



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 and Spirituality:

A Global and Missional Perspective

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From the heart and mind of the editor



William D. Taylor, Editor

Good global colleagues,

This is a rich issue of our young journal, with three sections. The primary thrust focuses on the delicate and challenging topic of mission and spirituality. We also offer two thoughtful articles to stretch you, one by Dave Livermore and Mark Awabdy, and one by David Ruíz. The final section gives the fresh reports from the November 2008 Mission Commission consultation in Pattaya, and the announcement of four strategic new mission teams: The global north/south dialogue; the new younger leaders team – Continuum; the mission church pastors task force; and the new mission and arts task force.

We dedicate the prime theme to an opening discussion of spirituality and mission. It comes from life-long debates on the diverse spirituality streams that God works through, from the deeply liturgical-sacramental on through to the other side of deeply emotional-individualized. Somehow God seems to be able to bless this diversity, and the key seems to be the fundamental hunger for God, to know him in truth and in spirit and in experience... and in the context of cross-cultural mission in our complex world.

I have posed a number of questions to our writers, and they may answer in part:

- What kind of spirituality gets us into cross-cultural ministry?
- What kinds of spirituality tensions and transitions emerge to re-shape along the journey?
- What kinds of spirituality will carry us to the very end of life?

And the fact is that while each of our spirituality stories is unique, there are commonalities and core truths and experiences. We also are keenly aware that organizations, schools, agencies, teams and networks have their own spiritual culture. Not always is that easy to discover, but discover it you will, especially if you join. YWAM spirituality is different from WBT spirituality; a radically charismatic church culture is certainly different from an SIM culture; an Assembly of God culture is different from a dispensational mission agency; a much older mission compared to a younger one; an African one compared to a Swedish one; a “finish the job in the next

decade” one compared to a long-horizon one; a reductionist team compared to a wholistic one. Welcome to spirituality diversity!

In search of definitions

As you read this issue, you will discern a diversity of understanding of the meaning of this key term, and that’s our challenge. There is no single definition that satisfies us all. But there are shared values.

A Barus writes in the *Dictionary of Mission Theology: Evangelical Foundation* (John Corrie, editor.

InterVarsity Press, UK, 2007, p. 371-373) about spirituality: “Its connection with mission begins with the God of mission, who draws us into relationship with himself in order to engage us in participation with him in that mission. This is the source of a ‘spirituality of mission’ as an expression of that relationship with God which initiates and empowers mission commitment.”

The Global Dictionary of Theology: A Resource for the Worldwide Church (William A. Dyrness and Veli-Matti Karkkainen, editors. InterVarsity Press, 2008, p. 851-857) has a more extensive article by S Chan on spirituality. He writes: “Christian spirituality may be defined as life lived in relationship with the one God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit.” Out of this definition he identifies three spirituality patterns as sacramental, evangelical and charismatic. He has a helpful section on the Catholic and Orthodox traditions as well as the Protestant one. Yet as I searched for a clearer relationship with spirituality and mission, I found Barus more

helpful, though shorter.

So how do we in our discussions in this issue of Connections define spirituality for/in/out-of mission? John Amalraj writes in his article:

True spirituality is a live continuous personal relationship with the Creator God that fulfills my deepest human longings for inward and outward peace and gives me meaning and purpose for everyday life. Spirituality is of no use if it is not of earthly use. True spirituality is discovered in human relationships built on the foundation of a relationship with God.

With this very sketchy backdrop, we invite you to read, to engage, to mull over and to let some of these thoughts mull over you.

The future

This issue is an appetizer and another forecast of things to come. During our recent Pattaya consultation both John Amalraj and Kirk Franklin spoke in plenary sessions, developing the themes of their fundamental essays in this issue. A team, led by John, worked for days in Pattaya to shape this issue of Connections, and to assign writers. Hence this issue comes out of those fertile discussions. The next step will be to listen to global feedback as we begin to craft a much more complex and diverse book, part of our “Global Missiology Series”. As you read through this issue, give us feedback on ideas you would have on what to include in the forthcoming book.

The Mission Commission writers and editors are hard at work to craft and produce three new books over the next eighteen months, following the general content of the last three issues of the journal:

- *Contextualization Re-visited: a global perspective.* Project led and edited by Mrs. Rose Dowsett (Philippines and Scotland) and Dr. Mark Young (USA and Poland).
- *Mission in a World of Suffering, Violence, Persecution and Martyrdom.* Project led and edited by veteran Brazilian mission educator Dr. Tonica van der Meer and Dr. Bill Taylor.
- *Spirituality and Mission: how we have been shaped and mis-shaped.* Project led and edited by Indian mission leader and lawyer, Mr John Amalraj and Dr. Bill Taylor

Good news to subscribers for and from the Global South

Here is an offer you cannot turn down. For every two-year subscription to *Connections* that's designated for or comes from a Global South mission agency, mission-minded church, theological education school, missionary training center or other mission leader, we will send, at no extra cost, one copy of either of these two books:

- *Worth Keeping: Global Perspectives on Best Practice in Missionary Retention.* Writers and editors, Rob Hay, Valerie Lim, Detlef Blocher, Jaap Ketelaar and Sarah Hay. William Carey Library, 2007.
- *Integral Ministry Training: Design and Evaluation.* Writers and editors, Robert Brynjolfson and Jonathan Lewis. William Carey Library, 2006.

Complete and send the subscription form and information in this copy of the journal, or process it via e-mail to Willem Griffioen at willem.griffioen@initialmedia.com.

Other items to consider

I encourage you to check out these key web sites for your reflection. Remember that all of our issues are on-line, for

free. Increasingly they are being used in theological schools and missionary training centres. Agora is Bertil Ekström's regular report from the Mission Commission.

- [Connections](http://www.weaconnections.com/), <http://www.weaconnections.com/>
- [Agora](http://www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/mc/agora/archive.htm), <http://www.worldevangelicals.org/commissions/mc/agora/archive.htm>
- Note the stunning article by Matthew Parris in the *London Times*, December 27, 2008, "Why Africa needs missionaries: significant thoughts by a gay atheist thinker". Introducing the article you find this striking summary: "As an atheist, I truly believe Africa needs God. Missionaries, not aid money, are the solution to Africa's biggest problem – the crushing passivity of the people's mindset."

http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/comment/columnists/matthew_parris/article5400568.ece

- Read with profit the *Economist* article on generations – a rather global perspective – with clear implications for mission and missions. "Generation Y goes to work... Reality Bites for young workers".

http://www.economist.com/research/articles/BySubject/displaystory.cfm?subjectid=348963&story_id=12863573

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.

Drawing to a close

As editor I never run out of material to print, and for this we are grateful, especially in our goal to provide a global forum for authors who might not be published otherwise. But what else can we do? One of my ideas is to introduce a column called, "Experiences on the road" or something like that. They could be humorous or serious. I have too many stories to tell of my own cross-cultural blunders, such as my enthusiastic Latin abrazo that shocked the staid and godly Evangelical Japanese pastor years ago. One of the seriously funny ones happened to me in Amsterdam in the use of one of those unique Dutch toilets, and having to do exegesis of the entire

plumbing system to find the flushing mechanism – and then finding my hosts almost on the floor in laughter, for they knew of my distress! There are too many more.

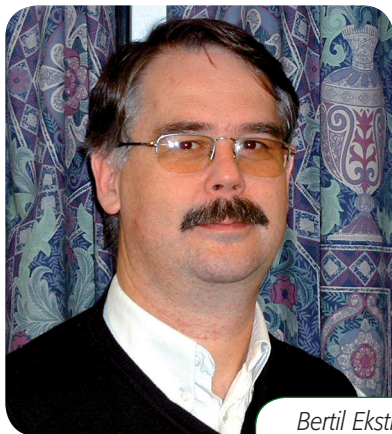
Enough. Have you something to write? Send it to me, btaylor@worldveangelical.org

As we look ahead for 2009, the second and third issues will focus on innovations in mission today. Issue 2009-2 will discuss Business as Mission, with a diversity of perspectives. We will begin a series of articles to examine mission structures (starting with the Korean context) and close with complete reports from all MC service teams.

Read, grow, share, subscribe!! <<



From my corner...



Bertil Ekström
Executive Director

A recent visit to the ruins of St Michael in southern Brazil's "Misiones" region reminded me of the various waves of missionary activity in our country and the diverse forms of spirituality that have been presented to both the original indigenous population as well as to the many immigrants who have settled down in South America. The counter-reformation in the Roman Church, represented among others by the Jesuits, included a strong missional passion and an orientation towards deeper spiritual experiences. Committed, however, to the imperialistic and colonising interest of the kings in Spain and Portugal, both mission efforts and spiritual activities were overshadowed by political and economic concerns, resulting in a "pseudo-evangelisation", according to the Catholic theologian Leonardo Boff, and in a superficial notion of spirituality that combined biblical faith with traditional beliefs and superstition.

St Michael of the Missions, or São Miguel das Missões, as it is called in Portuguese, was one of the Jesuit reductions established in the beginning of the 18th century.¹ The idea behind the reductions was that it was possible to live in community and share everything. The concentration of labour,

production and plantations, education, civil organisation and religious life would necessarily produce a strong community and stand against other nations and even against the despotic actions of the Spanish and Portuguese colonisers. The film, "The Mission", has given us some understanding of this epoch in mission history, although picturing the reductions in a very

naive and simplistic way. The imposition of the Christian faith upon the indigenous groups, violating their freedom of choice and disrespecting their culture, is certainly one of the many missional sins committed by Christian churches in history.

The question for us today, and specifically in our missiological reflection as the Mission Commission, is how we deal with the relationship between Mission and Spirituality. That is the main theme of this issue. Do we still carry vicious tendencies and aggressive attitudes towards other cultures and ethnic groups, echoing outdated theories that affirmed the need for "Christianisation" and "Civilisation" as motives for missionary work? We are surely all against those concepts today; nonetheless, some of our approaches towards other nations and people groups demonstrate our inability to present true spirituality, undressed of our cultural heritage and ecclesiastic tradition.

The Jesuit reduction of St Michael may have been a missional mistake in many ways, but it contributed to the establishment of the Christian faith in Brazil. The Guarani Indians suffered the consequences of it and are still

one of the disfavoured minorities in the country. Independent of our evaluation of the Jesuit mission and the validity of their missionary efforts to spread the Christian faith, we need to be humble and recognise our shortcomings also as Protestant and Evangelical churches. There is a constant challenge to review our motives and to contextualise our presentation of the Gospel, in order to give everyone the opportunity to express faith in Jesus in the way that makes sense to local culture and individual personality. Spirituality is not an issue of fixed rituals or Western models for prayer or religious expressions. The growing church in the Global South does definitely respect both old ruins that bear witness to efforts in earlier centuries and newer collaborative missionary initiatives that have significantly contributed to evangelise our countries.

The way to express spirituality, however, has to have the freedom to be constantly renewed and contextualised. <<

Footnote

- 1 See more on Jesuit Spirituality in the MC book, *Global Missiology for the 21st Century*, edited by Bill Taylor, page 507 ff.

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.



In Thailand, the land of the orchids, the Mission Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance celebrated its 11th Global Consultation with the attendance of 250 mission and church leaders from over 50 nations.

An Orchid Bouquet in Pattaya

The WEA Mission Commission Consultation: Nov 2008

Bertil Ekström
Executive Director

The vivid colours and the richness of cultures, church traditions and liturgical backgrounds were seen in the presentations of local singers and dancers as well as in the participation of the attendees. The diversity and the vibrancy of the consultation could also be observed in the missiological reflection and the creativity of the task forces, networks and specific forums. In the spirit of Thailand, a real “bouquet of beautiful

orchids” was displayed in the intensity and depth of the gathering.

The MC convenes a global consultation every two or three years for mutual encouragement, fellowship and building of relationships, growth in the understanding of the missional enterprise around the globe, dealing with global issues and challenges, and planning the joint work and strategies, in order to become better equipped for the work.

Three main themes

This time, the MC consultation focused primarily the missiological issues of Contextualisation, Mission and Spirituality, and Mission in the Context of Suffering, Violence, Persecution and Martyrdom. Contextualisation in Mission is a complex issue and both the panel discussions and the papers presented showed diversity in perspectives and challenged our



understanding and our practice regarding levels of adaptation to local realities.

Spirituality was discussed in a multi-national panel, particularly in relation to the personal life of the missionary, the encounter with other religious expressions of spirituality and the reality of the spiritual warfare. The plenary presentation gave a broader picture relating the theme to biblical concept and different forms of expressing spirituality in the history of church and mission. An analysis of what spirituality means for mission today was certainly one of the highlights of our gatherings.

The risky situation in which mission is done in our days was clearly demonstrated in the panel conversation with leaders from contexts where persecution against Christians is a reality. The many examples of believers suffering for their faith did not leave any one of the participants indifferent. The plenary speakers, from South East Asia and from the Middle East, made an appeal for a stronger involvement of the global missionary force in these areas, recognising though that God is at work and the Gospel is advancing also in their regions.

The general reflection of all participants and the specific missiological teams generated the core content for a new series of three missiological books based on the work done by the Global Missiology Task Force. These books will be published during the next three years.

Networks, Task Forces and Forums

The MC related Networks, Task Forces and Interest Groups dedicated time to evaluate, envision and plan their activities for the coming three to five years, providing services, research and materials to the national mission movements and the mission community worldwide.

The Global Member Care Network was re-organised and a new structure for the network was submitted to the member care people present in Pattaya. The International Missionary Training Network discussed issues related to the three missiological themes and the revitalized role of regional networks in missionary formation today. The National Mission Movements Network, the largest of the groups, had important moments, sharing experiences from the different nations and re-shaping the manual designed to start and strengthen national movements.

A global research project is being developed by the Mission Mobilisation Task Force and the results will be presented in the next MC consultation. During the gathering in Pattaya, the task force took important



steps in analysing the data already collected. The Global Missiology Task Force had a very busy week taking care of the presentation of the missiological themes, with working teams for each of the issues, and planning the publication of the series of missiological books. The Joint Information Management Initiative (JIMI) task force presented the opportunities of linking needs and resources in the missionary work and worked on the development of tools of information service for national mission movements.

The docked networks, Ethne, Sealink, Interdev Partners Associates, Tentmakers International and Refugee Highway Partnership, as well as the Business as Mission Network, were fully integrated with participation and input in the programme.

Four new initiatives were launched during the consultation: the Continuum-a network of younger reflective practitioners; the Mission and Art Task Force; the Pastors and Church in Mission Task Force; and the Global Dialogue as a MC contribution to the current North-South Dialogue between mission leaders. Reports on these new task-forces are included in this issue of Connections.

Conclusions and lessons

The dynamic process of reflection and gathering of opinions and conclusions was conducted by a team of people led by Russ Simons and Alex Araujo (Interdev Partners Associates). Some of the conclusions have already been mentioned in this report. Other aspects that the facilitation group highlighted were: 1) The need for face to face gatherings like this, in spite of financial crisis, visa problems and political uncertainties; 2) An increasing need for interaction between leaders from diverse cultural and ministry backgrounds; 3) The huge potential for cross-fertilisation between the various task forces and networks; 4) The challenge of gathering leaders in alternate and new ways in order to be more effective and to allow all the participants to contribute with their thoughts and experiences; 5) The involvement of the broader MC leadership in the planning and carrying out of the consultation, spreading the load; 6) The importance of giving more space to younger leaders in the planning and development of the MC and its events.

Each event like this gives us new lessons. The language issue is still a big challenge and we need to find creative ways of dealing with that in coming gatherings. As the facilitation group has suggested, our understanding of effectiveness using one major language (English) may not be as true as we think. A more interactive



process, taking more time to work through the issues and making sure that everyone has a good comprehension may be as effective, although demanding more time. The heavy programme, owing to our desire of making as much as possible of the time together and of the investment of resources, resulted in very few “white spaces” and an understandable tiredness by the end of the consultation.

The five days in Pattaya gave all the participants a unique opportunity to listen to God and to each other, helping us all to discern the relevant issues for mission today, as well as the priorities for the MC collectively for the period 2009 to 2012. Yet, more than plans and strategies for

the coming years, the gathering reinforced our inter-dependency and reaffirmed our willingness to work together in spite of differences in background, ministry orientation, theological and missiological opinions and financial conditions.

As MC leadership we are looking forward to the developments of both older and newer task forces and networks. There is a huge potential for strengthening the national and the regional mission movements through their networking and service. The outcomes of their creativity and hard work will, however, transcend the spheres of the Mission Commission and benefit the worldwide mission community.

To Him all the Glory! <<

What shapes our spirituality in missions?

K. John Amalraj

India is a land known for her spirituality. There was an atheist from the West who decided to visit India. Within twenty-four hours of landing in India, the experience of seeing the thousands of people on the streets, the hundreds of motorbike riders without helmets meandering through chaotic traffic, the noise, the colors, and the diversity of languages, ethnicity, food and culture convinced him that there must be someone Almighty who sustains this nation. He confessed his belief in God. Magnificent temples, ancient sculptures, images, idols and pictures of gods displayed all over provide a spiritual environment not necessarily seen in any other land.

What shapes Indian spirituality?

The spiritual environment in India has given birth to many religious sects of Hinduism, like Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, and fostered religions like Christianity and Islam that came to her shores. Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam spread into the South East and the Far East through Indians commissioned by kings as well as through traders who took their spices and religion to all the islands in the Indian Ocean. Indian spirituality has been exported successfully to the West through jet setting gurus who have built spiritual communities among the natives in North America and Europe to be their followers through their syncretistic teachings. New age spirituality and one of its expressions in Yoga or Transcendental Meditation for example, draws its source from Hinduism and is sweeping the younger generation in the West much more than those in India itself. Indian spirituality is best expressed in performing rituals, contemplative meditation, pilgrimages, celebrating the stages of life and climaxing their life by an act of renouncing the pleasures of the world, the family relationships and choosing to live and die as a hermit. The quest for true spirituality draws people from around the world to come to India.

Muslims in India faithfully express their spirituality in the cultural form that has been passed on to them through the influence of the Mughal Empire for nearly one-thousand years. There are some contextual exceptions to this. Unfortunately, most Indian Christians express their spirituality in the form of the European or American denominational sub-cultures handed down to them. The Gothic structures, the English hymnals, the pipe organs, the three piece suit for Christian Bridegrooms and the wedding rings are all symbols of Christian spirituality in India. Mother Theresa, serving the poor, recently became a symbol of Christian spirituality in India. She is now venerated as a saint by people of all religions and even worshipped as a goddess!!! No wonder the public opinion in India perceives Christianity as a Western religion. There may be exceptions, but they are scattered and too few to make an impression.

I once overheard the pastor say to the young organist "Practice well, since we are the only custodians of the liturgical music which the churches in England have thrown out." For the pastor, the 18th Century liturgy was an important expression of his spirituality, totally ignorant of the fact that there are millions of Indians seeking true spirituality within their cultural expressions.

What shaped my own spirituality?

