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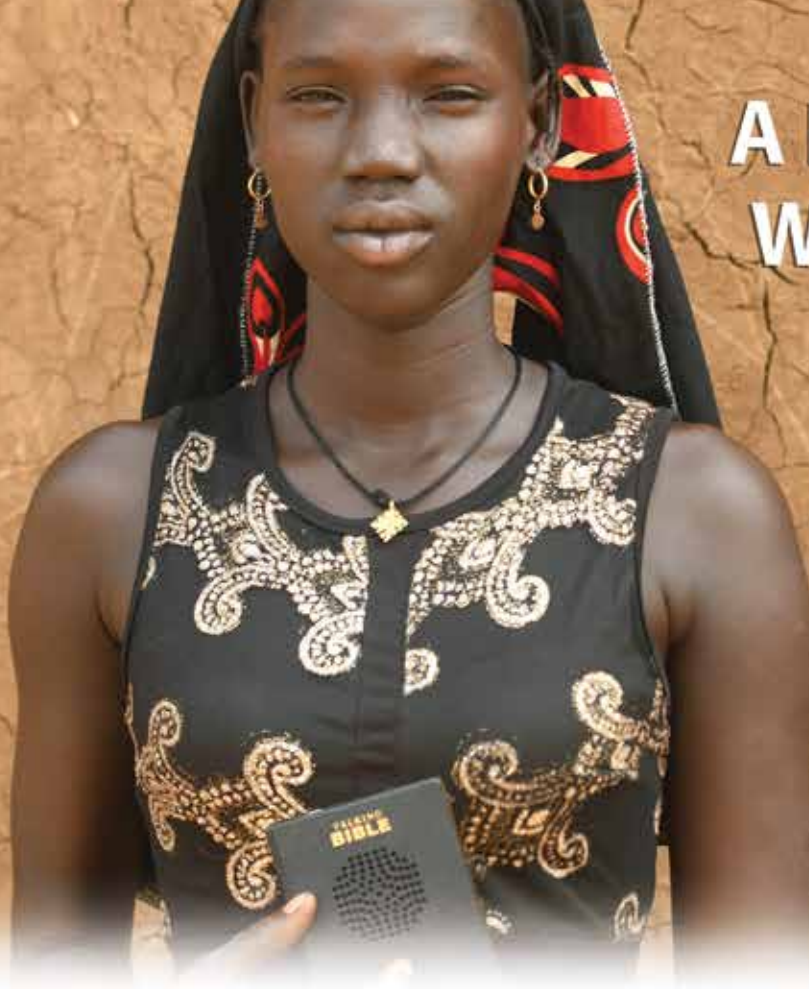
Movements: God's Way of Reaching Entire Peoples



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KINGDOM
MOVEMENTS

A Bible for Those Who Can't Read



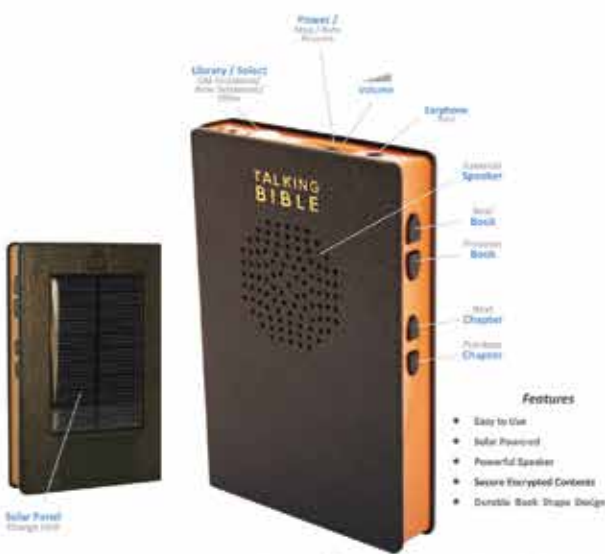
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non-readers with God's Word

Five years since the conflict began in South Sudan, over 4 million people have been forcibly displaced from their homes. Nearly 2.3 million of those are refugees, having fled to neighboring countries.

Neva is 19 years old and a newlywed at a refugee camp in East Africa. She came to the camp 4 years earlier to escape the fighting in South Sudan. Neva cannot read and first heard a Talking Bible two years ago. When she listened, she heard that they were supposed to forgive one another — a difficult task after years of fighting and hatred in her homeland. "I understood it was the Word of God, and meant to keep sin from entering my heart," said Neva.

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Advertising: advertising@missionfrontiers.org
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Rick Wood, Editor
Taya Johnson, Production Coordinator
Mike Riester, Graphic Design
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MOVEMENTS ARE SHOWING THE WAY TO REACH ALL PEOPLES



BY RICK WOOD

EDITOR OF MF
rick.wood@frontierventures.org

Movements to Christ have always been the way that God has reached entire peoples. While movements have become much more frequent in our day, they are not new. They have been a continual reality for two millennia as God has worked according to His sovereign will to reach entire peoples with the gospel. We highlight a few of these movements in this latest edition of *Mission Frontiers*.

There is, however, something quite new and unique about the movements taking place in our present day.

The movements that used to occur “by accident” with the combination of a visionary leader and his empowerment by the Holy Spirit, are now happening more purposefully as godly leaders learn how to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. In our lead article starting on page 8, Rebecca Lewis, identifies the common elements and patterns that are characteristic of both past and present movements. These movements are a combination of visionary leaders led by the Holy Spirit with a plan or strategy for success.

Our mission “technology” continues to grow as our understanding of how to catalyze movements to Christ increases with every new movement that is born. We now have over 1,035 movements that we can learn from on an ongoing basis. The study of these movements increases our ability to start more of them.

While we know so much more about how movements are started and grow, it is still not as simple as $A+B=Movement$. There is always the indispensable and non-quantifiable factor of the Holy Spirit. The analogy of the sailboat (see page 11 of the Jan.–Feb. 2020 issue) is applicable here. We need both good methods, plans and strategies and the power of the Holy Spirit in order to start a movement. It is not one or the other, but both. In order to see movement, a sailboat needs its sails and other equipment set properly for the maximum potential movement. Sailboat races are won or lost based on how skillfully the boat is prepared and guided to most effectively catch the wind. **But if the wind of the Holy Spirit is not blowing, you will not see movement no matter how well the sails are trimmed.** Again, we need both good strategies for multiplication and the Holy Spirit. Our job is to do all we can with wisdom and knowledge to pursue movements and to listen to and pursue the Holy Spirit. The research done by Rebecca Lewis confirms this. So we are now without excuse. We know how movements start and how to grow them in cooperation with the Holy Spirit. There should be smooth sailing from now on, right? Unfortunately, another factor is creeping into this picture with rough seas ahead.

A Victim of Our Own Success

While we should be able to train movement catalysts and deploy them to every unreached people with the knowledge we now have of how movements work, the enemy is sowing confusion in our ranks. For the longest time, those of us who have believed in the power of Kingdom Movements to reach all peoples have worked tirelessly to convince the mission world that these movements are the real deal and the most biblical way to reach all peoples. There are still lingering pockets of skepticism, but we have succeeded in making movements the new popular thing in missions. The good news is that many more people are interested in learning how to start movements among the unreached and believe that a movement in their people group is possible. The bad news is that some are watering down what a movement is and what it takes to start and grow one. They take their own ministry preferences and slap a “movement” label on it, even though it bears no resemblance to the 1,035 Known Kingdom Movements taking place all over the world. **In order for us to continue to make progress in fostering movements in all peoples, we need to align ourselves with the core elements that make movements work.** Some of these are identified in our lead article. To fail to do so, could mean a halt to future progress and a corruption of existing movements as confusion spreads. A clear understanding of what a movement is and what it is not is essential for future progress.



Four Marks of a Movement

In order for a movement to be considered a movement, it must include at least the following:

1. Disciples making disciples one generation after another. A movement is not about gathering a lot of people together to listen to a speaker. As wonderful as Billy Graham and his stadium crusades were, it was not a movement because those coming to Christ were not effectively trained to make disciples one generation after another.
2. Churches planting more churches, generation after generation past the fourth generation in multiple streams. Each time a church plants another church that is one more generation. When there are four or more streams of church planting four generations or more deep, that is the initial threshold of becoming a Kingdom Movement. Each of these streams will have multiple streams itself. Rebecca Lewis mentions that historically movements have consisted of small groups of committed believers. Our modern day movements are still built upon small groups of committed believers that eventually turn into churches. These small groups are often called Discovery Groups.
3. The priesthood of all believers is the foundation of all movements. Martin Luther taught this doctrine and it is becoming a reality in our day through DMMs, CPMs and Kingdom Movements—all names for the genuine movements flourishing in our day. The priesthood of all believers means that every Jesus

follower has the biblical authority to baptize, serve communion, evangelize, make disciples and start new churches. Jesus gave us this authority in Matt. 28:18-20.

4. Simple, biblical and reproducible means of training and leadership development. The DNA established at the start of a movement will determine whether that movement will grow or die. The greater the requirements for making a disciple, the less likely that a disciple will be able to reproduce that training in another, thus stalling or killing the multigenerational nature of these disciple making movements. At their core these movements are engines of leadership development.

There are many other things that characterize the Kingdom Movements of our day such as extraordinary prayer, accountability and listening to the Holy Spirit, but without at least these four elements you cannot call it a movement. **As the frontier mission movement moves forward, let us learn from past and present movements and set our sails for the unreached.**

Join Us as a Mission Frontiers Vision Caster


Mission Frontiers exists to cast the vision and provide the resources to foster Kingdom Movements in every people and place so that every person may have access to the life-saving gospel of Jesus Christ as soon as possible. But we cannot do this without the partnership of you, our readers. Producing *Mission Frontiers* six times a year is not inexpensive. There are fixed costs that must be met regardless of how many subscribers we have. Subscriptions and advertising do not cover our expenses. We need people who believe in what we

are doing and are willing to come alongside us in the following ways.

Prayer: We need people to pray for the success of our mission to mobilize the global church to focus on fostering Kingdom Movements in all peoples and places. I need your prayers for strength, wisdom and godly insights for each issue of *MF*. The enemy of our souls would like to silence us because our message is a direct threat to his territory among the unreached peoples.

Donate: We need your donations—both large and small—if we are to cover our costs and then go on to expand this ministry into other languages. We need committed regular support from the many readers who believe in this work. But even if you can only afford \$25 or \$30, every little bit helps. To give, please go to www.frontierventures.org, click on the Donate button and put MA 030 in the dialog box.

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Movements: God's W



Way of Reaching Entire Peoples



Patterns in Long-Lasting Movements

REBECCA LEWIS

Rebecca Lewis has spent 40 years with her husband and family working to see the gift of God's blessing for families reach the most overlooked peoples on earth.

As I write, millions of acres are burning in Australia. Most attribute the fires to winds and climate change, but authorities have arrested over 180 people for starting the fires, 27 deliberately.¹

Movements in history are similar. While they are propelled by the wind of the Holy Spirit, **God uses people to start them and plans to spread them.** To see what long lasting movements have in common, I have begun studying over a dozen movements in history *that lasted over 100 years and impacted hundreds of thousands of people.* Here is what I have found so far.

« Movements in history are similar. While they are propelled by the wind of the Holy Spirit, God uses people to start them and plans to spread them. »

Five patterns in Lasting Movements:

- 1) They were started by a person called by God and compelled by the Holy Spirit.
- 2) Each individual continually sought God for a specific unfolding plan to spread the vision widely.
- 3) The plans resulted in highly committed groups with the same vision that were small and self-replicating.
- 4) The groups engaged in transforming both the individuals and their broader community.
- 5) Institutionalizing or aligning with powers seemed to slow or stop movements.

No people group or nation has become identified with Christ without a movement taking place among them at some point, with the gospel spreading faster than the growth of the population. But these movements don't just happen.

« No people group or nation has become identified with Christ without a movement taking place among them at some point. »

A Person with a Plan

Paul set out with his companions to tell the diaspora synagogues of the Greek world about the Messiah Jesus. But, under the compulsion of the Holy Spirit, Paul realized God was calling him uniquely to spread the gospel in the Gentile world, leaving behind

communities of faith with designated elders.² When movements to Christ had been started in one region, he moved on to the next, leaving teammates behind to finish the work of establishing committed communities.

Successful movements have been mostly started by *individuals called by God and then directed by the Holy Spirit to slowly develop an organized plan.* These individuals were either already a part of the people group or they learned the language and culture very well and were quickly joined by native coworkers. Their unfolding plans included a concern to establish apostolic teams or small groups with the same calling over a large geographic area, always pushing into areas with no witness. The founding individuals continued in their calling for the rest of their lives, sometimes supported by spouses, but often single or not supported by their spouses. The role of Bible study should not be discounted; however, it was not personally available in most of these movements as it is in modern movements.

1 <https://www.news.com/stories/dozens-arrested-in-australia-for-deliberately-setting-fires/>

2 Allen, Roland, *A Roland Allen Reader*, The Compulsion of the Spirit, Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1983.

« Successful movements have been mostly started by individuals called by God and then directed by the Holy Spirit to slowly develop an organized plan. »

up small-group accountability bands and classes based on James 5:16. (“Confess your sins one to another and pray for one another, that you might be healed.”) He rode thousands of miles to establish groups all over England.

Sometimes the Holy Spirit used analysis and demographics to convict and compel. In 1792, William Carey sparked the entire Protestant mission era not just with vision, but with statistics and a call to use “means” (organized endeavors) to send the gospel to completely unreached nations, which began the era of the Protestant mission agencies.³ After others’ abortive attempts to reach the Chinese, Hudson Taylor was compelled by the Holy Spirit to take up the challenge (1849). Concerned with China’s vast inland areas with no witnesses, he made sure that there were at least two witnesses in every province in China, eating, dressing and speaking like them, 800 workers in 300 stations, starting schools and Bible studies.

In these long-lasting movements, the founder sought the ongoing guidance of the Holy Spirit for a self-sustaining plan that emphasized small, active groups and geographic coverage. *Many people, though filled with the Holy Spirit, have not started lasting movements.* For example, evangelist George Whitefield, contemporary of Wesley, had no plan and famously lamented that the thousands he had won to the Lord were like “a rope of sand.”

