

**Harvest Connection**  
**Connecting You and Your Church to God's Final Harvest**

By Dr. Howard Foltz

**Unedited Prepublication Copy**

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## Chapter 1: It's a Real World—Are We "Real" Christians?

*“People who don't believe in missions have not read the New Testament.  
Right from the beginning Jesus said the field is the world.  
The early church took Him at His word and went East, West, North and South.”*  
- J. Howard Edington

The Old Testament prophet Isaiah promised, “Because of the splendor and glory of God, the nations will come running to you” (55:5). I've seen this happen over and over again in places around the world. In this chapter, two of my partners in ministry will share a couple amazing stories with you. These stories represent the impact of the material in this book has had on church leaders throughout the world and right here in the United States.

Jerry Smith, an AIMS' Representative using our *Equipping for the Harvest* conferences, has traveled to Ethiopia numerous times and developed personal relationships with the people he has met there. His encounter and friendship with Gezahegn has greatly enhanced our partnership with Ethiopia and established a ministry model that has been shared with dozens of other countries.

Ron Johnson, Jr. is a pastor and personal friend of mine in Crown Point, Indiana. When his church adopted the Somali people of Tanzania, God began to open doors they never previously imagined. His story is a prime example of how pastors and churches in the United States can still have a lasting impact among unreached people groups around the world and change their own congregation as well.

### **The Story of Gezahegn, in Ethiopia** (as told by Jerry Smith)

In 1996, Dr. Howard Foltz and AIMS began a new training initiative in Ethiopia. In partnership with the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFE), Dr. Foltz taught the material in this book to a group of Ethiopian leaders in the Fellowship. The *Harvest Connection* seminar (see Appendix C, #1) was well-established and had already challenged and equipped leaders in Asia, India and the Soviet Union. It was about to be birthed in Ethiopia in amazing new ways.

For one man who sat in the audience that week, the ideas were life-changing. That man would one day launch a ministry directive among Muslim groups in the Rift Valley, the largest valley in the world stretching from Egypt into central Africa. That ministry would send over 400 missionaries, including 60 former Imams, a Muslim teacher or Mosque leader, into unreached areas of Ethiopia, Sudan and other surrounding countries.

When I (Jerry) returned to Ethiopia in 2000, Dr. Foltz and I were completely unaware of what had happened behind the scenes since that first training or had anticipated what was to come. That year, the Evangelical Churches Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFE) hand-picked 100 key leaders out of the first training to learn specifically how to mobilize others for missions

advancement in Ethiopia and beyond. This conference in the capitol city of Addis Ababa was one of the first *Equipping for the Harvest* conferences (see Appendix C, #5) to be held around the world.

As the participants gathered in the assembly hall of a Lutheran Church, the afternoon African air quickly became warm and stuffy. Despite the heat, several of the Ethiopians wore heavy jackets throughout the day. To create a breeze, I opened the doors at the front of the hall not too far from the podium but became frustrated when several of the Ethiopians stood up and shut the doors.

This happened several times. During a break, I approached one of the brothers who shut the doors. Wrapped up in a heavy army coat, the man wore boots and long heavy pants. He smiled as he explained that he from a city called Awassa that was much further south and at a much lower elevation. “Because of the high altitude here, I am always cold.”

I didn’t spend any more time with the man. I didn’t even learn his name. He was very quiet, humble and unassuming, and didn’t promote himself or any agenda. It wasn’t until several years later, when I traveling through Awassa on my way to a town on the border of Kenya called Moyale that I officially met Gezahegn (pronounced gez-AW-hen) Asmamaw and heard his story.

In October, 2003, as I was traveling from Addis Ababa to the southern Ethiopian city of Moyale, where Somalis, Oromos, and Amaraahs live just south of the border, I stopped to rest in the city of Awassa. Considered the most Christian city in Ethiopia with a high percentage of Ethiopian Evangelicals living within its borders, Awassa is also the headquarters of the ECFE and the agricultural center of the country. Just outside its borders lies the Rift Valley containing one of the largest concentrations of unreached people groups, most of which are Muslim or Animist.

As I sat with Gezahegn, our host Shiferaw and my American compatriot, Patty, in a restaurant at The Pines hotel that night, Gezahegn spoke up. “Dr. Foltz is my spiritual father.”

I was stunned. Who was this guy? I had never heard Howard ever talk about this guy. His statement intrigued me, so I asked him to explain. That conversation became the beginning of a wonderful and lasting friendship.

As a young man in the 1980s, Gezahegn decided to join the Red Army of Ethiopia under the Mengistu Haile Mariam, leader of a Communist military group called the Derg that governed Ethiopia during the Red Terror in the late 1970s until the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1991. For 18 months, Gezahegn trained rigorously in Moscow to later serve in Communist counter intelligence and operation of the SAM sites that were used to shoot down enemy aircraft.

In Moscow, Gezahegn remembers his excitement when he saw snow for the very first time. Amazed, he ran outside to stand and stare as the white flakes fell from the sky, ignoring the laughter of the Russians around him.

During his time in the Army, Gezahegn also met Jesus Christ. As a new believer, he developed strong leadership skills in evangelism as well as the military. From the very beginning, he didn’t hesitate to tell others about his new-found faith and soon began equipping others to share their faith as well.

In 1996, Gezahegn attended the first *Harvest Connection* seminar in Ethiopia led by Dr. Foltz. The material in the seminar changed his life.

“What Dr. Foltz taught us revolutionized my understanding of ministry,” he said. “I had been preaching and converting people, and I had been training other leaders to do the same. But when I received Dr. Foltz’s training, I became aware of unreached people groups for the first time. I saw their priority and how important it was to mobilize others to do the work.”

Unlike most individuals who hear the Gospel and choose not to believe, unreached people live among groups of people have very little or no access to the Gospel at all. Many live their entire lives without hearing the name of Jesus Christ even a single time.

Gezahegn was so moved by his teaching that he immediately put what he learned into practice. He began translating the material in *Triumph: Missions Renewal for the Local Church*, the first edition of this book, into Amharic. He identified four men and using the materials he had received at the seminar, trained them to share the Gospel with tribes and peoples that had no opportunity to hear about Jesus Christ.

The next day, Gezahegn took me to his office to show me what he was doing. His office was typical of offices seen over Africa and Latin America—cement buildings with white washed walls, open windows with light curtains blowing in the breeze.

While there, Gezahegn showed me photograph after photograph of Ethiopian missionaries, which at that time included more than 40 former Muslim Imams, who were evangelizing their own people. Then he pointed to a map of Ethiopia and its bordering countries. On the map, he had placed small, pinned-on flags, indicating even more missionaries, their locations, and the people groups being reached.

Gezahegn got more excited as he spoke: “We are now looking at sending more missionaries not only up north and out west but to Sudan and other regions outside our country!”

According to his reports, more than 200 new churches had been planted and 40,000 new believers had been baptized throughout the Rift Valley. Of those believers, over half of them are former Muslims.

I sat there amazed as Gezahegn began to explain the spiritual and preaching strategies they developed to connect with the people around them of Muslim faith.

“In some Muslim areas, one missionary will dress in traditional, Muslim clothing; you know, long robes with a headpiece on. The other brother will dress like you or I. They enter a village from opposite directions and meet in the middle of the village.” Gezahegn continues: “The ‘Muslim’ brother begins a public conversation as to what the Christian believes and teaches and a dialogue follows. This allows the people to hear the presentation of the gospel in a way that feels familiar and non-confrontational. We have seen many Muslims come to Christ doing this.”

I was fascinated. Gezahegn then told me of another way they proclaim the good news to villages.

“We send teams of prayer warriors to walk around a village, praying and binding the powers of darkness. Eventually, those who have demons begin to manifest them. Someone will actually begin to ask if there are Christians in the area and go out looking for them.” He continues: “The prayer team then enters the village and ministers to the demonized, liberating them from their demons. Thus, the missionaries are able to preach the gospel to the village.”

Gezahegn then looked intently at me and said, “This is all the result of what I learned from Dr. Foltz. What I did was read *Triumph* (the first book in the *Harvest Connection* teaching) and translated into Amharic (national language of Ethiopia). Then I put everything into place, step-by-step.”

As my relationship with Gezahegn has grown over the years, so has his vision for what he calls the Rift Valley Vision Program (RVVP), where he serves as founder and director. He oversees more than 400 Ethiopian missionaries including more than 60 former Imams who are reaching out to people in their own country and bordering countries with the Gospel. Gezahegn also serves with the Evangelical Church Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFE) as coordinator of evangelism activities in southern Ethiopia.

### **Story of Living Stones Fellowship Church, Crown Point, Indiana** (as told by Senior Pastor Ron Johnson, Jr.)

I (Ron Johnson, Jr.) first met Dr. Howard Foltz while working on my second master’s degree at Regent University in Practical Theology. He was one of my professors and encouraged me to enter the doctoral program instead. That’s where I learned about what he was doing in missions.

In the mid-1990s, I invited Dr. Foltz to visit our church, Living Stones Fellowship, in Indiana, to present the *Harvest Connection* seminar. We always had a heart for missions, but after the seminar, our congregation became very excited. I invited Dr. Foltz back to lead another seminar called *Final Focus* (see Appendix C, #1).

As Dr. Foltz was introducing himself to our students, I mentioned to him that we had adopted an unreached people group—the Somalis of Tanzania. This caught his attention. “The Somalis? Do you know anything about the Somalis?”

Throughout the next few years, our church put together action steps to begin ministry among this adopted people group. We registered our church on the Adopt-A-People Clearing House for the Somalis of Tanzania. Teams began to pray specifically for the Somalis.

In 1999, Living Stones Fellowship sent a team to Tanzania to search out the land and pray. They located a refugee camp of 6,000 Somalis; 99% were Muslim. Half were under 16 years old. The camp was divided into six districts and governed by the United Nations Commission on Refugees and the Tanzanian government. Violence was very high, so no outsiders were allowed to enter.

“Every day God brought somebody across our path that was critical to us reaching out to the Somali,” said missions pastor at Living Stones Fellowship and leader of the trip. The team

met several national pastors who were trained by AIMS and were already developing strategies to work with the camp. They also met a member of the government and received permission to enter the camp.

The conditions of the camp were deplorable. The one medical clinic did not have the medicine or doctors available to treat the people. Many of the refugees suffered from malaria and other diseases. There was no water or sanitation system in the camp. The team prayed for individuals within the camp, asking God for healing, but they wanted to implement a tangible aid.

During the next four years, Living Stones Fellowship's missions arm, sent out nine different teams to dig wells, paint schools, develop a water infiltration system, construct homes, and build relationships with the refugees. Each team was welcomed by the children first, who ran behind their vehicles when they entered. Eventually, the women joined them. But the men never participated, especially the camp leader.

In 2003, the church sent a team to build houses, offer a medical clinic, and run a children's camp while they fielded a training team to equip Tanzanian pastors. On this trip, the men joined with the women and children in welcoming the group of foreigners to their camp. For four days, the men worked alongside the team and leaders in constructing homes. Relationships began to form. One afternoon, one of our team members sat down with the camp leader and twenty-two of his Muslim leaders and shared his testimony about how he was once a hard worker just like them. He explained how he met Jesus Christ and how that meeting changed his life.

"God sent us here, not just to build your houses, but to plant a seed in your hearts," he said.

As the leaders met with their families that night, they discussed what was said. The next morning, the camp leader stepped forward followed by his other twenty-two leaders and prayed to accept Christ. The camp leader immediately donated land for the construction of a church. On Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup> of that year, their first church service was held in the national language of Swahili.

Our church continued to train and send missionaries to Tanzania until teams were transferred to Go To Nations in Florida, who began serving as the church's sending arm for this project.

Living Stones International now has their own missions sending structure, including a college to train missionaries in house. All of this is part of the ongoing vision to plant churches overseas. We've continued to build relationships with seasoned missionaries and have sent several missionaries to work in places like Asia and Europe.

The church is also focused on reaching cross-culturally in our own city. Recently, we planted a church on the north side of Chicago in a place called East Rodgers Park, one of the most ethnically diverse zip codes in America. Within a five-mile radius, about 200 different nations are represented, and 53 different languages are spoken in the local high school there.

Amazingly, we don't have to keep going to them; they are coming to us. Our goal is to equip and train these new immigrants here in America. God has actually sent us people to encounter Him and return to their people. That's part of the long-term strategy. All that was fueled through Dr. Foltz's work and seminars. It's created a missions culture where people regularly expect to be sent out from our congregation.

For me, it is so exciting to read the end of the story in the book of Revelation about every nation, tribe, tongue and language gathered around the throne. That passage really struck me. The Lord is looking for local churches to be a part of making history. We know the end of the book. We know that every nation, tribe, tongue and language will be there. But there still remains many unreached people groups.

It excited me to say to our congregation: "You know what? Let's be a part of making history! Won't it be exciting to stand in heaven some day and hear Living Stone's name called out? To hear a big cheer? To see a bunch of Somalis there saying 'Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.'"

From an eternal perspective, that chapter is already written, but it is happening in real life and we can be a part of making history. That has continued to really add strength to the missions culture here. Let's not watch the news; let's make the news. Let's not just watch history or read about history; let's be a part of making heaven's history. When we realize that a handful of normal, everyday people can be a huge tool in the Lord's hands for changing history, that's powerful.

Thank God for AIMS!

## Chapter 2: The War is Real

*“The Bible is not the basis of missions; missions is the basis of the Bible.”*  
-Ralph Winter

Tom Brokaw’s best selling book, *The Greatest Generation*, describes the sacrifice of the generation of Americans who defeated their formidable enemies in World War II. They faced the triple threat of the German Fuhrer Adolph Hitler, the Italian Premier Benito Mussolini, and the Japanese Prime Minister General Hideki Tojo. They fought their way up the string of South Pacific Islands and simultaneously liberated Europe from the incredible menace of two powerful war machines. Brokaw calls those threats “instruments of conquest in the hands of fascist maniacs.”<sup>1</sup>

During that war, Andy Rooney (1919-2011), who proudly bared the reputation of a beloved but opinionated presence on CBS’s *60 Minutes*, was a correspondent for the Army’s newspaper *Stars and Stripes*. While in college, Rooney turned toward pacifism.

But all that changed when he was drafted right after graduation. As a reporter, Rooney watched as American troops landed in Normandy. He was there when French troops liberated Paris. He crossed the Rhine with the first American soldiers. And he visited Buchenwald, one of Germany’s infamous concentration camps converted into a mass extermination center with gas chambers and crematory ovens. It was here that “inferior people” were systematically removed from society. Rooney wanted to see for himself if the things he had heard about that terrible place were really true. Brokaw related, “When he arrived, he was stunned by what he encountered, and embarrassed. ‘I was ashamed of myself for ever having considered refusing to serve in the Army,’ he wrote. ‘For the first time I knew that any peace is not better than any war.’”<sup>2</sup>

### **Any Peace is not Better than Any War**

In no way do I intend to minimize the sacrifice of that generation nor to debate the desperate seriousness of the conflict they waged to free individuals from the hands of fascist madmen. The tragedy of that period lies in the millions of human beings whose lives were taken or destroyed. Before the end of World War II, even outside the confines of the various battlegrounds, Nazi nationalism had resulted in the death of six million Jews and countless Poles, Russians and other peoples. As one pair of authors noted, “Genocide, the attempted destruction of whole ethnic groups or peoples, was the greatest of the Nazi sins against mankind.”<sup>3</sup>

It’s a terrible chapter in the history of mankind. So, while I don’t want to diminish it, I do want to compare it to the spiritual situation still evident in many parts of the world. Satan is a spiritual dictator, and he is intent on the eternal destruction of individuals and also on the eternal genocide of entire ethnic groups. In fact, Justin D. Long of the Network for Strategic Missions has noted that, each year, 59 million people die. Of these, 22 million are Christians, and 37

million are not. The sobering statistic is that, of the 37 million non-Christian deaths, 16 million never heard the gospel in a way they could understand.<sup>4</sup>

Nearly all of those individuals are part of what we call unreached or unevangelized people groups. Let me break that term down for you. A people group is simply a group of people who share a common language, ethnicity and culture. Jesus referred to people groups when He commanded His followers to “make disciples of all *nations*” (Matthew 28:19). The word we have translated *nations*, in its original context, does not mean a body of land within a geo-political boundary. The Greek word is *ethne*—the root of our word *ethnic*—which literally means “people groups.”

Within this context, according to missions statisticians, over 40% of world’s seven billion people—more than 3 billion—have never heard the Gospel even once. They represent the more than 7,000 people groups that we call unreached. Geography, religion, language, and politics keep them isolated from Christian beliefs and therefore, make them the most difficult to reach. These groups have had virtually no opportunity to hear the Good News of Salvation in any form.<sup>5</sup>

### **Who Are the Adi-Vasi?**

The Adi-Vasi people of India are one of these people groups. During the day, they work in fields, tending their crops. At night, they sleep in thatched huts in the jungles of the Indian state of Tamil-Nadu in Southern India. As Hindus, the Adi-Vasi worship many gods, and until recently they had never even heard the name of Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Without outside intervention, the individuals within people groups like the Adi-Vasi, and their entire societies, will remain in Satan’s grasp. They will spend the rest of their lives as prisoners of war in Satan’s strongholds, in regions dominated by Islam and Buddhism and Hinduism and various other “isms.” Then they will spend eternity in to a Christ-less eternity.

Of course, we know from Scripture that God is patient, not wanting any single individual to perish (2 Peter 3:9). That means it is His will for every single person to hear the Gospel and to have the opportunity to respond. Nevertheless, not everyone in our world has the same easy access to the Good News that we in the U.S. enjoy.

But one Adi-Vasi village did experience that hope, because dedicated Christians decided to intervene. In 2004, an Indian pastor who had attended an AIMS’ missions mobilization training in Chennai, India, discovered a village at the end of a long dirt road in the jungle of the Vadhya Mountains. At the end of the training, he decided to focus his attention on the Adi-Vasi people in this region. He traveled to the village and began building relationships with the people there. Since their primary language was Tamil, and he spoke Tamil, he could easily share the Gospel with them. Within a few months, 15 men in the village had accepted Christ!<sup>6</sup> This grew and grew until a network of churches was started. The visible Kingdom of God came to this Adi-Vasi village!

Consider the number of churches in your community. Try for a moment to imagine living in a community where there is no church at all. This is the spiritual situation facing almost half

of the world's population. Most of these people live in countries dominated by religious systems or political regimes that are hostile to the life-giving message of the Gospel. They are stricken by poverty and bound by injustice. Yet Christ offers hope for this present life and eternity. The Gospel can transform individual lives and entire societies. But we must see the task for what it is—a spiritual war against the powers of darkness.

## **Let's Start at the Very Beginning**

In Genesis, we see that God's purpose in creating the world was to provide the context for His Kingdom from the very beginning. He created mankind to dwell on earth as a fellowship of regents—that is, co-rulers or administrators—who would partner with Him in the task of governing creation.

When Adam and Eve sinned and fell out of that fellowship, God wasn't surprised. He knew it would happen and planned ahead for the restoration of His strategy (see 1 Peter 1:18-20). Adam and Eve's failure to choose the way God had prescribed did not shock the One Who had created them. But it also didn't minimize His desire to build His Kingdom. And that, to paraphrase Paul Harvey, is the rest of the Biblical story. Scripture demonstrates that God is accomplishing this great Kingdom purpose through His two great missions: Creation and Redemption. These two missions are mandated by God's very character. They are the eternal expression of who He is, and they will inevitably be played out in history.

## **His Mission to Create: The Context**

I once heard a story about a couple of scientists who decided they didn't need God anymore, because they were able to create life themselves. They scheduled a conference with God to inform Him of this new development. "To prove it," they said, "we'd like to challenge you to a contest. We'll create a man, and you create a man."

"Okay," God said. "You go first."

So, the two scientists knelt and began digging up some dirt to begin fashioning their man. "Oh, no you don't," God said. "You have to make your own dirt first."

That humorous story gives a glimpse into what the Bible really means when it gives the account of creation. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Genesis 1:1). In the original Hebrew, the word that we have translated as created describes the process of calling something into being from nothing (see Glossary of Terms). God didn't start with any "raw material." As *Creator*, He is the ultimate source of *everything* that is real. He spoke and created the earth, the cosmos, and all that exists in the vegetable and animal kingdoms. And He started with nothing.

In addition to being a *creator*, God is also an *architect*. He is a master designer, building order and precision into His creation. When Adam and Eve sinned, chaos entered creation. God began a plan to restore order. Every local church and believer needs to understand this

overarching plan to redeem the world and the specific role God has in mind for their involvement. Only as that happens—as we understand His vision, His heart and His design—can we successfully mobilize forces, prepare for battle, and wage war with the efficiency that will lead to success.

Finally, God is a *builder*. That which He *creates* and *designs*, He *uses to build His Kingdom*. Genesis describes man’s creation like this: “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness. Let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, and over the livestock, and over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground” (Genesis 1:26). God created men and women to oversee His Kingdom, extending His rule to the ends of the earth. He intended that we would be His esteemed partners, sharing in the extension of His Kingdom to rule all creation.

### **His Mission to Redeem: The Battle of the Ages**

When Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan’s deception, war broke out on earth. God intended that man would live in and enforce a Kingdom of light. But Adam and Eve chose to follow the serpent’s suggestion rather than obeying God’s directives. And in that moment, through Adam and Eve’s sinful choice, the forces of darkness seized control of man’s domain, attempting to extinguish the light of God’s eternal purpose.

In the aftermath, the Lord declared war on the vile intruder when He told Satan: “And I will put *enmity* between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Genesis 3:15, italics added).

*Enmity* is a warfare word. Derived from the word *enemy*, Webster’s dictionary defines it as “positive, active, and typically mutual hatred or ill will.” Although Adam and Eve failed to pursue God’s intention for creation when they surrendered to Satan’s forces, God still didn’t give up His original intention of building His Kingdom on this earth. He knew before He ever created Adam and Eve that they would fall, and He had already planned for His second mission – the mission of redemption.

The Scripture we examined earlier makes that obvious. Satan’s descendants make up the kingdom of death and darkness. Prophetically, Eve’s descendants make up the Kingdom of life and light. The last part of Genesis 3:15 describes Eve’s offspring as a singular *he* when it says, “*he* will crush your head.” That *he* is really *He*—Jesus Christ. Because of Jesus’ eventual incarnation and birth, through the reverent submission of a woman to God’s holy will, He is the only individual in all of history who was born to a woman without the requirement of an earthly, biological father (see Isaiah 7:14). So *He* is *Eve’s* descendant.

