lives, through illness or violence. Many suffered rejection by their own families 'back home'. Untold numbers buried their children in foreign soil.

Many of the churches of the global south thus have an ambiguous heritage. On the one hand, there may have been a point in the past where Christianity sheltered under some foreign political power, and indeed may have become entwined with national political power (as was the case in many Latin American countries, for instance). On the other hand, Christians have often been at the forefront of prophetic protest against the corruption of power within and beyond the church, and have suffered and given their lives as a result. Today, a growing percentage of global south churches have no connection with past imperial powers, but have developed independently. Sadly, they do not necessarily dissociate from worldly power and patterns of leadership spawned by Christendom rather than flowing from biblical revelation. We all (not just northerners!) struggle with fallenness.

Now, in the early years of the C.21<sup>st</sup>, the northern churches, especially those of Europe, are discovering all over again what it means to live without state protection. Indeed, with secular humanism as the default position for European governments, administered with varying degrees of aggression, Christians in many European countries face persecution for their faith in a way that is more akin to the pre-Constantinian church than anything that has happened since. It is not likely that Europe will return to the bitter, bloody wars between rival sectors of the church that followed the Reformation, but increasingly European Christians will find themselves having to choose between following Christ and keeping the law. It has been suggested that in Europe, evangelical Christians are the least protected religious community of all, with their so-called human rights and conscientious convictions consistently over-ruled by those of other groups. Once again, like the early Christians, we will face starkly the question: 'Are you willing to suffer, and if need be go to prison or even die, in faithfulness to Christ?' And, in the face of injustice and suffering, how will we respond? Seeking to retaliate, insisting on our rights?

Or, like the Lord Jesus will we give ourselves to sacrifice rather than self-protection? Will we fight for the gospel rather than for ourselves?

### Collision with other world religions

European problems, at least for the moment, are of course trivial in comparison with the situation cited at the start of this article concerning our brethren in India.

The weight of the world's population lives in Asia, which is also the heartland of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, as well as (today's) communist regimes. Along with North Africa and the Middle East, the countries of Asia (apart from the Philippines) are dominated by faiths other than Christianity, and Christians are usually a small (though not necessarily insignificant) minority. In most of these contexts, Christians have always known the reality of persecution.

In some places, Christians have been able to live peaceably side by side with those of other faiths. Loving service and integrity of life have enabled genuine clear testimony to the uniqueness of Christ without leading automatically to general hostility. Nonetheless, in recent years on the one hand Christians have been seen as a threat to national identity (usually a country closely tied to the dominant religion, even in a country technically under secular administration), and on the other hand more militant forms of those other faiths have emerged. Few governments have the will or the ability to curtail the activities of the latter. Politicians, police and military may all sympathise with the militants, and will do little to protect Christians even if their constitution requires it. In some countries, especially Islamic ones, conversion to Christianity (or another faith) is illegal.

It is for this reason that in some contexts, again especially in the Islamic world, Christians have been struggling with very deep and complex questions as to how they live out their faith. Christians are not called deliberately to court persecution unnecessarily. Just as the Council of Jerusalem affirmed early on, led by the Holy Spirit, that Gentiles did not have to become Jews before they could become Christians, so global south Christians are right to insist that they do not

have to become European or North American in the way they express their discipleship. We are, I think, learning today to be more sensitive than in the past over matters relating to appropriate cultural contextualisation so that faith in Jesus does not look 'foreign' in a way that extracts people from their own culture without due cause. At the same time, the gospel will always be counter-cultural anywhere in the world as it collides with human fallenness and with the religions and worldviews that the Bible insists to be delusions stemming from the suppression of God's revelation (see for instance Paul's argument in Romans 1, or the majestic assertions of Isaiah 45:18ff). If there is to be persecution and suffering, let it genuinely be through resistance to God's truth, not through our cultural clumsiness.

Especially difficult is the current debate as to how far believers within a very hostile environment can remain within their old religious and cultural observance, in order to avoid persecution. For instance, how far along the C1-6 spectrum can believers in Jesus align and be authentic disciples? At what point do they need to be distinct from the Islam, or Judaism, Hinduism or Buddhism, from which they come and within which culturally they are still embedded? How far is it possible to be a believer in one's heart without outward dissociation from former religious and cultural allegiance? Is it sufficient to see this as a pragmatic (and pragmatically very realistic) way of avoiding an otherwise likely martyrdom, or at the least the cost of being outcast by family and society? Some would argue that remaining an insider gives opportunity to witness to Christ, and is therefore justified. Others believe that it involves a level of compromise that is not compatible with true faith.

The early church divided sharply, too, over an arguably parallel situation: whether or not, to preserve one's life, one could outwardly conform to observation of Emperor worship, while not worshipping him in one's heart. Far more recently, in the middle of the C.20<sup>th</sup>, under Japanese military occupation, Korean Christians disagreed sharply over whether or not to obey edicts that they must comply with Japanese Emperor worship. In China, Christians are still deeply divided over whether or not they should belong to

Government sanctioned churches, the Three Self Patriotic Movement churches, or whether authentic faith means they must belong to house churches. As it happens, Christians in both streams have experienced persecution and even martyrdom in the last half century, and that particular story has not yet ended. The divisions in the early church led to bitterness that shadowed centuries. Many Korean Christians are still not reconciled. If nothing else, this should remind us very soberly that Christians in the furnace of suffering may reach different conclusions, and that while sometimes historically persecution has produced a harvest of faith, at other times it has sown deep divisions and also led to defections from the faith.

No wonder that the Lord Jesus taught us to pray, 'Deliver us from testing'.

### Conclusion

It is almost certainly the case that the C.20<sup>th</sup> saw more people killed, imprisoned or suffering because of their faith in Christ than any previous century. Moreover, that took place over a wider geographical spread of the world than in any previous century. There is little ground for believing that the C.21<sup>st</sup> will not also involve persecution for many Christians. Against such a reality, the prosperity gospel appears obscene.

The Apostle John, in his magnificent vision that we know as the Book of Revelation, tells us that those who gather round the throne of the Lamb of God are those who have come through great tribulation. The final victory over sin and evil is secure. In the meantime, we need to pray for those around the world being called upon to suffer at the present time, that they may know the grace of God to be faithful. And for those of us whose experience is at present far more comfortable, pray that we may be willing to pay the cost of witnessing far more prophetically into our fallen cultures. <<



# A Biblical Theology of Persecution and Discipleship

*Glenn Penner*

It is well recognized by those who work among persecuted Christians that few attempts have been made to develop a biblical theology of persecution. Most attempts consist of selected texts arranged thematically which, while helpful and better than nothing at all, fail to reveal the extent to which suffering for righteousness is addressed in the biblical text. Much of the problem, it seems to me, comes down to a failure to adequately consider many of the scriptural passages on suffering in their context. For example, it is rarely recognized that the New Testament authors are not overly concerned to answer the question of suffering in general (i.e., suffering due to living in a fallen world). That such suffering occurs is recognized but most of the New Testament passages that address suffering do so in the context of suffering for righteousness and not because of sin or because one lives in a fallen world. But in many of the classic books

on suffering, this type of suffering is hardly ever stressed.

This is to be expected, I suppose, since most Christians in the West have little or no experience with persecution per se. In our quest to make the biblical text applicable to daily life, the tendency is for Western preachers and teachers to misapply these passages to situations of general physical, psychological, and spiritual suffering because the biblical texts that speak to suffering for righteousness cannot readily be applied to a setting where there is little or no persecution. Unfortunately, this misapplication is subsequently turned around upon the text itself in future readings. Hence, the application influences future interpretations, resulting in the typical Bible student in the West never even suspecting that the biblical texts that deal with pain and suffering might be dealing with suffering for righteousness' sake rather than suffering because of sin. This also influences how Western Christians view and deal with those who suffer for their faith in other societies. We fail to recognize that persecution is normative for the follower of Christ historically, missiologically, and (most importantly) scripturally.

There is a clear scriptural link between persecution and discipleship. Indeed, there can be no discipleship without persecution; to follow Christ is to join Him in a cross-carrying journey of reconciling the world to the Father. That this journey is set in the context of conflict, self-sacrifice, and suffering is alluded to as early as Genesis 3:15 when the Lord affirms that Satan's judgment, accomplished through human instrumentality, will bring deliverance to the offspring of the woman, but it will take place in a process of bruising and pain. The deliverance will come through the bruising of the serpent's head, but in the process the heel that bruises him will be also be bruised. This truth is illustrated in the following chapter when the first murder takes place following an act of worship, as Cain's sacrifice is rejected by God while his brother's is accepted. In jealousy (a common reason given in scripture for persecution), Cain kills his brother. It is obvious that the New Testament views Abel's murder as much more than the result of sibling rivalry or a family squabble that got out of control. Jesus clearly saw Abel's death as an act of martyrdom (Matthew 23:35), as does the apostle John (1 John 3:12). John explains that Abel's death was because Cain's acts were evil and Abel's were righteous. Abel's death is clearly set in a context of martyrdom, a result of the conflict between the world and those who belong to God (1 John 3: 13).

Persecution is hardly an exclusively New Testament phenomenon. Numerous passages refer to the suffering inflicted on the people of God throughout the Old Testament historical narratives. It is likely that the psalms of lamentation address the issue of the suffering of God's people more clearly than any other portion of Scripture (including the New Testament). The imprecatory psalms cry out for God's justice on those who inflict the righteous without cause. The thrust of the book of Job is how a man of God suffers not because of sinfulness of himself or creation but because of righteousness and calls for trust in God in the face of such a paradox. This train of thought is amplified by the call of the prophets to look ahead to the Day of the Lord, believing that history is under the control of an Almighty God who, from the foundation of the world, has set His plans in motion of reconciling the world to Himself.



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All of this comes into focus with the coming of Jesus Christ, the revelation of the triune God. Through Christ, we see, among other things, that sacrificial love is in the very nature of who God is. To suffer and die to accomplish His Father's purposes was not to be unexpected; Jesus could not be God and do anything but. Weakness, suffering and sacrifice are God's *modus operandi*. This is how God accomplishes His work: not through strength or compulsion but through love and invitation. As so, the Servant of God suffers and dies, as do those who follow Him. This is to be expected; this is God's way of reconciling the world to Himself. A cross-centered gospel requires cross-carrying messengers. When Jesus declared, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Matthew 16:24), these words are to be taken much more literally than we are accustomed to doing. At stake is not so much a willingness to die for Christ but a readiness to, due to one's unconditional obedience to the Crucified One.

The demand of Jesus on His followers is to tread the path of martyrdom. As He prepared to send His disciples out as sheep among wolves and He told them that they would likely die in the process of carrying out their ministry. In order to build His Church (Matthew 16:18), His death was necessary, as He points out in 16:21. This is the foundation. Without Christ's death there is no redeemed community. But just as Christ's cross was needed to establish His Church, our crosses are needed to build His Church (16:24). Both are needed. As Josef Ton observed, "Christ's cross was for propitiation. Our cross is for propagation." To be called to follow Christ is to receive a call to suffer (e.g. Acts 9: 16; 14:22; 1 Thessalonians 3:3; 1 Peter 2:21; 3:9,17).

It was this understanding that sacrifice, suffering, shame, and even death were the normal cost of discipleship that fueled the evangelistic efforts of the first century Church. They did not expect to experience

all of the blessings of heaven in this world. They knew that by their faithfulness, even unto death, they were storing up rewards in heaven. Contrary to the Western belief that it is a blessing not to be persecuted, they knew that it was the persecuted who are blessed (Matthew 10-12). Rather than following the common Western practice of thanking God for the privilege of living in a free country where we do not suffer for Him, the early Christians thanked God for the honor of suffering for His sake (Acts 5:41). They knew that in order to bring life to others, they must die; to see others experience peace with God, they would have to suffer the violence of the world; to bring the love of God to a dying world, they would have to face the hatred of those whom they were seeking to reach. It is in this context that the biblical authors described spiritual warfare; not freedom over bad habits or psychological problems, but the brutal reality of witnessing to the faithfulness of God in the face of suffering, sacrifice and death. It was only in this context that the purposes of God would be accomplished.

This is also the reality of persecution today. We continue the task of taking the gospel to the end of the earth, knowing that He goes with us and that we do not suffer alone. In all of our afflictions, God is afflicted and just as Jesus demanded of Saul of Tarsus, so He asks of today's persecutors, "Why do you persecute Me?" The knowledge that nothing can separate us from Christ's love (Romans 8:35), that the Spirit prays for us when we can only groan in agony (Romans 8:26,27) and gives us His words in the face of our accusers (Matthew 10: 19,20) provides the help that the disciples of Jesus require to remain faithful witnesses. God has provided all that is necessary for the disciple to stand firm.

Yes, there may be fear, but by God's grace it need not control us. Yes, there may be terrible suffering, but suffering is not the worst thing that can happen to the child of God; disobedience to the Father is.

As we witness the testimonies of courageous persecuted brothers and sisters in person or through reports, it is worthwhile to reflect on the words of Peter, “For this is a gracious thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly” (1 Peter 2:19 ESV). In these words, Peter defines grace as being enabled to endure suffering due to one’s faithfulness to God. As we read the accounts of those who have suffered for the sake of Christ, we might be justified in saying that, from the world’s perspective, those who endure persecution are heroic. But from God’s perspective, Peter reminds us, they are recipients of grace. Peter stresses that enduring suffering is evidence that God is at work in one’s life. There is no glory for the sufferer. No hero worship. No merit for those who are able to endure hardship, no boasting of one’s achievements. It is evidence of God’s grace. It is all a work of God, from beginning to end. Is it any wonder that near the end of his first epistle, written especially to instruct persecuted believers to stand firm in their faith, the apostle writes, “And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the dominion forever and ever. Amen.” (1 Peter 5:10,11 ESV).

This hope is solidified with the Revelation of John’s vision of the victorious Lamb. Written to address the apparent discrepancy between the belief that God’s kingdom has come and that Jesus Christ is Lord and the reality that the forces of evil continued to exist, to dominate the culture and even flourish, while oppressing Christians to varying degrees, Revelation provide the churches with what they most needed; a revelation of who Jesus Christ is. God’s priority is not so much to answer the questions that His people may have as to why they are persecuted as to give them a revelation of Himself. In this final book of the Bible, Jesus is revealed as the one who is in the midst of the churches, as one who is in control of history and who will soon bring history to its conclusion. The believers to whom John writes face the challenge of witnessing for Christ in the midst of temptations to compromise with idolatry. John sees the persecution as increasing and his warning is meant to prepare the churches for that day, as well as for the challenges they

presently face. He sees that not all of the churches are prepared; some are already well on their way to denying Christ. The Christian in Revelation is called to witness for Christ, even to the point of death, in the midst of compromising Christianity and a hostile world, knowing that his reward is coming. Revelation helps us to see that there is always hope. Defeat may seem imminent to those in the midst of persecution; the disciple needs to be reminded that so is victory. The victory is not, however, as some might suppose, the punishment and destruction of the wicked; the victory is the vindication of the Church. Redeemed, triumphant in heaven, secure forever with the Lamb who has won the victory for Himself and the Church through His death and His conquest over it, the Church

participates in this victory with Christ as Bride and Bridegroom. By refusing to deny their allegiance to Him and acknowledge the idolatrous claims of the world order (13:15, 14:9), enduring even unto death, the martyrs share in Christ’s victory over it and in His triumph over all the powers of evil (12:11). God has determined to save the world by the foolishness of the cross of Christ and by the foolishness of the crosses of His children whom He has chosen and called for this very purpose. He will be consistent in using this unique method until He achieves His final goal. God will thus bring the nations to Himself by the sacrifice of His obedient Son followed by the sacrifices of His other obedient sons and daughters. <<

## Connections has its own website!

Yes, indeed, Connections has gone digital. As you read this the Connections website is already ‘up and running’ and you can view it on [www.weaconnections.com](http://www.weaconnections.com).

The home page shows the latest edition of Connections and its key articles, but you can also find all issues of AGORA, the newsletter of the WEA Mission Commission.

As this website is now intended to be the communication instrument for the Mission Commission, you will find other links on the site, presented in buttons, to help you find information on various Mission Commission issues. For instance on the homepage you

will find a button that leads you to the MC consultation site, where you can obtain general information about the consultation and a registration form, if you would like to attend.

One of the new features on the site are the links to the blogs of MC staff where you can follow their activities.

Other areas of the site include the “back issues” section where, once you have registered with a site profile, you will be able to look at all the previous issues of Connections and even download the articles for a limited time. Additionally there are pages regarding subscription matters (you can even subscribe

on site), costs for ad’s either in the journal or on this website (or both) and some additional information about us.

Please, add this site to your bookmarks and visit it regularly as changes will occur regularly.



# The Case of the Korean Hostage Incident

by the Taliban in Afghanistan

## Introduction

Twenty short-term workers from Sammool Church left the Incheon International Airport like any other similar teams leaving the country to serve in different parts of the world. Since there were already a number of short-term trips taken by the Sammool Church, it seemed to be no different from other prior trips. There were at least several other short-term teams representing different parties operating within Afghanistan and there seemed to be no imminent danger. There was one single woman worker sent from the same church situated in one locality for almost a year and a number of other NGO workers who had been there for some time—not many could blame them for having sense of false security. Nonetheless, it is necessary to revisit the incident to assess what lessons could be learned from each stage of the incident: pre-hostage stage, the hostage taking stage, and finally, the post-hostage stage.

## Pre-Hostage Stage

Sammool Church belongs to the Koshin Presbyterian denomination. It was formed after the liberation from the Japanese annexation of Korea after the Second World War. During the occupation, the Korean Christians were forced to take part in the so called “Emperor (Japanese emperor) Worship.” There were some that resisted bowing to the emperor at the risk of their lives. Koshin was formed among those who refused to bow to the emperor’s image. Sammool Church has been one of the leading churches in that

denomination, well known for social service both within and without of the country. Pastor Un-Jo Park, a staunch evangelical, is considered by many to be one of the preeminent pastors in Korea. The sending out of short-term workers was not something new for the church and not done in impulsive manner. It was the expression of their philosophy of ministry for the local church—doing both evangelism and social service.

## During the Hostage Taking

The twenty-member team left Incheon International Airport on July 13, 2007. They arrived in Kabul on the following day. It was reported that the twenty-member team successfully carried out their educational and medical service July 14-18 in the northern region of Afghanistan, where it was comparatively safe. However, on July 19 they were joined by three medical team members that were already in Afghanistan, and they then moved from Kabul to Kandahar. These three were supposed to act as guides. It was during this journey that the hostages were taken.

In hindsight, here is where the former hostages failed to scrutinize the situation and take precautionary measures. First, as the New York Times has appropriately pointed out, they failed to adhere to the safety code. They moved during the wrong time of the day since it was customary to travel only in the early mornings for safety reasons. Additionally, the route from Kabul to

Kandahar is ordinarily too dangerous to travel without an armed escort.

Second, they should have been suspicious when the bus driver was changed, and more suspicious when the bus driver picked up a stranger on the road. The rest is as we already know. The twenty-three were taken as hostages and it was forty-two days later that the remaining hostages were finally released. Two persons were dead and only twenty-one returned home safely, but not without physical and mental scars that are bound to haunt some of them for a long time.

It was only on July 20, a day after the hostages were taken, that the Korean government acknowledged that the Taliban had taken the Sammool Church team as hostages. The Sammool Church quickly set up a contingency committee and the Pastor was informed, who was at the time participating in a seminar in the United States. He subsequently arrived home and made a public announcement apologizing for the commotion caused by the hostage incident. On July 21, the President of Korea, Mr. Moo Hyun Noh went public and pleaded to the Taliban through CNN, a global news network, that they release the hostages as soon as possible. By then, the matter was way out of control and it became a national affair with all the cabinet members, including the President, acting as sort of a contingency committee. The whole nation was kept in suspense and terror as the news alternated from bad to worse. The Korean

*David Tai - Woong Lee, Korea*



government banned all travel to Afghanistan on July 21. After long hours and days of negotiation, the Taliban finally agreed to let the rest of the hostages loose on two conditions: One, the non-combat Korean troops stationed in Afghanistan would be withdrawn by the end of 2007. Two, all of the Christian workers, including NGO personnel, would leave Afghanistan as soon as possible. There have been rumors that the Korean government negotiation team paid a large ransom in exchange for the hostages. There is, however, no way to confirm this. The Korean government has denied these allegations.

Let me turn our attention to the responses of various factions during and after the hostage situation. The secularists are at one end of the continuum of those who are voicing their opinion about the post-hostage and mission by the Korean church, and the conservatives in theology but radical in their mode of mission are at the other end of the continuum. The secularists have launched the severest attack against Christian mission and the church. Sammool church suffered from the harshest criticism, and it is not completely over yet. The following are samples of the reactions by different groups over the hostage incident, particularly to the Sammool Church and to the Korean church in general.

There is almost unanimous consensus from all spectrums that the hostage situation has affected future hostage negotiations, both nationally as well as internationally. The loss is almost incalculable. Existing rules for hostage negotiation in the past were violated, whereby more frequent hostage taking may occur by terrorists around the globe. The Korean church must take responsibility for this outcome and back off from doing mis-



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sion confrontationally and aggressively and mobilizing masses in demonstrative forms, particularly in sensitive and dangerous countries such as Afghanistan and other Islamic countries with similar hostilities.

Leaders of Yong Dong Presbyterian church and like-minded progressive pastors declared that the days of doing mission by sending in workers are outdated. The majority of the Korean church will not identify with this view, though.

Perhaps the declaration made by Drs. Han Hum Ok, the Pastor, the former pastor of the Love church and Myung Hyuck Kim, Chairman of Korea Evangelical Alliance and others seem to fit the position of the majority of the Korean church who are of the evangelical faith. They would equally protest against aggressive and demonstrative mission modes while agreeing that evangelism and social responsibility are still the core curriculum of mission. They have, in essence, been most accurate in their description of the situation. They named a few radical groups that have been involved in the Afghanistan situation. This group has also been trying to stage a demonstrative approach for mission by sending in thousands of people in previous years in spite of strong protests by both government and major daily media, including the local workers in Afghanistan. They failed to stage their style of mission as the Afghanistan government later changed their mind and stopped issuing the visas and ordered those who were already gathered in Afghanistan to leave the country immediately.

### Post Hostage Stage

Nineteen released hostages finally arrived in the Incheon International Airport on September 2, 2007. Two had previously arrived. Out of twenty-three hostages, two were killed and twenty-one were finally released. They were taken to the Sam Hospital in An Yang, a satellite city adjunct to Seoul, where a debriefing team was ready



to meet the former hostages. They spent ten days being debriefed and counseled in a safe environment. Subsequently, they were taken to a remote town in Kang Won Province for a week of group therapy. Most of them have now returned to normal life, but not without scars. For some of them, the scars will remain for a long time. At least two couples have been married among them. Several have changed their jobs. Eight family members have become Christians. The families of the two members who were killed were the hardest hit among them.

The Sammool church is still harassed by anti-Christians picketing in front of the church weekly during their worship services. The Korean government requested that the church reimburse the direct expenses for bringing the former hostages back. The Sammool church gladly consented to do so. The Pastor submitted his resignation after the hostages were returned. Recently, the church voted to call back Rev. Un-Jo Park as their pastor. On the surface, one could not find any traces of the breathtaking events that captured forty-eight million Koreans daily and hourly for forty-two days. Yet one need not dig too deeply underneath the seemingly calm surface to find that there are still residues of unresolved anger, antagonism toward Christianity and mission from not only the public square but also from parts of the Korean church herself, not to mention the grief of the families who have lost their loved ones. The Korean church and the Sammool church will have to work extra hard to resolve this in the days to come. <<

# Seven Lessons Learned

## from the Hostage Case of Koreans in Afghanistan

The hostage case of twenty-three Koreans in Afghanistan provides us with important lessons in the midst of sufferings and damages. It was the first case of its kind for Korean churches and missions and they were very much unprepared and reactive instead of proactive. We must remember that the incident happened in God's providence, and we must find lessons from it to improve the practice of world mission, especially from the Majority World.

**Lesson One: We learned that passion and pure mindedness are not enough for good practice of missions.** The abducted team members and the involved churches and agencies were all pure-minded and passionate, reflecting the zealous mission mind of the Korean church. However, a pure passion is not enough for missions. We need wisdom, too. We need both wisdom and purity. What we lack in doing missions cross-culturally is often wisdom rather than purity. We assume that our local experience and knowledge within our own culture will work in another cultural context, but it is not true. We need to be wise as snakes in doing God's work, especially when we cross cultures for the Gospel. Korean Christians are known for their passion and zealousness for the cause of the kingdom of God, but must learn what it means to be wise and strategic in doing missions. Koreans can learn wisdom from other parts of the body of Christ in other parts of the world. We need a global partnership

between the churches in the West and the Majority World for synergistic ministries. Old missionary sending countries need to help young missionary sending countries with wisdom and expertise for ministry, since they are in a better position to do that with their longer missions history.

*Dr. Steve Moon, Korea*

**Lesson Two: We learned that understanding local cultural context is a prerequisite for missionary activities.**

An environmental scan must be a necessary part of cross-cultural ministry. We need accurate information and in-depth research on the local situation and environment for cross-cultural activities before embarking on a serious engagement in the mission fields. Pure missionary motivation should lead into in-depth research on the cultural characteristics, social changes, and potential risks in the target areas. Activism and excessive optimism may neglect this need. Research for missions has not been emphasized enough among Korean churches and missions over the years. The history of world mission presents us with examples of great missionaries with scholarly minds who were fruitful in their actual ministries in the mission fields. Activistic tendencies of Korean missionaries who pursue visible outcomes of ministry are in the way of strategic development of the missionary movement. A humble, teachable mind is the basis of missionary research and scholarly achievement for the cross-cultural dimension of the work of the kingdom of God. Churches and missions need to create

a corporate learning culture for mature missionary activities across cultures.

**Lesson Three: We learned that we need to pursue qualitative instead**

**of quantitative growth in this developmental stage of the missionary movement in Korea.** The Korean missionary movement marked phenomenal growth over the last thirty years quantitatively, but it did not grow qualitatively as much as

was required. It is not a matter of either/or, but of both/and.

However, qualitative growth seems to be more urgent at this developmental stage because of the imbalance. Some associations and agencies try to set a quantitative goal of a certain number of Korean missionaries by certain time, but we think our emphasis should lie on quality at this time. Without proper systems for member care and training, the numbers of missionaries and short-termers can not be a reason for self-contentment. Qualitative growth means pursuing global standards in doing missions in this ever-globalizing world. There are national cultural traits reflected in a national missionary movement, but we need to pursue true globalism as well as localism for the sake of globalization of the missionary movement.

It is not us alone participating in global missions. Partnership and networking across cultural and organizational boundaries is desirable for qualitative growth in this global age. Many Korean churches and missions are not connected enough with other entities for missions. We can make right decisions when we are connected properly. The hostage case may have been prevented if they had been connected with other information sources.

**Lesson Four: We learned that we need to invest in expertise development for maturation of the missionary movement.**

There are approximately 15,000 Korean missionaries in over 160 countries globally, but there are less missionary experts than needed here and there. Without developing expertise



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in different fields, such a bad case of contingency can happen again. We need expertise in the information network, research and development, strategic coordination, mobilization, member care (including counseling service), missionary training, and administration.

One of the reasons for poor development of expertise among Korean missions is that supporting churches prioritize field needs over organizational or professional needs. For a balanced development, local churches in Korea need to see and invest in expertise development among mission agencies. Along with expertise development, expertise sharing is needed. There are limited but substantial sources of expertise available among Korean mission communities, but expertise is not shared widely because of self-centeredness in big local churches in Korea. In other words, local churches, especially big ones, often tend to function as mission agencies, which inhibits expertise sharing. Local churches need to recognize the expertise of mission agencies and support their further development for common good.

**Lesson Five: We learned that massive rallies in the field have serious negative side effects.** The hostage crisis in 2007 had something to do with the massive rallies with missionary purpose in Kabul in 2006. The massive mission events were planned and performed with good intention, but they were done regardless of the opposition of Korean missionaries in Afghanistan. In the sensitive Islamic context, massive events of such a nature can be seen as a religious demonstration by foreigners. A rally can raise the tension level significantly, so much wisdom is needed when missionaries plan such a program. It is wrong if they think that holding a rally is the only way to combat the local territorial spirits. Prayers work across culture even when we pray at home. It is a spiritual myopia if missionaries think they should drive out demons and evil spirits in haste to facilitate and guarantee the fruitfulness of missionary activities in the target countries. A long-term perspective is needed and desirable to fight the spiritual warfare well. We are concerned about the short-term mentality of some massive rally programs. We wonder if they are based on the wrong worldview perspectives, with an “expanded middle” regarding spiritual warfare of Koreans as compared to a predominantly “excluded middle” regard-

ing spiritual worldview of Westerners. We need to recover the biblical balance between the extremes. There is spiritual warfare happening, but we need to fight solidly based on the biblical worldview.

**Lesson Six: We learned that vision trips need to focus on the educational purposes of the participants rather than on direct evangelistic purposes in the creative access areas.** It is widely agreed that we cannot expect too much from a vision trip, especially in a creative access area. Fewer and fewer countries permit direct evangelistic activities of foreigners. We need to be realistic in setting the goals of short-term trips to sensitive areas. We need to learn first before doing any serious mission activities. We can think and pray about what to do and how to serve the local people from a missional perspective as we gather information and knowledge about the local people. One temptation on the part of sending churches and short-term visitors is to leave visible results of their activities. However, we must remember that there are too many unwanted buildings and facilities not based on a thorough needs assessment. Physical artifacts not based on needs assessment may serve the self-satisfaction of the sending churches and short-termers, but they may not serve the local people in their important needs. Vision trips need to focus on learning the real and felt needs of the local people. As visitors learn about the needs, they can better pray for the local people and find their role for the evangelization of the people even after they return home. They can also learn what it means to live as Christians in this ever-globalizing world. They can learn to pray, give, and do more for reaching the unreached in God’s salvific will.