In the 5th century, St Patrick was called to Ireland, not only to win the Irish to faith but to instigate the extensive Celtic missionary movement, which sent bands of disciples to set up monastic evangelistic outposts throughout central Europe, bringing many people groups to Christ. Likewise, in the 13th century, St Francis was compelled by an encounter with the Holy Spirit to follow the example of Luke 10, where Jesus sent his followers out from town to town to places he planned to come later. The Franciscan movement resulted in three lasting monastic traditions (male, female and married) and evangelized hundreds of thousands in both Europe and around the world. After an encounter with the Holy Spirit in the 18th century, having previously failed as a missionary, John Wesley started the lasting “evangelical awakening” movement, by setting

« Sometimes the Holy Spirit used analysis and demographics to convict and compel. »

Committed Small Groups Changing Society

Lasting movements seem to have invariably had small committed communities with a sense of unified destiny to spread their transformational message to other communities. Large gatherings, like Jesus and the thousands, or Pentecost, were not the backbones of the movements, and in most cases special buildings were not erected or important to the movements.

From the beginning, movements to Christ spread most rapidly when they were person-to-person, almost “underground,” bringing hope in a way often perceived as subversive to the powers that be, as can be seen in Jewish or Roman society. The early Christian movement became quickly known for rescuing children from infanticide, healing and caring for sick and widows, taking in plague victims, and other remarkable counter-cultural endeavors, outlined by Rodney Stark in the *Rise of Christianity*.

« From the beginning, movements to Christ spread most rapidly when they were person-to-person, almost “underground.” »

Conversely, *while being organized into small groups seems beneficial, being institutionalized seems to counter the effectiveness of movements.* As Ralph Winter wrote: **“Every single denomination in this country that has evolved a required formal, extensive graduate professional training for ordination is now going downhill. There are no exceptions in the whole world.”**⁴

Movements to Christ have been hurt when they have become, or seemed to be, aligned with political, economic, or ecclesiastical powers, especially foreign powers. Faith in Christ spread in all directions for the first 300 years, before becoming overly aligned with the Roman Empire during the 4th century, when the enemies of Rome, like Persia, massacred thousands of Christians. State-sponsored councils resulted in anathemas placed on leaders of other movements to Christ and in the first military attacks on outlying Christian communities, like the Donatists. The spread of the gospel by military might met with resistance and was largely superficial and ineffective.

4 Ralph D. Winter, “The Largest Stumbling Block to Leadership Development in the Global Church,” in *Frontiers in Mission: Discovering and Surmounting Barriers to the Missio Dei*, 4th ed., ed. Ralph D. Winter (Pasadena, CA: WCIU Press, 2008), 64.

While dedicated believers in Roman “Christian” society began to hunker down in monasteries, the Celtic missionaries from powerless Ireland became the most successful starters of movements to Christ in Europe for the next 200 years. Patrick’s Celtic movement stood against the constant violence in Irish, Scottish, Gothic and Roman cultures, and some famous Celtic leaders set off as missionaries as penance for violence.

Later missionaries were often more successful in sparking movements to Christ when they challenged instead of aligned with colonial powers—maintaining their commitment to be ambassadors for Christ alone. Their compassion for their people group included fighting against things destroying their families, whether from without or from within. Hudson Taylor’s missionaries sided with the Chinese against Britain in the century-long fight to free China from opium-pushing British merchants, earning undying gratitude from the Chinese.

Those coming to Christ, now members of a heavenly kingdom, supported one another in their deliverance from sin as well as banding together to stand against earthly injustice. For example, the Wesleyan groups fought generation after generation against slavery and also against alcohol, which was destroying the poor in England and America. Greedy economic interests of global companies still deal ruthlessly with unreached people groups, enslaving them as laborers or customers for the alcohol, tobacco and other drug industries—addiction forcing the sale of their children into the sex-trafficking industry.⁵

Even a long-lasting secular movement bears out these patterns. Karl Marx had a vision for changing the “League of Justice,” a semi-Christian utopian socialist group in Europe (1830s). The group’s stated goal was “the establishment of the Kingdom of God on Earth, based on the ideals of love of one’s neighbor, equality and justice” and their motto was “All men are brothers.”⁶ Marx and Engel joined this “Justice League” and changed the name to “The Communist League” with the new motto “Workers of the world unite!” They turned a dying organization into a lasting global movement, by issuing *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) and by copying the card-carrying accountability cell groups structure of Wesley’s movement. The Communist cell groups focused on indoctrinating and developing members into


5 For the full story on this, see the PDFs of the recent *Mission Frontiers* issue (Sept/October 2019): Making a Killing: The Global Death Industries and Missionary Response.

6 Volkov, G.N., et al., *The Basics of Marxist-Leninist Theory*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1979.

committed revolutionary “comrades.” The small groups “are Communism’s cutting edge...a Communist may belong to many cells... Wherever you have three or more Communists, there you have a Communist cell. They are expected to work together in an organized way in the interests of Communism,...a body of activists with well-defined aims, a single mind and purpose.”⁷ Even though the Communist movement is a false hope, destroying the lives of many, *it has tapped into people’s desire to be part of a committed community and a movement of hope to make their world a better place.*

« As we seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance in sparking lasting movements to Christ, it is important to recognize the importance of Bible-centered transformative small groups, where believers learn to listen to and be led by the Holy Spirit. »

We should not fear, but welcome, committed groups of Christ followers bringing their force to bear against whatever is destroying their families. This activism shines the light of God’s love in their communities, even when they cannot publicly share their faith due to persecution. Movements to Christ throughout history have been moved by the Holy Spirit to pull their people groups out of everything from violence, slavery, and idolatry, to infanticide, cannibalism, promiscuity and addiction. Why let the Communists, socialists, or fascists try to claim the high ground of social transformation, with skewed priorities, when *historical movements to Christ have been exceedingly more successful in bringing peace, health, and brotherly love to communities?*

As we seek the Holy Spirit’s guidance in sparking lasting movements to Christ, it is important to recognize the importance of Bible-centered, transformative small groups, where believers learn to listen to and be led by the Holy Spirit. In addition, it is important for them to understand they are part of a spreading movement of hope, rescuing their people group, and even the whole world, from Satanic forces and false hopes. 

⁷ Hyde, Douglas, *Dedication and Leadership: Learning from the Communists*, U. of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana, 1966, pages 143-146.



The Story of Movements and the Spread of the Gospel

BY **STEVE ADDISON**

Steve Addison is a catalyst for movements that multiply disciples and churches everywhere. He is an author, speaker, podcaster and mentor to movement pioneers. This article is reprinted from the January/February 2018 issue of *Mission Frontiers*. Visit Steve at movements.net.

Luke begins the book of Acts by telling us that what Jesus began to do and teach, he now continues to do through his disciples empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Luke's story of the early church is the story of the dynamic Word of the gospel that grows, spreads, and multiplies resulting in new disciples and new churches. We get to the end of Acts and yet the story doesn't end. Paul is under house arrest awaiting trial; meanwhile the unstoppable Word continues to spread throughout the world. Luke's meaning is clear: the story continues through his readers who have the Word, the Spirit and the mandate to make disciples and plant churches.

« Luke's meaning is clear: the story continues through his readers who have the Word, the Spirit and the mandate to make disciples and plant churches.



Throughout church history we see this pattern continue: the Word going out through ordinary people, disciples and churches multiplying. While the Roman Empire was collapsing, God was calling a young man named Patrick. He lived in Roman Britain but was kidnapped and sold into slavery by Irish raiders. Alone and desperate he cried out to God who rescued him. He went on to form the Celtic missionary movement that was responsible for evangelizing and planting approximately 700 churches throughout Ireland first and then much of Europe over the next several centuries.

Two hundred years after the Reformation, Protestants still had no plan or strategy to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. That was until God used a young Austrian nobleman to transform a bickering band of religious refugees. In 1722 Count Nikolaus Zinzendorf opened his estate to persecuted religious dissenters. Through his Christ-like leadership and the power of the Holy Spirit, they were transformed into the first Protestant missionary movement, known as the Moravians.



When Asbury died in 1816 there were 200,000 Methodists. By 1850 there were one million Methodists led by 4,000 itinerants and 8,000 local preachers. The only organization more extensive was the U.S. government.

« He taught the people to cry out to God for sanctification, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and divine healing. »


Eventually Methodism lost its passion and settled down to enjoy its achievements. In the process it gave birth to the Holiness movement. William Seymour was a holiness preacher with a desperate desire to know the power of God. He was the son of former slaves, a janitor and blind in one eye. God chose this unlikely man to spark a movement that began in 1906 in a disused Methodist building on Azusa Street.

The emotionally charged meetings ran all day and into the night. The meetings had no central coordination, and Seymour rarely preached. He taught the people to cry out to God for sanctification, the fullness of the Holy Spirit, and divine healing.

Immediately, missionaries fanned out from Azusa Street to the world. Within two years they had brought Pentecostalism to parts of Asia, South America, the Middle East, and Africa. They were poor, untrained, and unprepared. Many died on the field. Their sacrifices were rewarded; the Pentecostal/charismatic and related movements became the fastest growing and most globally diverse expression of worldwide Christianity.

At the current rate of growth, there will be one billion Pentecostals by 2025, most of them in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Pentecostalism is the fastest expanding movement—religious, cultural, or political—ever.

« At the current rate of growth, there will be one billion Pentecostals by 2025, most of them in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Pentecostalism is the fastest expanding movement—religious, cultural, or political—ever. »

Jesus founded a missionary movement with a mandate to take the gospel and multiply disciples and churches everywhere. History is replete with examples of movements just like in the book of Acts; I have named only a few. Three essential elements are necessary for Jesus movements: His dynamic Word, the power of the Holy Spirit and disciples who obey what Jesus has commanded. 

« Three essential elements are necessary for Jesus movements: His dynamic Word, the power of the Holy Spirit and disciples who obey what Jesus has commanded. »

John Wesley's Church Planting Movement:

Discipleship That Transformed a Nation and Changed the World

**CHARLES WHITE
& ROBBY BUTLER**

Robby.Butler@MultMove.net
MULTMOVE.NET/
RESOURCES

Dr. Charles White is Professor of Christian Thought and History at Spring Arbor University. He has helped in Bible translation in ten different languages, as well as teaching *Perspectives* and other subjects in Nigeria, Rwanda, Ethiopia, India, the Philippines, Australia, Canada, Mexico, Poland, and Ukraine. He and his wife have four grown children and fourteen grandchildren.

Robby Butler is General Director for Mission Network, production manager for Steve Smith's *No Place Left* saga and editor for James Nyman's *Stubborn Perseverance*. He researches what is working best to advance God's kingdom, then distills this to equip others for greater fruitfulness.

When John Wesley was born in 1703, four million out of Britain's five million people lived in absolute poverty—unless they found enough food for that day, they would begin to starve to death.

When John Wesley launched a Church Planting Movement in this context, he not only changed the eternal destinies of an estimated one million people who came to Christ through his ministry, he changed their economic status as well. Not only did the Methodists he led get saved, they got out of poverty and became a powerful influence in disciplining their nation. Wilberforce and other “spiritual sons” of Wesley honored him as the “greatest man of his time.”

The Methodists made such an impact on their nation that in 1913, historian Élie Halévy theorized that the Wesleyan revival created England's middle class and saved England from the kind of bloody revolution that crippled France. Other historians, building on his work, go further to suggest that God used Methodism to show all the oppressed peoples of the world that feeding their souls on the heavenly bread of the lordship of Christ is the path to providing the daily bread their bodies also need.

Could Church Planting Movements of our day apply these same teachings with similar impact?

Personal Impact

Coming to Christ under the influence of the Wesleyan Methodists changed people by making Jesus the Lord of their lives. “Methodists” were given that name because they methodically sought to obey the Lord in all areas of their lives by obeying three main rules:

- one, do no harm;
- two, do as much good as you can; and
- three, use all the means of grace that God has provided.

The resulting spiritual change affected their daily lives in

four main ways, each of which improved the social and economic status of the new believers:

- First, they *abandoned sinful habits* which had previously ruined their lives.
- Second, they *began a new life of holiness* which led to health and wealth.
- Third, by going to the Methodist meetings they *learned to read*, which gave them upward mobility.
- And fourth, they developed a *new view on money*, which enabled them to profit from the technological innovations of their age.

Abandon Sinful Habits

To help Methodists obey the first rule, they gathered together into cell groups where they confessed their sins to one another and prayed for one another to receive self-control, which is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. **They thus aided one another in gaining the strength to abandon sinful habits which had previously ruined their lives and consumed their resources.**

In explaining the rule against doing harm, Wesley specifically mentioned drunkenness and fighting. When describing the change made by coming to Christ, he noted “the drunkard commenced sober; the whoremonger abstained from adultery and fornication.” Wesley may have mentioned the three sins of drunkenness, fighting and immorality because their effect was so obvious in his society.

Hogarth's print, *Gin Lane*, shows the social decay of Wesley's age. Gin had recently been invented. One-half of each year's grain crop was turned into this poisonous liquid instead of being baked into healthful bread. A quarter of the houses in London were licensed to sell it and the police were powerless to stop the crimes of desperate drunken men.

The police were also overwhelmed by the fighting and killing of the mob. The law executed people for 169 capital crimes, but the regular march to the gallows did nothing to make the streets safe at night. Sexual immorality was common at all levels of society, and the nation was overwhelmed with illegitimate children.

When people got saved, they repented of their sinful lives. Forsaking drunkenness, fighting and immorality made obvious changes in their lives. Believers stayed sober and quit doing the crazy and dangerous things intoxicated people do. They stopped fighting and thus avoided the injuries and feuds that destroy productivity. They abandoned promiscuity and started valuing their families and raising their children. **Simply renouncing these three self-destructive behaviors greatly improved the economic lives of the Methodists.**

Begin a New Life of Holiness

While Wesley's first general rule stopped the downward path of the Methodists, his second general rule, "Do all the good you can," led them out of abject poverty. Wesley described this positive change: "The sluggard began to work with his hands, that he might eat his own bread. The miser learned to deal his bread to the hungry, and to cover the naked with a garment. **Indeed the whole form of their life was changed: they had 'left off doing evil, and learned to do well.'**"

In his second rule Wesley said that Methodists should live with "all possible diligence and frugality" and "employ them [other Methodists] preferably to others, buying of one another, [and] helping each other in business."

These new lives of honesty and industry helped some Methodists succeed in business and others to become dependable and truthful employees. Besides raising their incomes, Methodism helped people curtail needless expenses and save their money for worthwhile endeavors. Wesley noted that the disciplines of the Christian life often lifted people from poverty: "For wherever true Christianity spreads, it must cause diligence and frugality, which in the natural course of things, must beget riches!"

Learning to Read

A third way in which salvation changed the economic life of Methodists was by teaching them to read. One of the means of grace which Methodists used in obedience to Wesley's third rule was attending Methodist meetings. At these meetings Methodists were urged to read the Bible and taught to sing the hymns of Charles Wesley. **As illiterate people learned to sing these hymns, they also learned to read.**

Charles wrote thousands of hymns for the people called Methodist, who usually learned them by singing them one line at a time as they were called out by the song leader. This "lining out" of the hymns enabled the singers to memorize the songs they sang. When John later published the hymns and sold them cheaply, people could match the words they knew by heart with the printed words on the page, and thus teach themselves to read. Since the Methodists usually sang five hymns at every meeting, each gathering functioned as a thirty-minute adult literacy session.

