

# Missions Seminar

## For Elders and Missions Committees Monte Cox Ph.D.

### Lesson 1: WHAT IN THE WORLD IS GOING ON?

#### A. THE WORLD AT A GLANCE

#### B. SOME ENCOURAGING TRENDS

1. Growing number of young people interested in missions.
2. Missionaries are better trained.
3. Mission teams are more common.
4. Increasing number of missionaries from countries other than the U.S.
5. Shift away from bringing nationals to America for training to training them at home.
6. Increasing number of short-term efforts is raising missions awareness in sending churches.
7. Sending churches are coordinating their efforts in certain fields.
8. Wealth and mobility are enhancing the role of sending churches in the efforts they support.
9. Increasing number of churches that are recruiting missionaries.
10. More U.S. churches reaching out to internationals in their own communities.

#### C. SOME GROWING CHALLENGES

1. Missionaries committing to shorter terms of service.
2. Danger that short-term campaigns replace more effective, long-term missions.
3. Increasing number of countries closed to Western missionaries.
4. The impact of philosophical pluralism, relativism and terrorism on prospective missionaries and their parents.
5. Declining evangelism in U.S. churches.
6. Materialism in American churches and increased competition for missions dollars.

7. Worldwide urbanization.
8. Population explosion and the poverty that comes with it.
9. Linking benevolence and evangelism in a holistic way.
10. Forging partnerships with national churches and leaders that help and don't hurt

## **Lesson 2: DECISIONS! DECISIONS!**

### **A. AN EXERCISE IN DECISION-MAKING.**

Your church has allocated \$2,000 per month to missions. Furthermore, a member gave a lump sum of \$15,000 to the church to spend on missions. At your next missions committee meeting, you must respond to these six requests:

1. A nephew of one of the deacons just graduated from college and is making plans to be a missionary in Santiago, Chile. He asks the church to sponsor his work and provide all of his support--\$3,000 per month, plus estimated moving expenses of 25,000.
2. A veteran missionary in Africa recently lost half of his support when his sponsoring church split. He asks the church to give \$1,000 per month, but only until he can find a new sponsoring church.
3. A preacher in Oklahoma City has just returned from his fifth evangelistic campaign to Russia wants to attend the meeting to ask the church to pay the salaries of four Russian preachers. The young churches, he says, desperately need trained leaders who speak the language and understand the culture. And, at \$250 each per month, this is a bargain.
4. The chairman has received a written request from a missionary in Papua New Guinea who is unknown to everyone on the committee. He is asking for \$100 (but would appreciate more) toward the purchase of a new four-wheel drive vehicle (total cost = \$21,000) without which he cannot reach the remote villages where the gospel has not been heard.
5. One of your members is a pre-med student home from college who is asking the committee for \$2,600 to go to Guatemala for three weeks this summer to serve as a medical assistant in the brotherhood clinic there. The student explains that this experience will help him decide about making a long-term commitment to missions when he finishes his education.
6. The Bangalore Bible School trains twenty national preachers each year. According to their fund-raising letter, they could accommodate twice as many students if they could build a larger dormitory. Since labor is cheap in this part of the world, they say, the total cost of this building project is \$50,000.

Will you contribute? How did you decide? What criteria guided your decisions? Did you apply the criteria consistently? How did your personalities affect the discussion and the decision?

### **B. AFTER THIS SEMINAR, YOUR CHURCH SHOULD BE BETTER EQUIPPED TO:**

1. Understand the complexities of cross-cultural ministry.
2. Ask better questions of missionaries seeking support.
3. Make educated decisions about missions.
4. Write a missions policy statement that will guide those missions decisions.

## WRITING A MISSIONS POLICY STATEMENT

### A. SEE SAMPLE IN [APPENDIX](#)

### B. HOW A WRITTEN POLICY STATEMENT CAN HELP:

1. It permits careful evaluation of critical issues well in advance.
2. It reduces the number of decisions that are based on personal whims or hunches.
3. It minimizes confusion, inconsistency, misunderstanding and hurt feelings.
4. It defines the specific responsibility of the congregation to the missionary and the missionary to the congregation.
5. It can save committee-meeting time.
6. It focuses the missions ministry.