**Lesson Seven: We learned that we need to make more efforts to care well for missionaries.** There are dangers and risks involved in missionary activities, both with long-term and short-term prospects.

Missionaries are more vulnerable than before to various kinds of potential dangers and risks. Korean churches and missions need to emphasize member care for a balance between sacrificial life and the well-being of missionaries. It is the obligation of pastors of sending churches and mission leaders to care well for their members. Sometimes people overemphasize the cases of martyrdom and neglect their obligations to care for their members. We need living martyrs who will live and embody the incarnational life-style of Christ in this world with sacrificial mind and spirit, although there are actual cases of martyrdom happening in the course of evangelization of a country or a people. If martyrdom is the exception, member care is the principle. As pastors, fellow missionaries, mission leaders, and supporters, our part is to do our best in caring for missionaries. According to my own survey directed to Korean mission executives, member care is regarded as one of the weakest points of Korean missions. We need a nationwide conscientization and orchestrated efforts in promoting member care.

By way of conclusion, I would like to turn our attention to the need for incarnational ministry. Whether in long-term or short-term ministries, we need incarnational approaches. Incarnational approaches may highlight unity in the midst of diversity,



humility and self-emptying, contextualization, soft power, presence of the Holy Spirit. The hostage crisis of the August 2007 may turn out to be a disguised blessing for the maturation and development of Korean missions as we commit to incarnational ministry. <<

Mission groups in South Korea have been discussing new practice procedures after being harshly criticized by the international community for sending inexperienced Christian workers into a high-risk area in Afghanistan – resulting in what was the largest abduction of foreigners in the country since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

# South Korean Mission Groups Re-Strategize for High-Risk Areas

Mon, Sep. 24, 2007 Posted: 16:38:55 PM EST

**M**ission groups in South Korea have been discussing new practice procedures after being harshly criticized by the international community for sending inexperienced Christian workers into a high-risk area in Afghanistan – resulting in what was the largest abduction of foreigners in the country since the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001.

Top Korean Christian and mission-sending agencies – including the Christian Council of Korea (CCK), the Korea World Mission Association (KWMA), and the Korea Evangelical Fellowship (KEF) – met recently for a series of discussions on changes needed to improve the safety of South Korean missions overseas.

Overall, the leaders agreed that evangelism needs to continue in hostile locations, but more preparation and risk-assessment is needed before a short- or long-term team is sent out. Preparation includes pre-screening applicants, more training on principles behind short-term engagement, holding security briefings, working more closely with the host country, and scheduling a debriefing after the trip.

“The reality is if we stop sending Christian workers to risky areas there would be a lot of places where we couldn’t send them,” said the Rev. Dr. Geoff Tunnicliffe, the World Evangelical Alliance international direc-

tor, to The Christian Post on Friday. “And that is not part of our mandate.”

Tunnicliffe was in South Korea Sept. 13-17 for several conferences including those concerning changes to South Korean overseas mission. The small nation of South Korea is the world’s second most missionary-sending country following the United States.

The recent meetings were held after a team of twenty-three Christian volunteers was abducted by Taliban militants on July 19 as their bus drove through Afghanistan’s insurgency-prone Ghazni province.

Over the course of the hostages’ nearly six weeks of captivity, two male captives were killed. The leader of the group, Bae Hyung-kyu, was found dead on July 25, and the body of 29-year-old Shim Sung-min was found July 30.

The remaining twenty-one workers were eventually released in a series of handovers in August after the Taliban and the South Korean government struck a deal that included the withdrawal of Korean troops from Afghanistan by the end of the year and Seoul promising to pull out and bar all Christian mission groups from Afghanistan.

In the aftermath of the hostage crisis, Korean churches experienced a sense of humility, realizing their mission tactics have

caused significant problems for Korean Christians and for the Korean government, according to Tunnicliffe. Korean churches have received a backlash from the broader culture following the incident while the Korean government has been strongly criticized for its handling of the hostage negotiations.

The evangelical leader said he thinks the incident will have a short-term impact on the Korean mission movement.

“But in the long-term I don’t think it will have a detrimental impact in the sense that they will send less people,” added Tunnicliffe. “I think they will focus more on the ongoing training, equipping people, and working more as a collaborative effort with the international Christian community.”

The WEA head estimates that it will take weeks, if not months, to lay the groundwork for the best guidelines for mission efforts. <<

*Michelle Vu,  
Christian Post Reporter*



**WEA**  
WORLD EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE

Crisis Consulting International

# Special Advisory

## Release of South Korean Hostages and Increased Risk to Faith-Based Personnel

### Summary

The release of the surviving 19 South Korean hostages held by the Taliban in Afghanistan since July 19, 2007 carries very real increased risk to missionaries and faith-based workers.

1. The South Korean government made an agreement with the Taliban to ban future missionary activity in Afghanistan, a watershed event that had been resisted in prior hostage negotiations for kidnapped Christians.
2. The Taliban, now an insurgency (or, at best, a non-state actor) rather than an incumbent government, was able to elevate itself by directly engaging a state (South Korea) in negotiations.

*The circumstances of the negotiations and the agreement leading to the release will increase the probability of future kidnappings of Christian missionaries and relief workers in Afghanistan and other venues.*

### Analysis

We need to begin by clearly stating that it is not the purpose or intent of this Advisory or the intention of CCI to criticize the actions of the South Korean government and other participants in the process that led to the release of these hostages. We have “been there and done that” (serving as the hostage negotiators for kidnapped missionaries) and appreciate that there are always dynamics and factors known only to the negotiators and decision-makers. However, there are often

unintended or unavoidable consequences resulting from hostage negotiations, and in this case those consequences include clear, foreseeable and imminent risk to others. Our objective is to inform about that increased risk, not to judge or criticize the process and decisions that may have led to it.

Shortly after the July 19 kidnapping of 23 South Korean Christians in Afghanistan, the government of South Korea publicly entered the negotiation process and sent a high-ranking delegation to Afghanistan. This delegation ultimately negotiated with representatives of the Taliban in a process at least passively condoned by the Afghan and U.S. governments. The negotiation process appeared to gain traction following the execution of two of the hostages.

Original demands of the Taliban included a ransom and the release of Taliban prisoners held by various governments. These have been typical Taliban demands in kidnapping cases since its overthrow in 2001 by U.S. led forces. The prisoner release demand is common almost to the point of routine in these types of hostage events; however, the agreement by the Afghan government to free Taliban prisoners in exchange for a kidnapped Italian journalist in March, 2007 sent a loud, clear signal to the Taliban (and every other group in the world that engages in hostage taking). The kidnapping of the South Korean Christians almost certainly was committed with an expectation that a prisoner release was a realistic possibility. However, international condemnation of

the Afghan government’s March deal resulted in a return to prisoner release being one of the “non-negotiables” during this hostage negotiation. This likely left the negotiators (on both sides) in a “now what do we do?” dilemma. The killing of two hostages resulted in the desired pressure on the South Korean government to find a resolution; and most likely even the most ardent Taliban realized that the group could not weather the retaliation certain to result from the execution of all 23 of the hostages. Some suitable alternative demand/concession had to be identified.

We don’t know whether the demand to ban South Korean missionaries from Afghanistan originated with the Taliban or was an offer extended by South Korea. From a risk assessment perspective, it doesn’t matter. The result is a situation where a terrorist kidnapping of Christian workers resulted in an agreement to remove (prevent from returning) a group of Christian missionaries from an entire nation that the antagonist does not control. Not only in Afghanistan, but in any location where there is a clash of Christian and Moslem evangelism, Islamist terrorists and insurgents will take note of South Korea’s concession.

The removal of Christian missionaries from any location has been an absolute non-negotiable in all hostage cases CCI has been aware of or involved in since 1983. This non-negotiable standard has only been broached once in the post – 9/11 era to our knowledge. In that case representatives of the U.S. gov-

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ernment insisted on inserting themselves as negotiators for kidnapped missionaries in an event perpetrated by Islamist terrorists with al Qaeda affiliation. The U.S. negotiators then offered the withdrawal of all Christian missionaries from the region in question as an alternative to a ransom being demanded by the hostage takers. The Christian community, supported by CCI, banded together in that case and prevailed on the U.S. government to withdraw the offer.

Now, however, an event has occurred with a highly-publicized concession by a modern state to withdraw (or prevent from going) Christian missionaries from an entire country; this action as a direct result of the kidnapping of other Christian missionaries. The implications are serious and predictable. We can expect to see additional future kidnappings of Christian workers (whether missionaries or relief workers) with attendant demands that Christian workers leave the area. The patterns of terrorist activities in general and the patterns of hostage events specifically indicate that actions that succeed are repeated. This Taliban kidnapping succeeded (perhaps not with the original goal, but with a result of arguably equal or greater impact). Others will desire to replicate it, and some will almost certainly attempt to do so. Although the most likely venue for additional future events is Afghanistan, the global publicity of this event and the global reach of Islamist terrorism make future events foreseeable in any venue where Christian workers and Islamist terrorists coexist.

There is a second factor in this event that will increase the risk of future kidnappings in similar environments. The Taliban was displaced as a government in 2001 and functions now as an insurgent group (or, very charitably, a 'non-state actor'). Insurgent groups almost always have an objective of increasing their presence and influence on the political stage, and the Taliban certainly fits this profile. During this kidnapping event, the Taliban was able to sit down at the negotiating table with a legitimate state, the government of South Korea. Even the use of intermediaries does not mitigate the fact that the participants were the Taliban and the government of South Korea. For that period of time, i.e., while those negotiations were under way, the Taliban enjoyed an elevated

political status that was a *de facto* result of South Korea agreeing to negotiate with them. The lesson learned by the Taliban: This kidnapping elevated their political status, at least for a time. That is a lesson seldom missed by insurgent groups. The result is a second, but also powerful motive for similar future kidnappings.

**Recommendations**

1. All Christian agencies working in Afghanistan should immediately review their operations and security procedures in light of this new, changed environment.
2. The nature of the increased risk should be immediately communicated to all Christian workers (missionary and others) working in Afghanistan.
3. Christian agencies in Afghanistan should immediately update their risk assessments in light of this new, changed environment.
4. Christian agencies in any part of the world where Islamist terrorist activities exist should review their operations, risk assessments and security procedures in light of this new, changed environment.
5. Christian agencies in Afghanistan and other parts of the world where Islamist terrorist activities exist should communicate clear guidelines and instructions to all of their staff in the security procedures of profile management, avoidance of routines and predictability, target hardening and the detection and management of surveillance.
6. CCI recommends the convening of a forum where Christian sending agencies can review this development, share experiences and best practices, and consider strategies to inform governments of the unacceptable nature of concessions of this type in missionary kidnapping cases. We will work with agencies such as the EFMA and IFMA to facilitate such a forum. <<



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**PRESS RELEASE OF THE WEA**

The following statement is provided by the World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission in response to the kidnapping of Koreans in Afghanistan.

- We grieve with the families who have suffered loss of life and we rejoice with those who are now reunited with their families.
- We call upon the church around the world to pray for healing and unity both in the Korean church and the nation of South Korea.
- While we note the complexity of situations dealing with the hostage issue, we also note that in our globalised world the actions of one government can have serious implications globally.
- We denounce any kind of inhuman actions such as hostage taking in any corner of the globe, including Afghanistan, and we pray that the long-standing right of citizens of any country to travel abroad and freely return to their own country without being penalized for so doing will come soon.
- We suggest that organisations with workers in other countries pay careful regard to security warnings issued by their government.

*Dr. Geoff Tunnicliffe, International Director  
World Evangelical Alliance  
www.worldevangelicals.org*

**CCI stands ready to support Christian agencies in the response to this increased threat, to implement these recommendations and additional actions, and to discuss specific issues and situations. We remain the only Christian agency in the world that provides real-time on-site support and assistance in crises and emergencies without charging fees. Contact us:**

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# Suffering, Persecution and Martyrdom in Turkey

(Translated by Marion Dawn Lewis)

On April 18, 2007, some terrible news shook and changed the course of the missionary movement in Turkey forever. I was driving my car to the service of the funeral of a dear brother's father when I got the call. It is not advisable to answer such a call when one is driving. Just after the incident occurred, this brother, A.S., was telling me, "Three of our brothers from Malatya have been killed, they have been slashed by the throat!" More calls followed, "Are you sure? Who are they? But, how? Misinterpretations rose, "Four were killed, not five; no, they are not dead; yes, they are all dead, but one..." One of the first persons I called was the pastor from our church in Izmir, brother in law to one of the victims. From the vague news, I tried to comfort him, reassuring him that he was still alive. But, the fatal truth was about to come...

The media were already there by the time I arrived to the church I headed to. They wanted to know our reaction. However, we did not count on precise information. The only words that I could say in front of TV cameras were: "We do not have accurate facts of what happened. We have little to say. However, it is extremely alarming that Christians in this country live fearing to get killed."

After the hideous killings of our brothers, Necati Aydin, Ugur Yucel and Tilman Geske, three questions came to our minds: Why did God allow this? What is the Lord going to do? In addition, how should we react?

After the assassination of Armenian jour-

nalist and believer, Hrant Dink last January, we began to expect the worst to happen. Just some months earlier, in the spring of 2006, a young man had killed Andrea Santoro, a Catholic priest, in his church at Trabzon by the Black Sea Coast.

That January, I was exchanging emails with other Latin-American brothers who served in the country. We were trying to schedule a conference in October and find an appropriate theme to be addressed. Among other proposals, I suggested, "Besides, 'the great cloud of Latino witnesses' that have seen the impact of their efforts, what else could encourage us than, 'to struggle to the point of shedding our blood'? (He.12:1-4). In some way, if we want to leave a mark in the history of God's work and in the world, we have to communicate that it is and it will be necessary that both, agencies and missionaries be willing to be the seed that dies to bring life." Sadly, three months later these thoughts became a reality...

Since then, the most common question has been, "Why did God let this happen?" Everybody makes this logic and normal question. But, little by little the Lord has led me to think that the Christians from the

first century didn't make that question when dying by faith was an everyday issue. They did not regret martyrdom but looked for it as a glorious goal. I am not saying that this should be our attitude, but something that has substantially changed our perception of faith, Christian life and mission.

As all well know, the word "martyr" as found in the New Testament, means witness and "martyrdom", testimony. **Both became so inseparable (martyrdom and testimony), that in Christian vocabulary they changed places, making witness and testimony, no longer martyr and martyrdom, the key words.**

Ignatius Martyr, Bishop to Antioch (Southeast of Turkey) was condemned to die in the beginnings of the second century (117 A.C.). On his way to Rome (where the sentence was to be served), he begged the seven churches not to take that honor from him. He feared that his brothers hindered him to fulfill his penalty<sup>1</sup>. It is the spirit of the early church. The church that transformed the world and offered the fundamentals to a victorious Christianity.

If we address mission, we address death. I wish my dear brothers had not died, or at least in some way their slaughter had been prevented. I wish no widows were left, or a bride who was about to say "I do". I wish five children would not grow up regretting their loss... Nevertheless, we must keep considering death and life of course! Because the message that we communicate, the message that we believe in and is part of ourselves, gives us a life no one can take away, a life every human being deep inside longs for.

But Scriptures demand us to, "Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, ARM YOURSELVES ALSO WITH THE SAME ATTITUDE..." (1 Peter 4:1) In his first

*Carlos Madrigal, Turkey*

Epistle, Peter mentions the words “sufferings”, “afflictions”, “offense”, and “insults” 23 times. Nevertheless, his message is one of hope, “He cares for you” (5:7), and at the same time a real one, “...your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of sufferings.” To embrace suffering and the possibility of martyrdom is not (it should not be) a curb but a weapon. Against what? Against death... Does it work? It works because it defeats fear. So many times, fear feeds more from uncertainty, the unknown, or expectations, than from hurt or pain, which dissuades it. If we expect the worst, whatever happens will always be better.

However, it is not necessary to die and suffer the martyrdom for faith. The mission is death because it requires self-denial. It requires from us to take the risk (in human terms), to deny ourselves and to deny our essence. To deny our culture, our comfort, our future, our sons and daughters, our goods, our most important brothers and sisters, our plans, our investment in time, prayer, traveling, and media... If we only assume the maximum cost, everything else will seem small and little before the big enterprise.

Only then, our questions before the worst will begin to recover the savor of the first century of Christianity. Instead of asking, “Why allows God this to happen?” we should ask ourselves, “Lord, why did you not let me die?” Or, even better, “Why am I still alive? Why am I still here? What life I should live and what mission I should accomplish?” or, “Why have not I died to my ego? Why



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have not I died to my comfort, my small world, my worldly vision of life, my fear of giving it all? Why have not I died to those hindrances within me or around me that stop me from giving my life for the Gospel?”

What will happen next? “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious” (1 Peter 2:7) Again, Jesus Christ will become precious to our eyes! Again, He will become everything to us. Again, He will be our first love... Don't we yearn that?

**The second question we ask is, now what is the Lord going to do?**

Right after the killings, some started to predict, “Now it is time for a revival!” I do not dare to say when the perfect time for a revival is. I think we should give it a thorough thought. God reaches and transforms the world through three different ways, 1) The Holy Spirit who convicts the world of sin (John 16:7-9); 2) The message preached by the saints (1 Corinthians 1:21); 3) Interceding prayers from His people (Colossians 4:3). When these three means are not enough due to the hardness of the spiritual ground, the Lord adds a fourth element, the martyrdom of believers! Then, their blood becomes, “the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel” (Hebrews 12:24 and Matthew 22:35). I understand that sometimes the only way to redeem the sins of a certain group (not as a substitute, but as a carrier of the message) is to suffer such injustice until God breaks down the hardened hearts in view of the terrible facts. Thus, God wants to increase the intensity of His mercy and permits atrocious reactions... until the terrible shock breaks the dam. In times of Roman repression, Cornelius Tacitus (55-117 A.C.) in view of the horror of persecution, says, “...Hence, even for criminals (the Christians) who deserved extreme and exemplary punishment, there arose a feeling of compassion...” (Annals XV, 44).

For the first time in the recent history of Turkey, the national press is denouncing incongruities in the investigation, destroyed or manipulated evidence, and the biased indictment presented by the Public Prosecutor in the murderers' trial in Malatya. For the first time, a unanimous voice is being raised to find the underlying cause of the

investigation and to punish, not only the perpetrators, but also those that from behind incited and are the intellectual authors of such atrocities. Furthermore, for the first time the media are exercising a thorough examination of consciousness and accepting their guilt for the many years of Christian anti-propaganda pervading the public opinion of this country. In addition, they accept their guilt for spurring on the most radical groups to increase hate against Christians.

Around 1995, Turkish Evangelical Christians, converted from Islam started to appear on TV debate programs witnessing their conversion and faith. Their testimony was one of people really convinced of their faith, being of sound mind and body. They didn't speak as if they were deceived or manipulated by hidden and political Western interests. The constant attack from the media accusing Christians of plotting against the Government has not ceased since then. The children from those times have grown fearing and hating Christians, are the adults of today.

What is the Lord going to do now? I dare to say that the only way to surpass this threshold of hate would be through the blood of martyrs. For months, many of us have been saying that the horror of these murders instead of calming down the spirits, stirs up more and more people who feel should be heroes and saviors of their country. A week ago visiting Germany, I was just saying this when we got the news that a Catholic priest has been stabbed in Smyrna. I've known him personally and I wished him a soon recovery. Later, the press revealed that, “The young man didn't mean to stab the priest but the pastor from the Evangelical Church in Eskisehir!” This is the church where I belonged and pastored! The same church where we have been attacked with Molotov bombs during 2007!

I firmly believe that the Lord is not only permitting this, but He is going to use this to break into pieces the hard shell that is covering the hearts of so many in these lands; lands that seem impenetrable due to the historic, social and spiritual reasons. However, unquestionable is what the Lord wants us to do today.

Finally, we approach our last matter:



## What should be our reaction?

Within the vast range of Christians, some would say, “demand justice and appeal to all possible governmental offices.” Others would say, “Turn the other cheek...” I think both reactions are faces of the same coin. What is important is how we react. In the first case, do we react with resentment? In the second case, do we react in submissiveness? In both cases, we should react with love, faith and hope!

Three years ago, I was called to the police headquarters in Istanbul to be interrogated. When I was giving my testimony, a superior officer shouted from time to time from his office, “Don’t let him invent those things!” I couldn’t bear no more and at one point I also shouted at him very upset, “It seems you know better than me, why don’t you come here and testify and sign instead of me!” I felt like a twinge in my heart, right after, “Had the Lord reacted like me?” The Lord answered me that same week, “Let him offer his cheek to one who would strike him, and let him be filled with disgrace.” (Lamentations 3:30) Moreover, “I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting.” (Isaiah 50:6) Also, “If I said something wrong,” Jesus replied, “testify as to what is wrong. But if I spoke the truth, why did you strike me?” (John 18:23).

In other words, we have to learn how to cope with aggressions without undermining our faith, our love and devotion; and at the same time we have to keep demanding from public powers and by all means, “Why, why, why...?” Until we get their attention and reaction. To make a difference we need action, interceding prayers and help from all believers around the world! <<

## Endnotes

1 “I write to all the churches, and I bid all men know, that of my own free will I die for God, unless ye should hinder me. I exhort you, be ye not an unreasonable kindness to me. Let me be given to the wild beasts, for through them I can attain unto God. I am God’s wheat, and I am ground by the teeth of wild beasts that I may be found pure bread [of Christ].” Translation by Lightfoot.

# EFI NEWS

## Press release on persecution cases

### Pastor attacked in Andhra Pradesh

An independent Pastor working in Tandur Bellampalli Mandal in Asifabad of Adilabad district, Andhra Pradesh was attacked by the Hindutva Radicals belonging to RSS (Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh) group on March 29th 2008.

This incident took place, at about 4 pm in the evening, when a group led by one Gattu Beemaiah, the driver of Adilabad MLA Sridevi along with four other miscreants barged into the house of Pastor Hanock Sanjeev and started beating him mercilessly with sticks and rods for planning to construct a Church. The miscreants left him brutally injured. Pastor Hanok Sanjeev was admitted to a local hospital with grievous injuries.

The Hyderabad chapter of All India Christian Council (AICC) is presently assisting the Pastor.

### Four Pastors Arrested under Conversion charges in Madhya Pradesh

A group of about 10 Hindutva extremists attacked four Pastors belonging to the Believers Church of India on March 28 in Raoti village which is about 28 kilometers from Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh.

At about 7 pm in the evening, the radicals belonging to the RSS and Shiv Sena entered the house of Dinesh Damar a resident of Hartal Gram which comes under Raoti Thane where the missionaries had organized a programme to watch a Jesus film “Daya Sagar”. A gathering of 10-12 Christian believers were present for the programme.

While they were preparing for dinner, the extremists forced their way into the

house and without any provocation started beating the Christians present and used abusive language against them.

The police arrived on the spot and confiscated the film and arrested Pastor Bharat Kant Patel, Sukram Dewara, Ramesh Bhuriya and Vilas Chandra Nag.

They were kept at the Ratlam police control room for the entire night where the pastors were interrogated by the officials. They even checked the movie to see its contents.

On March 29 in the morning the pastor were taken to Raoti police station and were locked in the thane on charges of conversion.

In the evening, at about 4.30 pm the pastors were then taken to the court where the magistrate sentenced them to 3 day police remand and were imprisoned in Sailana Jail which is around 18 kms from the Ratlam railway.

The Pastors were ministering in Raoti village. When our correspondent spoke to the police in charge Mr. I Khan, he informed us that two persons namely Kalu Singh Bhavar and Dev Singh Katiya have filed complaint against the pastors. The pastors were booked under Section 3/4 of Madhya Pradesh Religion Act.

*Evangelical Fellowship of India requests prayers for the justice to be granted to the Pastors. <<*

*Evangelical Fellowship of India (established 1951) is a charter member of World Evangelical Alliance an accredited NGO with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.*

# Reflections from a Nigerian Mission Leader on the Challenges, Dangers and Hazards of Ministry

The context of our missionary endeavors in Africa fits very well into the context described by the Lord in Matthew 10, which contrasts *the challenges, dangers and hazards of the missionary enterprise with the blessings, securities and insurances provided by the Lord of the Harvest Himself*. Most of our fields are located in the highly resistant Muslim areas of West and Central Africa or the worn torn regions of countries like Liberia and Ivory Coast. Our missionaries have been operating in the face of dangers and in environments and situations fraught with hazards. Therefore, our policies concerning the dangers of being a missionary under the Christian Missionary Foundation, whether on a short-term or career basis, derive from the Lord's own policies as contained in this chapter of Matthew as well as that of Luke 10.

First of all, we accept that recruitment into the missionary force is similar to being



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recruited into a military institution. Military institutions exist to fight battles, and engaging in battles results in casualties of diverse kinds. The Lord himself warned of this when He gave an orientation to the Twelve and the Seventy, respectively, before sending them on their missionary assignments. He described the fields (whether at home or abroad) as fraught with dangers, and warned about obvious costs to be paid by those who have chosen to heed his call and be engaged in the work on the fields. He sent them as “sheep in the midst of wolves” (Matthew 10:16). He also painted a picture of “a continuum of hazards” from denial of access, persecution, arrest, detention, imprisonment (including kidnapping), and ultimately death (Matthew 10:14-39).

In His Priestly Valedictory Prayer for His followers in John 17, He also reminded His disciples that the World into which He was sending them was full of dangers and ministry hazards, and He asked the Father to protect them while doing their ministry in the world—not to remove them from the world or shield them from those possible attacks (John 17:6-18).

Since the ultimate price of being in a military institution is death, we too have identified that as the highest price to be paid by any missionary (whether on short-term or career missionary assignment) under the CMF. We “train our missionaries to die” (apologies to Ven. Bayo Famonure’s book, “Training to Die”). As part of the training,

orientation, and commitment to our missionaries, we emphasize the fact that missionary assignments involve risks and hazards and could lead ultimately to death.

Therefore, one of the “Statements of Commitment to and Affirmation of CMF Policies” that the prospective missionaries sign and communicate to their relatives states that, “*a missionary is prepared to die and be buried in the field of his/her assignment, and that should his relatives opt for the retrieval of*

*Reuben Ezemadu,  
Christian Missionary Foundation*

*his/her corpse for burial in their own place of preference, such relatives will be responsible for such retrievals.*” Such dis-

claimers are extended to other areas of social responsibilities in the light of the complicated and sensitive family issues in our African culture with regard to marriages, extended family relationships, number of children to be born by a couple, etc., as well as responsibilities for generating and disbursing support.

In spite of these, one of our missionaries from Ivory Coast sued the CMF in court, claiming compensation for the inconveniences he suffered while serving in the field for seven years under the CMF. The court awarded damages of FCFA350,000 (US\$700) against CMF. This was not a case of paying ransom for a kidnapped missionary, but paying damages for a missionary who felt inconvenienced by serving in a field where he did not get all the comfort he desired! <<

Throughout this edition of Connections, you will see threads of a global communication between mission societies, mission movements and mission leaders as they respond to questions of doing mission in contexts of suffering, violence, persecution and martyrdom. These agonizing issues are reality. As we hammer out policies and guidelines as safeguards to our most precious resource, missionaries, let us look to each other how to handle different issues so as to glean best practices from one another.

# A Global Dialogue

## Mission in Contexts of Suffering, Violence, Persecution and Martyrdom

**Connections** sent out questions asking for a response to mission leaders across the globe. Some were returned as answers to the questions given (see these set in boxes throughout the magazine). Some responded in a more narrative format (see articles by Madrigal, Garner, Adams, Saayman and Hoffman). Some sent copies of their policies manuals (in some cases these were confidential documents to be quoted from with care). Some leaders, due to the delicacy of the issues, asked that they not be included in this issue of the journal, or gave permission to quote without attribution. One leader responded that he could say very little because their agency was, even as we spoke, in delicate negotiations to seek the release of one of their missionaries, recently kidnapped.

Our theme is painfully relevant—especially in light of the martyrs of Turkey, the Koreans in Afghanistan, the YWAM base in the USA, and the constant persecution in many areas of the world, as in the state of Orissa, India. This reality is just part of an historical flow within the Church of Jesus—from the day of its founding. And it is a present reality today in all nations of the world—nobody is safe anywhere, whether Global North or Global South. Satan just “tailors” his approach depending on the culture and political/religious systems that guide and control the human race.

In this extended “global conversation” we have three categories of responses: responses from the leadership of mission societies, from the leadership of national mission movements, and from a pastor of a mission-minded church. Categories are indicated under each title.

### The core questions:

1. What policies does your national mission movement, sending agency, or church, have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts? What are some of the specific guidelines?
2. What policies does your national mission movement, sending agency, or church have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts? What are some of the specific guidelines?
3. Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom? If so, please share it with us.
4. What guidelines do you have (or feel you must develop) in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?
5. What guidelines do you have (or feel you must develop) regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?
6. What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?

7. What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?
8. What more ought we to be saying to our churches and future missionaries in this area?
9. Do give us a short example of case study if you can.
10. Feel free to write anything else you desire here.

### 1. John Amalraj, Interserve, India Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

We prioritize placement of personnel in clusters and teams, especially in isolated and dangerous contexts.

*What policies does your agency have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

We prioritize placement of personnel in clusters and teams, especially in isolated and dangerous contexts.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

We have yet to develop this.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

In the event of mission personnel or his family member being kidnapped, the following procedures will usually be followed:

1. The return of other remaining family members to their home country.
2. Full cooperation will be given to all legitimate authorities seeking release of the victim.
3. Professional hostage negotiators will be used.

A victim who is kidnapped should seek to:

1. Stay calm.
2. Build relationships with the captors.
3. Be natural and appear open (without putting people at risk who may still be in the location) in interrogation.
4. Remember that different cultures have different values. Decide early on what “being honest” means for you. If there is more than one victim then consistency of story is essential.