Because literacy was the admission ticket to the middle class, Methodism provided the means for the upward mobility of thousands of poverty-stricken people.

A New View of Money

Finally, Methodism gave people a new view of money. Wesley often preached on this topic; his most famous message on money made three points: Gain all you can; save [economize] all you can; give all you can.

First, Methodists were to make as much money as they possibly could. Wesley said that despite its potential for misuse, there was no end to the good money can do: "In the hands of [God's] children, it is food for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, raiment for the naked. It gives to the traveler and the stranger where to lay his head. By it we may supply the place of a husband to the widow, and of a father to the fatherless. We may be a defense for the oppressed, a means of health to the sick, of ease to them that are in pain. It may be as eyes to the blind, as feet to the lame: yea, a lifter up from the gates of death!"

Wesley urged Methodists to gain wealth through honest wisdom and unwearied diligence. "Put your whole strength into the work. Spare no pains," Wesley exhorted. "But make sure the work does no harm to oneself or to the neighbor. Thus Methodists must avoid work with dangerous chemicals or in unhealthy environments. They must also not endanger their souls by any work that involves cheating or lying. Likewise, any trade that hurts the body, mind, or soul of the neighbor is out of bounds." Thus distilling liquor, running a tavern, or peddling patent medicines were forbidden to Methodists.

Wesley's second injunction, "Save all you can" had many practical implications: save all you can by refusing to gratify the desires of the flesh. "Despise delicacy and variety and be content with what plain nature requires." Refuse also the desire of the eye with superfluous or expensive clothing, and reject the pride of life, buying nothing to gain the praise or envy of others. Wesley pointed out that gratifying such desires only increases them, so if people were to throw their money into the sea,

they would be doing themselves and others less damage than if they bought needless goods.

Finally Wesley told Methodists to “Give all you can.” He pointed out that all money comes from God, and that people are not the owners, but only the trustees, of God’s money. He said that God wants believers to make sure that they and their families have adequate food, housing, clothing, tools, and savings to do all the work which God has appointed for them to do. He then stated that any money beyond these necessities must be given to the poor. “Render unto God not the tenth, nor a third, not half, but all that is God’s (be it more or less) by employing it all on yourself, your household, the household of faith, and all mankind in such a manner that you may give a good account of your stewardship.”

Altogether, this advice stirred Methodists to become “early adopters” and to benefit from the new opportunities the Industrial Revolution afforded.

Wesley’s teaching to pursue wealth in order to use it for good was not without its danger. Toward the end of his life he gave increasing attention to the dangerous temptation to justify buying whatever we can afford.

Discipling the Nation

Coming to Christ through the Methodist movement changed the lives of a million people in Britain and North America in the eighteenth century. As in other cases of “redemption and lift” through the power of the Gospel, most of these people and their children moved from the desperation of hand-to-

mouth poverty to the security of middle-class life as they made Christ their Lord and experienced the impact of His power on their economic lives.

As these people moved up the social ladder, they began to influence the political life of their nation. They helped to transform Britain from an eighteenth-century kleptocracy—where the powerful used the government to fuel their lives of indulgence by exploiting the poor, into a nineteenth-century democracy—which abolished slavery and used its empire to enrich the lives of every subject of the crown.

For Further Study

Here are three worthy efforts to summarize Wesley’s influence and/or his perspective on money:

- *England Before and After Wesley* by Donald Andrew is a distillation of John Wesley Bready’s 1939 book by the same title. currah.info/pages/dis744/england-before-and-after-wesley.pdf.
- “Four Lessons on Money From One of the World’s Richest Preachers” is my own more detailed analysis of Wesley’s teaching, model and observations ChristianityToday.com/ch/1988/issue19/1921.html
- *What Wesley Practiced and Preached About Money* is adapted from my “Four Lessons on Money” MissionFrontiers.org/issue/article/what-wesley-practiced-and-preached-about-money

Why Methodism Ceased to be a Movement

by Frank Decker and Darrell Whiteman of The Mission Society

The Wesleyan renewal stimulated the transformation of a generation, and is well known for its balanced emphasis on practical disciple-making coupled with an ardent ministry to those in material need. However, in the latter part of the 19th century two significant decisions were made which caused the emphasis on disciple-making to wane:

- 1 It was officially decided that membership in a small group (“class meeting”) would no longer be required for church membership. This was unfortunate because it was in these class meetings that the truly practical encouragement and equipping took place, what Wesley called “watching over one another in love,” enabling transformation in the life of believers in a way that attendance at only the larger Sunday gathering was unable to provide.
- 2 An emphasis on formal seminary education supplanted the previous grass-roots process by which leadership was largely developed. In early Methodism one could rise from class membership to the level of an itinerant preacher, but the subsequent emphasis on more formal education fomented a greater professionalization of the clergy.
- 3 Many churches today have also adopted these two aspects of ministry to their detriment. According to Mark Nysewander in *No More Spectators*, these two “plate shifts” are what caused Methodism to cease to be a movement over a century ago. Nonetheless, the example of the early Methodists remains as an excellent template for holistic mission today.

Editor’s Note: As Ralph Winter wrote:

“Every single denomination in this country that has evolved a required formal, extensive graduate professional training for ordination is now going downhill. There are no exceptions in the whole world.” 

John Wesley's Plan for Multiplication

STEVE ADDISON

Excerpted from the book,
The Rise and Fall of Movements
by Steve Addison

Steve Addison is a catalyst for movements that multiply disciples and churches everywhere. He is an author, speaker, podcaster and mentor to movement pioneers. This article is an edited extract from his new book, *The Rise and Fall of Movements: A Roadmap for Leaders*. Visit Steve at movements.net.

Growth phase—John Wesley and the Methodist movement

No one would have predicted that John Wesley would be among the great founders and builders of a multiplying movement. Wesley, the founder of Methodism, went to America hoping to convert the Indians. But he returned to England despairing of his own salvation, wondering, "Who shall convert me?"

On May 24, 1738, Wesley reluctantly attended a study on the book of Romans. As the leader was describing the change that God works in the heart through faith in Christ, Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed." He wrote in his journal, "I felt I did trust in Christ alone for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

« As the leader was describing the change that God works in the heart through faith in Christ, Wesley felt his heart "strangely warmed." »

Transformed by God's grace, Wesley traveled Britain with a vision for the conversion and discipling of a nation and the renewal of a fallen church. His passion drew others to the cause. Wesley initiated the Birth of the Methodist movement and led it into Growth. Wesley showed how a movement leader in Growth turns vision into action while maintaining flexibility

and control. He released authority and responsibility, and empowered the movement to embody the Methodist cause.

In March of 1739, Wesley knew it was time to act. He headed to Bristol, invited by the evangelist George Whitefield. Wesley was shocked by what he saw; he believed Whitefield was acting like an extremist and heretic by preaching in the open air to vast crowds. On a Sunday afternoon, Wesley watched Whitefield preach to 30,000 people. The fruit of Whitefield's methods changed his mind. The next day Wesley preached outdoors. By September, he was preaching to crowds of 12,000-20,000.

The common people were less likely to attend church, so Wesley went to them, and he was gladly received. He preached to thousands, standing on a tombstone with the church behind him serving as a sounding board. He preached in market squares. He preached in public parks in the evenings and on the weekends. He preached at 5:00 A.M. before the workday began. Wesley adopted methods from other movements and shaped them to his purpose. Whitefield showed him how to reach the masses through open air preaching. The Moravians taught him how to gather them into disciple-making groups.

In the 1740s he explored and adapted Strategies and Methods that served a growing movement. These included field preaching, classes, bands, societies, itinerants, circuits, annual conferences, and publications. He borrowed from other movements, constantly implementing, adapting,

and evaluating. He combined the elements into a consistent whole that became Methodism.

« The common people were less likely to attend church, so Wesley went to them, and he was gladly received. He preached to thousands, standing on a tombstone with the church behind him serving as a sounding board. He preached in market squares. He preached in public parks in the evenings and on the weekends. »

Wesley's flexibility with Strategy and Methods was tempered by his dependence on the authority of the Word, the leading of the Holy Spirit and his clarity of Mission. He loved church tradition, but for Wesley, the Bible was "the only standard of truth, and the only model of pure religion." He said, "I allow no other rule, whether of faith or practice, than the Holy Scriptures." This view of Scripture left him free to experiment by dispensing with church traditions that no longer served a purpose. He adapted his methods under the guidance of the Holy Spirit as he pursued the Mission of discipling a nation. Wesley experimented, tested, and refined simple but effective methods and structures, so the movement could expand but still remain focused once it moved beyond his direct control. His Spirit-inspired Adaptive Methods enabled him to mobilize leaders and workers in an expanding movement and still keep it on track.

« Wesley experimented, tested, and refined simple but effective methods and structures, so the movement could expand but still remain focused once it moved beyond his direct control. »

Wesley was now preaching to crowds of thousands. But his mission didn't stop with people who made decisions—he wanted disciples. He could have become the pastor-teacher of a great church, but he wanted to reach a nation. He needed a simple method for discipleship in a rapidly expanding movement. So wherever the gospel was met with faith, he set up Methodist societies. He formed the first of these in London in an unused cannon foundry.

Methodist societies were the functional equivalent of a local church. Society meetings included worship, Bible reading, a message, and prayer. The use of the term "society" enabled Wesley to avoid conflict with the state-sponsored Anglican church as he reinvented the nature of church. After Wesley's death, Methodist societies became Methodist churches. Wesley divided each society into classes, which were groups of twelve with an appointed leader. The condition for membership was a desire to flee from the wrath and to come and show the reality of conversion through conduct. As class leaders visited members they discovered behavior incompatible with true conversion, such as domestic disputes and drunkenness. In response, Wesley turned the class meeting into a pastoral and disciplinary structure, which became the building block of a disciple making movement.

« Wesley was now preaching to crowds of thousands. But his mission didn't stop with people who made decisions—he wanted disciples. He could have become the pastor-teacher of a great church, but he wanted to reach a nation. »

The purpose of field preaching was to gather those seeking salvation into the societies and classes. Most conversions took place in the classes, and those converted then joined bands, which were even smaller discipleship groups. The focus of the class was conversion and discipline. The focus of the band was the

confession of sin and pastoral care. Through the system of societies, classes and bands, Methodists came together to encourage each other, confess their sins, pray for each other and hold one another accountable. The class leaders were the backbone of the movement. Wesley examined them to determine “their grace, their gifts and their manner of meeting their several classes.” Discipline and accountability were Wesley’s effective methods for dealing with an expanding movement.

Overwhelmed with opportunities, Wesley experimented with evangelistic preaching that wasn’t followed up with new societies, classes and bands. It was a failure. Wesley observed, “Almost all the seed has fallen by the wayside; there is scarce any fruit of it remaining.” The awakened souls could not “watch over one another in love,” and believers could not “build up one another and bear one another’s burdens.”

Wesley could not disciple a nation alone. He multiplied himself through a system of circuits and circuit riders.

London and Bristol—the cities under Wesley’s direct influence—were the movement’s strongholds. Methodism was also springing up across the nation because of local revivals. It further expanded by adopting local groups and leaders from outside the movement. Inevitably, this added both momentum and new challenges, as the absorbed groups came with many theologies and practices—Calvinists, Moravians, Baptists, and Quakers. How would Wesley unite pockets of revival into a cohesive movement? Leadership was key. He and his brother Charles were constantly on the road both advancing and unifying the movement. In an expanding movement the founder must not depend on positional authority but on the authority of a life devoted to the Word, the Spirit, and the Mission.

Wesley learned from Jesus’ example as a founder. When Jesus left this earth, His disciples had the memory of His life and teaching. But they had more than a memory: Jesus led them


into the same relationship he had with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

He told them it was for their good that He went away (John 16:7). His physical absence enhanced their leadership. Through the Word and the Spirit, His presence went with every disciple as they pursued the Mission He gave them. Wesley brought others into the same experience of saving grace he encountered. He mobilized them into an army of committed followers who embraced the Methodist cause. They knew who they were, and they knew what to do. The movement had vitality and form, enabling it to surpass the direct control of its founder.

« They knew who they were, and they knew what to do. The movement had vitality and form, enabling it to surpass the direct control of its founder. »

LEADERSHIP TASKS: GROWTH

Put the idea to work: Ground the founding vision in effective action that produces the results for which the movement exists.

- **Balance flexibility and control:** Utilize effective methods and functional structures that enable the spread of the movement.
- **Release authority and responsibility:** Mobilize workers and leaders to consolidate and expand the movement.
- **Let go:** Avoid the Founder’s Trap by empowering the movement to embody the cause.
- **Pursue Prime:** Put in place the people and systems to achieve the results for which the movement exists. 

The Birth of a Movement

STEVE ADDISON

Excerpted from the book,
The Rise and Fall of Movements
by Steve Addison

Steve Addison is a catalyst for movements that multiply disciples and churches everywhere. He is an author, speaker, podcaster and mentor to movement pioneers. This article is an edited extract from his new book, *The Rise and Fall of Movements: A Roadmap for Leaders*. Visit Steve at movements.net.

Birth phase—Francis of Assisi and the Franciscan movement

He went out half-naked in his hair-shirt into the winter woods, walking the frozen ground between the frosty trees; a man without a father. He was penniless, he was parentless, he was to all appearance without a trade or a plan or a hope in the world; and as he went under the frosty trees, he burst suddenly into song.

—G.K. Chesterton

Francis' father was furious. He had endured his son's wild living, but Pietro Bernardone would not allow Francis to squander the family's wealth on the poor. He dragged Francis before the Bishop of Assisi for a ruling. As a rich silk merchant, Bernardone had plans for his son to one day take over the business and become a leading man in the city of Assisi, but Francis disappointed him.

In AD 1201, Francis left his home seeking adventure as a soldier. He fought with Assisi's forces against the city of Perugia and was captured, imprisoned, and later ransomed. On the way to his next battle, he heard a voice ask, "Is it better to obey the servant or the Lord?" **When he answered, "Lord, what would you have me do?" he was told to return home and wait. As he waited, Francis became overwhelmed by the emptiness of his life.** Looking for answers, Francis made a pilgrimage to Rome, and on the steps of St. Peter's Basilica, he exchanged clothes with a beggar and begged for his dinner.