### C. OBJECTIONS?

1. A missions policy statement is too restrictive. Each request deserves special consideration.
2. A written policy quenches the spirit.
3. It will take too long to write it.
4. No one will read it.
5. The committee probably won't follow it anyway.

### D. FOR HELP IN WRITING A POLICY STATEMENT:

1. Ed Matthews, "Missions Committee Policy

Workbook," Abilene, TX: ACU Department of Missions, rev. ed., 1992.

2. Church Mission Policy Handbook, 2d edition.

Wheaton, IL: ACMC. Telephone: (708) 260-1660

### **Lesson 3: WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW**

WE NEED CHURCHES TO SEND OUT TEAMS TO PLANT CLUSTERS OF INDIGENOUS CHURCHES AMONG RECEPTIVE PEOPLE GROUPS AND CITIES OF THE WORLD, CHURCHES WITH ENOUGH RESOURCES TO EVANGELIZE TO THE FRINGES OF THEIR GROUP OR CITY AND BEYOND.

#### A. TEAMS

1. Why teams? Because they are practical and biblical.
2. But are they worth the expense and potential problems?

#### B. CHURCHES

1. As opposed to a focus on individual converts.
2. In clusters, formed through web and people movements.
3. Indigenous, i.e. locally owned and operated, so that converts are not unnecessarily alienated from their own culture.

#### C. RECEPTIVE

1. Because we're looking for fields where God has prepared a harvest.
2. Because Jesus gives priority to those who are seeking Him.
3. Yes, but . . .
  - a. Receptivity is relative. True. How responsive must people be to justify staying? How long do we wait?
  - b. We shouldn't emphasize numbers. Neither should we glorify smallness.
  - c. We should respect the call of God in the lives of His servants. Amen!
  - d. We should blanket the earth with missionaries according to population. But we have a limited number of workers, therefore, we will be selective, but based on what criteria?

#### D. PEOPLE GROUPS and CITIES

1. Seeing peoples, NOT just political boundaries.
2. Appreciating the difference between rural and urban missions.

#### E. RESOURCES

1. Evangelize to the fringes of their people group and beyond with little or no outside funding.

2. Balancing the crippling effects of dependency with the need to share our wealth.

## **Lesson 4: WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?**

### A. CHOOSING A FIELD: LEARNING TO LOOK AT A COUNTRY

#### 1. People groups

##### a. Two types:

1) ethnolinguistic

2) sociologically defined

b. Most countries are actually mosaics comprised of many different people groups. Example: Togo

##### c. Three levels of evangelism

1) E-1 = one member of same ethnic group to another.

2) E-2 = a member of one ethnic group to one in a different ethnic group, but within same language group.

3) E-3 = a member of one ethnolinguistic group to one outside that group.

d. High priority on "hidden people" groups: where E-3 evangelism is required, but not happening at the moment. How many are there?

#### 2. Targeting people groups: theologically?

a. Matt. 28:18-20, "ta ethne"

b. Jesus' instructions: "to the Jews first . . ."

c. Rev. 5:9 "from every tribe and language"

#### 3. Targeting people groups: practically?

a. Such "cultural specificity" leads to more long-term productivity because:

1) communication takes place in the heart language

2) indigenous leaders are raised up

4. On the other hand . . .

a. People group focus can lead to ungodly segregation if it continues too long.

b. People group approach is less suited to cities

## B. URBAN MISSIONS

1. Shouldn't we target major cities assuming that influence flows from the city to rural areas, not vice versa?

a. Questioning the assumption.

b. Resolving the debate between urban or rural: we need both.

2. Strategizing for cities

a. Different types of city churches in the Southern Hemisphere:

1. City-center churches

2. Neighborhood churches

3. House churches

4. Ethnic churches

5. Rural churches

6. Street corner churches

b. Urban strategy must take into account five problems that complicate urban ministry in the South.