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

The following guidelines apply:

1. The Christian church will be informed of the situation, so as to stimulate prayer for the victim and their families; except, of course, where it is felt that this measure of publicity might prejudice the release of the captives. (It is often necessary to restrict information about kidnappings.)
2. The rights of citizenship of the victims may be exercised by seeking the help of their respective governments.
3. The host government will be informed, as having the immediate responsibility for the safety of expatriates.
4. Where appropriate, attempts will be made to obtain the release of the victims by reasoning with the kidnappers, although it is recognised that it will not always be feasible to establish direct links between the Fellowship and the kidnappers.
5. It is, however, affirmed that no sums of money by way of ransom will be paid, nor can the Fellowship enter into any political bargaining.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situa-*

*tion of violence, illness, death?*

Debriefing by the member care/personnel staff, and if necessary professional help is facilitated. Interserve India has appointed a crisis counselling consultant on an honorary basis for this purpose.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

We do include a mention in the context of security awareness—but seldom do we have to face such situations since most of our mission personnel use their profession as their primary identity on the field (tentmakers).

## 2. Paul Bendor-Samuel, Interserve: Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

We send short termers only to places where we have either long term missionaries of our own or experienced people from a partner agency. If the context is particularly unstable we will only send them where we know they will be a part of a team receiving effective care, mentoring and accountability.

*What policies does your agency have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

In general new longer-term missionaries will not be placed in an isolated situation. Exceptions to this could include: the person concerned is new to Interserve but is already an experienced worker; the place we are sending them is with a known and trusted partner agency who will meet our standards for care and support. This policy sometimes lands us into conflict with the sending part of Interserve, or the worker's church or the worker themselves where one of those entities wants to press for a placement but where our local team or regional leadership do not feel the situation is adequate and meets our standards.

Part of the answer to this question lies in the general standards we have in selection. Most of our workers are going to tough contexts so we are pretty stringent in our selection process. Someone once remarked, “It’s not easy to get into Interserve but once

in you can do pretty much what you want!” Perhaps an exaggeration but the point is that most of our people are very well qualified professionals who (we hope) are spiritually and personally mature. Not many join long term who are still in their 20s because of the need to bring something of real value to the field in terms of professional and ministry competency.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

Excellent question. I am not aware that we have an agreed statement although some of our National Offices may well have this. It is something for us to reflect on.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

We have extensive guidelines which I attach as a separate document.

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

See attached document

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

We expect to do critical incident debriefing both with the individuals concerned and with the team that is affected. We have concluded that it is vital to bring the team together to process their feelings and to do this in country and within a few days of events if possible.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

This is quite variable depending on the national office concerned. Some take this very seriously as part of their preparation of new candidates, others don't do much. We are currently developing agreed standards for pre-field training to help our national offices do this and other aspects of preparation more effectively.

*More dialogues throughout the magazine.*

# Martyrdom in the Context of World Evangelization

Marvin Newell

“Do you consider the two Korean missionaries who were killed by the Taliban in Afghanistan to be martyrs?” a colleague pointedly asked me after the incident took place. After a thoughtful moment I responded, “Yes I do.” Regardless of opinions concerning the circumstances leading up to, during and after the kidnapping of this short-term team, the two who were savagely killed can rightfully be considered martyrs of the Christian faith.

This assertion is based on what I believe to be an accurate definition of martyrdom. Although many definitions have been offered by the Church through the centuries, the most helpful definition of a martyr is succinct: *believers in Christ who lose their lives prematurely in a situation of witness as a result of human hostility*. We need to get beyond the notion that only a person who is publicly burned at the stake for refusing to renounce his faith is a true martyr.

Martyrdom is not something a person usually anticipates or to which one readily aspires. It is an experience that God in His providence bestows on select individuals for purposes ultimately known only to Him. Yet, the premature death of a follower of Christ as a result of human hostility has an enduring impact on observant believers. It causes most to pause and ponder anew the extreme cost of discipleship. It forces many to question whether they themselves measure up to the highest standard of devotion to Christ and His Cause. It motivates still others to abandon selfish plans and ambitions and turn to serve Christ in hard and difficult places. It creates a baseline for the Church from which to measure its



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worth - whether its activities are meaningful and truly important in light of death and eternity. Martyrdom has its value.

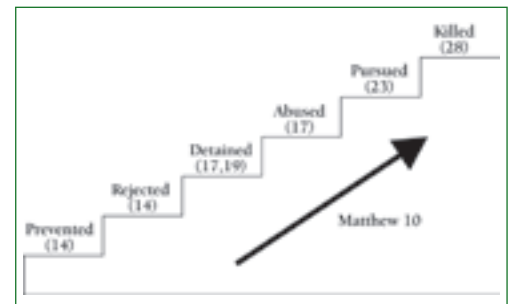
The book *A Martyr's Grace* (see review in this issue of *Connections*) documents the lives and deaths of twenty-one such martyrs. From 1898 to 2002, these martyrs were killed in a vast array of historical settings. From the little known “Hut Tax War” in Sierra Leone (1898), to the Boxer Rebellion in China (1900), through the bloody years of unsettled China and congruently the pioneering efforts in the Amazon basin in the 1930's, right through World War II, to the Vietnam War and Simba Rebellion of the 1960's, to present day unrest in the Middle East, martyrs who were on mission for Christ had their lives taken. These martyrs served as bush pilots, Bible translators, medical doctors, nurses, teachers, professors, social workers, pioneer church planters and field administrators. They were ordinary people performing ordinary mission tasks, who became caught up in extra-ordinary situations. They were people like you and me, living out their calling where God had sent them.

## Place of Martyrdom in Persecution

Not all persecution is equally intense nor carries equal consequences. Believers experience various degrees of persecution, with martyrdom as the highest degree of opposition. In Matthew 10, Jesus commissioned his disciples for a mission for the first time. Before sending

them out, he explicitly cautioned them that they would face varying degrees of opposition. His lesson to them can serve as a template for Christ followers of all ages.

Six phrases are used by Jesus to describe six increasingly intense hostilities that opposition can take. He begins with the least severe form, progressing in ascending order to the ultimate human hostility – martyrdom. Christ shows that His messengers could expect to be: prevented (“does not receive you,” v.14); rejected (“nor heed your words,” v.14); detained (“deliver you up,” vv. 17, 19); physically abused (“scourge you,” v. 17); pursued with intent to harm (“persecute you,” v. 23); and finally martyred (“kill the body,” v. 28).



It is instructive to note that Jesus declared opposition would come from the State (v. 18), religious leaders (v. 17) or family members (v. 21). Losing one's life as a result of human hostility in a situation of witness is the ultimate persecution experience.

## Lessons Martyrs Teach Us

Much can be learned from the deaths of martyrs to help us more clearly understand the fuller picture and implications of martyrdom.

### 1. *There seems to be no specific personal qualification for one to enter the ranks of martyrdom.*

A study of martyrs reveals that none of them planned or expected to die as a martyr. It is a trial that God in His providence bestows on select individuals for purposes

ultimately known only to Him. But He is not capricious in a matter as heart wrenching as this. God's selection of those who so die may appear arbitrary at times. However, we can say with confidence that His plans are sure and purposeful in each martyr's death. The truth of Romans 8:28-30 gives perspective in this regard.

## 2. Great gains are realized in martyrdom.

Paul states that for the believer, "to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). Gains at death are especially true for the Christian martyr. Over and over, stories recount gains that are achieved when the life of a servant of God is taken on account of Him. Gains achieved in martyrdom are best understood from three perspectives.

*Gains in relation to the martyr:* Ultimately, the martyr whose life has been sacrificed has reached a glorious new existence! The martyr is now in the untainted glorious presence of his Master, where "fullness of joy" and "eternal pleasures" abound (Psalm 16:11). Unimagined benefits are experienced. But beyond that, martyrs rightfully receive special recognition that will be noticed by all throughout eternity! A "crown of life" is a special emblem of honor, rewarding them for faithfulness until death (Revelation 2:10).



*Gains in relation to ministries:* Many times ministries initially experience a setback and even devastating loss immediately following the death of a martyr. Besides life being taken, property often is destroyed, followers scattered, and the work left in disarray. However, once the impact of the death is felt around the broader Christian community, it is not long before greater gains are realized. In most instances more funds are given, more initiatives started and more volunteers come forward as the impact of the martyr's death makes its mark.

*Gains in relation to God:* God always gains when His followers lay down their lives for Him! Satan attempts to make God look bad, weak and defeated by those deaths. But God has His way of showing otherwise. God gains by showing the world the cost of the cross – demonstrating anew through His martyrs the suffering of Christ himself. He gains when Christians so moved by the martyr's example rededicate themselves to Him and to His Cause. He gains when ministries expand, bringing forth crops of new believers. But more precious, He gains when His beloved martyr is welcomed into His presence to enjoy Him forever

## 3. Much pain is experienced in martyrdom.

We tend to romanticize the experience of martyrdom, believing that there is nothing but triumphant victory derived from the experience. The reality of the matter is that there is a flip side to be soberly considered as well: pain and loss.

*Pain in relation to the martyr.* To lose one's life prematurely by human hostile action is in every instance a physically painful experience. Typically, martyrs are beheaded, stabbed, choked, shot, speared, and stoned. There are times when martyr deaths are so glamorized that the gruesomeness is too often minimized. We need to be reminded that these people suffered pain as they spilled their blood. All experienced painful deaths.

*Pain in relation to loved ones left behind.* Wives, husbands, children and extended family members forever feel the pain of losing their martyred loved one. Some recover from the ordeal and

use it as a means of grace and growth. Others do not and throughout life bear the scars, heartache and consequences of having their beloved taken. Disillusionment, deep spiritual struggles, broke marriages and heartache plague many surviving family members, especially children.

## 4. A special "Grace" seems to be extended to martyrs.

For those martyrs who have time to contemplate what is happening and see their death coming, God seems to grant a special "grace" to endure the impending ordeal. In many cases, God grants a surreal, tranquil spirit, a serenity of heart and a peaceful mind that transcends understanding. That spirit of peace leads to a genuine surrender that is derived from an overarching eternal perspective on life. An unshakable faith in something better in store for them helped many martyrs to calmly face their end.

## 5. In martyrdom "justice" is rarely served.

Rarely if ever are the perpetrators of the martyr's death brought to "justice." When not apprehended, neither are they jailed, tried, convicted, nor punished for their crime. Perhaps this is what further qualifies martyr's deaths as martyrdom – that the sacrifice is accepted as a non-punishable crime. After all, these individuals were proclaiming Jesus, the ultimate Forgiver, who at the event of his martyrdom could plead, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." The highest priority of missions is to engage the lost by proclaiming a forgiving Jesus, not to seek justice. Ultimately, in His time and in His way, it will be God who avenges the blood of His martyrs (Rev. 6:9-12).

## 6. Seeking after martyrdom is unchristian.

In a day of rampant "suicide bombers" who glorify and justify the destruction of innocent lives as an act of martyrdom, it is right to question motives. It can be categorically demonstrated from Scripture that to seek after martyrdom is a very unchristian thing to do. The intentional destruction of one's own life, by putting one's self in harms way with the intent of being killed, cloaked in the excuse that it is for the cause of Christ, is selfish, self-serving, and sinful. Those who would attempt such a course of action are out for self-glory. It is their hope that others would applaud them for their action and thus

bring a degree of admiration to themselves that they could not achieve otherwise.

### 7. *The martyr cannot be dishonored.*

Christian martyrs are appropriately given their due share of respect. Instead of being discredited, they are immortalized. Their example encourages Christian workers in dangerous areas and hard places to continue to persevere in their calling. To honor martyrs for providing this incentive is the right thing to do.

### 8. *Martyrdom as a strategy of evangelism.*

A few decades ago, major mission strategies focused on taking the Gospel to the least resistant peoples or “ripe” fields. However, in recent years that strategy has flipped-flopped. Now the focus is on reaching least reached peoples who are mostly found in highly resistant places. Consequently, we can expect more martyrs as staunchly held Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist areas are being penetrated. But God is not caught off guard by these deaths. Ultimately, they promote the advancement of world evangelization, not the curtailment of it.

### 9. *Martyrdom as example to local believers.*

The impact of martyr deaths on local believers where those deaths take place is immeasurable. In many instances, not only has the work expanded and adherents increased, but the resolve of local followers to remain loyal to Christ is brazened. Resolve on their part to bear up under persecution is enhanced. By example of the missionary martyr, local believers have a model to follow and a death to emulate as they in turn stand against opposition. Some of them will die as martyrs too, and will be ready to sacrifice their lives because of the sacrifice that preceded their own.

## Conclusion

Martyrs speak to us by example from the grave. It becomes the responsibility of us who remain to pause and reflect on the heritage that has been passed along through their sacrificial deaths. Only then will we be prepared to endure the same kind of treatment if so granted the honor (Philippines 1:29). <<

# Christian Martyrdom is Act of Love

Pope Benedict XVI highlighted Wednesday to thousands of pilgrims that the deaths of Christian martyrs in the past and present are an act of love.



“We should always note that this is a distinctive characteristic of the Christian martyr – it is exclusively an act of love, towards God and towards men, including the persecutors,” said the Pope to crowds in St. Peter’s Square, according to Reuters.

“Christian martyrdom reminds us of the victory of love over hatred and death,” he said.

He spoke from his study window in the Vatican the day after Christmas, when the Roman Catholic Church celebrated the feast of Saint Stephen – the first Christian martyr, according to Indian Catholic news agency.

Stephen, a deacon in the first Christian community in Jerusalem, was stoned to death by a mob in Jerusalem as Christianity began to spread in the region. He was recorded in the Bible as praying for God to forgive his persecutor as he died.

The pope’s speech drew attention to the fact that Christians in many parts of the world still face persecution, torture and death.

“It is not rare even today that we receive news from various parts of the world of missionaries, priests, bishops, monks, nuns and lay people persecuted, imprisoned, tortured, deprived of their liberty or prevented from exercising it because they are disciples of Christ and apostles of the Gospel,” he said.

He did not name any specific events of persecution to prevent aggravating the situation. But recently, there have been several notable incidents. Among those are the stabbing of an Italian Catholic priest in his church in Turkey less than two weeks ago, and the burning and destruction of twelve churches by Hindu extremists in India, beginning Christmas Eve, killing at least one person.

The German Pope concluded by inviting pilgrims and Catholics to pray “for those who suffer because of their fidelity to Christ and to his Church,” according to Indian Catholic. <<

*Ethan Cole, Christian Post Reporter*

# Reflections on suffering and danger

written from the sidelines of the world tentmaking movement

Tentmakers in contexts hostile to Christianity face danger and suffering for their faith in Jesus. It feels fraudulent to be writing about this as I sit in my study at home in one of the most peaceful countries in the world. Yet, I write as a retired trainer of tentmakers and missionaries. I write as a long-time pastor and also as a former missionary.

Have I lived in a context of persecution? No, but I have lived in a setting of occasional violence and danger. Have I suffered for my faith at the hands of a hostile community or government? No, but by observing over time, training and meeting many practitioners, occasionally passing through dangerous contexts, and brushing up against fear and suffering, I have picked up glimpses of helpful truth. It is these glimpses I share.

## Six steps to minimize dangers

If we are honest, not all the suffering encountered in sensitive or dangerous settings is the fault of the hostile country. Sometimes, as missionaries, we make mistakes—whether through lack of preparation or lack of wisdom—which causes a reaction from those amongst whom we live. Here are six preventative measures that can minimize triggers of suffering and danger. These factors should be considered by both agency and individual.

### 1) Have I/we thoroughly studied the laws of the country we plan to work in?

Sometimes tentmakers break the law and cause a reaction simply because they do not know the law thoroughly. It is all very well

to have a blanket belief that we should serve God rather than people, but it does in fact help to know what the laws are. This knowledge needs to be current, needs to recognize regional variations, and needs to include an understanding of the principles on which that law is based. In other words, laws often reflect a mindset and not just a regulation.

### 2) Have we also studied well the cultural and religious factors we will encounter?

I never fail to be surprised at the scanty and haphazard preparation many tentmakers have before entering a difficult setting. Our preparation needs to be thorough, specific to the country and region, and informed by up-to-date knowledge of recent cases and news. This is particularly so in short-term teams, which often are so caught up in the adventure that they overlook the dangers and sensitivities. The relative youth and immaturity of many short-term teams simply adds to this problem. Around the world, there is a long catalogue of incidents that led to danger, expulsion, imprisonment, and damage to the existing church simply because a team on a very short visit made mistakes they would not have made if preparation had been more thorough. We also need to recognize that in studying another religion, one generally opposed to Christianity, that its outworkings will not be the same in every country

or region. For example, each country in Northern Africa's approach to Islam needs to be understood in terms of that country and its history.

### 3) Do we understand how that country sees our own country of origin?

I remember being in a particular country during a military coup. We watched tanks roll by from the guest house window and watched as a machine gun post was set up behind some petrol pumps! When it was all over, we went out in our agency vehicle and drove amongst the celebratory crowds. We had a Kiwi insignia on the door. New Zealanders were, at that time, very highly thought of in that country. Everywhere we went, we enjoyed a warm response. In contrast, at the instructions of their embassy, Americans were behind closed doors because of the local attitudes to Americans. This is not a reflection on either culture, but recognition of the fact that our country of origin often affects how we are perceived and how freely we may act.

### 4) Do we understand what is happening right now in that place, in that people group, and why?

Within big countries there are subcultures, regions, local variations. Driving once in a particular setting with a colleague, we both noticed the road was very quiet with

Derek Christensen

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### 3. Detlef Blöcher, DMG, Germany

Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

- Short-term missionaries are not sent into high-risk situations.
- Short-term missionaries do not work without experienced longer-term missionaries.
- Principles and policies for longer-term missionaries apply also for short-term missionaries.

*What policies does your agency have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

We enquire about their theology of suffering as an integral part of the selection process (we expect a written assignment).

- Required pre-field training, including simulations.
- Required on-field orientation by local partner organization.
- Team ministry approach (support team), mutual care.
- Cooperation with national churches and partner organizations in the place of service.
- Careful risk assessment and security guidelines.
- Sixteen pages in our manual that cover: risk assessment, crisis prevention (risk avoidance), development of crisis management plans and its implementation, intervention in events like armed robbery, arrest and interrogation, natural disasters, rape, hostage taking, kidnapping, criteria for evacuation, sudden death of team members, natural post trauma reactions, critical incident debriefing of team members, mutual care, helping children in crisis situations.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

- We expect all new missionaries to write an assignment on their personal theology of suffering.
- As a mission we have a theology of suffering (in German). In brief:
  1. We are created in the likeness of God (immense value)
  2. We are fallen of creation
  3. We are created for heaven, not earth
  4. The world is completely lost to sin; in persecution and violence, sin shows its true character
  5. God reveals the nature of the fallen world by permitting suffering to happen
  6. There is no discipleship without suffering
  7. God's judgment is on a fallen world (and each individual is part of it)
  8. There are spiritual dimensions of disasters and persecution

no pedestrians, a very bad sign. We immediately turned back and took another route. Later, a young couple coming along that road didn't know the signs, drove on, and were ambushed and badly injured. The incident stemmed from events that had taken place between tribes in that place over the past fortnight. We had general training in the culture

of that country, specific training regarding urban politics, and local knowledge through experience of what was happening right then.

**5) Have we made use of all the training available in preparation for that setting, including training available from secular providers?**

(the devil hates Jesus and his people)

9. In the last times persecutions and disasters will increase
10. God's children honour God even through pain and suffering
11. They live out God's character, show His grace and compassion with people in need
12. They live a dedicated, committed and sacrificial life in obedience to God's word
13. We know that we will not change the world to the better and still live out God's character and set prophetic signs.
14. We believe in unity of the global body of Christ in times of suffering and persecution (prayer support, practical help, advocacy)

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

- We have two pages of guidelines in our manual (in German).

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

- As a mission, we do not pay any monetary ransom, as such a practice would invite the kidnapping of more missionaries.
- If the family of the abducted person wanted to pay a small ransom, our mission would probably tolerate this, yet it needs to be small (symbolic).
- We may consider other demands (development projects, sending of missionaries) if it is a neglected people group and their demands appear legitimate and there can be a peaceful resolution.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

- The manual gives guidelines and practical steps on how to serve a team member when no specialist is available.
- CID by a trained professional for the whole mission team (as they all feel vulnerable) if possible.
- Provide extensive time for inner resolution in the country of service or a safe place (e.g., 6 – 12 months).

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

- Pre-field training, including simulation of a kidnapping/armed robbery.
- Life in community (team) and practical care for each other (trusted relationships).

Not every agency knows everything! Tentmakers in particular are going to serve in secular settings. Have we checked out the information others in our field have gained? Have we listened widely and wisely? Have we moved like Jesus, amongst the "ordinary people" and not confined entirely to our Christian subculture?

**6) Have we registered with our embassy in the country of choice?**

Do we know what the policy of our government is in cases of danger, kidnapping or similar threats? Do they know about us? Sometimes, we are so concerned about being citizens of heaven we neglect some obvious earthly assistance. Our own government often has problems when there are crises or natural disasters because a high percentage of our citizens living in the other country have not registered their presence with the embassy. Sometimes, there are issues sometimes of security but that is another question...

**Five responses that may be helpful if the worst happens**

Hostile reactions to tentmakers range from being asked to leave by revoking a visa through kidnapping, injury or death in a flare up of violence. There are current examples of these reactions, and all the points in between. Here are five helpful responses to negative situations that every tentmaker should be prepared to engage.

**1) Activate my network**

Are my contact networks strong, well organized and easy to activate? Often when something bad happens, kidnapping or imprisonment for example, our first reaction is to let people know so that those outside the situation can begin to act. Am I able to activate that network? Do I have the means of getting in touch? If I am in a sensitive area, are people checking that I am all right? Do our children know what to do? If we get trapped in the middle of a violent outbreak, do we have emergency supplies? Step one is often to activate those networks.

**2) Having done so, expect my agency to act in a well thought out manner**

Has my agency or support body put in place a strong response policy with good networks itself to government and other significant players? Tentmakers in particular need to know this is in place. Some agencies are small and new (and often inexperienced). When I make contact with the first point in my network (if I am able) then I need to know that the backup team behind that contact knows what to do.

**3) Act in a manner consistent with my**

**Lord towards the person/s hurting, threatening, holding me**

The way I react initially often affects what happens later. A wild outburst of anger, threats (my government is bigger than yours), an attitude of racial superiority...these may further endanger me and inflame the situation. Have I worked through the issues involved in treating these people as those for whom Christ died, those whom God continues to love? Am I able to maintain, at the very least, a spirit of quietness, respect and common sense? I haven't been kidnapped, shot at or imprisoned, but I have been marched off towards the cells and then locked and boarded up in a house while an angry and drunk husband tried to break in with a machete. The thing that surprised me in these incidents was that I stayed fairly calm. What bothers me is my response to the times in my own little country when

another driver does something stupid, a shop assistant is less than helpful or a colleague cuts across what I am doing without telling me. It seems to me, after many years of the Christian walk, that winning the tiny daily victories is the key to the bigger ones that may challenge us in the future.

**4) Minimise collateral damage**

When I am arrested, questioned, observed or monitored, have I the capacity to see this within the larger picture of God's people in this place, or am I centred on myself and my own situation? My response is both preparatory (being prepared to act in such a way that others will not be compromised) and a response mechanism at the time of danger (how should I best act in this situation to preserve the integrity, security and ministry of others, even if it means sacrificing my own work and how I perceive my own

**4. Bob Creson, Wycliffe Bible Translators, USA**  
Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

*What policies does your agency have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

The policies are the same both for long-term and short-term personnel:

- **Risk Assessments:** Without carrying out Risk Assessments an entity is not positioned to plan for corporate or personal security. This is the first step in preparation for contingency planning and must be repeated at regular intervals to reflect changing conditions in the US and at other locations where Wycliffe USA staff are assigned.
- **Staff Working in High Risk Areas:** Countries of the world where Wycliffe USA staff members work are often areas of greater-than-average risk to personnel. Wycliffe recognizes its responsibility with partner organizations to weigh the risk to which its staff members are exposed against the urgency of its task of serving the language communities of the world.
- **Contingency Plans:** Contingency Plans will always be based on a current risk assessment. The planning process should

focus on mitigation of risk as well as management of a crisis should it occur. It is not possible to develop an adequate Contingency Plan after a crisis has started. It is far better to think through possible emergencies and considered options in a time of calm. Decision-making will usually be better where a plan is in place. The Contingency Plan is a dynamic document, frequently updated, and should be in harmony with local conditions. It is intended to be a guideline for specific local actions and not a substitute for common sense. The plan should be user friendly and reflect the worst-case scenarios.

- **Personal Contingency Plans:** All of the above applies to Personal Contingency Planning as well. Personal Contingency Plans should be registered with and approved by the entity administration.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

- **Ransom:** The payment of ransom encourages the taking of hostages. Wycliffe USA advises its members that they are being assigned to a partner organization where it is the policy that no payment is made nor actions taken that would likely per-

contribution?). God has an uncanny capacity to carry on the work of His Kingdom, even when we are removed from what we are doing. On the other hand, many stories are emerging currently of kingdom work damaged severely because of the lack of wisdom of foreign Christians who consider their right to go where they want with the gospel of supreme importance, even when it means a government may expel all foreign workers in a region because of the “rights” clung to by a few or even a single individual.

### 5) Draw on spiritual resources and reserves built-up over years of Christian life

It is inspiring sometimes to read the biographies of some Christians captured and held for long periods of time. Terry Waite made great use of Scripture he had memorized. Others sing hymns and songs they have known. Still others practice spiritual

disciplines built into their lives over a long period of time. Do we have those resources? Have we built them in? Do we know they are there as a means of God’s grace in the toughest times? I have seen people tackle a major physical challenge (running a marathon, climbing a mountain, swimming “to that rock out there”) only to crumble because the physical hardness and endurance have not been built-up. Likewise, I have seen God’s people crumble because their spiritual reserves have not been built-up.

### Groundwork - four theological exercises

In the end, how we react and how we cope depend not just on techniques, networks and mental toughness, but also on our core beliefs. I suggest that the following four questions are important to work through before the crisis comes. I offer no comment

on the “answers” you should find. I simply suggest they are vital questions.

#### 1. How do I see myself in terms of my role and my definition?

Am I a missionary? Am I a missionary undercover? Am I simply one of God’s people, being God’s person in this different place according to my gifts and my opportunities?

#### 2. How do I view the people I encounter here, whether I encounter them in good times or in danger?

Are they people hopelessly trapped in sin and evil, people under the shadow of a religion born of Satan, or people with hopes, dreams, longings and urges just like me and for whom my Lord has an equal love?

#### 3. How do I view the future of the Kingdom in this place?

Is God’s work up to me, under the control of the Spirit, or a partnership of local believers, Spirit and visiting encouragers? This question relates to both the sovereignty of God and the nature of the Church. A related issue that bothered me for many years is this: Do I consider myself divinely protected? How would I react if I knew I was going to die or be seriously harmed, despite my belief in the all encompassing love of God? Many years ago, a number of Christians working for an agency were captured in Africa. Two were New Zealanders. One was shot and killed. The other was wounded and escaped. The one who escaped came back to New Zealand and spoke widely of the goodness and protection of the Lord. This left unanswered the question of how the Lord had treated his colleague who was killed.

#### 4. How do I view the religion/belief systems of this place and this people?

How does God see people in this place? How does He plan to deal with them? What means does He have for meeting the whole range of needs that they have and where do I fit into His plan? These questions raise theologies of salvation, evangelism and social action.

Enough! Except to say that my observation is that our capacity to cope is generally in direct proportion to the preparation done beforehand, in learning and training and in Christian lifestyle. <<

## GLOBAL VOICES

petuate extortion, ransom or blackmail.

This does not, however, preclude the possibility of negotiations to obtain the release of the hostage.

- **Evacuation of Family Members:** In order to gain the release of a hostage at the earliest possible time and in light of the experience of previous hostages, family members of the hostage will normally be evacuated to their home country, or perhaps to a neighboring country, as soon as possible. This requirement may be waived by the CMT if it is determined that the evacuation of a family or family member would be detrimental to the best interests of the family or of the host partner.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

- Policies regarding post-crisis responsibilities
- **Debriefing:** Wycliffe USA Personnel who are directly involved in a crisis will participate in a debriefing process facilitated by a counselor or a qualified debriefer. The initial debriefing should ideally happen within 72 hours of the resolution of the crisis, followed by a second debriefing within six months. The VP for Personnel is responsible to ensure that such debriefing occurs.
- **Post Crisis Evaluation:** In order

to improve the response to major Organizational Level Crises, whenever Wycliffe USA manages an Organizational Level Crisis, Wycliffe will conduct a review within 60 days of the resolution of said crisis. Wycliffe expects partner organizations to do the same.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

Training

- **Initial Training:** Wycliffe USA field assigned members should receive Contingency Preparation Training appropriate to their location, role and field term prior to or shortly after reaching that assignment. It is the responsibility of each Partner Organization to determine how and where this information should be delivered.
- In cases where there is no Host Partner organization Wycliffe USA will ensure that adequate training is delivered prior to releasing that staff member for service.
- **Ongoing Training:** Partnering entities are expected to provide ongoing Contingency Preparation Training for staff as well as Crisis Management Training for administrators and those assigned to security and crisis management roles.

# Tentmaking Missions

## in Contexts of Special Challenge

There are about eighty-one countries in the 10/40 window where the least evangelized people live. There are 1739 ethnic linguistic groups of more than 10,000 that do not have a Gospel witness.

These are mostly located in the most restricted areas where we cannot obtain missionary visas. The only way to get access into these countries and serve the people is to go there as tentmakers. Under such circumstances, it's inevitable that a lot of tentmakers have to experience persecution, dangers and difficulties because they have to work and minister behind closed doors.

Many tentmakers, under the strict control of the government, struggle with many crises and difficulties. Their difficult stories are seldom told publicly because they have to continue their ministry in the country.

Friends from my country were arrested by their host country's police and had to stand trial. Some of them have been expelled. Some have had their meetings broadcast on national TV by a camera crew that came unannounced to their Bible study. It is not such a rare occurrence for some to have their lives threatened because of their work for His Kingdom.