And because *He* has crushed Satan’s head, *we* who live within Christ’s kingdom also have victory over Satan and all of his demonic powers. Satan can still tempt and try to deceive, depress, oppress, and lead us astray. But because of Christ’s incarnation and His submission to the Father’s plan, even in the face of unimaginable personal suffering, our victory is assured.

The Apostle Paul described his ministry as “waging war.” He said he used “divine power to demolish strongholds” (see 2 Corinthians 10:3-4). If believers and local churches truly intend

to live out God's Word on a daily basis, they must acknowledge the reality of this war. But they mustn't stop there.

### **A Lesson from the Past**

As events unfolded in Europe and Asia leading up to World War II, Western democracies remained pacifist. Collectively, they faced the same dilemma that Andy Rooney faced as an individual. They had to choose what atrocities to accept and what events would eventually lead them into battle. They had signed treaties after World War I regarding the conditions that would guarantee peace. When dictators violated those carefully detailed conditions, Great Britain, France and the U.S. were simply unwilling to risk war for the sake of guaranteeing those agreements.

And so, these madmen attempted the same thing Satan did when he tried to overthrow the Kingdom of light and life—they usurped power and authority that wasn't really theirs. And like Satan, they introduced chaos to the world as they tried to build their own kingdoms. Two historians summarized the situation like this: "...force was used by those who wished to upset the international order, but never by those who wished to maintain it."<sup>7</sup>

Britain and France were basically forced to respond to the crisis, since it was virtually in their backyard. But the U.S. maintained its isolationist pacifism—until December 7, 1941. On that day, without warning, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. Our military was caught off-guard, and almost 2,500 people were killed. The temporary crippling of our naval fleet allowed Japan to move without hindrance into the western Pacific. The next day, the U.S. declared war on Japan. Three days later, Germany and Italy and all of their puppet states declared war on the U.S. Suddenly, the war was all around us.

In those days, Americans found out that a war won't go away just because you ignore it. Individual Christians, and the churches they represent, must learn that same lesson. Satan's weapons are just as real and just as potent as those used in physical battle. The war between the kingdoms of light and darkness is just as real as any physical war—and it won't go away just because we ignore it.

## Chapter 3: The First Mandate: How It All Started

*“The one aim of the call of God is the satisfaction of God, not a call to do something for Him.”*  
- Oswald Chambers

Coming into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we are constantly reminded that large religious blocs remain untouched by the Gospel. In fact, despite 2,000 years of Christian missionary effort, these groups are not just ambivalent toward the message of evangelism and discipleship—they are actually hostile to it. The world’s 1.6 billion Muslims may be the hardest people to penetrate with the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ. But there are also more than 1 billion Hindus, 483 million Buddhists, and 662 million ethnic religions, not to mention the countless individuals who don’t fit within those specific religious categories. Researchers also note that 974 million are non-religious. These figures represent the growing number of atheists in China, Russia, and countries around the world.<sup>1</sup>

These people are *not* our enemies. They are hostages, held tightly in Satan’s grasp. We don’t wage war against Muslims, or Hindus, or Buddhists, or tribal religionists, or people who subscribe to any other religion. As the Apostle Paul reminds us, “...our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12). We wage war against Satan and against his minions who aggressively protect their territory and brutalize their prisoners of war. We know we will *never* win this fight in our own strength. We will win this battle *only* as we rely on the authority and power we have through Jesus Christ.

But the task to release large numbers of people from the hopelessness of such bondage is so great. We must examine our own troops if we even hope to make a difference. How many soldiers do *we* have engaged in this battle?

### The Size of the Army

Abraham Lincoln did not subscribe to the “might makes right” philosophy that has infected so much of our world’s political history. Instead, he said, “let us have faith that *right makes might*; and in that faith, let us to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it” (italics added).<sup>2</sup>

Lincoln’s words could apply just as easily to our spiritual war as they did to the American Civil War. In our case, right does make might – even if the numbers don’t show it.

Statistics indicate there are more than 2.2 billion affiliated church members in the world, and 1.5 billion of those people actually attend church. But only 694 million of them are people that we call “Great Commission Christians.” They understand the nature of the Great Commission, and supposedly, they are actively involved in trying to finish that task that Christ laid before us almost 2,000 years ago. Since the world’s population reached over 7 billion in

2012, that means that under 10 percent of all the people in the world could be actively enlisted in this Great Commission army.<sup>3</sup>

We are in the business of enlisting more people and more churches in that fighting force. We believe the army will grow. But given those odds, it would be easy to assume we can't win this war.

But don't forget—we serve the God who used a shepherd boy to bring down a giant (1 Samuel 17:47-50). We serve the God who used a rag-tag bunch of Israeli refugees to bring down the mighty city of Jericho (Joshua 6:1-27). We serve the God who sent an angel to a man named Gideon, self-described as the least member of the weakest family in his tribe. Gideon didn't want to go into battle, but God told him, "Go in the strength you have...I will be with you" (Judges 6:11-15). So in the strength of the Lord, Gideon and his 300 men defeated a coalition of armies marching against Israel (Judges 7:16-25).

We serve a God who specializes in using seemingly insignificant people with seemingly insignificant resources. And if they are willing to fight in His power and follow His battle plan, He will use them to bring down empires. In 2 Corinthians 12:9, God promises, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." We've seen it throughout history in the visible, political world. But it has also happened in the invisible, spiritual world. And it will continue to happen—but only as we follow the mandates that make up the Bible's battle plan.

## **Our First Mandate: Stewardship**

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a regent is defined as "a person who rules a kingdom in the absence of the sovereign." As God's regents on earth, we are subject to the Stewardship Mandate, which goes all the way back to the beginning of creation in Genesis 1. Some call this the Cultural or Creation Mandate, but I would prefer calling it the Stewardship Mandate. The Scripture states, "God *blessed* them and said to them, '*Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.*'" (Genesis 1:28)

Note the six ingredients of this particular verse: 1) God's blessing, followed by His commands for 2) fruitfulness, 3) increase, 4) filling, 5) subduing, and 6) ruling. The Hebrew words associated with each of these steps are outlined more fully in the Hebrew glossary at the end of this book. For now, let's just say this process may be seen graphically as a "cycle of blessing." Let's look at the individual elements so we can more fully understand this powerful mandate.

*1. Stewardship begins with God's blessing.* Before assigning responsibilities to the first couple, the Creator blessed them. In the Hebrew, the word which we have translated as *blessed* is a graphic term used to describe the attaching of one's name to those who are in a family. It also describes the bestowal of prestige or authority, as when a king dispatches a messenger in his own name. It can even describe the action of kneeling in front of someone in an attitude of service. In Genesis 1:28, then, we see a picture of the Servant God blessing Adam and Eve. After creating them, God extended His hand to signify their acceptance into His family. He attached His name

to them and gave them His authority. Adam and Eve held within them the seed of all mankind, so symbolically, God extended this same blessing to every individual who chooses to become part of His family.

2. *The productivity of stewardship.* The charge to Adam and Eve to *be fruitful* naturally refers to the procreation of the human race. But keep in mind that God's original intention was a kingdom on earth, to be ruled by His regents. In the fallen world, then, our mandate is to give birth to spiritual children.

3. *A result of stewardship.* In that original passage, God clearly indicated that, in His plan, productivity leads to *increase*. The Hebrew word used here refers to *abundance*. In the original language, abundance is not just a farming term, but also a hunting term, which refers to shooting an arrow into a target. It would be silly for a deer hunter to shoot arrows randomly into the woods. To achieve *abundance*, he would have to aim at a specific target. In our current spiritual environment, a church that simply goes into all the world to "be busy for Jesus" will never achieve the abundance that God has in mind. Like the flight of an arrow, church programs, resources, prayers, and finances must be directed in a vital way to complete the mission that God mandates. Churches should strategically shoot arrows to subdue the Enemy and extend God's rule where the kingdom of darkness has maintained strongholds. The end result should be making disciples, church development and church planting. So we see that biblical stewardship should guide every believer in church in generating wealth to finish the great commission. I've seen some churches that give 25 dollars a month to dozens of missionaries. This can be admirable in deed, but the strategic element would dictate giving to all four quadrants of Acts 1:8—Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the ends of the earth. And, as we consider generating wealth for Kingdom advancement, we should give generously so individual missionaries have adequate monthly and project budget.

4. *The extent of stewardship.* The fourth ingredient of Genesis 1:28 is *the filling of the earth*. The Hebrew term refers to overflowing, furnishing and satisfying. Productivity should not be contained in the environment where it originates—it should overflow. In the spiritual environment, a local church should never be satisfied with hoarding God's blessings. And the Christian Church in general should target the desert regions that are being governed by Hindu, Buddhist, animist and Muslim ways of relating to the spiritual dimension. We must impact the world's spiritual wastelands where the "waiting world" of the unreached have no way to hear the Gospel in a way that they can understand.

5. *The victory of stewardship.* The Lord also charged the first man and woman to *subdue* the earth. In the original language, the word that we have translated as *subdue* is *kabash*. When my 22-year ministry with Teen Challenge brought me to New York, I used to hear Jewish people say: "I'll put the *kabash* on somebody," which literally meant they intended to whack that person over the head. *Kabash* in the Hebrew means *to tread down, to conquer, to subjugate*. It includes the idea of military conquest. The Church, too, is to subdue the earth. True stewardship of the Church's blessings, becoming productive with strategic increase, and overflowing with satisfaction to the desert regions—this is the Church's role in subduing the earth.

6. *The purpose of stewardship.* This leads us to ruling. The Old Testament term can mean *to tread down as wine in a winepress, to prevail over, to reign over, and to take*

*possession*. The eventual goal of this cycle is the expansion of God's Kingdom in this world by prevailing over the forces of darkness.

## **Are Local Churches Following the Stewardship Mandate?**

God wants *every* local church to steward its blessings so it yields productivity, strategic increase, filling and satisfaction. The goal is to subdue the whole earth, extending the rule of God's Kingdom. These all follow the steps outlined in the first mandate of Scripture—the Stewardship Mandate. So, we all have to ask the big question: Are local churches obeying this mandate?

1. *Finances*. Let's admit right up front that money is not necessarily the best evidence of God's blessing. Many people who are earnest disciples of our Lord are poor. But, in the face of that admission, let's also note that God has blessed Western Christians with tremendous wealth. Missions data has estimated that church members in the U.S. alone earn something around 35 trillion dollars per year. Yet of that amount, less than 626 billion dollars will be given to Christian causes per year, and 35 billion will go to global foreign missions.<sup>4</sup> Granted, not all church members are truly Christian, but the figures are still abysmal. They indicate that American church members give less than 2 percent of their income to Christian causes, and of the amount invested, only a small percent is given to the task of world evangelization. One agency that examines Christian giving has noted an overall decline in total contributions over the past forty years. In 1968, the average American gave 3.68% of his income to the church. In 2007, that percentage had decreased to 2.56%, a decline of 18%.<sup>5</sup> These statistics clearly indicate that American Christians have failed to understand the cycle of blessings evident in the Stewardship Mandate.

2. *Other Christian resources*. Our resources for building God's Kingdom aren't limited to money. In the West, for instance, we have an incredible supply of Bibles. Just think about how many Bibles you have in your home. Most of us who claim to follow Christ and who live in a Western country have several, even in many different translations. Admittedly, many unreached peoples have no written language. According to the International Orality Network, 5.7 billion people are oral learners and have little or no access to resources about Christ. A great many of the remaining unreached people groups live in these predominately oral societies.<sup>6</sup> The few that do have written languages are still waiting for the Scriptures to be translated. But let's face it, even in the face of those kinds of equalizers, the Western Church in general is guilty of hoarding its resources.

However, some organizations have strategically used technology to make great strides in overcoming illiteracy. Since 1979, The JESUS Film, a video version of the life of Jesus, has been translated into over 1,227 different languages and has reached billions of people.<sup>7</sup> The Christian Broadcasting Network (CBN) now broadcasts the Gospel in 65 languages across 147 countries.<sup>8</sup> Gospel Recording Network (GRN) uses storytelling to reach people around the world. GRN trains and equips native peoples around the world to utilize technology such as CDs, podcasts, Bluetooth, email and other audio and video media to share the basic teachings of Christ in their native tongue.<sup>9</sup> As technology advances, opportunities to use mobile devices to share the Gospel in unreached tribes and peoples will continue to become more effective.

*Our people.* Our blessings have multiplied in the West, yet we have basically kept much of them to ourselves. We have been fruitful. We have multiplied. But we have failed to fill the earth and subdue it for our Lord. We have failed to overflow to those regions that desperately need to hear the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ. Perhaps the one area where that is most noticeable is in the distribution of full-time Christian workers. Joshua Project has counted 165 out of the 238 countries of the world that can be described as “heavily Christianized.”<sup>10</sup> Yet, more than two-thirds of the world’s population continues to live in darkness.

So you see, as we fail to successfully steward our blessings, obediently moving into increase, overflowing to the realms where God’s Kingdom needs to be expanded, we will also fail to subdue the earth and rule it for God’s pleasure.

Many years ago, Isobel Kuhn, that great missionary to China, noted, “I believe that (in) each generation God has ‘called’ enough men and women to evangelize all the yet unreached tribes of the earth. . . everywhere I go, I constantly meet with men and women who say to me, ‘When I was young I wanted to be a missionary, but I got married instead.’ Or, ‘My parents dissuaded me,’ or some such thing. No, it is not God who does not call. It is *man* who will not respond!” (italics original to the quotation).<sup>11</sup>

The statistics we’ve just noted seem to underscore Kuhn’s heart-felt statement. The global Church—and therefore every local church—must learn obedience. If we fail to obey the Mandate of Stewardship, then we fail to fulfill God’s very purpose in Creation. How can we say we are His disciples if we don’t follow where He leads?

Our God is awesome. He doesn’t need to work through us to accomplish His purposes. Yet He honors us with an invitation to partner with Him. He gives us the privilege of participating with Him in building His Kingdom on this earth. The first step in that direction lies in our obedience to this Mandate of Stewardship.

## Chapter 4: The Second Mandate

*“There is no biblical mission without biblical living.”*

-Christopher J. H. Write

We showed in chapter two that God’s intention for the world He created has not changed. He always has intended to build His Kingdom. He planned for that when He created the world, and His plan did not change when Adam and Eve sinned. We also talked in chapter three about Scripture’s first mandate—the Stewardship Mandate—and we described how it sets the standard for missionary outreach. Also, it is a foundational mandate for Kingdom life in daily practice. Now let’s look at the New Testament mandate which gives direct marching orders to every person and every congregation that claims to follow Christ.

### **Preach the Good News**

The Evangelistic Mandate found in Mark 16:15 calls all believers to witness for Jesus Christ. In this passage, Jesus told His disciples, “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation.”

In context, this is more than preaching from a church pulpit or preaching as an evangelist. Just as the Stewardship Mandate begins with God’s setting the example of servant hood, this mandate begins with Christ setting the example of incarnation. *The Message*, a Scriptural paraphrase by Eugene Peterson, describes Christ’s coming to earth like this: “The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood” (John 1:12). In imitation of that example, Christ intends for clergy and laity alike to develop an “incarnational lifestyle”—living out the Gospel, taking it into the *streets* and *shops* and *homes* of our neighborhoods, and sharing Jesus Christ through lifestyle and personal testimony. This is the task of *all* believers—not just the ones who are paid to represent Christ in the pulpit.

The Evangelistic Mandate in Mark 16:15 also clearly defines the target for evangelism—it’s the whole world. “Go into all the world” could be translated from the original Greek, “Go and *enter everyone’s world*.” Five verses later we see the beginning of the process of obedience: “Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere. The Lord worked with them and confirmed His word by the signs that accompanied it.” The disciples’ response to the Lord’s command is beautiful and purposeful. They went out witnessing and preaching. And the Lord worked with them, producing signs and wonders to confirm their ministry. Today, signs and wonders still occur, especially overseas, but churches must first obey the Evangelistic Mandate. They must first *go*, and *then* signs and wonders will follow.

### **Make Disciples**

An accompanying passage in Matthew 28:18-20 clarifies Jesus' intentions. These verses record Jesus' saying to His disciples, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

*Authority* in the Greek refers to *delegated power*, as in the power of attorney. This passage clearly indicates that Christ's authority is the strong foundation of this Great Commission. Jesus' authority was delegated to Him by His Father, so that He, in turn, would delegate it to believers. When we obey Christ's mandate, we carry the spiritual equivalent of His power of attorney. And since He is the King of kings and the Lord of the universe, that's pretty potent authority. This is authority to preach, heal, and see the signs and wonders that Jesus saw in His ministry.

Based on that, Jesus literally said, "Having gone, make disciples." You see, the word we have translated *go* in this passage is not a command. It literally translates, "having gone." Christ's command is actually in the second part of this verse – make disciples – for it is in the imperative form. But it assumes His followers will be going every day, in a continuous action, to the entire world. Notice, Jesus didn't say, "Go into all the world and be active. Have programs. Plan activities..." He said, "Make disciples." As we obey this mandate, the natural result will be the gathering of these disciples into local churches. This should be the church's strategic direction in its "going-ness."

Breaking down this mandate, then, we see three important points:

- 1) The *going* is assumed.
- 2) The task is making disciples.
- 3) The target is the nations, i.e. people groups.

## **Surveying the Battlefields**

Jesus called His followers to make disciples in every nation, and to gather those disciples together for the purpose of baptizing and teaching them. The word for *teaching* in Matthew 28:18 literally means *communicating knowledge in a way that shapes and forms the human will*. This is a powerful form of communication that directs people to obey Jesus Christ. I encourage you to stop for a moment and really contemplate the impact of this expanded definition.

So we see that making disciples is an imperative action following the imperative to witness and evangelize. And, where do disciples gather, in local churches. Church planting is not commanded in the New Testament, but it is the natural consequence of discipling, "shaping the human will," as seen in the book of Acts. These churches can meet in a home, school, business, under a tree, or a church building.

In chapter two, we talked about the Greek word that we've translated *nations*. We established that it doesn't refer to geo-political countries, but rather, to groups of people who

share a common language, ethnic identity, or culture. In the U.S., for instance, we have a group of people who call themselves the Navajo *Nation*. They share a common language, ethnic identity and culture. They are not just identified by political borders within which they live. This represents the Biblical understanding of the word *nation*.

And so, by this “people group” view of the world, we see Ukrainians, Lithuanians, and Khazaks as separate, culturally identifiable clans who may or may not be distinctly identified with one individual geo-political country. Within this framework, we must accept that, even if two distinct people groups live in the same country, and one people group is basically Christian, the other might not be. The Gospel will not easily cross language and cultural barriers into a new people group, unless someone intentionally plans to make that happen. If we intend to obey Christ’s “marching orders,” we can no longer focus just on geo-political countries. Dr. Donald McGavran, late missiologist and professor, said, “Look at the world through ‘people group’ eyes, not country eyes.”

We also talked about the world’s more than 7,000 people groups with little or no access to the Gospel. Each of those people groups needs an individual strategy. India, for instance, is a single country with geo-political borders. But it’s also a mosaic of more than 2,200 individual and separate ethno-linguistic groups. Over 90% of those groups are virtually unreached—groups like the Hindu Dhodis (over 12 million), the Kandu (over 2 million) and the Meitei (over 1 million) peoples.<sup>1</sup> We must develop specific strategies for each one if we really intend to penetrate them with the Gospel.

For instance, almost 12 million Najdi Bedouin live in Saudi Arabia and surrounding countries. Natives of the Arabian Desert, those considered “true Bedouin” continue to live as nomadic shepherds, raiding caravans that travel through the desert. With no permanent home, these nomads live in portable tents made from goat hair and have migrated primarily to the Negev Desert. Many have now settled in Jordan, Iraq and Syria to begin farms or earn money on jobs—a disgrace to their tradition—in order to survive. As Sunni Muslims, most Bedouin follow the teaching of Islam and risk being put to death if they choose to follow Christ. Although portions of the Bible were translated into their language in 2013, Joshua Project reports that no active church planting has occurred within the past two years. Our best estimates are that very few have even heard the Gospel in any form.<sup>2</sup> For more information about the Najdi and other people groups (See Appendix E, Adopt-A-People Clearing House).

How tragic! Yet the Bedouin represent thousands of people groups who share similar spiritual circumstances. If you took a map and placed a dot on it to represent the approximate home of each of those unreached people groups, you would find that most of them are clustered together from the west coast of northern Africa, across the Middle East and southern Asia, as far as the Pacific Ocean. If you drew two east-west lines there, one at 10 degrees north latitude, and one at 40 degrees north latitude, you would have drawn the corridor where most of the world’s unreached peoples live. This stretch of the globe has been dubbed “The 10/40 Window.”

According to the Joshua Project, 5,915 of the world’s 7,000 unreached people groups (84.5 percent) live right here in the 10/40 Window. But that’s not all—80 percent of the world’s poorest people live here. And the headquarters for every major non-Christian religion lie within this region. So, the majority of the world’s Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and tribal religionists

live within the 10/40 Window, too.<sup>3</sup> If we are to reach all the world's people groups, this area must be the growing emphasis of missionary work.

## The Blessings of Obedience

Rosalind Goforth, missionary to China, once remarked, "When He asks for and receives our all, He gives in return that which is above price—His own presence. The price is not great when compared with what He gives in return; it is our blindness and our unwillingness to yield that make it seem great."<sup>4</sup>

Her comment underscores the promise at the end of the mandate found in Matthew 28:18-20: "And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." God's promise of His presence assumes our obedience to the Great Commission. Now, God is not asking every believer to don missionary apparel and become a cross-cultural missionary, but every believer does have a role to play. We will discuss this later in chapter seven.

That in itself is the best reward for our obedience. But God also offers other blessings.

1. *He gives the extraordinary promise of blessing in Genesis 12:1-3.* This passage is sometimes called the Great Commission of the Old Testament. It records Abraham's call to be a missionary to other "peoples." In verse one, God commanded Abraham to leave his home for an undisclosed destination. This is comparable to the first element of the New Testament's commission to "go into all the world." With this calling, God promised: "I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, *and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.*" "Peoples" here refers to "communities, families, or people groups." Similar to Matthew 28:19, we observe that the target of Abraham's blessing was "all peoples."

How does this apply to believers today? The apostle Paul provides the answer: "The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and *announced the Gospel in advance* to Abraham. All nations will be blessed through you. So those who have faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith" (Galatians 3:8). By faith, believers are part of Abraham's lineage. So we share his blessing as well as his commission. Abraham's obedience opened the door for God to shower him with blessings that would be passed on to all the earth's cultural groups. Like Abraham, *we* are to take of the Lord's blessings, and then pass them on to all the nations and families of the earth. The Great Commission of the Old Testament (Genesis 12:1-3) is part of the Gospel message in the New Testament. The Gospel is not complete without the Great Commission. When we receive the Gospel, we are to be obedient to the Great Commission.