I am an Indian. But you will be disappointed to know that there is very little of the Indian spirituality that I can discover in my own spiritual expressions. Four generations ago, my great-grandparents chose to follow Jesus Christ and embraced Christianity. I was baptized as a Lutheran, confirmed in the Anglican tradition, disciplined by para-church agencies to be an evangelical, and influenced by charismatic experiences. I have grown up rebelling against various forms of superficial spirituality that I encountered. This made me question all forms, functions and meaning of the expression of spirituality, but I cannot

escape the reality that my spirituality was shaped by denominational Christianity.

What shapes the Indian Christian spirituality?

The history of Christianity in India goes all the way back to the first century with Apostle Thomas's martyrdom in India. However, the influence of the Syrian ecclesiastical order, European and American missionaries have left their mark on how Indian Christians express their spirituality. The denominational mission societies faithfully planted their form of spirituality in the new churches they established. Most of the Indian missionaries from the South who went to North India, imitated the Western missions in their own mission enterprise, which includes structures, policies and methodologies. It is similar to mission enterprise from the North Eastern states of India as well as the churches in the East, West and Northern India.

Describing true spirituality

Spirituality may have to be defined in its context and it is not a term exclusive to the followers of Jesus Christ. There are many hundreds of definitions for spirituality in various dictionaries and writings, but I want to suggest my own understanding of spirituality.

True spirituality is a live, continuous personal relationship with the Creator God that fulfills my deepest human longings for inward and outward peace and gives me meaning and purpose for everyday life. Spirituality is of no use if it is not of earthly use. True spirituality is discovered in human relationships, built on the foundation of a relationship with God.

What shapes our spirituality in missions?

There are many factors that shape our spirituality in missions. If we seek to express true spirituality in our life and work in a modern, global mission context, we need

to stop and look back to what shapes our spirituality.

Life Stages: Our expression of spirituality changes as we advance in age. Some of us who are younger leaders are excited at every new opportunity that comes before us and we jump on them. We assume that our generation can “finish” the job of the Great Commission and so put all our energy to the task. Being active and busy in the ministry sounded very spiritual. However, as we advance in age and life stages, we are mellowed with experience. Our energy level drops, we slow down and start talking about leadership succession and the need for “Sabbaticals”. As we near the grave, our spirituality is expressed more visibly. We confess our regrets, failures and disappointments and naturally begin to devote more time to spiritual disciplines. There is a need for inter-generational participation at every level of mission work so that there is more of a balanced expression of spirituality. How do age and the stages in life shape our spirituality in missions?

Personality: The simplest of personality categories divide between extroverts or introverts. I may be wrong here, but I tend to think that most extroverts love to express their spirituality in charismatic form of worship, compared to introverts who may like a more liturgical form of worship. We sometimes assume that an introvert, whose image is that of being very contemplative, looks more spiritual than an extrovert who does the opposite. We normally talk of leadership styles that differ based on personalities. Some leaders are perceived to be more spiritual than others and it often tends to be simply personality differences. What is the influence of our personality and our leadership style in the way we express our spirituality in missions?

Culture: The study of the relationship between culture and spirituality is complex and vast. This is where contextualization of spirituality becomes an issue. Christ shared his revelation in simple Semitic terms with stories, images, and parables that arose out of his own Jewish culture. The Sermon on the Mount (The Beatitudes) is a counter to the kind of spirituality practiced by the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Later, as Greco-Roman philosophical concepts were established, those conceptual terminologies became normative. Adaptation, nativization and contextualization became part of several pioneers.

The Westerner’s understanding of spirituality is influenced by the Greek dualism of secular and sacred or physical

and spiritual. Asians and Africans, on the other hand, incorporate the spiritual realm into every aspect of their daily life—a more wholistic understanding of spirituality. It is normal for them to think spiritually. Many of the mission fields in rural areas of India normally report of miracles, deliverance from demon possession and even healing of their milking cows, goats and poultry, which led people to decide to follow Christ.

Western culture expresses its spirituality in the form of abstract philosophies boxed into systematic theology. We are labeled as either a Calvinist or a Wesleyan, an evangelical, liberal or an ecumenist. Why can we not combine the richness of all of them into an expression of spirituality without these labels? In the context of Asia and Africa, these distinctions generally do not matter except for the funding! The theologians and denominational leaders have influenced our thinking process. Why do we have to continue the centuries of theological debates and denominational wars in Asia and Africa? For many of us it is an expression of spirituality to defend our pet theology or denomination. These distinctions may be important in the Western historical context, but not necessary in many other cultures. This has direct implications into the kind of church planting that takes place on the mission field.

The Roman Catholic missions were the pioneers in developing Asian Christian spirituality, led by the courageous efforts of Matteo Ricci (d.1610) in China, who attempted to retain Buddhist expression of spirituality in his life and witness. Francis Xavier (d.1552) had earlier attempted to adapt to the local culture in Japan. In India, Roberto de Nobili (d. 1656) emulated Ricci adapting saffron dress and other symbols including an Indian name to express his spirituality within the Indian culture (1). Many others, including Protestant missionaries, followed in their footsteps, but their efforts were isolated and scattered and have never become mainstream in Indian spirituality.

Worship is one of the most visible forms of the expression of spirituality within a culture. There are efforts toward developing indigenous music and songs on the mission fields. The African style of worship, with rhythm and dance, and the Asian way of worship, with rituals and symbols, add diversity to our worship.

Spiritual disciplines, like prayer and meditation of Scripture, are also related to cultural expressions. Mass prayer and Early Morning Prayers are Korean cultural

expressions. The inductive Bible study method is primarily a Western cultural practice, whereas the meditative approach to the study of Scripture reflects the Asian culture.

How does culture shape us in the expression of spirituality in missions?

Religious traditions: Richard Foster’s monumental work in collecting stories from historical, biblical and contemporary paradigms and clearly distinguishing the strengths and weaknesses of each of these traditions is a very useful work in the study of how religious traditions influence our spirituality. Foster says that, “There are streams of spiritual life: the Contemplative, Holiness, Charismatic, Social Justice, Evangelical and Incarnational traditions. In reality, these traditions describe various dimensions of the spiritual life. It is Jesus who models them in his life in its most complete form.” (2). Although most of us would attempt to identify which tradition we have been most influenced by, there will always be a mixture of traditions. Foster does not discuss much about the spirituality tradition of the Eastern Orthodox, where the liturgy in itself is a demonstration of the Gospel and has been designed to help people worship God and, through that, bring others to worship God.

The spirituality that was expressed by Sadhu Sundar Singh (d. 1929) was unique. He was a convert from Hinduism and those religious traditions shaped his expression of spirituality. His spirituality was close to the monastic tradition, and characteristics of this tradition can be identified in most of the religions. There are men and women who dedicate their lives totally to living the deeper spiritual dimensions of their religious beliefs. The mandate of the Vatican Council II says, “Let them reflect attentively on how Christian religious life may be able to assimilate the ascetic and contemplative traditions whose seeds were sometimes already planted by God in ancient cultures prior to the preaching of the gospel.” (3) Sadhu Sundar Singh, after much hesitation, accepted baptism by the Anglican tradition, but soon after that renounced all identification with the traditional churches and took on an ascetic lifestyle, travelling barefoot all over India and even to Tibet preaching the Gospel. His teachings were once popular in the West as a tool to aid deeper spirituality.

In a similar way, the first generation Buddhist-background believer, Muslim-background believer, Sikh-background believer, animistic-background believer

and others will have a spirituality that is influenced by their own religious tradition background. The expression of spirituality in our mission fields will vary according to the traditions. How do traditions shape our spirituality which eventually affects our missions?

Gender: Women are considered more spiritual than men in most cultures. Women are the bearers of cultures. If we take a survey of attendance at Sunday worship, prayer meetings, revival meetings, crusades, and outreaches, we will generally find more women than men. History bears witness to the sustenance of mission movements because of the role of women in providing prayer and support. In the Indian context, it is the devout women who sacrificially set aside money, rice, wheat, etc., for the cause of giving to missions. It is the mothers who most often dedicate their sons to become pastors or missionaries. It is the mothers who are always praying for the prodigal son or daughter. Most of us come from a male dominated society that fails to recognize the influence of our own mothers, wives, sisters and daughters who are in the forefront of expressing their true spirituality. Women often shape the spirituality of their children and family and pass it on to the next generation. This is true not just in Christianity, but even in other religions. It is an irony that women are not involved in official roles in religious organizations or structures. Maybe this is why we sometimes lack a sense of spirituality in our missions! We would have a richer experience of spirituality if we involved more women in our gatherings, meetings, committees and consultations! How does gender shape spirituality in missions?

Understanding of vocation:

All personnel who are involved in missions will relate to the "Missionary Call". How do we understand the relationship between one's spirituality and calling? Does our spirituality relate to how we respond to our calling? As a pastor's son in a conservative evangelical tradition, my family expected me as the eldest son to follow in the footsteps of my father. I resisted this family pressure and ended up studying law and management. Eventually, I ended up becoming involved in mission organizations using my training and experience from the corporate world. I never heard a voice or saw a vision or had somebody lay their hands on me and prophesy. A mentor saw the potential in me and invited me to be involved in missions. I do have the assurance that I am fulfilling the purpose of God in my life, but I understood

my calling through who and what shaped my spirituality.

The word "call" has its roots in the Latin word "vocare", which in English means vocation. All people are called to their respective vocation. A teacher needs to have a sense of call if she is dedicated to her work. A doctor needs to have a sense of calling to excel in his profession. A businessman also needs a calling to be involved in business. We become frustrated when we have to work to sustain ourselves and our families without having a choice to fulfill our potential. God has gifted us with natural abilities and spiritual gifting for certain specific vocations. A missionary who has lost her sense of calling will be a total failure on the field. Similarly, a pastor who has lost his sense of calling will just be doing the routine without a concern for his congregation. All mission organizations have extensive procedures and systems to test the calling of individuals into missions. How we understand each individual's calling is based on the spirituality expressed in the organization. Is there something different in the way we understand a missionary calling to that of a calling to a profession? Why does a missionary or a pastoral vocation somehow seem to be more spiritual than other vocations? Are we being dualistic? Does this understanding of spirituality make us expect that only a few in the church are called to missions and all others just stay where they are? The Filipino churches have commissioned their womenfolk to serve professionally as maids and sent them to the Arab world as witnesses. Hundreds of young women come back with stories of transformation. A silent spiritual revolution is happening because of the faithfulness of the Filipino maids.

The hidden years of Jesus' life has fuelled much speculation. The last we hear of Jesus' childhood was when he was just twelve years old, in the temple answering questions. I think it is right to believe that Jesus was a full time carpenter, both initially, as an apprentice with his earthly father Joseph, and later on, as the eldest son, responsible for supporting his mother, brothers and sisters. His public ministry lasted only a very brief period, but his life as a carpenter also had a mission to fulfill. The influence of his spirituality in everyday life was a way of fulfilling his mission. Those hidden years were not just a time of waiting or preparation for the "main" public ministry. Jesus was sent by the Father to redeem the world, which included the long silent years of work as a carpenter. He did become a Rabbi in his public ministry. It is good that we do not have more information

about his carpentry work, otherwise we would have institutionalized the vocation of Carpenter and made all the tables, chairs and furniture made by him into museum articles. If we understand who and what shapes our spirituality, then our understanding of vocation and the missionary enterprise will be different.

Organizational spirituality: The study of organizational behavior reveals that organizations have their own sub-cultures and large multi national organizations even have different sub-cultures in each department. I had the privilege of working in the corporate world for a brief period before starting to work with mission organizations. My first observation was that organizations are human structures, whether in the business world or in the missions and church world. The same inter-personal challenges are present in both kinds of organizations, except that in Christian organizations, there are greater expectations from one another. I believe that we can use the field of knowledge in management, governance and organizational behavior to strengthen the capacities of our organizations to be more effective. However, in the early stages of my involvement, I was told not to use my knowledge of organizational management in Christian organizations because the principles were not spiritual. Many Christian organizations have gone into crisis simply because they refused to adopt common management principles.

What kind of spirituality do our organizations have and how does the spirituality of the organizations impact missions on the field? Why do we only call some mission organizations "faith missions" and not all? Fund-raising policies, member care policies, organizational structure, and governance model of our organizations are different according to our culture, but also they are different because of the spiritual traditions in which the founders and leaders are shaped. Operation Mobilisation (OM) and Youth with a Mission (YWAM) are two well-known organizations that express their spirituality very differently. I have good friends in both organizations, but I have yet to meet someone who has migrated from OM to YWAM or the reverse. Maybe it is impossible.

Conclusion: I am not an anthropologist, biblical scholar or even a missiologist. Thank God for the Igassu consultation, from which the term "Reflective Practitioners" was born, a term which describes our journey. We need to reflect on why we do what we do and who or what actually shapes our expressions of spirituality in missions. Let us not judge

one another in the expression of our spirituality. Let us not become legalistic and lay down norms of spirituality. Let us enrich our spirituality by being inclusive of one another's diverse spiritual expressions and experiences. In the globalized context of missions, we need to develop integration into every aspect of our life and mission so that God's name may be glorified forever and ever! Now all glory to God, who is able, through His mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to Him in the church and in Christ Jesus, through all generations forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3: 20-21.) <<

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Mission and Spirituality

Kirk Franklin

The term "spirituality" is laden with significance, but hard to define. When I asked Bill Taylor for advice about addressing this topic he suggested to just, "tell your story." That makes sense. Many aspects of spirituality are about the personal journey of relating to a holy God.

My story is influenced by twenty-five years of living in Papua New Guinea, both in childhood and later as an adult. One year seemed to be particularly filled with an extra measure of spirituality. The Lord had been directing some Papua New Guinean leaders and me about formalizing a leadership structure in our church. An eldership was appointed on which I served. At our weekly meetings, many hours were spent in prayer, so much so that we often lost track of time. The sick sought us out for prayer and we witnessed miracles of healing.

On Easter Sunday, I was the closing speaker at the church's retreat. I had worked on the message for weeks, but that morning I sensed the Lord directing me to give a new message. Knowing I only had two hours until I was to speak, I checked with some of the elders and they affirmed that I needed to listen to the Lord. I found a quiet place and had the remarkable experience of God giving me a brand new message while I wrote it down as fast as I could. When the time came to preach, the words flowed for a solid hour. But when I reached the end, I suddenly realized the Lord hadn't given me the ending. Instead, as it turns out, he had given that to one of the elders who came up while I was giving the closing prayer and whispered "I'll take over." I gladly let him, and the Lord touched many people's lives that morning.

Soon afterward, I had a serious accident and broke two bones in my arm. As I was being prepared to be airlifted to a hospital, the elders gathered around and prayed for a miraculous healing. That didn't occur, but they later interpreted the resulting 11cm scars on both sides of my arm (where plates had been inserted) as symbols of the Lord's body broken over the people of our community.

This was an exhilarating time for me,

especially as it was happening in the culture in which I grew up. Melanesian Christian spirituality was engaging my heart and making me passionate in new ways about God and what he was doing. My wife and family, however, were not part of these experiences. Our three kids were very young and my wife, an Australian, didn't share the same connection with Melanesia that I did – how could she? One morning as we were flying out in the twin engine mission airplane to start a year long home assignment, she leaned over and said above the roar of the engines, "I'm glad we're leaving." I was shocked by her words. What she meant took months for me to understand. I was confused. Could what I experienced during that year have been authentic spirituality since it impacted me so much? Why was it that the events of this year only raised questions for my wife?

An historical look at missions suggests that our experience of spirituality is greatly influenced by what God is doing in the culture being renewed. I was deeply affected by what God's renewal during this time because of my sensitivity to the Melanesian culture. My wife did not experience this in the same way.

Spirituality and renewal

Is authentic spirituality in mission important, and if so what does it involve? Putting on historical mission lenses, a reoccurring theme throughout mission history is that renewal and expansion are accompanied by new spiritual dynamics and renewed forms of spirituality. This impacts "the relationship between the gospel and the totality of human experience arising from culture, nationality, history, geography, politics or economics" (Corrie, p. 66). There are well documented examples of this from mission history that include: (see Taylor, pp. 489-517 for other examples)

The Celts (5th-10th centuries) were evangelists of the British Isles. They followed a simple ascetic lifestyle with an intense commitment. This created a sense of adventure that attracted the younger

generation. They solely believed in and used Scripture as the Word of God to support what they believed, preached and propagated. They used small mission bands in difficult places and established communities that were intentionally missional. They translated parts of the Bible into the local language and used the vernacular in their preaching. They relied on dreams and visions in a significant way.

The Pietists (early 1700s) started as a moral and spiritual reformation that grew out of the Lutheran context. Genuine conversion and inward renewal of the individual were stressed. Lay people were given roles in the church. They emphasized the use of Scripture, koinonia fellowship, a greater interest in mission, the growth and cultivation of the Christian life and separation from the world.

The Moravians (18th Century) were a Protestant form of monasticism (a vowed religious life that included community, prayer, common worship, silence, and labour). They deliberately served in mission amongst marginalized people. They preached a simple gospel of God's loving act of reconciliation. They saw themselves as assistants to the Holy Spirit in mission.

I have personally seen renewal events. When I was attending a mission high school in Papua New Guinea, a revival spread across the country, particularly among students. In 1975, a classmate was tragically killed when her motorcycle collided with an army jeep. This shook our school community. Many of

us had been unkind to her, but we knew her passion for Jesus. We sought out her parents, who willingly forgave us for our attitudes towards their daughter. A revival started in our school community and spread to a nearby Easter camp of IFES (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students) from around the country. The revival spread to universities and schools with continued evidence for at least a year.

In 1991 I visited New Caledonia, a small French territory in the South Pacific. Three years earlier, a group of Melanesians had led an uprising for independence that eventually failed. Groups of them had used their black magic to hide themselves from the French soldiers and carry out raids and ambushes. I was taken to meet some of these former rebels. Many had become Christians. While having fellowship over a meal, they shared stories of how their lives had been transformed by Christ. Then they sang a hymn they had written which expressed their eternal hope in Christ. As they sang, it felt as though heaven opened to us as we worshipped God on his throne. I have not experienced anything quite like that since.

In these examples, historical and contemporary, there is evidence of renewed forms of spirituality, from what was being practiced by the church at the time, to new or renewed movements of God in his people which he used for his mission.

Defining spirituality

As I have already stated, the word "spirituality" is loaded with meaning. It is difficult to define succinctly. Spirituality is "the state of a deep relationship to God" (J.M. Houston in Elwell, 1984, p. 1046). This state flows from God's inner nature to us and "propels us into Christian ministry; living in relationship with God in such an intimate way that it influences who we are and how we relate to others" (Van Rheenen, np). This "experiential relationship in the believer and God" is "a transforming process of deepening intimacy, which at the same time renews relationships with others as a reflection of this mystery" (A. Barus in Corrie, p. 371).