1. The fast pace of urbanization

2. Over-urbanization

3. Urban "schizophrenia"

4. Transient populations

5. Urban poverty

## C. RECEPTIVITY AS A CRITERION FOR FIELD SELECTION

1. Different types of evangelism:

a. Presence: just Abe there@ doing good in Jesus= name

b. Proclamation: just scatter seed

c. Persuasion: make disciples

2. In the New Testament

a. Jesus' teaching

1) Matt. 9:35-38

2) John 4:34-38

3) Matt. 10:11-16

4) John 10:16, 25-27

b. Practice of the early evangelists

1) Acts 13:46-51

2) Acts 18:6

3) Acts 19:8-10

4) Acts 28:28

#### D. RECEPTIVITY INDICATORS

1. Sogaard's two-dimensional model

Fig. 3--Sogaard's receptivity indicators

2. Other indicators.

a. Inadequate world view of the target culture, as indicated by:

1) culture in great transition

2) shifting political situation

3) recent actual church growth

b. Percentage of "unchurchedness" in population

1) low level of churchedness

2) recent actual church growth

c. High homogeneity

1) low mobility; high mobility leads to low homogeneity (exception: new permanent settlements)

d. Relative fit of Christianity with target culture

\*Note: Sometimes, previous ineffective methods are to blame for an apparent lack of receptivity.

#### E. OTHER FIELD SELECTION CRITERIA

1. Restricted or unrestricted entry?
2. Construction or reconstruction?
3. Rural or urban?
4. Long or short term?
5. Livability?
6. Giftedness of workers?

#### F. RESOURCES FOR RESEARCH IN MISSIONS

1. Center for World Missions, Harding University. Check out the web page at [harding.edu/missions](http://harding.edu/missions).
2. Patrick J. Johnstone, *Operation World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2001). Brief, up to date articles and statistics on each nation of the world.
3. ATLA Religion Database on CD-Rom. Includes Religion Index One: Guide to Religious Periodicals. Articles on mission work in various countries of the world published in religious journals.
4. David B. Barrett, *World Christian Encyclopedia*. (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 2000).
5. *Information Please Almanac, Atlas, and Yearbook 1997* (Boston: Houghton/Mifflin Co., 1997).
6. Mac Lynn, *Churches of Christ Around the World* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1990).
7. *Restoration Serials Index*, for information on specific mission works by churches of Christ in other nations.
8. Missionary newsletters. Call or e-mail the Missions Department of one of the Christian Universities.

## A. WHAT SHOULD THE CHURCH(ES) LOOK LIKE?

1. They should be free in Christ, not a transplanted U.S. church.

"Don't bring us the gospel as a potted plant,  
but bring it as a seed and plant it in our soil."

(An anonymous Indian Christian)

2. They should be indigenous.

a. Assumption: indigenous churches grow best.

b. Definition: a church that is locally owned and operated

and NOT unduly alienated from their own culture.

Indigenous = nationalized?

Indigenous = traditional?

Indigenous = ownership!

c. The four selves: supporting, propagating, governing and theologizing.

d. Examples of ownership in:

1) singing

2) decision-making

3) appointing elders

3. They should be able to reproduce.

a. Germinal vs. terminal growth. A germinal church grows and reproduces on its own. A terminal church grows into a plant, but cannot reproduce itself.

b. Key question in a germinal strategy: Is this reproducible?

c. Role of the missionary in germinal growth? Work self out of job.

d. Web movements and people movements. Web movements develop along kinship lines. Many web movements become a people movement.

## **Lesson 6: MISSIONS AND MONEY**

### **A. THE PROBLEM OF DEPENDENCY**

1. The local agenda is set by outsiders.
2. Progress locally is dependent upon outside funds.
3. Foreign-salaried preachers are not free to innovate.
4. Self-image and community image is diminished.
5. What may have been intended as short-term assistance becomes long-term addiction.