Wherever we go, we hear the stories of these persecuted tentmakers. Their sacrifices and the persecutions they have to face are beyond our imagination. A while ago, I sent an e-mail to my fellow tentmakers around the world asking for stories of tentmakers work-



**Johnny Chun** is executive secretary of Tentmakers International. He is also executive director of Mission International and former director of the Korea Association of Tentmakers (KAT)

ing in restricted countries. I didn't get much response; I can understand why they are reluctant to tell these stories publicly because of security issues. However, the following is one story from a tentmaker whom I disciplined and sent out.

### A letter from a tentmaker in Central Asia.

*With a thankful heart I was dispatched to Uzbekistan as a doctor of an international cooperation agency in May 2005. It'd been my dream to go help the people of Uzbekistan with my skills as a doctor and to share my faith with them. I'd like to share what I've learned and experienced during the two years and seven months I was there.*

*Before I arrived in Uzbekistan, I didn't know much about the situation in Uzbekistan. At that time, the Uzbek government had gained their independence from Russia and wanted to break free from Russia's stronghold. The Uzbek government kept a close relationship with America and other Western countries through a war that was raging in Afghanistan. A lot of NGOs and missionaries, including Korean and American, were working in Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan was known as a paradise of NGOs. However, within a week from when I'd arrived, things changed. There was a rebellion that took the lives of more than 500 people. Soon after, Europe withdrew from Uzbekistan, blaming the government. America decided to maintain their relationship with Uzbekistan, but eventually they followed Europe because of pressure from other Western countries. America withdrew their troops from Uzbekistan and the Peace Corps and many volunteers and missionaries were banished from the country.*

*The democratic movements which arose in Kyrgyzstan, the Ukraine and Georgia threat-*

*ened the government, so they strengthened their power internally, kept their distance from the West, and began to build their relationship with Russia again. As a result, the environment for*

*Christian missionaries became more sensitive than before. The government also had a meeting with the leaders of the major religions and initiated a bill stating that any missionaries who preached God's words outside the church would be imprisoned and fined heavily.*

*Many Korean missionaries were exiled and many Korean NGO's quit their work. The Uzbek government approved only certain religions and religious affiliations. Even with that, it was still illegal to evangelize people even to the permitted religions. If any missionary work was detected, a fine of up to 200 to 600 times the average salary in Uzbekistan would be assessed, and if he was disclosed again, not only himself but also the pastor of his church would be arrested and imprisoned for 3~8 years. The government also strongly suppressed the production and distribution of any Christian documents and imposed heavy punishment regarding this. During that time, two Korean volunteers were detected by the police for attending a Christian meeting so the rest of the Korean volunteers were also strongly oppressed. The government restricted the Christian activities in the international cooperation agency.*

*I prepared for my work by having a weekly Bible study with the family of a Korean missionary. I also had regular meetings with some families in a Korean church. In October, 2005, the Uzbek religious department banned services in unregistered places like our church and ordered us to move to another place. So we moved to the registered local church and held a service in the afternoon. In January, 2006, the missionary who led the Bible study was deported.*

Johnny Chun

From late August, 2006, I worked twice a week in the hospital that was being run by a Korean missionary organization. They had also built a church and did many things ranging from evangelizing, to providing medical care, to teaching the medical college students and doctors. The government commanded the organization to close the hospital and they deported the leader. However, through the efforts of the Korean Embassy, they were allowed to keep the hospital but had to separate it from the church and do no religious activities. Two doctors returned home and the hospital needed a doctor. By the request of the organization and tacit approval of the Embassy and the international cooperation agency, I started my work in the hospital.

I met a lot of Uzbek patients. I was really happy to serve them and to be served by them. I was challenged by my patients to show them the way to open their hearts to God and the Uzbek staff wanted me to evangelize others and to pray with them in the midst of the dangers

At that time, the Uzbek President appeared

on TV and warned the nation against other religions, especially Christianity. He said that Christianity would divide the nation. In December, the program, "Hypocrites," was broadcast nationwide twice. The program talked about the unregistered local churches and said that many foreigners come to Uzbekistan to confuse people in religion and that the government was trying to find them to deport them. It also mentioned Korea twice and showed pictures that were taken at the airport when the missionary who led the Bible study was deported in early 2006. It compared Christianity with examples of heathenism, including Aum in Japan and religious disputes which arose in Sudan and Rwanda. It also insisted that foreigners, including Koreans, were actually breaking up the Uzbek society and confusing the nation. The program said much to damage the image and trustworthiness of Koreans. As a result of the program, many Christians in Uzbekistan went through difficulties and troubles. At times they had to close the church and too often they were dragged, beaten and their jobs and children were threatened.

During my stay in Uzbekistan, I felt sad because of the restrictions. I couldn't help the people of Uzbekistan as much as I had initially hoped. Even though the difficulties in Uzbekistan are great, I believe that the missionaries' efforts to share their true heart with others will have a great impact. I believe that God will write a great history and produce a few but precious fruits. I hope that the Uzbek people will think of us as a people who take care of them and love them with sincerity and don't only focus on missionary work. Therefore, I thank the missionaries who work hard in the barren places with hopeful dreams.

It is not easy for tentmakers to share the gospel in such restricted countries and that is the reality that every tentmaker who lives and works in a restricted country meets everyday. For the tentmaker missionaries who desire to serve in those closed countries, I suggest:

First, tentmakers in these restricted countries should be trained and equipped more than traditional missionaries. They should



Believers holding a prayer meeting in secret in the desert

become experts in Christian ministry AND in their profession. Otherwise, it would be difficult for them to work effectively. Actually, they have to do two jobs: one as a fulltime missionary and another as a full time professional.

Second, tentmakers' ministries should take time to develop. They cannot preach or share the gospel publicly or freely. All the

ministries they do are done personally and carefully. Their identity and their job should be matched so that the people around them will recognize them as professionals, not as missionaries. Lifestyle evangelism is the point of contact for tentmakers. They develop friendship first and then share about life in Christ through their lifestyle.

Third, tentmakers should make every

effort to get to know and understand as much as possible about the situation of in his/her host country. This should include the political situation and the country's policies and regulations regarding evangelism and public Christian meetings. They should also get to know the local culture and customs. <<

# Reflections from a Missions Pastor

*Hendrik Saayman*

When a Kingdom worker reports for duty to be obedient to the calling of the Lord, the last thing that a missions Pastor is thinking about is suffering, persecution, kidnapping or hostage victims. You are just glad that there are some people who are willing to take the Message to the ends of the earth that you do your best to help him or her to do just that.

The reality is unfortunately that the world is not so eager to receive this Message and neither the "enemy". Therefore it is important to be prepared for difficult situations. We had to learn that the hard way. On two different occasions some of our workers experienced very challenging situations. One (single male) was kidnapped in a closed country and a family was trapped in a war zone in the Middle-East.

As a church we were not prepared for this and not sure how to handle it. By God's grace, both of the parties came physically unharmed out of the situation but were emotionally wounded. We have learned precious lessons out of this and I would like to share these.

First of all, there must be a plan of action for workers who are going into a potentially hostile country. Such a plan must consist of at least the following points:

- Information about the nearest embassy or consulate of your country in or near the target country. The worker must report his or her presence in the country.

- Agreement/contract on who is responsible for decisions in time of crisis with the agency whom your worker is going to work with.
- Communication strategy. This was one of the most important expectations from the workers. They need to be in contact with their church for moral support. This strategy depends on the context of the worker and may include provision for satellite phone if the other ways of communication like SKYPE, landline, cell phone, internet, etc. are unavailable.
- Evacuation strategy:
- It must be discussed with the worker how he or she will decide when is a good time to evacuate and what principles must be taken in consideration e.g. own safety, witness opportunity, fear etc.
- What means of evacuation are available
- Necessary funds for evacuation must be available.
- Information about trauma counselors in that country or the availability of trauma counselors ready on re-entry of the workers.

Above points must be cleared out in detail as good as possible before the worker leaves for the foreign country.



**Hendrik Saayman** – Missions  
Pastor of the Dutch Reformed  
Church Moreletapark, Pretoria,  
South-Africa

Secondly the church must create a "safety net" for the worker. Such a "safety net" can consist of the following:

- Prayer network. Make sure that enough people will intercede for the worker.
- Communication network. Information of the needs of the worker must be effectively communicated to the church.
- Moral support is very important in times of distress.
- Emergency funds must be available on short notice.
- In the event of re-entry there must be logistical support such as accommodation, transport etc.
- Professional trauma counseling must start as soon as possible.
- The worker must feel that his or her well being is important to the church and not their performance.

Although persecution or martyrdom is something that you do not want for anyone, it is a reality and something that you find in the Bible from the very beginning! In Gen.4 we read of Able who was killed by his brother Cain because God accepted Able's offering and not Cain's. It is thus necessary for all of us as Christians to be prepared for persecution but more so for our workers because they are on the front line. As a church we must help them as well as we can to be prepared and to feel secure in the love, care and commitment from the church towards them. <<

## 5. Dorothy Haile, SIM

### Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

- All short-term missions are required to have travel insurance with evacuation provision.
- International contingency planning guidelines apply, including missionary's agreement to obey instructions from local leadership, and annually updated risk assessments.

*What policies does your agency have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

- Evacuation cover is provided by our sending office policies.
- International contingency planning guidelines apply, including missionary's agreement to obey instructions from local leaders and annually updated risk assessments.
- Each sending office includes some training in its candidate orientation.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

We do not have a written summary statement on a biblical theology of martyrdom and suffering, though we have shared materials obtained from other groups widely in the last few years. Our core value that ends "or even death" is relevant.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

Hostage Negotiation and Ransom/  
Extortion

**Ransom/Extortion:** It is the policy of SIM that ransom or other extortion should not be paid, nor should SIM yield to other demands issued through the use of hostage-taking or extortion

The Crisis Management Team is authorized to conduct negotiations, consistent with the limitations of other SIM policies, as it may deem necessary to save the life or lives and obtain the release of any member abducted while on official SIM business. It may employ such consultants and negotiators as it deems appropriate.

Except where it is felt that publicity might prejudice the release of the captives, the Christian Church worldwide will be informed of a hostage situation in order to stimulate prayer for the victims and their families.

- The host government will be informed immediately because it has responsibility for the safety of expatriates.
- The rights of citizenship of the abducted person(s) will be exercised in seeking the help of the respective governments.
- Where possible, attempts will be made to obtain the release of the victims by reasoning with the kidnappers. However, it is not always possible or desirable to establish direct links between a mission and kidnappers.
- Sending Offices will do all in their power to assure next of kin of their concern and of the practical steps being taken to secure release and to exercise a spiritual ministry, as opportunity affords, to anxious relatives.

**Relocation of Hostage Families:** In the event of a hostage seizure of SIM personnel, the family of the hostage will be evacuated to a safe location as soon as possible. A staff member shall be assigned to work with the family throughout the period of crisis.

In the event of a hostage seizure of its personnel for political or terrorist motives, "the family of the hostage will be evacuated to a safe location as soon as possible." In many cases, the safe location will be the family's home country though a safe regional location may also be a good option. This policy will be waived only if a decision is made that an evacuation of the family is not in the best interests of the hostage or his/her family or of SIM.

"A staff member shall be assigned to work with the family throughout the period of crisis." This staff member shall provide information for the family and take whatever steps are possible to minimize the stress and consequences of the crisis on the family.

It should be noted that where the local situation indicates that hostages are taken temporarily in order to demand a relatively small "ransom" (e.g. up to USD 1000) this

## GLOBAL VOICES

will not normally result in the family being relocated. This situation is more like robbery or extortion.

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

It is the policy of SIM that ransom or other extortion should not be paid, nor should SIM yield to other demands issued through the use of hostage-taking or extortion

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

**Crisis Counseling:** SIM personnel who are directly involved in a crisis shall receive an initial debriefing from a suitably trained person and will be offered a follow-up assessment from a qualified Christian mental health professional.

These initial debriefings shall occur as soon as possible following a crisis (normally between 48 and 72 hours if possible) and follow-up evaluations six to twelve months later (unless otherwise specified by the mental health professional).

These evaluations and any treatment are confidential between the SIM person and the mental health professional. Costs associated with this policy shall be paid by SIM. Although the individuals who receive this evaluation may vary from incident to incident, in each case at least the victim, the immediate family, the Crisis Manager and the negotiator (if any) shall be offered the opportunity of evaluation from a qualified mental health professional.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

Different sending offices will vary in their training. We do not have internationally mandated materials.

*What more ought we to be saying to our churches and future missionaries in this area?*

We should be saying lots more to our churches and future missionaries in this area!

# When Trouble Comes....

Laura Mae Gardner

Trouble of many kinds comes to most missionaries. Usually it falls into one of five categories: health, relationships (including relationship with God), success in one's assignment, family, or finances. However, trouble also comes from civil unrest, war, violence, the break-down of law and order in a country, hostile ideologies, etc.. In view of these matters, **Wycliffe and SIL, who partner together in the care of shared workers**, think in terms of the following:

## Training and Preparedness

Short-term teams are almost always led by an experienced worker. This person prepares his team to face field realities, one of which is that members of this team are obliged to abide by the guidance of leaders on that field. Usually, a team of short-term workers will not be encouraged to go to places of high danger or potential unrest.

Long-term workers or career people have minimal crisis training pre-field, but are made

aware of the security challenges of the field to which they are assigned. Once on-site, they are given some crisis training and informed about crisis policies for that field or area.

Field administrators are assisted by the International Coordinator for Crisis Management to develop crisis policies and practices to predict, prepare for, and weather crisis situations. These policies include the following:

- Risk Assessments. What are the risks most likely to happen in our area or country, and what is the probable impact of those events?
- Triggers. Which events will elicit a corresponding response from our group, informing us of the need to move to a higher or lower level of alertness?
- Contingency Plans. These must be developed for both the group and the individuals in that group.
- Staffing for Crisis Preparedness. A field crisis management committee is formed, to develop and oversee implementation

of these policies, and monitor the triggers when crisis threatens.

- Communication Networks. Strong communication links must be in place for each field administrative office, with the home offices of each field member, with sending churches, with the organization's international communication office, and with crisis specialists.

## Appropriate principles behind these policies are:

- Preparedness is wisdom;
- The field is the best situated to gather accurate information about the pending crisis;
- Decisions are best made by those who are impacted by them.
- Policies should be established well ahead of the time of need. They are more easily developed when reason is not contaminated by high emotion or high fear. Establishing policies about ransom of kidnap victims cannot be done after a member is kidnapped—it must be done well before this event.

## After the Crisis

- SIL's policies include the need for a debriefing after a major crisis, debriefing for groups in the event of an evacuation or similar occurrence that impacts the entire group, or for those individuals most impacted. We have found that healing and stability occur more quickly when a debriefing takes place.
- Practical care for the impacted individuals and entities. Organizational funded evacuations and debriefings evidence care and impact morale more than any words can do. "We've heard you say you care, but now we see that you really do" were words heard at an evacuated group's debriefing.
- SIL has become more aware of the reality



Glorious Church - Manner



of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSS) and is in the process of developing biblically integrated helpful materials to address this level of distress.

- Post-crisis evaluation of the policies and practices of a group—what did we do well? What did we fail to do? What remains to be done to bring wholeness and stability to this group?

## Principles

- A mismanaged crisis can result in a secondary crisis that exceeds the original one. Therefore, it is important that a crisis is handled well, thus the need for good policies, good risk assessments, good contingency plans, and an excellent communication network.
- Preserving organizational assets takes second place to care of the people. An organization can rebuild its field assets, but never recover lives unnecessarily lost while trying to save or protect buildings or materials.
- No amount of training, no array of excellent policies can guarantee safety to individual workers or established field centers. Nothing will replace a reliance on God for His care and direction.
- Individuals must be faced with the fact that serving God as a missionary does not preempt them from suffering, hardship, persecution, and possible death. A theology of suffering, established ahead of time, is essential. (A sample theology is attached.)

## Examples

In 1973, at an International Conference, the position was taken that SIL will not pay ransom in the event of a kidnapping of an adult member or of a member's child. However, at the same time it was made clear that every possible effort would be extended to obtain the release of that kidnapped person. Since that time there have been several kidnappings, including that of an adult male who had been held for 810 days. All except one have been returned unharmed. SIL has

**Larrie Mae Gardner** is member of WEA-MC's Global Member Care Network

benefited greatly by the services of Crisis Consulting International (CCI) under the guidance of Mr. Bob Klamser.

In the early 1990's a position was created for an International Crisis Coordinator. This person, Stuart Shepherd, was tireless in developing policies, in informing field entities of appropriate guidelines, and developing training which included maintaining current risk assessments, and contingency plans.

This International Crisis Coordinator, Stuart Shepherd, also developed a manual for field administrators. This manual, titled *Manual for Managing Individual Crises*, listed the most likely challenges involving an individual member to face a field leader and gave him or her guidelines for responding by offering six questions and a reasonable rationale for following recommended procedures. Those six questions were:

- Who should manage this crisis?
- What level of confidentiality applies in this case?
- Who should be informed?
- What immediate actions should be taken?
- What policies apply?
- Are there legal considerations?

This field manual has been distributed to all SIL fields and has proven to be a significant resource for field leaders and administrators.

## A Suggested Theology of Suffering

The foundational principles, the truths that will sustain us as we face suffering for ourselves and for those for whom we carry responsibility are at least these six:

1. Suffering is inevitable; it will happen. It will probably happen to us, and to others. (John 16:33; Phil 1:29, I Peter 5:9; Heb. 10:34.) This does not mean we don't need God's comfort, or that we should fail to support and comfort one another when suffering comes. It does not mean we should court danger or take unnecessary risks.
2. God has promised His presence and sustaining power. (Psa 23:4; Isa. 43:1-3; Matt. 28:19-20.) These are most needed in times of uncertainty, suffering and loss.
3. The perspective of a bright, eternal



future. "Better and lasting possessions" (Heb. 10:34b; "eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (II Cor. 4:18; 'our heavenly dwelling" II Cor. 5:4), etc.. The present is not all there is to life. And long life is not God's sweetest gift.

4. The example of biblical heroes who suffered—we are not exempt. (Heb. 11.) Some were gloriously delivered (vss 32-35a) and some were not (vss. 35b-38). Whether we will be exempt from suffering, delivered from it, or have to endure it is not our choice. However, we are not alone in our suffering (I Peter 5:9).
5. The example of Christ Himself. (Heb. 12.) His suffering was in accordance with God's will. And he was perfected by his suffering (Heb 2:10, 18).
6. The refining, growth-producing power of suffering (Heb. 12; I Peter 1:6-7; 5:10 ).

Scripture does not glorify unwise sacrifice (sacrificing children to Moloch (Lev 18:21; 20:2,3,4), the sacrificing of Jephthah's daughter as the result of an unwise vow (Judges 11:29-31, 34-39). Scripture helps us understand that we are part of a Body (I Cor. 12), and what hurts one, hurts all. So putting oneself in danger intentionally, knowing the consequences may fall on others, may be a selfish, short-sighted ignoble act. What are appropriate risks? How will these risks forward the gospel? Who will have to endure the fall-out? How can we as leaders of a mission organization, protect our own members? How can we ignore the danger that the people being served will face—those folk cannot leave! Where does faith end and presumption begin? These are questions that each responsible person must answer for himself and for the group he leads. However, each individual should also think soberly about faith and risk, risk and consequences, suffering and growth. <<

Very good intentions but too many sad stories. That's how I would summarize missions. Changed lives, but at an unexpected high price for many. Please don't skip the word "unexpected". There are many attempts and approaches to reason with suffering, but hardly any, if any at all, satisfying answers for victims. "God is good!", "God the healer" "By his stripes we are healed" ... doesn't really cut it.

# Too many sad stories

## Harry, with a larger organization somewhere in Asia

There is something about this topic on violence, persecution and martyrdom, which I don't like. Don't misunderstand me: I appreciate and support the developments, political works, and support groups for human rights very much. I live in a country where many of the older pastors have been in jail and labor camps for 20 years. They paid an extremely high price for their faith and I don't want to belittle that. But something is missing in evangelical circles, when we talk about this.

And I think I am referring to the emotional violence and pain. Emotional violence is usually embedded in physical violence and persecution. But there is a whole world out here of violated emotions without physical persecution and dangers.

I think that's why the recent killing of two young YWAMers in Colorado/USA doesn't raise any outstanding thoughts or emotions. There is another world out there, where other people get killed, but it's not on CNN. And there is another world out there, where people don't get killed, but carry devastating emotional wounds with them, which effect their work, their lives and the lives of their families and friends FOR EVER!

**Harry Hoffmann**, Germany, started his overseas work with establishing a rehabilitation center for handicapped orphans. Since then he founded two interagency Member Care centers in East and South East Asia. He loves leadership coaching, team development & organisational consulting.

**Case:** A Christian house helper of missionary friends brings her little baby to work. While cleaning the house the baby falls out of the window of the 6<sup>th</sup> floor, almost in front of some missionary friends feet who happen to pass by. They try to reanimate but the baby is dead.

**Case:** When the Taliban invaded Kabul, some of my missionary friends, while on vacation or home assignment couldn't go back to get their personal belongings, family pictures, personal memories nor their cat.

**Case:** One missionary mother starts hitting her child during their first year overseas. Their particular mission organization even has a child abuse department, which I have never heard of before in an agency. They were asked to move to another city to receive counseling for the whole family.

**Case:** One missionary, after working in a third world countries' orphanage for 3 years, was diagnosed with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, an anxiety disorder. It was diagnosed 10 years later, after a decade of struggle with self, life, faith, marriage and friends.

**Case:** We met Tsunami survivors who were able to find the body of their daughter, but can't find the body of their son. They still believe that he might be alive somewhere.

**Case:** The sons of two friends of mine in two different countries died, one due to

drugs, one committed suicide. They were marginalized by the church and in both cases a Christian funeral was denied.

**Case:** A lot (and not too much) has been published on missionary kids and their emotional suffering due to abandonment, abuse in boarding schools, absent mothers and fathers, and high expectations projected onto their lives.

**Case:** A missionary man runs off with his local secretary, leaving his wife, 3 kids and one just adopted local baby. And the reverberations are huge, with a long term negative effect on the unreached people group they were working in.

**Case:** A mission leader, who I would diagnose with a narcissistic personality disorder, leaves a long ditch of destruction behind him where ever he goes. Over 8 years now, people come to me talking about him, but there is no evidence to take action, except separation. One family joined a two-week "spiritual abuse counseling" and left the controlling environment right after that.

I could go on and on and on and on. And these events not only affect the immediate victim, but it negatively affects the lives of their families and friends as well. There is so much pain in this world. How does Jesus deal with that? He created us as fragile beings, easily wounded, physically as well as emotionally. Why?

Harry Hoffmann

And it's good that persecution and martyrdom gets our attention, but what about all the emotional pain, people are carrying. Does that get our attention? No! The evangelical leadership world, largely a male world, as well as many of our home cultures are less emotions based and more fact and cognitive based. The suffering which greatly is on an emotional basis is hard to catch, hard to describe. Physical wounds are much easier to deal with.

That's why I want to advocate for all those with emotional pain. You are OK! You are important! Your pain is real! Your suffering should be acknowledged! Your experiences

should be validated! You should be included and cared for by the church, by your mission and the body of Christ!

I remember one of my organisations regional conferences, where all of a sudden women started to come on stage and shared about their pain within the organization and with their male leaders in front of 600 people. It was a highly vulnerable situation but the leadership had enough guts to let that happen without justification. It deeply impacted me.

And I am so sorry, that so many weren't given a chance or enough chances to share.

It grieves me that many people get excluded from church because of emotional suffering. It grieves me that the body of Christ is not more healthy. It grieves me that many missions projects are run by goal-oriented man, where neither women nor emotions have space. It grieves me that it's so often about the task and the goal, and not about the people. And I am very sad that all of those with an enormous amount of pain don't have a voice, are not heard, feel pushed to "just sort it out", "get over it" and resolve it, are abandoned by the church and the body of Christ.

I really believe that's wrong. And it needs to change! <<

## 6. Kirk Franklin, Executive Director/ CEO of Wycliffe International

Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

Our leadership does not knowingly place any people serving with us into a situation of unacceptable risk or into one that is very dangerous. The field leadership's risk assessment is always sought first before allowing someone to leave for the field. When short-term missionaries go out in teams they are led by people with experience in the field context where the team is going. Individuals are linked up with more experienced field workers on location.

When missionaries are caught in civil unrest situations, the in-country leadership and the sending country leadership confer with each other to determine what should be done. The field leadership has the benefit of assessing the immediate situation. The sending country leadership has the more objective perspective of guiding the decision, particularly if it is felt that the field leadership may be too close to the situation to make a decision.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

The policies are similar to when we send shorter term missionaries. The difference being that more thorough orientation can be provided to the missionary as part of their pre-field training. Then once on the field, the missionary receives further in-country orientation that includes issues of safety and security and appropriate behavior in various situations likely to be encountered. The missionary is also advised about the security and evacuation plans and procedures that the field leadership has in place. These are tailored to and governed by the local situation.

There are a set of crises management policies that all personnel are required to be aware of and adhere to. No missionary is permitted to stay in a location after their local leadership has decided that

all missionaries located there must evacuate. In a similar way, no missionary is permitted to return to a location unless the leadership has determined it is wise to do so.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

A biblical theology of persecution and martyrdom can be based on the example of the Apostle Paul who stated, "I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (Phil 3:8). Christ is to be our supreme treasure and joy. Our joy in serving the Lord can be, however, very costly. Again, following Paul's example when he was near the end of his life he said, "I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13). Paul demonstrated that the glory of the name of Jesus and his reputation in the world was more important than life.

Over a few decades, Western missionaries have lost Paul's perspective and perhaps have become too soft to be true agents of Christ's joy in all circumstances. Our society has shaped our priorities to be focused on harm-reduction, risk avoidance and personal comforts. Therefore, the daily encounters that many Non-Western Christians experience of suffering and even dying for the Lord is a remote possibility for Westerners. For example, how many Western missionaries have ever experienced imprisonment because of their faith? How many Western missionaries receive training to cope with these sort of situations:

- How to witness for the Lord under any circumstance, on trains or buses, or even in the back of a police van on our way to the execution ground.
- How to escape for the Lord. We teach the missionaries special skills such as how to free themselves from handcuffs, and how to jump from second-storey windows without injuring themselves (Brother Yun, The Heavenly Man).

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*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped? What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

We do not make payments for hostages taken by kidnapers or take actions that could perpetuate extortion, ransom or blackmail. Payment of ransom encourages the taking of hostages. This does not, however, rule out the possibility of negotiations to obtain the release of the hostage. When a hostage is taken, immediate family members on the field will normally be relocated to their home country.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

In post trauma situations, psychological consultations from trained Christian counselors are provided in the field situation. These are sent in for such a purpose. In the case of people being evacuated, this same counseling is provided after the evacuation. Further debriefing and follow up counseling is provided to the missionary if they are sent home or decide to return home. In some situations, extended care may be required and the missionary may be encouraged to take health leave or compassionate leave.

**Kirk Franklin** grew up in the mountains of Papua New Guinea, the son of American Wycliffe linguist-Bible translators. He became involved with Wycliffe in 1980 and has served in media-communications and leadership roles in Papua New Guinea and Australia. On January 1, 2008 Kirk became the Executive Director/CEO of Wycliffe International, which is an association of 48 member organizations worldwide that have agreed to work with each other and with partners around the world, promoting and participating in local and international Bible translation movements. Kirk is based in Melbourne, Australia.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

As part of the missionary's pre-field orientation, they are made aware of these issues. This can be done through role plays and case studies about topics such as operating in dangerous or violent contexts. The issue of martyrdom is not directly discussed although reference may be made to various martyrs of the modern missionary movement.

Some informal research suggests that whenever there is a mass evacuation of personnel back to their home country, on average about 20% of these people will not return to the field once the crisis has passed, particularly if the crisis is lengthy. Therefore, the decision to evacuate can be a very difficult one to make.

**Case study:** Recently, we postponed a missionary from going to the field due to civil unrest in that country. The field leadership strongly advised not to send the person until the crisis had passed. There were similar concerns expressed by family members and the church's mission committee. The missionary still wanted to go, so the decision to make them wait was particularly difficult for them to accept.

Whenever the topic arises amongst my friends on the theology of suffering and martyrdom, I am reminded of the life of Stephen (as recorded in The Book of Acts). Not only was he the first recorded believer who died for Christ, but his response clearly displayed character that could not have been expressed without the help of the Holy Spirit. We all need this character for the times of persecution that are to come.

# Reflections on Mentoring and Suffering

## A dialogue between a theology of suffering and knowing who I am in Christ

Often, we have an idealistic view of Christianity; all will/should go better the day we become a Christian. In reality, we should actually prepare ourselves for a much harder life as we are no longer only living according to fleshly desires, but according to the spirit.

Although we generally relate suffering and martyrdom to places where religious freedom is not present and to cases where people physically suffer and in many cases die for what they believe, is that truly the only type of martyrdom? What about martyrdom in countries where we do have religious freedom—the places where Christianity is known, yet peer pressure has such an impact that believers turn from the ways of God. What about situations where friends and family, caught up in traditions and methods of old, challenge us when we dare to step out of the comfort zone? The Christian challenged in this way can feel alone, an outcast under enormous pressure. Isn't that too a type of martyrdom? Isn't pressure to conform to tradition and comfort also a way of making life difficult for those who want to give all for Christ? How often have we heard people say (in word or essence): "I am glad to hear that you are now a follower of Jesus, but please don't change." They might not physically beat us, we might not physically die, but surely the pressure can cause a spiritual death or at least slow the tempo of spiritual growth.

Daily, people are physically martyred around the world. Much more needs to be done to help them and to train people to

endure physical challenges. But we also need to prepare ourselves for when the challenge is not physical. Someone once said that we should not only be prepared to die for Him, but we should also be prepared to live for Him. To die might be physical and challenging, but to live for Him, when the spiritual environment is oppressive and when even Christian friends are not as eager, might also be a type of martyrdom worth talking about.