After Francis returned to Assisi, he was praying in the broken-down church of St. Damian when a voice spoke to him from the cross: "Go and restore my house." Taking the command literally, he rode to his father's store and loaded his horse

with fine fabrics. Selling the cloth and the horse, he used the money to minister to the needy and restore the church at St. Damian. Furious, his father brought him before the bishop for a ruling. The bishop sympathized with Francis' generosity but ruled the money was not his to give away. Francis responded by stripping naked and laying his clothes at his father's feet. He renounced his family ties and inheritance, declaring his trust in his heavenly Father to provide. Bernardone gathered up his son's clothes and left, while the bishop wrapped his cloak around a trembling Francis. So began the Franciscan movement.

Rejected by his father, Francis begged for stones to restore ruined churches in the countryside around Assisi. In the chapel of Portiuncula, he read Jesus' instructions to his disciples:

"As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give. Do not get any gold or silver or copper to take with you in your belts— no bag for the journey or extra shirt or sandals or a staff, for the worker is worth his keep." (Matt. 10:7-10)

Through his struggle, Francis found God's calling: He would do what Jesus commanded and proclaim the message of the kingdom of heaven, trusting God to provide everything he needed.

Exchanging the mission of Jesus for wealth and security, the monastic orders had abandoned poverty to live in comfort. Francis of Assisi refused to accept the gap between the monastic ideal and everyday reality; eventually, thousands followed his example.

Francis' dream was to live life like Jesus and his disciples did—as an apostolic brotherhood with no distinction between clergy and laity, living in obedience to God's leading, and without the hindrance of possessions. The motivation for this was a passionate love for Christ. Bonaventure, a follower of Francis, described him as "completely absorbed by the fire of divine love like a glowing coal." Francis' response to the decline of settled monasticism was the birth of mobile missionary bands of friars (brothers). Wherever they went, they preached the joy of repentance, and trusted God for their needs. Francis and many of his followers came from wealthy and noble families, but they made the poor and the outcast the special concern of the Order. This was part of Francis' commitment to reach people for Christ outside the walls of the cloister and the borders of Christendom.


Francis of Assisi was true to his calling, and his life drew others who were willing to lay down their lives. The people of Assisi couldn't decide if Francis was a saint or a madman. A few chose to believe he was a saint. Bernard of Quintavalle was a wealthy and prominent man, yet he sold his possessions and gave away his fortune to the poor, joining Francis as a beggar. Next came Peter Catanii, a lawyer. Within a year, Francis had eleven followers. As the numbers grew, Francis organized his followers into small traveling bands who preached repentance. The Franciscans preached in the open air, on street corners, in the market places, and in open fields. Speaking in the ordinary language of the people, their vivid messages inspired and moved people to repentance and joy before God. Francis was never ordained as a priest. Similarly, those who followed his lead were ordinary, untrained men, resented by the clergy for their success.

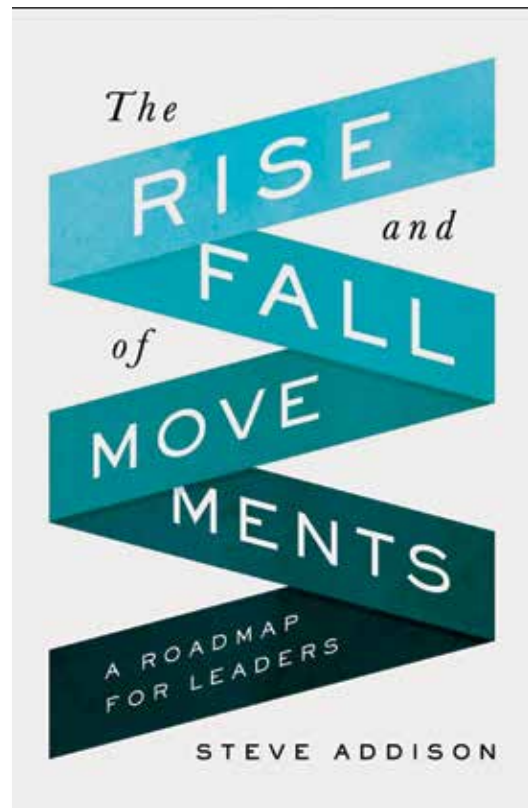
Like Francis, founders inspire others to act. They win the trust of followers by putting their lives on the line for the cause. They demonstrate the unconventional tactics that will achieve a movement's purposes and they protect it from those who bring their own agendas.

Francis of Assisi excelled as a founder and lived what he believed. His authority flowed from his uncompromising commitment to Christ.

He had little time for organizational structures and external requirements. He excelled as a visionary but struggled to ensure the movement adapted to its meteoric rise. Regardless, he remains one of the most endearing figures of Christian history.

LEADERSHIP TASKS: BIRTH

- **Wrestle with God:** Surrender to God to bring clarity of vision.
- **Fuel discontent:** Raise awareness of the gap between the ideal and reality.
- **Dare to dream:** Know where you are going, even if you don't yet know how you'll get there.
- **Commit to action:** Show how the vision can be turned into reality.
- **Build a team:** Call people who are willing to lay down their lives for the cause. 



Four Stages of a Movement

BY **STEVE SMITH**

Steve Smith (March 11, 1962–March 13, 2019) served overseas with the International Mission Board (SBC) for 18 years, helping initiate a Church Planting Movement (CPM) among an unreached people group in East Asia, and then coaching, training, and leading others to do the same throughout the world. Upon his retirement from IMB in 2016 until his death, Steve served simultaneously as the Vice President of Multiplication for East-West Ministries, as a Global Movement Catalyst for Beyond, and as a co-leader of the 24:14 Coalition, a global effort to engage every unreached place and people with a movement strategy by 2025. His heart and passion was to lead God's people to be completely, lovingly obedient to all of God's Word, and to hasten the coming of the Day of the Lord.

I stood in front of the American congregation and urged them to send short-term teams to my Asian people group. “On a two-week trip, you can win a household or two to faith and begin a church with them.” They were tracking with me until the word “church.” At that 400 sets of eyes glassed over.

I was stymied to figure out what had created doubt. When I saw some of them looking at the building overhead, I realized the problem. They thought I was asking them to plant a large-building church with the programs, equipment and full-time staff.

I rephrased my admonition. “How many of you have started a small group in your home?” Dozens of hands went up. “I would like to invite you to start similar groups in Asia. We will help those become churches that meet in homes.” Looks of relief spread around the room. Many nodded. This was something they could attempt.

What I encountered that day is a common stumbling block when we transport believers from a Phase 4 movement and insert them into a Phase 1 situation. Throughout history, most movements have gone through four phases or stages (and sometimes back again through grass-roots movements). Failure to understand these can create unreal expectations that are inappropriate for a given stage of a movement.



Years ago mission practitioners Don Dent and Nik Ripken spoke of similar stages. Mark Stevens, a CPM trainer in Southeast Asia, has then summarized these as four phases

of a movement. Neill Mims, another trainer in Southeast Asia, has crafted this into a simple drawing. The drawing I present here is a slight modification of the work these men have done.

This paradigm tool has proven so helpful that many CPM (church planting movement) trainers now draw a simple diagram on a poster depicting this at the beginning of a training. We leave this up on the wall throughout the training to avert misunderstandings. What follows is an oversimplification but simplifying it clarifies the progression and why tensions arise at times. This historical progression from the Unreached Phase to Institutional Phase can take years, decades or centuries.

This tool is not aimed at criticizing believers and churches in any of the phases. I am a product of a stage four movement. Rather the goal is to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each stage and what we must navigate when we move from one to the other.

Stage One—Unreached Phase

In the beginning of a new mission work, the people group is unreached. Few believers or churches exist. Outsiders enter the context and lead people to faith. Persons of Peace are discovered and networks of relationships are opened up through those who accept Christ. It is not uncommon to find some who may multiply gospel acceptance 30 times, 60 times and 100 times in their circle of influence.

« In the beginning of a new mission work, the people group is unreached. Few believers or churches exist. Outsiders enter the context and lead people to faith. »

In this early stage of what might become a movement of God, usually all forms and methods are rather simple.

If they are not, then this mission work never becomes a movement.

- The number of Christians (represented by dots) is relatively small. The budding movement may be growing (represented by a line moving higher on the graph.) But most of the evangelism and church planting is being done by evangelists from outside the people group. Growth is still incremental.
- The few churches meet in informal places—homes, under trees or in other places already built (storefronts, offices, etc.). This is symbolized by a house. Again, most churches are being started by outsiders.
- An important step that must be taken is development of the concept of the priesthood of every believer (represented by “P”s). In this stage, though outsiders are initiating the evangelism and church planting, this budding work can become a movement if they instill in believers a strong concept of the priesthood of the believer. They must help believers not only to go directly to God but also to live out the priestly service of evangelizing and ministering to others. If they do not catch this concept, then the missionary work can remain in the unreached phase indefinitely—outside missionary experts doing all of the evangelism, discipleship, church planting and leading.
- Leadership development of local believers is very informal, usually happening in the churches or local context, just in time, mainly in the form of mentoring.
- All of the forms are so simple at this stage, that with the right empowering and vision, the early stages may be fanned into a Church Planting Movement.

« Leadership development of local believers is very informal, usually happening in the churches or local context, just in time, mainly in the form of mentoring. »

Stage Two—Movement Phase

At this stage, multiplication of disciples and churches is occurring primarily because indigenous believers are captivated by the vision to reach their own people group and beyond. The number of believers begins to increase dramatically because the concept of the priesthood of every believer takes off (the line begins to rise more rapidly).

As the Spirit empowers them through simple forms and methods, new communities are reached with the gospel.

Churches continue to meet in informal places such as homes, and multiplication is the norm for most churches as they live with these simple forms. Leadership development usually occurs in the context of churches. Locally connected leadership networks develop where leaders with more responsibility gain additional training in context.

« As the Spirit empowers them through simple forms and methods, new communities are reached with the gospel. »

Indigenous believers do not wait for outsiders to initiate evangelism, baptism, discipleship, church planting or leadership of churches. The movement grows because of their confidence that they are commissioned and empowered to do the work of ministry. Most believers and leaders do not see a great “clergy/laity” divide. A movement can remain in this stage for years or decades.

Stage Three—Formalizing (or Established) Phase

As the movement progresses, the number of believers continues to increase rapidly. A desire develops to standardize or formalize certain aspects of the movement (e.g. church formation, leadership development, etc.). Leadership development existed in the earlier phases but it was done intentionally in context – essentially theological education by extension.

As the movement formalizes, some churches begin to meet in purpose-built structures while some continue to meet in homes. Brick and mortar (or bamboo and tin) buildings emerge. (This is represented by a building with a cross on top.) Some of these brick and mortar churches become much larger than the average church meeting in a home.

Leadership development becomes more formalized as well. Dedicated institutions (represented by a colonnaded structure) begin to emerge to train more leaders and to do it in a more systematic manner. Certificates and credentials begin to emerge in the process. Some very gifted leaders begin to stand out amidst the leaders (represented by stars on the drawing). They are highly gifted evangelists, preachers, teachers and administrators. Lay pastoral leadership becomes less common and a professional leadership becomes more common.

The result is that normal disciples can be intimidated from doing the work of the ministry. They do not have the abilities or specialized training/credentials of the professional leaders. Therefore, the concept of the priesthood of the believer (in terms of “every member a minister”) wanes. A smaller percentage of disciples continues in ministering to others. No one intends for this to occur, and many pastors will do their best in stages three and four to build up their church members as ministers and leaders, but the “clergy/laity” divide becomes more profound.

Stage Four—Institutional Phase

As the movement becomes more formalized, it inevitably moves to an institutional phase. Overall the movement may grow for a while due to the sheer number of churches and believers bearing witness. However, it is not uncommon for the movement to plateau, unable to keep pace with the birth rate.

« For a church to meet in a home is seen as odd and “not real church.” »

At this stage, multitudes of believers exist. Churches are very common and accepted in society. The majority of churches meet in purpose-built structures and the requirements for what constitutes a church become more rigid. For a church to meet in a home is seen as odd and “not real church.” Some churches become larger and some mega-churches emerge, though in many denominations, the vast majority of churches still average under a hundred in attendance.

Extremely gifted leaders emerge (represented by even larger stars on the diagram). Virtually all leadership development is now done in institutions – seminaries or Bible schools - and credentials are expected. A majority of leaders serve in full- or part-time capacities. Lay leadership is less common, or at least less visible. The upshot is that the concept of priesthood of the believer wanes drastically. Believers bring their lost friends to church rather than lead them to faith themselves. Professional leaders do the work of ministry and find it difficult to motivate the average person in the pew to serve in lay ministry.

« Believers bring their lost friends to church rather than lead them to faith themselves. »

Institutions by the church become common (seminaries, publishing houses, hospitals, mission organizations, etc.) and often effect great impact through the manpower and budgets they wield.

Stage Four Workers in Stage One

This whole process can take years, decades or centuries to develop. The early church does not appear to have entered this final stage until the Fourth Century A.D. Most movements progress through these stages. The difficulty comes when we lack this historical perspective and try to make sense of movements at earlier stages.

What happens when a missionary leaves a stage four church and tries to do evangelism and church planting in stage one? Inadvertently he tries to plant stage four disciples and churches because that is all he knows. One missionary in Sub-Saharan Africa expressed revelation upon seeing this diagram. He realized that when his organization pioneered work in his tribal people group, they attempted to start stage four churches from the beginning (complete with brick and mortar). He discovered that on average it took 22 years to plant a stage four church in stage one.

As Neill Mims was teaching a group of Korean missionaries, this question sparked an intense counseling session. Though a result of a mighty movement, Korean church culture is now extremely institutional. This chart gave these missionaries some understanding as to why their home churches and pastors expected them to start large churches or other institutions very quickly or be considered failures.

Leadership development also becomes a challenge. Local partners that I mobilized to reach an unreached people group in Asia needed one year of training-doing-retraining-doing-retraining before they understood basic reproducible patterns for evangelism, discipleship and church planting. After one year they finally were following a stage one and two pattern.

But when it came time to choose leaders, they naturally reverted to seeing through stage four eyes. They could not find any believers from the harvest to appoint as pastors. The reason was not the lack of biblical qualifications. The problem was that they were envisioning leaders from back home (stage four) – extremely gifted, exceptional teachers, highly mature spiritual life, administrative abilities, etc. It was not until they grasped the basics of Scripture and abandoned stage four expectations that they could develop local leaders appropriately at stage one. These indigenous leaders would continue to grow and mature as they were trained in the years to come.

Stage Two Workers in Stage Four

What happens with believers from stage one or two who visit leaders and churches in stage four? A not-uncommon consequence is death of the movement phase and immediately entering the formalizing and institutional phase.

Leaders from an emerging CPM left their mountain homes and descended into the plains where stage four churches and institution had existed for decades. When the leaders saw the marvelous buildings, institutions and gifted leaders, they longed to have the same thing. They returned to their mountain churches and immediately instituted stage four requirements for what constituted a church and who could lead. This effectively killed the progress of their movement.