2. *The Lord has also pledged the power made available at Pentecost.* Jesus told the disciples: "But you will receive *power* when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The Greek word for this *power* describes *might that exerts ability, influence, and that reproduces itself*. This power is not the same as the authority that Christ referred to when He gave the original discipleship mandate. Remember that the Great Commission is based on

Christ's supreme authority that He delegates to us. But the promise in Acts 1:8 is for a *dynamic power* from the Holy Spirit. This *power* works hand-in-hand with *authority*. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, along with the authority we have in Christ, we are properly equipped to dismantle principalities. Because of this, we are thoroughly equipped to expand the Kingdom so it takes in all the world's people groups.

The whole outline of the book of Acts is found in this one verse. The disciples went into Jerusalem, then into Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. We see here that Jerusalem and Judea are within the same culture—this is monocultural evangelism (E-1). Samaria symbolizes God's people moving out into another culture, a near-neighbor type culture—like Americans going to Germany (E-2). The ends of the earth represent those peoples who live within a culture that is radically different from our own—a culture that holds a different worldview and different values (E-3). For example, western countries view time as linear, while eastern countries view time as circular. God calls us to work in all three realms simultaneously. The call to cross-cultural missions (E-2, and E-3) is never to detract from local evangelism (E1) and visa versa.

## **The Prophecy of Fulfillment**

At the close of this book, I'll explain why this great spiritual battle is a "winnable war." For now, let's just say that the goal of reaching every unevangelized cultural group is no mere missions whim. Jesus gave a remarkable prophecy to encourage His followers with a promise of success. Matthew 24:14 says, "And this Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations [peoples] and then the end will come." This is both a promise and a prophecy.

The King of kings is determined to have the Uighurs of China, the Albanians and the Kirghiz of Kyrgystan peoples in His Kingdom before drawing this age to a close. Our Lord has set His heart on the unreached peoples, and He has decreed that they *will* hear about their Savior. The final cultural group to receive the news of Calvary will, like the last grain of sand in the hourglass, signal the end of the task. No one knows exactly how close we are, because research data on the extent of evangelization is never precise nor current. But as we've noted, our best estimates indicate there are still more than 7,000 unreached people groups.

With so many people groups unreached, it is inconceivable that Christ would be pleased for believers and churches to merely maintain local programs with a blind eye toward His plans for the world. In no way does God want us to limit our church life to local activity in which we, like hamsters running a big wheel, just keep busy for our own personal needs. We have a lot of work to do in the world. The Lord is going to bring it to pass, and we all have the privilege to discover our own role in the process.

The Prophecy of Fulfillment refers to the "Gospel of the Kingdom." This is not just a Gospel of salvation. We have a message of Kingdom power that restores lives, families, and cultures to the image of the Creator and makes us members of His, thus far invisible, Kingdom. Remember, the Gospel of the Kingdom is one of signs, wonders and miracles. This is the power and authority of God in forward advancement.

## Chapter 5: Real Churches—Hometown Missions Bases

*“An introverted church, turned in on itself, preoccupied with its own survival, has virtually forfeited the right to be a church, for it is denying a major part of its own being.”*

- John R. W. Scott

I firmly believe that local churches hold the tools God wants to use to expand His Kingdom to every nook and cranny of our globe. Local churches hold the world’s future in their hands. God wants to use them like hometown bases for global operations, recruiting personnel and developing strategies. They will provide resources and training for God’s people to engage Satan’s kingdom in battle—and win.

You see, the people groups who remain in Satan’s strongholds live in regions that are essentially closed to traditional methods of sharing the Gospel. In the missions' community, these countries are known as “Restricted Access Nations” (RAN’s), where we must deploy “creative access” strategies. These people live in areas dominated by Islam or Hinduism or Buddhism, where religious and political systems are hostile to the Gospel. They tremble in fear of retribution from the spirit world. They live in the few nations that remain as bastions of atheism, attempting to squash every form of religious expression. They live in remote regions that must be reached by foot or on horseback. Satan has established plenty of barriers and possibilities of ambush. But despite this, we know from Scripture that, in God’s time, His Kingdom will expand to take in every people group.

The key to seeing His plan fulfilled in our lifetime lies in the work of the Holy Spirit convincing believers to enlist in this war. Every individual Christian and congregation has a responsibility. We *will* win this war as every group of believers in the world responds in obedience to the Biblical battle plan, and in compassion to the drastic situation faced by billions of people worldwide. It will happen as churches develop the desire to be a hometown base for global operations.

### **Describing a Hometown Base for Global Operations**

When I refer to a “church,” I don’t mean the building. From the Biblical viewpoint, the traditional building with a steeple is non-essential. In fact, some of the world’s most powerful churches don’t have such a building – they meet in homes.

Secondly, a church’s essence is not its departments or programs. Secular businesses and service organizations have departments and programs. A specific organizational structure doesn’t differentiate a church either. A church is a local gathering of God’s people who are “built up” by God’s spirit working in and among them. It is not only a visible institution, but rather, a living organism that grows from divinely networked relationships.

What creates a church, then, are the interactions between God and His people, and secondarily, the divine effect of those interactions on people’s relationships with each other and

the world. These things have eternal significance—the buildings and the organizational structure do not. Within this framework, three dynamics set apart the church from all other institutions:

1. *Christ's redemptive work.* Redemption is a complete work when we receive Christ, but it's also an ongoing work. The Apostle Paul noted, "... Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners of whom I am the worst" (1 Timothy 1:15). The form of the word for *save*, as written in ancient manuscripts, means that salvation is complete.

However, according to Romans 5:10, "For if when we were God's enemies we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son, how much more having been reconciled we shall be saved in His life." In the original language here, the phrase translated *shall be saved* shows a continuous activity. We experience salvation as God uncovers areas of our lives that need spiritual course correction. He redeems those things as we confess them to Him and choose to eliminate them from our lives. This is sanctification.

And yet, Scripture also tells us that, when Jesus appears, we will become like Him (1 John 2:3). Even our physical bodies will be transformed by the complete work of salvation. This is glorification. So, Biblically speaking, redemption is a process that encompasses our past, present and future. In a nutshell, you could explain it like this:

- We have been saved (past). This is the doctrine of Salvation.
- We are being saved (present). This is the doctrine of Sanctification.
- We shall be saved (future). This is the doctrine of the Glorification of our bodies when Jesus returns.

2. *The power of the Holy Spirit.* As we noted in previous chapters, the Holy Spirit empowers us to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). That means He specifically intends every individual Christian and every local congregation to have a strategic ministry in their own communities, in cultures that are similar to theirs, and extending to cultures that are entirely different from theirs. The verse doesn't say to develop ministry in Jerusalem first, and *then* in Judea, and *then* in Samaria, and *then* to the ends of the earth. Admittedly, that's the way it happened in the book of Acts. But they were just getting started. I believe God intends for local churches to engage in these ministries simultaneously.

The power to support this kind of global perspective will come only as we experience the daily rejuvenation of a continuing, ongoing relationship with the Lord through the Holy Spirit. One filling five years ago will not support this kind of ministry today. Ephesians 5:18 commands us to be "...be filled with the Spirit." The Greek tense for the word, "be filled" is in the imperative. This filling is something the Spirit does to us. We don't fill ourselves. In the original language, the verb form also teaches that we are currently filled, but we are to continue being filled by the Spirit. That type of continual empowerment by and dependence on the Holy Spirit will undergird a global vision.

3. *The revelation of God's Word.* The Apostle Paul wrote to the church of Ephesus, "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation..." (Ephesians 1:17). The language implies an ongoing revelation of who God is, who we are in Him, and how we can be used to accomplish His plan in this world.

## Spiritual Aspects of Church Life

These three dimensions, played out in a continuous cycle in a healthy church, rest completely on the interaction between God and His people. When all of those things are operating in the way God intended, you should begin to see at least four results growing in your church.

1. *Spirit-filled leadership.* As God works among His people, He blesses them with different gifts, which include supernatural abilities to lead a church in fulfilling the mission of Jesus Christ (see Ephesians 4:11). Seven motivational gifts move the church forward under God's direction (see Romans 12:6-8), and nine manifestation gifts are made available to every member of the Body of Christ to release the anointing of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 12:7-11).

Within that framework, though, it's important to acknowledge the importance of God-inspired leadership. When I was a professor at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA, my missions' classes conducted a survey and found that the senior pastor is the primary factor influencing a church's growth in missions. That fits with the Scriptural plan. You see, the original language term for leadership in Romans 12:8 means *to stand before*. By implication, leadership requires an individual to stand before God and receive His vision. A Scriptural leader finds out what God is doing, seeks His wisdom to impart this vision to His people, and then helps the people cooperate with what God is doing in their midst. Without the right kind of leadership, the local church will have little involvement in local evangelism or in world missions.

2. *Edification of the church.* The Holy Spirit empowers believers in His body to build up and train others. This is often called discipling, nurturing, teaching or equipping.

3. *Participation in worship and intercession.* As God's Spirit works among His people, He draws out worship. That is key in this process, for all people tend to imitate that which they worship. It may be conscious or unconscious, but the truth of the matter is, we become like that which we venerate. Scripture clearly emphasizes this when it tells us, "Those who make them (idols) will be like them, and so will all who trust in them" (Psalm 115:8). So, if you venerate the American culture, you'll become like it. If you venerate a certain position in a company, you will become like the person you think should fill that position. And if you worship Jesus, you'll become more and more like Him. When we allow God to work in our lives, He draws worship from us. As we open our lives to Him, seeing more and more of who He is and what He is doing, we become more like Him. We will be drawn into intercession and communion with Him—a daily lifestyle of prayer.

4. *Desire for fellowship.* The local church is a network of relationships—first with God, secondly with each other. The doorway to growth in God's Kingdom swings on the health of these relationships. The strength of these relationships supports continued individual and corporate growth.

## The Necessary Goal

All of those ingredients are crucial to the inner and outer workings of a healthy church. But even if those three dynamics of God's work are obvious in a group, and even if the four aspects of His work are clearly defined in their midst, essential ingredients are still missing.

Let's look again at the passage which describes Christ's commissioning of the Church—Matthew 28:18-20. This passage records Jesus' telling His followers, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

As we've already noted, from this very beginning, Christ proclaimed the mission of the Church: *to go to all peoples ("nations") of the earth*, evangelizing, discipling, baptizing and teaching them. This is not a series of items tacked onto a long list, just for the appearance of completeness, nor a form of spiritual "extra credit." Along with worship and glorifying God, it's the reason for the Church's existence, and therefore, *it's the reason for every local church's existence*. Jesus' last words become His marching orders for us. To take that a step further, it's the reason for existence *for the entire church body* – not just for the missions department. And remember, some of these "nations" are unreached people groups, the "waiting world" that requires cross-cultural missionary sending.

Certainly, our church people need discipling, equipping and nurturing so they can experience greater wholeness. But as we noted in a previous chapter, our blessings, like Abraham's, are given so we can bless others. As we experience healing and grow in wisdom, we are increasingly equipped to participate in God's mission of the worldwide network of believers, the Body of Christ. We are corporately commissioned to go to all people groups—every tribe, every tongue, every people—with the Covenant blessings of Christ.

Of course, many groups that lack a missions' spirit are commonly called "churches" anyway. They have church structure—departments, committees and programs—without the Kingdom mission. But when an institutional spirit overrides a group's missionary spirit, the departments begin to play games that are common to worldly institutions. They vie for funds, for staff, for prominence. The Church's preeminent purpose—building God's global Kingdom—tends to be forgotten.

In contrast to the kind of church I've just described, I encourage church leaders and laity to pursue the factors, which will make each local fellowship a Great Commission church. This congregation is connected to the world, because it obeys its Lord's command, and it has compassion for those whose current misery is miniscule compared to the eternal state of a Christ-less eternity, which awaits them because they never heard the Gospel in a way they could understand and respond. Every department and every program in this church—from singing in the choir to childcare—can be done with the spirit of outreach.

To accomplish this, I highly recommend that every local church should establish a Biblical discipleship course or program, such as MasterLife (available from the Southern Baptist Convention) or NAV 2:7 Series (available from The Navigators). In such a course, each

member's spiritual gifts can be discovered, and they can be placed in appropriate ministry within the church. You see, not everyone who is saved is a growing spiritual disciple. The church needs to equip people to become the kind of disciple that grows and disciples others. Spiritual giftings should be understood as well. A person's ministry is colored by his or her motivational and ministry gifts, so people need to be placed in the Body according to their gifts.

## **Measuring the Mobilization**

Based on what you've read so far, take some time to consider your own congregation. Are you connected to the world, going to others with the Good News? If so, are you only ministering through "same-culture" evangelism, staying in your Jerusalem and Judea, instead of moving beyond? Even reaching peoples within "Westernized" societies (such as those in the city-cultures of Latin America or Europe or Africa) in our day is comparable to the Church in Acts going to neighboring Semitic culture of Samaria. The Lord's mandate for us to go to the ends of the earth means crossing even greater cultural, social and political barriers.

The Apostle Paul reflected this belief when he wrote to the Corinthian believers, "Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you" (2 Corinthians 10:15b-16a). Paul defined the goal for every local church. But, of course, the question is, how do we get from here to there?

The rest of this book will give additional details to help you answer that for your own congregation. For now, I'll just explain that Accelerating International Mission Strategies (AIMS) has developed a set of measurable attributes by which you can measure your congregation's progress in its initial mobilization (see Appendix B).

## **Blessing Yields Responsibility**

In Christ, the mobilization of a congregation for global missions is more than possible—if you proceed with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, one step at a time. Remember, Scripture repeatedly tells us that, in God's plan to expand His Kingdom, blessing always yields responsibility. Fulfillment of that responsibility always yields greater blessing. And so the cycle continues.

Living where we do in this world, we have been blessed with many resources. In Christ, we are heirs to every spiritual blessing. And residing within every blessing is the seed of a mission and the promise of fulfillment. It's time for the Church to challenge the forces of darkness, to claim the promised triumph of the Bride of Christ, and to prevail against the gates of Hell that resist our progress to fulfill Matthew 24:14.

What are the actual steps to building a hometown missions base? The rest of this book will offer specific suggestions to help you get from where you are to where you need to be in your continuum of missionary outreach. But remember, God in His infinite creativity probably

has a unique plan for your church that He has custom-made for you. I can make suggestions, but He will tell you how to apply them.

## **Chapter 6: Recruiting Officers and Developing a Strategy**

*“As long as I see anything to be done for God, life is worth living;  
but O how vain and unworthy it is to live for any lower end!”*

-David Brainerd

If God designed local churches to be the hometown missions base, then it stands to reason that local pastors and church leaders are commanders in this spiritual war. Pastors and church leaders, like generals, marshal troops and resources. They enlist soldiers and motivate troops. They recruit officers who will follow their example, mobilizing, strategizing and tending to the details that will make the battle plan succeed.

History books hold the stories of countless generals who aggressively invaded hostile territories to enlarge the empires they represented. But not one of those generals earned the victory alone. All of them had legions of troops as well as corps of under-officers and aides. Local churches can be successful in ministry, impacting regions around the world. But it begins with the pastor, and it continues with the process of recruiting officers to serve on a stellar missions team.

### **Building a Winning Missions Team**

Your missions team/task force is one of the primary bodies that will assume the task of mobilizing your local church. This group forms your corps of under-officers who build and maintain the vision and strategy to propel your church into successful ministry.

Your missions team is not just another church “department.” Rather, this group carries the responsibility to orient every department and ministry of the local church toward Biblical Great Commission goals. Whether this group is called the foreign missions board, the missions council, or the cross-cultural missions team is not important—but its success is crucial to build a new missions emphasis or to maintain or improve an existing one.

If your church lacks an established missions task force, begin by establishing a missions prayer fellowship. Even two or three people who have expressed interest in global ministry or in missions can begin praying together. This core group would meet primarily for the purpose of interceding for the world, for missionaries and for the local church’s involvement in missions. Once a prayer fellowship is established, then “closet” prayer warriors who have been distracted by other matters will be enticed to get involved. Even if the group only meets for one hour each month, that prayer will increase learning about other nations and sharpen their vision for greater Kingdom work. As this group grows, natural leaders will arise as candidates for your missions task force.

To have the maximum impact on the whole church, the missions task force should be set within the existing church government. The task force should work in unity and cooperation with other church leaders, never working apart from or in opposition to the overall vision and structure of the church.

Remember—the missions task force fulfills a leadership role in the church, guiding the fellowship towards accomplishing its Great Commission goals. The missions task force is not just a group of people who control the purse strings for the missions budget. If that's the primary motivation, this group will not accomplish anything truly significant. Rather, the missions task force is tasked to lead, guide, and inspire in the area of missions, with the goal of seeing the church strategically carrying out a missions vision.

## **The Qualifications**

As you build a new missions task force, or reinforce an existing one, people with a variety of spiritual gifts are necessary. This concept, of course, is important when filling any role in the church body. We've all seen situations where ministries succeeded because of the supernatural abilities of the people involved. Likewise, ministries have failed because people worked within the measure of natural ability (or the lack thereof) rather than working in the empowerment and anointing of the Holy Spirit.

The process of developing a missions task force requires at least the same amount of care given to building any other ministry in the church. A task force needs a variety of giftings to enable the members to be missions mobilizers. This includes people who are adept in teaching, people who are willing to serve and help in behind-the-scenes tasks, and people who are capable of handling administrative details.

As you recruit people with a variety of gifts, you will build a solid core who are uniquely prepared to meet the challenges inherent in this kind of endeavor. When we try to do God's work, we must do it His way. That requires the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in every facet of preparation, in every event, in every task. Missionary outreach is at the center of God's heart, but as churches move more and more into regions that are central to Satan's control in this world, spiritual opposition will grow increasingly bitter. When that time comes, it is critical to have people who operate and function in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the giftings that He provides.

Of course, other factors should guide your choices of people to serve in this strategic position. For instance, the candidate should have a proven ministry in the church, having demonstrated attitudes of service and commitment to your local fellowship. Don't consider anyone who has not proven these attitudes over an extended time.

## **Training is Essential**

The missions task force must have some missions training. AIMS offers basic missions seminars that are very useful for this type of situation. Our introductory level curriculum, *Missions Foundations* is a wonderful 13-week resource not only for this type of environment, but also for Sunday school classes or small group Bible studies. The full *Harvest Connection* seminar is available on a DVD set that includes 20-minute teaching segments that can be used in small group and prayer meetings. These resources, along with several others, are listed in Appendix C.

Practical training is also necessary. I truly believe that every task force member should have some type of cross-cultural experience. It may be a short-term trip to another part of the world, or, at the very least, some type of work in a local cross-cultural setting. For instance, local cross-cultural settings may include outreach to international students or refugees living in the community. This type of experience will give members a greater understanding of and stronger vision for missions. With global emigration, the mission field, even unreached peoples, have come to the Western doorstep.

But remember, trip participants should always have some type of training before embarking on a short-term trip. We'll cover this in greater detail in a later chapter. For now, keep in mind that, at every juncture in this process, training is essential. In a physical war, officers who lead their battalions into battle have very specialized training to prepare them for the task at hand. Yet, at the spiritual level, we often throw people into a spiritual battlefield with eternal consequences against an incredibly powerful enemy without adequate training. And then we wonder why things fail or continue in the status quo.

## **Responsibilities**

Missions task force members should be trained for and gifted for certain responsibilities. But the most important task applies to all participants, regardless of gifting and training: Prayer. Without prayer, even the most gifted, committed, and trained group will not succeed. Praying and mobilizing others for prayer should be a primary concern of the missions task force.

Beyond that, the task force should meet regularly, and as different members are assigned tasks, a regular system of accountability should be established. Details for different kinds of missions endeavors will be laid out in future chapters. For now, let's just note that the missions task force works in a variety of areas, such as education, prayer, conferences, missions budget, long-term planning of missions strategy, research, and personnel.

Sub-task forces may need to be established for some of these areas, with each sub-task force reporting back to the entire group. For example, hosting an annual missions conference requires year-round planning and preparation. This should not take up the time and energy of the entire task force. An effective sub-task force can handle the details and report regularly back to the whole task force as needed.

Finally, an important task of the missions task force is developing a policy which will chart the course for all cross-cultural outreach endeavors considered by your congregation.

## **Charting a Course**

Missionary outreach is not very effective when using the "shotgun" approach. In the shotgun, as you probably know, soldiers shoot a stream of pellets to cover the widest area possible. This approach rarely hits any intended target, unless it is close-up. By contrast, a rifle shoots a single cartridge—a bullet that requires sole concentration on a specific target, even at long range. To be truly effective in leading a congregation into cross-cultural outreach, missions

task forces are more effective when they have a particular target (or vision) in mind. That requires a master strategy and a description of mutually-held beliefs that will undergird specific procedures. That, in a nutshell, is a Missions Policy and Strategy Statement. (See *On the Cutting Edge*, Appendix C, #3)

Church leaders should provide guidelines for all aspects of that particular congregation's missions program in a single strategy policy. This is not a legalistic list which inhibits the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Rather, it is a flexible document, developed with the guidance of the Spirit, to provide policies and goals related to how the church "does" missions. Proper development of a good missions policy includes at least five key qualities:

1. *Prayer and teamwork.* When developing a missions policy, task force members must stay in prayer and be willing to work as a team, with one another and with other church leadership. The process is just as important as the final outcome, as task force members interact with one another and with God.

2. *Philosophy.* The Missions Policy represents the unique philosophy of the individual church. Every church should strive to be a mobilized, Great Commission church. But it's important to remember that God has an overall plan for the completion of the Great Commission, and He also has a strategic plan that is unique for each local fellowship, giving specific tasks that fit miraculously into the big picture. That means each church may approach missions from a different angle, because of the unique callings and giftings in that body.

3. *Strategy.* The Missions Policy should reflect the strategy that will guide the church's present and future missions decisions. Having a 1-, 3- and 5- year plan, and even a 10-year "forecast" shows a commitment to growth and allows for the accomplishment of goals which require an ongoing commitment.

4. *Mobilization.* Out of the Policy and Strategy should flow a plan to take specific steps toward investing in the expansion of the church's missions vision. In other words, it should not only describe specific goals, but it should explain how the task force intends to mobilize the congregation and enlist volunteers to accomplish them. Specifically, it should address ways to involve the congregation in prayer, in learning more about the world and its needs, in giving, in sending missionaries from within the congregation, and finally in getting hands-on experience by going.

### **The Strategy Must Be Flexible**

Experts tell us that one of the major reasons military ventures fail is that the leadership fails to adapt to new situations or to changes in environment. Alexander the Great, for instance, was a tremendous warrior. Yet his army eventually failed, because the soldiers advanced ahead of their supply line, and they never adjusted to living off the land. Their strategy didn't flex with the circumstances.