There are thousands of Christians physically martyred around the world annually, yet many of us not living in overtly hostile areas will never even know someone who has undergone such an experience. Our martyrdom is different. For some of us, it is in our work place where we experience pressure from colleagues and business partners to secure the deal above all else. Others of us find that the rat race we are in keeps us from spending adequate time with family and even God. This dilemma is not physically forced, but bosses, deadlines and that one extra deal often adds pressure such that minimal time is left for God's Word. Still others of us face family pressure. Even though we might have grown up in a Christian family, much of what is "Christian" in our family is cultural; grandparents and parents are Christians, therefore the family members are Christians, or should we say "church-goers".

How many of our Christian friends today in school, college, or university are compelled to certain behaviours and activities just to be

part of the "in thing"? Peer pressure is growing by the day. The need for acceptance is growing faster than many of us are realising, and subconsciously, this puts pressure on us to think differently, talk differently and, eventually, behave differently.

Coming back to Stephen; we will all agree that there was something different about him, something unique, and something that draws us to be like him—not necessarily die like him, but to have his character of perseverance and understanding of who he is in Christ.

*Adriaan Adams, South Africa*

For many years, I struggled to understand why I so often longed back to my military training days. It truly wasn't because I enjoy people shouting at me all day or being sent to run up and down the hill in full battle gear. There was something else, something I only realised much later; the discovering of my rights written in the constitution of our country. I discovered something I was prepared to stand for no matter the cost. We need to ask ourselves if we know and understand the rights we have in Christ written in the Christian constitution called the Bible? How many of us fully understand the authority given to us through the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ?

In conclusion, or perhaps to begin with, "Unless we are mentored into the understanding of who we are in Christ, we will continue to fail in withstanding the suffering and martyrdom of Western society." <<

“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children.

Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” Romans 8:16-17

# Partnership in Suffering

The knock on the door came soon after dinner. I was already in my hotel room, in bed for an early night’s sleep after a day leading seminars with my hosts. We had been meeting quietly in a double room of a small hotel. For two days we had crowded in, all fifty two of us, sitting on beds, the floor and a few chairs. We came to the room in small groups so as not to draw attention, and I spoke through interpreters. At the end of the day, I wanted to go to bed early to rest for our last session on the following morning. When I heard the knock on the door unexpectedly, I thought that perhaps we had been detected by local authorities, but my apprehension was quickly dismissed when I opened the door and found two of the ministry leaders seeking to speak with me. I invited them in and listened to their request.

They asked if I would be willing to teach tonight what was scheduled for the next morning. I was tired from the long trip and two days of teaching, so I asked them what caused such change in plans. My brothers explained that the secret police planned to visit the hotel after breakfast because they had heard of some unusual meetings going on there. My hosts’ idea was to finish our material in the evening, then everyone could leave the hotel soon after breakfast the next morning and be gone by the time the police arrived. It was obviously a good reason to postpone my bed time, so I got dressed and walked quietly to the hotel room where we held the meetings. Everyone else was already there, confident that I would agree to come.

We had a great time of discussion and fellowship and by 11:00 PM we dismissed for the night.

The next morning, I saw a group of North Americans at breakfast, and I engaged in conversation with them. I learned that they had been visiting a neighboring province seeking to find Christians with whom they could work. This was their first time in country and they had in their hearts to find local Christians with whom to establish a ministry partnership. They were tracked by the provincial police and told to leave. Instead of leaving the country, they came to the neighboring province to try again. They were followed to our hotel and the local police were alerted to their presence. My Christian hosts learned about all this and decided we needed to leave immediately after breakfast the next day, before the police came.

Our plans had been developed many months in advance, with many prayers, and the local leaders had worked hard to find the right place and time to hold our seminars. The group of North Americans had also prayed and planned their trip. Little did they know that their plans would result in the disruption of ours.

We make much of globalization today and how it changes the way we do missions. On the one hand, there is more freedom to visit other countries and explore new opportunities. On the other, there is increased risk of conflict between different agendas. Some

*Alex Araujo, Partners International/IPA*

Christians are now able to travel freely almost anywhere in the world. Other Christians are still working under very difficult local conditions. It is understandable that those with greater freedom would want to come and help. At the same time, those with less freedom to develop their ministries risk exposure and disruption of their hard work by association with random visitors from the outside. This state of affairs calls for careful reflection about how we develop fellowship and cooperation with one another.

Christians in North America, Europe, Brazil, Korea and many other places face little or no obstacles to Christian activity, and are increasingly able to send traveling teams to other places, usually places where there is less freedom and where Christians are harassed and persecuted. These are two realities that do not easily come together. The story I told above had relatively minor consequences, but often the consequences are more serious, as in the recent case of Korean Christians taken hostage in Afghanistan.

I offer some considerations that might help as you plan your mission activities in difficult places.

1. Assume that the Lord has people already in the places you are going, and that your visit may have an effect on what they are doing. This will help you plan your steps more carefully and minimize the possibility of disruption and unintended harm. Today, one of the most harmful misconceptions in missions is to think that we are the only ones seeking to do the Lord’s will in a given place. I am often surprised to find a vital and

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growing church in places that seem, on the surface, completely devoid of Christian witness.

2. Assume that other outside groups, such as churches and mission agencies, may already have some activity in the country, and try to learn who they are and what there are doing.
3. If at all possible, begin your exploration of the new field in cooperation with those who are already working in that country. First, see if you can assist them and learn from them. Later, there may be benefit in you starting your own distinct work. If so, you will do it much better because of the good relations you developed and the things you learned. After all, you want to do what is good for God's kingdom and his people, right?
4. Reflect on the differences between your own country and the one you plan to visit and work. In particular, think of the differences concerning the freedom to be Christian and to do Christian work. These are not trivial, but serious matters, where lack of consideration can harm the very ones we want to serve. The recent Korean experience in Afghanistan

has generated difficulties not only for the Korean group, but for the Afghan church and for other mission groups that have carefully built their work there over many years of patient and faithful effort.

5. Remember that, in most cases, you can always return to the safety and freedom of your home country, while your fellow believers face the persecution that results from your well-meaning but ill-prepared presence in their country.
6. Think also of the work of foreign missionaries who have already invested many years, even a lifetime of work in the country, and the consequences to them, your fellow workers in the same vineyard, of your carelessness.
7. Proverbs 19:2 says, "It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be hasty and miss the way." Our zeal for the gospel should not result in unnecessary harm to the work of other believers. To be faithful is more than to risk all for Christ; it is also to do our preparation well with the resources the Lord has made available to us.
8. Today we can find information about who is working where with relative ease.

The WEA MC itself offers links and resources you can use via its web site. The US Center for World Missions offers a vast array of missions information. In fact, you can simply use Google to find almost all the information on missions you want. Just enter words such as "Evangelical missions" and you will be amazed how much you will learn.

These are only a few considerations which will help you prepare your missions trip and work. What other helpful considerations can you add to this list?

Finally, let us take full advantage of the new opportunities brought about by globalization. By full advantage I mean, let us be faithful in preparation, merciful to those who face greater suffering than we do for the gospel, and let us look kindly on one another and seek to work together with those who have already invested much ahead of us. We want to serve them in the spirit of Philippians 2:4 and 5, "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interest of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus..." <<



# Filling Up the Suffering of Christ

## “Good News” Ministry in Dangerous Situations

Mission invitations for people to accept God’s call to serve Least Evangelized peoples and cities are often met with the question, “Is it safe?” Celebrated missional churches often trumpet quick, pain-free, sanitized forays among these “hard peoples”—after which these envoys enjoy the prestige of having done missional work...and return to their “normal” lives, whether in Singapore or Seattle, London or Lagos, Sao Paulo or Stuttgart.

Proponents of developing comprehensive strategies to stimulate holistic gospel movements (also called transformational church planting movements—CPM) among peoples and cities clearly understand that successful transformation will require suffering from the messengers (both local and cross-cultural) and the new converts. This view precludes the simplistic and formulaic caricatures of “CPM” thinking, which suggest that “perfect” strategies and contextualization and “mercy” ministries will divert suffering.

Essentially, Scripture teaches that Gospel proclamation (in word and deed) among all peoples will come only in the middle of great suffering and sacrifice. Those called to the Least Evangelized of the world must be strengthened both by the promise of God’s help in suffering and God’s ultimate success. This understanding will prevent a reductionistic or an over-simplistic understanding of missions.

Allow me to lay out some thoughts for your reflection:

**The biblical standard for Jesus’ challenge to discipleship emphasizes cost-counting and the likelihood of suffering.** Jesus asked James and John if they were willing to suffer on His behalf. He set the rich young ruler’s price at “suffering” the loss of his possessions. He challenged all believers to die in order to succeed on His behalf.

Paul celebrated his own brutal spiritual execution which freed him from Satan’s ownership in order to live an incredible Spirit-generated and guided life of proclaiming the Good News (Gal. 2:20).

Hebrews 2:10, and 10:32-36 include a call to suffer for the sake of the gospel. Peter tells his readers that suffering for the sake of Jesus is normal and will be offset by being overjoyed when His glory is revealed (1 Pet. 4:12-17).

**Scriptures celebrating the spread of the Gospel reflect an assumption that suffering is often a “given.”** Paul celebrates that, in spite of severe suffering, the Thessalonians joyfully welcomed the Holy Spirit-transmitted message—with the result that the message rang out in Macedonia, Achaia and everywhere (1 Thes. 1). Paul tells Timothy to join him in his suffering by not being ashamed to testify of the Lord, points out he is glad to endure his chains—and implies that this suffering causes the Word of God to go further

**Kent Parks**, and his wife Erika has served in SEAsia for 17 years, working mainly among Unreached People Groups and in helping develop UPG ministry networks, as well as nation-wide and region-wide UPG-focused networks. He served seven years as a Baptist pastor in the US before serving in SEAsia as a seminary professor (Ph.D. in missiology), and as a Strategy Coordinator focused on stimulating trans-denominational and trans-national efforts among UPGs. He is currently serving as SEAsia Regional Facilitator for the Network for Strategic Missions and as the Facilitator for SEALINK, an emerging SEAsia UPG network.

(2 Tim. 1:8-10). The apostles rejoiced they were counted worthy to be disgraced—which motivated them to teach and proclaim Jesus continuously (Acts 5:41-42).

**Many mission sermons surgically remove “suffering” verses and use “triumphal” verses.** As long as we isolate such Scriptures, mission theology and practice will be stunted.

The suffering to fill up the incomplete sufferings of Christ (Col.1:24) was not generic suffering because of living in a fallen world. This suffering’s purpose (v. 27) is so that the saints can make known to non-believers this glorious mystery—“Christ in you, the hope of glory.” Paul’s expanded teaching (Eph. 3) adds the emphasis that this is a mystery of humanity being reunited in Jesus—Jews and Greeks are now one.

Mission speakers quote Habakkuk 1:5—God’s promise that something incredible will happen, which not only will be hard to believe but will *not* be believed (!)—as if wonderful positive “mission success” is imminent. While ultimately this interpretation is borne out in Chapter 2 with the promise of the knowledge of the Lord covering the earth as the waters cover the sea, most “do not believe” when warned that the “incredible things” in Habakkuk 1:5 describes great disaster and suffering brought about by a “ruthless” and “slaughtering” and massive devastation. Only after a significant, lingering period of this suffering does God clarify to the watchful that God’s ultimate revelation and victory will come and will be seen by those who patiently work for God’s appointed fulfillment.

Isaiah understood. In his wonderful and terrifying experience of seeing, being purified and being called by God, a final price to pay was required—to go to a people who would not listen and who would persecute him (6:9-



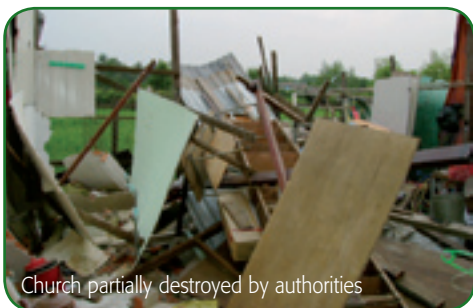
13). Few mission sermons go beyond verse eight and the joyous “send me.”

Isaiah 66 (often considered the pinnacle of Old Testament mission vision) celebrates both the sending of people to proclaim His glory to the nations, and the resultant pilgrimage of believers from all nations (vv. 18-21). What is usually ignored is that those whom are sent to all the peoples are the *survivors*—clearly indicating that this sending will be through and in spite of suffering.

Matthew 24:14’s great promise that all *ethnê* will hear the Good News is often violently used out of context. This verse is part of the conclusion of Jesus’ “final days” teaching. He does not suggest all peoples will hear “in spite of” this catastrophic turmoil. He links the hearing of the peoples with these disasters when he says “and” all peoples will hear. More disturbingly, He stresses that in the middle of this increase of evil (and suffering?) many believers will betray each other and that the love of most believers will grow cold (only doing missions where it is “safe”?). Jesus’ conclusion seems to be that God will redeem catastrophic situations by opening doors for the spreading of the “knowledge” of the Lord in dangerous times and places—when He finds those willing to serve the peoples in spite of danger and suffering.

*New converts and cross-cultural witnesses are applying these Scriptures by spreading the Good News and rejoicing that they are worthy to suffer for doing the right thing. Here are three case studies.*

**Asia I:** A small congregation in a mountainous village learned to answer severe persecution with love. They shared food with those who trampled their gardens. They loved those who threw feces into their wells. They responded with love when one of their homes was burned to the ground. The main



Church partially destroyed by authorities

(and very cruel) persecutor finally brought a mob to the home where they were worshipping. The mob did severe destruction to the roof and outer walls of the home. Suddenly, for an unknown reason, the mob turned on their leader and literally beat him to death before the Christians had time to come outside. As the mob angrily stormed down the path as the sunset, the Christian leader asked them who would guard his body until the police could come to that mountain village in the morning. The sneering reply was, “Let the Dogs have his body”—an amazingly strong curse for a Muslim to give. So the believers took turns staying up all night to guard the body of their enemy. After the police finished their report, the believers asked the village leaders who would prepare this man for burial, since as Christians, they could not legally do so or bury him in the Muslim cemetery. The angry retort was, “Let him rot!” Again, the believers lovingly took the body of their enemy, washed it and buried it.

**Asia II:** A congregation in a neighboring village that had emerged from this first congregation faced similar persecution. Over a year later, with pressure from outside “enforcers,” the village warned this second congregation that they were going to burn the small meeting place (like the home noted above). After praying and asking God for wisdom, the believers came back to the village leadership and asked to be allowed to worship one more time in their place, and promised that they would then dismantle the structure. The village leadership agreed. The congregation had a powerful service of praise to Jesus followed by a wonderful biblical message—while throngs from the village stood in a circle around the building—and listened quietly the full time! Then the congregation emerged, dismantled their building, and held a celebration meal for all who were there.

And now, these congregations have grown, plus there are congregations in eight more villages! When did this all begin? When the initial congregation began to



Pastor released from prison

understand that their job was to pay whatever price to spread the Good News and asked God to give them power to touch their villages, their people, and the world!

**Africa:** A Nigerian believer was arrested in a North African nation as he left a worship meeting at a house church. The members were Sub-Saharan Africans, Indians, Pakistanis and Filipinos. He (plus others who experienced similar suffering) was arrested, beaten, shaved, forced into heavy labor, beaten as he worked, and dragged face down over gravel. Personal property and passports were confiscated and never returned.

He was forced to reveal meeting places of other believers who were also arrested. One such believer worked in a car wash and served as a voluntary pastor in a government approved congregation. He was hung upside down and required several hospital visits as a result of his beatings. He was accused of being an agent receiving money from the “Mother Church” in order to bribe others from this nation to become Christians.

Shortly after this, a pogrom broke out against Nigerians and other black Africans. Hundreds of black citizens from other African nations were killed or simply disappeared. Yet, these who were persecuted continued to pray for the peace and salvation of this country—and continue to work so others will come bear witness to Jesus in this dangerous place.

The suffering of Christ will not be “filled up”—nor His joy complete—until all peoples are fully served with the “works, word, and wonders” proclamation of His Good News. <<

Crisis Consulting International:

# Model Policy Recommendations

## Introduction

Crisis Consulting International (CCI) has identified the need for a core set of twelve policy guidelines addressing four critical areas of crisis management. Although the circumstances of specific organizations may create the need for additional policy guidelines, these twelve core areas are considered the foundation necessary for adequate crisis management preparation.

CCI has developed a set of “model policy” recommendations for each of these twelve circumstances. We are making these model policy recommendations available to interested Christian organizations. However, we emphasize that these model policies should serve as a starting point for consideration and evaluation, and should not just be adopted as presented.

## Characteristics of Policies

- Policies should be consistent with and reflect the organization’s core values and standards.
- Policies should be value-driven.
- Policies should apply throughout the organization.
- Policies describe what you will do, not how you will do it.
- Compliance should be mandatory throughout the organization.

## Using this material

CCI authorizes any non-profit organization to use this material as necessary, including reproducing and distributing it within the organization.

## Model Policy: Payment of Ransom, Yielding to Extortion

This organization recognizes that payment of ransom, acquiescing to other demands in kidnapping and hostage-taking cases, and making concessions in the face of extortion are all actions that contribute to the probability that similar future events will occur. Put another way, we understand that payment of ransom or similar actions that make the underlying event a “success” in the minds of the perpetrators will create incentives to encourage the same perpetrators, or others, to commit similar acts in the future.

This organization also places a high value on the safety of its members, staff and families, and in cases of kidnapping or hostage-taking desires to take all reasonable steps to secure the safe release of the hostage(s).

*It is the policy of this organization that in cases of kidnapping, hostage-taking or other extortion, no ransom or concession that is reasonably likely to cause or contribute to the probability that future similar events will occur shall be paid (or made).*

In specific cases, it shall be the responsibility of the Crisis Management Team to determine whether or not a proposed payment or concession complies with both the letter and spirit of this policy. If the Crisis Management Team cannot reach a consensus on this policy as it applies to a specific proposed concession, or if a proposed concession would likely be viewed by the broad Christian community as violating the spirit of this policy, the proposed payment or conces-

sion shall be reviewed by the authority that convened the Crisis Management Team prior to the proposed payment of concession being agreed to or made.

## Model Policy: Negotiation with kidnapers and hostage-takers

This organization recognizes the distinction between negotiations and payments or concessions in cases of kidnapping and hostage-taking. We understand that negotiations can be conducted without necessarily obligating the organization to make payments or concessions that violate our values and policies. We also understand that negotiations, if they can be effectively and competently conducted, are the strategy of first choice in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking.

This organization also recognizes that hostage negotiations are a very specialized and a potentially dangerous activity.

*It is the policy of this organization that in cases of kidnapping or hostage taking of our members, our staff or members of their families, their safe return shall be a priority of the organization. All reasonable efforts consistent with our policies and core values will be made to achieve their safe return. These efforts include hostage negotiation as a strategy of first choice. In cases where this organization has the opportunity to negotiate for the safe return of hostages, we will seek assistance from professional hostage negotiators.*

A source of hostage negotiation consultation and assistance is the non-profit organi-

*Crisis Consulting International*

zation providing support to international Christian organizations:

Crisis Consulting International  
PMB 223, 9452 Telephone Road  
Ventura, CA 93004  
U.S.A.

Tel (+) 805-642-2549  
Fax (+) 805-642-1748  
Email: info@CriCon.org  
Internet: www.CriCon.org

### Model Policy: Family relocation

Experience has shown that in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, rapid relocation of family members away from the area of the event is strongly advised. Having such a policy is a significant comfort to hostages, who report that uncertainty about the location and status of their families was the primary worry and source of anxiety during their captivity. Experience has also clearly demonstrated that such an action is in the best interest of these families (especially ones with younger children). Lastly, experience has shown that the presence of family members at the immediate site of crisis management and hostage negotiation efforts can create distractions and situations that divert the attention and energy of those responsible for resolution of the event away from that primary responsibility.

*It is the policy of this organization that in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, family members will be relocated from the country of occurrence as soon as possible. This relocation will normally take place to the home country of the family. In specific cases, the Crisis Management Team may waive this policy if doing so is in the best interests of the crisis management effort.*

In cases where this policy is invoked, this organization will make ongoing support and assistance to the family a priority. This will include, but not necessarily be limited to, support in finding appropriate housing, school transfers, ongoing financial support and similar matters. This will also include establishing a regular system of providing timely and accurate information to the family on the status of the case and the work of the Crisis Management Team. This support will

also include insuring that adequate pastoral, emotional and psychological support, including that of trained professionals, is provided as indicated.

### Model Policy: Notifications to governments in kidnapping and hostage taking

In cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, this organization understands that the local (host) government has authority and responsibility for such crimes that occur within the country. We are also aware that the home government (government of citizenship) of the hostage(s) has a legitimate interest, and perhaps even legal jurisdiction, in these foreign kidnappings or hostage takings of their citizens. However, we recognize that in some of these cases in some countries, the involvement of governments may create a conflict with our objectives and values.

*It is the policy of this organization to cooperate with legitimate government inquiries and activities in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking, when doing so is judged to be in the best interest of the hostage(s) and the organization. The decisions of when and how to make these notifications to government agencies shall be made by the Crisis Management Team.*

### Model Policy: Risk assessment

Accurately and adequately understanding risk is the essential foundation for all contingency planning and security preparation and management. A commitment to understanding risk is an essential component of our overall member care and security management efforts. Such a commitment requires the use of a disciplined and structured protocol of risk assessment.

We also recognize that it is important that measures or descriptions of risk and danger be in a form that is as objective and quantifiable as possible, and that the descriptive criteria used be as standardized as possible (so the same term or description applied to one situation or country means essentially the same thing in another situation or country).

Finally, we realize that there are two distinct types of risk assessment: Tactical assessment, which analyzes the present situation and

identifies threats and vulnerabilities that are here and now; and strategic risk forecasting which forecasts future risks and predicts both the probability and consequences of unwanted events occurring. We appreciate that both types of risk assessment are necessary for the most comprehensive and accurate understanding of risks and dangers facing the organization.

*It is the policy of this organization to require all field entities to conduct and maintain adequate and timely tactical and strategic risk assessments. Strategic risk assessments are to follow CCI's "Strategic Risk Forecasting" protocol, and are to be conducted at least every two years (see next paragraph). Field Vulnerability Assessments are to follow CCI's "Tactical Risk Assessment" protocol, and are to be conducted at the beginning of a new project and at least every two years thereafter (see next paragraph).*

*The frequency of both strategic and tactical risk assessments are to be increased if:*

- *There is a significant change in the environment (change of government, substantial political shift, threat or outbreak of war, etc.)*
- *The assessed risk/threat level is such that field, regional or headquarters leadership determines that a more frequent risk assessment schedule is appropriate.*

### Model Policy: Contingency Plans

This organization recognizes the need for contingency planning as a major component of security and crisis management. Contingency plans assist the organization not only in responding to events that have occurred, but also assist the organization identify and implement proactive steps that seek to reduce both the probability of unwanted events occurring and the consequences and impact of those events should they in fact occur.

Risk assessments done by local entities will determine specific threats and situations requiring advance contingency planning. However, there are some areas that are sufficiently common and foreseeable that all entities need corresponding contingency plans.

Finally, there is significant benefit in the

use of contingency plan formats that are consistent throughout the organization.

*It is the policy of this organization that each entity prepare and maintain current contingency plans for threats and dangers that are reasonably foreseeable and potentially threaten the safety of staff or the disruption of our work. As much as possible, given local conditions and circumstances, contingency plans shall be written in CCI's recommended format and shall identify proactive measures to reduce both probability and consequences (if possible) as well as response protocols.*

All entities shall complete and maintain current contingency plans for the following situations:

- Evacuation of staff (both local and country-wide)
- Establishing and operating an entity Crisis Management Team
- Information management during a Crisis

*In addition, each entity shall complete and maintain current contingency plans for any event for which a Tactical Risk Assessment results in a "critical" or "high" rating; and for any event for which a Strategic Risk Assessment results in a forecast rating of "critical" or "high".*

*"Current" contingency plans are those that remain consistent with the threat, environment and organizational conditions and resources. Contingency plans are to be reviewed at least every two years and either modified as necessary or certified as still current. Increased risk and dynamic local conditions may require more frequent review and modification.*

### Model Policy: Training

The most effective security and crisis management activities are those that prevent unwanted occurrences, or reduce the impact/consequences of unpreventable events.

Training of personnel is one of the most valuable and effective proactive steps an organization can take. Trained personnel are the most successful at minimizing their own exposure to danger, and trained personnel assist the organization avoid dangerous, disruptive and compromising situations.

*It is the policy of this organization to provide security and crisis management training to all personnel. The type and degree of training shall be commensurate with the assessed risks and dangers the member is exposed to, and also commensurate with the member's organizational responsibility for the safety and security of other staff and organizational assets.*

All personnel shall receive training in (at least) the following areas:

- The organization's policies
- Evacuation procedures
- Basic personal safety and security

## 7. Patrick Fung, OMF, Singapore

### Mission Agency Leadership

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

Our dependence is upon God for our safety and security. We live in an uncertain world and the possibility of being taken as hostages cannot be ignored. In this event, the Fellowship would do everything in its power to cooperate with governments, and with local officials directly, to secure the release of kidnapped personnel.

#### Ransom

Consistent with our dependence upon the Lord, personnel and their families should be fully aware of the Fellowship's policy not to respond to ransom demands for release. To do so would invariably place a price on the head of other colleagues.

#### Evacuation of Family Members

In the event of a kidnapping, other family members would normally be immediately moved to a place where they can receive maximum support. Field leadership has the

final decision as to where the family will be moved. In some cases this will be to their Home country where they can receive support from family, friends and/or supporting churches. This ensures that the kidnapped victim will know that their family is being cared for, while freeing Field leadership to handle the situation.

#### Contingency Procedures

All personnel are to be familiar with the contingency plans of their Field of service and to comply with them in case of emergency.

#### Wills

OMF Workers are expected to make a will when they join OMF. A copy should be filed in the Field and Home office.

#### Crisis Management

All OMF fields are expected to have a crisis management handbook that includes situations such as kidnap, sudden deaths, etc.. Leaders also go through regular crisis management training (some of these training have been done in collaboration with other mission agencies). We have also conducted training events for post-traumatic stress debriefing and counselling.

#### On relationships with government and legal authorities

Fellowship personnel are guests in other countries and should behave toward the properly constituted authorities in a way that brings credit to the gospel.

#### Political non-Involvement

It is essential that personnel exercise caution concerning involvement in politically sensitive issues. Involvement in political matters, even though well meaning, could lead to misunderstanding and possibly jeopardize the individual's or the Fellowship's status in the host country. Strict adherence must be given to OMF guidelines in a sensitive local situation.

#### Officials of Home Governments

While personnel may be on friendly terms with official representatives of their home countries, such as consular and embassy personnel, care should be taken to avoid any impression of identification with foreign government representatives. Personnel may not accept appointment as representatives for foreign embassies even in an emergency situation. No Fellowship personnel are allowed to pass on information or give interviews to

### Model Policy: Crisis Management Team

Experience teaches that in the event of a crisis or emergency, the existence of a predetermined and structured response speeds resolution and recovery, and also minimizes the overall disruption to the organization. Experience also teaches that the absence of such a plan not only hinders the organization's ability to resolve the crisis, but also may create new and additional crises that can ultimately be more disruptive than the original event.

We also recognize that even in the face of a significant crisis or major emergency, the primary objective of the organization is to continue its work, and to be as productive as possible in accomplishment of its objectives.

For these reasons, we acknowledge the importance and need of a predetermined organizational response plan for crises and emergencies.

*It is the policy of this organization that in the event of a crisis (or emergency), a Crisis Management Team (CMT) will be formed to manage that event through resolution and recovery. The CMT will be formed and structured on models consistent with those described in the literature and in professional training for corporate and government entities (such as the model taught by Crisis Consulting International).*

*For purposes of this policy, a "crisis" is understood to include events that threaten the organization, that present a danger to the safety of staff or the potential for significant organizational disruption, that are likely to be extended in time and are likely to require an abnormal commitment of resources.*

*A CMT can be established by field leadership for any event within that field, and by regional or headquarters leadership for any event whose foreseeable organizational impact is likely to extend beyond the local entity.*

*When a CMT is established, it is to be the only component of the organization "working" on that crisis. All other components and members of the organization shall refer all information and suggestions to the CMT. No action related to the crisis is to be taken without the authorization of the CMT. No public statements related to the crisis are to be made without the authorization of the CMT.*

### Model Policy: Information Management

It is the intention of this policy that information flow during a crisis be carefully and strictly directed and controlled. Incoming information such as background information, suggestions about resources and assistance, ideas for resolution, etc. need to be received by the Crisis Management Team. Outgoing information must be monitored and controlled to prevent the release of confidential information, to prevent exacerbation of the situation or the creation of secondary crises and to control the spread of rumors.

national or international intelligence agencies or to make reports of a political nature to outside organizations.

#### Legal Action

No Fellowship personnel may initiate legal action for the establishment of personal rights. Legal action is an expensive and long drawn out process and while in progress may hinder the person concerned from leaving a given country. The Fellowship is committed to manifest the grace of God in forgiveness rather than in the assertion of rights.

This policy does not mean that the Fellowship is opposed to the process of law being followed by duly constituted authorities in criminal cases. The Fellowship welcomes appropriate efforts on the part of local officials to maintain an orderly society and will cooperate with them in providing evidence. Fellowship personnel may bear testimony in a court case instituted by others, where this is necessary. Personnel may also apply for individual compensation where such may be available.

#### Case study

Excerpts from the story of D. E. Hoste and

the Boxer Rebellion.

(D. E. Hoste was the second General Director of the CIM. He succeeded Hudson Taylor as the key leader in the Mission).

Hoste's godly character was not only recognized by the mission, but also by those who were once enemies of the mission.

When the Boxer Rising finally drew to its tragic but inevitable end, and reparations were offered, it came as a surprise to the Chinese government as well as to the foreign powers that the China Inland Mission refused to receive any compensation.