« When the leaders saw the marvelous buildings, institutions and gifted leaders, they longed to have the same thing. »

Stage Four Leaders Watching a Stage Two Movement

When our whole frame of reference is stage four, it is easy to criticize what we see in stage two. We can easily label the house churches as “not real churches.” Or, we can require that leaders meet certain credentialing requirements before they can perform the ordinances. Or, as we feel compassion for pastors that are bi-vocational, we may dedicate money to fund them full-time, thereby creating a benchmark that is no longer reproducible. In all, we can kill a movement when we implement extra-biblical requirements that are a yoke too heavy into these early stages.

It is easy to ridicule such movements because we have no frame of reference for them. Recently, as I spoke to 400 pastors, seminary professors and mission leaders about launching Church Planting Movements in the American context, I encountered many such questions. The idea of every believer being trained to make disciples and potentially start churches was a foreign concept.

I read them an account of the number of believers and churches multiplying almost ten-fold over the course of twenty years in the States. Many in the group began to ask where this movement was occurring. I shared that this occurred in the American frontier among Baptists from 1790-1810.

I read the following quote from Baptist historian Robert Baker:

Baptist ecclesiology and doctrine were particularly suited to the democratic atmosphere of the developing western frontier. The Baptist gospel was simple, minimizing complex theological formulations, and emphasizing a life-changing confrontation with Jesus Christ. Like Paul, most of the frontier Baptist preachers were tentmakers in the sense that they provided for their own livelihood. The distinction between “laity” and “clergy” existed only in the fact that the latter had fire in their bones to preach the gospel in response to a divine summons.

The Baptist preachers lived and worked exactly as did their flocks; their dwellings were little cabins with dirt floor and, instead of bedspreads, skin-covered pole-bunks: they cleared the ground, split rails, planted corn, and raised hogs on equal terms with their parishioners.

The fact that each Baptist church was completely independent appealed to frontier democracy and eliminated problems of ministerial appointment and ecclesiastical authority. It is no wonder, then, that the Baptists played a large part in the significant frontier movement and made great gains from their ministry among the people on the growing edge of American life.

I announced to the group, “This is our heritage! This is the way we lived just 200 years ago. Let us embrace our heritage and ask God for a renewal movement.” Heads began to nod in the audience.

History is filled with this general story occurring over and over, nation by nation. It is also filled with stories of plateaued denominations in which fresh grass roots movements emerged by going back to principles of stage two.

The challenge is to keep a movement at the movement stage as long as possible and to not let the formalizing impede the progress of the kingdom. But when it does begin to slow down, going back to simple biblical processes and methods of earlier stages can spark a new movement.

Why not today? Why not in your context? MF

Rapid Mobilization

How the West Was Won

BY **STEVE ADDISON**

Steve Addison is a catalyst for movements that multiply disciples and churches everywhere. He is an author, speaker, podcaster and mentor to movement pioneers. This article is reprinted from the July/August 2015 issue of *Mission Frontiers*. Visit Steve at movements.net.

Editor's Note: On page 15 of this issue we highlight the power of the Methodist Movement in Britain. That nation was transformed by John Wesley and the Methodists as people became members of mandatory small group "class meetings." They came to know Christ, learned to read by studying the Scriptures and singing hymns, confessed their sins one to another and became frugal, hard working and sober. Through obedience to the Word, they became circuit riders and non-professional pastors to spread the gospel even further. They employed many of the characteristics of the Church Planting Movement methodology of our day to very remarkable effect. The following story tells of the similar impact the Methodist movement had in the United States as the country moved westward. Like the movement in Britain, the movement in the U.S. also began to decline when "class meetings" were no longer required and the Methodists began to require seminary education instead of allowing pastors to rise up from the class meetings. See the sidebar on page 17 for more on this.

When the 26 year-old Methodist pioneer, Francis Asbury, arrived in the American colonies in 1771, he believed he was called to fulfill a great destiny. He was right—although that destiny was far greater than he ever imagined. In 1771 there were only 300 American Methodists, led by four ministers. By the time of Asbury's death in 1816, Methodism had 2,000 ministers and over 200,000 members in a well-coordinated movement. By 1830 official membership was almost half a million, and the number of actual attenders was six million. Most of these people had no previous church connection before they became Methodists.

Asbury, like his mentor John Wesley, modeled the commitment required to achieve such success. Throughout his ministry Asbury delivered more than 16,000 sermons. He traveled nearly 300,000 miles on horseback. He remained unmarried so that he could devote himself fully to his mission. He was often ill and had no permanent home. He was paid the salary of an ordinary traveling preacher and was still traveling when he died at 70 years of age. Asbury's leadership and example inspired



an army of circuit riders, many of whom followed his example and remained unmarried. There were no formal vows, but in the early days of the movement the majority of the riders lived by the three rules of the monastic orders: poverty, chastity and obedience. Methodism was a kind of Protestant missionary order under one leader, adapted to reaching isolated communities in harsh conditions across an entire nation.

Jacob Young, a typical circuit rider, was 26 years old in 1802 when he took up the challenge of pioneering a Methodist circuit along the Green River in Kentucky. Young developed his own strategy to evangelize the region. He would travel five miles, find a settlement and look for a family who would let him preach in their log cabin to interested friends and neighbors. Sometimes he found groups already gathered, waiting for a preacher to arrive; in one location he discovered a society run by an illiterate African American slave with impressive preaching and leadership skills. Young established class meetings wherever he went to be run by local leaders in his absence.

Circuit riders like Jacob Young began with limited formal education, but they followed the example of Wesley and Asbury and used their time on horseback for study. They spoke the simple language of the frontier.

They faced ridicule and even violence, with courage and endurance. Above all else they sought conversions. Within a year of his call, Young had gathered 301 new members; for his efforts he received just \$30—a cost of ten cents per new member.

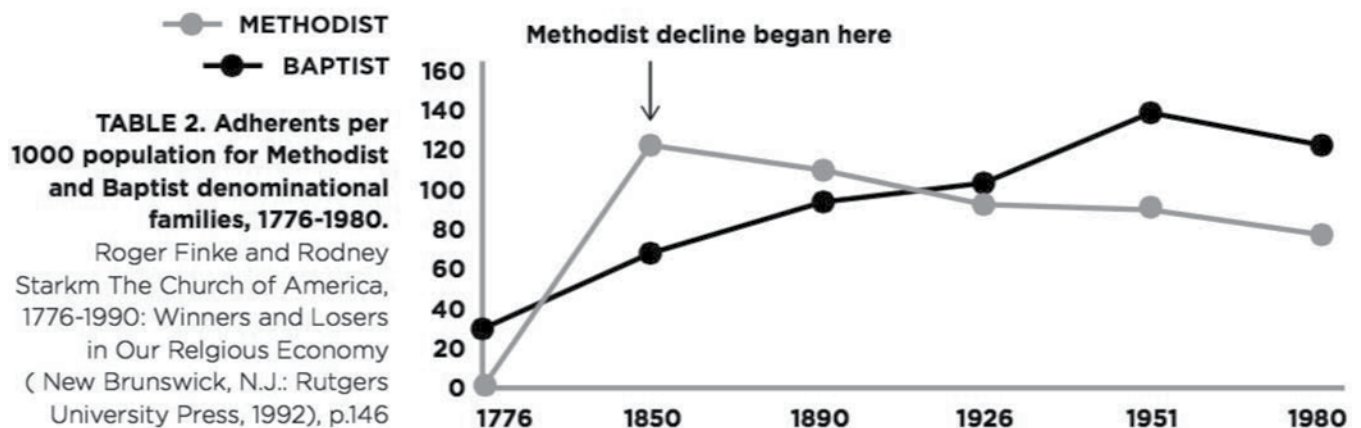
In 1776 only 17 percent of the American population was affiliated with any church. By 1850 that number had doubled to 34 percent. Most of the growth was as a result of the gains by the Methodists and Baptists on the frontier. Francis Asbury could never have reached a nation as vast as the United States, no matter how many miles he rode and no matter how many sermons he preached, without rapidly mobilizing young circuit riders like Jacob Young.

The Protestant mainline denominations (Episcopalians, Presbyterians and Congregationalists) failed dismally to keep pace with these Baptist and Methodist upstarts. Having succumbed to a more settled version of the faith and having lost the zeal for evangelism, the message of the mainline denominations became too vague and too accommodating to have an impact.

The clergy of the mainline churches were well educated and refined, drawn from the social elites. At least 95 percent of Congregational, Episcopalian and Presbyterian ministers were college graduates, compared to only 10 percent of the Baptists. As a combined group the mainline denominations had trained 6,000 ministers before the first Methodist minister graduated from a seminary.

Higher education lifted the mainline clergy above the social status of their congregations and turned them into religious professionals. Secularized theological education and social background influenced both the content of their message and how it was delivered.

The clergy preferred to educate their hearers rather than convert them. The clergy's carefully drafted scholarly sermons did little to stir hearts; they were out of touch with the common people. There also weren't enough of them; it was not possible to mobilize enough well-



educated, well-paid clergy to respond to the challenge of the rapidly expanding frontier. If expansion had been left to the older denominations, American Christianity may have ended up today looking more like the church of Europe—theologically refined, but declining.


So the mainline clergy watched from the safety of the larger towns and cities along the Atlantic seaboard while the Baptists and Methodists moved west. On the frontier it was hard to tell Methodist and Baptist preachers apart. They were ordinary folk with limited education. They spoke the language of the people and preached from the heart about the need for salvation from sin. As they preached, the power of God was not only spoken about, it was experienced. Methodist pioneer Peter Cartwright recalled that, “while I was preaching, the power of God fell on the assembly and there was an awful shaking among the dry bones. Several fell on the floor and cried for mercy.”

The Baptists and the Methodists developed strategies that made it easy for gifted and committed laypeople to take up leadership and go where the people and the opportunities were. Deployment was rapid because very little upfront investment of resources and education was required. Methodist preachers, many of whom were teenagers, were trained on the job as “apprentices” by more experienced workers. They were expected to be continually studying as they traveled. They practiced lifelong learning and graduated the day they died.

The Methodists were centrally governed, whereas the Baptists believed in local autonomy. But in actuality, both movements planted self-governing congregations. The Methodist circuit riders did not have the time to settle down in one place and take control. Their role was to pioneer new works and mobilize local workers to continue the ministry in depth. These self-governing congregations were well suited to rapid multiplication in the frontier culture.

Methodism gave unprecedented freedom to both women and African Americans to engage in ministry. Methodist preachers called the converted to join a growing movement and offered them the opportunity to make a significant contribution—as class leaders, lay preachers or even circuit riders. Some women served as preachers, and many more served as class leaders, unofficial counselors to the circuit riders, network builders and financial patrons.

Large numbers of African American Methodist preachers emerged following the Revolutionary War. Some were well-known public figures. Harry Hosier, probably born a slave, traveled with Asbury and other Methodist leaders and preached to large crowds, both white and black. Methodists and Baptists, unlike the established churches, preached in a way uneducated slaves could understand and affirmed the place of spiritual experiences and emotion. African American preachers played a significant role in shaping the Methodist movement.

The Baptists and Methodists flourished because they mobilized common people to preach the gospel and plant churches wherever there was a need. The Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Congregationalists languished because they were controlled by well-paid clergy who were recruited from the social and financial elite. Early growth was dramatic for the Methodists—from 2.5 percent of the church-going population in 1776 to 34 percent in 1850, with 4,000 itinerant preachers, almost 8,000 local preachers and over one million members. This made them by far the largest religious body in the nation. There was only one national institution that was more extensive: the U.S. government. This achievement would have been impossible without the mobilization of ordinary people—white and black, young and old, men and women—and the removal of artificial barriers to their engagement in significant leadership such as class leaders, local workers and itinerant preachers. Unfortunately, the Methodist rise was short-lived. Whereas before 1840 the Methodists had virtually no college educated clergy among their circuit riders and local preachers, their amateur clergy was gradually replaced by seminary educated professionals who claimed the authority of the church hierarchy over their congregations. Their relative slump began at the same time; by the end of the 19th century the Baptists had overtaken them in numbers. 

« They were expected to be continually studying as they traveled. They practiced lifelong learning and graduated the day they died. »

"Tokyo 2020, and the History of Movements"

BY KEVIN HIGGINS

Kevin Higgins is General Director of Frontier Ventures (FV) and the President of William Carey International University (WCIU). He has a PhD from Fuller in Intercultural Studies with a focus on Translation Studies. He is married to Susan and is the grateful father of Rachel, Sarah, and Emma.

In this edition of *Mission Frontiers* we include a look at the upcoming Tokyo 2020 event, and we are looking at the history of movements. I want to say a few words about each here.

Tokyo 2020

In 2010, a number of events celebrated and reflected upon the 1910 Edinburgh conference. The one most focused on what we refer to as frontier missiology was held in Tokyo that year. In a next edition we will be publishing an entire group of articles looking at Tokyo 2010. The articles will be written by those who presented papers in 2010, and each will be looking at how we see things ten years later. Stay tuned!

In *this* edition of *MF* David Bogosian and Obed Alvarez look ahead at the soon coming Tokyo 2020 event, which is also seeking to build from what began in 2010. Obed and David describe the call for a new reformation, and use the event of Luther's posting of "theses" as an inspiration for the global church to gather and do the same, with representative leadership describing what needs to change.

This is a commendable enterprise, and we should all pray for its success. At the same time, I sense a gap. Since 2010 one of the dramatic realities in the progress of mission has been the phenomenal growth of movements to Jesus that are largely outside the realms of the churches being represented in Tokyo.

By saying this I am not only referring to so-called insider movements, but also to the growth of all sorts of movements that have expanded the Body of Christ but not generally within (or known to) better known church structures. Which leaves me wondering what sort of theses

the leaders of these movements might post on a 2020 Wittenberg door?

Speaking of movements, that is the main topic of this edition of *MF*...

Drinking from the Headwaters: the History of Movements

As an *MF* reader you are aware of how central the topic of movements has become for us in Frontier Ventures, and in a growing number of organizations engaged in the frontiers of mission. As I have noted before, we are in the midst of a "movement movement."

Typically, our articles have focused on description and reporting. This edition focuses more on the historical perspective, and one thing that emerges is that movements are not a new fad or a recent trend. So, one hope in compiling the articles you have here is to make the point that, while there has been an increase in our awareness of movements, they are not new.

Another point is to suggest that we are in a season in which we are witnessing what very likely is an increase in the number of movements as compared to at least the general flow of mission history. I want to exercise some caution here, as there is much we simply do not know about the past, and our current language and definitions related to movements provide us with lenses for looking at history, but these are lenses our predecessors were not using, and thus there may well have been movements we do not know about at all, or the dynamics of which were not described in ways we recognize easily.