The Bible gives insights about spirituality:

- It is loving God: "Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deut 6:5, NIV).
- It is focusing on God: "Set your hearts on things above.... Set your minds on things above... your life is now hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3:1-3, NIV).
- It is influenced by God's Word: "Blessed are those... who delight in the law of the LORD, and meditate on his law meditates day and night" (Psa 1:1-2, TNIV; also Psa 51:6).
- Its evidence is inner peace: "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you" (Isa 26:3, TNIV; also Rom 8:6 and Rom 14:17).
- It involves a holy life: "Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do" (1 Peter 1:15, NIV; also Matt 5:6).
- It is guided by the Holy Spirit: "Live... according to the Spirit" (Rom 8:4, NIV; also John 14:17).

Connecting mission to spirituality

The term "mission" continues to cause confusion. Some definitions of (Christian) mission are: "Everything God does in establishing his kingdom in all its fullness in the world" (G Vicedom); "A movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission" (Bosch, 1991, p. 390). Spirituality is "our committed participation as God's people, at God's invitation and command, in God's own mission within the history of God's world for the redemption of God's creation" (Wright, p.23).



Connecting mission to spirituality is appropriate because, as G. T. Smith says, mission is “an extension of and an expression of authentic spirituality,” and such spirituality responds “to the call of God and the brokenness and alienation of the world” (Smith, p. 904). Therefore, spirituality in mission starts with the *missio Dei* since it is God who is the one “who draws us into relationship with himself in order to engage in mission” (Corrie, p. 371).

Summing up then, spirituality from a missional perspective is:

- A description of the relationship between God and a believer made alive in Christ and empowered by his Spirit.
- This relationship is intended to be transformational (a noticeable change in one’s character) because it takes the believer from their pre-Christ state to what they are today and provides motivation for future spiritual maturity.
- People should see something different in the believer which is only possible because of Christ and God’s Word from which the believer’s life is built upon.
- This relationship with God is intended to initiate and empower mission commitment (Corrie, p. 371).

Missiological implications of spirituality

If we take spirituality in mission seriously, there are missiological implications to consider:

a) **Integral mission and spirituality:**

Authentic spirituality must be integrated with all of life. As Bryant Myers says,

We cannot love our neighbour, or even ourselves, if we are not loving God with all our heart, soul and mind... Disciples are called first to be with Jesus, and only then to preach the gospel, heal the sick, and cast out demons. Being comes before doing. We cannot share what we do not have. We cannot live eloquent lives that provoke questions to which the gospel is the answer unless our lives are made by the Spirit of the living God (p. 162).

b) **Reconciliation and spirituality in mission:**

The reconciliation of people to God and each other is a theme of God and his love and justice for all of his creation. This gets “expressed in a reconciling life, which infuses a reconciled person’s word and deeds and gives shape to a spirituality of mission for a post modern world” (Corrie, p. 373).

Two years ago I was giving devotional messages at a retreat for Papua New Guinean missionaries who serve their own communities. The theme given to me was about our identity in Christ. During one of the sessions, one of the leaders stood up and pointed out how he characterised

various people (represented in the group) based on their cultural identity. He stated for example, “I don’t like people from K_____ because they are the leaders of crime in our cities.” Then he asked each person who represented these various groups he didn’t like to come to the front. He asked for their forgiveness, on behalf of the nation. They hugged and wept together. It was an incredibly moving experience.

c) **Contemplation and reflection in mission:**

If we have an action and task oriented mindset towards mission it can mean we have little room for contemplation. The reflective practitioner is a concept that has not been widely embraced. And yet, reflection is important. The mission community owes a debt of gratitude to Bill Taylor for pointing out that reflective practitioners are people “of both action and reflection, committed to God’s truth; obedient in the power of God’s Spirit to the Great Commission in all its fullness” (Taylor, p. 5).

Borrowing from Celtic spirituality, the missionary monks were contemplative because “they valued solitude and prayerful meditation” (Taylor, p. 492). They were also reflective: “they gave serious attention to learning and the life of the mind... for only with a muscular creation spirituality and theology could they deem the things of this world such as art, music and books as worthy of their sustained attention” (p. 492).

d) **Holiness impacts spirituality in mission:**

Spirituality is about holiness “which is the restoration of the human person to what he or she was created to be... Holiness involves the recovery of wholeness – the integrity of our lives as they are being restored by the Spirit” (Elwell, 1996, p. 746). Jesus says that spirituality that pleases God is characterized by a “hunger and thirst for righteousness” (Matt 5:6). This kind of spirituality satisfies because it comes from deep within.

I know a person who spent many years in training to be a missionary. This included Bible College, specialized studies, spiritual formation and raising financial and prayer support. Shortly after he and his family arrived in their country of service, he started an extra marital affair. As the news of this broke out he and his family had to return home. The man told me “this was the death of a long-term dream to be a missionary.” His actions had negatively impacted his involvement in God’s mission.

Conclusion

As mission practitioners we need to consider how mission and spirituality interact and

intersect as themes. Obediently participating in God’s mission does not mean success is guaranteed in our spiritual lives. Soon after my wife gave birth to our first child she became unwell. For eight long years we searched for medical solutions and eventually she was diagnosed with Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. There were times where the only way she could get through a day was by spending long times in prayer. We wondered if we could stay involved in mission. But as a result she developed a deeper prayer life and commitment to mission accompanied by a much stronger and healthier spirituality because of her physical challenges.

We each may have our own sense of struggling with our spirituality as we serve in mission knowing that there is always room for improvement. Therefore, a great personal challenge and responsibility is to live an authentic spirituality as we participate in God’s mission. <<

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An Asian pastor recently noted that, "If a missionary shares the details of his (or her) specific missionary call with the church, the congregation then perceives him as being more spiritual than a missionary who does not have the experience of such a call."

The Missionary Call:

Spiritual Indicator or Historical Hindrance?

A couple of decades ago, the mission agency SIM published a brochure titled, *"The Missionary Call: what to do if you don't have one."* This brochure, over all other SIM brochures from that era, had to be reprinted the most often.

In *Too Valuable To Lose*,¹ research indicated that the lack of an adequate sense of call was the second highest cause of attrition amongst missionaries from newer sending countries.

The concept of a "missionary call" is clearly an important one for many people, and the term figures often among Christians. Thus, the term and concept is worthy of some reflection, particularly as it is often linked with spiritual maturity by Christians. It is also worthy of reflection because many use the concept as the basis for not personally considering missionary service. The response, "I don't have a call," becomes an excuse for further consideration of the subject.

What is the origin of the term?

A few years ago, the personal papers of a deceased missionary were returned to his agency by non-Christian relatives, who were not sure what to do with them. Among those materials were two papers written by mission leaders in the 1930s. Both of the papers referred to the necessity of a missionary call, and both of them referred to passages in Isaiah 6, Jeremiah 1 and Ezekiel 1. However, neither writer actually referred to the text of these passages as the basis for their point, but rather to the headings inserted in their particular translation of the Bible.

More recently, a theological student presented an essay on missionary motivation, which made reference to the missionary call. The essay traced the use of the term through English language history, and associated its present meaning with

the early 19th century usage of "calling," describing work that entailed a measure of personal sacrifice, undertaken principally for the benefit of others.

Still others see the term originating with the testimony of Paul, who described himself as "called to be an Apostle." This personal statement by Paul, with regard to his apostleship and authoritative role in the church, is seen as establishing a basis for others involved in ministry.

What is meant by the term?

More important than its origin is the present day meaning being conveyed by how we use the term "calling". Recently, a multicultural group of missionaries in training was asked what was meant by a "missionary calling". They felt that users of the term were referring to an assurance of God's presence in their decision/preparation process; or to their conviction and motivation for doing what they were doing; or to a spiritual experience that gave them a sense of divine authority; or something similar to the above. Any Christian involved in ministry would agree to the necessity of having this level of assurance of God's involvement in their life. But is "missionary call" the appropriate and most useful term to use to describe this assurance of God's involvement?

Is the term biblical?

Isaiah 6, Jeremiah 1, and Ezekiel 1 frequently include inserted headings such as, "The call of Isaiah" or, "The call of Ezekiel". A text study of these (and similar) passages reveals that "call" is not actually the key term of the passage. A quick scan immediately identifies the key term as being "send", as in Isaiah 6:8 or Ezekiel 2:3. Instead, when the term "call" is used in the Old Testament, except for when it is used to mean "speak", it is generally in reference to the possibility of a relationship with God, as

in "call on his name" (Isaiah 12:4).

In the New Testament, the principle of being sent by God is taken up by Jesus, both concerning himself and concerning his disciples. In Matthew 9:35-38, while confronting his disciples with the spiritual need of the world, he encourages them to "ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." He did not exhort them to go out and get involved – sending was to be at the root of their involvement, not the need of the people. Jesus often speaks of the Father as "he who sent me" (e.g., John 8:26), and his consciousness of being sent was clearly very important to him. In his prayer recorded in John 17, Jesus speaks of having sent his disciples into the world (John 17:18), a fact he made clear to them in John 20:21. The principle of being sent is also seen in the book of Acts, as the local church takes on its responsibility with regard to the wider world. In Acts 13:1-4, the Spirit and the local church are the two agents involved in sending Saul and Barnabas. In Romans 10:15, Paul explains that the preaching of the gospel will only occur if people are sent.

What of the term "call" in the New Testament? Apart from two locations, every use of the term is used in the context of salvation and a relationship with God, such as "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matthew 9:13), or "those everywhere who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:2).

What are the issues we need to consider?

The use of the term "call" with reference to Christian service can hide, if not detract from, the significant biblical teaching on our call to salvation.

The sharing of a "missionary call" with other Christians can easily be perceived as an indicator of a higher spiritual standing – a kind of spiritual superiority that leads the

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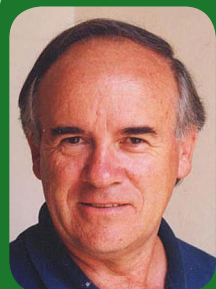
hearer to discount the possibility of being a missionary themselves.

The emphasis on the personal “call” over the counsel, affirmation and commendation of the local church tends to make the mission agency more significant in the life of the missionary than the local church of which they are a part.

The current usage of “call” with regard to Christian service puts the decision-making emphasis heavily on the individual. This fits with the current emphasis of the individual in Western culture, but does not sit well with the New Testament teaching on the body of Christ. The church corporate was involved in sending Saul and Barnabas. They were also involved in sending Paul and Silas (Acts 15:40), and in sending Timothy with them (Acts 16:2). Ephesians 4:11-14 describes Christian service as a corporate responsibility, with the goal of spiritual maturity for all the members of the body. By placing the decision-making on the individual, the “call” concept takes from the body the spiritually maturing experience of discerning together the purpose and plan of God. By extension, this leads to a lower level of involvement of the local church in the life and work of the missionary. Mission work is an aspect of the ministry of the church in the world, and God has promised to be with his church in fulfilling that role (Matt 28:20). Ministry in the world is part of the process of spiritual maturity, both for the church as a body and for its individual members as they participate in that ministry. <<

Footnote

1 William D. Taylor, ed., *Too Valuable To Lose*, (William Carey Library, 1997), p.94.



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Spiritual Warfare in Missions

The origin, the nature and the context of spiritual warfare in missions

Reuben Ezemadu

The Lord cast His plan for the redemption of mankind from the Fall in a warfare context when He announced as follows: “*And I will put enmity between you (i.e., the serpent) and the woman, between your offspring and hers, he will crush your head and you will strike his heel*” Genesis 3:15 (NIV). The deliverance of the people of Israel from slavery in the land of Egypt (a typical missionary enterprise) took place in the context of warfare that was more of spiritual contests and maneuvering, as evidenced in the successive encounters between Moses/Aaron (who were employing the instructions and directions from God on one side to secure the release of the people of Israel from slavery) and Pharaoh/Egyptian magicians (who were invoking and employing satanic powers on the other side to resist the deliverance of the Israelites from bondage). Exodus 7:10-12:36.

These are conditions which describe the state of the people who are subjects of the missionary enterprise:

1. Living in an abode of wickedness: Psalms 74:20
2. Shut up in prisons: Isaiah 42:28
3. Plundered and exploited: Isaiah 42:28
4. Hardened and blinded: II Corinthians 4:3-4
5. Harassed and scattered: Matthew 9:36
6. Under the chain of the evil one: Acts 8:9-11
7. Shut-off and guarded by a very strong man: Matthew 12:29

We cannot, therefore, contemplate getting such people out of that kind of condition without definitely encountering some spiritual conflicts. Hence, spiritual warfare is *the battle that is being waged between the agents of God’s*

Kingdom and the opposing forces of the evil one in a bid to set mankind free from bondage to sin and oppression of the devil.

Spiritual forces opposed to the gospel and their earthly agents are variously summarized as follows:

1. Psalm 2:1-3 describes “a conspiracy by nations and their rulers against Christ and His gospel.”
2. Paul, in his writings to the Ephesians Christians (6:12), calls such opposing forces “rulers, authorities, powers of this dark world, and spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms,” which oppose God’s purposes on earth.
3. II Corinthians 4:4 describes “the god of this age (which) has blinded the mind of unbelievers so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God,” and therefore should be overcome, uprooted and dislodged for mankind to have access to the benefits of God’s salvation (Ephesians 6:11, 13-18; II Corinthians 10:3-6).
4. The opposing forces also manifest as “ancient gates”, traditions, cultures, customs, rules and regulations, practices, etc., which prohibit the penetration of the gospel (Psalms 24:7-10) and deny people the right to decide to follow Jesus Christ (John 4:13-34), distract others from hearing the gospel (Acts 13:6-12), infiltrate missionary teams to undermine their effectiveness (Acts 16:16-20), oppose and discourage missionaries (Acts 19:23-32), doing counterfeit miracles to discredit the gospel (Acts 19:13-20).

The Lord, who Himself encountered spiritual warfare in His earthly ministry, warned us

about the same experience in our own era as we continue with His Mission here on earth (Matthew 10:16-22; John 16:33). Hence, He assured us of His presence and power to overcome and emerge victorious in the spiritual battle to be encountered in taking the gospel to the nations (Luke 10:19; Matthew 24: 20; Mark 16:17).

Spiritual warfare in modern missions

Even though spiritual warfare had always been part of the missionary enterprise right from the beginning as indicated above, this reality has unfortunately been overlooked, ignored and not recognized in many of the missionary endeavors, especially by some of the older mission sending structures. As a result, many labors have been unfruitful, many missionaries became casualties in the fields, and much of the efforts have been frustrated, resulting in a very high toll on manpower and resources. There was also the misconception that evil forces operated more among the tribal and animistic cultures, fuelling the delusion by the devil that civilized and developed societies are no-go areas for demonic operations. Such ignorance or misconception has contributed to the present situation that prevails in modern and post-modern societies where demons, under various guises, have woven a “civilized”, polished, technologically advanced, satanic empire with their fangs in media, education, government, business, and even religion. This phenomenon thereby redefines the unreached and ripe mission fields to extend beyond the traditional concepts of the unreached.

For us in Africa, spiritual warfare has been (and will continue to be) part of our holistic approach to missions. It is a common feature of the African Church to thrive in the midst of spiritual battles, physical limitations, limited resources, social upheavals, and insecurity. In fact, the church in Africa exists in such contexts and flourishes within that kind of environment. The church in Africa is increasingly becoming a missionary church, even in the face of such limitations, oppositions and challenges. The contexts of religious pluralism, ethnic and cultural diversities, multilingual realities, unwavering belief in the super-natural, tenacity and persevering spirit, adaptability, creativity, now strengthened by spiritual fervency, have placed the African Church in a position to contribute more towards the final push in world evangelization and missions. We must do it in cooperation and partnership with other sections of the Body of Christ worldwide-especially our brethren in Asia, Latin

America, Middle-East and Central Asia who share similar experiences.

Winning the battle

In commissioning the Church to carry on with His Mission on earth, the Lord implied that there will be battles which will involve a dislodging and a dispossession of the strong man of his long held positions and captives (Matthew 12:29). So we are destined to win this raging spiritual warfare in missions! But there are certain things we need to know and do about spiritual warfare in missions if we are to complete the task before us.

1. Don't be ignorant of the devices (the schemes and modus operandi) of the devil (II Corinthians 2:11).
2. Sharpen our spiritual senses of “discernment” so as to easily identify the devices and operations of the evil one (Matthew 16:15-17 cf. 22-23; Acts 16:16-18; I Corinthians 2:10-14).
3. Train and equip missionaries in the awareness of the realities of spiritual warfare in missions and in the assurance of Christ's power to overcome the evil forces arraigned in opposition to the gospel (Mark 3:13-15; Luke 10:19; Luke 4:16-18; Matthew 28:18-20).
4. Understand the nature of the warfare, distinguishing between the victims (humans) and the villains (the spiritual forces at work) so as to know who to target in the fight (Ephesians 6:12).

5. Master the weapons at our disposal to wage the warfare and understand how to appropriate them in the various circumstances, contexts and purposes (Ephesians 6:11, 13-18; II Corinthians 4:1-5; 10:3-6).
6. Trust and rely on the leading and direction of the Holy Spirit because He alone knows the target and the right weapon to apply under any circumstance of warfare (John 14:26-27; I Corinthians 2:10-14).
7. Always walk in the confidence of the assurance of Christ's presence, power, protection, provision, and preservation as we face the challenges of penetrating the strongholds of the enemy to set free his captives (Matthew 28:18-20; Matthew 10:26-31).



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Re-integration:

Recovering Spirituality's Wholism

"Spirituality" has become something of a buzz-word. I do not recollect its widespread usage forty years or more ago, at least in British evangelical or wider Protestant circles, and certainly not beyond the religious. Maybe my memory is simply faulty (no surprises there!). Maybe not. Whichever, now it pops up in conversation after conversation, in book after book, sermon after sermon.

And in newspaper after newspaper, secular book after secular book. Take your pick: there's even humanist or atheist spirituality, according to the popular press. "Spirituality", it seems, has been high-jacked by anyone and everyone, to represent some warm inner glow, some extra-sensory experience, some essence of commitment, the pleasure of some sexual encounter however deviant, or whatever else one cares to put into the word. It can mean everything, or anything, or nothing.

Christians, too, have often been caught up in this fuzzy thinking. Often spirituality is rather vaguely assumed to be something subjective, even mystical, something firmly detached from the rational or the material, possibly involving an altered state of consciousness. It is often linked to a sense of warm well-being and pleasure. It is primarily something that is intensely personal and individual. It can be entirely independent of ethical behaviour. In the late 1960s, the Beatles popularised eastern mysticism, yoga and Hindu or Buddhist meditation; and "spirituality" took on a new lease of life. A thinly veneered version penetrated Christian circles. Contextualisation or subversion?

The Christian church has from its very earliest days had its mystics and its solitaires, especially those who withdrew from the rough and tumble and contamination of 'the world' in order to focus completely on God. Christians did not invent these patterns, they simply adapted them from already existing ways of life among a variety of religious practitioners, including Jewish Essenes and others. However, whatever the perceived role of mystics and contemplatives may have been down the Christian centuries, there are two main reasons why this should not be the sole template for our understanding of spirituality.