Henry V, on the other hand, successfully defeated the French in 1415, simply because he was able to lead his forces in an adaptation of his basic strategy. In August of 1415, King Henry V of England took 1500 ships full of soldiers and supplies and transported this huge invasion

force to France. By the middle of September, the troops had endured a lengthy but successful siege of a strategic French city. But sickness, coupled with desertions, had left Henry with only about 900 men-at-arms and 5,000 archers. By October 25, the English situation seemed doomed. That's when the battle of Agincourt turned the tide for Henry V and his forces.

October 25 dawned gray and damp because of torrential rains the night before. Henry used his troops strategically to draw the French to attack. Hampered by heavy mud in the plowed field between the two armies, the French charge faltered, and horses and riders became easy targets for the English. Archers began shooting the horses, who pitched their riders to the ground. Those riders were unable to rise because of the weight of their armor, which at 60-70 pounds provided great protection and still allowed a certain measure of agility in battle. However, if the wearer fell over, he was in great danger, for it took two men to help him stand up.

When the second line of French soldiers advanced on foot, they also became mired in the mud. Under the weight of their armor and under a heavy rain of arrows, they fell forward on top of the men who were already on the ground. Many actually suffocated inside their visored helmets. The casualties sum up the entire story. Within an hour, when the battle was finished, about 11,000 Frenchmen had lost their lives, while the English had lost only about 100. The tattered English soldiers, worn by battle, fatigued from disease, lacking in numbers and half starved, won the battle. Why? Because they were able to adapt to the situation.<sup>1</sup>

If that kind of flexibility is crucial in physical warfare, we must expect that it will be crucial in spiritual warfare as well. I encourage churches to review their Missions Policy and Strategy Statement each year. Keep it current. This document should never become a dusty, stale instrument which rules the missions program from the past. As the church grows and changes, and as the Spirit teaches and guides in new ways, the policy must also change. Thank God for word processors!

## **Other Components**

In addition to the above characteristics, a Missions Policy may include the following components:

1. *Statement of Purpose:* This statement summarizes the overall purpose of the missions program and how it impacts the whole of the church body.

2. *Structure of the Missions Task force:* This section would specify the requirements for task force candidates, responsibilities of the task force, sub-task force structure, and length of service for task force members. Just remember that as you set structures, let the structures serve the long-term vision, not inhibit the work that needs to be done.

3. *Financial Policies:* The Policy will set guidelines for financial goals and priorities. We recommend that every church dedicate a minimum of 10 percent of the total church budget for missions (cross-cultural only), with at least a quarter of that being dedicated to work among unreached people groups. Then, do a faith promise program that will help the mission's budget grow even faster. I like to refer to Faith Promise giving as, "grace motivated and empowered" giving.

4. *Policies on Missionary Care and Support*: This section will answer questions like these: Is there a limit on the amount the church will provide for a missionary? How will the church care for missionaries on furlough? What kind of accountability is expected from the missionaries supported by the church?

5. *Missions Education Planner*: This portion would lay out a long-term plan for implementing missions education into all facets of the education, children through adults. This section could also spell out guidelines for the annual missions conference.

6. *Long-Term Missions Strategy*: This section would set long-term goals and the steps needed to reach those goals. The strategy should fit in with the philosophy of missions of the church. In the manual and /or seminar, *On The Cutting Edge* Appendix C, #3, you will find resources for developing your Missions Policy and Strategy.

### **What Does This Look Like in the Real World?**

AIMS has published an interactive manual called *On The Cutting Edge*. In addition to covering other specific missions ventures, this manual offers a step-by-step guide through the steps in developing a missions task force and writing a policy. This is a crucial venture for a church that truly intends to rewrite the eternal destiny of people in other cultures (See Appendix C, #3).

Lance Stoddart, missions pastor at Bethel Temple in Hampton, VA, told us how this works in his church. “The policy becomes the map, or guide, to help you reach your final goals,” he said. “Without a clear missions policy that everyone believes in and supports, you’re susceptible to whatever sounds good, or whatever tugs the hardest at your heartstrings.”

Stoddart added, “Prior to establishing our missions policy, Bethel’s monthly support roster gave a good indication of the lack of clarity and strategy in its approach to missions. It was impossible to tell what priorities our church had for missions, if indeed we had any. In developing the policy, we had to ask ourselves what our priorities in missions were.”

Pastor Stoddart and his task force took that question to the Lord, and they came back with this list:

- Church planting
- Leadership training
- Focusing on unreached peoples
- Equipping the congregation for the work of ministry in an international setting

Then they set their priorities. Pastor Stoddart explained, “Our highest priority for Bethel Temple is identifying, equipping, placing and supporting church planting teams among the unreached people groups we believe God has called us to target. A lower priority is funding leadership training which emphasizes reaching the unreached. A still lower priority is funding a medical missionary working in an area that is already evangelized. Our lowest priority would be

funding workers who assist an established national church in advancing their own home missions strategy.”

He noted, “Of course there are exceptions. God’s will always supercedes our written document, so we wrote the document to reflect that.” (For more information about how Bethel Temple specifically has applied this concept of building a missions task force and writing a missions policy, I invite you to turn to *On The Cutting Edge* Appendix C, #3 at the back of this book.)

Bethel Temple has recognized an important point—strategy makes a great servant, but it’s a lousy master. It should provide a framework for your cross-cultural outreach without ever controlling it. As the great missionary John R. Mott once remarked, “If these great things are to be achieved we must pay what it costs. What will be the price? Undoubtedly it involves giving ourselves to the study of missionary problems and strategy with all the thoroughness and tirelessness which have characterized the intellectual work of those men who have brought the most benefit to mankind.”<sup>2</sup> When we are willing to pay that price, we will sow the seeds of victory.

## Chapter 7: Can't Be Done Without Supply Lines

*"To know the will of God we need an open Bible and an open map."*  
- William Carey

On the morning of June 5, 1967, Israel declared war by bombing air bases housing Egyptian, Syrian, Jordanian, and even Iraqi military air units, rendering them almost useless. Within a few days, Israel had also taken over air bases in Sinai, Jerusalem and the West Bank. By the sixth and final day of the war, they had also pushed Egyptian and Syrian forces beyond the reach of Galilee.

The Six-Day War, as it has become known in history, was won before a single shot was ever fired. For years, Israeli had invested heavily in intelligence operations that would bring them intimately close with their enemy. With the help of spies from Israel, Egypt, Europe and America, Israel was able to infiltrate the Egyptian and Assyrian militaries and political infrastructures on the highest level gaining priceless information that would become very useful in battle.

That information allowed Israel intelligence to break the Egyptian code and relay a false message diverting a pilot who was preparing to bomb Israeli lines. When the pilot questioned his orders, the intelligence officer was able to provide detailed information about his wife and family as proof. The pilot dropped the bomb into the sea instead and aborted the mission.

In another incidence, an Israeli intelligence officer gained enough information to impersonate an Egyptian officer and divert a lost battalion in Sinai away from the Israeli line. The officer was led back to the POW camp where Israeli troops took control of Egyptian tanks and soldiers.

Even King Hussein of Jordan admitted that Israeli preparation won the war. "Their pilots knew exactly what to expect...their pilots had a complete catalogue of the most minute details of each of the thirty-two Arab air bases, what objectives to strike, where, when and how. We had nothing like that."<sup>1</sup>

All in all, Israel won the war because they laid the ground work ahead of time. Years of preparation paid off, and a war was won in only six days. *Both sides recognized that wars can be won or lost because of the availability of resources and research.*

### Supply Lines are Crucial

Supply lines are not just important in physical wars. They are crucial in spiritual wars as well. In looking back at the account of Living Stones Fellowship in Chapter 1, individuals as well as churches must prepare in a variety of ways. After hearing the initial *Harvest Connection* seminar, they invited me back to teach *Final Focus*, another seminar that trained specifically in adopting an unreached people group. While the church as a whole took steps in adopting the

Somalis of Tanzania, teams began to pray specifically for the people group. Over the course of many visits, various short-term teams spent years working alongside refugees, constructing homes, wells, medical clinics, and building relationships. All these activities developed a wonderful supply line so that when God began to move in the hearts of the refugees, they were ready to respond. Today, churches exist within that Somali refugee camp because Living Stones Fellowship and AIMS established appropriate logistical supply lines that paved the way.

Your church can do the same thing. But it must begin with your leaders. When leaders personally invest in cross-cultural ministry, their personal regard for the great global battle for the eternal future of individuals and of entire people groups begins to grow. Remember that no two churches are alike. As you seek God's creativity in this process, you will find incredible resources right within your church body. He has a specific plan to help you mobilize those resources, develop a supply line, and then keep it open. I can't give you the exact details. God has a unique plan for your church. But I can give you some general suggestions that can apply to every local church.

The process of mobilizing resources and enlisting individuals for global battlefields generally follows a specific, six point course. The first three items speak to the mobilization of resources. The last three speak to the enlisting of participants. These six items don't necessarily happen in order, but they are all crucial. Here are the six points:

- Praying
- Learning
- Giving
- Sending
- Welcoming (new immigrants)
- Going

These six steps of personalizing the Great Commission will help any believer to actualize the promises of both the old and New Testament in being part of God's Great Commission community. Note the promise to Israel, and now the church, in Isaiah 49:8-9

This is what the LORD says:

In the time of my favor I will answer you,  
and in the day of salvation I will help you;  
I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people,  
to restore the land  
and to reassign its desolate inheritances,  
to say to the captives, 'Come out,'  
and to those in darkness, 'Be free!'  
They will feed beside the roads and find pasture on every barren hill.

We see that the Lord promised five things: First, in the time of His favor, he will answer us; second, in the day of salvation, He will help us; third, He also will keep us (keep is a military term referring to guarding a city); fourth, He will make us to be a covenant for the people to restore the land; fifth, the end result of these promises is that we become His “covenant connector” from Him to those who still abide in darkness. The end result is those in darkness are reassigned from their desolation and brought out of darkness into the light of God’s Kingdom. God announces—BE FREE! This is a result of our personalizing the Great Commission. Wouldn’t it be simply fantastic if every believer did this?

When most churches venture into the arena of cross-cultural outreach within that framework, the Holy Spirit begins to grow their leader’s personal missions vision larger and larger. Adequately expressed, this growing concern, interest and vision speaks volumes to lay leaders or missions activists, who can also invest themselves in those six elements that fuel the missions growth spiral.

So, let’s take a look at the first three items in that list, to see how local churches can establish healthy supply lines for those fighting on the world’s spiritual frontlines.

### **Impacting the World through Prayer**

At AIMS, we always say that prayer is the first work of missions and the ongoing work of missions. It is the most important work we can do for missions. Without intercession, all the programs and methods in the world won’t accomplish anything. Patrick Johnstone, originator of *Operation World*, says “When we work and don’t pray, we work. When we work *and* pray, God works!”<sup>2</sup>

R. A. Torrey once noted that we live in an age that depends on man’s planning and machinery and determination. In fact, he said, the Church has never been better organized or physically ready to accomplish everything God has commanded. “Our machinery is wonderful,” he noted, “it is just perfect; but alas it is machinery without power; and when things do not go right, instead of going to the real source of our failure, our neglect to depend upon God and to look to God for power, we look around to see if there is not some new organization we can set up, some new wheel that can be added to our machinery.”

Torrey concluded, “We have altogether too many wheels already. What we need is not so much some new organization, some new wheel.” According to this wise Christian leader, we need God’s power. And we lack that power, because we fail to pray. “Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God’s infinite grace and power,” he explains. “But we must use the key.”<sup>3</sup>

Strategic prayer may birth “burdens” for specific countries or people groups. We saw that in Pastor Johnson’s story, but I’ve heard it from people all over the world. In 2005, during an international training of Church of God (Cleveland, TN), the seventy top denominational leaders from across Asia began experiencing a paradigm shift. “We don’t have enough prayer.” As the conference came to a halt, participants from India, Australia, Indonesia, the Philippines and other Asian countries began to seek God and intercede for the world’s unreached people groups. During that hour, things changed. Earlier in the year, these leaders had decided to focus on ten

unreached people groups in Asia, the Middle East, Europe and Africa. After their intercession, they felt the Holy Spirit guiding them to focus their efforts on more!

1. *Individual prayer.* Every Christian should be committed to individual daily prayer for the world. As you've probably discovered, however, this type of commitment is not easy to fulfill. Whenever you make a commitment to pray, everything possible seems to distract you. Even "good things" get in the way. Prayer is hard work, but it is an essential part. And, as a side benefit, God uses it to generate in you a greater vision and heart for the work.

You also may have discovered how difficult it is to spend extended periods of time in prayer for missions without knowing any specific needs. Without pertinent information, prayer becomes a quick "God-bless-all-the-missionaries-Amen!"

Personally, I recommend that every Bible-believing Christian should get and use a copy of *Operation World* by Jason Mandryk. This informative guidebook provides a framework for systematic prayer for every nation in the world. Within a year of using this resource on a daily basis, you will pray strategically and specifically for every country. This book has such good and broad information covering topics such as the geography, social, cultural, political and group specific needs. Many parents of homeschoolers use this book as a teaching aid. By using it with a world map, you will see the world with new eyes. For years, Christianity has struggled to form in Somalia. Believers have been persecuted or martyred for their faith. But God chose a camp of refugees in Tanzania to begin to grow a church. Why? Because individuals in a church in Indiana began to pray.

2. *Family prayer.* I also encourage family prayer times. A world map is an especially great learning tool for children. As a family prays for a specific country, the children can locate it. Train your family to view every source of world information as a potential prayer guide. One family watches the evening news, and then takes time to pray for the various issues covered that evening. Another family learns fascinating things about other cultures through *National Geographic* articles and prays for those people groups to receive God's Word.

3. *Corporate prayer.* To be successful, prayer at the small group or congregational level requires not only commitment, but also leadership. It should come primarily from the pastoral staff and the missions committee, so the congregation sees prayer as the priority. The pastoral staff must model this. Emphasize prayer in your teaching and in the establishment of your programs.

Plans for group prayer may take many different forms. A *missions prayer fellowship*, meeting at least monthly, can spend concentrated time in corporate prayer. Group prayer requires at least as much information as individual prayer does. This kind of vital information is available in *newsletters from missionaries* supported by your church. Keep your congregation aware of specific needs. Information from newsletters and other sources can be included in customized *bulletin inserts*, *bulletin board notices* or *minute for missions* prayer times during worship services. Your church may want to host an entire evening of prayer. Any initiative you supply in organizing these things is precious, because prayer is the key to world evangelization.

## **Learning about the World**

It's impossible to discuss prayer without bringing up the learning element, too. You need something to pray about, of course. But head knowledge gained through reading and research is just a starting point. Ideally, the goal is to move your congregation to learning by experience. Start by inviting veteran missionaries to describe their personal experiences. People need these opportunities to relate to missionaries as real, fallible, growing people. This also provides a great atmosphere to ask questions about their work, their motivations, and their discoveries.

Planning a *missions conference* can give your local church an even more concentrated dose of missions vision. Expect the conference to both educate and inspire the congregation, but be ready for some other exciting benefits, too. For example, a missions conference gives interested visitors an appropriate context for considering the universal claims of Christ. The conference challenges believers to examine their commitment to the advancement of Christ's Kingdom. Plus, churches that have an annual missions conference tend to give two to three times more to world missions than other churches and have greater income per capita in general.

Get creative when planning a missions conference. Having guest speakers or missionaries whom your church supports would be great; however, remember that a capable missionary might not necessarily be an accomplished public speaker. Choose guest speakers carefully so the conference does not include mixed messages or contradicting elements. It can be wise to choose a theme that each speaker can contribute specific information or insights.

Creating a colorful, festive, and exciting atmosphere will greatly enhance your conference. Flags, maps, authentic costumes, and displays create an interactive environment. Consider inviting various missions agencies to host booths. There is no limit to the things you can do: missions-related films and slide shows, having special meals and banquets, hosting youth activities, and using lots of missions music. One church transformed Sunday school rooms into four countries, one for each of the missionaries speaking at the conference. People visited each "country" and learned about that area of the world, talked to the missionary, and sampled ethnic food. Similarly, another church had a Buddhist room, a Tribal room, a Muslim room, a China room, and a Hindu room. They also had a Mobilization room where the visitors learned about mobilizing the local church for missions. (For more ideas about how to host a missions conference and resources that will help you plan one, order [MissionsConference.Org](http://MissionsConference.Org) from AIMS.)

There are many ways to schedule a missions conference. For example, some churches devote an entire month to missions emphasis, with special activities each Sunday and on various days throughout the month. Others may have a weeklong conference with meetings every evening and concluding with a big banquet or "rally" on Saturday or Sunday evening. Some simply have a weekend conference, beginning on Friday evening and continuing through Sunday. A church can work out almost any schedule, depending on the needs of the specific congregation. What is important is to schedule the events in such a manner that a majority of the congregation can and will attend!

A missions conference takes work, planning, and a lot of prayer, but it is a great way to get your congregation involved in missions. Whether you have a one-day conference or a one-month conference, have a conference!

## Giving and the “Faith Promise”

In Chapter 3, we discussed the abysmal statistics that indicate the lack of global investment on the part of American Christians. Although resources are not limited to money, the bottom line is that financial investment is crucial to cross-cultural ministry. Faith-filled generosity is an indispensable component for growth in missions vision, be it moral, financial, prayer or logistical support. Prayer groups provide a tremendous opportunity for individuals to make personal investment of time and of personal involvement. A ministry of encouragement through letters or gifts to missionaries is vitally significant, too. But as Malla Moe, veteran missionary to South Africa, once said, “The Gospel of Jesus Christ is free, but it takes money to keep the Gospel Wagon in Tongaland.”<sup>4</sup>

While I believe in and even challenge churches to apportion a percentage of their church offerings for missions, the budgetary apportionment method alone can severely limit the congregation’s vision for giving. Faith Promise giving is one of the most effective and meaningful ways to increase missions giving. In fact, thousands of churches have doubled their missions giving through Faith Promises! The renowned pastor and missionary statesman of the People’s Church in Toronto, Dr. Oswald J. Smith, testified that it was through the Faith Promise method that God taught him to give to missions. For more than 60 years, his leadership and that of his son have made the People’s Church one of the world’s premiere missions-active church, giving millions of dollars to missions yearly and the giving of the Peoples Church rolls on. It’s even gone up to 60% on some occasions.

For a Scriptural understanding of what I mean by Faith Promise, let’s first examine two important passages.

1. *Old Testament.* Remember the story of God’s request that Abraham should sacrifice Isaac? In the process of going to the specified place for the sacrifice, Isaac said to his father, “The fire and wood are here, but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?” Abraham answered, “God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son,” (Genesis 22:7c-8a). Note that Abraham trusted God entirely to make provision for the sacrifice that he was commanded to offer. The NIV phrases verse 8: “God Himself will provide the lamb.” In the NKJ, it’s phrased: “God will provide for Himself the lamb.” The Hebrew language has strange and wonderful twists that allows God Himself to be used in either order. So, we see that God Himself provides for Himself, and His mission, through us!

2. *New Testament.* Now take note of the Apostle Paul’s testimony. “For I testify that they [the Macedonian churches] gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints. And they did not do as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s will,” (2 Corinthians 8:3-5; 9:8). The Macedonians gave “as they were able” and “even beyond their ability.”

Based on those Scriptures, when you make a Faith Promise, first ask God to reveal the amount you should trust him to specially provide for you to give. Commit to that amount and trust him to channel that money through you. Faith Promise giving is contributing what God provides above your tithe but it is an amount that you trust God in advance to provide through you for missions. Trust God to do something supernatural and miraculous.

This step is based in your faith in God’s provision. It will help you identify with the faith walk of missionaries who continually trust God, not employers, to supply their financial needs. The Faith Promise is a commitment between you and God, not you and the church or any organization. It is part of the privilege of joining in God’s work.

### **Describing the Faith Promise**

The preceding paragraphs define Faith Promise giving, but it’s equally important to explain what the Faith Promise is *not*.

1. It is *not* the tithe. The Faith Promise is always above and beyond your regular tithes, and it is for missions, not ourselves or other church projects, such as repairing the church bus.

2. It is *not* a pledge that is owed the church. It is a Faith Promise to God—not to an individual or a church. No one should pressure a person to “pay up.”

3. It is *not* to be a foolish, impulsive commitment. Instead, it is based on prayer. Church leaders who promote Faith Promise giving must give everyone ample time to pray and hear from God.

4. It is *not* designed to glorify the individuals who participate. Faith Promises focus on what God does to provide the pledged amount. No glory goes to the individual.

### **Strategic Details**

Although the Faith Promise is not the same as a church pledge, I still recommend that the church ask people to fill out a form for three reasons:

1. If all Faith Promises are to be channeled through the church missions budget, having the completed forms gives the missions task force a guideline for budget planning.

2. The act of signing a piece of paper makes people take a commitment more seriously, being more consistent in prayer and more aware of how God is bringing in the money.

3. If the form is signed by a regular church member, the committee knows it is valid. This eliminates the possibility of someone making an anonymous, insincere promise of a large amount.

God will use an amazing variety of ways to provide for a Faith Promise. A person might save a little extra by reordering priorities. For example, a person might give up something such as a daily cup of coffee and channel those extra funds to the Faith Promise. Or, someone could try something creative to bring in extra funds like the housewife who trusts God to bring in orders for her special pastries. Finally, God might bring in the money in unexpected ways—a check in the mail for the exact amount of the Promise, a surprise inheritance, a bonus at work. That is what makes Faith Promise giving so exciting—seeing how God honors your commitment

and uses you to channel money into Kingdom work. Faith Promise giving stretches the believer's faith in the whole enterprise of the church.

If Faith Promise giving is a new concept to the congregation, I recommend that the leadership spend adequate time teaching Biblical stewardship and stress the importance of Faith Promise. Then, as part of a missions conference or a special Sunday service, the church can have a Faith Promise service where people fill out cards and spend time in prayer over them. Then watch for God to work financial miracles. I know that from my own experience, but also, people all over the world have told me their own stories, substantiating my claim that Faith Promise giving builds a supply line for missions, but it also builds the faith of the giver. Remember, this is why I also call Faith Promise giving, "Grace Motivated and Empowered" giving.

### **One Testimony**

Five years ago, Without Walls Church in Fort Worth, Texas, began hosting an annual missions conference. Located on the east loop of I-820S in the city of Fort Worth, Without Walls Church focuses on reaching the poor around them. Their congregation of 150 is far from rich.

"Our church is located in the poorest part of the city by choice," said Carolyn Hedgepeth, Missions Director of Without Walls Church. "We have been doing Faith Promise giving since the beginning and are seeing more of our people respond and with greater faith."