So, this edition seeks to paint at least a partial picture. Movements are not new. And indeed, one way to understand and read the New Testament is as a combination of case studies of the earliest movements to Jesus: the headwaters for all subsequent movements.



The New Testament is certainly more than that, of course. It is a source of doctrine and spiritual life and principles and ecclesiology and much, much more. But it is also, in addition, the collection of the true narratives (Gospels and Acts) and the behind the scenes, inner workings (epistles) of the earliest Jesus movements.

Reading the New Testament that way, as the first history of movements, what are a few things we can glean?

Authentic Movements are a Work of the Spirit

The combined narrative we have been given in Luke and Acts is filled with references to the work of the Spirit. Before the birth of Jesus, in the birth of Jesus, throughout the life and ministry of Jesus, and then beyond the ascension of Jesus: the Holy Spirit was the prime mover in the movements we see in the text. This statement could be misunderstood in at least two ways:

First, my words might be taken to mean there is nothing we need to do, or nothing we need to learn about practical realities or even practices that might foster movements, or might hinder them. I am not saying that at all. There is a crucial place for learning from other movements, whether those are contemporary to us, or historical, or (even more important in my view), biblical. We can and should learn and glean and apply what we learn and glean.

Second, my words might be taken to mean that I am saying everything that seems to be growing like a movement is a result of the Spirit at work. I don't think anything is ever quite that neat and clean! The New Testament record of movements is already an antidote to the idea that anything that seems like a movement must be free of warts and foibles, as well as sin and brokenness. We see in Luke and Acts and even more clearly in the letters that the same movements I have said are empowered by the Spirit are also riddled with human sin, error, and foolishness.

A look at 1 Corinthians provides perhaps the most dramatic picture of the paradox I am pointing to, namely that movements are a work of the Spirit and yet also can be rife with folly and sin, and false teaching.

Readers will almost certainly be in mind of the profound level of brokenness in Corinth and of Paul's passionate attempts to correct and heal. But, even so, even in this rubble of sin and error we know as the "church in Corinth," Paul opens his letter with the apparently contradictory affirmations of the Corinthians as sanctified, enriched in every way, and lacking in nothing. Paul expresses his

confidence that the Lord will continue to confirm them until the day of Jesus.

Movements are messy, and when we look under the hood they often need a lot of repair. Movements have certain dynamics and principles about which we can learn. But movements to Jesus are at the same time works of the Spirit of God. While we can and should learn how to better serve Him in the birthing, growth and ongoing development of movements, they are His work.

Authentic Movements Share Certain Common “DNA” Markers

Much of the discussion of movements has, understandably, focused on the quantitative elements: numbers of disciples or fellowships, generations of multiplication, timeframes within which things have taken place, etc. The Gospels and Acts also at times provide “numbers”: how many ate from the loaves and fish, how many disciples were sent in Luke 9, and then in Luke 10, how many were present in Jerusalem in Acts 2, or later in Acts as the movement grew, and even later when Paul returns and hears of “myriads” who follow Jesus among Torah loving Jews. But no one who is advocating or reporting about movements suggests that just those numerical markers provide the ultimate signs of health.

In our look at the history of movements, if we return to the New Testament as the headwaters, we see that far more attention is given to qualitative measures than to quantitative measures when it comes to describing what was happening, or correcting and encouraging and teaching the leaders and people involved.

I affirm the validity of looking at contemporary or historical or biblical examples of movements in order to draw principles and practices for our own ministry approaches and philosophies. The vast preponderance of biblical material addresses *qualitative* issues and there is very sparse material that could be defined as pragmatic “how to’s” for starting and growing movements.¹


¹ There are practical, pragmatic commands given in Jesus’ instructions to the 12 and the 70, and in Paul’s admonitions to Timothy or Titus. However, Jesus’ admonitions must be carefully applied as they were originally spoken for very specific contexts and purposes, and Paul’s primarily related to leaders and correction of errors, not the explicit growth or expansion of movements. This does not mean that important principles cannot be derived and applied: one popular example being to find a “person of peace.” This has been a fruitful principle, but there are also examples of movements beginning apart from this, and it is unlikely that it was originally given with the intent of being a universal commandment in its specific, original form.

I am not sure if he was the first to note this but an early observer of the New Testament movements was Roland Allen, and he noted the nearly complete absence of anything like exhortations to grow, evangelize, make disciples, plant churches, etc. in Paul’s epistles, much less anything like instructions for how to go about those things. Instead, what the epistles are full of are exhortations, teaching, examples, prayers, and deep truths that are intended to describe and continue to shape the fundamental identity and community life of the recipients. The epistles provide primarily qualitative “DNA” markers and pathways.

I am not implying that Paul did not have practices and principles in his mind or work. And certainly we can discover hints of those, as for example in Acts 14 near the end when Luke describes some of the functions of Paul’s work: evangelizing a city, making disciples, strengthening disciples, and appointing elders. Paul certainly developed ways of doing those things, and those who accompanied him on his journeys would have seen those and learned from those. But, although we can glean such practical wisdom from Acts and Paul’s letters it seems to me that describing detailed prescriptions for our actions does not appear to have been the primary interest of the Holy Spirit when inspiring what we have been given in the New Testament.

Conclusion

My prayer is that this edition of *MF* will bless you, and that it will find its way into the hands of women and men who will be able to glean practical wisdom from the history of movements. May you be able to apply it to your own contexts and ministries whether you serve in the frontiers or in the land and culture of your birth.

I also pray that as you learn from the rivers of movement history we have sought to assemble here, you will also be encouraged to keep following those rivers, like the intrepid explorers searching for headwaters of the Nile, back to the fountainhead of all movements, and there drink deeply from the scriptures which are able to build you up and equip you for every good work! 

24:14 Goal



Movement engagements in every unreached people and place by 2025 (70 months)

The Church Involvement Continuum

BY **CHRIS GALANOS**

website: www.experiencelifenow.com

Chris Galanos is the Founding and Lead Pastor of Experience Life Church in Lubbock, Texas. *Outreach Magazine* named Chris the Youngest Megachurch Pastor in America several years in a row and named Experience Life one of the Top 100 Fastest-Growing Churches in the country five different times. Chris lives in Lubbock with his wife, Emilie, and daughters, McKinley and Charis.

Since the release of our book, *From Megachurch to Multiplication*, we've had the privilege of training hundreds of pastors from across the country, and even some from around the world. Through the process, I constantly see pastors wrestling with how to implement DMM in their churches.

Do they leave the church alone and just do this DMM thing on the side? Do they implement some of the principles in their church? Do they take their church through a major transition? Do they just move on from their church and do this somewhere else?

Very early in the training I usually start to get these questions from the pastors. I've found myself responding in a similar way each time, so I put together a Google Doc called "Church Involvement Continuum" to present some various ways the Spirit might lead a pastor and church to implement DMM.

« Let me say first:
The absolute most important thing for you to do is listen to the Spirit and do whatever he tells you to do. »

Let me say first: *The absolute most important thing for you to do is listen to the Spirit and do whatever he tells you to do.* We shouldn't look at a continuum like this and pick the commitment level we like best. We shouldn't bring our team together and take a vote. We shouldn't pick a

commitment level because it seems easiest. The Spirit still speaks to churches! He'll show you what to do!

« As you begin to process what DMM might look like in your church, you need to **listen** to the Spirit! The involvement continuum is not exhaustive. It represents just *some* of the ways that other churches have responded to the DMM vision. »

In Revelation 2-3, Jesus says one thing to all seven churches: "Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches" (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22, NLT).

How might this apply to us? We must *listen* to the Spirit and *understand* and *obey* what he is saying to the church. The Spirit still speaks! Do you know what the Spirit is saying to your church?

As you begin to process what DMM might look like in your church, you need to **listen** to the Spirit! The involvement continuum is not exhaustive. It represents just *some* of the ways that other churches have responded to the DMM vision.

Be encouraged that the Spirit will speak to you and your leadership if you have ears to hear what He wants to tell you. To be honest, though, when I look at many of the churches in movements overseas, they make the American church look prayerless and lukewarm. No wonder they hear so clearly from the Spirit about what they're supposed to do. They spend a *ton* of time listening to Him!

Do you and the leadership of your church spend a lot of time listening to the Spirit? If you do, He'll speak to you and you'll know just what you should do. I find that so encouraging!

Start praying today, *"Lord, what do you want us to do? We are listening! And when we hear you, we will obey!"*

My guess is that what the Holy Spirit will tell you to do with DMM may not be what you would've picked. It probably won't be the safe, easy, comfortable option. But the Lord's plans for your life and your church are better than yours.

Way #1—Bless

The first way the Holy Spirit might lead a church to be involved with DMM is to pray for it and **Bless** it when it begins to make an impact in your city or area. This path doesn't require any church-wide commitment to embrace DMM. This is simply understanding and supporting DMM in your area and not resisting it.

« The first way the Holy Spirit might lead a church to be involved with DMM is to pray for it and **Bless** it when it begins to make an impact in your city or area. »

This is a very important step. As I've talked to people connected to movements overseas or read some of their writings, I continue to hear something very surprising. They often say that their greatest resistance in making more disciples comes from "traditional Christians." By traditional Christian, I think they just mean Christians who go to traditional churches and think everyone should do things the way they do things. The truth is that traditional Christians often resist what they don't understand or don't like.



« The first way a church might be involved in DMM is to bless the movement and pray for it! For a traditional church to bless and pray for a movement, even if they aren't a part of it, is a great contribution to movement work in an area. »

The first way a church might be involved in DMM is to bless the movement and pray for it! For a traditional church to bless and pray for a movement, even if they aren't a part of it, is a great contribution to movement work in an area. It keeps movement workers from being burdened by opposition from traditional churches. And it encourages movement workers to know the churches are praying for them.

Almost any pastor can lead their church to bless DMM work in their area, without pushback from the church. Nothing changes within the church. No one has to get on board. The proverbial "boat" isn't being rocked at all. It's simply a pastor leading his/her church to bless, not curse, DMM work in their area by supporting the workers and praying for the work.

My prayer is that every church would at least engage in DMM at this level. It requires no commitment and no cost. And it makes a significant contribution to DMM work in an area because it creates less opposition and more partnerships.

Way #2—Release

The second way the Holy Spirit might lead a church to be involved with DMM is to **Release** some of the “radicals” in the church. Release them to be trained by a DMM trainer/catalyst and sent out from your church to your city or area.

This builds on the first way of blessing and praying for movement work in your area. Like the first way, this doesn’t change the direction of the church. The vision stays the same and the programming stays the same. This is more of an underground, behind-the-scenes strategy that mainly affects the few radicals you send out.

The way this works is that a pastor or leadership team first identifies some people in the church who are “radicals.” These are the people so fired up that we have trouble containing them in our churches. They are like caged lions ready to break out and take the world by storm for King Jesus. They know there must be more than just the activities of the church and they would be excited to be trained and released to make disciples *outside* the church.

Many churches have a few people like this, but usually not a lot. They’re not antagonistic toward the church. They’re just discontent, but in a good way. They love their church but they know there’s got to be more.

After you identify the radicals, you cast vision to those radicals and release them to be trained by a DMM trainer/catalyst. That trainer would show them how to multiply disciples and churches among the lost of your city or area: those who would probably never attend a traditional church like yours. According to statistics, that’s probably 90% or more of the people around you. We’ve got to open our eyes and see that most people aren’t coming to our churches. Most aren’t even interested in coming. We’ve got to release some people to “go” and pursue the lost, much like Jesus instructed in the Great Commission.

After training with a DMM trainer, the radicals might want to form a “DMM team” with other radicals to start “going and making disciples” in the most difficult parts of your city or area. If so, you and the leadership team would gladly bless and send them to do so. They would be analogous in some ways to missionaries sent out by the church – in this case to reach nearby people who would likely never go to a traditional church.

This doesn’t change much at the mother church. It just encourages some of the “radicals” in the church to chase the Romans 15:20 ambition (preaching where Christ is not known) God has put on their heart: to see your whole city or county reached.

I expect most pastors would need leadership approval (elders, deacons, or whoever governs the church) to implement this approach, since some of the radicals you send out might well be among your best givers or volunteers. This requires a little more commitment and risk on the part of the leadership than just blessing and praying for movement work in your area.

Some might ask: Can we release the radicals and still have them come to our church, so they can keep volunteering and giving? You could, but I wouldn’t recommend it – for the same reason you don’t recommend that people attend two different churches. It’s too difficult to get deeply involved in more than one church.

If these radicals stay involved in your church, they likely won’t get very involved in their DMM team (often formed into a DMM church seeking to start DMM churches among the lost). Do you continue to expect the same level of involvement from the missionaries your church sends overseas? Of course not. Besides the fact that they don’t live in your area and couldn’t attend



anyway, you wouldn't want them to come because you want them focused on their mission — reaching people who haven't yet heard or responded to the gospel. The same applies here.

« This approach clearly requires a higher level of commitment than the first way, because you could lose some of your best givers and volunteers. But isn't that a small sacrifice for your church, in order to potentially be a part of a movement of God that impacts the lost in your city or area? »

Would these radicals still be connected to your church? Absolutely! Would they still come on occasion to give reports of what God is doing? Absolutely! Would they be sent and supported by your church? Absolutely! There would still be a strong partnership and they would remain a part of your church family. You would be sending them out similarly to the way you send missionaries. In this case their focus would be the lost people in your city or area, who would never come to a traditional church.

This approach clearly requires a higher level of commitment than the first way, because you could lose some of your best givers and volunteers. But isn't that a small sacrifice for your church, in order to potentially be a part of a movement of God that impacts the lost in your city or area?

We at Experience Life certainly thought so. On our 10-year anniversary, we laid hands on and commissioned our first 50+ “radicals” to be sent from our church to form DMM teams (which became DMM churches) to go and reach our city. It was very exciting and our whole church was involved. You don't have to send them out as publicly as we did, but we definitely wanted to free up our radicals to go and reach the people in our city who our church would never reach — the 90% who need Jesus!

It's been two years since we sent them out, and we're so glad we did. They haven't had to pass out bulletins at the door, watch kiddos, usher people to their seats or anything else like that at the mother church. We removed every potential distraction from them and told them we supported them and were cheering for them as we sent them out. I think they would all say it's been much better being fully involved with their DMM church than being partially involved in their DMM church and partially involved in our traditional church.

Since we released our radicals two years ago, they've prayed for hundreds of hours, shared with thousands of people, and seen over 150 Discovery Groups started in multiple streams to the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and even 5th generation. They share totally amazing stories of God's work in advancing his kingdom! We're so glad we released them! God has used them to bring more gospel light into the great darkness around us.