First, our faith is to be all-embracing. The Lord Jesus, following the Old Testament summary of the Law, taught that we are to love God with our total personality-body, mind, soul, emotions, or whatever other categories you care to use, though Hebrew culture did not see these as separable; there was no such thing as a disembodied 'spirit', detached from body and mind. We too often read back into Scripture Greek dualism, thus profoundly misunderstanding texts that speak of the soul (e.g., Matthew 16:26). Modern Western culture, in the wake of the Enlightenment, emphasises (entirely falsely) that the spiritual and the rational/material are totally separate, the latter being objective and the former being subjective and beyond verification (and therefore unreliable). By contrast, both Old and New Testaments bear consistent witness to the call to worship the Lord with all that we are, all that we have, in every dimension of life, and that this is the essence of genuine spirituality. Inner experience that does not issue in whole-person transformation is spurious and worthless.

Second, our faith is to be profoundly communal. Too much contemporary Christian literature about spirituality is fully addressed to individuals in separate self-contained units. But the emphasis of Scripture is on the believing community being the primary place where faith and character are developed and honed, where the quality of our relationships together is to exemplify Kingdom reconciliation, and where children and new disciples, rubbing shoulders with others, are to be brought into ever-growing understanding and concrete lived-out reality of new life in Christ. That community may be the home and family, which Luther famously described as "God's little church", it may be the formal congregations where most of us belong, or it may be some other configuration of believing people, such as a mission agency or peer group where faith and obedience and transformation are stretched and grown. It is no accident that the majority of the New Testament Epistles, with so much theological content and so much applied practical wisdom, are almost all written

to groups rather than to individuals, and indeed only make full sense in the context of communal life, set within the even broader context of an unbelieving world. Those letters that are written to individuals have a very easily discerned specific purpose and even these we read as God's inspired word with significance for us all, not just for the original recipients.

True spirituality, then, has as much to do with how I brew the tea, or write letters, or drive the car, or care for my neighbour, as it has to do with what happens in my personal devotions; and my study of the Scriptures and prayer in the privacy of my own room, crucial as these are, represent only one strand in the formation and transformation which can only fully happen in company with others of the Lord's people. Many strongly community based cultures, as opposed to individualistic cultures, know this instinctively, in the same way that some cultures do not fall into the trap of falsely separating "spiritual" from the whole of life. Others of us come from cultures where we need a bold re-integration.

Hebrews 10:19-25 encapsulates these themes wonderfully. The Lord Jesus Christ, both High Priest and perfect sacrifice, has opened the way for cleansed, forgiven, faithful, hope-full access to our heavenly Father. We are to respond together to this provision of grace, helping one another "toward love and good deeds", encouraging each other as we share our lives together, all in the light of our Lord's return.

Across the global church, let's reach out to one another to do just that, for the glory of God! <<

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Rest and the work of Missions:

Living the Way of Jesus

Jim Van Meter, D.Min.

As I write this article, I am in the mountains of Colorado in the loft of a barn that has been dedicated as a place for day retreats for people in ministry. It is winter time and the snow has begun to fall. I came here for two reasons: one was to do the work of writing this article, and the other was to seek a place of rest, because my soul has become rest-less. The Christmas holidays were wonderful-celebrating the birth of our Lord with friends and family, much wonderful “work” and activities. But the constant activity has taken a toll on my soul because my times of solitude and

communion with the Father were crowded out. I am now finding myself off center. I had left the rhythm of working and resting, and consequently am finding myself impatient, hurried and easily irritable.

Isn't this often what happens in missions? We are committed to the Great Commission; in obedience to the Lord of the harvest we have dedicated our lives to discipling the nations. But in the process of living for and serving our Lord, we often become pre-occupied with the task of missions while neglecting the care of our own soul. As mission leaders, we don't need to

be motivated to work harder. However, it is my opinion that we need to be encouraged to learn how to better find rest for our souls. We have forgotten that our Lord, who was sent by the Father with the huge task of redeeming the world, showed us the way to live, a life characterized by a rhythm of work and rest, ministry and communion with the Father. By becoming so driven by the task and taking little time to pull back for rest and reflection, we may be in danger of losing our souls! Souls die when there is no time for rest, reflection, retreat, and communion with the Lord.





Why is rest important when the task is so great? Why take time to rest, when there is so much to do?

First, God Himself modeled rest by ceasing from His work of creation on the seventh day. God's creation itself demonstrates His intention and desire that we practice a rhythm and lifestyle of rest: the day/night cycle, the seasons (dry and monsoon, winter and summer), and the tides of the sea (high and low tides). One day, I went to the ocean during low tide, when the waves were minimal. I saw scores of seals lying on the rocks. As I started to move toward them to get a photograph, someone warned me not to get too close, so as to not disturb the seals' rest! Even seals need to rest!

Second, rest gives us the opportunity to reflect upon and assess our work, just as God Himself assessed his work of creation, and to ask ourselves if what we are doing is really "good". God did not finish the work of creation, but entrusted the on-going process

to us humans. As we pull back to rest, we are given insight to evaluate whether our work is aligned with God's purposes and desires for His creation.

Third, Jesus modeled for us a lifestyle characterized by both serving and resting. Dallas Willard says, "My central claim is that we *can* become like Christ by doing one thing—by following him in the overall style of life he chose for himself. If we have faith in Christ, we must believe that he knew how to live" (*The Spirit of the Disciplines*, HarperOne, 1990, p. ix). We get a glimpse of Jesus' rhythm for living from Mark 6. The disciples had been chosen and sent out with authority to preach and minister to the needs of the people. When they returned to Jesus, they reported all the wonderful things that had happened. Because there was so much communion going on around them, Jesus responded by saying, "Come away with me by yourselves to a quiet place and *get some rest* (v. 31)." After much ministry, Jesus invites us to be with Him and get some

rest. This was Jesus' pattern for living. Rest and solitude was where he reflected with the Father in prayer over what had happened in ministry.

Fourth, communion and solitude with the Father brings rest to our soul, which gives us the strength to face the needs of the multitude. "Compassion is the fruit of solitude and the basis of all ministry. The transformation that takes place in solitude manifests itself in compassion" (Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, HarperOne, 1991, p. 33). Compassion is not our natural response to the needs of people, unless we have been alone with the Father, have His heart, and have come to a place of rest in our souls. Jesus could have compassion on the people because he had been with the Father and would have more time with the Father very soon (Mark 6:34, 46).

We are better prepared to face the demands of the ministry when we are at rest. During the National Pastors Retreat,

Ruth Haley Barton (from the Transforming Center) said, “The most important thing we can do is to be extremely tenacious in the care of our own soul... The best thing we can bring (to the work of God) is a transformed self, stripped of compulsive behaviors, and then replaced with basic rhythms, rhythms of work and rest, engagement and retreat, solitude and community, Sabbath keeping, and celebration and self-examination.”

Rest prepares the soul to contribute and serve in sacred, rather than destructive ways. As we rest, we are able to assess how those around us are impacted by our lives. Bill Lawrence, of Leader Formation International, said in an email to me, “Leaders lead best when they are at rest.” When we are at rest, our souls are restored. A restored soul gives birth to joy, passion, kindness and contentment, and those around us are positively impacted.

What are some ways that we can practice the rhythm of work and rest in our mission contexts?

1. **Get a good night of sleep.** I often hear missionaries say, “I only need five-six hours of sleep.” Archibald Hart, in his book *Adrenalin and Stress* (Word Publishers, 1986), says that people were basically created to get eight-nine hours of sleep. When we are in the habit of sleeping less than that, adrenalin may be interfering with our basic need for sleep. In the long run, this can damage our health. Adrenalin is God’s tool to help us cope with emergencies, not to help us work more and rest less as a life-style.
 2. **Daily communion and solitude with the Father.** Communion with the Father puts our souls at rest because He reminds us again that He is with us, and it is His strength, not our own, that we are relying on to face the demands of the day. A day without a time of solitude and silence is to subject ourselves to the noise of both the world around us as well as our hearts, missing the opportunity to hear God’s still small voice speaking quiet into the storms of the day.
 3. **Weekly Sabbaths.** Those of us in missions are often called upon to minister on Sundays, the traditional day of Sabbath for most Christians. The challenge we face is how to observe the purpose of the Sabbath, which is to
- cease from work. “The important thing is that a particular day is set aside as the Sabbath, and that it is observed faithfully every seven days so that God can imbue us with His rhythm of six days of work and one day of ceasing work.” (Marva Dawn, *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly*, Eerdmans, 1989, p. xi)
4. **Periodic personal retreats.** A personal retreat is simply a concentrated and consecrated time to be alone with God for a day or two. It is that resting place where we remove ourselves from the demands of our life and give the Lord an opportunity to speak and minister to us in an unhurried setting. It can be anywhere, as long as solitude is possible and distractions are minimal. Jane Rubietta’s book, *Resting Place* (InterVarsity Press, 2005), is an excellent guide for that retreat time, with quotes and passages of Scripture to meditate on along with reflection questions and hymns to guide the time.
 5. **Sabbaticals.** “Sabbatical years are the biblically-based provision for restoration. When the farmer’s field is depleted, it is given a sabbatical, after six years of planting and harvesting it is left alone for a year so that the nutrients can build up in it. When people in ministry are depleted, they are also given a sabbatical-time apart for the recovery of spiritual and creative energies” (Eugene Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*, Eerdmans, 1989, p. 145). For some unknown reason, missionaries seldom take sabbaticals. After thirty-five years in mission ministry, I had never heard of missionaries taking a sabbatical until a missionary friend shared with me his sabbatical experience. Something stirred in my heart when I heard his story because I was depleted spiritually and my walk with God had plateaued. After taking this sabbatical, I felt such love from God. I fell in love with the Lord all over again. I now know what it is like for my soul to be at rest through having had such an extended time with my loving Father. That rest has become a plumb line, a standard, by which I assess the condition of my soul. When I get off center, I quickly take corrective action.
- So, what does it involve and how important is the rest and care for our soul? We are not called to the monastic life, or

may not have the physical constitution to survive the rigors of the desert (like the Desert Fathers), but, as Nouwen writes, “we are still responsible for (the care of our own souls). Precisely because our secular milieu offers us so few spiritual disciplines, we have to develop our own. We have, indeed, to fashion our own ‘desert’ where we can withdraw every day, shake off our compulsions, and dwell in the gentle healing presence of our Lord. **Without such a desert we will lose our soul, while preaching the gospel to others** (bold mine). But with such a spiritual abode, we will become increasingly conformed to him in whose Name we minister” (Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, p. 30).

As missionaries and leaders, the intentional care of our souls is the single most important thing we can do. As under-shepherds, we best lead the sheep to places of green pastures and quiet waters when we have been there. When we haven’t practiced rhythms of rest and don’t know the way to places of rest, then the sheep are impacted—because they too don’t know where those places of rest are that bring restoration to the soul. The Good Shepherd is concerned for our souls, because a restored soul is directly related to the sheep’s welfare. The restoration of a depleted soul is much more arduous than the regular attentiveness to the soul’s need for a rhythm of work and rest. <<



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Spirituality...

Don't Mind It

We were planning to set out driving the next day from Chennai to Bangalore at 9:30am when my father-in-law announced that it wasn't an auspicious time to leave the house. My father-in-law is from an Orthodox Christian background: the Syrian Christian community in South India trace their Christian heritage back to Thomas the Apostle. We told him we believed that God is Lord of our time and every hour in it, prayed and left at 9:30am. When we got home my husband said, "I was driving a little extra carefully, I did want us to get home without a scratch so that Dad will see that it is God who protects and cares for us, and he is Lord of Time".

What happens to our spirituality? Centuries of heritage, years of going to church, hearing and reading Scripture and praying all are deemed to be expressions of Christian spirituality. Yet, it seems possible to combine these expressions of Christian spirituality without a "renewing of the mind", or change of worldview as envisaged in the New Testament. In Romans (12:1, 2), Paul links our worship to the renewing of our minds. (**We need to take note that worship here is not merely that part of the service when the leader comes and announces let's now worship the Lord and we sing songs/hymns or choruses of worship for ten to thirty minutes.*) Paul here is talking about worship as being the offering of our bodies in sacrifice and service. Worship is certainly one of the more tangible evident expressions of our spirituality.

Christian spirituality must go deeper, and change (even turn upside-down) our beliefs and worldviews. Only when our tangible or intangible expressions of Christian spirituality have deep roots in a continually renewed mind can they really bring glory to God or make sense to our fellow human beings. Unfortunately, in our discipleship we often stop at the expression without getting to the root. The expressions of our spirituality need to become the unconscious choices and behaviour rooted in our worldview.

Being from India, I feel the need to define spirituality, for we have various traditions and expressions of spirituality that

are not Christian and even contradictory to Christian spirituality. We mushroom spiritual gurus in our backyard! So, I would like to qualify the expression by using the term "Christian Spirituality".

Ellen Alexander

The Fall has fragmented our world, our relationships, and did not spare our mind. So we are able to live comfortably in compartments of neatly packed boxes, naively deeming that what we believe in our spiritual box is water-tight and must not or cannot affect what we believe in or about the political or social or psychological or supernatural box and vice versa.

It is possible in Hinduism to believe in bad gods and good demons, which is in fact is a contradiction in terms. A Christian mind that is not being continually transformed and renewed similarly has water-tight compartments that can even contradict each other. So it becomes possible to believe in a Sovereign God and say we trust Him and pray to Him, and yet believe that the bad stars or evil spirits can control our lives and destiny. Or we believe that God is creator, the one who created the sun and the stars, but to tightly lock this belief away in a "spiritual" compartment, compelling one to go to the stars or astrology to determine a good time before a journey or beginning a project.

Or take another example: yoga. Popularly practised around the world as the simple art of meditation and physical exercise, it is actually a spiritual expression, a practice with the ultimate goal of being in complete control of the mind in order to negate the mind so that the individual mind (the person meditating) is immersed or submerged in the Cosmic mind (Brahma or god).

Consider how different the worldview expressed by yoga is from the Christian worldview.

One is a worldview where the creator and the creature are one and same in essence, like the fire and the spark, a worldview where enlightenment is the knowledge that "I am god" and therefore there is a possibility of merging the individual soul and cosmic soul.

The other worldview comes from Genesis in which the creator is eternal, absolute and distinct from humans – the two can never merge into one. The very first temptation in this worldview was, "Your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods" Gen. 3:4. It is the very aspiration or desire to be god that led to the fall of humankind.

Renewing of the mind, then, is not just checking to see if my behaviour is spiritual or not, but to go further and ask what kind of a worldview does this behaviour spring from, and to reflect. Renewing our mind is not about picking texts to suit our behaviour, but about working out a framework. It is not even about principles and values, but about building a strong deep foundation of our understanding of God, His creation and revelation, human beings and our fall, redemption and eschatology. It is not to be self contained chapters in a book or bricks in a foundation, but colours that merge and blend into each other, as landscape from a wide-angled lens. This is a worldview that is wholistic, integrated and biblical.

Renewing our mind calls us to become aware of what is in our minds, our existing worldviews (which are formed from the earliest days of our childhood and have been influenced by family, peers, culture, religious traditions, education, media) and allowing them to be critically appraised and changed by the Spirit.

For from this foundation springs our behaviour and expressions of spirituality.



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Organisational Spirituality:

A Journey in Growing

Paul Bendor-Samuel

In 2004, Interserve began a major review and change process.¹ Our basic structures had been established fifty years earlier in a different period in missional history. We knew that we needed to change if we were to align ourselves with what God is doing today. From the outset, it was clear that realignment needed to be about much more than systems and structures. Although unable to articulate it clearly at the start, it has become increasingly clear that if we are to be a living, dynamic, creative and fruitful participant in God's mission, we need more than organisational change: we need to renew, deepen and broaden our organisational spirituality.

If defining spirituality is like reeling in a slippery fish, then defining organisational spirituality is like landing the fish standing on a steep, muddy bank. However if the river we fish from represents the free-flowing grace of God, falling in may be the best thing we can do. We will get wet.

Humanistic definitions of spirituality focus on the human spirit. As followers of Jesus, our personal spirituality is the reflection of our relationship with the Triune God. In the sacred narratives of John 13-17, Jesus invites his followers to a deeper knowledge of the community of the Trinity. He shows us their oneness, their mutual submission, their love and intimacy. And then he makes the stunning statement, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23). All true spirituality flows from this relationship of intimacy with the Father and Son through the enduring presence of the Spirit.

The condition for this intimacy is love for God, expressed in obedience to His teaching. "If you love me you will obey my teaching." And what is the centre of this teaching? "A new command I give you: love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34).

There is no Christian spirituality without community. No community, no true spirituality. Our personal spirituality is lived out in community.

Applied to our mission organisations, we affirm that personal and organisational spirituality are inseparable. We cannot retreat into a private domain and leave the shape of the spiritual life of the organisation to others. All of us share the responsibility of working towards an organisational life that reflects vibrant and intimate relationship with the Trinity. As we do this we experience a transformation in our personal lives.

If we share a corporate responsibility to build our organisational spirituality, what are we aiming for? I have four sons. At times their distinctiveness makes it hard to believe they come from the same parents. Sport, fine arts, drama, scientific, detailed, relational... there are endless differences. And I've come to learn that their spiritualities are distinct too, reflecting their personalities, gifts and unique relationship with God. So too the spiritualities expressed by our organisations. There is no 'right' organisational spirituality, only communities on a journey towards experiencing and witnessing to the beauty, love and grace of shared life in the Trinity.

Although organisational culture and organisational spirituality must overlap significantly in a mission organisation, the two are not synonymous. My wife and I were recently enjoying an after-dinner chat with some mission leaders. Some of us held glasses of red wine, others fruit juice. Our organisational cultures were reflected in the choice of beverage, but not our spirituality. Organisational culture is the expression of shared beliefs and values, whereas organisational spirituality is the shared expression of the community's relationship with the Trinity. In the future, it may be that organisational spirituality proves the more helpful paradigm in growing organisational identity.

The more we have worked on implementing vision through renewed Interserve structures, processes and priorities, the more our senior leadership and International Council (Board) have explored the development of our organisational spiritual life. A "spiritual audit" within

Interserve shows some significant strengths. For example, we live out our commitment to partnership and service. Most Interserve Partners (workers) are seconded to other groups. Our Partners are highly skilled professionals, working in holistic ministry, serving others. They are dedicated, reliable, trustworthy and motivated, all strengths that reflect God's character and impact our spirituality.

We also recognise some potential weaknesses in our spirituality. Professionals are usually self-starters, good at finding solutions. We may find it hard to act in dependence on God and on each other, a prerequisite for true organisational spirituality. Or again, with our well trained cognitive powers we may find it challenging to be open to the life of the Spirit.

Recognising our distinctive strengths and weaknesses, we want to grow. This does not mean that we try to become just like other organisations we admire. Given our organisational story, our identity and call, we are intentionally and prayerfully committed to growing our organisational relationship with God, creating a space for God to do His work.