Last year, the church gave more than \$34,000 to missions. This year, the church expanded their conference to four weeks with seven different speakers. Within just 4 months, the church had given almost \$24,000—more than 70% over what they had given at this time last year.

That's why each year, Without Walls Church gives people an opportunity to make Faith Promises. The people fill out a form that says, "As God enables me, I will express my faith and help to evangelize the world by giving to the missions program of Without Walls Church. I understand this Faith Promise is a commitment between me and God for the next 12 months. I understand I will not be asked for payment at any time."

"It deeply impacted the life of the church, so much that our pastor has asked that we do the same next year," said Carolyn. "We are rejoicing and moving on in faith to see what God wants to do with us in the future.

Carolyn Hedgepeth's testimony represents the experience of countless people and countless congregations worldwide. Any individual or group who will invest personal time, talent and resources in cross-cultural outreach will contribute to the surge of a missions wave through your congregation. The Church worldwide is, in a sense, an all-volunteer army. As our vision grows, our commitment can grow as well. It is up to the Holy Spirit in you to direct your vision to comprehend and use the resources available to you. Conviction, commitment and courage will equip the local churches everywhere to mobilize for victory.

## Chapter 8: Building a Squadron

*“The Great Commission is not an option to be considered; it is a command to be obeyed.”*  
- J. Hudson Taylor

On June 5, 1944, the evening before the Normandy Invasion, General George S. Patton addressed the men under his command in the Third Army. He reminded them of all the things they had learned in training and drilling—to stay alert, because their lives and their friends’ lives depended on it. He offered examples to drive home his point. He bluntly told them, “You are not all going to die. Only two percent of you here today would die in a major battle. Death must not be feared... Yes, every man is scared in his first battle. If he says he’s not, he’s a liar... The real hero is the man who fights even though he is scared.”

But what stood out most was that Patton had confidence in the men under his command: “We have the finest food, the finest equipment, the best spirit, and the best men in the world. Why...I actually pity those poor (Germans) we’re going up against.”<sup>1</sup>

### The Spiritual Application

The stories that have surfaced from that D-Day invasion echo with the courage that Patton saw in his men. They trained and prepared. They fought hard. Many sacrificed their lives. Some who survived were scarred for life. But their courage saw them through to victory.

If local churches want to hasten a similar victory for our Lord’s Kingdom, we must raise up men and women who have the kind of courage and fortitude to see the battle through to victory. Not everyone will serve on the frontlines. After all, World War II was won in part by those who stayed home, sacrificed and worked to provide the resources necessary to fight. Even among those who served in the military, some were medics, truck drivers or cooks. Think of the famous “Rosie the Riveter,” women who helped produce military equipment.

Patton himself noted, “All of the real heroes are not storybook combat fighters...every man in this Army plays a vital role. Don’t ever let up. Don’t ever think that your job is unimportant... Every man is a vital link in the great chain...Every department, every unit, is important to the vast scheme of this war. The ordnance men are needed to supply the guns and machinery of war to keep us rolling. The Quartermaster is needed to bring up food and clothes because where we are going there isn’t...a lot to steal. Every last man on K.P. has a job to do, even the one who heats our water...”<sup>2</sup>

The same is true in the local church. Everyone has a job to do in this Great War. To win, we must raise up people who will courageously persevere in the battle. Some will labor at home. Many of their tasks have been discussed in preceding chapters. But others are called to the frontlines. The first step may very well be a short-term mission trip.

## Short-Term Missions

In the previous chapter, we discussed the importance of learning about the world to focus our prayers more effectively. Some people will learn by experience through short-term outreaches. These temporary cross-cultural ministry experiences do not require a career commitment. Whether lasting one week or two years, short-term missions trips, if conducted with the proper preparation, attitudes, and follow-up, can bring a multitude of blessings in the following five ways:

1. *For the participant.* A missions trip provides experience in sharing the Gospel in a cross-cultural context. You'll learn to live with people from other countries and backgrounds, and you'll see God answer prayer. It'll be tough, but you'll build character. Your vision will grow as God uses you. Maybe you'll change your college major or career. At the very least, you'll be better equipped for prayer and service in your church.

2. *For family and friends.* For Christian friends and family, a missions trip offers an opportunity to participate through prayer and financial support, even for your non-Christian family and friends. Your participation may open the door to discuss your motivations and beliefs.

3. *For the church.* In the local church, people who participate in missions trips return with increased experience, understanding and maturity, preparing them for more leadership in the body of Christ.

4. *For mission agencies.* Short-term trips inspire new missions candidates. Over 80 percent of those currently recruited for career missions felt some type of calling through a short-term trip. God uses short-term experiences to call people to career missions. Also, your support and service can be a blessing to the career missionary on the field.

5. *For the lost people in other nations.* God uses short-term outreaches to lay a foundation that others can build upon. Short-term missions is a strategic part of world evangelization, but make sure that your trips are, in fact, strategic and help the Kingdom of God truly advance.

## Options in Short-Term Ministry

The length of missions trips varies from case to case, from “encounter” trips lasting few weeks to commitments of one or two years. AIMS can provide information on brief encounter trips through Youth With A Mission (YWAM) or with agencies seeking people with specific skills for longer periods of time.

Short-term ministry comes in many shapes and sizes: street evangelism, drama, construction, child evangelism, crusades, church planting, relief work, support type work (clerical etc.) for a missionary or agency, etc. Some trips are organized simply to “spy out the land” and intercede on-site. On these trips, often in countries where open evangelism is prohibited, teams spend the majority of its time praying for the country or a people group.

Whatever the type of trip, make sure it is truly *ministry* focused. Don't organize a church group for a so-called short-term "missions trip" to Hong Kong—to go shopping! (This actually happened!)

For a group of first-time missionary apprentices, it is best to go to a "harvest" location -- an area where people will be open to the Gospel. For example, regarding the inexperienced, Latin America would be a better place to begin than a closed, Muslim country. But be careful about locking yourself in to places that don't need your long-term investment. In some cases, those evangelized-Christianized areas know better themselves how to develop missionary-sending strategies. Don't get "sucked in" to just helping national churches do their home missions work.

Pastor Terry Roberts of Faith Christian Fellowship in Warrenton, Missouri, already had a heart for missions when he attended a *Harvest Connection* seminar, but soon learned that he was missing so much more. While his congregation succeeded at reaching out locally targeting similar cultures, they had no idea how to engage with the unreached around the world. Short-term missions opened the door to a world that completely changed the way Pastor Roberts and his church approached missions. He explained: "I already had a missions perspective...I was just ignorant with the ends of the earth perspective. Going with AIMS to an unreached area opened my eyes to a vision for those who had never heard the Gospel."

### **Training is Crucial**

Now, a word of caution. Without the proper training and preparation, a short-term trip can end up doing more harm than good. Participants may not handle the culture shock. They can become a hindrance to the field missionary. Or even if things go well on the field, the short-term missionary might come back and experience disillusionment and anger toward the home culture and church. Appropriate training should include topics such as evangelism, cultural entry, culture shock, serving the field missionary and indigenous church, team dynamics, and reverse culture shock. Appendix D includes training materials for short-term missions candidates.

Attitude is another major contributor to the success or failure of a short-term missions experience. In one word, the correct attitude is *servant hood*. A team member who goes as a know-it-all, wanting to plunge in and save the world single-handedly, will not be a blessing on the field! A successful missionary will do anything possible to serve the local people and the field missionary. Whether the need is cleaning toilets in an orphanage or filing documents in an agency's office, he or she will do it. The team member must not have critical attitudes toward the career missionary or toward the culture. If such problems arise, they should be discussed privately with the group leadership. A humble and cheerful attitude will not only help the career missionary and the rest of the short-term team, but it can also be the strongest evangelistic witness you can have.

Most funding for short-term ministry trips should come through the initiatives of the participants themselves rather than from the church missions budget. Otherwise, church expenditures for missions will be out of balance, failing to give proper aid to the long-term commitments of skilled missions veterans using long-term strategies. Team members can raise

funds by drawing on savings, doing extra work, and asking friends and family to get involved. Watch out for “Black Holes” that just absorb resources without any measurable and observable fruit.

I have been in 89 countries of the world and have worked with multiple national, indigenous groups. One of the great “black holes” of missions is Westerners and others giving money to the indigenous church without accountability or strategic direction. A black hole occurs when money is given, projects are executed, and training is done, but there is no lasting fruit that advances God’s Kingdom. An excellent book is *When Helping Hurts* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, published by Moody Publishers. Corbett and Fikkert explore supporting indigenous groups and alleviating poverty without hurting the poor and ourselves. Dependency needs to be avoided, even while we are generating greater resources to help national, indigenous churches send out their missionaries to unreached people groups.

### **Make the Most of the Experience**

Before you go, learn all you can about the culture. Share your excitement with friends, family, and congregation. Receive proper training and spend time in prayer. While on the trip, keep that servant’s attitude and really get to know the people around you. Even with language and cultural barriers, people from all parts of the world appreciate genuine interest and concern for them. Take time to communicate; however you have to do it, with people from the other culture. Learn all you can about them as individuals, and about their culture. And of course, keep praying!

*A short-term trip is not a success if it does not make you more effective in ministry once you get home.* Bring back attitudes and skills learned on the mission field to your church at home. Share your experiences with others to communicate enthusiasm for missions, but be careful. Guard yourself against the common, human temptation to return with a judgmental attitude.

During Pastor Roberts' first trip to Romania and Moldova, he met a Romanian leader who was reaching the unreached around him. Inspired upon his return, Pastor Roberts and Family Christian Church began a partnership with an organization in St. Louis that was providing humanitarian aid to the city's large immigrant community. Pastor Roberts continued his training in Manchester, England, and began regularly mentoring and teaching pastors throughout Europe to reach the unreached around them. He hopes to develop multiple church plants in migrant communities including one in St. Louis. The prospects excite him: "I see the potential for incredible revival and even church planting among the unreached all over Europe."<sup>3</sup>

As for Faith Christian Fellowship, the congregation has experienced tremendous church growth. In an area with a population of about 8,000, church membership has reached more than 1,000. Several individuals and couples have answered the call to become cross-cultural mobilizers in China, Moldova, Thailand, and other parts of the world. "God has blessed us because we have adjusted and Biblically straightened out our priorities," said Pastor Roberts. "In some churches, we have a 'get home fixed first' mentality...I think we've all become healthier by realizing that it's not wasting money or time to reach out."<sup>3</sup>

The number of short-term mission trips has grown exponentially in the past few decades. In the United States, Americans spent more than \$1.6 billion on short-term mission trips in 2006 alone.<sup>4</sup> With this amount of money being spent, it is crucial that we focus our mission trips with the right intent: to best assist the nationals and the long-term missionaries working with them, not to hurt them or leave a mess for them to clean up. While the intent of most teams is to help, without proper preparation, they can collide with the different cultural patterns in the region. Investment into effective missions training is never wasted and will bring a greater effectiveness on the field.

### **Mentoring Local Recruits**

Beyond raising up short-termers, every local church also should be in the business of recruiting, enlisting, training, and commissioning career missionaries for this worldwide harvest. I believe the local church should partner with schools that train missionaries and with agencies that equip and manage missionary enterprises. The local church should be an active and assertive home base for missions preparation and deployment.

The financial support of Family Christian Church to mission ministries was just the beginning. They began mobilizing members of their congregation to start working with the community in very practical ways: teaching English as a second language, donating clothing and furniture, helping immigrants learn how to drive, or working on a local farm to teach them how to grow their own food. This is missions preparation in action.

But too often, missionary preparation takes a different path. "Joe" expresses his interest in becoming a missionary to his pastor, who recommends that Joe attend his alma mater located two hundred miles away. So Joe goes off to a Bible school, which has no missions major. He takes Bible classes and one class on the history of missions. He gets summer and weekend jobs wherever he can, working and borrowing his way through school.

Four years later, Joe searches desperately for a "sending agency" that does not require him to have majored in missions. He finds a small "faith ministry" that tells him they need all the help they can get. He returns to the church to ask for support, but his pastor is long gone, having moved to a different congregation two states away. Because he has lived out of state for four years, Joe has few ties with the remaining congregation members who mainly knew him as a child. But one deacon knows Joe's aunt who sings in the choir, so the church agrees to support Joe—at a mere \$25 a month.

Disheartened by the lack of support from home base, Joe contacts the church he faithfully attended while in college. While the pastor is sympathetic and acknowledges that Joe demonstrated some teaching ability teaching their fifth grade Sunday school class, he explains that 17 other members are also recent graduates and are already on the missions budget. Inundated with requests for financial support, the congregation is unable to squeeze Joe into their budget for at least another year.

Joe approaches another minister, the father of one of his college friends, but the pastor wavers when he learns that Joe has no established track record of cross-cultural ministry. "I've

been too busy working to pay for schooling,” Joe explains. “Even with all that work, I still owe for some college loans,” he emphasizes.

With that, the pastor gives Joe a firm “no,” stating that his congregation never gives to missionaries who might apply the money to school debts. “We fund overseas ministry, not college degrees.”

### **It Could Be Done Differently**

Nowadays, as in the First Century, God wants to use the local church to reach the world. Everyone’s ministry begins in his or her personal Jerusalem, extending outward throughout the world.

When "Mike" approaches his pastor, we see a different model than Joe’s, for he is directed toward the first step of a systematic, home-based preparation process. The pastor refers him to the church’s missions counselor (the missions director, missions elder, experienced missions task force member, or even the pastor himself), who will lead Mike through the following steps in exploring his interest.

1. *The Missionary Interest Stage.* In this stage, which usually lasts 3-6 months, missionary candidates learn whether they have a general burden for missions or possess the specific call to minister in cross-cultural missions. They can prove their call by doing the following:

- Make a commitment to the home church and establish a proven, active ministry in the church.
- Read and pray through *Operation World* daily, and pray regularly for a missionary supported by the church.
- Interview a missionary to gain understanding of what is involved.
- Check in with the missions counselor monthly for a review of progress.
- Do local cross-cultural research, such as visiting an ethnic church and make friends among the group.
- Complete specific reading and listening assignments. Contact AIMS for a copy of *Missionary Preparation for the Local Church* to help with this step.
- Have a final evaluation with the missions counselor; if candidate and counselor mutually agree, advance to the next stage.

2. *Missionary Discipleship Stage.* After Mike has established that he is called to missions, he proceeds to the Missionary Discipleship Stage, which lasts about 10 to 12 months. In this stage, he will:

- Establish a more in-depth relationship of counseling/discipleship with the missions counselor.
- Continue to pray through *Operation World*, and for missionaries.
- Complete a personal discipleship course in the church.
- Identify his spiritual gifts and ministries. (This should be part of the discipleship course.)
- Complete AIMS *Missions Foundations* course, or a similar entry-level missions curriculum.
- Work in a regular, local cross-cultural ministry (such as helping in a poor community, or tutoring an international student).
- Complete AIMS' short-term missions training manual or similar course, and participate in a 2-3 week missions trip.
- Write a statement of life purpose and a 5-year plan for developing a missionary career.
- Complete reading and listening assignments.
- Develop a plan for formal Bible and missions training.
- Meet with the missions task force for evaluation and strategy for future training and ministry.
- Have a final evaluation with the missions counselor; if candidate and counselor are in agreement, advance to the next stage.

3. *Missionary Training Stage.* The Missionary Training Stage may take 2-4 years. Although prospective missionaries may go off to school at this point, they are still vitally tied to the coaching and support team of the home church. They will not be merely “handed over” to a Bible school. Now their goals are to:

- Complete the equivalent of a four-year college degree with a foundation in general education, Bible knowledge, theology, missiology, and practical theology. Some churches prefer to train future missionaries themselves rather than sending them to a Bible college or missionary training institution. This can be done successfully if the church follows a solid educational program. For churches that do not have their own program in place, contact AIMS for a copy of its curriculum called *Missionary Preparation for the Local Church*.
- Continue praying for the world, using *Operation World*, and for missionaries supported by the church.
- Continue local cross-cultural ministry.

- If attending Bible college, send a report to the missions counselor bi-annually and schedule an annual personal interview.
- Refine the five-year plan and annual goals.
- Complete reading and listening assignments for this stage. Bible students might be reading missions materials at school, but just in case they are not, a missions counselor should suggest appropriate books for this stage.
- Write to missions agencies for information on field deployment or to determine a church-based sending strategy.
- Complete a 2-3 month missionary internship. Work with the church, Bible college, a missions agency, or AIMS in partnership with YWAM can devise an internship.
- Meet with the church's missions task force for final evaluation and advancement to the next stage.

4. *Missionary Apprenticeship Stage.* During this 2-4 year phase, a missions agency will supervise the candidate without severing ties with the church. This stage contains the following advanced training experiences:

- Select an agency or develop a church-based sending plan for a two- to four-year apprenticeship with a missionary on the field.
- Prepare a strategy statement and a job description for the apprenticeship period.
- Complete the reading and listening assignments for this stage.
- Raise personal support.
- Have a commissioning in the home church.
- Depart to the field; work under a senior missionary mentor.
- Do language study on the field.
- Report to the church missions task force bi-annually.

5. *Missionary Mentor Stage.* In this final stage, a missionary mentor performs his ministry both on the field and at home while on furlough. This stage may consist of the following:

- Seek graduate education is advisable.
- Perform some mobilization and training ministry in the local church.
- Lead a short-term trip from the church if possible.
- Select a team to train and mentor (if relevant to field goals).

- Raise personal support.
- Be commissioned with the team for a three- to four-year term.
- Depart for the field.
- Do further language study as needed.
- Mentor apprentice missionaries.

By receiving clear coaching from his home church and partnership with a training institution and sending agency, the field missionary candidate develops thorough training and experience while maintaining strong ties with his local congregation. The candidate has experienced real commitment and accountability in a local fellowship and is more likely to pass on such Biblical values in the field ministry. In addition, since that home church has invested time and energy into the candidate, it will more likely continue to under gird his ministry success.

### **Back to Basics**

I've given lots of strategic information, but I want to close with a reminder. At the beginning of this chapter, I quoted a speech given by General Patton on the eve of the Normandy Invasion. It was intended to rouse his soldiers' courage. But that same General Patton—the one who believed in planning and preparation—also believed in prayer. On December 8, 1944, he told his chaplain, "...any great military operation takes careful planning or thinking. Then you must have well-trained troops to carry it out...But between the plan and the operation there is always an unknown. That unknown spells defeat or victory, success or failure. It is the reaction of the actors to the ordeal when it actually comes. Some people call that getting the breaks; I call it God."

Patton continued, "Up to now, in the Third Army, God has been very good to us. We have never retreated; we have suffered no defeats, no famine, no epidemics. This is because a lot of people back home are praying for us. We were lucky in Africa, in Sicily, and in Italy, simply because good people prayed." He then asked his chaplain to "put out a training letter on this subject of prayer" to each of the 486 chaplains in the Third Army. "We've got to get not only the chaplains, but every man in the Third Army to pray," he said. He referred to Dr. Alexis Carrel, one of the foremost scientists of that day, who described prayer as "one of the most powerful forms of energy man can generate." Patton added, "...it will be like plugging in on a current whose source is heaven. I believe that prayer completes that circuit. It is power."

The chaplain wrote the letter, and Patton signed it. That letter, in part, said this: "...those who pray do more for the world than those who fight...Gideon of Bible fame was least in his father's house. He came from Israel's smallest tribe. But he was a mighty man of valor. His strength lay not in his military might, but in his recognition of God's proper claims upon his life. He reduced his Army from thirty-two thousand to three hundred men lest the people of Israel would think that their valor had saved them. We have no intention to reduce our striking force. But we must urge, instruct, and indoctrinate every fighting man to pray as well as fight. In

Gideon's day, and in our own, spiritually alert minorities carry the burdens and bring the victories."<sup>5</sup>

Patton recognized the necessity of prayer in the physical war in which he fought. But surely, if prayer is necessary in that kind of war, it is even more important in the spiritual war in which we fight. As he noted, prayer "completes the circuit. It is power." In the spiritual war, spiritual power is the only resource that will propel us to victory. So, let me close with this reminder: *bathe every step in this process with prayer.*

## Chapter 9: Targeting—Let’s Get Specific

*“In the vast plain to the north I have sometimes seen, in the morning sun,  
the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary has ever been.”*

- Robert Moffat

Desert Storm, in Kuwait, was the first war that Americans saw live via satellite as they sat in their living rooms, circled around television sets. We watched strategic targets disappearing from the face of the Middle Eastern desert. The aerial bombardment was incredible. A captured Iraqi soldier noted that the air war did not result in many injuries or casualties among his troops—just one soldier killed and two wounded. And the one who was killed did not die from a direct hit. Rather, the vibrations of the bombing caused his bunker to cave in on top of him.

That may seem like the air war was ineffective, but that Iraqi soldier would disagree: “...it was extremely effective,” he said. “The planes hit only vehicles and equipment. Even my own personal vehicle...was hit. They hit everything. I explained to my soldiers that they should not fear the American soldiers. If the Americans wanted to kill us, I said, we would already be dead. The Americans just wanted to take away our ability to fight.”<sup>1</sup>

You see, American weaponry had grown in sophistication and power through the development of Smart bombs. In the 1980s, the F-117 Nighthawk became the Air Force's first stealth fighter. An Air Force Lieutenant Colonel called the Nighthawk "a strategic weapon that really shaped how the Air Force looked at strategic warfare." It soon became a vital part in various air campaigns in Panama, Iraq, Afghanistan and Bosnia.<sup>2</sup>

Military personnel have always known the importance of taking out strategic targets—airfields, weapons storage units, tanks, etc. Our goal in developing weaponry has been to increase our probability of success. And yet, even in Desert Storm, where civilians witnessed the incredible accuracy of these kinds of weapons, it’s important to note that no single pilot or missile launcher was tasked with the responsibility of wiping out all of the strategic sites and weapons in Iraq’s arsenal. Each pilot and each missile launcher was given a specific target. The resulting victory came as every individual pilot and missile launcher assumed that responsibility and saw it through to success. The combined effort resulted in victory for the U.S. and our allies.

Today, of course, newer technology has given us further leverage with drones. Usually covert, these unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) allow the military to access situations normally too dangerous for human pilots. Drone campaigns have been used in operations to strike terrorist targets in Afghanistan, Yemen, Somalia and Pakistan, and have become a "central component of [the U.S.] counterterrorism strategy."<sup>3</sup>

And, with the rapid advance of technology, we wonder, “after drones, what is next?”