When D. E. Hoste submitted a statement of the CIM's losses to the governor and insisted that no compensation would be claimed or accepted by the CIM, the governor was dumbfounded. On 11 Oct 1901, the governor of Shanxi issued an edict. Placards were seen wherever the CIM had worked and suffered, throughout Shanxi. On each placard was written these words:

The Mission, in rebuilding these Churches with its own funds, aims in so doing to fulfill the command of the Saviour

## GLOBAL VOICES

of the World, that all men should love their neighbours as themselves, and is unwilling to lay any heavy pecuniary burden on the traders or on the poor. I, the Governor, find... that the chief work of the Christian religion is in all places to exhort men to live virtuously. From the time of their entrance into China, Christian missionaries have given medicine gratuitously to the sick....

Jesus, in his instructions, inculcates forbearance and forgiveness, and all desire for revenge is discouraged. Mr Hoste is able to carry out these principles to the full; this mode of action deserves the fullest approval.

I charge you all, gentry, scholars, army and people, those of you who are fathers to exhort your sons, and those who are elder sons to exhort your younger brothers, to bear in mind the example of Pastor Hoste, who is able to forbear and forgive as taught by Jesus to do so....(China's Millions 1902 pp33, 36).

*It is the policy of this organization that all information, intelligence, ideas, suggestions, etc. relating to a crisis be directed to the Crisis Management Team at the earliest possible time. Any member of the organization with such information or with suggestions for the Crisis Management Team shall forward the information or suggestions immediately to the CMT.*

*It is further the policy of this organization that during a crisis all information released, and all public statements about the crisis be made by (or with the specific approval of) the Crisis Management Team. No member of the organization outside the CMT is authorized to make any statement that relates in any way to an ongoing crisis. This includes statements to internal constituencies (other members, families, etc.) as well as external constituencies (the media, extended family, home churches, government agencies, etc.).*

### **Model Policy: Member Care**

*It is the intention of this policy to recognize that individuals who undergo traumatic events, and others associated with these events, can suffer emotional reactions that may become destructive if untreated. It is the intention of this policy that those involved in traumatic events receive evaluation and, if necessary, intervention from mental health professionals.*

*It also is the intention of this policy that this evaluation and intervention be conducted confidentially with the objective being the treatment of existing trauma and the prevention of future trauma associated with the crisis.*

*It is the policy of this organization that those personnel who are directly involved in a crisis receive an initial and follow-up evaluation from a qualified Christian mental health professional. These evaluations shall occur as soon as possible following a crisis and again six to twelve months following the crisis (unless otherwise specified by the mental health professional).*

*These evaluations and any treatment are confidential between the member of the organization and the mental health professional. Costs associated with this policy shall be paid*

*by the organization. Although the individuals who should receive evaluation as described herein may vary from incident to incident, in each case at least the victim, the immediate family, and the Crisis Management Team shall receive this evaluation.*

*In situations involving large numbers of members, such as group evacuations, the use of a supervised Critical Incident Stress Debriefing may fulfill the requirements of this policy (providing the C.I.S.D. incorporates a mechanism for recognition of the need, and provision for accomplishing, followup counseling or therapy as needed).*

### **Model Policy: Evacuation Authority**

*The intention of this policy is to address those components of evacuation planning and decision making that can be identified before a crisis occurs. One of the most critical (and potentially divisive) elements of evacuation decision-making is determining who has the authority to mandate an evacuation. Experience has demonstrated that those on the field and close to the situation will have perspectives that tend to prioritize different factors than those in leadership roles and more geographically removed from the events. Experience has also shown that in some cases, those closest to the scene will have access to the best information to support an evacuation decision, but in other cases this information will be denied to them and will only be available to those more removed from the event.*

*It is the policy of this organization that decision-making authority regarding evacuation exists at the individual or family level, at the local entity level and at the headquarters leadership level. In different circumstances, each of these levels may have access to information that makes evacuation an appropriate decision; so, each is authorized to act on such information and make a decision. The remainder of the organization will respect such a decision. This policy is multi-lateral: Just as headquarters will support an individual family's decision to evacuate, so will individuals and families support a directive from local leadership or regional or headquarters authority to do so.*

### **Model Policy: Evacuation Criteria**

*The intention of this policy is to address those components of evacuation planning and decision making that can be identified before a crisis occurs. Experience shows that training and contingency planning ahead of time will often times make the difference between successful and safe evacuations and those that endanger members and result in unnecessary organizational disruption.*

*It is the policy of this organization that each local entity will prepare evacuation plans for all personnel serving under its jurisdiction. Copies of these plans shall be submitted to headquarters leadership where a reference copy will be maintained. These plans shall be reviewed, and updated and revised as needed, at least every two years. At a minimum, these plans shall include:*

- *A description of how the local entity will determine whether an evacuation is necessary; specifically identifying the decision making authority and criteria to be used to make such a decision.*
- *A description of the notification system that insures all personnel receive necessary information before and during an evacuation.*
- *A description of the procedures the local entity will use; such as, means of transportation, evacuation routes and alternatives, staging and destination sites, and communications procedures.*

*Each member or member and family shall prepare for two types of evacuation scenarios by identifying what would be taken with them and how they would accomplish an evacuation (e.g., method of transportation, routes, staging areas and destination) for each of these circumstances:*

- *An evacuation with at least 24 hour's advance notice and in which a carload (persons and belongings) could be taken.*
- *An evacuation with one hour's notice and in which only those items that could be hand-carried could be taken.*

*Each member/family's plan will be submitted to the local entity and maintained as an annex to that entity's evacuation plan. <<*

Religious Liberty Partnership

# Best Practices

## for Ministry to and with the Persecuted Church

### Introduction

The Code of Best Practices for ministry to and with the persecuted church around the world is designed as a benchmark document to guide the policies and practice of organisations in their involvement. It is not intended to establish legal standards or liability. Rather the motivation for the development of this code is based upon the responsibility toward all participants and partners in religious liberty work, that they are served with the highest standards possible.

The code does not necessarily reflect current practice, but encourages aspirations toward excellence. However, minimal standards are implied and therefore these principles should be seen as steps in the process rather than an end in themselves. It is also recognised that the code may not be applicable to all situations in religious liberty ministry.

Please recognize that no document or agreement on principles can reflect the attitude and relationships from which they were birthed. We have attempted, however, to do so.

These issues were identified by the membership of the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) as needing to be somehow addressed in this document:

- Problems of market or donor driven ministry
- Common understanding of the needs of the situation
- Doing no harm
- Cross-cultural value and appreciation
- Long-term thinking that is proactive as opposed to reactive.
- The tendency to see money / technology / resources as the primary responses to need

Religious Liberty Partnership

- Possible disagreements over the root causes of persecution.
- Ministry preparation / Biblical and theological training / knowing and applying Biblical principles concerning persecution
- Communication integrity
- Between organizations.
- Within own organization / network
- Between nationals and international
- Encouraging partners abroad
- Respect a Body of Christ relational viewpoint
- Partnering and collaboration
- Accountability among RLP ministries
- Recognizing the centrality of the local church—i.e., providing funds through and capacity building of the local church to render aid and counseling
- Concept of working with persecuted church leaders as equals as opposed to primarily seeing them as victims
- Equal access to opportunity, including those without a knowledge of English
- Danger of over professionalism

### Principle 1

**Collaboration and Partnership** – the persecuted church is best served by ministries cooperating and working together while maintaining the ministry distinctives. This to include the reduction of duplication; wisely sharing communication; growing common understanding of problems and root causes of persecution; growing relationship and trust; and accountability (information, money, etc).

#### Key Indicators

- We are making the time to develop relationship and trust with one another.
- We are actively seeking to avoid duplication of ministry in a given area whenever

possible.

- We are seeking to develop our collective intellectual capital by appropriately sharing information, knowledge and lessons learned.
- We are seeing attitudes of competition are being reduced.
- We are speaking well of each other.
- We are seeing more joint projects launched.
- We are learning how to share success with each other.

### Principle 2

**Doing No Harm** – ministry to the persecuted church should operate under the core value of ensuring that we actively work to never do harm to those we are trying to serve. This to include cross cultural consideration and appreciation; equal access to opportunity; support of local leaders; long-term thinking; and examination of possible exploitation.

#### Key Indicators

- We are respecting local culture, language and practices.
- We are learning when to take no for an answer in avoiding the exploitation/over exposure of persecuted believers for the sake of publicity/promotion.



- We are promoting unity and not feeding disunity among local Christians by providing broad access to resources, consulting on possible projects, and evaluating past and present projects.

### Principle 3

**Education and Training** – as learning entities we are continually trying to learn from our mistakes, as well as the mistakes of other ministries, and willingly embrace the opportunity to do so in order to serve the persecuted church more effectively. This to include preparation for future possible persecution; training of Biblical principles and theology; orientation and teaching to workers in countering dependency; and promotion of local church leadership.

#### Key Indicators

- We are providing orientation and training on key issues such as dependency, partnering, cultural sensitivity, etc, to our staffs and workers.
- We are promoting the understanding and awareness of different levels of persecution.
- We are providing appropriate preparation to our leadership, staff and partners as to the Biblical and missiological principles of persecution.

### Principle 4

**Communication** – striving to demonstrate integrity in all of our communications. This to include integrity in promotions; integrity in information gathering; integrity in dissemination; and integrity in use of statistics.

#### Key Indicators

- Organisations are providing effective communication without exaggerating the needs, the statistics, and the plight of persecuted Christians.
- Accurate and verifiable statistics and research are being used.
- Appropriate sourcing and permissions are being practiced.
- Sensitivity is being shown to the impact on persecuted believers in our information gathering.
- We are following the directives and guidance of a variety of local leaders in what can be reported and publicized.

- We seek agreement to use the same numbers regarding the number of those being persecuted and the number of martyrs.

### Principle 5

**Accountability** – mutual accountability leads to more effective ministry and faithful stewardship of our shared calling to the persecuted. This to include financial standards; information; and evaluation.

#### Key Indicators

- Adherence to nationally agreed upon financial standards, including certified audited accounting, is occurring.
- Organisations are open to receiving input from other RLP members as to our faithfulness to and our fulfillment of the best practices.
- Significant concerns on accountability are being expressed face to face.
- Where there is failure to resolve disputes among, they are handled by Mathew 18 principles and possible mediation.

### Principle 6

**Advocacy** – raising the awareness of the situation of persecuted believers as well as seeking to influence socio-economic and political policies and structures. This to include: advocacy being done with the benefit of persecuted believers in mind; and advocacy being done collaboratively.

#### Key Indicators

- Neglected peoples are receiving appropriate attention.
- Whenever possible, advocacy is being done cooperatively with other ministries.
- Campaigns and public advocacy are being done with the participation and agreement of their families and local church leadership whenever possible.

### Principle 7

**Operational Strategies** – ministry to the persecuted church needs must go beyond “marketable” strategies. This to include attitudes of participating **with** persecuted church leaders and understanding that there may be differences in opinion among local believers on how to handle a given situation.

#### Key Indicators

- We try and see that our work is never only donor driven
- Money, technology, resources are not being seen as the only “answer”. When looking to address the needs of the persecuted we are looking beyond monetary, technical or other material resources.
- Organisations are growing in their heart motivation for the persecuted, not merely by secular management standards.
- Organisations are looking to determine long term considerations and impact as part of their overall strategy rather than mere expediency.
- The establishment of branch offices are being done with sensitivity to local culture, context and economic realities (salary, personnel) as well as avoided when national organizations are doing the required work.
- Organisational involvement is building the capacity and self sufficiency of national leaders and churches.

### Principle 8

**Fundraising** – raising funds for ministry to the persecuted church needs to exemplify integrity.

#### Key Indicators

- Accurate and verifiable statistics, facts, and testimonies are used in fund-raising materials with the avoidance of sensationalistic approaches.
- The needs of the persecuted are presented truthfully and respectfully and in such a way as not to exploit their plight for material gain or further endanger them through publicity.

We view these Best Practices as a “living document,” originally drafted by a task force from the Religious Liberty Partnership in August 2007. This is the fourth incarnation, dated March 2008.

Questions, comments and more information requests should be sent to:

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Voice of the Martyrs

# Code of Best Practices

## for Cross-cultural Visits to Restricted Nations

### Preamble

We believe that everything we do and say has the potential to build or undermine the trust of our team members and our international partners. It is with this understanding that we commit ourselves to following these Best Practices for Cross-cultural Visits to Restricted Nations.

### Prior to the Visit

1. Prior to departure all team members will be involved in a comprehensive and formal briefing that will address issues such as:
  - Security
  - Objectives and expectations
  - Team roles (leader, finances, devotions, contact person, et al)
  - Medical issues
  - Cross-cultural issues
  - Ethical concerns
  - Communications issues
  - Political/historical/religious environment
  - Spiritual wellbeing
  - Other relevant issues e.g. paying for our own meals, covering internal travel expenses, not asking to use personal telephones/Internet, etc.

We aim that all team members come together prior to the trip for this briefing. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible to do this briefing by Skype conference and Powerpoint, at the discretion of the team leader.

2. Prior to each trip a security rating will be assigned to each country by mission executives and the appropriate practices to be employed. The security ratings will be Green (unrestricted), Amber (restrict-

ed) or Red (very restricted).

3. Each trip will be approved by the mission executive only after prayer, a definite benefit to the mission and our partners is identified and the trip's purposes can be clearly stated.

### During the Visit

4. We will endeavour to be good guests while in country. We endeavour not to be a burden to our hosts. This is, in fact, very difficult. We cannot avoid being a burden on their time and schedules, but we can exercise prudence and modesty by, for example, avoiding being a financial burden to them.
5. We will clearly express our expectations and objectives for the visit to our hosts/partner, while exercising sensitivity to their needs, concerns and aspirations which may differ from our own. If an agreement cannot be reached, the judgment of our host/partner will prevail.
6. On field activities of the visit will be aligned to long term partnerships and priorities. Long term partnerships and priorities will always take precedence over short term needs or aspirations. For example, we will not endanger a partner or a project for the sake of a photo or interview.
7. All non-project gifts should be given by the team leader on behalf of the mission through our local partners only after consultation with them as to its appropriateness. Ideally, gifts should be anonymous with the understanding that this is not precedent setting. All gifts must align with the mission, purpose and values of the mission. They must be received and reported upon.

8. We will be careful not to make unauthorised promises or raise expectations that we cannot guarantee fulfilment of. We will endeavour to clearly explain the decision making processes of the mission that precludes individual staff from making such commitments. These include requests for finances, photos, videos, services and projects.
9. We commit to meet together as a team each day of the trip for prayer and Bible reading.
10. We commit to meet together daily to assess the progress of the trip objectives, team dynamics, the present security situation, and emerging issues and determining corrective action.
11. We commit to follow our partners' directives and guidance as to what can be reported on and how it can be publicized. In principle, we will say less than what is approved by partners in the country but we will not say more than what they have approved. We will always confirm the appropriateness of the use of photos and interviews with trusted leaders/partners in the country, even if the interviewee has already given approval.
12. We will endeavour to maintain as low a profile as possible when in country. We will inform our partners/hosts of this desire and ask for their assistance and advice on how to carry this out appropriately and especially when it involves invitations to preach, visiting homes, arranging interviews, etc.
13. Within a week of the conclusion of each trip, each team member and the team

*Voice of the Martyrs, Canada*

### After the Visit

13. Within a week of the conclusion of each trip, each team member and the team

will be verbally debriefed by the mission executive. We aim that all team members come together after the trip for this debriefing. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible to do this debriefing

by Skype conference at the discretion of the mission executive.  
14. Within a month of the conclusion of the trip, each team member will submit a written report including how the trip

purposes have been fulfilled, what were the team dynamics, how the partnership is functioning, financial accounting and what follow up is needed. <<

## 8. Márcia Tostes, Antioch Mission, Brasil

### Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

Up to now we have chosen not to send missionaries to dangerous contexts for short-term missions.

*What policies does your agency have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

We have a “Missionary Declaration” that is signed by the missionary and also his/her family, which states that the missionary may be in a difficult situation and that this is by his/her choice.

We have a monetary fund which is available in case any of them need to come home urgently.

In case of open war, we advise our missionaries to follow the instructions of the Brazilian Embassy—if they say to evacuate the country, this would be the rule to follow. But in some cases, we are open to consider together with the missionary, his/her family and sending church, their choice to stay. That would be dependent upon answering a very important question: What difference would it make for the local church if he or she stayed there? This would of course be subjected to the missionary's maturity, if there are children involved, and so on.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

We usually use Margaretha Adiwardanas' book, *Prepared to Persevere*.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped? What guidelines do you have regarding*

*monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

We follow the example of older mission agencies and would not pay a ransom. As it has never happened to one of our missionaries, we have never tried out this policy.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

We would advise them to get to a place where they could have the care they need, if possible in Brazil, our base, where we could provide the care of specialists.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

In our Missionary Training Course, we create opportunities that will bring the subject to reflection. Even though our country has a high level of urban violence, most of the candidates have never experienced this kind of pressure in their lives.

*What more ought we to be saying to our churches and future missionaries in this area?*

I believe we should be training them to know about and understand more specific situations.

### Case study

In our short history, there have been some examples of missionaries who were sent to dangerous contexts—such as Angola, during the civil war. Most of the examples of difficult situations occurred after the missionaries were in the country, such as the onset of the Iraq war against Israel and the political unrest of Albania in 1988.

During these crises, we had missionaries that stayed behind on the mission field. In Angola, one of our missionaries lived for seventeen years in the context of war, suf-

fered many privations, a bomb explosion near her house, and so on. As this occurred some years ago, communication was very difficult. By the grace of God only, she continued to live there and made a lot of difference.

In Albania, the missionary (a single lady), was very mature and her family and sending church agreed with her choice to stay. She made a big difference helping the people, working with refugees, being a channel for receiving help from NGOs, and so on. Once the problem was resolved she came back to Brazil, where she received proper help to deal with the stress she incurred. The mission was in contact with her the whole time, and would have tried diplomatic solution if she needed to be evacuated. We all knew if that happened we would have a lot to work for.

In Israel, some missionaries left and some stayed. Both groups needed special care after the situation calmed down. The war did not last long.

### Final thoughts

I believe that, as in many new sending countries, we are still growing regarding the subject of preparing for and caring about dangerous contexts. It is still difficult for some Brazilian churches to understand that missionaries sent to the most needed places of the world need life insurance, for example. Not because they would not understand the danger, but for lack of knowledge. And of course, it life insurance would require another US \$1000 in the support. For a family, that could easily increase to US \$3000.

The lack of proper structure for dangerous contexts may be the reason we are not sending many to these areas. Should we? Or should those who have that kind of structure continue doing that part of the work?

## GLOBAL VOICES

# Visiting the Persecuted Church

## Best Practices for Foreign Teams when visiting Sri Lanka

### 1. Culture shock

It will be most helpful for the sending organization to conduct a brief orientation for visitors and staff, prior to arrival in Sri Lanka. This will help them grasp the local situation and be culturally sensitive. Such orientation is essential to the safety of visitors and local pastoral workers serving in hostile environments.

### 2. Objectives

Most visitors from organizations have set objectives for their visits to the Persecuted Church. It will be most helpful to communicate your trip objectives to the local partner well in advance of the visit, giving time for any adjustments and setting a suitable date for the visit that is acceptable to both parties.

### 3. Itinerary

When making travel arrangements etc..., we, the local partners have to work within certain limitations. For example: some parts of Sri Lanka are not easily accessible and can require eight hours of road travel. Travel to some other areas requires prior clearance from the Ministry of Defense. It is essential for visitors to consult with the local partner in preparing an itinerary. A sudden visit to a given location may not be realistic.

### 4. Local wisdom

It is always best to follow guidelines set by the local partner when making field visits. Your host will have a better understanding and experience of the ground situation and is in a better position to make good decisions and assessments.

### 4. Enthusiasm vs. good sense

While we appreciate the efforts of visitors to capture on film and highlight the plight of

the Persecuted Church in Sri Lanka, it should also be born in mind that while visitors leave our shores after a brief visit, the local pastors, staff and workers continue to live here amidst persecution and are vulnerable to danger. For example: a very visible and loud reporter or video crew invariably attracts attention and places the local pastor in danger. It must be remembered that most places you will visit are often watched and monitored by interested parties.

### 5. Camera-shy

Most victims of persecution are from very humble circumstances. To them, facing a foreign journalist, interviews, posing for video filming, etc., are strange and alien experiences. Many of them feel uncomfortable "acting" for the camera. This situation needs sensitive handling.

### 6. Taking 'no' for an answer

It is our culture to show hospitality to visitors. This is particularly so in rural villages. Most local Christians will accommodate the requests of a guest, even if it is inconvenient, dangerous, embarrassing or uncomfortable. For example: requesting a persecution victim to act out a traumatic scene from an attack or repeat a painful experience several times. In such instances, it is our responsibility as the local partner, to intervene on behalf of the victims and deny the request. Please trust our judgment in such instances, even if the victim may "appear" to be willing to comply with the visitor's request.

### 7. Gifts

The churches or victims you visit may have many material needs and often a visitor's heart will be moved to help. It is best to consult with your local partner as to the appropriateness of a gift or a promise of help before making such a commitment to the vic-

tims. Ideally, any gift from the visiting organization should be given through the local partner. As local partners, we will in turn issue proper receipts and reports of such gifts.

### 8. Attire and conduct

There may be places that you visit where being clad in appropriate clothing is a way of showing courtesy to your hosts. For example, if you are invited to speak or share at a meeting or visit a business office, dressing in shorts is not

appropriate. Most places of cultural interest which are also places of Buddhist worship require modest dress. Similarly, behaviour which may be normal and acceptable in the West may also not be acceptable in very conservative, rural areas. Seek guidance from your host as to what is appropriate.

### 9. Reporting

There may be times when publicizing sensitive information can endanger the local Christians or hinder the work of the Church. It is best to follow the guidelines set by the local partners and always cross check reports, scripts and copy before it is publicized.

### 10. Our commitment

As partners and hosts, we are committed to making your visit fruitful and mutually beneficial; subject to our paramount duty to protect and ensure the safety and best interest of local pastors, believers and churches. In this context, we advocate that visitors follow the advice of our staff as to what actions and behaviour are acceptable when making field visits. <<

Formulated by: Roshini Wickremesinha  
Advocacy & Legal Officer, NCEASL, 2003 / Updated  
2007

*National Christian Evangelical  
Alliance of Sri Lanka*

# Guidelines for Crisis Management and Prevention

## Including Working in High Risk Areas

### INTRODUCTION TO GUIDELINES

The Global Connections Guidelines for crisis management and prevention are designed to assist dealing both with critical incidents and also when working in high-risk situations. They are designed to apply to any UK based organisation or UK churches sending staff or volunteers overseas. The principles should be applied to all types of staff such as mission partners, volunteers working overseas, national staff and UK staff visiting field locations. Agencies and churches should also apply them in all contexts, both long and short term, although some different procedures might be needed in each context. Some of these guidelines have been formed specifically with high-risk areas in mind, but most of the principles can also be useful in lower risk situations and wherever or whenever crises arise.

No area of the world or working situation is completely risk-free and crises and accidents can happen in any location. However, some mission partners live in high-risk areas of the world where they could be susceptible to insecurity, violence and even kidnapping. They do not normally carry weapons or have guards and this can add another dimension to any proposed response.

Quite obviously, if an attack on mission partners were to be successful, with money being handed over or political demands being conceded, cross-cultural work in some areas of the world might become more impracticable.

Anticipating and preparing for crisis situations is an essential first step to dealing with them. Safety and security is extremely impor-

tant and therefore Global Connections has formulated these guidelines in consultation with its members. Safety and security must be the responsibility of all staff and they must be equally committed to the process to ensure success.

It is impossible to provide “off the shelf” policies and procedures that fit all locations, circumstances and the needs of all groups. This set of guidelines has therefore been developed which are designed to help agencies and churches think through and develop their own agreed policies and procedures.

All UK agencies should appoint a representative (or team) who is responsible throughout the agency for the management of a crisis situation. They should also ensure that the agency develops and implements its Crisis Management policies and procedures which should be consistent with the standards set out in these guidelines. Agencies that are part of an international structure should ensure the Head Office has appropriate policies and procedures in place and that the UK office is an integral part of any procedures.

### Section 1

#### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF A CRISIS MANAGEMENT POLICY

A Crisis Management and Prevention Policy is a statement of intent that demonstrates a responsibil-

ity and commitment to staff and national workers of agencies and churches based in the UK but sending staff or volunteers overseas. It helps to create the safest and most positive environment for staff and to show that the agency/church is taking its responsibilities seriously.

1. All UK agencies and churches should have a Crisis Management and Prevention policy regardless of whether or not they work in a high-risk area, as situations can happen unexpectedly. Policies and procedures should be written with a holistic approach in mind across all departments.
2. The policy should be written clearly and should be easily understandable. It should be integrated with all other personnel and member care policies.
3. The policy should be given to all staff and volunteers who work in or visit overseas locations. It should be an integral part of the staff handbook, orientation and training programme.
4. Crisis Management and prevention

*Global Connections, UK*



issues should be an integral part of personnel and member care practice. It should also be an integral part of an agency's risk management analysis. Therefore the policy should be reviewed on a regular basis, preferably every year, in view of continual change in legal legislation, or when there is a significant change in the UK agency/church.

5. In situations where a staff member is seconded to a local partner, the local partner should also be encouraged to develop Crisis Management and Prevention policies and procedures.
6. Clear overall procedures should be developed and then adapted as appropriate for each overseas location and be based on the overall policies.
7. One of the aims of the policy should be to identify clear management structures so that everybody knows who should be informed and involved so that the best standards of member-care can be offered.

#### Note:

The use of the term "staff" throughout this document is a generic word, which is used to include all categories of people working overseas, including volunteers and those who are self-supported.

## Section 2

### SELECTION & APPOINTMENT, INDUCTION & ARRIVAL AND ONGOING SUPERVISION

Taking potential crisis situations into account during selection, induction and supervision is important in all settings. However, in high-risk situations especially, where there are serious external risks as specified in Appendix 2, it is especially important. As a result each agency/church should:

- Appoint a Crisis Management Coordinator who has overall responsibility for developing, completing and implementing its Crisis Management and Prevention policies. In each location, a local Crisis Management Officer should be appointed.
- The Crisis Management Coordinator should keep knowledge, policies, procedures and best practice requirements up to date and ensure local Crisis

Management Officers are adequately trained.

- Agree about and ensure that there is clarity on whom to contact overseas and in the home country.
- Review regularly security procedures at staff meetings and ensure all changes in the security situation are communicated to all staff.

### Procedures relating to selection and appointment

- All potential personnel and volunteers working overseas should be informed of any possible risks associated with a placement at the start of any recruitment, appointment or re-deployment process.
- The application process should ensure basic health screening of applicants.
- During the interview process, applications should be asked about previous high-risk areas and crisis situations in which they have been involved as appropriate.
- Any additional criteria relating to a person's suitability for being appointed to work in a high-risk area should be clearly set out in the selection process.
- The Crisis Management policy should be integrated into the staff handbook or appropriate document and all personnel should be required to acknowledge in writing that they have received and understood the Crisis Management policy.

### Procedures relating to orientation, induction and arrival

- Orientation should be provided for all categories of staff and volunteers relating to crisis management.
- People working in high-risk areas will be provided with appropriate specialist training, including personal security training.
- Induction relating to specific situations should be provided on site on arrival.
- Relationships with Embassies should be established and all staff members and families should be registered. Their guidance should be sought for those working in high-risk areas.
- Advice should also be sought from

## 10 Ways to Reduce Tension within the Community you Serve

- 1 Be sensitive to sound levels during meetings & services
- 2 Integrate into the village, without alienating yourself from the community
- 3 Be culturally sensitive in your conduct, especially when dealing with youth
- 4 Avoid high publicity programs on special religious holidays
- 5 Do not use relief or social programs as "bait" for evangelism
- 6 Adopt a simple lifestyle consistent with the village
- 7 Promote unity among Christian leaders in the area
- 8 Gather in a small congregation if hostility persists
- 9 Avoid promoting foreigners or outsiders to a prominent role in the village or Church
- 10 Avoid disrespectful comments towards other religions at all times

Used with permission from the Religious Liberty Commission of the National Christian Evangelical Alliance of Sri Lanka

local Christian leaders and other agencies including international bodies. Appropriate use should be made of any UN traffic light system for entering restricted areas.

### Procedures relating to ongoing supervision

- Staff working in a stressful situation should have regular periods of rest and refreshment away from their work place. This should be in addition to normal holiday entitlement.
- Reporting mechanisms should be in place for work-related injuries, sickness,

## 9. Jamie Wood, Director, Pioneers (NZ)

### Mission Agency Leadership

*What policies and guidelines does your agency have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

Our regular practice with short-term missionaries is to undertake a thorough pre-trip orientation program that seeks to both uncover un-realistic expectations and paint an accurate picture of the situation on the ground. To paint an accurate picture and ensure that expectations are realistic, we need to obtain a lot of information from the receiving team. Aside from our general organizational security protocols, we look to the team on the ground for security specifics.

Since every situation is different, we allow a lot of variability in the guidelines. However, we ensure they are aware of communication protocols (avoid overtly missions-oriented language in emails, etc.), and basic cultural mores such as dress codes and acceptable behaviors, etc..

We don't send short-term workers into areas where we have no receiving team or leader, and short-termers are told in no uncertain terms to comply with the recommendations of our workers on location.

*What policies does your agency have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

As above, only the orientation is much more in-depth and includes self-care as well as crisis-care training. Long-termers are required to refer to our International Handbook much more proactively and in particular to the security policies therein. They join teams that are required to develop specific security protocols for their respective situations, including contingency plans for major potential threats. Such threats might include natural disasters, hostage situations, medical emergencies, war or imprisonment, etc. Contingencies range from knowing escape routes and keeping a grab bag of essentials handy, to being sure you have trustworthy local friends in the community who are able to help in times of need.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

From our International Handbook (Sections 8.4.5 – 8.4.8)

#### **Policy on the Payment of Ransom and/or Yielding to Extortion**

It is the policy of Pioneers that in cases of kidnapping, hostage taking or other extortion, no ransom or concession that is reasonably likely to cause or contribute to the probability of similar events taking place in the future will be paid.