This includes:

- Deepening prayer and dependency on God. We have appointed an international prayer coordinator, organised fellowship-wide prayer events, ensured that prayer takes a high priority in our international gatherings and our personal lives...
- Building a greater sense of community through a range of initiatives – creating leadership teams, agreeing on common priorities, growing a culture of mentoring and discipleship, becoming more culturally inclusive...
- Developing leaders with training that reflects these main areas of growth. We are constantly challenging ourselves to do leadership in an environment of corporate worship, prayer and submission to the Word of God...

■ Broadening our corporate experience of the traditional biblical expressions of spirituality. We are evangelical, and also flow with the streams of social justice and incarnational spiritualities. Richard Foster's classic work² has inspired us to ask how we can draw from other streams, such as the contemplative, charismatic and holiness traditions. We identify the challenge of moving to become a community which welcomes diversity in spirituality.

In all these areas, the senior leadership of Interserve is committed to modeling our calling. Growing organisational spirituality is not about programmes any more than discipleship is a five-week course. It's all about relationship.

For many in mission, busyness threatens to strangle our personal spirituality in a boa-like grip. As organisations, we will have to learn to create space for grace³ if our organisational spirituality is to flourish. Let's share the lessons God is teaching us.

"The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you." 2 Timothy 4:22

I am indebted to the International Director husband and wife teams of AIM, SIM, WEC and Wycliffe, and my wife, for the development of these thoughts.

- 1 For full treatment see: Rob Hay, et al. *Worth Keeping*, "Case Study Chapter 19: Reloaded: a radical organisational review," (William Carey, 2007).
- 2 Richard Foster, *Streams of Living Water*; (HarperCollins, 1998).
- 3 For an excellent reflection of spirituality and organisational development see Rick James' publication: *Creating Space for Grace, God's power in organisational change, 2004*. It can be downloaded free from: http://www.missioncouncil.se/download/18.25948b3d117af90ec978000388/04_02_space_for_grace.pdf



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Psalms and the Dynamics of the Missionary Journey

Jim Van Meter

All spiritual journeys with God are unique. They are unique because God's purposes for the individual are unique. The missionary's journey is also unique. However, there are also some common themes in our journey with God. The psalms are perhaps the best place in Scripture to see a model for the spiritual journey for the people of God. Calvin said that the psalms are "an anatomy of the soul", where the whole faith of the whole person is articulated.

In this article, I will first look at the spiritual journey in general through the grid of the psalms. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, in his book, *The Message of the Psalms*, has done a wonderful work illustrating the dynamics of the journey of the soul around three ongoing themes. I will use these themes as a foundation for understanding and applying the dynamics of the spiritual journey to the missionary's journey.

The Psalms Model

The Book of Psalms has historically been used as the prayer book of the church. The psalms are largely prayers which give us insight into the "anatomy" of the soul and heart of the psalmists as they engage in prayer with God the Father. Brueggemann has organized the psalms around three general themes that run throughout the book. Sometimes a particular psalm will focus on one theme, and other times we can see all these themes in one particular psalm. These themes are the reality of human life and experience, and for that reason can serve as a model for the journey in our faith-walk with our Lord.

1. **Psalms of orientation.** The reality of human life consists of seasons of well-being. The psalms that express

orientation would focus on the truth about Who God is, the truth that God created the world, and His intention for the way life should be lived in this world (shalom). In this season of well-being, we are grateful for His continued blessings to us. There is congruency between the promises of God, the trustworthiness of His Word, and the reality of life. Consequently, these psalms of orientation articulate the joy and delight for the goodness and reliability of God, His creation, and for the coherence of God's governing law in this season of well-being. Some examples of psalms which focus on orientation would be Psalms 1, 8, 11, 16, 19, and 119.

2. **Psalms of disorientation.** However, human life also consists of seasons in which we experience and lament over hurt, alienation, suffering, darkness and death. Feelings of anger, self-pity, resentment, fear and hatred are evoked during these periods. These seasons can be the result of sin (e.g., Psalm 51), but most often they are the result of living in a fallen world, where our sense of Shalom is lost. (e.g., Isaiah 50:10; 2 Cor. 1:8). Disorientation is the major theme of these psalms because one feels an incongruence between the present experience and the truth about God and His promises. Anger can be involved because of the expectation that "orientation" and a sense of well-being would last forever, and because we are shocked by trouble and hard times, thinking our journey with God would include immunity from trouble. Some examples of psalms of disorientation are Psalms 13, 17, 36, 51, 73, 74, and 86.

3. **Psalms of new orientation.** Life also consists of times when we experience surprises and new gifts from God, when joy and light break through the despair and darkness. The “light at the end of the tunnel” has come. The Lord has come to our aid, and we rejoice over the way He has delivered us from the “pit of despair” and the troubles of “disorientation”. These psalms and our experience affirm that God is sovereign and in control, and that He has intervened with something fresh and new. He has answered our cry for help and as a result, we rejoice and tell of His goodness and this “new orientation”. Some examples are Psalms 18, 30, 40, 65, 66, and 96.

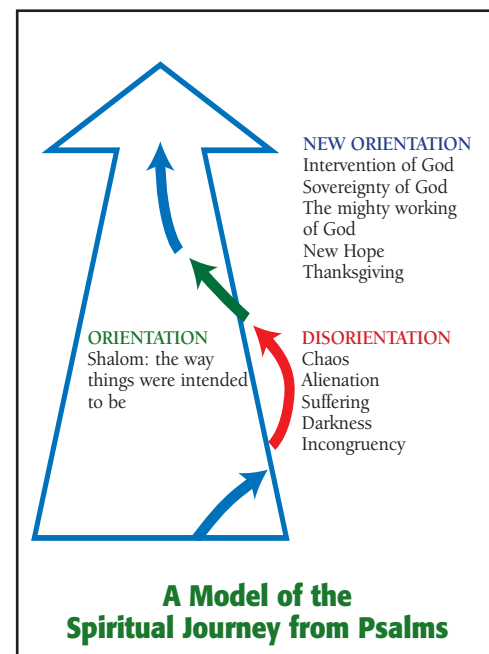
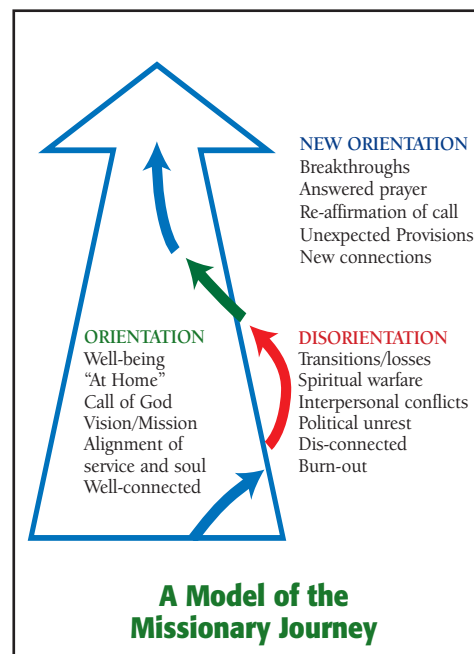
There are 2 *decisive movements* of faith in this model. Human life is not simply a place in which we find ourselves. “It is also a movement from one circumstance to another, changing and being changed, finding ourselves surprised by a new circumstance we did not expect, resistant to a new place, clinging desperately to the old circumstance... . The life of faith expressed in the psalms is focused on these two decisive moves of faith that are always underway, by which we are regularly surprised, and which we regularly resist” (Brueggeman, pp. 19-20).

“*One move* we make is out of a settled orientation into a season of disorientation... It constitutes the dismantling of the old, known world, and a relinquishment of safe, reliable, confidence in God’s good creation. The movement of dismantling includes a rash of negativities, including rage, resentment, guilt, shame, isolation, despair, hatred and hostility” (p.20). It is the lament of being in a new situation of chaos, now devoid of the coherence that marks God’s creation. It feels like the end of the world.

The second move we make is the move from a context of disorientation to a new orientation, “surprised by a new gift from God, a new coherence made present to us just when we thought all was lost” (p. 20). It is a move inexplicable to us, to be credited only to the intervention of God, where we respond with amazement, wonder, awe, gratitude and thanksgiving.

The dynamics of the missionary journey in light of the Psalms model.

The missionary journey also follows the model of the psalms. For the missionary, there are seasons of “orientation” and



well-being, where the truth of shalom (the way things were intended to be) is for the most part reality. There is peace internally and externally. The vision of our mission is clear, challenging and very fulfilling. Family and friends are in good relationship. The provision and blessings of God are plentiful.

There are also times of disorientation. The missionary predictably experiences much loss: loss of identity, lack of fruit and fulfillment, loss of friends and family, ambiguous ministry assignment, etc., especially during those early years. These often evoke a rash of negative feelings, as the missionary seeks to find “new orientation”. There are times of conflict with team members and local leaders, political unrest and sometimes persecution, sickness, financial challenges, misalignment between one’s giftedness and the ministry assignment, stress, and even sometimes burnout.

Then there are seasons of “new orientation” when the missionary experiences breakthroughs in ministry and experiences the mighty workings of God, when light breaks through the darkness and there is great joy and victory. Unexpected blessings, provisions and victories cause us to rejoice and give thanks to God for His intervention. These experiences give us new hope, strength and motivation, because God has intervened on our behalf, as He promised He would.

The movements from “orientation” to “disorientation”, and from “disorientation” to “new orientation”, are partly predictable and partly unpredictable; however, both

require faith. Part of the movement into disorientation is predictable, because it is inherent in the missionary call. When missionaries move out in obedience to the call upon their lives, they are knowingly and predictably moving into transition and ambiguity. They are leaving their home country and moving to places where they are strangers and aliens, where language and culture are usually foreign. This time of transition evokes feelings of confusion, because their props and orientation have been removed and replaced with new and untested support structures. Although the dynamics are predictable, faith is still required. Faith is needed as one trusts God for the strength to endure and for His intervention to bring us out of the darkness into the light. Many agencies give new missionaries “orientation” to help them re-orient, so that there will be care and support into this movement of disorientation and so that movement out of disorientation into new orientation will be fruitful.

The movement from disorientation into new orientation also requires faith. While one is waiting for God to intervene, faith is required, because the timing of the movement is uncertain. When will the unrest subside? When will the needed provision be supplied? When will the fruit of ministry be seen? When will our prayers and cries for help be answered? When will the conflict be resolved and harmony restored? Throughout, faith is called for, just like Abraham waiting for the birth of the promised son.

Caring for the soul on the missionary journey.

In light of the Psalms Model and the two important movements of faith (the movement from orientation into disorientation, and the movement from disorientation into new orientation), some observations need to be made. First, the cycle is not once for all (see the model). The issues will be different and vary from person to person, but missionaries are going

to move through the cycle many times throughout life. Second, leaders need to be careful not to be judgmental when a missionary is experiencing “disorientation”. Rather, loving care and support is important during times of disorientation, because the missionary is more vulnerable then than during times of orientation and new orientation. Some of the issues faced in “disorientation”, if ignored, or addressed with little compassion and understanding, can lead to unnecessary attrition.

Fourth, the ongoing care of the soul is the most important thing that can be done. The organization needs to encourage its people to tenaciously care for their souls; and the individual needs to practice spiritual disciplines routinely to foster the care and vitality of one’s own soul. A well-cared-for soul is the best thing we can offer the kingdom of God, our mission agency, and those around us. <<

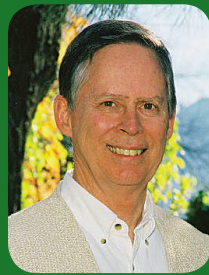
Some Characteristics of the Missionary Journey		
Orientation	Disorientation	New Orientation
Settledness in old home	Transition/Loss	Settledness in new home
Political stability/peace	Political Unrest/persecution	Political peace agreements
Interpersonal harmony	Interpersonal Conflict	Conflict resolution
Vision/Mission	Ambiguity	Vision Re-clarified
Health	Sickness	Healing
Alignment of soul/service	Misalignment of soul/service	Joy of alignment
Call of God	Serving out of nothingness	Re-affirmation of call
Healthy Family	Children Issues	Children Issues Resolved
Healthy marriage	Marriage strain	Second honeymoon
Provision	Financial challenges	Unexpected provision
Promises of God	Spiritual warfare	Victory/deliverance
Emotional Hardiness	Emotional Distress/Burnout	Restoration
Insider/citizen	Outsider/alien/foreigner	Acceptance by insiders
At home	Culture Shock	Adjustment

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you care for your soul at the various places of your journey?
2. What does care of the soul look like at these two critical junctures/movements in your context?
3. As you think of pastoral care for the missionary, what are the implications of this model in light of the pastoral care that is provided for missionaries? What can be learned from the journey of your own soul in caring for and leading other missionaries?

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Jim Van Meter has been a missionary for more than 35 years. He has served in Indonesia, and the Philippines. For the last 22 years, he has been involved in missionary training, with a passion to enhance missionary effectiveness. For 6 years he teamed with Dr. Met Castillo in training Filipinos for missionary service. Then for 10 years he served in the USA as Director of Training for new missionaries. Currently, as an associate with Paraclete Mission Group, he is partnering with the Mission Commission of the World Evangelical Alliance, and other agencies, focusing on those areas which directly impact a missionary’s effectiveness. Jim is a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary and holds a Doctor of Ministry degree in Global Ministries. He is also an MC Associate.

God's Global Purpose: Worship

Obviously, our ultimate purpose in serving God in this world must be to align ourselves with His purpose for this world. I would suggest that God's purpose is summarized (among other places in Scripture) in Psalm 86:9:

*All nations whom You have made
Shall come and worship before You, O Lord,
And they shall glorify Your name.*

Here we read that God *made* the nations (or peoples); the clear implication is that He has every right to expect their worship, their glorification of Him as their Creator. But not only is this an *expectation*, but also a clear *prediction* that this *will* happen (see also Psalm 22:27-28). The thrust of history and of the Church and of missions is towards that day when a countless throng of worshipers "from every tribe and tongue and people and nation" (Revel. 5:9) will join the angelic host around the throne to exclaim, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever!" (5:13) Right now "missions exists because worship doesn't," but at that future point "missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever" (John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad: The Supremacy of God in Missions*, p. 11).

This certainty is thankfully not dependent on our faithfulness or stamina – rather God condescends to use us in His global purpose of gathering worshipers to the glory of His name. May we never forget that the purpose and its completion are God's responsibility!

It is possible to be distracted from God in trying to serve God. Martha-like, we neglect the one thing needful, and soon begin to present God as busy and fretful. A.W. Tozer warned us about this: "We commonly represent God as a busy, eager, somewhat frustrated Father hurrying about seeking help to carry out His benevolent plan to bring salvation and peace to the world... Too many missionary appeals are based upon this fancied frustration of Almighty God." (Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, p. 13)

Seeing worship as the ultimate purpose and end of the Church, and therefore of missions, is not special pleading for the superiority of one "department" in the church over

all others. Worship in its broadest biblical understanding, as the totality of our response to the glory of God, is something much bigger than church music, than worship services, than the Church itself, than even this world.

But worship must indeed be central to all of them, because it is central to God's purpose, as Psalm 86:9 clearly demonstrates.

Evangelism must ultimately be understood as an invitation to men and women to become worshipers of a great and glorious God through the redeeming work of His Son. The goal of evangelism is to quite simply to win more worshipers to glorify His name (because He is worthy of it, and because that was His purpose in making the nations and redeeming mankind). To the Apostle Paul, evangelism was also in itself an act of worship: "For God, whom I serve (or *worship*) in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of his Son, is my witness..." (Romans 1:9). Paul also considered it to be a spiritual offering of worship for him to present new Gentile converts to God (Romans 15:16).

Church planting also needs to have worship (in its broadest sense) at its core – not just one of a list of church-sponsored activities, but a God-centered, vertical orientation to all of church life and ministry. Planting a church, building up the body, reaching the lost – each of these vital pursuits has by definition a people-oriented, horizontal component, and thus are just means to a much greater end. The *glorifying of God's name* must always be before us as our explicit goal and purpose. Our ultimate focus must be not on human needs but on God's worthiness (which in turn will help us to see human needs from His perspective).

Likewise, our entire lives and ministries should be seen as our offering of thanks and praise to God for all that He has done for us in Jesus Christ. Paul makes this clear in Romans 12:1, a pivotal New Testament verse on worship and the Christian life: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." We seek to serve the glory of God ("whether we eat or drink or whatever we do," 1 Corinthians 10:31) because of all that "the mercies of God" has shed upon us, because of "the richness of His grace, which He lavished upon us" (Ephesians 1:7-8). Any missions endeavor is thus

properly an outflow of a grateful saved heart, or as John Piper puts it, "worship is the fuel of missions... You can't commend what you don't cherish" (*Let the Nations Be Glad*, p.11).

Thus, all service flows from the inside out, as Paul points out in Romans 1:9: "For God is my witness, whom I serve *with my spirit* in the gospel of his Son." Interestingly, Paul uses Old Testament priestly terminology, invested with a new spiritual and internal meaning, to describe his evangelistic ministry as he speaks of "the grace given me by God to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable" (Romans 15:15-16). All worship is a *response* to God's prior revelation of His Person and His grace – even offering up converts, *new worshipers*, for His glory.

We so easily lose the big picture with all of the things that clamor for our attention and energy! May God help us, in the midst of the rigors and the pressures of life (whether on the mission field or wherever), to keep ever before us a sense of wonder at the greatness of His glory. May those whom we serve see in us that God quenches the thirst in our own souls – that they might want to drink deeply as well. May our ministries awaken in people a deeper hunger for making Him central in their lives – that more and more people might "come and worship before You, O Lord... and glorify Your name."



Ron Man joined Greater Europe Mission in 2000 and developed the Department of Worship Resources to supplement, on a pan-European level, the field based worship ministries of other Greater Europe Mission missionaries (notably in France, Germany, Spain, and Romania). Ron comes out of a varied background which included both music (M.M., University of Maryland) and theology (Th.M., Dallas Theological Seminary); both pastoral and worship ministry in local churches in the U.S. and in Europe; and experience in and a heart for Europe coming from ten years of residence on the continent at four different times over the last thirty-five years. Check out his site on Worship Resources at www.worr.org

Pilgrimage Reflections on Christian Spirituality on Mission

Pilgrimage Reflections on Christian Spirituality on Mission

December 16, 2008

Dear Colleagues of the MC, Paul, Min-Young, Todd, Steve, Rose, Hannelore, Peter, and Detlef,

Help us as you reflect on your own pilgrimage of spirituality and give our global readers food for thought.

1. What 2-3 books (other than Scripture) or individuals shaped you in your EARLY spiritual journey in life and mission?
2. What 2-3 books or individuals have shaped you in your LATTER (let's say if you are over 50 years old) spiritual journey in life and mission?
3. What groups, movements or other spirituality streams have been instrumental in your own journey in the Spirit? Examples: the monastics, the desert mothers and father, Celtic, Catholic, Orthodox or other spiritualities.

With appreciation,
Bill

Detlef Bloecher, International Director, DMG, Germany

The Lord found me 1970 after a rebellious youth period. It was the time of student rebellion and I was full of bitterness against society, establishment, my father and the church. Meeting Jesus has meant a great revolution in my life. It was the integrity of a youth leader, his openness to my radical questions, acceptance of my search for truth and his honesty that attracted me most to the Christian faith. It was his example that had the strongest influence on my life – not so much books.