### The Spiritual Application

As I see it, the situation is not all that different in a spiritual war. No single individual—and indeed, no single congregation or denomination—is tasked with the overwhelming responsibility to reach the whole world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Rather, each individual and each congregation is tasked with the responsibility to seek God's will, to determine the region He has assigned to them, and to mobilize effectively to reach that specific area. As hundreds and thousands of churches seek to know and to do God's will, the combined effort will result in overall victory. *Remember, there are about 1,000 churches for each unreached people group.*

In missions circles, this process is called adoption. Churches *adopt* unreached or unevangelized people groups. This adoption could also include unevangelized cities and urban areas. At AIMS, we believe this is such an important concept that we have made it part of our mission statement. We have built a resource called *Final Focus* that is available in both manual and seminar formats. It mobilizes churches for adoption.

Earlier in this book, we defined unreached or unevangelized people groups as groups of people who share a common ethnicity, language and culture. They have never effectively heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or they do not have a local church planting movement that is strong enough to reach their own people. In short, without someone stepping across traditional and cultural lines to share God's Good News of salvation with these people, they will never turn to Christ.

Adoption is literally defined as *making someone part of your family through legal means*. It implies that a family decides to increase the size of their household, choosing the exact child to claim as their own and promising to raise and nurture that child to adulthood.

That same adoption principle works in world evangelization. God wants *every local church* to expand its family. He has given specific instructions to accomplish this it by spreading His Good News at home as well as in other cultures.

For the purposes of our ministry, *adoption* means that a church decides to help evangelize a specific unreached people group or area. This church commits to allocate spiritual, physical and material resources, networking with others who share the same vision, to plant a strong indigenous church in that people group and nurture it to maturity as a self-sustaining church planting movement.

### **Adopt an Unreached People Group**

Keep in mind that I am not against the current missions work in “reached” nations, countries where an evangelizing indigenous church already exists. But the Bride of Christ must wake up to the need of the forgotten peoples as we allocate new resources in missions. I support any kind of missions work that your church is called to do. Christ calls us to reach “all nations,” but we must challenge the Church to include harder-to-reach people, the unreached people groups, whom I, along with several missions leaders, have chosen to emphasize.

Just as a husband and wife would commit themselves to providing for a child they adopt, more and more congregations are accepting responsibility for an unreached people like the

Tibetans of China or the Kurds of Iraq. God has some surprises in store for churches that adopt an unreached people. Consider the experience of one church of about 1,200 members that already had a good missions program, including several of their own homegrown career missionaries. They had also developed a missions committee, a regular prayer program, short-term teams, and they were probably giving 30-40 percent of their total revenue through faith promises and other fundraising methods for cross-cultural missions. And yet, a few years ago, God did something really new when he laid on their hearts a burden to adopt a specific unreached people group.

When they began a prayer team of 8-15 people to meet weekly to pray for the ethno-linguistic clan they had adopted, a group in a Muslim country (for security reasons, referred to here as “Afrasia”), only five or six Christians lived among this population of six million people. Because the country was completely closed to missionaries, this prayer group researched and networked with several other churches to see if they could send a team to Afrasia as “tentmakers”—skilled people who go as professionals or tradesmen and share the Gospel as they practice their trade or profession.

Because a prospective member of the tent making team had an undergraduate degree in Health, she was able to secure an entrance visa for herself, her husband and six other workers! They began to share their faith in life-style evangelism to reach Muslims for Jesus Christ. That local church caught the vision for our collective worldwide task. They prayed for it; they stimulated other churches to catch the vision; and now God has established a work there. Today, I’m glad to report, there are several hundred converts in Afrasia, meeting in house churches.

You and your church can make a difference, even in some of the most difficult and challenging areas of the world. A worldwide network of mobilized churches can surmount the barriers to the Gospel to attain “closure,” the completion of the Great Commission.

## **Phases of Adoption**

The mobilization of your congregation to reach an unreached people group would generally develop in three general phases. In actual practice, the phases overlap and some facets of phase one will continue through phase three, but let us examine them separately. AIMS offers a series of adoption resources as well as one-on-one consultation to help churches through this process. But for now, let’s look at the phases of adoption.

*1. Preparation phase.* As your local church hears about the world’s needs, begin to pray and give towards work in several countries and people groups. Your leadership can prayerfully assess the varied resources of the congregation. Through this process, the Lord will begin to define your group’s calling. Plan a general audit of your congregation to discover resources your church can contribute toward reaching a particular group. Ask these kinds of questions:

- What spiritual gifts and talents are resident within my group?
- What are my congregation’s areas of expertise?

- What resources have been hidden within my congregation? Ask God to reveal people, materials and wealth that can be used to further the cause of evangelizing an adopted people group, according to the Stewardship Mandate and the sense of mission discussed earlier.

2. *The mobilization phase.* After the Lord reveals what group to adopt, the mobilization phase begins. Focus your research on that special people group to formulate a strategy specifically for reaching them. Find the answers to questions like these:

- What are these people like?
- Who else—if anyone—is currently trying to reach them?
- How can we partner with them?

Partner with other churches or agencies whenever possible. Together, perhaps gradually, you will be able to form a strategy and plan.

3. *The implementation phase.* During this phase, put into practice what you have theorized. Begin with prayer, the first business of missions. Then, prioritize strategy elements and develop appropriate time lines to complete the tasks.

## **Details of Adoption**

Adoption is not necessarily an easy venture. It may require years of effort. Churches that do this effectively are not impulsive churches, influenced by the latest fads in church ministry, running a few sprints but never the long distances.

Mobilized churches start with a group of trained leaders: the missions task force, the missions mobilizers. Organize an annual missions conference that will bring people together to ask God for creative ways to generate financial, spiritual, and material resources for missions, and to pray about making faith promises or other methods to create a new financial base. Express your vision to raise up and prepare missionaries in the local church. Send out short-term teams and engage your congregation in local cross-cultural missions. The kind of church that will adopt an unreached people group should be moving towards all of these components of mobilization. It cannot be a spontaneous whim. You need to count the cost, because there will be a price to pay.

Adopting an unreached people group is a journey that impacts both the local church and the people group. When Jill Weigand accepted the position of Missions Director at Trinity Church in Marble Hill, GA in 2005, the church had little understanding of missions. After experiencing their first *Harvest Connection* seminar, the church developed a mission policy to target their various areas of influence beginning with the needs closest to home, reaching into surrounding areas, and taking the steps to impact people overseas.

Their first missions conference focused on local ministries supported by the church, including drug and alcohol recovery programs, pregnancy centers, and local Young Life and YMCA representatives. "We had prayed with people for the nations for several years before the church even began, but they had no knowledge of the unreached within the 10/40 Window," said

Jill. "We sent them home with an assignment to pray and listen for God's answer about who we needed to target." <sup>4</sup>

After compiling what people heard from the Lord, the missions task force used a software program to find common denominators among the nations listed, where they learned about the unreached people group in northwest China. A name meaning "unity" or "alliance," the Mukin (pseudonym) people originated from Turkic groups who used to inhabit modern-day Mongolia. Primarily Muslim, the Mukin follow a mixture of folk Islam and superstition. Among the more than 10 million Mukin living in China today, there are only 50 known Mukin believers who worship in two small churches in the region (that's less than 0.01%).<sup>5</sup>

In 2010, the church decided to focus their annual missions conference educating their church members about the Mukin people and developing strategic ways to reach them worldwide. They invited RUN Ministries in Virginia Beach, VA who had contact among the Mukin to join their conference. The church began supporting Bible translation efforts targeting the people group.

"During the following year, the translation process took a different turn," said Jill. "The Chinese government began relocating the Mukin who were declaring their own autonomy... So we began praying about where God would have us put the money."

God answered that prayer. The pastor of Trinity Church met Lady "Mo" through a mutual friend. A student at Columbia Bible College in Columbia, S.C., Mo was studying Mandarin in hopes of working among the Huang Chinese people. After Mo spoke to the congregation, Trinity Church began supporting her efforts. She left for China in 2012 to begin working with the Mukin directly. By the beginning of 2013, the church began organizing care packages to send to Mo so she could reach out to her Mukin neighbors.

Isn't this a tremendous testimony of how one person can impact an entire congregation and see them become strategically involved in reaching Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. What would happen if every evangelical church became fully mobilized like Jill mobilized hers?

### **The Missions Focus Doesn't Hurt Ministry at Home**

The focus on unreached peoples has only enhanced other ministry opportunities at Trinity Church. Locally, the congregation has participated in distributing food and clothing to people in need in downtown Atlanta. "We went from zero involvement in missions to involvement in the Dominican Republic, South Africa, Honduras, Kenya, England and Nicaragua," said Jill. "People in our church initiated missions on their own or through an agency."

By the time of the February 2013 missions conference, individuals in the church were ready to do even more. Several young people volunteered to work with local churches in Kenya to operate a feeding program for children and minister to prisoners. Most had never before participated on a missions trip. Some expressed an interest to lead revivals and retreats in England. Others wanted to go to Honduras to work with a youth discipleship program among a local unreached people group there. As a church, Trinity is partnering with AGAPE flights to

provide mail service, emergency transportation and fix equipment for missionaries in the Dominican Republic.

"We are currently regrouping our efforts in the U.S. to see how we can more effectively work among the poor in our country," said Jill. "Our youth pastor is discipling local youth. Although the church had only one trip planned for this year, many trips are being planned throughout 2013 by individuals. The self-starters are self-generating and self-multiplying. It's a continuing work."

Jill's passion to see a "missions culture" in her church built the foundation for a church-wide vision that would be sustained from generation to generation.

## Chapter 10: Building an Alliance: Let's Work Together

*“Real partnership is costly. We need to be willing to empower others to godly leadership and make their dreams possible, even at the expense of putting aside our own desires.”*

- David Ruiz

Many people regard Winston Churchill as the architect who put together the alliance of nations that defeated Germany, Italy and Japan in World War II. Britain, like other Western powers, tried to stay out of this great conflict. Yet finally, on September 3, 1939, Britain declared war on Germany. Britain was engaged in the battle against fascist powers longer than any other nation.

Yet, Churchill, who served as Britain's prime minister, knew that no single nation could win this war alone. Despite the fact that the British Commonwealth colonized nations like Canada, India, and Australia, Churchill knew he would have to build an alliance of nations who were willing to lay everything on the line to defeat the evil that was threatening to engulf Europe and Asia. That alliance included the United States, France and Russia, as well as 23 other nations who invested resources and people in the effort to turn back the forces of fascist dictators who were bent on destroying everything that stood in the way of conquest.

In a 1943 speech at Harvard University, Churchill referred to World Wars I and II, explaining, “Twice in my lifetime the long arm of destiny has reached across the oceans and involved the entire life and manhood of the United States in a deadly struggle.” He added, “We do not war primarily with races as such. Tyranny is our foe, whatever trappings or disguise it wears, whatever language it speaks, be it external or internal, we must forever be on our guard, ever mobilized, always ready to spring at its throat. *In all this, we march together.* Not only do we march and strive shoulder to shoulder at this moment under the fire of the enemy on the fields of war or in the air, but also in those realms of thought which are consecrated to the rights and dignity of man” (italics added).<sup>1</sup>

Just as Churchill knew that, despite its collective power, the British Commonwealth could not defeat the Axis Powers alone, today's local churches need to understand that Satan's minions will fall much more readily to a unified force that recognizes and understands this important principal.

### **The Power Inherent in Unity**

God built many laws into His universe that rule all of life. We're all familiar with the Law of Gravity; it affects every individual and every thing that exists on earth. But perhaps less familiar is the Law of Unity – at least that's what I call it. Basically stated, God has built a principle into this universe demanding that anytime two or more individuals (or two or more animals, or two or more churches, etc.) unify their purpose and agree to work together toward a common goal, the end result will be exponentially greater than what would have been accomplished if all participants had worked toward the same goal only on their own.

Let me give you an example. Once, when I was flying to a speaking engagement, I sat beside a professor from a large university on the west coast of the U.S. He told me of a study performed at his school, wherein researchers tested individual horses and found they could pull loads up to 9,000 pounds. Out of curiosity, they decided to harness two horses together, and increase the size of the load they were pulling, just to see what happened. Naturally, they hypothesized that, since one plus one equals two, or in this case, since 9,000 plus 9,000 equals 18,000, that two horses would be able to pull 18,000 pounds. Then they put the horses to the task to test their hypothesis. They kept adding weight and adding weight, and when all was said and done, they found that two horses—each of which could pull 9,000 pounds individually—could pull 27,000 pounds when harnessed together to pursue a common goal.

You see, unity is more than a nice principle for Christian behavior. Unity breeds exponential power. God has written that premise into all of nature, and it is revealed in Scripture. For instance, Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived, explained, “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not easily broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:9 & 12). God was indeed prophetically speaking an important truth through Solomon. And in the midst of a passage describing rewards for obedience, Moses promised his people, “Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you,” (Leviticus 26:8). We see a strong spiritual synergism at work here. In the natural world, when we put one and one together, we simply get two. But in God's Kingdom, one and one can actually equal the power of five!

Because this Law of Unity is inherent through all of creation, it can be used for evil as well as good. Scripture describes a time, near the beginning of our earth's history, when all mankind spoke a single language. Because they wanted to build an empire to glorify themselves, these people decided to build a city, “with a tower that reaches to the heavens.” They worked together to accomplish this goal, and they were well on their way. But God was not happy with this misuse of the Law of Unity. So He confused their languages. When they couldn't understand each other, their sense of unity disappeared, and they abandoned the effort.

God's action should never be interpreted as discipline against the spirit of unity that characterized these people. Rather, it was discipline against the misuse of the power that accompanies unity. You see, God built that law into His universe to enable His people to accomplish His purposes. We know that, because Jesus prayed for it. As He looked ahead to the agony of the cross, Jesus was focused on those who followed Him, both in that day and for the rest of time. Jesus prayed: “Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name *so that they will be united just as we are,*” (John 17:11 NLT, italics added). Later He added, “I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe in me through their message. I pray that they will be one – as you are in me, Father, and I am in you,” (John 17:20-21 NLT).

But the unity, which Jesus sought for every disciple in all of time, had a purpose. “May they experience such perfect unity,” Jesus prayed, “*that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as me,*” (John 17:23 NLT, italics added). God intends that His people will be unified, and that they will use the power inherent in that relationship to build His Kingdom.

## What Does This Mean to the Local Church?

Local churches often preach unity among the believers of their congregation. Sometimes, I suspect as much for their own peace of mind as for a greater truth. Pastors refer to verses like Paul's exhortation to two women named Euodia and Syntyche to "agree in the Lord," (Philippians 4:2), and they preach a unity that basically means everyone should get along. Certainly, there is a place for that. The fighting and bickering that characterizes many fellowships is an embarrassment to our Lord. But I don't believe God intended for the principle of unity to stop at the individual level. I believe God wants unity in local church bodies, but I also believe He wants unity in the Universal Church.

That is the foundational understanding that guides much of what we do at AIMS. When Pat and I and a team founded this ministry, it was based on the understanding that unity breeds power for the completion of the Great Commission. Throughout our history, that has been our guiding principle. We have grown, and now our mission statement has evolved and is now two-fold.

1. We mobilize churches to adopt unreached people groups, as I explained in the previous chapter.

2. We build alliances of individuals, churches and mission organizations that are willing to lay aside non-essential differences and work together to target specific regions or specific unreached peoples.

We believe that if God said it would work, then it will. Since AIMS began in 1985, we used this strategy and have seen great results. AIMS strives to unify believers and to build alliances for the nations because it works. Ministries that choose to work together really do find that the end result is greater than the sum of what they all could have accomplished individually. In other words, *cooperation multiplies results rather than just adding to them.*

Let me give you a hypothetical example—suppose a small university in Minneapolis, MN, notices that a group of international students have just arrived from India. "First Church," located just down the street from the university, hosts a potluck dinner and posts invitations on the bulletin board of the university library. Ten Indian students show up, and that initiates a relationship that causes the congregation of First Church to become curious about life in their native country. So, they plan an event allowing each of those international students to describe the place where they live.

Three of those Indian students come from the northern part of their country, which is ravaged by poverty and is often the target of warfare between Hindu and Muslim extremists. One student in particular talks about the need for fresh water in the region where he lives. So, First Church decides they want to do something about that. They opt to raise money to dig a well in that village.

That's a worthwhile goal. But just think—what if First Church partnered with an agency specializing in digging wells and another agency that provides the *Jesus* film? What if they also partnered with an agency providing Bibles and sponsored an indigenous missionary for follow-

up who would use those materials to plant a church in that village among the converts who respond to the evangelistic message of the *Jesus* film. The well would provide a gathering place for people in this particular village. The missionary can use the local place to show the *Jesus* film and provide discipleship resources to the many people who respond. With all these partnerships in place, he can continue to follow through and plant a church among them.

First Church can simply dig wells or they can do more by providing a powerful flow of Living Water that will change the lives of individuals for all eternity. This is accomplished through partnerships with other churches and agencies to maximize the results of a simple well-digging project.

The task of partnerships and building alliances is not just a strategy drawn out on paper. It's a strategy that we've put into operation many times over and seen how it works. That's why we continue to expend the effort to establish the kind of unity in the Body of Christ that will yield these kinds of results.

### **A Real-Life Example**

I've seen this strategy work repeatedly. In Chapter 1, my colleague Jerry Smith told you the story of Gezahegn in Ethiopia. Our work in Ethiopia actually began in 1989 when my home church in Colorado—Calvary Temple in Denver, where I was saved, baptized, discipled and married—opened its doors to house an Ethiopian church. The believers who made up this fellowship had come to the U.S. to escape persecution in their native country. Ethiopia's Christians suffered greatly under the Marxist regime which overthrew Emperor Haile Selassie in 1974. Marxist ideology, coupled with regional uprisings, drought and famine, ruined the already weak economy, so that the United Nations once labeled Ethiopia one of the poorest nations on earth. At the time, Ethiopia's per capita income was just \$10 - \$15 per month.

These beloved brothers and sisters in Christ had come to the U.S. to escape that type of environment. When the Communist regime collapsed in 1991, Pastor Charles Blair, senior pastor at Calvary Temple at the time, was asked to chair an international, inter-denominational board. Its goal was to help church leaders in Ethiopia as they made the transition from underground cell groups to thriving, visible congregations that would impact post-communist Ethiopia.

During early fact-finding trips, Pastor Blair received an invitation from the Evangelical Fellowship of Churches in Ethiopia (EFCE), which represented 97 percent of Ethiopia's evangelical believers, to help train 675 key Ethiopian workers. But the vision that grew from that initial training was too great for any single congregation to handle alone.

So, AIMS partnered with Calvary Temple and the Evangelical Fellowship of Churches in Ethiopia (EFCE), in an alliance that we named *The Ethiopia Call*. Along with many individuals and churches who sent money and people to help, this alliance trained and deployed 313 national Ethiopian missionaries who quickly penetrated the unreached people within the borders of their country.

At the birth of this alliance, Ethiopian research indicated that this country was host to 70 people groups who had never truly heard the Gospel. As of this writing, an Ethiopian missionary

team of over 2,000 has been equipped through the *Ethiopia Call* alliance and they have already penetrated 46 of those people groups, and set their sites on the last 24. After over 20 years of partnership, this alliance of multiple denominations and agencies under new leaders like Pastor Ray Noah of Portland Christian Center and his missions network called Petros, has seen over 15,000 churches planted with more than 900,000 salvations. And it continues to be effective in Ethiopia today.

Just across the Red Sea from the Horn of Africa (home to the nation of Ethiopia) lies the Middle East. Considered the “final frontier of our global harvest,” this region lies at the very core of the 10/40 Window and is one of the most difficult regions of the world to penetrate with the Gospel. Due to strict Islamic laws, wars, political and economic instability, as well as a very difficult terrain, the Christian missionary movement has simply not been very successful in the Middle East.

This region has been called “Satan’s Finest Masterpiece” and the “Last of the Great Giants.” The political events that have surrounded the Middle East in recent history have radically changed our lives and our world. The years to come may bring even more radical change. Islamic fundamentalist government is rapidly becoming a major political force. It is forcing the Islamization of national structures and lifestyle, extending the Muslim missionary work force worldwide. The largest oil producing countries in the world are heavily funding this movement. This has caused Islam to rapidly spread around our globe.

AIMS and the Evangelical Fellowship of Churches in Ethiopia are dedicated to seeing the spread of the Gospel throughout this region. Central Asian missionaries have already been sent to this region, as well as India, Pakistan and Sudan. Yet all these results that we’ve already seen, and the ones that are still to come, would probably not have happened if God had not lead AIMS, Calvary Temple and the Evangelical Church Fellowship of Ethiopia (ECFE) to unite and confront the forces of darkness in this part of the world. This is the power of synergism!

## **A Partnership in Asia**

In 2006, the president of a mission organization in a "creative access country" in Asia invited me to lead the *Harvest Connection* seminar in a nearby country. Together with the mission organization and a local missionary, AIMS worked on translating seminar materials and raised money to produce over 12,000 complete training kits, including DVDs and books, to be used throughout Asia.

A local evangelist joined our missionary partner in 2010 to extend the training to include churches throughout Singapore, South East Asia, and other creative access countries. Ten churches trained in the original country began multiplying efforts even further.

"I think that the best results happen when the Westerners get out of the way and the [nationals] initiate the work without us," our local missionary wrote in a 2012 report to AIMS. "They are being effective without any Western missionary involvement."

In addition to local training opportunities, our partners in Asia are at work developing further mission mobilization strategies. These programs will continue to achieve the same goal as

our seminars, but will provide additional resources for those who are unable to attend a seminar. This will enable local evangelists and the more than 100 million Christians (est.) in the region to advance the Gospel aggressively throughout the unevangelized world.

## **The Last Word**

Winston Churchill was one of the most eloquent men of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He knew the power that grows from unity, and frankly, he expressed it better than I can. In that same speech that I mentioned earlier, Churchill described the war that was ravaging Europe as “entering...its most severe and costly phase.” He described the need for a lasting world peace, but he noted, “Nothing will work soundly or for long without the united effort of the British and American peoples. If we are together nothing is impossible. If we are divided all will fail.”<sup>2</sup> If we are together, with God inspired leadership, partnerships and alliances, nothing is impossible.....

Churchill’s words echo those of Christ Himself. Though He was in very different circumstances, being accused of driving out demons by the power of Beelzebub, Jesus’ response rings with the veracity that has been proven repeatedly, in the natural realm as well as the supernatural realm. “Every kingdom divided against itself will be ruined,” He said, “and every city or household divided against itself will not stand” (Matthew 12:25).

It’s time for the Church to realize, if we continue being divided, we will be ruined. If we seek to be unified, we will have the opportunity to harness the power of partnership, and put it to use in expanding God’s global Kingdom. We can help you in this process, and conversely, you can help us reach this common goal.