Way #3—Hybrid

The third way the Holy Spirit might lead a church to be involved with DMM is through a *Hybrid* approach. One of my friends and mentors, Roy Moran, wrote a whole book on this topic called *Spent Matches*. I highly recommend you buy and read it. It's fantastic!

He borrows the hybrid analogy from the car industry where some cars have both an electric motor and a gas engine. He compares DMM to the electric motor and the traditional church model to the gas engine. Both run under the same hood and work together to boost performance and create better fuel economy.

The hybrid approach to DMM allows you to keep doing what you've been doing and add an additional DMM track in your church that you publicly promote and invite people to join. Whereas the previous two ways talked more about a private approach to DMM, things become more public with the hybrid model.



According to Roy, the hybrid approach can take different forms. In his book he talks about how his church has different small group tracks: one for those inside the church, and one geared for those outside the church (using DMM principles). He recently told me about another church that used a hybrid approach by implementing DMM in their college ministry but not with everyone else.

Hybrid simply means you publicly integrate DMM principles into some part of your church while everything else remains the same. It's like adding an electric motor to a car already running on a gas engine.

In *Spent Matches*, Roy writes, "The hybrid car became a metaphor for Shoal Creek [Community Church]. On one side is the old *attraction model*—gas engine—inviting people each week to come discover a life they've always wanted. On the other side a gospel planting model—electric engine—that equips people to move into their neighborhoods, workplaces, and relational networks with the life-changing truth of Jesus."

While a hybrid strategy may initially sound preferable to some because it sounds like the best of both worlds, it's not for the faint of heart. Roy acknowledges that there will almost assuredly be a cost to implement it. But, for some, this may be how the Holy Spirit leads your church to be involved in DMM. As I said at the outset, make sure you let the Holy Spirit choose for you rather than deciding what's most convenient or what you or your church may like the best.

When I explain to pastors these various ways a church can be involved in DMM, I tell them that with the hybrid approach and the remaining two ways (mentioned below), you'll have to count a cost. These approaches require sacrifice, courage, and faith to implement. Don't let that dissuade you. Often what the Lord calls us to do requires sacrifice, courage, and faith. Perhaps the Holy Spirit will lead you and your church to implement a hybrid approach like Roy's church did and ours did as well.

With the hybrid model, the church becomes publicly committed to DMM and more people can get involved. DMM is now officially inside the church and positively affecting certain areas and ministries of the church. And most likely those areas will become more outwardly focused and more intent on making disciples among lost people, which is awesome!

Pursuing the hybrid builds on the other two ways to get involved. It allows you to bless and pray for movement work in your area. It allows you to release radicals who want to be sent from the church to do this exclusively. And it involves the entire church in the process by implementing DMM principles into various ministries in the church.


I encourage you to begin praying for the Lord's best, with these three ways in mind. God's Spirit may lead you to something even more radical, with even greater potential to reach the lost around you. If you're interested to explore further, I invite you to read about two more possibilities on my blog.

Way #4 - Transition

A fourth way the Holy Spirit might lead a church to be involved with DMM is through a "*transition*" to a singular DMM focus. Instead of having two visions you're running alongside one another, like with "hybrid," you decide to make DMM the primary vision. While you may continue to do many of the things you've done before, like weekend services, you leverage everything in the church to help accomplish the primary vision of catalyzing a movement in your city/region. Read more at wigtakedmm.com/transition.

Way #5 - Relaunch

One more way that the Holy Spirit might lead a church to be involved with DMM is through *relaunching* as a network of DMM churches. Honestly, one year ago, I probably wouldn't have even included "relaunch" in the list. Not because it didn't belong in the list but because I wouldn't have even known it existed until I got to witness what the Holy Spirit has done in our church over the last six months. It's been remarkable! Read more at wigtakedmm.com/relaunch and read the articles in the Jan-Feb 2020 issue of *Mission Frontiers*.

May the Lord lead you into his best as you listen to and follow the voice of his Spirit. 

The Slippery Slide of Starting Movements

BY **C. ANDERSON**

website: Dmmsfrontiermissions.com

C. Anderson is an experienced field practitioner and leader. The past 27 years, she served in Asia with YWAM Frontier Missions. Anderson trains and coaches both international and indigenous church planters toward the launching of Disciple Making Movements. She blogs weekly about DMM related issues at Dmmsfrontiermissions.com. Other articles on member care, language learning, visa stress, etc. are available at missionarylife.org. Her 30-day devotional for church planters, *Faith to Move Mountains*, can be purchased on amazon.com.

I saw a funny video some years back. The clip showed a kid trying to run up a slippery, wet slide. He would back up, get a running start and go for it with all his might. A few steps up the slide, it would get the best of him. Down he went. Watching him go down, spinning, and flailing was hilarious (it's a little sick, but we seem to enjoy watching others fall grandly). Undeterred he attempted to go up the slide again. He'd shake himself off and giggle loudly. Lowering his head, with a running start, he attacked the challenge ahead. Finally, after a mad dash at it, he somehow made it to the top. There, hands raised in the air, his high-pitched voice screamed with the thrill of victory!

« Jesus admonished us to be childlike in our faith. As we pursue Disciple Making Movements we should learn from the kid in that video. Learn to laugh. Enjoy the attempts, even when they don't produce success. There is joy in the DMM journey! Starting a movement can be a thrilling challenge. »

I can still see his joy, even in the many attempts it took to get to the top. He was determined, unfazed by failure and thoroughly loved participating in this test of the will.

Enjoy the Challenge

Jesus admonished us to be childlike in our faith. As we pursue Disciple Making Movements we should learn from the kid in that video. Learn to laugh. Enjoy the attempts, even when they don't produce success. There is joy in the DMM journey! Starting a movement can be a thrilling challenge.

I coach and train many disciple-makers. During calls or visits, they often express frustration and disappointment. They're stuck in the "messy middle" of this audacious God-sized goal.

We don't often hear failure stories. This is true even when learning from those failures was the very thing that catalyzed the movement. More often, we hear stories of victory, breakthrough, radical multiplication, and organic growth. In the DMM tales, I confess, even the ones I tell, it sounds so easy. Almost always, however, behind the success story is a back story, one that involves numerous lessons learned from failures.

Some Plants Are Fragile to Get Started

I love gardening and playing with plants. Some plants are beautiful but require quite a lot of care to get them growing. Once they are rooted and established, they flourish. In the seedling stage, it's easy to kill them. DMMs can be like this too. Once they are up and running, with the DNA firmly established, there is no stopping them. In the early stages, however, they are easy to kill.

It's not impossible to start a Disciple Making Movement. Not at all. We can see this from the rising numbers on the front of this magazine. More and more movements are springing up across the globe. It's an exciting time to get on board with what God is doing through DMMs.

« It's not impossible to start a Disciple Making Movement. Not at all. We can see this from the rising numbers on the front of this magazine. More and more movements are springing up across the globe. It's an exciting time to get on board with what God is doing through DMMs. »

Count the Cost and Go For It

Jesus told a parable about a man who built a tower and couldn't finish it. He also told of a king who went to war.

²⁸ For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it— ²⁹lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, "This man began to build and was not able to finish?" ³¹Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Luke 14:28-30 NKJV.

Every follower of Jesus is called to engage in multiplying disciples (Matt. 28:18). When groups of disciples embrace this truth, movements can begin. There is a price to be paid though, a cost to count, when pursuing this dream.

Expect to experience failure as you go after a DMM. Don't be surprised by it. Gain understanding from difficulties, then move on. Learn, adapt, change, and even laugh at yourself as you slide back down that slippery slope! Keep at it and one day soon you'll get to the top.

Ten Common Failures

Below are ten of the most common failures. See any of these in what you are doing now? Or have done in the past? Don't be dismayed. Laugh (or at least smile), learn, change and try again.

1—FAILURE TO SIMPLIFY.

How we love to complicate things! Simplicity is not only beautiful. It multiplies easily. Resist the temptation to create structure or complex systems. In reporting, training, evangelism, story-telling or story-crafting approaches, keep it simple.

While working in South Asia we realized the process we were using of crafting stories and creating story sets was too complex. Our indigenous workers struggled with it, even with significant training. If we wanted our method to reproduce, we had to simplify. It took hard work to find new, simpler ways. We had to let go of some ideals and desires to keep things simple.

A rule of thumb is: if it takes more than an hour or two to train someone to do it, it's too complicated. If a fourth or fifth grader can't learn it, it's not simple enough.

2—FAILURE TO CONTEXTUALIZE.

We often apply methods and practices without considering the context. It's human nature. We want a magic formula for success. We watch a movie, or visit a DMM that is multiplying well, and come back enthused. "I am going to do things exactly as they do it there!" we declare.

Don't try to reach Hindus, Muslims, and Buddhists with the same approach. It doesn't work! World-views are too different. The same story or Bible study set you used for high caste Brahmins in Bali will likely not work well in Chicago with Polish immigrants.

DMMs are rapidly growing in poor, rural communities. They also are accelerating in places with significant levels of persecution. Your context may be quite different. What those movements *do* may not work in your place, with the people you are trying to reach.

That doesn't mean a movement can't happen where you are. It just means that you have to contextualize your approach. Adapt principles but adjust methods. Experiment and observe.

There may be someone working in your people group who is not necessarily applying DMM principles but is seeing great success in evangelism. What can you learn from them? How could you adapt it to fit DMM principles? To make it more reproducible and organic?

Some things simply can't be transplanted or adapted. They are too foreign. If I try to grow a tropical plant in Minnesota, it will likely die. The climate is too different.

« It takes an investment of time to learn the culture and worldview of the people you are reaching. It can take time to find a Person of Peace, to lay a strong foundation of prayer and intercession. »

3—FAILURE TO LAY A STRONG FOUNDATION.

We sometimes expect rapid results without building strong foundations. We hear about how quickly movements multiply, but that can give the wrong impression. *Once they are moving, they do indeed grow quickly.* What we fail to realize is that getting the first groups started can take some time. This is particularly true when working cross-culturally and in a resistant context. It can also be true when there are many traditional churches nearby.

It takes an investment of time to learn the culture and worldview of the people you are reaching. It can take time to find a Person of Peace, to lay a strong foundation of prayer and intercession.

I have seen movement leaders and trainers who started movements relocate to new places. They know how to start a DMM and have done so before. Still, it takes time for them to start another one in a new place. This is not uncommon. It shouldn't be a surprise. Digging the foundation, establishing yourself spiritually and relationally in a new community is slow work. These strong foundations will lay the groundwork to sustain future growth and the radical multiplication God wants to bring. If you are an insider to the culture, this does accelerate things significantly. Still, there is a foundation that must be laid.

4—FAILURE TO HUMBLY EVALUATE

Success can become our greatest problem. When we see significant growth, it is easy to grow smug. The temptation to *over-report* to please donors creeps in for many. I'm not talking about having an optimistic outlook here. Many leaders have that. What I'm referring to is

a lack of integrity in reporting due to laziness or letting financial donor pressure get the best of you. Along with this comes the tendency to *under-evaluate* what we are doing because we haven't tracked things properly and honestly. Pride and busyness cause issues that can lead to the movement's failure if left unchecked.

5—FAILURE TO LOCALIZE FINANCIAL OWNERSHIP

Finances are needed to grow movements among the unreached. No doubt about it. Great caution must be taken though in whether, if ever, you bring in outside funds. It is easy to kill a movement with money. It destroys local ownership, initiative, and sustainability. Outside donors begin to control decision making rather than the indigenous leaders.

6—FAILURE TO PERSEVERE

Learn to "fail forward." Perseverance is a crucial characteristic of every disciple-maker's life. This is particularly true in those who've chosen to pioneer DMMs among the least reached peoples of the world. Don't give up and don't give in. If what you are doing isn't working yet, and you are prayerfully evaluating regularly, just keep going. Persevere. God will bring it about as you refuse to give up. (Gal. 6:9)

7—FAILURE TO MULTIPLY AND TRAIN LEADERS

Movements can fail due to a lack of trained leaders. By this, I don't mean seminary graduates. I mean those who have been mentored in the field. Movements that give focused time to leadership development can sustain growth. Those that fail to prioritize this are unable to.

8—FAILURE TO DIVERSIFY GIFTINGS

Some years ago, I read that a characteristic of movements is that they have a charismatic leader. I've seen this to be true. Movements that are sustained, however, do not depend on one apostolic leader. It is not easy for powerful leaders to move into the background. Many fail to release control and authority. They love being in the limelight, getting the glory for the growth happening. Many enjoy the perks of being flown around the world to speak or attend conferences and share about the multiplication their

movement is experiencing. This is a significant danger. Charisma can get things started, but only when there is a strong team of elders and trainers who work together are movements sustained. One man shows don't multiply.

9—FAILURE TO EMBRACE SUFFERING

Suffering and movements go hand in hand. It is easy though to under-estimate the spiritual warfare and traditional church opposition that is normal when a movement takes off. Many don't adequately count that cost and grow timid or confused when this happens. Physical persecution from both the church and the world are normal when the radical growth of God's kingdom takes place. The Apostle Paul experienced it and so will we.


Are you willing to be misunderstood? To suffer loss and walk through pain? This is particularly hard for us Western Christians to embrace. We don't have a theology of suffering and are plagued with prosperity teachings. That may be true of some African churches as well.

Financial hardship, spiritual attack, sickness and threats are going to water the growth of the movement. As Paul said to Timothy, "Endure hardship as a good soldier of Christ." (2 Tim. 2:3-4)

10—FAILURE TO QUICKLY LEARN FROM OUR MISHAPS

Entrepreneurs know that if you want to start a successful business you have to be willing to try a few ideas and fail. Fifty percent of small business attempts fail within the first five years.¹ It's not that different when church planting or attempting to start a multiplying movement. I've said it before but will say it again. Make failure your friend and don't let it get you down. Learn from it. Expect it. Make changes and adjustments and try again. Roy Moran in his excellent book "Spent Matches" talks about failing quickly. I agree with him. Don't waste time moping around or condemning yourself. Failure is a success if you've learned from it.

All Heaven Will Dance

The above list is not exhaustive, but ten is enough to think about. No matter what you do, you can't avoid some mistakes on this DMM journey. Almost no one gets to the top on their first try. The great news is that God is cheering for you, laughing with you and helping you have the strength to go after it yet again. Enjoy the slippery slope and celebrate grandly when by some good luck and God's sovereign grace you reach the top. All Heaven will dance as thousands come into the Kingdom...when you multiply disciples effectively among the least, last and lost. 