My mind and thinking have been greatly inspired by Francis Schaeffer, *Escape from reason*, that it is worth to deeply engage with culture and philosophy of our times, and that my personal decisions greatly influence the outcomes.

W. Ian Thomas, *Christ in you*, founder of Torchbearers, taught me that I stop trying to live a Christian life out of my own strength,

but it is Christ living in me and empowering me to a holy life.

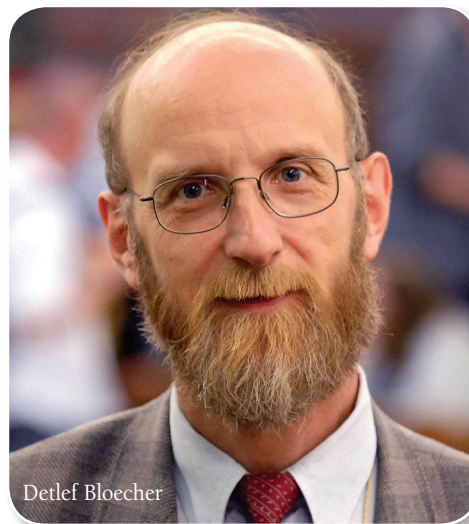
Ron Sider, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, challenged me to a simple lifestyle and that the I am making a difference.

Georg Vicedom, *Missio Dei*, taught me that mission is not primarily a “great commission” as a human activity but God at work in our needy world and including us humans in his mighty works.

And John Piper’s, *Let the Nations be glad*, catchy phrase “mission is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Mission exists because worship doesn’t. Worship is ultimate not missions, because God is ultimate, not man.” has been a great liberation to me. It has refocused my life.

I am greatly indebted to Operation Mobilisation that has formed my Christian life. Their leaders believed in us young people and invested in our lives. They stimulated my love to Jesus, passion to active evangelism, commitment to life in community and the value of international teams as well as simple lifestyle.

IFES (UCCF/Intervarsity) student groups greatly broadened my horizon. I’ve learnt to appreciate other denominations, reflect my own theological understanding, engage with the pressing needs of our society and proclaim the Gospel in relevant ways.



Detlef Bloecher



Rose Dowsett

Rose Dowsett, OMF, MC, Scotland

I was deeply impacted by my brother’s death, a year after my coming to faith. My peer group at university through Inter Varsity, including much good teaching (John Stott, Jim Packer, Alec Motyer, etc), a missionary prayer group focused on Asia (I think 10 of us went on to serve there), church history (wonderful for seeing how the post NT story develops, and where we fit in!), *Search the Scriptures* (3 year study programme right through the Bible, embedding pattern of daily Scripture reading), *The Christian Mind* (Harry Blamires), Francis Schaeffer, mission leaders such as Michael Griffiths, early years of missionary service in a difficult setting and through ill-health.

Books: *Knowing God* (JIPacker), *Streams of Living Water* (Richard Foster), *Waterbuffalo Theology* (Koyama), *Transforming Worldviews* (Hiebert), lots more church history, lots more theology from around the world... Friendships with brothers and sisters from around the world. Experiencing worship in ancient churches (the parish church from which I went to Asia dates back 1,000 years) and in new ones – and everything in between. Fellowship with older and younger Christians as well as peers.

I remain most comfortable in an evangelical (UK understanding of the word)

setting, by conviction and culture; but have many precious friendships which cross the spectrum. Church history (including biographies), poetry and music, art and hymns introduce us to many strands, and in some ways I am quite eclectic. Cathedral evensong can be spine-tinglingly beautiful!



Hannelore Zimmermann

Hannelore Zimmermann, International Coordinator of Children's Ministry Children's Ministries, SIM, Peru

When I first got your email I was wondering how I got on the list of people to be asked about the topic "Mission and Spirituality" and I was considering giving you a negative answer. But then I started to think about the questions and so I wrote down some thoughts and finally decided to send them to you. I don't know if this is what you were expecting, but feel free to use any part of it if you think it might be useful. I was reading *In step with the God of the nations* (Philip M. Steyne) together with *Let the nations be glad* (John Piper) during my second term as a missionary, when I felt burdened too much by the task I faced. These books have given me a new perspective on my ministry by helping me to see what a great privilege it is to be part of God's plan of salvation and to see Him at work. I felt a deep joy understanding that God will accomplish His plan and that my calling includes worshipping His greatness and enjoying His goodness.

Growing up in a church with roots in the Pietism movement has helped me to understand the importance of studying God's Word regularly *and* putting it into practice in my everyday life. When I later learned about some of the desert fathers I was deeply impressed by the complete surrender of their

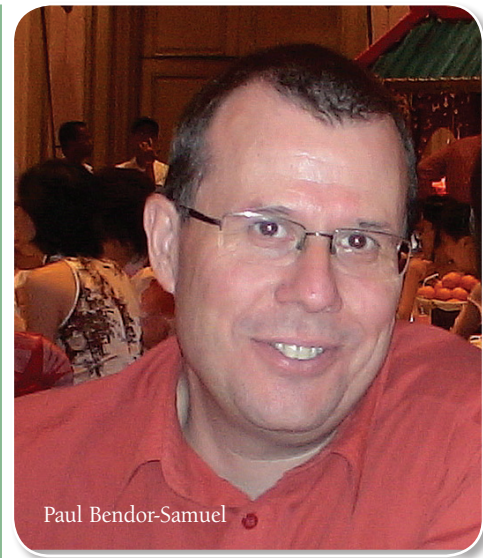
will to the will of God. Though the idea of withdrawing from society never appealed to me, their example helped me to establish the practice of frequent "silent days".

Todd Poulter, Forum of Bible Agencies International, Mission to Unreached Peoples, Malaysia

When a 17 year-old atheist like me comes to Jesus out of a divorced family in California in the 60s, he's looking for guidance. Pastors Ray Stedman and Dave Roper, along with Ray's wife Elaine, modeled the life of faith for me. Wycliffe missionaries opened my eyes to Bibleless peoples and set the course for my future ministry. And later, a rural Idaho rancher and his wife, Glenn and Doris Loomis, encouraged and challenged me as a young man finding my way. Henri Nouwen and C. S. Lewis have become friends and encouragers over the years through their writings. Yet what has most deepened my journey of faith has been experiences of weakness, suffering and failure that God brought me through – professional and ministry challenges that left me wondering whether there was a future, and medical crises that forced our family to return home from overseas ministry on three different occasions. Oswald Chambers says it well: *"Your position is not really yours until you make it yours through suffering and study."* Frank Robbins, former Executive Director of SIL International, and his wife Ethel, have been there for us as friends and mentors for two decades. And in recent years, the Jesuit tradition has taught us to ask: *"What is it in our daily experience and in our interaction with the Word that reveals Jesus to us, and draws us closer to Him?"*



Todd Poulter



Paul Bendor-Samuel

Paul Bendor-Samuel, InterServe, Malaysia

A few years ago I wrote to an elderly man, thanking him for the way he impacted my life and mentored me as a teenager. He was happily surprised, grateful for the way God used him unconsciously. Some of those that God has used to shape me acted intentionally; others will only know their role when they meet the Lord.

I was a poor reader as a child and young man. Until Bible College I read because I had to, and studying medicine involves a lot of reading! But I am struck by how God used specific, spoken phrases to shape me. John Grainger was the Wycliffe centre manager. An intensely practical man, his quiet love for God and graciousness attracted me. As a teenager longing to be instantly holy and spiritual, it was he who released me with the comment, "there are no short-cuts, Paul, in the spiritual journey".

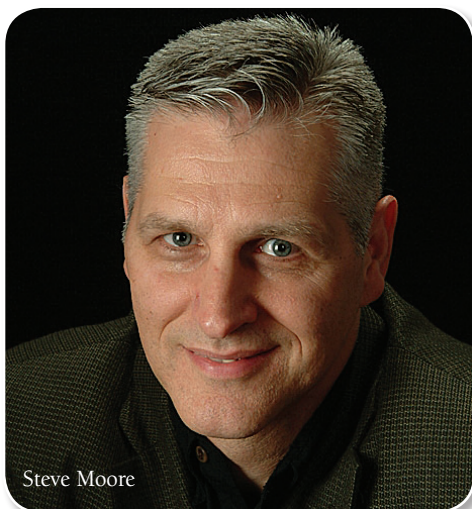
I was conscious that I did not excel in any of the areas that were important in school: sports, academic achievement, good looks. A family friend told me one day, "Paul, you can do great things for God." My mother is the living definition of encouragement, yet a teenage boy needs people he can admire outside the home.

There were many influential individuals but I grew up in community and it was those communities that shaped me as much as, if not more than individuals: my family, with my four siblings, boarding school, the Wycliffe centres we lived on, and the university Christian Union.

Although only dimly aware at the time, our early years in North Africa were dry and

difficult. Our community was very small and there were no 'mentors'. I remember longing for an older figure to trust and confide in. I discovered the power of silent retreats, with nothing but bible, notebook and coloring pencils! My first four-day retreat probably impacted my life more than any other single event. During this period I began to draw more intentionally on my father, appreciating more and more his unshakable confidence in the Lord, reflected in personal humility, selflessness and unflinching dedication to the service of God.

In later years reading has become more important. Some that stand out: Henry Nouwen *The Return of the prodigal*, Philip Yancy *What's so amazing about grace?*, Warren Benis *On becoming a leader*, Bryant Myers *Walking with the poor* and most recently William P Young *The Shack*.



Steve Moore, President and CEO, The Mission Exchange, USA

Early in my faith journey I was exposed to the simple little book on personal revival called *The Calvary Road*, written by Roy and Revel Hession. This book frames revival as both personal and immediate when any Christian "walks in the light" with a true sensitivity to sin. To live in personal revival we must be prepared to call things by their proper name of sin, such as pride, hardness, doubt, and self-pity. The blood of Jesus does not cleanse excuses.

Through this book I was introduced to Andrew Murray (though a few quotes) and discovered his little book, *Not My Will*. In this equally short but powerful book Murray emphasizes that the central, most important issue before me as a Christ-follower is surrendering my will to the Father. In many

ways these two books focused on the same simple truth. One of these books *The Calvary Road* was written out of the experiences of missionaries serving in Africa, the other *Not My Will*, a careful exegesis of the Scriptures by a South African pastor and theologian. I read and meditated on these two books, alternating between them as a part of my devotional exercises, for the first few years of my spiritual pilgrimage.

Though I'm a few years away from 50, in my latter years, no one has influenced my understanding of spiritual formation more than Dallas Willard. His book, *Renovation of the Heart* and his more recent book, *The Great Omission*, have profoundly impacted my personal journey. I find refreshing his honesty about how little real spiritual transformation actually results from much of our ministry today balanced by a hope that inner transformation of our thoughts, feelings, will and body is indeed possible if we allow Christ to be formed in us.

Though I have grown to appreciate the diversity of "sacred pathways" and been refreshed by fellowship with Christ-followers from various traditions, I can't really point to any one specific stream of spirituality that has influenced my journey. I think what has been most helpful is seeing the diversity of worship and expression in the global body of Christ very early in my spiritual walk. This greatly expanded my horizon and made it much harder to categorize or stereotype others whose approach to God was different from mine.

Peter Tarantal, OM, "Emerging Mission Movements Key Focus Area", South Africa



Peter Tarantal

I was more shaped by individuals rather than books in my early spiritual journey. The two individuals who had a great impact on my life are George Verwer, founder of OM and Viv Thomas, who was the international personnel services director for OM and who now runs a ministry called Formation which focusses on leadership development. George's message of radical discipleship impacted me greatly. His books, *No Turning Back* and *Revolution of Love* emphasised his total commitment. The other book that influenced me was *Calvary Road* by Roy Hession.

Viv Thomas was one who believed in me from the outset and recognised potential in me and encouraged me to dream big.

In terms of missions, the book that influenced me greatly was *Operation World* by Patrick Johnson. Prior to this my world consisted of Cape Town, South Africa.

The person who continues to influence me to this day is still George Verwer who is consistent in his walk, his brokenness and acknowledgement of his own weaknesses. The books that has shaped me in my latter years is *The Shack* by William D. Young that deals with our brokenness and a God of love. The other book is *How Africa Shaped The Christian Mind* by Thomas C. Oden. This book like few others, has given me hope for Africa and that Africa has a message to proclaim. The other person that had greatly influenced me is an Africa leader from Zimbabwe called Phineas Dube who just exudes life in the Spirit.

The Holiness Movement had a great impact upon my life in those early years of my Christian walk. I was exposed to the Keswick Movement and a desire after the deeper life. A person who has challenged my thinking on traditional Christian beliefs has been Mother Theresa and her life of total service and commitment. She blew away some of my evangelical boxes.

Min-Young Jung, Associate Director, Wycliffe International, Singapore/ Korea/USA

Rev. Jung-Gil Hong, former senior pastor & founder of Nam Seoul Presbyterian Church (my sending church). Rev. Hong persuaded the congregation to sacrificially send out their first missionary to Thailand just after a couple years of its foundation in the mid-1970's. Being a member, and later an assistant pastor, of this church, I was inevitably influenced and even compelled to commit my life for mission.

The late Dr. John T. Seamands, a former faculty member of Asbury Theological Seminary, was instrumental in keeping my

missions flame alive. Through his genuine commitment for the Kingdom cause he touched the heart of many Koreans who attended the Summer Institute of World Mission in the late 1970's, the early stage of modern Korean missions movement.

Dr. Calvin Rensch, a recently retired Wycliffe missionary, nailed my specific missions involvement down to the Bible translation ministry through his own dedicated life for reaching the unreached people groups without God's Word in their heart languages. Dr. John W. Stott's books, commentaries and articles have laid a firm foundation of my spirituality and missiological framework.

The individuals who have shaped me are three. 1) Dr. David T. Lee, former chairman of GMF Korea, has been my mentor for spiritual character and missions practice. 2) Dr. William Taylor, former director of WEA MC, has become my role model as a "reflective practitioner." 3) Kirk Franklin, current director of Wycliffe International, has been a significant influence on the Kingdom perspective as against a myopic, sectarian and "turf" mentality. I have been impacted by Rev. John Piper's *Reformed Baptist* movement & insight (esp. "Missions exists because worship doesn't") in his books (such as *Let the Nations Be Glad, Desiring God*) and speeches (esp. "Don't waste your life") have renewed my God-centered commitment and missional motivation. Leaders from Dallas Theological Seminary (esp. Chuck Swindoll and Howard Hendricks) have taught the centrality of integrity in authentic spirituality. Some "Evangelical Catholic" leaders/authors are making me listen to them. <<

Min-Young Jung



Counting Sheep?!

How do we measure missional effectiveness?

Dave Livermore and Mark Awabdy

Measuring effectiveness and success is a quest shared by many different professional arenas. The business arena is concerned about making quarterly projections and gaining market share. Educational institutions are concerned about the competency of their graduates. And athletes want to win the game.

But what does it mean to measure the "success" of Christian mission? The very question conjures up varied and often emotional responses. Many business-minded people roll their eyes saying, "You missions people could never survive in the business-world," while others defend the absence of more assessment procedures in missions saying, "We can't sell out to *Missions Inc.* and embrace business-oriented practices for God's work!"

Perspectives like those and many in-between were represented by the hundred-some missions leaders who gathered for the second annual Global Learning Center Symposium held at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary last January. Our topic was *Counting Sheep: Measuring Missional Effectiveness*.

The conversations moved from the cynical: "If you added up all the people allegedly converted through the *Jesus Film*, the entire globe should be reached 1.5 times now."

To the overwhelmed: "How can we possibly know what God is doing through our evangelism efforts here, much less in another part of the world?"

To the hopeful: "There's never been a better time in history to be engaged in worldwide ministry."

Those of us leading ministry efforts often find ourselves in an interesting quandary when it comes to evaluating our work. Hopefully, we resist simply embracing the corporate standards of bottom-line, success-oriented, "bigger

is better" kinds of measurements. On the other hand, it is naïve to suggest that it is not "spiritual" to evaluate what we are doing. We make evaluative decisions all the time. We decide which programs to launch and when to pull the plug. We make choices about which missionaries to support, where to send our short-term missions teams, and how to allocate our budget dollars.

Most of us gathered at the January symposium agreed about the need to be more intentional about assessment. This article presents a few of the seminal ideas that emerged from the Symposium. (A full summary of the varied presentations and discussion findings are found at our website, <http://grts.cornerstone.edu/resources/glc/>.) First, we will explore the topic of whether measuring missional effectiveness has any biblical origin. Then, we will look at the question through a *missio dei* framework. That is, before we can measure our effectiveness, we must grow in our understanding of what the mission actually is. Finally, we suggest some implications for how we evaluate mission.

Is measuring missional effectiveness biblical?

The biblical precedent for measuring the effectiveness of missional work is not overt. Scripture seems to emphasize *God's work* in fulfilling His mission and His people's faithful obedience, regardless of the results. We are leery of anything that might sniff of proof-texting this topic.

At the same time, a broad look at the narrative of Scripture suggests there is an inherent danger in *not* measuring what we're doing missionally. God, as Creator, has made us in His image. We were created to engage in mission as the sent people. He gives us the creativity to do mission effectively and to steward well our role as co-creators. As redeemer, God enables us to effectively work around the effects of the fall to live out His

mission. Thus, failure to measure how we are accomplishing the mission task downplays both our holy calling and the devastating results of the fall upon mission.

A word of caution is in order, however. God may call us to do something that does not seem particularly smart or strategic. Ezekiel would not have had a very impressive quarterly report to fill out for his supporters. Mark's gospel underscores the importance of following the Servant who suffers, whatever the cost, though the disciples don't seem to get it. Rabbi Jesus seemed to place humanly absurd demands (not merely cognitive, but familial and volitional) on their lives. This

is not to defend any kind of absurd work in the name of mission, but we do suggest the need to be cautious about assessing missional effectiveness in light of biblical precedent.¹ Missional calling must be discerned in community.

What is the mission?

Effective assessment requires a shared definition of mission. Thanks to the work of Bosch, Newbigin and others, many in the mission world seem to have moved beyond the debates over "get people converted" versus "social gospel". There is a growing sense that both are essential aspects of

mission. A holistic understanding of mission is a better reflection of how the Scriptures describe the mission of God and our participating role.

Christopher Wright's recent work, *The Mission of God*, is an unusual gift in that it weds together exegesis and missional reflection. Wright provides a scaffolding to help answer the question, "What is mission?" According to Wright, *missio dei* includes: (1) God's purpose for His whole creation, (2) God's purpose for human life, (3) God's historical election of Israel, (4) The centrality of Jesus, and (5) the church as the Jew-Gentile extension of the Abraham Covenant.