### **B. HOW CAN WE HELP WITHOUT HURTING?**

1. Funds should only be given for projects that can be maintained locally.
2. Aid given by foreign partners should be tied to what locals have already given.
3. Financial partners should be open about the nature of the local accountability structure, trust that structure, and give funds to specific projects without excessive earmarking.
4. The financial partnership is best served if the missionary is not the middleman receiving and disbursing funds.

### **C. LESSONS FROM THE PAST**

1. Henry Venn and Rufus Anderson (Anglican and Congregationalists Mission Boards, 1850s)
  - a. Self-support of nationals
  - b. Self-propagating churches
  - c. Self-governing churches
2. John Nevius (Presbyterian, China/Korea, 1885)
  - a. Three selves
  - b. Strict church discipline
  - c. Benevolence by native Christians
3. Roland Allen (Anglican, China, 1895)
  - a. All teaching must be such that those who receive it can retain it and pass it on.
  - b. All organization must be able to perpetuate itself.

c. Churches must operate independent of foreign funds.

d. A sense of mutual responsibility must be at work in the church through a mobilized membership.

e. The church must be given authority to conduct its own affairs immediately after its inception.

## **Lesson 7: SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL MISSIONARY**

### A. TWO BY TWO

#### 1. Biblical models

a. Luke 10:1ff

b. Paul's co-workers, Acts 20:4 for example

c. Prov. 27:17, "As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."

#### 2. Practical advantages

a. Social

b. Spiritual

c. Strategic

1) Shared ideas, pooled wisdom, accountability

2) Model for infant church. Loner missionaries often plant loner churches.

#### 3. Potential problems

a. Expense

b. Potential interpersonal conflicts (the number one cause of missionary attrition.) Over what?

1) Personality clashes

2) Disagreements over strategy

3) Lack of teamwork

4) Immaturity

#### 4. Troubleshooting potential problems before they happen:

a. Select people with solid character and maturity. Screening may be done through psychological testing and through supervised work experiences with your congregation.

b. Provide adequate training for team in group communication, conflict management, etc.

\*NOTE: I highly recommend the work of Dr. Vann Rackley, a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, in training mission teams in group dynamics. Dr. Rackley conducts seminars for mission teams in all stages of their work.

Dr. Vann Rackley

Harding University, Box 12262

Searcy, AR 72149-0001

(501) 279-4347

rackley@harding.edu

## B. UNDERSTANDING YOUR MISSIONARIES

1. Cross-cultural adjustment
2. Other issues among bicultural missionaries:
  - a. Missionary generationalism: disagreements between rookies and veterans.
  - b. Questions of personal identity: who am I?
  - c. Alienation from home culture.
  - d. Issues related to missionary children.
  - e. Issues related to re-entry.

## **Lesson 8: GETTING YOUR CHURCH INVOLVED**

A. Some ABC's for Missions Committees. Assorted ideas for raising and sustaining the level of missions interest in your church.

B. Church Missions Policy Handbook, 2d. ed. (Wheaton, IL: ACOM, 1987). Practical guide for setting missions policies and writing policy statements and agreements with missionaries.

C. Bryant Myers. The Changing Shape of World Mission. (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1993). Graphs and charts that illustrate the condition of the world and the task before us. Sets of slides and transparencies are available. Order from MARC: 1-800-777-7752.

D. Gerry Dueck. Kids for the World: A Guidebook for Children's Mission Resources. (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1990). Full of resources and ideas for curricula, children's books, activities, visual aids, videos, children's songs from around the world--and addresses for ordering all of the above! The material is updated regularly. Order from: William Carey Library, Children's Missions Resource Center, 1605 Elizabeth Street, Pasadena, CA 91104. (800) 777-6371.