Pioneers places a high value on the safety of its Members, staff, and families, and in cases of kidnapping or hostage taking desires to take all reasonable steps to secure the safe release of the hostage(s). Pioneers recognizes that payment of ransom or concessions may contribute to the probability that similar events will occur in the future. In specific cases, it shall be the responsibility of the CMT (Crisis Management Team) to determine whether or not a proposed payment or concession complies with this policy. The final decision regarding payment must be approved by the International Director, the International Council Chair, and the Director(s) of the Mobilization Base(s)/Office(s) directly involved in the crisis.

#### **Policy on Negotiating with Kidnappers/ Hostage Takers**

It is the policy of Pioneers that in cases of kidnapping or hostage taking involving Members, staff, or their families, their safe return shall be our priority. All reasonable efforts consistent with our policies and Core Values will be made to achieve their safe return. These efforts include hostage negotiation as a strategy of first choice. In cases where Pioneers has the opportunity to negotiate for the safe return of hostages, we will seek assistance from professional negotiators.

In cases of kidnapping or hostage taking Pioneers recognizes the distinction between negotiations on the one hand, and payments of ransom or concessions on the other. We also recognize that hostage negotiation represents a specialized and potentially dangerous activity.

#### **Policy on Family Relocation During a Hostage Crisis**

It is the policy of Pioneers that in cases of kidnapping or hostage taking family members will be relocated from the country of occurrence as soon as possible. This relocation will normally take place to the home country of the family. In specific cases, the CMT may waive this policy if doing so is in the best interest of the family and the crisis management effort.

Experience has shown that in cases of hostage taking or kidnapping rapid relocation of family members away from the event is strongly advised. Having such a policy is generally a comfort to hostages, who report that uncertainty about the location and status of their family is the primary cause of anxiety during their captivity. In cases where this policy is invoked, Pioneers will ensure that ongoing support and assistance to the family remains a priority.

#### **Policy on Notification to Governments in Kidnapping and Hostage Taking Incidents**

It is the policy of Pioneers to cooperate with legitimate government inquiries and activities in cases of kidnapping and hostage taking when doing so is judged to be in the best interest of the hostage(s) and Pioneers. The decisions of when and how to make these notifications to government agencies shall be made by the CMT.

In cases of kidnapping and hostage taking Pioneers understands that the local (host) government has authority and responsibility for such crimes that occur within their country. We are also aware that the home government (of citizenship) has a legitimate interest, and perhaps even legal jurisdiction, in the foreign kidnappings or hostage takings of their citizens. However, Pioneers recognizes that in some cases the involvement of governments may create a conflict with our objectives and values.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

From our International Handbook (Sections 8.4.9)

## GLOBAL VOICES

*Policy on Member Care Following a Crisis or Emergency*

It is recognized that individuals who undergo traumatic events may suffer significant emotional reactions that may become problematic if untreated. It is the policy of Pioneers that confidential counselling be made available to Members directly involved in a crisis. This counselling is strongly advised and may be initiated by either the Member or the appropriate member care coordinator. The extent and nature of this voluntary counselling is to be determined by the appropriate member care coordinator in consultation with the Member(s) in question.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

Training is a core part of our pre-field orientation program followed up with team specific security orientation as required when a new member joins the team.

*What more ought we to be saying to our churches and future missionaries in this area?*

Expect the unexpected, be prepared for the worst and don't be surprised if the worst happens. As our Global Security Advisor said to a recent gathering of Pioneers Leaders about anticipating increasing persecution, "The next time we meet I expect some of us will be missing".

*Case study*

From an article I wrote for NZ Christian Magazine "Daystar", January 2008 edition. Sourced from an Arab Pioneers leader who organized the gathering.

"In September 2007, more than 400 young Arab Christians gathered to learn about God's heart for those nations of the world still largely untouched by the gospel. Responding to a challenge about their responsibility, eighty-one young men and women came forward and dedicated themselves to be light-bearers for Christ as employees and businesspeople in Arab lands fiercely resistant to the gospel. One hundred and seven more committed themselves to being proactive in their outreach

to isolated people groups in their own countries.

During the conference, testimonies were shared by young men and women who were sent out in short-term teams to various Arab nations to share the love of Christ with those who have not yet experienced it.

In one of the teams that went west, two of the young men were arrested, imprisoned and tortured for thirty-eight days. Their tormentors sought to expose them as spies and tried to turn them against each other, but the truth prevailed and their testimony could not be refuted.

One of the teams that went south was attacked on the road by a gang of bandits. The attackers strafed the truck on which they were riding with automatic gunfire, killing one of the team's young men. A young woman was also injured, hit in the thigh with a bullet. The miracle of her injury was that the bullet travelled an unnatural trajectory around the major arteries and bones in her leg leaving a 'clean' wound relatively easily healed, and confounding the doctors who attended her. The emotional wound was more severe but she is being well cared for. Pray for her.

The conference officials were concerned about the reaction as these stories were shared. They needn't have been. The net result has been a substantial INCREASE in young people applying to attend next years' conference and join future short-term teams! Furthermore, a vision is forming to see thousands of young Arabs scatter as ambassadors for Christ throughout the Arab world."

*Final thoughts*

This is a pertinent subject and one that I'm hoping will HELP mobilize a new generation of cross-cultural ministers willing to lay their lives down for a cause much bigger than any of us, like it motivated those young Arabs.

accidents and fatalities, and should be monitored to help assess and reduce future risk to staff.

- Anticipation of a crisis.
- **External:** External crises can be predicted by regular monitoring of media, both international and local. Staff can alert their Crisis Management Officer of potential crises
- **Personal:** Personal crises may be detected early by observation and interaction. Consistent pastoral care at various levels should facilitate this process. Individuals who observe behaviour, which may lead to individual crises should make their concerns known to their Crisis Management Office. Staff should be expected to use their common sense with regard to health and travel! Travel routes should be secure and others be advised of routes to be taken.
- **Ministry:** It should be made clear to staff that their behaviour can affect their own ministry and the ministry of others. Staff may sense that their movements are being monitored. If so, they should inform the Crisis Management Coordinator, not using a home phone and be discreet in their contact with other personnel

**Section 3****BEING PREPARED**

It is easy to assume that everyone knows what is appropriate in a situation of crisis or potential crisis. This is rarely the case and there is often an absence of specific expectations. Clear guidance needs to be given to staff on many issues.

The following is a check-list for staff

- All staff should be made aware regularly of security, travel and health risks together with evacuation procedures for the specific country or region.
- Agency obligations and individual responsibilities in relation to possible risks should be clearly communicated to staff.
- Agencies/churches should provide adequate health and evacuation insurance cover. Local insurance options for local

staff should also be sought.

- Each staff member or family should appoint a current power of attorney for every adult family member.
- Each staff member should have an up to date will and its location should be known by their power of attorney.
- Each staff member or family should notify their agency/church about the details of whom to contact in an emergency.
- Each staff member or family should notify their agency/church of their wishes in the event of a death overseas, including guardianship of children.
- All staff should establish access to funds that will be adequate for emergencies. In the case of married couples, both partners should be able to access the funds in the event of an emergency.

## Section 4

### CRISIS PROCEDURE

Mechanisms must be put in place for actions to be taken when a crisis happens. While some procedures depend on the particular nature of the event, the following general procedures should be included:

- A verifiable source will identify the crisis.
- A list should be made of all key stakeholders to be involved, both at Field Office, Home Office and Head (International/Regional) Office level.
- A person should be appointed (normally by default the Crisis Management Officer or Team Leader) to co-ordinate the situation on the field. Delegation should be made to specific people regarding specific tasks so that everyone is aware of who does what and when and where to report back.
- Clear lines of communication should be established to ensure reliable and confidential channels are used.
- Depending on the crisis, the Crisis Management Co-ordinator may take overall charge on behalf of the whole agency. It is important that there are clear decision making processes over who has full overriding authority and whether it is the Head Office or remains at local level.
- The person taking the lead will be responsible for the following as necessary:

- Maintaining a chronology of events, during and after the crisis or critical incident
- Keeping a log of phone calls and notes of all relevant meetings
- Collecting relevant signed statements or testimonials
- Overseeing funds of team members if appropriate
- Overseeing return or burial arrangements for any deceased staff, including liaison over autopsies
- Seeing to the honourable discharge of any of the team's liabilities
- Overall liaison with:
  - trustworthy legal counsel
  - local government
  - embassy
  - family

## Section 5

### COMMUNICATIONS PROCEDURE IN A CRISIS

It is important to have clear procedures in the event of a crisis situation. The following may be helpful examples of some of the areas that should be covered.

#### Overall communication

- For security purposes, consideration should be given regarding what is the best communication channel to use in the case of emergencies

#### Communications with the family

- Contact should only be made with the contact specified by the staff member in the first instant and that there is clarity about contacts depending on the crisis and its likely impact on the family
- Ensure that the Crisis Management Team or responsible person has decided exactly what information is to be passed on, and that possible responses of the nominated contact or family are considered and prepared for:
  - How much you can say and why
  - Should the family go to site or stay where they are
  - Who can they inform and what can they say
  - How to handle media

- How to try to affirm trust
- The family will want time and attention and must feel that all is being done
- Be aware that the family may take action themselves

#### Communications with the authorities

- A decision must be taken as to how to deal with local and national authorities as well as the home authorities of the person/people involved.
- Complications may arise if they are not informed or if they are informed.
  - They will want to be seen to be assuming their responsibilities.
  - They may distrust mission/aid agencies.
  - They may accuse mission/aid agencies for not seeking their security advice.
  - They may not want mission/aid agencies to negotiate with their "enemies".
  - They may try and resolve rapidly by using violence.

#### Communication with the Embassy

- Keep in touch with the relevant embassies. However, the extent to which they are involved depends on the nature of the crisis.

#### Communication with the media

- Generally try and exclude media as it may complicate matters.
- If the story is in the public domain, ask the media to limit what they say.
- Answer questions with minimal information (only facts).
- It may be necessary to use media at a later date so be aware of who they are and what they are reporting.
- Always use one focal person. Head Office should share with field exactly what has been said (and vice versa).

#### Communication with other agencies

- Incidents may increase risk, information needs to be shared, but with strict confidentiality
- Risk control may then be further discussed to ensure safety of others.



## Section 6

### DEBRIEFING AND POSSIBLE COUNSELLING

When staff members and their families come through a crisis appropriate counselling MUST be given. It is routine that they should receive debriefing and counselling, regardless of their apparent emotional well-being. This should not be at the discretion of the supervisor or the staff member.

- Staff should be aware of how to access emergency member-care and this should be facilitated by the agency/church
- Debriefing following an emergency situation should take place within at least 72 hours of the crisis
- Affected colleagues may also require counselling, for example in the event of the death of a colleague.
- It is common to attempt to shelter children from distress by trying not to mention concerns in front of them. Ensure that children are included in any debriefing.



Appendix 1

### SOME DEFINITIONS

**Kidnapping:** Forced capture and detention for the specific purpose of obtaining some sort of payment (or political aim) from them, their organisation or a Government. Release and safety are usually dependent of certain criteria being met. The cause may be political in nature, economic (extortion) or ransom. Because of the negotiation skills

needed in this, a specialist will probably be needed.

**Hostage-taking:** This is more in a situation of siege, where the abductors, have taken a person(s) as part of their strategy for escape.

**Abduction:** This is the forced taking of a person(s) but with no demand made. (For example young men can be forced into the army). With no demand there may be another reason, often political statements, where examples of people are made. Very serious – response may be **only to give high level media coverage**. It may also require negotiation with advocacy groups and human rights groups.

#### Appendix 2

### DEFINITION OF A CRISIS

A crisis may be external, individual or ministry.

#### External

- Kidnapping
- Civil unrest, accelerated military activity or war
- Terrorism
- Hijacking/carjacking
- Natural disaster

External crises can often be predicted by regular monitoring of media, both international and local.

#### Individual

- Disagreement between members in conflict
- Missing persons
- Serious accident
- Violence including murder or accidental death
- Major health problem (physical and psychological)

Individual crises may be detected early by observation and interaction. Consistent pastoral care at various levels can facilitate this process. Individuals who observe behaviour, which could lead to an individual crisis, should make their concerns known to their team manager. Early intervention may diffuse a larger crisis

#### Ministry

- Imprisonment or expulsion
- Refused re-entry
- House arrest

Individuals may sense that their movements are being monitored. If so, they should inform their team leader, not using a home phone and be discreet in their contact with other team members.

#### Appendix 3

### Useful Resources

#### People in Aid

Regent's Wharf, 8 All Saints Street  
LONDON N1 9RL  
Tel: 020 7520 2548  
Email: [info@peopleinaid.org](mailto:info@peopleinaid.org)  
[www.peopleinaid.org](http://www.peopleinaid.org)

#### RedR London

1 Great George Street  
LONDON SW1P 3AA  
Email: [info@redr.org](mailto:info@redr.org)  
Phone: 020 7233 3116  
[www.redr.org/london](http://www.redr.org/london)

#### International Health Exchange

1 Great George Street,  
LONDON SW1P 3AA.  
Email: [info@ihe.org.uk](mailto:info@ihe.org.uk)  
Tel: 0207 233 1100  
[www.ihe.org.uk](http://www.ihe.org.uk)

#### Crisis Consulting International

Email: [tmercercr@cricon.org](mailto:tmercercr@cricon.org)  
Tel: 02891 457689  
[www.cricon.org](http://www.cricon.org)

#### Member Care

Mrs. Marion Knell  
Tel: 01509 890268  
Email: [marion@knell.net](mailto:marion@knell.net)

#### List of UK Embassies

[www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)

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The purpose of the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) is to encourage and nurture partnering and collaboration among Christian organizations focused on religious liberty. The RLP will more intentionally work together in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious persecution globally.

# RLP Purpose Statement

## The Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) and 2008 Update

### Member Guidelines

1. Members of the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) are **primarily** involved (that is the majority of their time, personnel and resources) with ministry on religious liberty issues in whatever context and strategy.
2. Members of the RLP come from organizations who are globally, regionally, country or project focused in their efforts.
3. Members of the RLP agree to the statement of faith in the Lausanne Covenant (<http://www.lausanne.org/>)
4. Members of the RLP agree to abide by the Code of Best Practices drafted by the Religious Liberty Partnership and the Wesley Guidelines (see below).
5. New members of the RLP are to have the unanimous approval of the RLP Leadership Team.
6. The Leadership Team of the RLP shall come from and be elected by its member organizations. Only one member per association or organizational family shall be represented on the RLP Leadership Team. Leadership Team members will serve two year terms and elect their own Chairperson.
7. Each member organization is to pay whatever it can within the Euro 500 - 3,000 range of annual RLP membership contributions. These fees cover the operation of the partnership, including facilitation, working group coordination, communication, and leadership team expenses.

### Wesley Guidelines

1. We will not listen to or even ask about bad things concerning each other.
2. If we do hear anything bad, we will not believe it.
3. As soon as possible, we will tell the other person what we have heard.
4. Until we have done that, we will not say a word about it to any other person.
5. Even after we have done that, we will not mention it to anyone.
6. We will never make an exception to these rules unless our consciences force us to do so.

*Drafted by John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Thos. Maxfield, J. Downes, et. al.*

### RLP Leadership Team 2007/08

- Mervyn Thomas, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, (UK) (RLP Chairman)
- Johan Candelin, World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission (Finland)
- Johan Companjen, Open Doors International (Holland)
- Glenn Penner, Voice of the Martyrs (Canada)

- Brian O'Connell, RLP Facilitator (USA)

### March 2008 NEWS: The Religious Liberty Partnership

The Religious Liberty Partnership held its 2008 conference in Zurich, Switzerland, this past March. The conference participants addressed key advocacy issues, approved "Best Practices for Ministry to and with the Persecuted Church," and agreed to make a joint declaration (entitled the *Zurich Statement*) calling for the support of the appeal of Christian brothers and sisters in China to pray for the nation of China, and the Chinese Church at large in this Summer Olympics year.

In addition, the RLP members explored possible work together relating to India, Central Asia, the care of persecuted church workers, mediation and peace building, the flow of money internationally, and working better with more traditional missionary organizations on the promotion of religious freedom. Invited resource speakers at the conference included Dr. Brent Fulton, CEO of ChinaSource; and Dr. Joseph D'Souza, President of the All India Christian Council.



**Brian O'Connell** is the President of REACT Services, a non-profit organization which guides and equips Christian ministries to harness the power of partnership for more effective impact, primarily among people least reached by the gospel. He also serves as facilitator of the Religious Liberty Partnership, a collaborative effort of Christian organisations focused on religious liberty. He can be reached at: [Brian@REACTServices.com](mailto:Brian@REACTServices.com)

The purpose of the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) is to encourage and nurture partnering and collaboration among Christian organizations focused on religious liberty. The RLP commits to more intentionally work together in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious persecution globally.

Current RLP members come from over 10 countries and represent most of the major Christian religious liberty and persecuted church organizations. Members of the RLP

are primarily involved (that is the majority of their time, personnel, and resources) with ministry to persecuted Christians and/or on religious liberty issues in whatever context and strategy.

“One of the primary goals of the partnership,” says Mervyn Thomas, CEO of Christian Solidarity Worldwide in the UK, and Chairman of the RLP Leadership Team, “is to promote working together rather than competing with one another. We believe that is God’s heart and will produce real

synergy in all we do.” Other members of the RLP Leadership Team include Johan Candelin of the WEA Religious Liberty Commission, Johan Companjen of Open Doors International, Glenn Penner, of Voice of the Martyrs in Canada, and Linus Pfister of HMK, Switzerland.

For a copy of the Zurich Statement or more information on the work of the Religious Liberty Partnership, contact: [Brian@REACTServices.com](mailto:Brian@REACTServices.com) <<

Religious Liberty Organizations Call for

# Global Prayer for China

March 28, 2008

ZURICH, March 2008 - In a historic move, key organizations that work with the persecuted church around the world launched a global campaign calling for prayer for China. In what is called “The Zurich Statement,” the Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP), with member organizations that include Open Doors International, Christian Solidarity Worldwide, the Voice of the Martyrs (Canada), and the Religious Liberty Commission of World Evangelical Alliance, have called the worldwide Christian community to pray for China during this Summer Olympics year.

The Zurich Statement acknowledges some important progress made in China over the past few decades and raises the hope that this will translate into the removal of remaining obstacles to the full expression of faith and an end to serious violations of religious freedom. In addition, the Statement recognizes potential of the Chinese nation as a sig-

nificant political and economic force for the furtherance of regional and global peace.

“The call for prayer is rooted in the fact that the RLP felt it was time to acknowledge some progress in China’s attitude toward religious liberty and also the part Christians play at all levels of Chinese society,” stated Mervyn Thomas, CEO of Christian Solidarity Worldwide, UK, and Chairman of the RLP leadership team. “There is still a very long way to go and religious freedom is something very alien to many Christians in China. However Christians all over the world have been praying for their Chinese family for many years and I believe we are beginning to see the impact of those prayers today.”

“What a change we have seen in the nearly 30 years since my first visit to China,” said Johan Companjen of Open Doors International in Holland and a member of the RLP leadership team. “In spite of many obstacles, the Church in China has

multiplied. What seemed impossible in the past has happened because around the world we joined the Chinese Christians in prayer and our Chinese brothers and sisters have been willing to pay the price for following Jesus. If we continue to pray, we may be surprised by what God will do in the coming 30 years.”

The Religious Liberty Partnership (RLP) is a collaborative effort of Christian organizations focused on religious liberty. The RLP seeks to more intentionally work together in addressing advocacy and in raising the awareness of religious persecution globally. The current membership of the RLP is listed on the Zurich Statement.

For more information about the Religious Liberty Partnership or the Zurich Statement, please contact Brian O’Connell:

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Phone: +1-425-218-4718 <<

# FIRST STEP FORUM

## Engages New Situations, New Challenges and New Solutions

After serving WEA and the global church for almost ten years and visiting some 100 nations, I became more and more aware of the weaknesses we Evangelicals have. Unless we are brave enough to see them and to deal with them, we do not really need an enemy; we will be our own worst enemy and we will not be the agent for change God wants us to be. I found four major weaknesses in the global Evangelical community:

1. We are a divided community worldwide
2. We are re-active, not pro-active
3. We have a tendency to see enemies instead of possible partners
4. We do not give high value to Christians outside the "Evangelical circle"

### Let us look in the mirror

If we do not deal with these issues, we will not be able to play the unique, relevant role in the world that I believe God has given to us. We could change the world if Evangelicals would take each other's hand to



**Johan Candelin** from Finland is Goodwill Ambassador, WEA and Executive Director, First Step Forum (candelin@kolumbus.fi)

form a chain that would go around the globe several times!! My dream was, therefore, to form an independent network that would unite professional leaders on a world level, to act proactively to build bridges, to find new partners outside our Christian circles, and to include and give value to other Christians. Based on the Chinese saying, "A journey of one thousand miles starts with one first step," I called the group First Step Forum. The vision is to anticipate upcoming conflicts as they brew and be the first to see, the first to understand and the first to act. But we want to act in a Christ-like, non-confrontational way to seek a way to be a blessing to nations, all people groups, and individuals. The Forum's capacity to raise and release financial resources that could invest up to US\$500 million gives the Forum a new, unique position to meet with governments.

### Who are we then?

Today the Forum includes three Former Prime Ministers (Kjell-Magne Bondevik, Norway, Jerzy Buzek, Poland and Mart Laar, Estonia) a former Foreign Minister (Brizuela de Avila, El Salvador), a former Under Secretary of State (David Kilgour, Canada), US Ambassador Bob Seiple and former Ambassador Slavi Pachovski, Bulgaria, and members of Parliaments in many nations. We have legal, media and business investment experts all working together to build bridges, mainly to the Muslim world. As the Muslim world is by far the biggest challenge in the future, it is very significant that we will have a Christian Ambassador from a Muslim nation (Ambassador Dennis Igantius, Malaysia) Ambassador to Canada) working with us starting this August.

It is a great joy that both Protestant and Catholic Christians can work together in

the Forum as followers of Jesus Christ. The Forum is now recognized by many world leaders. Says former American President Bill Clinton, "Thank you for what you are doing. Together we can build a brighter, more prosperous, and more peaceful world." An Ambassador for Iran says, "The Forum plays an important role as a bridge between the West and the Muslim countries." Says the late Benazir Bhutto, "The Forum has played a critical role in helping women from the Muslim world." It needs to be said that the Forum is independent from WEA but, works together with WEA on an ad hoc basis.

### What do we do?

The Forum has worked with the government of Turkey to help Protestant churches acquire legal registration, but has also advocated for Muslims religious liberty in Greece, given training for Muslim and Christian journalists together in Nigeria (invited by a Muslim governor), built democracy networks and leadership training material with the late Benazir Bhutto from Pakistan, worked on a solution to the Sahara conflict, and advocated on behalf of Christian refugees from Iraq in Turkey. We have also been working with the government of Syria to establish a dialogue with the West. At the same time, we have brought in investors to create employment opportunities in many nations so that people would not have to emigrate from their home countries. In several nations where Evangelicals are under stress, we have helped their leaders to meet face to face with the government and explain their needs.

### Why do we do it?

When we look in the mirror, we see the reflection of our face. When we look into the face of suffering brothers and sisters, we

see a reflection of our heart. Should we act? I believe that we live in a new situation with new challenges today, but also new solutions. There is much more goodwill than we can dream of if we start to see non-Evangelicals as possible partners. The reason FSF wants to work for a better tomorrow is that every human being has the right to human dignity as a creation of God. Another reason is that we are called by God to be good stewards of



Destroyed church

this world. We have the mission to love all our neighbours. We live now in a world that is crying out for new initiatives rooted in the love of Jesus Christ. I believe that the situation is ready for many new initiatives taken by Evangelical Christians and other Christians. As Victor Hugo said long ago, “There is nothing as powerful as an idea whose time has come.” First Step Forum is just one of many ideas. But at its best, it might be what just what it is called, a first step. <<

## National Mission Movement

### 10. Bob Lopez, Philippine Mission Association, Leader, National Mission Movement

*What policies and guidelines does your missions movement have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

As a national missions movement, we do not have any policies regarding short-term missionaries going into dangerous contexts.

*What policies does your missions movement have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

As a national missions movement, we allow our members to set their own policies in regards to their longer-term missionaries going into dangerous contexts. However, we do have consultations and seminars which address persecution and security issues periodically. Some groups provide crisis management training to all those who are interested.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

Our current practice is that we first try to negotiate for the release of the person kidnapped. We do not agree to pay ransom. When negotiations fail, we leave it to either the direct family or organization to decide whether they will need to notify the authorities. Also, each organization determines whether they will have to pull out their people from the field for whatever duration they deem best after assessing the situation.

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

We know for a fact that Muslim extremists have been encouraged to kidnap people for the purpose of raising money for their cause. Therefore, we do not agree to pay any amount of ransom.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

## GLOBAL VOICES

There is a long debriefing period to help the family through the process. There are times, depending on the need, when we try to raise financial support for the family to help them through the early difficult stage.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

We have crisis management training, which includes arrest and detention. We also provide training on maintaining security, especially regarding communication.

*What more ought we to be saying to our churches and future missionaries in this area?*

We have been telling our churches that the possibility of persecution and even martyrdom is part of being involved in Muslim ministry.

### Case study

About five years ago, a team leader was shot and killed in Southern Philippines. This came after he had received several death threats. These threats were evaluated, and the consensus was for him to remain in the field with his family, if he/they agreed. Following the incident, the family was immediately evacuated after attending to and repatriating the remains of the martyred brother. All this was handled by their field agency. The rest of the team members decided to temporarily leave the field. Some moved to other fields while others returned after about a year—but none to the same area. The wife and children were under the care of their agency for several years, during which time they were helped emotionally, psychologically and financially. More than three years after the incident, the wife decided to return to the field with her children. She was allowed to do so by her agency after much counseling and prayer. This agency has had previous experience in handling this type of situation; they have had quite a number of their people through the decades who have given up their lives for the spread of the gospel.

# News from the Refugee Highway

## Sidebar - Celebrate World Refugee Sunday June 22!

World Refugee Sunday provides an opportunity for congregations around the world to raise awareness of and pray for refugees and internally displaced persons. It is held on the Sunday immediately following United Nations World Refugee Day.

Helpful resources, including a downloadable bulletin insert, a resource packet, prayer points and links to other materials, are available at the RHP web page, [www.refugeehighway.net](http://www.refugeehighway.net).

## Sidebar - RHP Roundtable in Entebbe, Uganda

The RHP will host a Refugee Roundtable for church leaders in Entebbe, Uganda June 18-23, 2008. On-site arrangements are being coordinated by the Association of Evangelicals in Africa (AEA).

The roundtable will bring together approximately 80 strategic church leaders from around the world, including 5-10 representatives from each region and issue group area of the RHP. Participants will see first-hand the impact of refugee movements; partner with the African church through prayer and encouragement; and strategize about ways to engage more local churches worldwide in ministry to refugees.

For more information, contact Linda Moorcroft of the Refugee Highway Partnership leadership team at [Linda\\_Moorcroft@christiestreetc.com](mailto:Linda_Moorcroft@christiestreetc.com).



*Farad\* directed a major Afghan newspaper. When a regime change brought terror and murder threats, he and his family were forced to flee. After first hiding in the countryside, they eventually traveled via Pakistan and Russia to the Netherlands. But the Dutch government denied their request for asylum. What next?*

Farad is just one of millions of refugees traveling the "refugee highway." The term refers to well-worn routes traveled by desperate people forced from their homelands by violence, terror and persecution. The refugee highway spans the globe and is filled with countless stories of human suffering.

Like Farad, the refugees who travel this highway simply seek a safe place to call home. But the challenges they encounter are complex and heart-wrenching. Refugees must locate food, shelter and medical care; heal from physical and emotional trauma; navigate a maze of border regulations and immigration policies; learn new languages and customs; and wrestle with loneliness and despair.

The Refugee Highway Partnership (RHP) is a community of Christian leaders from around the world who share a commitment to welcome and serve refugees and a desire to see the global church more actively engaged at every spot on the refugee highway.

The birthplace of the RHP was an historic consultation held in Izmir, Turkey in 2001. The more than 200 attendees at that event represented refugee-producing, refugee-transit and refugee-receiving countries. But they shared a common desire to connect the people already reaching out to welcome refugees at diverse points along the refugee highway and a common dream to see more Christians to respond to the overwhelming need.

The mission of the RHP is to mobilize the worldwide church to bring hope and provide refuge for over 30 million refugees and internally displaced people. The RHP

serves as a catalyst for collaboration. It casts vision by sponsoring World Refugee Sunday and producing resources such as the Refugee Highway map (copies available at the RHP web page), connects people by hosting periodic consultations and roundtable events, and exchanges information through a web page and quarterly e-newsletter.

Members of the RHP include any individual, church, or organization which shares the core values of the partnership. Leadership is provided by a team which includes regional coordinators representing Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America, and South Pacific and issue group coordinators



Heidi Moll Schoedel

representing Advocacy, Children, and Leadership Development.

Please join us! Together, we can bring the love of Christ to refugees around the world.

*Farad and his family appealed their asylum denial and years later still wait for a final verdict. During this period of exhaustive and terrifying uncertainty, people from a local church began visiting his family. Through these new friends, Farad found peace in Jesus. And now, with all of his talents, he wants to dedicate himself to sharing the wonderful news about Jesus with his fellow countrymen in the Netherlands and abroad.*

For more information about the RHP and to register for our quarterly e-newsletter, visit our web page at [www.refugeehighway.net](http://www.refugeehighway.net). <<

\* name changed to protect privacy

# Connecting – Facilitating – Developing

## Mission Commission Global Member Care Network (GMCN)

Working internationally is a powerful experience; a privilege that is also motivating. The synergy potential is enormous as member care know-how is shared between experts, practitioners, counselors and mission pastors from other continents and regions.