Now, admittedly, I don’t necessarily agree with those who believe theology is inconsequential. I believe there are basic tenets that have been carefully described in Scripture. These form the basis of sound theology. At AIMS, we use the globally recognized *Lausanne Covenant*. But outside the fundamentals, in those areas that are open to interpretation, we must be willing to extend a hand to brothers and sisters in Christ. We must be willing to lay aside cultural, racial and denominational differences for the sake of taking the Gospel to the world. We should access the power that God inscribed into His universe—the power of unity—and we must give it purpose. We must return to the understanding that undergirded Jesus’ prayer: “May they be brought to complete unity,” He requested of His Father, “*to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me,*” (John 17:23, italics added). That is why God builds His church, so that we can fulfill God’s mission through unity in a single purpose and goal.

## Chapter 11: His Triumph, Our Victory

*“The trumpet still plays the notes of war. You cannot sit down and put the victory wreath on your head. You do not have a crown. You still must wear the helmet and carry the sword. You must watch, pray, and fight. Expect your last battle to be the most difficult, for the enemy’s fiercest charge is reserved for the end of the day.”*

- Charles Spurgeon

### **This is a Winnable War**

Of course missions endeavors have their share of risk and sacrifice. But our joy overcomes those risks when we understand that we have brought God himself pleasure through helping expand the boundaries of His Kingdom. We must always remember that this battle is to expand God’s Kingdom, not our own. National prestige and history will not give us power to change eternal destiny. Personal strength, education and financial resources are not enough. We bring nothing to this battle against Satan, except our crucifixion with Christ, the power of His resurrection, and the filling of His Spirit.

Our victories over Satan come *only* as we appropriate the victory already achieved at the cross. In Colossians 2:15, Paul described Christ’s victory like this: “And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, *triumphing* over them by the cross,”<sup>1</sup> (italics added). The Greek word translated *triumph* means “to lead in a triumphal procession, to conquer.”

### **A Picture from National History**

Most of us have seen a “triumphal procession.” We might not remember the festivities that accompanied the return of World War II veterans to their homeland in the 1940s. But we probably remember the celebration that welcomed soldiers home from Desert Storm at the beginning of the final decade of the previous century.

Desert Storm was the first military engagement played out live on national television in the U.S. By January of 1991, our evening news reports noted that Saddam Hussein’s mighty military had brazenly invaded Kuwait, brutalized its citizenry and seized both personal and national wealth. As the American armed forces, along with those of our allies, gathered to confront the growing menace, disturbing questions arose. How devastating would chemical warfare be? What was the truth of Iraq’s rumored nuclear capability? As the cloud of Vietnam-era humiliations troubled the American psyche, we found ourselves asking, do we dare face such a foe on his own turf?

Under General Norman Schwarzkopf’s field leadership, a combined military coalition from 18 countries soundly defeated the ominous threat of Iraq’s military. Dangerous operations, executed with a great degree of precision, courage, discipline and skill, inspired the admiration

of Americans back home. In just 100 days, American soldiers and their international partners performed to the maximum, defeating the third most powerful army in the world and evil dictatorship.

The tremendous relief and the sense of national accomplishment expressed itself in a vast array of victory parades across the U.S. But the most festive of all celebrations was held in New York City in June of 1991. General Schwarzkopf himself led the parade, followed by column after column of his victorious troops. The streets were crowded with cheering people waving victory banners and throwing confetti. *What a triumph!*

Let's look at another example. More recently, in 2013, a Pennsylvania soldier who lost both legs in an explosion while serving in Afghanistan received a hero's welcome during an American Independence Day parade, with 14 other local wounded servicemen. The doctors had cleared him for the Parade of Heroes after 16 surgeries for injuries he sustained from a bomb blast while trying to rescue other soldiers who were injured during an earlier explosion. The crowd greeted him with loud cheers, celebrating and waving American flags. Not only had this soldier triumphed on the battlefield, but he had won victory after victory over his many extensive injuries.<sup>2</sup>

### **Glad Expressions of Victory**

Through the lens of these experiences, let's take another look at that wonderful text of Colossians 2:15, which describes a similar situation in the spirit realm—a spiritual battle at the cross. Jesus won, and He invites us to participate in the triumphal procession that He started almost 2,000 years ago. Close examination of this passage reveals three truths:

1. *God has reversed Satan's diabolical plan.* Satan tried to use the cross, a cruel implement of death, to destroy Jesus. But that very cross became the weapon Jesus used to conquer Satan and bring his forces into captivity. When Jesus breathed His last breath on Calvary and uttered, "It is finished," He disarmed the devil and all of his mercenaries. Now He commands His followers to go into all the world and administer that same victory through His authority and power.

2. *God uses the cross to "make a spectacle" of the hostile opposition.* The thorough rout of Saddam Hussein's notorious fighting forces made a spectacle of that leader's proud boasting. Similarly, God has brought down kingdoms and governments throughout history that stood against Him, and in the end, He used their downfalls for His glory. The Church should never be fearful of evil powers but exercise spiritual authority over them through prayer and power encounters. We'll discuss this more later, but for now let's note that the public spectacle Paul speaks of here refers to the humiliation of captives taken in battle and then led in chains behind the victors in the celebration of triumph. This is the ultimate result when we enforce His victory, won on the cross, and we engage in the battle to release unevangelized captives from their bondage. Those souls who were formerly held captive are now free, and the demonic powers that previously bound them are now subject to ridicule.

3. *The shameful cross becomes the victor's chariot.* Every victory in the spread of the Gospel is initiated by Christ's triumphant work on Calvary. Human and secular arrogance can

have no place in the triumphant participation in missions. The victory is God's alone. But He wants us to engage in the effort to appropriate this victory, even through personal sacrifice. As we succeed, we will see the cross lead the triumphant procession to complete His mission on earth and then bring Him back as King of kings.

## Celebrating God's Triumph

With all this talk of victory, don't think that missions is an easy task. It's not. Sometimes it means spending a lot of time in the trenches. Those who serve on the front lines of this spiritual battle know that Satan is a formidable foe. But he is also a defeated foe. When the weariness of war sets in, we will have one compelling reason to persevere – *faith* and *joy* are the main sources of fuel that propels us to true victory. That joy perpetuates in every step of God's triumph. We find this in the vivid metaphor set forth in 2 Corinthians 2:14: "But thanks be to God, who *always* leads us in *triumphal* procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him," (italics added).

To appreciate Paul's exclamation, we must understand first-century imagery. When a Roman General returned home from a great military victory—one where at least 5,000 of the enemy had fallen and the conquered country was effectively occupied—he was greeted with a great procession. The General, his troops, and the captured armies would draw up to the Port of Capena, Rome's great ancient entrance supporting a main aqueduct. A host of state officials would welcome the vanquishing General. The streets would be lined with cheering throngs. Then the General, flanked by state officials, would lead his victorious armies through the streets of the imperial city, and finally toward the Capitoline hill and the Roman Forum.

The procession began with legions of trumpeters who would pierce the air with clarion blasts to announce a long train of carriages bearing the spoils of war. These were laden with gold, silver, costly jewels, and other items taken from the defeated armies and the treasuries of their plundered cities. Throughout the long march, incense-bearers would wave censers to spread the aroma of victory. The whole extravagant celebration was associated with this special fragrance. In missions, this would be the incense and fragrance of prayer.

Next a white bull would be offered for sacrifice to Jupiter or to another god that the General felt had granted him victory. Then the vanquished king, queen or general passed in chains, followed by the defeated troops, also in chains. Everyone knew these prisoners were destined to become slaves of the Roman General and Senators or, worse, to be imprisoned or executed.

The loudest cheers would be reserved for the triumphant General himself as he rode by in a decorated chariot drawn by four white horses, followed by his family, and then his conquering soldiers. He would hold a royal scepter and wear a laurel crown. The soldiers would march in victory, holding aloft their spears, each one wreathed in a laurel bough. Every Roman knew the greatness of this conqueror and the magnificence of his victory. It was a heady experience of celebration for the conqueror, and an awesome spectacle to the public.

Paul uses the imagery of the Roman triumphal procession to describe Christ's victory as "making a spectacle of his enemies," but also refers to the special fragrance issuing from the

procession. He explains that this scent of victory, like the incense, emanates from those who follow Christ in this incredible procession to mark His victory--“the fragrance of the knowledge” of our Lord. This appealing scent of victory attracts an ever-growing number of people to accept and live within Christ’s Kingdom.

So, what kind of fragrance emanates from your life and your church? If it’s not the fragrance of His glory, then possibly it’s a much less desirable odor. Some believers, even churches, are marked by the aroma of their own self-ascribed agenda, rather than the fragrance of a jubilant commitment to completing the Great Commission.

## **Word Pictures of Triumph in Missions**

The Biblical words for “triumph” paint many other pictures that personify the *Lord’s* victory, the *Church’s* victory, and *our* victory in missions. Let’s look at the meanings of these important biblical ideas and see how they apply to the Great Commission of the Church.

1. *Jumping up and down.* First, to triumph can mean to jump for joy. “When the righteous *triumph*, there is great elation,” (Proverbs 28:12). The Hebrew word for *triumph* here means “to exult or to jump for joy.” When you’ve experienced God’s wonderful saving grace, nothing can make you feel glad like seeing somebody else hear and receive it, too. And when it happens repeatedly, or entire cities and nations open up, some for the very first time, to the eternal message of salvation, an overwhelming joy results. The triumph of God’s people in missions releases the joy of the Lord everywhere in the same way the fragrance of incense was released in the triumphal procession.

2. *The battle cry.* To triumph can also refer to letting out a war cry. King David said to the Lord, “I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not *triumph* over me,” (Psalm 41:11). In this verse, the original word for triumph is to yell out a battle cry. We see it again in Joshua 6:10 where it is translated *shout*--“But Joshua had commanded the people, Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, do not say a word, until the day I tell you to shout. Then *shout!*” (italics added).

The same word is used when the Lord tells Israel how they will know when to advance into the Promised Land. At the appropriate time, Aaron’s sons were commanded to blow two special trumpets made of hammered silver. The trumpets split the air with a sound of victory that called Israel to advance: “the blast will be the signal for setting out” (Numbers 10:6). When they went into battle God promised: “... sound a blast on the trumpets. Then you will be remembered by the Lord your God and rescued from your enemies” (Numbers 10:9). The trumpet call and war cry for the Church was issued when Jesus gave us the Great Commission. “Go into all the world and preach the Good News to all creation” (Mark 16:15).

3. *The forward thrust of dominion.* Triumph also portrays the forward thrust of God’s dominion against the opposing powers of darkness. “God reigns (*triumphs*) over the nations; God is seated on his holy throne” (Psalm 47:8). The Biblical word here means “to reign, or to ascend to the throne.” The Holy Spirit is being poured out today to equip and empower the Church for the final sweep in advancing God’s kingdom against Satan’s dominion over the world’s unreached peoples. As we exercise the authority of Jesus’ Name and the power of the Holy

Spirit, we can liberate peoples that Satan has held in his clutches and bring them into full deliverance. And one day in the foreseeable future, when all the unreached people groups have been reached, our Lord and King will return visibly to earth: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations (*ethne*), *and then the end will come*” (Matthew 24:14 italics added). Our missions triumph will prepare the world for our King’s return.

4. *The shout for joy.* A derivative of the word we just discussed is a Hebrew equivalent for “shout for joy.” We find this word used in Zechariah 2:10-11--“*Shout* and be glad, O daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you, declares the Lord. Many nations will be joined with my people. I will live among you and you will know that the Lord Almighty has sent me to you,” (italics added). This describes the joyous shout that comes from God’s people when they are used to win nations to the Lord.

### **Triumph is a Missions Word**

So, it’s really true that *triumph* is a missions word. I’m not talking about a cultural triumphalism that says, “My culture is better than yours.” Nor am I talking about a theological triumphalism that says, “My theology is better than yours.” I’m talking about building God’s Kingdom.

You and your church can be triumphant in missions. It will cause you to “jump for joy.” Yes, missions is fun, and any believer or church not involved in missions is missing a major part of the joy of knowing and following the Lord. Missions is also the triumphant “war cry” of the victorious believer, and the church that advances God’s kingdom by winning new souls to His service. Finally, our triumph is founded on His victory on the cross, and our part in the triumphal procession and in releasing the fragrance of His knowledge is wholly by His grace.

Right now, take a moment to see yourself in God’s final parade of triumph. All the faithful saints of God from the beginning of humanity are following our Commander-in-Chief. Our Risen Lord is leading in a great victor’s chariot. The early saints and patriarchs are in the parade, like Abraham, who obediently stepped out in missions to bless all the peoples of the earth. David and the prophets are there. Everyone is shouting and singing praises to God. Then come the twelve apostles and the other early saints. Many had been martyrs, but they were always victorious and spread the fragrance of the knowledge of the Lord, even in death. Missionaries from all the ages are in the parade and so are the reformers.

The stream of triumphant soldiers gets wider and wider, and the reverberation of singing and shouts of joy escalate even higher and higher. All the faithful contemporary saints are there. You and your congregation should be there! All of us should be in this final triumphant processional, following Christ with believers from Antioch, Philippi and Macedonia. And with us should be the members of the unreached people groups that we and our church were instrumental in winning to Christ. The Uighurs of China, the Fulanis of Africa, the Tzeltals of Mexico and the Ifugao of the northern Philippines. I’m sure you want you and your church to be there.

The parade leads through the gates of glory. We all stand before our King worshipping and waving palm branches of victory. The incense of ultimate conquest over Satan fills the air. We are part of that joyful throng that helped to complete the Great Commission. In that moment, the “it is finished” of Calvary will become the “it is finished” of the Church’s mission to partner with God in His plan to redeem the world!

Throughout this book, we have investigated the necessity of a proper biblical worldview, the unfinished task, details of a Great Commission church, and the best practices of missions of the local church. My hope is to see every believer become an Acts 1:8 Christian and every church an Acts 1:8 church. When this happens, we can certainly “make the Great Commission the Great Completion!”

**Please note:**

The following section encompasses five appendices. Appendices A and B are exercises from chapter 5.

# Appendix A

## Who in the World Are You?

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Ever feel like you don't have too much to offer the Lord? Are you intimidated by all those "Dr. Livingston, I presume-type" missionaries who are so charged and on-fire that they have to be sent to the deep jungles of Tu-Hot-For-Me Africa to work off some of their super-spiritual fervor? After all, you've never wanted to climb Mount Everest or acquire a taste for fish heads and other exotic missionary staples. Well, perhaps God has a special task just for you which doesn't require super-human strength or a cast iron stomach.

The following mini-gift inventory is a test to see just who in the world you are. God considers each of His children, and each local church, to be a critical component of His global plan. The results of the following inventory may give you some indication of how you have been uniquely crafted to respond to God, His Church, and the global harvest.

**Directions:** Read each statement and circle the appropriate number which could best represent your response (5 = always to 0 = never). Try to have a range of responses, both low and high.

**Hint: Don't think too hard -- go with your first reaction!**

### I Have a Tendency to . . . .

1. Remember people's likes and dislikes.  
5    4    3    2    1    0
2. Say, "I'll be praying for you," and then do it.  
5    4    3    2    1    0
3. Be content to work without recognition.  
5    4    3    2    1    0
4. Like to learn about other languages for fun.  
5    4    3    2    1    0
5. Give things and money to the Lord's work.  
5    4    3    2    1    0
6. Trust God for the impossible.  
5    4    3    2    1    0
7. Be flexible in fluctuating circumstances.  
5    4    3    2    1    0
8. Enjoy meeting and being with people from other countries.  
5    4    3    2    1    0

9. Enjoy ministering to other's needs.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
10. Think God works through my prayers.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
11. Enjoy writing letters to those far away.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
12. Would rather have an adventurous than a quiet life.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
13. Share the Lord with those from different backgrounds.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
14. Believe wholeheartedly in God's power.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
15. Use all the resources I have to accomplish goals.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
16. Believe people in ministry need more of the power of God.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
17. Discern Satan's work and vanquish it.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
18. Imagine living in another country.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
19. Freely volunteer my time.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
20. Enjoy work that involves much prayer.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
21. Believe all of my money belongs to God.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
22. Adapt easily to new situations.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
23. Envision God supplying other's needs.  
5 4 3 2 1 0
24. Feel unconcerned about the risks in sharing the Gospel.  
5 4 3 2 1 0

## Key To Scoring “Who in the World Are You?”

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The following pages apply to these categories:

| <b>Intercessor</b> | <b>Missionary</b> | <b>Sender</b> | <b>Totals</b> _____   |
|--------------------|-------------------|---------------|---|
| 2 _____            | 4 _____           | 1 _____       | To score the instrument,<br>simply add up the number<br>scores for each of these<br>categories and put the total<br>at the bottom of the sheet. |
| 6 _____            | 7 _____           | 3 _____       |   |
| 10 _____           | 8 _____           | 5 _____       |   |
| 14 _____           | 12 _____          | 9 _____       |   |
| 16 _____           | 13 _____          | 11 _____      |   |
| 17 _____           | 18 _____          | 15 _____      |   |
| 20 _____           | 22 _____          | 19 _____      |   |
| 23 _____           | 24 _____          | 21 _____      |   |

Next: Understanding “Who in the World I Am”

## Understanding “Who in the World Am I?”

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The mini-gift inventory “**Who in the World Are You?**” is meant to give an idea of how God may deploy you right now in the task of extending His Kingdom into all the world. Basically, there are three categories into which you might fall: **Intercessor, Missionary or Sender.**

At the bottom of your inventory, you will see your cumulative score for each of these categories. I = Intercessor, M = Missionary, and S = Sender. These scores were compiled by simply adding the numbers from questions asked in each category. Please remember to compare yourself only with yourself. Your highest score will indicate how God might desire to use you right now. Perhaps in the future He will use you in a different way, but for now, look to see how you might develop and use the gift you have for His glory.

**For our purposes, these gifts may be defined as follows:**

***Intercessor*** -- a person who is gifted to be involved in prayer and spiritual warfare for the cause of missions. An intercessor will look for opportunities to use this gift to do the work in the spirit that is required to precede and accompany the actual doing of missions.

***Missionary*** -- a person who enters another culture to do missions. This person will look for opportunities to prepare himself or herself to take the Gospel to other cultures.

***Sender*** -- a person who stands behind and assists others who are taking the Gospel to other cultures, as well as the missions program of the church. A sender will constantly be looking for ways to help those who are doing the work of missions and the program of missions in the church.

You must remember that this is only one tool, not a “final word from God” on how you will be used in missions. The results should be confirmed by your pastor and others who know you well. **Use it to encourage you to get busy now in furthering the cause of missions!**

# MISSIONARY – What in the World Are You Going to Do?

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If you scored highest as a "missionary" on the test, "Who in the World Are You," you may feel the Lord prompting you to make some specific commitments in line with your gifting.

**Take that step now!** Set some specific goals to develop and use your gift in the next year. Choose two or three (or several) from the following list, or you may have some other specific goal in mind.

- I will read at least two missions books to inspire and help direct me (for example -- *Eternity in Their Hearts* by Don Richardson or *A Mind for Missions* by Paul Borthwick, "Triumph" and "Healthy Churches in a Sick World" by Dr. Howard Foltz).
- I will begin to set further goals as suggested in *Practical Steps to the Mission Field* (an AIMS publication).
- I will go on a short-term missions trip.
- I will share my commitment with my pastor or other church leader and ask for counsel in helping me prepare for God's direction for me.
- I will correspond or talk with a missionary about what they do and how I should prepare myself.
- I will begin to pray regularly for missions (for example, use *Operation World* by Jason Mandryk as a daily prayer guide).
- I will begin to give in a regular, systematic way to missions (or increase my giving).
- I will seek further training to prepare myself for missions.
- I will offer to teach a missions course at my church or help prepare the church's missions conference. (Use the AIMS training manual "Mission Foundations")

## SENDER – What in the World Are You Going to Do?

---

If you scored highest as a “*sender*” on the test, “Who in the World Are You,” you may feel the Lord prompting you to make some specific commitments in line with your gifting.

**Take that step now!** Set some specific goals to develop and use your gift in the next year. Choose two or three (or several) from the following list, or you may have some other specific goal in mind.

- I will read at least two books which will increase my knowledge of missions in general (like *Bruchko* by Bruce Olson) and others to help me to know how to be a good "sender" (like *Serving as Senders* by Neal Pirolo).
- I will find a missionary with whom I can correspond and I will write letters or cards of encouragement at least once a month.
- I will go on a short-term missions trip so I can learn more about missions and be a better "sender." (Use the AIMS training manual “Short-Term Training Manual”.)
- I will begin to pray regularly for missions (*Operation World* by Jason Mandryk is a good daily prayer guide).
- I will begin (or increase) my financial commitment to missions.
- I will share with my pastor or church leader my interest in being a "sender" for missions.
- I will attempt to find missionaries who are in my area and invite them over to my home for a time of fellowship and encouragement.
- I will work with a group at my church to put together a church missions conference.

## INTERCESSOR – What in the World are You Going to Do?

---

If you scored highest as an *"intercessor"* on the test, "Who in the World Are You," you may feel the Lord prompting you to make some specific commitments in line with your gifting.

**Take that step now!** Set some specific goals to develop and use your gift in the next year. Choose two or three (or several) from the following list, or you may have some other specific goal in mind.

- I will read at least two books to encourage me and help me develop my ministry of intercession (for example, *Touch the World through Prayer* by Wesley Duewel or *The Hour That Changes the World* by Dick Eastman).
- I will read at least two books about missionaries to encourage my prayer commitment (for example, *Through Gates of Splendor* by Elizabeth Elliot or *Peace Child* by Don Richardson).
- I will "adopt" an unreached people group to pray for and do research to learn about them. (Use the AIMS Training Manual "*Final Focus Adoption Manual*".)
- I will go on a short-term missions trip with a goal of giving me a clearer vision and focus for my intercession.
- I will begin to give a specified amount of time on a regular basis to intercession for missions (*Operation World* by Jason Mandryk is a good daily prayer guide for the world).
- I will help to mobilize a movement of prayer for missions in my church (David Bryant's *A Concert of Prayer* will help you).
- I will find another person who will be my "prayer partner" in praying for missions.
- I will learn more about spiritual warfare and praise and worship and utilize them in my times of intercession.

## Appendix B

### Attributes of a Missions-Mobilized Church

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#### DIRECTIONS FOR USING "ATTRIBUTES" CHECK LIST

The attached "ATTRIBUTES OF A MISSIONS-MOBILIZED CHURCH" has been designed from our AIMS experience of mobilizing local churches for world missions over the past 30 years. If you will take this quick "mission check-up" quiz, it will help you evaluate the current missions status (activity) of your church.