## **Lesson 9: RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **A. THE STATE OF THE WORLD**

1. World population = 5.75 billion (1995)
  - a. Africa = 10% (575 million)
  - b. Asia = 61% (3.5 billion)
  - c. Europe = 9% (518 million)
  - d. Mid. East = 6% (345 million)
  - e. N. America = 5% (287 million)
  - f. L. America = 8% (400 million)
2. Income: Half world's population lives on less than \$300 per year.
3. Oppression: In many countries, 3% of pop. controls 80% of the land.
4. Consumption worldwide: Twenty percent of the world=s population consumes 80% of the world=s natural resources.
5. Water supply: Eighty percent of the world's disease comes from contaminated water. Thirty percent earth's rural peoples do not have access to clean water.
6. Child mortality: Each year 13 million children under the age of 5 die, 5 million from dehydration caused by diarrhea, and the rest from preventable infectious diseases and respiratory illnesses. In Afghanistan, 40% of the children die before their 5th birthday.
7. Street children: Approximately 145-200 million worldwide live on the streets; 4.5 million in Rio de Janeiro and Sao Paulo alone.
8. Malnutrition: The World Health Organization recommends a minimum of 2400 calories per day proper nourishment. In India 10% of the population receive no more than 1500 calories per day; another 20% get only 1300 calories per day.
9. Doctors per capita
  - a. America = 1:410.
  - b. Kenya = 1:7400
  - c. Ghana = 1:22,000
  - d. Ethiopia = 1:36,000
  - e. Mozambique = 1:143,000

10. Faith in the world:

- a. Muslims = 20%
- b. Eastern = 30%
- c. Tribal = 15%
- d. atheists = 10%
- e. Christian = 25%

11. Missionaries/full-time church workers: about 600:1.7 million (1:3000)

B. HOW DO WE RESPOND? COMPARING PRINCIPLES

DEVELOPMENT

RELIEF

GOAL

Facilitate change

Deliver services

Attacks root causes

Treats Symptoms

Prevention

Cure

Long term objectives

Short term objectives

Inspire cooperation

Finish project

Independence

Meet immediate need

Build capacity

Stop-gap solutions

Transformation

Temporary relief

World view change

Behavioral change

Holistic and integrated

Reductionistic and compartmentalized

PRIMARY PARTNERS

Community focus

Individual focus

Church as "healing community"

Individual recipients

ORGANIZATION

Decentralized

Centralized

Uses existing structures

Uses donor's structures

Much local ownership

Little local ownership

Participatory

Hierarchical

Uses local resources

Uses foreign resources

Indigenous leadership style

Expatriate leadership style

Volunteers/Non-professionals

Salaried staff

Generalists

Specialists

SCALE

Small

Big

Grass roots

Institutional

Personal

Impersonal

Low appropriate tech

High Tech

INTERACTION OF LEADERS/CHANGE AGENTS AND PRIMARY PARTNERS

Fraternalistic

Paternalistic

Incarnational

Extractionistic

Reciprocal relationship

Donor-recipient relationship

Begin with locals' perceived needs

Begin with expats' perceived needs

Participatory appraisal/evaluation

Top-down appraisal and evaluation

On-the-job training

Centralized training

Moves at local pace

Moves at expat's pace

Emphasizes flexible process

Follows standard blue-print

PERPETUATION

Sustainable (reproducible)

Non-sustainable

Empowerment

Continued dependency

"Help others help themselves"

"Help others"

Nonformal "problem-posing" education

Formal Western education

Uses contextualized media

Uses alien media

Emphasizes stewardship

Ongoing donor mentality

C. FOUR DIMENSIONS OF CHRISTIAN DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY

HEIGHT

\*motivated by God's mission to reconcile all things to Himself

\*facilitated through the church as the "healing community"

- \*integrated vertically with all other types of ministry

- \*infused with wisdom and power from above

#### DEPTH

- \*goal is transformation on deepest level of being

- \*aims at worldview change as key to transformation

- \*attacks root causes, especially sin, not just symptoms

#### BREADTH

- \*broad holistic agenda

- \*focuses on a few but with intent to impact everyone

- \*decentralized organization spreads ownership

- \*participatory leadership empowers more people

#### LENGTH

- \*begins with the end in mind

- \*long-term objectives include establishing a church that will serve as agent of reconciliation until the Lord comes

- \*inclined against short-sighted use of outside funds

- \*concern for appropriate scale with

sustainability in mind

- \*sustainability balanced by sense of global responsibility and stewardship