The leadership team of the GMCN, a network under the WEA Mission Commission (WEA MC), met in Tucson, Arizona, US from March 17-21, 2008. We came together from India (Pramila Rajendran), Latin America (Carlos Pinto, Bertil Ekström), South Africa (Marina Prins), USA (Larrie Gardner, Brent Lindquist), Europe (Marion Knell) and East Asia (Harry Hoffmann), to transition the GMCN into a new level of global viability and effectiveness.

For many years, the GMCN functioned as an autonomous group connected by relationships and "docking" with the WEA MC. However, as we engage the future, we became aware that in order to enhance sustainability, we needed a better defined structure. We also perceived a need for greater accountability and oversight. And we wanted an organic connection to the WEA and the Mission Commission.

At the same time, the WEA MC expressed a desire for the GMCN to be more formally linked to them, and together with the MC Executive Director, Bertil Ekström, we formulated a proposal in Tucson to provide an appropriate structure for the GMCN future.

During one session, while talking about possible projects, our financial needs and funding options, a clear sense of excitement

arose among us. India has member care resources that Latin America would greatly benefit from. The US has a recognized and certified member care training programme which most other regions would be interested to evaluate and adapt to their realities.



*Harry Hoffmann, Coordinator of GMCN*

Europe has experience in hosting a number of continent-wide consultations on member care. The need for online access to member care articles and curriculum from and for different regions and languages was expressed. The desire was articulated to produce research-based material for new publications that will create member care awareness among mission movements, organizations and churches, and most of all for more connection within the Global Member Care community to share and learn from one another.

Our core values are expressed in this statement: **Member care is the ongoing preparation, equipping and empowering of missionaries for effective and sustainable life, ministry and work.** We want to integrate closely with the other networks of the WEA MC (such as. missionary training, and mobilization) so that member care takes a rightful place at the core of

all aspects of missionary life.

In Tucson we created a basic "skeleton," a frame and structure to facilitate the continued development of the Global Member Care Network. In preparation for the WEA MC

Consultation in Thailand this coming November, this structure will now be presented to different constituencies, national and regional mission movements, member care providers as well as among interdisciplinary member care connections. In Thailand, a larger gathering of the GMCN leaders will meet to put "meat on the skeleton."

Our website, [www.globalmembercare.com](http://www.globalmembercare.com) "Connecting – Facilitating – Developing", is one part of the meat. As we move forward in 2008, this site will include an extensive database (GLOCC)

of qualified member care providers in different regions around the world, which form the platform for global member care connection. The website will also provide a listing of member care resources from different regions and in different languages.

The responsibility for member care rests with the primary mission stakeholders: the sending church, the sending agency, the receiving church, leadership (home/field), the missionary team, families, individual supporters, competent member care providers and the individual missionaries themselves. In light of the complexity of mission work, those involved must seek to develop competence in all those areas where they are working through ongoing learning, networking and resourcing.

That is what we are here for. That is why we exist. With that in mind, there are great days ahead. <<

# Persecution Information on the Web

The Internet provides ample evidence that persecution of Christians is an extensive international tragedy. Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) yields some 200,000 hits from a search for “persecution of Christians” (with the quotes). Searching for websites dealing with persecution of Christians in a particular country, such as India or China, further demonstrates the scope of the problem: entering the words “persecution Christian India” (without the quotes) into Google results in nearly 400,000 hits; substituting China for India gives a similar result.

Wikipedia can often provide an initial introduction to an issue, its definition and context. Its article on “Persecution of Christians” ([en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution\\_of\\_Christians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians)) includes an extensive historical overview, along with links to nearly two dozen related Wikipedia articles.

In this article we’ll highlight some of the key websites (in alphabetical order) that provide valuable online resources (see them all at [www.mislinks.org/practical/persecuted](http://www.mislinks.org/practical/persecuted)).



**Scott Moreau** is Professor of Intercultural Studies and Missions at Wheaton College, having served for 10 years in Africa as a missionary. He is also the editor of *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*.



**Mike O'Rear** serves as president of Global Mapping International (GMI), dedicated to producing and presenting world-class research that fuels emerging mission movements and leaders.

htm). We group them into three categories: Christian organizations focused on ministering to the suffering church, Christian news and information sources focused on persecution, and major secular sites.

## Christian Organizations

Barnabas Fund ([www.barnabasfund.org](http://www.barnabasfund.org)) offers “hope and aid for the persecuted church” and promotes prayer and advocacy ministries. Focused primarily on the Muslim world, its website provides daily prayer points, a news archive and feature articles.

Christian Freedom International ([www.christianfreedom.org](http://www.christianfreedom.org)) is “an interdenominational human rights organization that combines advocacy with humanitarian assistance for persecuted Christians on the front lines.” The website offers news, Persecution Spotlight items, a few videos and practical ways to get directly involved.

Christian Solidarity Worldwide ([www.cswusa.com](http://www.cswusa.com)) is “called to stand with our persecuted brothers and sisters in Christ, giving voice to their cries of suffering and urging action on their behalf, by raising prayer support and emergency aid in partnership.” The website provides profiles of several dozen countries, a newsletter, a daily prayer calendar and government petitions.

Christians in Crisis ([www.christiansin-crisis.net](http://www.christiansin-crisis.net)), “a prayer advocacy ministry that prays for the persecuted church worldwide,” offers online devotionals and stories from the field. The ministry emphasizes the Islamic world, but the online news section covers persecution of Christians around the world.

International Christian Concern ([www.persecution.org](http://www.persecution.org)) is an interdenominational

human rights organization dedicated to providing assistance, advocacy and awareness for the suffering Church. The site includes prayer profiles of countries where Christians are persecuted, current news stories, a semi-monthly prayer bulletin and petitions to sign.

International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church ([idop.org](http://idop.org)), “a global day of intercession for persecuted Christians worldwide,” is scheduled next for November 9, 2008. The website provides a set of country-by-country “Critical Prayer Requests (CPR) for Strategic Nations” along with articles and other resources.

International Justice Mission ([www.ijm.org](http://www.ijm.org)) is “a human rights organization that rescues victims of violence, sexual exploitation, slavery and oppression. IJM documents and monitors conditions of abuse and oppression, educates the church and public about the abuses and mobilizes intervention on behalf of victims.” The website includes monthly in-depth “Justice Briefings” and valuable articles by IJM staff.

Open Doors International ([www.opendoors.org](http://www.opendoors.org)), the ministry founded by Brother Andrew, focuses on Bible delivery programs, leadership training in restricted areas and prayer mobilization. Its World Watch List, available free online, ranks countries according to a 50-question set of criteria related to religious freedom.

The Voice of the Martyrs ([www.persecution.com](http://www.persecution.com)), founded by Richard Wurmbrand, is “dedicated to assisting the persecuted church worldwide.” Sign up to access the audio/video media room, country profiles, weekly email updates and monthly newsletter.

The related PrisonerAlert.com site ([www.prisoneralert.com](http://www.prisoneralert.com))

*A. Scott Moreau and Mike O'Rear*



prisoneralert.com) profiles individual prisoners, encouraging the writing of letters to prisoners and sending email to government officials.

VOM's Persecution Blog ([www.persecutionblog.com](http://www.persecutionblog.com)) provides good insight, and their extensive blog roll will lead you to many related bloggers.

World Evangelical Alliance's Religious Liberty Commission ([\[gelicals.org/commissions/rlc\]\(http://gelicals.org/commissions/rlc\)\) monitors the religious liberty situation in more than 100 nations, "defending persecuted Christians, informing the global church, challenging the Church to pray \(\[www.idop.org\]\(http://www.idop.org\)\) and giving all possible assistance...." The website provides a weekly News & Prayer Bulletin.](http://www.worldevan-</a></p>
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### Christian News and Information Services

Assist News Service ([\[net\]\(http://www.assistnews.net\)\), providing "Aid to Special Saints in Strategic Times," produces multiple news articles on a daily basis, many of which deal with persecuted Christian communities. Use the search feature to find previous news items from Assist's extensive online database; for instance, searching for "Sudan" finds over 370 articles.](http://www.assistnews.</a></p>
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Christian Monitor ([www.christianmonitor.org](http://www.christianmonitor.org)) provides news headlines focused on persecution of Christians around the world,

## 11. K and Pramila Rajendran, India Mission Association, Leader National Mission Movement

*What policies and guidelines does your missions movement have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

Indian indigenous missions have sent most of their missionaries inside India as it has many distinct cultures and languages. Sending missionaries outside of India is a growing phenomenon. The sending of Indian missionaries by Indian missions is governed by a high sense of sacrifice.

Many Indian missionaries face more ill-health than martyrdom in some of the remote areas. Some local tribes may have inaccessibility to good water, food and sanitation and missionaries trying to become one with that local tribe [contextualization] may become affected in their health. Many become sick with malaria, typhoid, jaundice, brain-fever and other communicable and non-communicable deceases. Therefore, our dangerous situations are more connected with health issues than physical danger of attack, except in few cases in the recent past. Indian missions are slowly becoming aware of the health issues and are trying to handle such situations.

A few Indian missionaries, mostly with international organisations, have gone to some "closed" countries to be a part of international teams. Most indigenous Indian missions are not able to send workers outside of the country yet because of economical realities. Indian Missions are still coming to terms with recognizing and accepting the Indian Christian Diaspora as missionaries.

*What policies does your missions movement have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

Same as the above. There is very little difference between short-term and long-term workers. We find that there is less emphasis on short-term workers and instead workers are challenged to accept longer-terms.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

We do not have a written summary including the newer perspective of the context. Contrasting documents have been made between academics with less field experience and field practioners who emphasize more practical issues.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

Guidelines are yet to be made, except the example of a missionary's child who was abducted and rescued by the mission leader after much negotiation with the thugs who abducted the child.

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

Not much has been discussed in this matter by India Missions at large. Many of the abductors do tend to think that missionaries have a lot of funds at their disposal because of the amount of work Christians do for the society.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

Few mission organisations are beginning to adress this issue. Some missionary welfare

## GLOBAL VOICES

organizations started to address this, but it is a very small number compared to the volume of missionaries and the vast challenge of mission work in India. Furthermore, there are very little funds ear-marked or budgeted for the purposes of post-trauma care.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

Slowly, some awareness is being built and more has to be done to prepare people for the context of violence, persecution or martyrdom.

*What more ought we to be saying to our churches and future missionaries in this area?*

We must educate the churches, missions and the Bible institutions regarding this crucial topic.

### Final thoughts

The future of missions will be influenced by how we address some of these issues that accompany the radical teaching of carrying on the ministry of the Great Commission to the present world. Cross-cultural evangelization needs to be rethought in light of globalization, in which people mingle all over the world like a melting pot. The world is at the doorstep of all the churches across the world. As much as we need cross-cultural missionaries who will physically go across the world, we also need mission minded Christians in every church who mentally reach out to other cultures and build bridges to help them follow Christ.

along with related editorials, book reviews and interviews.

Christian Persecution Info ([www.christianpersecution.info](http://www.christianpersecution.info)), “a Christian news journal” provided by Worthy Ministries, specializes in tracking the latest news on Christian persecution. Regional tabs let you focus on recent news items in Africa, China, Russia, etc..

Compass Direct News ([www.compassdirect.org](http://www.compassdirect.org)) is a professional news service dedicated to providing “strategic news and information from the world’s most difficult areas.” Via an exclusive international network of news bureaus and correspondents, it provides paid subscribers with reports, interviews and analyses of persecuted Christians worldwide.

Project Open Book ([www.domini.org/openbook/home.htm](http://www.domini.org/openbook/home.htm)) focuses on “docu-

menting the persecution of Christians in the Islamic world.” It provides online access to papers and articles documenting specific incidents of persecution.

### Secular Organizations

Amnesty International ([www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org)) focuses on human rights in general and has multiple ongoing campaigns. You can search their extensive online library of over 50,000 items: newsletters, reports, appeals for action, video and audio clips, stories, etc.

Center for Religious Freedom ([crf.hudsonson.org](http://crf.hudsonson.org)), sponsored by the Hudson Institute, “promotes religious freedom as a component of U.S. foreign policy by working with a worldwide network of religious freedom experts...” The website provides online access to over 200 articles related to religious freedom.

Human Rights Watch ([www.hrw.org](http://www.hrw.org)) is “dedicated to protecting the human rights of people around the world.” The site provides an online list of substantial publications (including HRW’s annual World Report), a list of current campaigns, a set of photo galleries and an array of video clips.

The United Nations Refugee Agency ([www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch)) provides extensive textual information, statistics, databases and maps describing the world’s refugee population. The State of the World’s Refugees is available as a free download ([www.unhcr.org/static/publ/sowr2006/toceng.htm](http://www.unhcr.org/static/publ/sowr2006/toceng.htm)). You can search their massive online database, Refworld ([www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain](http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain)), a collection of reports as well as policy and legal documents from countries around the world. <<



# Two Books on Suffering and Persecution

Reviewed by Samuel E. Chiang, Hong Kong

**In The Shadow of The Cross.** By Glenn M. Penner. *Living Sacrifice Books*, 2004; 315 pages; ISBN: 0-88264-346-0

**A Martyr's Grace.** By Marvin J. Newell. *Moody Publishers*, 2006. 223 pages; ISBN: 0-8024-7829-8

India, China, Iran, Sudan, Indonesia, and other hot spots of persecutions and sufferings do not dominate headlines in the news, nor are they well remembered in the life of the Church; in fact, for the Church in the West, the fervor to pray, to shoulder and uplift our colleagues, fellow pilgrims, and sisters and brothers in Christ must be rekindled.

Thus, it is appropriate that two very different books on suffering and persecution, written in this decade, speak to us in this young century. *A Martyr's Grace*, *Stories of Those Who Gave All for Christ and His Cause*, by Marvin J. Newell (head of CrossGlobal Link, USA), provides the theme of remembrance—we are to remember them. In contrast, Glenn M. Penner, (head of Voice of the Martyr's, Canada) has written *In The Shadow Of The Cross, a Biblical Theology of Persecution and Discipleship*, which teaches us the theme of understanding—we are to learn about God's plan for history.

"And they might not return," is a statement we seldom hear in the church, anymore. The annual gift of 1.5 million to 2 million short-term missionaries from the USA going abroad and returning home safely has caused myopic congregations to believe that short-term missions is equal to no suffering and great "success." Our views have been

altered by the digital age with instant real-time reporting. Our sensibilities have focused on those who are "one-of-us," and we forget that the "majority world" (where most of the Christians are and residing outside of North America) is also "one-of-us." We forget that in the field of missionary service, people might not return!

With over one hundred years of data, Newell traces twenty-one former Moody Bible Institute students and the martyrdom story that God has written through them. These recognized martyrs were distributed into all continents, of varying ages, encompassed both genders, were endowed with different capacities, performed various tasks, and all were taken to glory in the line-of-duty. From the twenty-one stories, Newell distills nine sobering observations for the readers. They are all instructive.

Timing is right in this century for a biblical theology of persecution and discipleship. Banish the thought that Mr. Penner proof-texts his way for this informative and masterful volume. His tracing of conflict commences with the first three chapters of Genesis, and thus, exegetically and theologically develops the conflict that is apparent. Furthermore, he contrasts and compares both Mesopotamian and Egyptian worldviews to that of the God of the Bible—our God has a plan and intends to fulfill it. If man were to obey God and fulfill His mandate for man to have dominion over the earth, should we be surprised that there is conflict in this fallen world?

Penner starts with the word "suffering" as opposed to the word "persecution." The

biblical text speaks forth with ease and yields consistent examples where the word "suffering" is deployed to describe conflicts. The development of biblical theology allows the Old Testament text to show suffering as a result of: a) a punishment for sin; b) discipline with the purpose of training and educating; c) one's relationship with and loyalty to, the living God.

Penner does not shrink back in dealing with various theological implications of predestination and election. He deals with both in a masterful way, and this reviewer found it refreshing that the author also spoke into the Doctrine of Impassibility. Basically, this doctrine states "that God is not capable of being acted upon or affected emotionally by anything in creation." If so, and certainly both the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England and the Westminster

Confession of Faith explicitly assert that God is "without body, parts, or passions, immutable," then, it begs the question "what kind of God is He?" Does He understand us? How do we worship Him?

Choosing not to directly confront the Doctrine of Impassibility, Penner's theological arguments make a clear link to anthropomorphic metaphors (the figures of speech that are used in Scripture to describe God experiencing human-like emotions); thus, showing God had revealed Himself to man through His Son. Through the Gospels, Penner takes the reader through accounts of opposition, suffering, and the ultimate persecution of Christ.

Having established that God's plan is trustworthy (Old Testament), and God under-

Rev. Samuel E. Chiang



**Rev. Samuel E. Chiang** serves as the Global Coordinator of the International Orality Network which uses story-telling, poetry, drama, arts, and music to plant churches amongst the unreached people groups. Based in Hong Kong, he and his family have served the Church in China since 1991.

stands our sufferings (Christ in the Gospels), Penner presses on to look at persecution in the Books of Acts, and also the Teaching of the Apostles. The author also offers reasons as to why the disciples started the spread of the Gospel in Jerusalem (in contrast to Galilee, as an example). He links Jerusalem, the city, to the center of monotheistic worship, unique globally, to that of God's co-venant with mankind, in continuity as God's plan.

The choice of Jerusalem was significant, in that God did not plan it as if opposition would eventually come. No! The choice of Jerusalem meant there would be immediate resistance and danger. But God's plan intentionally focused on the not-so-easy tasks, and in utter dependence upon God, the Gospel will spread. Through careful analysis, Penner makes this significant observation: it is not so much that persecution causes church growth but that church growth and the spread of the gospel tend to cause persecution.

Newell examines the martyrs who had studied at Moody Bible Institute, and in contrast, Penner focuses on the Biblical progression of conflict, suffering, and persecution. In Newell's book the persecution that led to martyrdom was generally for religious reasons. Penner demonstrates through the biblical text that the persecution of Christians can involve religious confrontations, but may also include political, social, economical, and emotional forms of persecution.

Over two millennia worth of Church data is available to Penner to compose his thoughts, yet he seldom wanders past the seventh century, and only does so to buttress his point. The author is mindful of application of his work to the present day church and mission. He appropriately provides certain documents enabling the reader to reflectively work through discussions with

Muslims, interpretation of Psalms in the New Testament context, and various testimonies from the saints of the last century.

The discipleship process is evident throughout this book. The clear intention of this book calls upon Christians to focus on: the Incarnation (rather than self-serving), the cross (rather than self-preservation), and weakness and dependency upon God (rather than stability and strength). Triumphalism, the "ME" generation, the do it "my way" societies, with a view to no suffering, short term, and success are all in contra-distinction to the plan of God, and the evidence of lives found in the Bible. It is time, once again, for the Church in the West to teach thoughtfully on this subject. It is important that we learn to identify

with God's plan for history, and his flock around the world who face sufferings and persecutions with regularity.

This is not a volume to be quickly read. For the reflective practitioner of missiology, and indeed, for pastors and teachers, this work should be read thoughtfully. The bibliography is an exhaustive eighteen pages, and some of the real hidden treats are found in the 592 Endnotes.

Glenn Penner's fifteen years of study on this subject demonstrates a mastery of material and a contribution of knowledge to the Kingdom. This reviewer will not be surprised if there is future curriculum built around this excellent book. This book should be read by every individual, and discussed in fellowships and communities. <<

### Pastor/ Missions Pastor, USA

#### 12. Adams, Jeff, Senior pastor, Kansas City Baptist Temple, USA

Pastor/Missions Pastor

*What policies and guidelines does your church have when sending SHORT-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

We require specific personal security training developed and taught by several people in our church body who have backgrounds in law enforcement and military special ops teams. The essence of the teaching has to do with learning skills of situational awareness. We are in the process of finalizing a written manual for short term missionaries that includes instructions and policies in this area. In addition to personal security, we believe that instruction in cultural sensitivity also contributes to safety by learning to avoid making dangerous mistakes.

*What policies does your church have when sending LONGER-TERM missionaries to dangerous contexts?*

By most measures we would be considered a modest-sized mega church. So, this may sound a bit different at a time when many mega churches are functioning as their own mission boards. But, in response to long term missionaries living in dangerous contexts, we are more convinced than

ever that this is why we need to do a better job of partnering with mission agencies.

Mission boards and agencies have the expertise, experience and resources to do a much better job of preparing long term missionaries for potentially dangerous assignments and dealing with them when they arise. They often have other people on the ground in those areas that serve as support systems for continued training and monitoring of dangerous threats. We believe that when local church and mission agency partner together with clear communication and understanding, that this is the very best case possible.

*Do you have a written summary statement giving a Biblical theology of persecution or martyrdom?*

No, we do not.

*What guidelines do you have in case a missionary, or a child of missionaries, is kidnapped?*

Though it is not written at this time, we do communicate the position that we will not pay ransom in the case of kidnapping. We hope to include this policy in written form as we continue the development of our mission documents.

*What guidelines do you have regarding monetary ransom of a kidnapped missionary?*

Same as above.

# Missions in Contexts of Violence

By Keith E. Eitel, editor

## Missions in Contexts of Violence

By Keith E. Eitel. *Evangelical Missiological Society series Number 15, 415 pages; ISBN 978-0-87808-389-3*

The book consists of nineteen chapters divided over four main themes:

- **General Reflections:** This section includes two chapters, one comparing the journeys of Jesus, Constantine and Muhammad, the other discussing the role of Christian Mission in “Glocal” violence. “Glocal” is defined as “the encapsulation of the dual macro-micro feature of a situation” (23). Muslim-Christian relations are used as an example of this phenomenon.
- **Biblical and Theological Foundations:** This section discusses the biblical context of violence, the role of missions, and the fact that persecution and martyrdom forces the missional world to establish a “theology of persecution”. This theme ends with a challenging chapter about Kitamori Kazo’s “Pain of God Theology”. Kitamori argued that in making forgiveness available for the sinner, “God acted in an ‘ungodlike’ and improper way” because divine love is not a smooth and easy love, it is “love for the enemy” (98).

- **Lifestyles, Strategies and Practices:** This section discusses life attitudes while living in a hostile environment, member care issues, and the use of “violent words.”
- **Finally, Geographical or Thematic Specific Studies** gives a historical overview of missions in contexts of violence as well as case studies in Southern Sudan, Eastern Europe, Rwanda, the Middle East, and inter-ethnic violence.

Keith Eitel is a Dean at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. The book’s twenty-three authors come from different cultural backgrounds. We note that of the thirteen authors of the first three themes, eight are based in the USA, three of them without long-term mission experience.

The role of the USA and Muslim-Christian relations play a major role in this book. However, we may question whether the USA is the best partner to be involved in Muslim-Christian dialogue. Isn’t the fact that the USA is seen as a “Christian nation”, while at the same time being the forerunner in military endeavours against or in Muslim countries, a hindrance in an appropriate

dialogue? We will have to give more thought to the mission efforts of Christianity towards the Dar al Islam, bearing in mind that “evangelism and witness to Jesus Christ is one distinctively Christian way of dealing with violence and suffering connected with Muslim-Christian relationships” (21/22)

An interesting discussion was around the response of Christians towards persecution—flight, avoidance or engagement. From a member care point of view though, it was rather discouraging to read that there are “times that flight becomes an ungodly act”. (70) Is such a statement not putting our limitations upon God’s judgement?

All in all, this was a valuable book and we recommend it to our readers worldwide.

<<



### Kees van der Wilden

serves WEA-MC as associate director. He is the Managing Editor for Connections. Together with David Ruiz he co-ordinates the National Mission Movement (NMM) network of WEA-MC.

*What post-trauma care is given to your mission force family that has gone through a situation of violence, illness, death?*

This is another situation where we believe that the partnership between local church and agency is the most effective way to provide this level of pastoral care for missionaries. Agencies often have access to professional counselors who have experience in dealing with missionary-specific situations. That experience is invaluable. We have found that most counselors who do this type of work are willing to share information with the home church if the missionary gives permission. This allows the local church to reinforce

the counsel and care given by the agency. When the situation warrants, we have not been hesitant to bring the missionary home from the field in order to receive extended care and nurturing in the local church context in full cooperation with the agency. We sincerely believe that a proactive stance by both agency and church working in harmony is the best way to provide the care missionaries need.

*What kind of pre-field missionary training do you give or encourage for contexts of danger, violence, persecution or martyrdom?*

We are currently giving prayerful thought

to how we can be more intentional in addressing these issues in the pre-field training we offer as a church.

### Final Thoughts

I am very pleased that CONNECTIONS is exploring this important issue and facilitating dialogue. As you might discern from some of the responses above, I firmly believe that we simply have to have better cooperation between church and agency in order to address this and similar issues of great importance to the Kingdom.

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# Religious Freedom in the World

 Reviewed by **Brian O'Connell**

**Religious Freedom in the World.** By Paul A. Marshall. Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, MD; Paperback, 499 pages; US\$ 95.00.

"There is no [religious] group in the world that does not suffer to some degree because of its beliefs." So begins *Religious Freedom in the World*, a major compendium of profiles which evaluates the level of religious freedom in 101 countries. Published by the Hudson Institute's Center for Religious Freedom, and edited by its Senior Fellow Paul Marshall—formerly of Freedom House—it is a significant work that covers each continent and major religion.

I must confess to not being a big fan of these kinds of profile books. Normally, they are looked at fairly briefly with perhaps a few countries explored for confirmation of what many already know, and the shelf life is short because of quickly changing global circumstances. However, as true as that is, there are a few good reasons why this book might be an exception and worth a deeper look.

First, there is an attempt by the seven authors who set the context for the profiles to explore trends in religious liberty—both positive and negative (although much of this book is focused on the latter). For example, Lebanese scholar Habib Malik does an outstanding, albeit somewhat contentious, job of examining the state of Christianity in the Middle East and the erosion of their numbers and influence over the past several years. "Among the region's Christians," he asserts, "there is a pervading—and justified—sense of abandonment by fellow Christians throughout the world, and they have grown to harbor deep disappointment tinged with resentment at their coreligionists in the West who they accuse of deliberately neglecting them, especially in moments of grave danger" (emphasis mine). Though many, both in the region and outside, might take issue with this statement, there is no doubt that it reflects serious voices.

Secondly, *Religious Freedom in the World* attempts to illustrate the variations of the problems within each of the regions and among different faith communities. Felix Corley, long time reporter and analyst on religious liberty, looks in depth at the challenges within the countries of the former Soviet Union. He points to the overriding imperative of control in the authoritarian regimes of Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan Azerbaijan and Belarus. Evangelicals would not be surprised to see examples such as police video footage of raids on Baptists in Kazakhstan, or of textbooks in Belarus stating that Adventists operate "on the same principle as any fraudster." But, Corley also points to the ways in which religious liberty is constrained among Muslims in the region, where the Islamic hierarchy is deliberately kept under total governmental control with the chief mufti and leading imams appointed only with state approval.

Finally, there is a considerable effort to show the ways in which religious freedom is connected to and foundational to other rights. Dr. Ted Malloch, noted author and scholar and founder of the Spiritual Enterprise Institute (a major funder of this book project), addressed the ways in which religious freedom and economic freedom tend to go together. Using

Wall Street Journal indices, he observes that the countries with the worst records of religious freedom have, for the most part, terrible economic records. This linkage, even if relatively new, is illustrated masterfully by Malloch in suggesting that religiously free societies encourage more entrepreneurial attitudes and leaders because religious freedom creates the conditions for people to make their own choices on ultimate concerns. "Religiously free societies," he postulates, "usually display the highest concentration of companies that generate prosperity. . . Closed religious systems foul economic development and stunt growth." Brian Grim, a senior researcher for the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, makes a similar statistical case in his essay on broader socio-economic issues.

Without these overviews and analyses (including ones by Thomas Farr on national security, and Willy Fautre on the situation in Europe) *Religious Freedom in the World* would probably not be worth the hefty \$95 price tag. Even with them it will be a stretch for most. The profiles themselves are well-written and fairly comprehensive with the usual statistics for population, percentage of the different faith communities along with ratings for religious freedom and government regulation and favor of religion. The rationale behind the selection of the country profiles themselves, which according to Marshall, contain more than 95% of the world's population, is not described. Apart from the usual expected cast: Burma, China, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, North Korea, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Pakistan, Cuba, Vietnam, etc, there is no mention of why some were chosen and others not.

Examples of European difficulties are covered by the inclusion of Germany, France, Spain, Greece, Denmark and other, but why no exploration of the important issues in places like Holland and the UK, where growing religious minorities are placing increasing pressure on governments and institutions? The challenging situations in Guatemala and Nicaragua are outlined, but why were other important trendsetting countries in Central America (Costa Rica, Panama) not included? There may be good reasons for these things—even beyond the obvious, we can't cover everything—, but those questions are left unanswered.

Marshall helpfully explains some of the statistical problems inherent in identifying religious adherents, and sketches some of the ways in which the country profiles look at what a religious freedom violation might be. However, it seems an oversight not to delve into the natural complexity of the range of religious liberty violations. There is an obvious and profound difference, for example, between laws that might discriminate against or harass certain faith communities and systemic persecution that includes imprisonment, torture and death.

Even though the current global situation on religious freedom is without question problematic and this book confirms that, there are reasons for hope. One, the world has become smaller and religious liberty violations are increasingly more difficult to conceal. Second, global religious bodies like WEA are giving more sophisticated attention to religious human rights—and are viewed as more respectable than in the past. Finally, we are seeing a growing attention to an emerging theology of persecution within evangelical circles that is assisting our broader understanding and places these issues more under God's control. That, of course, is where they belong.

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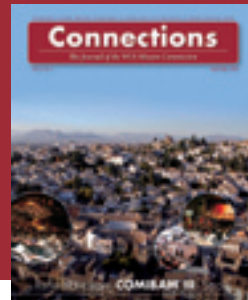


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