Wright's scaffolding and the presentations at our Symposium kept bringing our conversation back to the importance of holistic transformation—cooperating with God to see all aspects of creation restored—our bodies and souls, poverty alleviation and care for the planet, our political and social systems, etc.. Nigerian pastor, Rev. Bernard Ayoola, challenged us to consider the necessity of *simultaneously* improving the condition of people's souls while redeeming the fall's effects upon physical health, community ethics, and the environment. Rev. Ayoola said, in all of this, "We must invite people to Christ!"

Holistic transformation is en vogue these days. But its historical roots lie in the demands Yahweh placed on Israel's community. If they obeyed, Israel would flourish and attract the nations to Yahweh. So also, God is calling the church "to be the agent of God's blessing to the nations in the name and for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ" (Wright, 67-68). That is our mission with God—to join him in making all things new.

A creation-based understanding of mission naturally takes us away from just counting converts. Had more missiologists used this kind of holistic definition of mission in the early 1990's, maybe Rwanda would not have been quickly labeled as a missions success story. Tragically, it took the 1994 massacres in Rwanda to pointedly question what missional success looks like. The same could be said for many communities in the so-called "Bible Belt" of the United States, where racism lives on.

Assessing mission lies in an exegetically-informed understanding of mission. As we grow to understand God's mission to "bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head" (Ephesians 1.10), we have a standard from which to conduct our evaluative efforts.

Implications for evaluation

Struggling to discern how the Scriptures approach the topic of measuring missional effectiveness leads us to consider a few implications for how we assess what we're doing missionally: communal assessment, measuring with a long-view, how we report, and always reforming. All of these implications are interrelated.

Communal assessment

Members of the Southern Church bemoan the ineffectiveness of well intentioned but uninformed missions efforts done in their

communities. Missionaries describe the frustration of filling out lengthy reports for supporting churches that have little understanding of how to do mission in another part of the world. Local churches get miffed with agencies for being costly in-between brokers who seem to get in the way of direct ministry. And agencies describe the challenges of working with foundations that superimpose ministry strategies. You likely have plenty of your own rants to add here!

We have to get away from the idea that any one individual or organization can objectively assess another, or that any of us is capable of completely assessing ourselves. In the words of Wright, the church is fundamentally a multi-ethnic community of Christ-followers, called to bless the nations for God's glory. We need the polyphonic voices of all God's people as we evaluate our effectiveness. Local and global expressions of evaluation are needed.

Locally, all the invested parties involved in a project need to be involved in assessment. Hopefully, we are beyond thinking the missionary has the right or ability to independently assess work in a "foreign" place. Yet over-reacting by only allowing the locals to assess a project isn't the answer either. Both voices along with others need to be heard.

On a global scale, mission agencies and networks like WEA's Mission Commission can serve as catalysts for constructive, honest, loving assessment of the state of mission more broadly. Researchers, pastors, donors, laity, missionaries, theologians, development workers, political advocates, etc., must all be part of communally assessing the work God has entrusted to His sent ones. We must all work together in humility while also establishing relationships that promote the freedom to critique one another in love.

Measuring with a long-view

A communal perspective leads us to see how our work is tied to a long past and an eternal future. We stand on the shoulders of what God has done in and through His people for several millennia. God was at work long before we arrived at any given place and will be long after we are gone. This longer view of mission is one of the value-added contributions many business-minded donors have added to the conversation about mission. Financiers have often challenged us to consider whether what we're going is reproducible and sustainable in a way that outlives the current resources.

This is an area where GRTS (Grand Rapids Theological Seminary) is growing in our missional efforts. We have been exploring ways to make contextual, graduate ministry training available to church leaders in places like Liberia, North India, and Southwest China. Initially, some creative distance-learning methods were considered, wherein leaders in these regions could receive a graduate degree from our US seminary. But we questioned the viability of this approach over the long-haul. Our emphasis has more recently shifted toward collaborating with local seminaries in these regions to help them with their mission and to find ways where they can help us in our areas of need. For example, we are partnering with the Evangelical Seminary in Liberia (they are working on ways to help us grow in viewing Scripture, theology, and ministry through a West African perspective) and they have invited us to consult with them on developing a sustainable, contextualized seminary education for their constituents. As we engage in mission together, the emphasis needs to be on a long-term relationship that outlasts the accomplishment of any common task, project, or goal.

How we report

Those responsible to report to constituents about missional "progress" feel the challenge of doing so. Some emerging missions movements commit to eradicate the triumphalist reporting styles they have witnessed from their older siblings in the West. The recurring narrative from the West has often been: "Here's what *we've* done. Here's what *we're* doing. Here's what *we're* going to do. Look what's happened from *our* hard work!" Less often do we hear, "Here's what *God has done* in our midst!" We say God's work is assumed, but after awhile it sounds like we could probably pull off a lot of what we're doing regardless of whether God shows up. In the words of David Zac Niringiye from our WEA gathering in Capetown in June 2006, "The problem isn't that we don't believe in ourselves! It's that we don't believe enough in the Holy Spirit!"

What does this look like beyond using a cliché-like tag line that credits God? Perhaps we could use fewer charts and more stories. There is a place to report trends, statistics, and strategies, but we would be wise to spend more creative energy reporting through stories and pictures. Qualitative descriptions of what God is doing may more accurately reflect holistic transformation than charts and graphs. More importantly, our reporting should be oriented toward discerning what

God is doing over impressing constituents with what we have accomplished in the last months.

Always reforming. Always reforming. Always reforming. Always...

Though the core components of God's mission are unchanging, the church is continually reforming and our understanding of God's mission must also be continually changing. We need to frequently ask, *What is God doing here, in this place, through this local expression of the resurrected Jesus?*

Stephen Freed of International Teams was our primary presenter at the Symposium. Freed said, "We often tend to do what we measure, and measure what we do." In other words, rather than measuring our progress in light of a *missio dei* framework as described earlier, we often end up measuring the activities we have been doing since the inception of our organization or project. Those activities may have been an excellent way of serving our ultimate mission at one time, but are they still the best way?

Practically, this means we often measure and report what we think our donors want to hear from us. As a result, those are the activities to which we devote our time, energy, and money. What if these tasks do not align with our fresh understanding of what God is doing? Communal assessment is an important tool for this evaluation. Who in our lives will discern with us, lovingly confront us, or spur us on to more faithful expressions of God's mission—regardless of what it costs us with donors? We must be committed to an ongoing evaluation of whether or not we are aligning with the fresh winds of the Spirit's work.

Conclusion:

The above are a few of the core issues and questions related to the topic of measuring missional effectiveness. Our hope is that these thoughts serve as conversation starters for each of us in our respective roles and organizations. Much more needs to be explored to help us steward well the holy calling of joining God in making all things new in a fallen world.

Missions strategy, planning, and assessment are needed. But let's not confuse the voice of the strategist and evaluator for the voice of the Holy Spirit. They may be among how God's Spirit guides our missional work, but they may

also be detours from God's redundant call upon us to follow and obey.

Lest we bemoan the ways we often run adrift in our missional attempts, the worldwide revolution of Jesus has never been more alive than it is today. God's kingdom is springing forth in some of the most surprising places! May we remain faithful to hear God's voice and join His saving hand in making all things new. Soli Deo Gloria!

The Global Learning Center of Grand Rapids Theological Seminary provides missional leaders with training and resources that are practical, research-based, and theologically informed. Outlines of the presentations given at the January 2007 Symposium are available at <http://grts.cornerstone.edu/resources/glc/symposium>.

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Mark Awabdy, M.Div., recently graduated from Grand Rapids Theological Seminary where he also works in Admissions. Mark is applying to Ph.D. programs in Old Testament and hopes to teach the Scriptures cross-culturally.

- 1 For a complete transcript of Mark Awabdy's presentation on "*Measuring Missional Effectiveness through the Lens of Scripture*", including patterns seen in Isaiah 40-53 when studying the "*Servant Songs*", visit <http://grts.cornerstone.edu/resources/glc/symposium>.



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David Livermore has a Ph.D. in International Education (Michigan State Univ.) He is the Executive Director of the Global Learning Center in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Dave has authored several books, including the award-winning title, *Serving With Eyes Wide Open: Doing Short-Term Missions with Cultural Intelligence* and the newly released book, *Cultural Intelligence: Improving your CQ to Engage our Multicultural World* (Baker Publ.) as well as numerous articles and training manuals. He and his wife, Leslie, have one son and one child due in August. They hope to serve Jesus cross-culturally through theological education and health care.



The New MC and the Arts Task Force

Arts in Mission Pattaya



At the consultation in Pattaya, Thailand in November 2008, the Mission Commission took a major step forward in approving and launching a task force on Arts and Mission. Over its long history, modern missions has at best been inattentive to the value of the arts for the missional task. Though no doubt there have been many on the front lines who naturally engage the arts, there has been little sign of any intentionality among mission leaders to affirm their value for the work of missions. When one considers the way in which music, dance, visual art and craft are woven into the fabric of indigenous (actually all) cultures in the majority world, it is evident that the arts are an untapped resource for missions.

During the days in Pattaya, a small group of eight gathered to look at what might be done to give the arts a more significant role in the world of missions. There was ready agreement that art is an important means of communication and a common thread in all cultures. We noted too that acknowledging and engaging indigenous art is a gesture of respect and bridge-building across our cultural differences. It was evident to our small group

that much could and must be done through the arts that would strengthen and enrich the work of mission around the world. We were well aware that a lot of good things are already happening in arts and mission, while conscious that there is great promise in more intentional arts awareness among mission practitioners. Engagement of the arts in mission signals an attunement to the aesthetic side of life, which has received less attention in the West than in the rest of the world.

Among the tasks the group will take up in the early stages of our work are:

- Map organizations, training centres, churches, para-church organizations and networks in which art and mission come together.
- Articulate a biblical and theological foundation for the arts.
- Carry out a global survey to discover the current level of mission involvement with the arts.
- Provide resources and recommendations for national mission movements, mission agencies and training institutions as they create space for the arts in mission.

- Generate conversations on arts and mission through consultations, presence at mission gatherings and space on the Mission Commission website.

A second strategic planning meeting will be held in the spring of 2009 to determine how we will proceed in the months and years ahead. We will also give shape to a double issue of the MC journal, *Connections*, to be released mid-2010. Our hope is that we might set in motion a fresh consideration of the way in which the arts can uniquely convey the themes of hope and healing, as well as serve as a catalyst for justice, peace and renewed articulation of the age-old message of the gospel. We hope that many of you in the WEA Mission Commission community and beyond will assist us by letting us know what you or others are doing to engage the arts in mission. If you have comments or suggestions, contacts or ideas, we invite you to be in touch.

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Significantly divergent histories often lead to mutual incomprehension

David D. Ruíz M.

Philip Jenkins, in his 2006 book, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, offers some significant reflections about the contextualization of the Christian church:

We must be cautious of perpetuating stereotypical notions of the white missionary drilling his ideas into the heads of his obsequious native listeners, almost literally at gunpoint. While missionaries began the process of Christianization, they had little control over how or where that path might lead. As we trace the spread of Christianity across Africa and Asia from nineteenth century onward, we see the role of grassroots means of diffusing beliefs, through migrants and travelers, across social and family networks. As it passed from community to community, the message was subtly transformed. Missionaries might introduce ideas, but these would only succeed and gain adherents if they appealed to a local audience, if they made sense in local terms.¹

The new and fresh church that has and continues to emerge from Latin America is a remarkable example of what Jenkins writes about. This church establishes her origins in the Word and the words that we received from the first missionaries, but contextualization takes place after a process of reflection in the middle of our pain, poverty, oppression, disadvantages and the theft of too many of our resources and hopes.

The Latin American church is like the mythical thorn bird, described by Colleen McCullough. In the midst of its sorrow, "...it began to sing more sweetly than any other creature on the face of the earth. And singing, it impaled its breast on the longest, sharpest thorn. But as it was dying, it rose above its own agony to out-sing the lark and the nightingale."

This Latin church, with a mixture of pain and hope, clung onto life to survive-

and to emerge strong and with her own identity. That is the church in Latin America. The sound that we now hear from her is the symphony that emerges from her deep sorrow within her own continent.

First of all, it is the pain of religious discrimination, marginalization and persecution that we Evangelicals faced from the beginning. Most of our countries maintain sad pages about it in our church history as a result of the religious confrontation due to "social ostracism and pressures, the fruits of centuries of a mentality molded by the colonial Inquisition."

Second, it is the pain of a church that has emerged from the lower and impoverished levels of our societies. In most of our countries, the church began to grow among the Indians, the poor, the marginalized. In some countries, people from those areas took the gospel with courage and shared it with the rest of the country; thus, the church spread into the other levels of our society. Latin American church historian, Pablo Deiros, wrote about this: "It was among the poor and the lower middle-class that the missionaries acquired greater answers to their message. Protestantism penetrated social areas with greater social mobility among those who were looking for an ideology that helps them to justify this displacement."

Third, due to the cold war, the cocaine war and other political conflicts in our countries, we were abused and ignored in the global political negotiation. We have been booty of the cold war and, to save us from Communism, they condemned us to poverty, to be the object of disrespectful treatment by governments endorsed by the powerful nations.

The church in Latin America has paid a high price for the privilege of creating a contextualized interpretation of the Scriptures in light of and as a result of our struggles and pains. More than a century after the first Protestant and evangelical missionaries arrived in our land, we begin

to understand the rightful state of who we are in Christ, our identity, and our beliefs and new worldview that emerges out of the process of a contextual reflection of the Bible. As Jenkins properly states: "Since 1970's, many scholars have been fascinated, not just by the distinctive interpretations emanating from the global South, but by their enormous potential for reshaping Christianity worldwide."

Ironically, as the Latin American Evangelical leadership has begun to express itself and raise its voice in international gatherings and within the international denominations and agencies, some of the Western leaders have attempted to re-write the explanation of our concepts in Western syntax, trying to "re-colonize" the emerging theologies raised in our context. It is painful for us when we see an international organization claiming the parenthood of our own organizations and events or even our ideas and particular theologies.

A thoughtful dialogue must imperatively take place if we are to understand the church in the global South, and, in my case, the church in Latin America. We need to know how to relate in a better and healthier way. However, for this to take place we have two important tasks to achieve. It must start with a change of attitude in the Western church so that it can learn how to relate with this new phenomenon called the Latin American emerged church. As Andrew Kirk writes, "Will Christians belonging to the European tradition of Christianity decide to listen to their brothers and sisters from the South, or choose to ignore them?" Additionally, they must revisit the way in which the Christian world is perceived and especially how Latin American church and missions are interpreted. We are living now in a new world where more than 70% of the global Christian Church is formed by Africans, Asians and Latin Americans.

The baton has changed hands.

Andrew Kirk again says, "On the other side, some Western Christians and most of those

imbued with secular habits of mind find it almost impossible to understand the beliefs and mentality of the younger churches.” This strong word introduces the second but probably the most important task: we need to work together to develop new categories to interpret the emerged church and her emerging mission movements. Only this way might we avoid misunderstanding and prejudging what we are saying, doing and, especially believing about what it means to be the missional church in and from Latin America. <<

Endnotes

- 1 Philip Jenkins, *New Faces of Christianity*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 20.
- 2 See http://www.reconnections.net/thom_birds.htm
- 3 Jean-Pierre Bastian, *Historia del Protestantismo en América Latina*, (Mexico: Ediciones CUPSA, 1990), 108.
- 4 Pablo Deiros, *Historia del Cristianismo en América Latina*, (Ecuador: FTL, 1992), 712.
- 5 Jenkins, *Op. Cit.*, 7.
- 6 Andrew Kirk, *Mission Under Scrutiny*, (Minneapolis: First Fortress Press, 2006), 156.
- 7 *Ibid.*, 154.

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David D. Ruiz

Guatemalan David Ruiz Molina worked in business administration before his transition into ministry. He served as pastor of El Camino church in Guatemala City, and then moved into national and continental mission leadership. For over ten years he led COMIBAM (Cooperation of Missions in Iberoamerica), and in 2006 he joined the staff of the WEA Mission Commission as associate director focusing on national mission movements. He has his MA in mission from All Nations Christian College, UK; is married to Dora Amalia and they have three young adult children.

Missional Church Pastors Task Force Launched

Willie Crew

It is with great enthusiasm and praise to God that The Mission Commission announces the launch of a new task force designed to serve not only those directly involved in missions, but to include the voice of local churches successfully doing missions as well.

The Interim Steering Committee of the task force is composed of Willie Crew (Africa), Paul Ng (Asia), Bruce Huseby (North America), Paulo Moreira (Latin America), Bryan Knell (Europe).

During the last MC's meeting in October 2008, held in Pattaya, Thailand, the new Missional Church Pastor TaskForce (MCP) was formed. The task of missions worldwide is reshaping itself and local churches are increasingly involved in initiating, organizing and doing missions. Responding to those realities, the MC executive leadership agreed that now is the time to find ways to involve more missional church leaders and to obtain their input to the global network of the MC.

As a first step, in the upcoming months of 2009 the MCP task force will undertake research with key voices around the world. The purpose is to gather fresh information about significant grassroots, hands-on mission work, whether local, national or international, stemming from missional churches and pastors. “The Local Church is the missing ingredient to finish the task of world evangelization,” Willie Crew, task force leader said. “We are seeing churches rise up all over the world with a zeal and passion to be a part of the team that will finish the work.”

You as a *Connections* reader can help us with this research. Because of your role in the world mission movement, we believe you are in a position to serve with us as we develop a potential network of missional churches and pastors. We see the preliminary task as identifying mission church pastors with significant involvement in global missions. Our goal is to have 300 questionnaires returned by August 2009.

We invite you to suggest names and contact information of key mission pastors and churches to which we may send the questionnaire. Your assistance will be of great value. Although there are many categories of missional churches that are

worthy of discussion, a few stand out that we would like to make contact with for our survey:

1. The church that has formed its own mission department and does the work themselves.
2. The church that has joined networks or flows that focus on planting churches in areas where there are none.
3. The church that wants to partner with others churches and mission organizations to enhance the work that is being done around the world
4. The smaller church, especially (but not only) in the Global South, that valiantly plants churches in unreached suburbs and villages in close proximity to them.

There are many known churches that are great models, and we certainly want their input. However, we are also very eager to find out about missional churches that are less known and are doing significant, even amazing, work.

We start with an open mind but with a clear passion and agenda. We want to hear from as many examples, in as many places, as possible. This is a major assignment, but if we can get the help of many around the world, we will be able to accomplish our goal.

In order for the Body of Christ to be effective in its quest to expand the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is imperative that the models that are being developed by these churches be discovered, studied, and brought into contact with the rest of the mission community.

This is the beginning of a journey. Much more will develop as together we move ahead with our goal of having 300 questionnaires returned by August 2009. “It’s a matter of focus,” Bryan Knell of Global Connections UK said, “Mission at the heart of the church, the church at the heart of mission.” <<



Willie Crew is a South African mission leader, founder of the World Mission Centre in Pretoria, and creator of the “Live School” missionary training programs and curriculum design. He is the coordinator of the MC's new Missional Church and Pastor's Task Force. He served as the on-site director for the MC's consultation in South Africa, June 2008.