The following are some guidelines for taking the check-up:

1. Read each statement, and respond by filling in the most appropriate number for your church. Don't think too long, the first number that comes to your mind is probably the best one.
2. Add up your total and put the score in the space at the bottom of the page.
3. **There is not a "pass" or "fail" score for this check-up.** The only way that any church can "fail" is to not obey God when He speaks about mobilizing further.
4. Later, you can have your elders, deacons or missions committee also do this check-up together. Then, they can compare their scores and use this as a means for discussion.
5. The twenty attributes are not arranged in any particular order of priority. In your thoughtful meditation and discussion, prioritize them yourself according to the need of your particular church. What are the most important things for your church to begin improving on first, second, etc.
6. The twenty attributes should funnel into the six "CRITERIA FOR A MISSIONS MOBILIZED CHURCH" from page 10. These six criteria are measurable, and AIMS encourages every church to adopt and move towards fulfilling these criteria.

May God richly bless you as you prayerfully consider the application of this check-up to your church's missions outreach.

## Attributes of a Mobilized Church

The criteria for a "Great Commission Church " are listed below. The mobilization process will vary depending on the size, financial base, leadership style, etc., of each church. The AIMS publication titled *On The Cutting Edge* is an effective tool for a church to use in evaluating and planning its own program.

|   |
|---|
| QUICK MISSIONS CHECK-UP: Mark a number (0-5) for each attribute below:<br>0 -- no activity 5 -- full involvement Total the score. |
|---|

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Teaching on missions in Sunday School, sermons, missions newsletter, home cells, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Regular intercessory prayer for the lost world, focusing on the unreached
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Missions advocacy team or fellowship group which meets at least monthly
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Annual missions conference
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Systematic financial involvement of congregation for missions (preferably Faith Promise)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. A focus on praise and worship that expresses the missionary heart of God and inspires the congregation to missions involvement
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Pastoral care for missionaries, with letters, phone calls, gifts, visits, email, etc.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Has a missions secretary or pastor/director
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Goals, objectives, and policies defined for mission program
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Local cross-cultural outreach
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Missions projects, such as church building or equipment purchasing
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Missions-minded pastor who travels to a mission field at least biennially
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Short-term outreaches for congregation's members and staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Identification and training of missionary candidates within congregation
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Career or "tentmaker" missionaries sent out and supported by church
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Program to reproduce and share your missions vision with other churches
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. "Adoption" of (or preparing to adopt) an unreached people group
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Regular missionary guests
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. The entire church "knows" the missionaries, not just pastors and church staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Vision of local church as a "missions base"
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Total**

## Appendix C:

### AIMS Resources for Missions Mobilization

#### **1. AIMS Trainings and Seminars**

**AIMS' trainings and seminars equip churches to do missions strategically.**

**AIMS Premier Seminar – *Harvest Connection* (for use domestically or overseas) This seminar is based on the revision of the book, *Triumph: Missions Renewal for the Local Church* now renamed *Harvest Connection*.**

The *Harvest Connection* Seminar and book grew from a quote from Jesus Christ: "I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for the harvest!" (John 4:35). He referred to a world of individuals waiting to hear of His love for them -- regardless of ethnic background, culture, lifestyle or creed.

*Harvest Connection* highlights the spiritual state of our world. It outlines the Biblical basis for missions and a detailed teaching of the steps necessary to mobilize a church for missions to the Unreached People Groups (UPGs) of the world. It also demonstrates how local congregations can link their resources with those of other laborers to maximize efficiency. Using a variety of techniques, from video presentations to small group discussions, this seminar reveals God's heart for the world.

Harvest Connection, created and sponsored by AIMS, can help your church become a Great Commission Church, expanding God's Kingdom all over the earth. Join the 20,000-plus pastors and church leaders all over the world who have already benefited from this Seminar.

This seminar has been translated into the following languages:

|                            |                   |                          |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Arabic</b>              | <b>French</b>     | <b>Russian</b>           |
| <b>Armenian</b>            | <b>German</b>     | <b>Swahili</b>           |
| <b>Amharic (Ethiopian)</b> | <b>Hindi</b>      | <b>Telagu</b>            |
| <b>Chinese</b>             | <b>Indonesian</b> |                          |
| <b>Oromo (Ethiopian)</b>   | <b>Portuguese</b> | <b>More languages to</b> |
| <b>Spanish</b>             | <b>Romanian</b>   | <b>follow</b>            |

*Harvest Connection* is also available on DVD in English and Mandarin Chinese. For those who are interested in utilizing the English DVDs, you can purchase our *Harvest Connection* packet containing the DVDs, a facilitator's manual, five student manuals, and three one-hour consultations. For further information, call 719-226-3737 or to place an order, email us at [aims@aims.org](mailto:aims@aims.org). (7 hours)

***Final Focus***

## **Theme - Focus on a People through Adoption**

The *Final Focus* seminar grew from an understanding that, for many churches, the task of taking the Gospel to the entire world is simply too vast to grasp and personalize. *Final Focus* teaches churches how to break the Great Commission task into manageable portions by focusing on specific ethnic groups. AIMS uses this seminar to encourage local churches worldwide to “adopt” people groups that live in regions where people have never heard the Good News of salvation through Jesus Christ. The eventual goal of such adoptions is to establish new churches in those regions, and help those churches reproduce themselves in their own culture and beyond. How can we possibly take the Gospel to every tribe and language in the entire world? We will do it as we focus on one people group at a time. (6-7 hours)

## ***Mission SMARTer***

### **Theme - Anything We Do In Missions Is Smart, But Maybe We Can Do It SMART'er**

The *Mission SMARTer* Seminar grew from an understanding that anything a church does for missions is smart, but anything it does in a purposeful way is even smarter. The information included emphasizes the power of Strategy, Mobilization, Advancement, Resources and Training in the battle to expand God’s Kingdom all over the world.

The AIMS *Mission SMARTer* Seminar includes an animated computer presentation, video support, group interaction, and plenty of opportunities for questions and answers. But more than that, it has the information you need to launch your church into an even more fruitful global ministry. (6-7 hours)

## ***Understanding Islam—Loving Muslims***

### **Theme - Revolutionary Ideas on How to Share Jesus’ Love with Muslims.**

For all Christians a Biblical understanding of Islam and the Muslim culture is essential in today’s world. *Understanding Islam—Loving Muslims* will help you understand Islam, love Muslim people, and find effective methods for communicating Christ’s love for them as individuals. (5-6 hours)

## ***Healthy Churches in a Sick World***

### **Theme - The World is Sick – How Can the Church be More Healthy?**

The Healthy Churches Seminar is built on the concept that local churches have a Scriptural mandate to minister in four venues: 1) To those who are part of the congregation; 2) To those who are part of the culture in which the congregation lives; 3) To those who live in similar cultures; 4) To those who live in entirely different cultures.

The Healthy Churches seminar offers a guided, interactive opportunity for pastors and other church leaders to become even more healthy in global evangelism. This seminar utilizes a

dynamic diagnostic instrument to help the church evaluate its current health as a Great Commission church. The animated computer presentation, illustrations and penetrating group discussion help the church apply a specific “prescription” for greater health in 10 different areas of applied ministry. (6-7 hours)

### ***On the Cutting Edge***

#### **Theme – Guidelines and Insight on Missions Mobilization for the Missions Task Force and other Church Leadership**

A seminar that presents a step by step process that guides church leadership in developing the eight best practices of local church missions. (3-4 hours)

### ***Business as Mission***

#### **Theme - A Fresh Approach to Tentmaking Missions**

Explores the biblical model for business and how business provides a platform for effective ministry, particularly in hard to access regions. Students also learn how to financially and strategically analyze the business potential of opportunities in their midst. Instructors are individuals with practical “hands on” business experience. (6-8 hours)

### ***Strategic Power Shifts in Missions***

#### **Guidance For Missionaries, Pastors and Church Leaders To “Power Shift” to Increased Harvest**

This seminar outlines 5 important power shifts that if instituted will launch local churches into completing the Great Commission. These power shifts are Attitude, Actions, Alignment, Abundance and Anointing. Based on Dr. Foltz’s book (5-6 hours)

**Other AIMS materials and presentations are listed on [www.aims.org](http://www.aims.org)**

## **2. AIMS Books by Dr. Howard Foltz**

***Healthy Churches in a Sick World*** —Analyzes three arenas of local church ministry within the body, within the community, and to the whole world, and offers an evaluation for the reader to gauge the health of his/her own church.

***Paradigm Lost – Rediscovering God’s Plan for Harvest*** —This book is a call to the church to restore the harvest mentality of Jesus’ words and gives step-by-step examples of how to implement this farming paradigm for more effective evangelism in our neighborhoods, our country and the world.

***For Such a Time as This – Strategic Missions Power Shifts for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*** —These seven

thought-provoking chapters challenge us to reflect Biblically, prophetically, and practically on our cherished missions world-view.

### **3. AIMS Training Manuals**

***On the Cutting Edge*** — A step-by-step to developing and implementing a successful mission program in the local church.

***Final Focus Manual*** — Designed to help local churches change the world one people at a time by adopting an unreached people group.

***Missions Conference.Org*** — A guide for setting up a missions conference in the local church.

***Harvest Connection for Kids*** — A program designed to raise up our children with a mission's mindset.

***Mission Foundations*** — A beginning level missions curriculum designed to fit almost any format, from Sunday school or small group Bible Study to cell groups to entire church participation.

***Short-Term Missions Training — The Ticket to Successful Ministry***—A comprehensive training tool for outreach teams preparing to go on short-term missions trips. Evaluation Forms are included.

### **4. AIMS Booklets**

***Mission Fundraising*** —Completed in cooperation with our partnering Churches, this booklet gives ten fundraising ideas that have been tested and found to be successful.

***Practical Steps to the Mission Field*** —A concise handbook to assist individuals to establish plans to go to the mission field.

***Strategic Prayer*** —A prayer guide for the world organized by religious block blocks.

***Strategic Missions Giving*** —A guide in how to maximize your investments in God's Kingdom.

### **5. AIMS Premier Overseas Training**

#### ***Equipping for the Harvest (EFTH)***

This AIMS training is to help mobilize indigenous movements overseas. This training includes teaching via Power Point in the local language utilizing the AIMS foundational seminar, *Harvest*

*Connection*, followed by *Faith Promise Giving*, and *Networking/Partnerships*. At the end of EFTH, the national churches are formed into partnerships targeting Unreached People Groups. Their goal is to raise up a “grass-roots” missions movement that generates prayer, finances, and national missionaries and send them to the unreached peoples to generate church planting movements.

## **Appendix D:**

### **Training Materials for Short-Term Mission Candidates**

1. *Before You Pack Your Bags, Prepare Your Heart* (Cindy Judge), 2000 (rev 2005), Minneapolis MN: STEMPress, ISBN-13: 978-0-9712320-4-4.

**Theme - PRE-FIELD DEVOTIONAL PERSONAL PREPARATION:** By far the #1 selling STMPress book; is used as a devotional pre-field training tool by each individual in a short-term mission team.

2. *Bringing It Home: A Post-Trip Devotional Guide for International and Domestic Short-Term Mission Teams* ( Jim Mersereau), 2010, Foresight Publishing, ISBN-13: 978-0-9844423-4-8.

**Theme - RE-ENTRY:** Designed to help prevent short-termers from crash and burn upon return from the field. Should be required reading and journaling for every short-termer beginning day one back home from the field.

3. *Building Strategic Relationships: A Practical Guide to Partnering with Non-Western Missions (3rd Edition)* (Daniel Rickett), 2008, Minneapolis MN: STEMPress, ISBN-13: 978-0-9711258-5-8.

**Theme - ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE FIELD THAT WORK:** Excellent, indispensable tools for assessing intercultural partnerships, with tactical strategies to build collaborative relationships that actually work for the long haul.

4. *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures*(Sarah A. Lanier), 2000, Hagerstown MD: McDougal Publishing, ISBN-10: 1-58158-022-3.

**Theme - PRE-FIELD CULTURAL (CROSS-CULTURAL) TRAINING:** A very popular easy-read introduction by an experienced YWAMer to basis cultural differences.

5. *Maximum Impact Short-Term Mission: The God-Commanded Repetitive Deployment of Swift, Temporary Non-Professional Missionaries* ( Roger P. Peterson, Gordon Aeschliman, and R. Wayne Sneed), 2003/2008, Minneapolis MN: STEMPress, ISBN-13: 978-0-97112-581-0.

**Theme - LEADERSHIP TRAINING FOR ALL SHORT-TERM MISSION LEADERS:** Solid short-term mission theory for implementing virtually any type of short-term mission endeavor. Ralph Winter called this book “the Bible” of the short-term mission movement.

6. *Short-Term Missions Workbook: From Mission Tourists to Global Citizens* (Tim Dearborn), 2003, InterVarsity Press, ISBN-13: 978-0830832330.

**Theme - PRE-FIELD TEAM-BASED TRAINING:** 8-week course for teams to do together. Prepare spiritually through individual and group Bible study, gain cross-cultural understanding, and get ready for reentry.

## **APPENDIX E: OTHER FACILITATING ORGANIZATIONS**

### **Joshua Project**

**The Recommended Research site.**

[www.joshuaproject.net](http://www.joshuaproject.net)

Joshua Project is the principle website AIMS uses for research. It is an organization seeking to highlight the ethnic people groups of the world with the least followers of evangelical Christianity. Focusing on ethnicity, they maintain an extensive database of "unreached peoples" listed by country and language. Joshua Project maintains this data to support Christian missions and is based in Colorado Springs, USA. Joshua Project began in 1995 from within the former AD2000 and Beyond Movement. Joshua Project is now part of the U.S. Center for World Mission.

### **Adopt A People Clearing House**

[www.adoptapeople.com](http://www.adoptapeople.com)

This website exists to help the Great Commission community establish an “end-vision” passion, and equip local churches and mission organizations worldwide to adopt all remaining unreached people groups through prayer, partnership, provision, and personnel, for the purpose of church planting.

## Glossary of Terms

**Closure** - concept the mission mandate of the church (make disciples of all nations) can be completed in a way that is measured by establishing a viable indigenous church movement in every people group. (Completion of the Great Commission).

**Evangelism (E-0)** - bringing conversion and renewal to people in our own congregations.

**Evangelism (E-1)** - ministry within one's own culture or geographic region. (JERUSALEM)

**Evangelism (E-2)** - cross-cultural ministry to a culture that is very much like our own, their world-view is very similar to our own. (SAMARIA)

**Evangelism (E-3)** - evangelism that crosses significant cultural differences, people who have never heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ (ENDS OF THE EARTH).

**Mission** - God's redemptive work in building or extending his Kingdom in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and into the rest of the world.

**Missions** - application of God's redemptive work cross-culturally.

**Missionary** - minister of the Gospel who works cross-culturally.

**People Group** - group of individuals that share ethnic, linguistic and cultural traits.

**Unreached People Group** - people group within which there is no viable indigenous church that can disciple and reach its own people.

## End Notes

### Chapter 2:

<sup>1</sup> Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House, 1998), xix.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, 296.

<sup>3</sup> R.R. Palmer and Joel Cotton, *A History of the Modern World Since 1815* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1950, Fifth Edition 1978), 803.

<sup>4</sup> Long, Justin, Network for Strategic Missions. Personal correspondence, June 4, 2010.

<sup>5</sup> The Joshua Project ([http://joshuaproject.net./global\\_statistics](http://joshuaproject.net./global_statistics)) accessed January 25, 2015.

<sup>6</sup> Personal interview with a national Indian leader, 2004.

<sup>7</sup> R.R. Palmer and Joel Colton, *A History of the Modern World Since 1815*, 791.

### Chapter 3:

<sup>1</sup> The Joshua Project ([http://joshuaproject.net./global\\_list?listtype=religions](http://joshuaproject.net./global_list?listtype=religions)) accessed January 25, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* (New York: Oxford University Press, Third Edition, 1979, 1989), 314:17.

<sup>3</sup> Status of Global Mission, Updated for 2014. Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/resources/documents/StatusOfGlobalMission.pdf>, accessed July 16, 2014.

<sup>4</sup> Status of Global Mission, Updated for 2014. Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/resources/documents/StatusOfGlobalMission.pdf>, accessed July 16, /2014.

<sup>5</sup> “Giving Research.” The Empty Tomb, Inc. <http://www.emptytomb.org/research.html>, accessed October 17, 2011.

<sup>6</sup> “Statistics and Facts.” International Orality Network. [http://www.oralicity.net/statistics\\_and\\_facts](http://www.oralicity.net/statistics_and_facts), accessed July 16, 2014

<sup>7</sup> “Official Ministry Statistics – April 1, 2014.” The JESUS Film. [http://www.jesusfilm.org/assets/files/JFP\\_Statistics\\_Apr2014.pdf](http://www.jesusfilm.org/assets/files/JFP_Statistics_Apr2014.pdf). Accessed July 16, 2014.

<sup>8</sup> “CBN Partners Make a Difference.” CBN International Ministries. <http://www.cbn.com/partners/about/index.aspx>. Accessed July 16, 2014.

<sup>9</sup> “Recording Strategy.” Gospel Recordings Network. <http://www.gospelrecordings.net>. Accessed 2/20/12.

<sup>10</sup> “Great Commission Statistics.” Joshua Project Legacy Website. <http://legacy.joshuaproject.net/great-commission-statistics.php>. Accessed January 25, 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Vinita Hampton and Carol Plueddemann, comp. *World Shapers: A Treasury of Quotes from Great Missionaries* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1991), 3.

#### **Chapter 4:**

<sup>1</sup> “India People Groups,” Joshua Project Legacy Website, accessed January 25, 2015, <http://legacy.joshuaproject.net/countries.php>.

<sup>2</sup> “Najdi Bedouin of Saudi Arabia,” Joshua Project Legacy Website, accessed January 25, 2015, <http://legacy.joshuaproject.net/people-profile.php>.

<sup>3</sup> “What is the 10/40 Window?” Joshua Project Legacy Website, accessed January 25, 2015, <http://legacy.joshuaproject.net/10-40-window.php>.

<sup>4</sup> Vinita Hampton and Carol Plueddemann, comp., *World Shapers: A Treasury of Quotes from Great Missionaries* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1991), 115.

#### **Chapter 5:**

<sup>1</sup> Personal Interview with Pastor Ron Johnson, July 12, 2010.

#### **Chapter 6:**

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Livesey, *Great Commanders and Their Battles* (New York, NY: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 36-43.

<sup>2</sup> Vinita Hampton and Carol Plueddemann (comp.), *World Shapers: A Treasury of Quotes from Great Missionaries* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1991) 16-17.

#### **Chapter 7:**

<sup>1</sup> Geller, Doron. "Israeli Intelligent in the 1967 War. Jewish Virtual Library. <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/History/intel67.html>. accessed 8/25/2012.

<sup>2</sup> Johnstone, Patrick and Mandryk, Jason. *Operation World: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Edition*. (Chicago, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001), 24-25.

<sup>3</sup> R. A. Torrey, *The Power of Prayer and the Prayer of Power* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing Company, 1976), 16.

<sup>4</sup> Vinita Hampton and Carol Plueddemann, comp., *World Shapers: A Treasury of Quotes from Great Missionaries* (Wheaton, IL: Harold Shaw Publishers, 1991), 74.

<sup>5</sup> Carolyn Hedgepeth, testimony.

## **Chapter 8:**

<sup>1</sup> Charles M. Province, "The Famous Patton Speech," excerpted from a book titled *The Unknown Patton*, <<http://members.aol.com/Patton2GHQ/speech.html>>, (accessed December 22, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Roberts, Pastor Terry. Personal Interview on March 3, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Roger Peterson, plenary address at *Short-Term Missions Long-Term Impact?* a conference cosponsored by Interdenominational Foreign Missions Association and the Evangelical Missiological Society, 28 September 2007, Minneapolis.

<sup>5</sup> Msgr. James H. O'Neill, "True Story of the Patton Prayer," <<http://www.apostolic.edu/patton/text.htm>>, (accessed December 22, 1999).

## **Chapter 9:**

<sup>1</sup> Vern Liebl (USMC intelligence specialist), "The View from the Other Side: An Interview with an Iraqi Soldier" (excerpted from a conversation with a captured Iraqi officer on March 2, 1991), <<http://www.desert-storm.com/soldiers/into.html>> (accessed December 23, 1999).

<sup>2</sup> Bates, Matthew (Air Force Staff Sergeant), "F-17: A long, storied history that is about to end." *Air Force Print News*. Posted: October 28, 2006. <http://www.af.mil/news/story.asp?storyID=123030185> (accessed May 8, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Barnes, Julian E., "U.S. Shift to Drone Command." *Wall Street Journal: Middle East News*. Published March 20, 2013. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887324103504578372703357207828.html> (accessed May 8, 2013).

## **Chapter 10:**

<sup>1</sup> Winston S. Churchill, "The Price of Greatness," <http://www.winstonchurchill.org/learn/speeches/speeches-of-winston-churchill/118-the-price-of-greatness> (accessed May 24, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

## **Chapter 11:**

<sup>1</sup> Comparable to 2 Corinthians 2:14

<sup>2</sup> Minemeyer, Chip. "Wounded Soldier Cleared to Join 4<sup>th</sup> Fest Parade of Heroes in State College, Pa." Centre Daily Times. July 3, 2013. Reprinted Stars and Stripes. <http://www.stripes.com/news/us/wounded-soldier-cleared-to-join-4th-fest-parade-of-heroes-in-state-college-pa-1.228746> Accessed 8/17/13.

## **About the Author**

This book is born of education and experience. Dr. Foltz's theological degrees are: B.S. in missions, Southwestern University; M.A. in Cross Cultural Communication, Assemblies of God Graduate School; D.Min., Missiology Denver Seminary. This education provided a foundation that facilitated the beginning of Teen Challenge in Texas and then globally. Dr. Foltz's ministry expanded throughout Europe, the Middle East and Southern Asia. He and his team pioneered and developed Teen Challenge missionary ministries in 27 countries. In 1985 Dr. Foltz took this extensive background to Regent University where he became Professor of Global Evangelization for 23 years. His passion is to mobilize local churches for missions, and then help them network with other local churches, mission agencies and schools. In this capacity, he has trained countless missionaries in scores of countries. Through all of this, he enthusiastically testifies that missions is not relegated to the level of a "boring duty." It's an expression of the jubilant victory of Christ.

Dr. Howard Foltz and a team of colleagues speak regularly in churches around the US and abroad. Currently, this team oversees 12 Strategic Alliances around the world

To schedule Dr. Foltz to speak in your church for either a Sunday service or seminar, call (719) 266-3737. Dr. Foltz has had exceptional success motivating congregations in the area of Faith Promise giving or as he likes to call it, "Grace Inspired and Faith Motivated" giving.

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