The global dialogue on mission cooperation: “catching the wind” and “dancing a different dance”

Reuben Ezemadu



Group - Atlanta/September 2008, North American Pastors Consultation on The Changing Role of the American Church in World Evangelization – Dallas/September 2008.)

Opportunity created by the WEA-Missions Commission Task Force

When the Executive Committee of WEA-MC invited us to convene the Task Force during the Pattaya Consultation, we saw it as a great opportunity to begin to harness the dynamics of the changes and the ongoing dialogues towards more Kingdom benefits.

Most of the participants in the TaskForce represented some of the major constituencies of the evangelical mission community and have been involved in at least one of the above mentioned levels of the ongoing efforts. All demonstrated very keen interest in the subject, showed concern and desire that the different and parallel streams of the mission forces merge into a major river of global evangelical mission force. The ongoing efforts have been described as attempts to master the skill of “catching the wind” and “dancing a different dance”. We are all invited to join in the efforts and in the different dance steps!

Recommendations of the Global Dialogue on Mission Cooperation

We recognize the vision and sacrifice of those who have gone before us and that we stand here on the basis of their obedience to bring the gospel to the whole world. We affirm the new movements across the world and commit ourselves to work together as one Body of Christ. We therefore call on the leadership of the WEA Mission Commission to:

1. Speak up on the issues of North/South dialogue, write about them and use its position of influence to help the mission community reflect on them in biblical, contextual and intentional ways.
2. Model the behaviors that will build true dialogue and demonstrate that we are genuinely a united people coming together on an equal basis under God. The MC should work very intentionally to model inclusive international practices, including;

The dynamics of a changing missionary landscape

There has been a series of changes within the evangelical church and mission movement over the centuries. These changes have caused dramatic shifts in the global mission landscape, thereby reshaping traditional church and missions in the 21st Century. Unfortunately, these changes are generating tension, polarization, and unhealthy rivalries between the Older Sending/Supporting Structures and the Newer Ones, tending towards the emergence of parallel structures and networks that would further undermine the potential of the Global Church to tackle the remaining task as *one body with one voice*. Worried about the unhealthy outcome and some negative reactions to the inevitable shifts, discerning leaders in the mission community started taking some steps in response to the stimuli from the Lord to stem the drift into polarizations. Some of such efforts have been taking place at the following levels:

1. **Intra-agency:** Some mission organizations started reviewing their structures, operational methods and priorities in order to continue to serve Kingdom objectives rather than their own agenda (for example: Interserve, WEC, OM, SIM, AIM, OC, etc.).
2. **Inter-agency:** Some older mission sending structures and newer ones have been dialoguing on their own, seeking for ways of establishing Kingdom motivated partnerships.
3. **Continental/Regional and Inter-Continental/Inter-Regional:** Continental and regional meetings have been serving as forums for older and newer missions to interact and discuss the implications of the dynamics of the changes. (For example, the North-South Dialogue at MANI-South African Regional Consultation in February 2008, and the COMIBAM-Forum for Missionary Cooperation held in Costa Rica in September 2008.)
4. The major global ministry networks are also playing hosts or facilitating forums where the dialogue is taking place on a broader basis. (For example, the WEA-MC initiated movements in Pattaya/March 2007, Pasadena/August 2007, Limuru, Kenya/November 2007, Denver/September 2008, as well as convening The TaskForce in Pattaya, Thailand/2008. Other Global Ministry Networks initiatives in this regard include the OXFORD Initiatives/November 2006, LCWE initiated Resource Mobilization Working

- a. Creating space for diverse leadership
 - b. Making provision for delegates in global meetings to participate in their own language
 - c. Demonstrating the richness and diversity of multicultural communal worship
 - d. Practicing varied means of communication in plenary sessions that affirm a wide range of cultural learning styles
 - e. Translating of conference materials into major languages
3. Work to include the participation of those significant groups and movements who are currently absent.
 4. Develop biblical resources for use by individuals and groups to enable a deeper understanding of identity, ethnicity and unity in diversity.
 5. Gather resources (case studies, checklists, guidance papers, etc.) to enable organizations to engage in self-reflection and improve their capacity for global inclusivity and North/South collaboration.
 6. Encourage all national mission movements to engage in reflective processes that grow appropriate mission strategies, methodologies and structures. Communicate these within the MC community for shared learning.
 7. Encourage all MC Task Forces and Networks (e.g., Training, Mobilization and Member Care groups) to take into consideration the issues related to North/South dialogue.
 8. Create an environment and mechanism for the exchange of mission trainers between the North and South.
 9. Prayerfully develop dialogue with sending initiatives (including short-term ministries) from both the North and South to assist them to learn lessons from the positive and negative experiences of mission history.
 10. Consider ways to develop mutual financial transparency between Northern and Southern initiatives.
 11. Encourage the larger WEA family to engage the whole Church on North/South issues.
 12. Affirm the North/South dialogue that has been in process for some years and ensure that the conversation is broadened to include other key stakeholders.

Affirmed at the WEA MC Global Consultation, Pattaya, November 2008.

From an invitation to a mandate –
the emergence of something... promising...

Continuum:

a younger mission leader network



What on earth is *Continuum*, you may well ask, and why *Continuum*? Hmmm. We are still asking that, in some respects. We were an eclectic group that met in Pattaya. Our common thread when asked why we came was usually, “Bertil invited me,” or, “Bill asked me/twisted my arm.” Some of us were flattered or amused to discover our name badges said “Younger Leader”, a definition only accurate in cultures where young is under 65!

We spent the first few days figuring out why we were sitting in the same room. Some history was given to explain how the first vision for such a group began-at Iguassu in 1999, in a conversation between Bill Taylor and Richard Tiplady. This led to Holy Island, a WEA MC sponsored gathering of seventeen GenX mission leaders who met with Bill and Yvonne Taylor for five days in March 2001. The time was spent imagining what mission would look like if it was done by Xers. The discussion there led to a book, edited by Richard Tiplady, *Postmission*, and eventually to a young leader’s panel session in South Africa in 2006. Certainly, we had the largest density

Rob Hay

of younger participants of all the networks and taskforces that met (that was energising and fresh) but,

as we realised over the time together, it was also a potential problem! We were graciously encouraged by Bill and invited by Bertil to help the MC to think about its future. That was exciting, but, we also realised as time went on, that this too was a potential problem!

They were problems because, with a group of “younger leaders” all sitting in one room whilst the rest of the consultation focused on issues, themes and interests within the global mission scene, we had unwittingly annexed most of the younger/emerging leadership, rather than engaging them with the issues being looked at and with the other participants attending the gathering. That led to the second problem. Separation does not build the bridges required between the older and younger, established and emerging leader. Many who were not part of the group but involved in other networks and task forces asked *Continuum* members, in hushed tones, what was happening in our group, as if we were some rather odd sect. So whilst that separation caused quite amusing

curiosity this time, if left to continue it could cause suspicion and distrust over the longer term. This is the opposite of what we need. The individuals in *Continuum* want to interact with and learn from others the history, achievements and practices that have gone before and shaped the MC today. They want to be a part of the MC of today whilst helping shape the MC of the future. They see and support a sense of continuity – thus, the name *Continuum*. The participants were invited to help think about the future of the MC, but that is not a new venture. Rather it is about helping what is already there to continue to serve effectively into the twenty-first century and, God willing, beyond.

This means, practically, that *Continuum* is likely to meet as a group under the MC but outside of the main consultations. The group will meet separately for support, thought and development, but, at the events, will be integrated into existing tracks, networks and taskforces. However, as someone older than many of the young leaders in *Continuum* and younger than many established (older) leaders outside of *Continuum*, I see challenges ahead and use the reflections of Todd Poulter (a gracious and hugely appreciated older leader who so ably facilitated our time in Pattaya) to lay those out, as I perceive them and as he (being older and wiser) sets out so clearly!

We, as older leaders, sometimes tolerate strained or broken relationships as long as we can come to public agreement on issues. Younger leaders prefer to build genuine friendships and trust among themselves, while tolerating and even welcoming a diversity of opinions among them.

We older leaders sometimes reinforce stereotypes about younger leaders and the so-called “younger generation” that don’t actually fit them. This may be due in part to the fact that we may not have in-depth relationships with individual younger leaders.

During the MC meeting, I had an elevator conversation with an older leader from my current home region in Asia: “Younger leaders are really different from us. They haven’t had the experiences we as older leaders have, and they lack our commitment to God and to missions. So we need to tell them so they understand.”

That picture is far different from the discussions that actually took place in the four days the younger leaders were together in Pattaya. They were saying things like, “We want to live out radically incarnational ministry where we are.” They see how risk-averse we older leaders can be. They are hungry for models of faith-based risk-takers, willing to try things risky enough that they might fail, for the sake of the Kingdom, rather than simply playing it safe.

If we really do want to integrate younger leaders into the fabric of what we do, it will impact us in multiple areas, among them:

- Who is involved. The voices of younger leaders are not likely to be heard, just like the voices of those outside the West are not likely to be heard, until they become a significant enough minority in our groupings (20-25% or more) to have a collective voice that require those of us in the majority to pay attention. These fresh voices can be a very positive part of who we become as an MC.

- How we interact. It will be less formal, more engaged and interactive, with less presentation of content and more interaction about the issues. And the conversations don’t need to result in agreement.
- What we interact about. Younger leaders want to talk about things we as older leaders – and established organizations – have often chosen not to talk about. If we are going to welcome them, we must be ready to welcome these uncomfortable conversations.

Next steps for the group will be:

- Connecting with each other further by getting the Facilitation Team together face to face during 2009
- Connecting with other emerging and younger leaders around the world who would benefit from being connected
- Engage with the MC staff to understand how the group can work with the wider plans and visions of the MC

Rob Hay, Redcliffe College, UK.

January 2009

FACILITATION TEAM

Adriaan Adams	Director FILT – Focus Team Leadership Training
Darren Birch	Missions Interlink (NZ)
Matthew Gibbins	Inter-Varsity Canada & Evangelical Fellowship of Canada
Rob Hay	Director of Research & Partnership Development, Redcliffe College, UK
Todd Poulter	Int’l Partnership Coordinator, Forum of Bible Agencies International
Juana Romero	North American Hispanic Mission Movement

TEAM MEMBERS

Jesse Anderson	Executive Director, Apostolos Campus Ministry International
Yen-Yi Chen	Apostolos Campus Ministry
Jeff Hahn	SIM Director of Ministry Development, Int’l
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Taewan Kim	Staff in Unnuri World Mission Center
Joseph Lee	Executive Director, Apostolos Campus Ministry Korea
PC. Mathew	National Director, Urban India Ministries
Bob Moffett	Panahpur Foundation, UK/India
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Kent Parks	International Director, Mission to Unreached Peoples
Grace Samson	Africa Director, Call2All
Albert Tan	
Richard Tiplady	British Director, European Christian Mission
Fritz van der Lecq	Director: Student YMCA University of Cape Town
Peter Vermeulen	The Himalayan Network Live School

Spiritual Formation Resources

A Short Annotated List compiled by Bill Taylor

(Taken from *Global Mission Handbook* by Steve Hoke and Bill Taylor. Copyright© 2009. Used by permission of InterVarsity Press P.O. Box 1400 Downers Grove, IL 60515. www.ivpress.com.)

Three Crucial Questions about Spiritual Warfare. Clinton Arnold. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1997. Perhaps the most balanced and helpful work on the topic, rooted in Scripture and reality, avoiding the extremes.

Surrender to Love: Discovering the Heart of Christian Spirituality. David G. Benner. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003. A compelling reminder that it is our surrender to love that allows us to offer it to others in power.

Sacred Companions. The Gift of Spiritual Friendship and Direction. David G. Benner. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2002. An inviting introduction to the ancient practice of the church of being in accountable spiritual relationships that both encourage and direct.

Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us. Adele Ahlberg Calhoun. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005. Designed as a workbook, this project is best done in a small group, and introduces you to the classic spiritual disciplines that have shaped God's people through history. Don't go anywhere in the world without these two.

Satisfy Your Soul: Restoring The Heart Of Christian Spirituality. Bruce A. Demarest. NAVPress, 1999. The most helpful overview of the disciplines and spiritual formation and direction that I've found.

Celebration of Discipline. Richard Foster. Harper and Row, 1980. This classic by well-known Quaker spiritual director Foster outlines ten classic spiritual disciplines for personal and community growth into Christlikeness.

Spiritual Warfare: Disarming the Enemy through the Power of God. A. Scott Moreau. Shaw Books, 2004. A most valuable series of self-study guide on twelve topics based on inductive Bible study. This is a gem for everybody in mission.

Essentials of Spiritual Warfare: Equipped to Win the Battle. A. Scott Moreau. Shaw Publishers, 1997. Other missiologists have cited this short book as the best introduction to spiritual warfare on the market. A balanced understanding that is biblically-based, personally relevant, and culturally sensitive.

Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation. M. Robert Mulholland Jr. Downers Grove InterVarsity Press, 1993. A clearly written introduction to the transformative nature of intentionally choosing to start the journey of spiritual growth and formation.

In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership. Henri Nouwen. Crossroad, 1990. One of the most powerful books (deceptively brief) on true spirituality, especially relevant for all who are or who aspire to some kind of Christian leadership. I have given away more copies of this book than any other in my life.

The Way of the Heart. Henri Nouwen. This beloved devotional author and spiritual director suggests solitude, silence and prayer as the core dynamics of a deeper walk with Jesus.

A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society. Eugene Peterson. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1980. Tested spiritual counsel by one of the wisest shepherds of the Global North, rightly dissects our penchant for instant spirituality and leadership, and calls us to perseverance and endurance in the life-long journey of faithful discipleship. Anything by Peterson will be healthy for you!

Water from a Deep Well: Christian Spirituality from Early Martyrs to Modern Missionaries. Gerald L. Sittser. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2007. I have found this one of the richest and inviting sources to deepen and grow my own spiritual life. Just the stories of the early Church are worth the book, but it takes you into today's world as well.

Renovation of the Heart. Dallas Willard. Harper, 2002. Arguably the most accessible writing of Willard, who dissects the Christian life into its component parts, and then puts them all back together into a riveting guide to personal transformation.

Rudy Girón The new Executive Director of IbET

The General Assembly of the Ibero American Institute of Cross Cultural Studies (IbET), celebrated November 21-23 in Torrox Costa, province of Malaga, Spain, officially installed Dr. Rodolfo "Rudy" Girón as its new Executive Director and charged him with the responsibility of IbET's training ministry of Ibero-American missionaries working in the Muslim world.

Another highlight of the assembly was the appointment of Pedro Jones as IbET's new Academic Director. IbET was created a decade ago through the collaboration of some twenty missionary organizations working among Muslims. The hallmark of IbET's training programs is its integral approach oriented towards academic and practical formation, which directly contributes to lessen the impact of one of the most harmful elements of cross-cultural missions, i.e., the early attrition from the field due to inadequate training.

The president of IbET's board of directors, Miguel Juez, concluded that: "The spirit that permeated our consciences and hearts during the Assembly was to give the Lord the liberty and the opportunity to surprise us with all that He wants to do through IbET, and also through those of us who believe He will show us greater things in IbET's future."

Dr Giron comes to IbET with a wealth of missionary experience. He was educated in missions and education and he served as the President of COMIBAM International as a missionary educator in Russia he founded the Eurasian Theological Seminary, and he has served as the Director of Hispanic Education for the Church of God in the USA.

In his closing remarks to the Assembly, Dr Giron said "As a group, we have redefined our vision and mission statements for the next five years. This refocuses our attention to the main objectives for the new plan; namely, the revision of the Institute's curriculum, the sharpening of an integral methodology, the commencement of a process of accreditation and course recognition with other educational institutions, and the focusing of special attention toward strengthening our cooperative relationships with IbET's partner organizations."

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"Slumdog Millionaire"

Indian Reflection on an Eight-Oscar Winner

J.N. Manokaran

As an Indian I am proud to know that Slumdog Millionaire has brought laurels to the country. Danny Boyle, the director, along with Loveleen Tandon have produced a master piece. A.R. Rahman deserves full praise and commendation for his world-class contribution. The script writer Simon Beaufoy has woven the story in a very attractive style that does not bore the audience but is carried into the story. The film has accurately portrayed the stark realities of India before the global audience. The elite of my country have spoken against the movie, as it reveals the other side of India, not the IT superpower urban India but rather the real India.

The film realistic unveils the following truths:

1. **Slums:** 25 to 40 per cent of urban population in India lives in slums. The movie brings out the pathetic life in slums – the narrow streets, lack of health and hygiene, tin roofs, open sewerage, garbage heaps, and more.
2. **Lack of human dignity:** Jamal (Dev Patel) who appears in the Kaun Banega Crorepati ("Who wants to be a millionaire?") is ridiculed by the anchor Prem Kumar (Anil Kapoor). To the powerful, selling tea is a 'mean' job and he publicly ridicules him.
3. **Children:** Children do not have opportunity for education. In fact, too many are kidnapped, maimed and sent to beg on the streets. The money that is collected by begging is taken by the gang leader Maman. 'Missing children' in India mostly end up as child beggars in big cities, or worse.
4. **Children and starvation:** The starving children steal food in a moving train, are roughed up and thrown from the train. Miraculously they escape. The way the children are treated for this legal misdemeanor is horrific.
5. **Human trafficking:** The stark reality of human trafficking especially of women is also brought out well in this movie. Women are exploited to be dancers and sex slaves, and this is an open fact in India.
6. **Violation of human rights:** The hero Jamal is picked up when he comes out of the show

and is tortured to force him to "tell the truth". How did he know all the answers when more educated could not even get past the first few rounds. Police are brutal and violate all laws of the land.

7. **Attitude of upper class:** Prem Kumar (Anil Kapoor) informs the police that Jamal could have cheated, because he wanted nobody in the show to win. He could not tolerate a socially lower class (caste) boy winning the prize of a million rupees.
8. **Riots:** riots are a common feature in India. Minorities are attacked with impunity, occasionally with the help of law-enforcing agencies.
9. **Underworld:** The mafia gangs operate in cities like Mumbai with impunity. They could violate human rights, bribe police and escape. Many teens are being attracted towards these elements.
10. **Karma:** At the opening scene, a title card is presented: "Jamal Malik is one question away from winning 20 Million rupees. How did he do it? A) He cheated, B) He's lucky, C) He's a genius, D) It is written." At the end of the film, the answer is given as 'D' – written. This promotes the idea of 'karma' where everything is predetermined and nothing could be changed.

Thus the film has opened the window to view the ground realities in India. Instead of contesting the portrayal, leaders should work to address it.

Rev. Dr. J.N. Manokaran, served as a cross cultural missionary in Haryana for eleven years. Since 1997 he trains missionaries and pastors to build their capacities by teaching, training and writing as Managing Director of Trainers of Pastors International Coalition (TOPIC) of India. Has authored three books: *Christ and Cities*; *Christ and Missional Leaders*; *Christ and Transformational Missions*. He is married to Rosy and together they have a daughter studying medicine in Melarus and a son in secondary school.