¹ <https://www.fundera.com/blog/what-percentage-of-small-businesses-fail>

3 Ways We Stifle S.W.A.P.

BY JEAN JOHNSON

website: fivestonesglobal.org

Jean Johnson serves as a missionary and coach as well as Director of Five Stones Global (formerly known as World Mission Associates). She has over 32 years of vocational cross-cultural ministry experience. This includes church-planting among Cambodians in St. Paul/Minneapolis and 16 years of service in Cambodia. One of the key starting points of her missional journey was moving in with a first-generation Cambodian refugee family of eight in the inner city of Minneapolis. She presently promotes and teaches about creating a culture of dignity, sustainability and multiplication in Great Commission efforts.

Steve Smith's book, *Spirit Walk*, moves many of his readers, including me. In his book, Steve presents a pathway to walk in the Spirit via the acronym S.W.A.P. As a quick reminder, S.W.A.P. stands for:

- Surrender to His will and His every word
- Wait on God in prayer
- Avoid sin, and let God root out all unrighteousness
- Pursue the promptings of the Spirit.

As I read about the absolute necessity of surrender and waiting on God in prayer to aid us in walking in the Spirit, this question came to mind: *How often in serving cross-culturally do we unintentionally stifle people's ability to surrender completely, wait on God, and obey His promptings?*

How could we possibly stifle our host cultural group's S.W.A.P.? I desire to touch on three critical ways we stifle S.W.A.P. among the nations we serve.

We stifle people's felt need to practice S.W.A.P. by creating an environment in which it becomes their top priority to seek out foreign sponsors and then accommodate those sponsors. In some cases, what their sponsors want and what keeps the flow of money coming becomes their pathway to make decisions. In other words, they surrender to the outsiders' agendas and accommodate to their prepackaged foreign forms, rather than seeking and waiting on God's agenda and creativity for His will and word for them.


We exercise our control by using our Western business models. In the name of partnership, as soon as we begin to fund local initiatives and fund salaries, we are perceived as the person who has the power and we naturally exercise control in the relationship to varying degrees. Money flowing one direction changes the power balance in the relationship. We have to track return on investment and require reports for our home base. We must withdraw funding when we see missteps or lack of best accounting practices according to our Western systems. These types of influences give us a level of authority and control that disturbs a healthy practice of S.W.A.P.

We artificially move the movement. Steve Smith, a dedicated practitioner of Disciple Making Movements, reveals to us the most critical way to experience fruit, growth, multiplication and movement — through walking in the Spirit via the process of S.W.A.P. The apostle Paul surely was someone who practiced S.W.A.P. faithfully; yet he faced persecution, opposition, and was ejected from many places. His growth came with the rhythms of the Spirit and realities of the environments he served. No one came along and said, "You would be way more successful if you let us inform you of better ways and even pave the way with money and resources." The movement was the Spirit's movement. It was at His pace and His way. But wealthy foreign Christians like to speed things up with their financial and expert intervention. Before you know it, we artificially infuse the local movement instead of allowing the Holy Spirit to drive it. If the Holy Spirit is generating the movement through the local believer's S.W.A.P., do we need to artificially speed things along as we see fit?

Raising local resources includes raising local disciples' vision and ability to walk in the Spirit via S.W.A.P. In this case, they lack nothing. The Spirit will provide, lead, and move based on their practice of:

- Surrendering to His will and His every word
- Waiting on God in prayer
- Avoiding sin and letting God root out all unrighteousness
- Pursuing the promptings of the Spirit.

Do you want to partner with existing and emerging churches around the world? Do you want to engage with unreached people groups? Focus on how to foster S.W.A.P.—and how to avoid stifling it.

Cheering people on, praying alongside them in the background, asking good open-ended questions (not hiding our solutions in the questions), leaving our Western systems and traditions at home and allowing necessity to be the mother of Holy Spirit-led invention are just a few ways to encourage local, indigenous S.W.A.P. 

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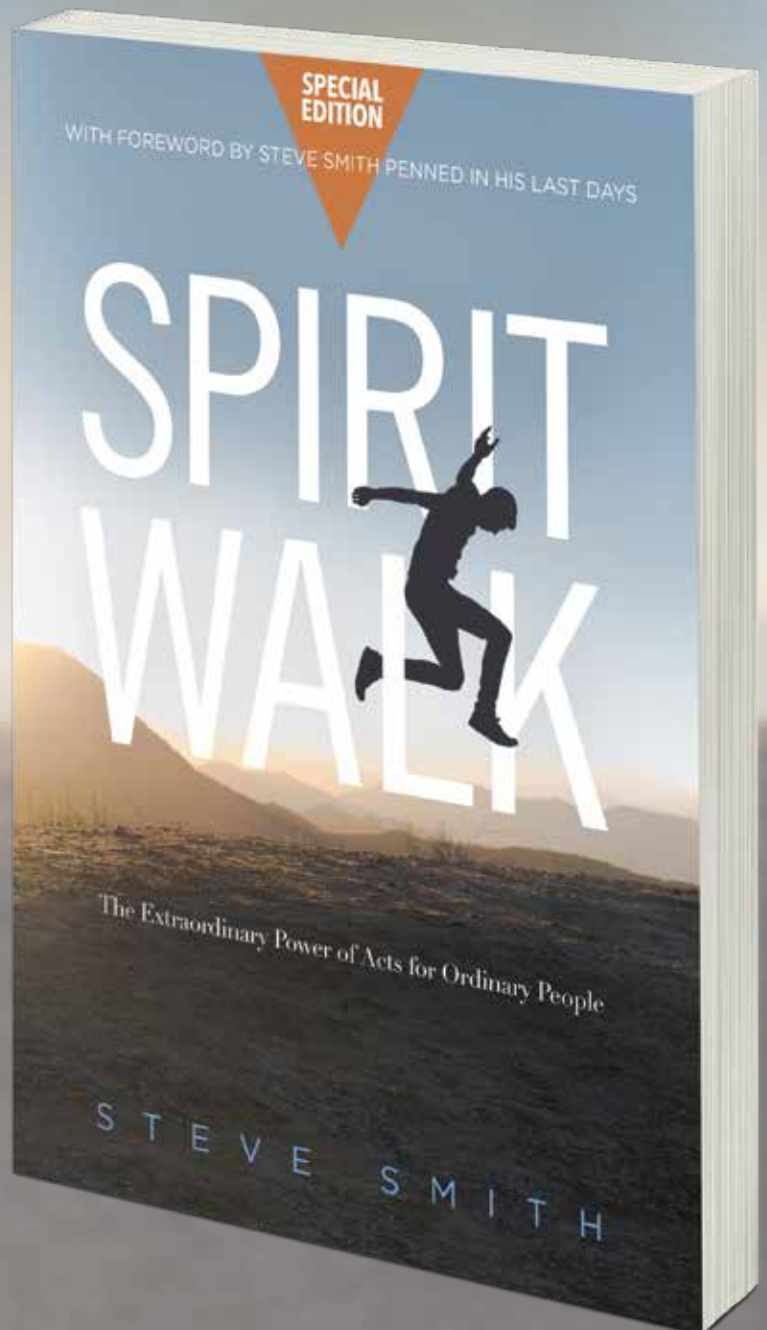
Since the original publication of *Spirit Walk*, author Steve Smith has gone home to meet the Lord face-to-face. However, before that glorious day, he penned an impassioned plea to believers in the last days of his life. That plea and piece of instruction is what comprises the new foreword in this special edition of *Spirit Walk*. Read and be both challenged and invited to a life lived in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Though we know the Bible says to walk in the Spirit, the majority of Christians are unsure (and even nervous) about how to practically live in His power. The result is lives marred by continued brokenness and ministries plagued by fruitlessness. In contrast, believers from Acts understood the ancient path of the Spirit Walk. That extraordinary power was not just for them, but also for us.

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Tokyo 2020:

A Global Call for Reformation 2.0

BY DAVID TAYLOR

David Taylor is research director for the Global Network of Mission Structures and senior editor of the *Global Mission Database*. He is the author of *Eternal Vision and Operation 10/40 Window*.

If Martin Luther were alive today what might he nail to the door of the Church? This is the topic which global mission leaders will ask when they gather in May of this year in Tokyo, Japan. Ten years after Ralph Winter gave a call for the Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Consultation, the original organizers of this gathering are reconvening to ask a crucial question: In what areas do we need reformation today in order to see world evangelization in our generation?

Five hundred years after the Protestant Reformation and almost 2,000 years after Jesus gave the Great Commission, we still have a long way to go in fulfilling our global mandate. Two billion people remain without access to the gospel. Hundreds of thousands of communities are

« In what areas do we need reformation today in order to see world evangelization in our generation? »

without access to a church in thousands of unreached and frontier people groups. Over 3,000 languages still do not have the Scriptures in their language. In spite of these great needs, missionary sending from the United States and other Western nations is plateauing and even declining.

Why is that? What are the impediments that have kept this generation of believers from reaching every unevangelized person, place and people with the gospel? Although we live in the most gospel-rich era in human history, there are still vast areas of the world that remain without a witness. With an estimated 800

million evangelicals in the world, why are there still unreached people groups who have yet to receive their first missionary? Is there something inherently flawed in our discipleship, our ecclesiology and our leadership development that allows this status quo to persist unquestioned?

« Although we live in the most gospel-rich era in human history, there are still vast areas of the world that remain without a witness. »

Tokyo 2020 is an open call to re-examine everything we are doing both at home and abroad, both within the church and on the mission field. Leaders from every country are being asked to pray and seek the Lord. In what areas do we need to repent? In what areas are we doing well? Do those of us in the West have blind spots which the African church can see, but we cannot? Tokyo 2020 will be a summit to hear from God, but it will not end with the gathering itself. It is just the beginning of what will be a five-year global inquiry to hear what God is saying to his Church all over the world.

The genesis of this reformation survey began with the chairman of Tokyo 2010, Obed Alvarez, a mission leader from Peru. Following Tokyo 2010, Obed organized several international gatherings to mobilize and equip the Church to face the Muslim challenge. Obed was alarmed at the inroads Islam was making in his country and in Latin America. It seemed the Church was not prepared. He learned that Islam has bold and aggressive plans to evangelize his continent, as well as Africa and Europe.

« Tokyo 2020 is an open call to re-examine everything we are doing both at home and abroad, both within the church and on the mission field. Leaders from every country are being asked to pray and seek the Lord. »

The more he examined this, the more he realized the Church was asleep. At a time when the Church should be the most awake, with such incredible opportunity to reach the Muslim world, the opposite seemed to be happening.

Like Martin Luther, this issue revealed something deeper that was troubling. Luther's original 95 Theses dealt with one major issue: papal indulgences. At the time it was more of an annoyance to Luther than anything else. He was still a faithful Catholic and an obedient priest. Yet this one issue struck a match to a reformation that has now impacted the entire world. Ultimately what Luther was contending for was the purity of the gospel, even though he may not have known the full weight of his inquiry at the time. In hindsight we can see that getting to this core issue changed everything. The gospel is the foundation for everything we do and everything we are. Recovering the gospel unleashed the power of the Church and the believer for global impact that has irrevocably altered the course of human history.

« While we have been busy exporting our denominations, theological controversies and mega-church franchises to the nations, we have been losing an entire generation of young people to secularism, agnosticism and atheism. »

Are we in need of a new reformation today? It would seem God has been speaking to many leaders around the world about this very thing. When Obed gave the call in this last year to issue a new "95 Theses" for the global church, submissions began pouring in from every continent. It is evident God is speaking in many areas. Compelling themes are emerging. One area in particular should be of special concern to those of us in the West. There is growing unease, especially in the non-Western

church, with what is happening to American Christianity. While we have been busy exporting our denominations, theological controversies and mega-church franchises to the nations, we have been losing an entire generation of young people to secularism, agnosticism and atheism. Could it be that after two hundred years of sending over 200,000 missionaries, it is now we in the West who are in need of some mentoring in disciple-making? Maybe we could learn a thing or two from the persecuted church, from our brothers and sisters in places like China and Iran.

« No doubt, we all need to come to this table with humility. Like it or not, as Americans we represent the richest generation of Christians in history. »

No doubt, we all need to come to this table with humility. Like it or not, as Americans we represent the richest generation of Christians in history. We carry the most weight and have the strongest impact. Our "prosperity gospel" can now be found in every country of the world. We should not be surprised if the global church has something to say about it. We may not like it, we may even find it offensive, but we need to listen. If we have made the gospel subservient to our culture, it may take the global church to help us see it. That's the beauty of global mission coming full circle. God still has his prophets, and we need to hear what he is saying through them.

Of course, this inquiry will not just be a critique of Western Christianity and its global impact. It's about the whole church listening to one another. Like "iron sharpening iron", Tokyo 2020 will be an opportunity for the global church to refine its message, purify its motives, and recover lost methods for world evangelization. It's about Asians listening to Africans, Latinos listening to Indians, and Europeans listening to Pacific Islanders. From East to West, everyone's voice will be heard.

Each participant and delegate to Tokyo 2020 is being asked to consider the following questions:

- 1.) What needs restoration?
- 2.) Why does it matter?
- 3.) How do we recover it?
- 4.) Who is responsible to pursue it?
- 5.) Where do we begin today?


In many respects, this global inquiry follows the trajectory set ten years ago at Tokyo 2010. This global gathering gave a clarion call to go deeper as we go farther. It's not enough to simply go everywhere. Our job is not done even if every person in the world becomes a Christian. Our task is to make disciples, and we can't do that if we ourselves are not being discipled. This was the weighty subject matter of Tokyo 2010. It had to do with the breadth and depth of the gospel. The Tokyo 2010 Declaration made this abundantly clear:

« It's not enough to simply go everywhere. Our job is not done even if every person in the world becomes a Christian. Our task is to make disciples, and we can't do that if we ourselves are not being discipled. »

“The new believer's worldview must be adjusted to a biblical worldview; his lifestyle changed to increasingly conform to the image of Christ; and his ethical conduct progressively marked by biblical morals. Ideally, this results in individuals applying the gospel of the kingdom to every sphere and pursuit of life— from government to economics, from education to health, and from science to creation care.”

This statement itself is quite reformational. In fact, it was something the Protestant reformers understood very well. They recognized what we seemed to forget along the way – that the gospel is not just about transforming individuals. It's about God's purposes in the whole world. We are called to proclaim the “gospel of the Kingdom” to all nations and to every area of society. Only then will the end come. In other words, it's not just about our going everywhere that fulfills the Great Commission. It's about the quality of what we are proclaiming and what we leave behind. It's about teaching the nations to obey all that Christ commanded. It's about God's kingdom—not our denominational empires. It's the gospel of Jesus Christ—not the gospel of the latest fad or ecclesiastical franchise.

« We look forward to what will emerge as God's people take a pause and listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches today. »

We look forward to what will emerge as God's people take a pause and listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches today. May we truly be a generation that seeks His will and His kingdom above all else. May those who gather in Tokyo be filled with His presence and blessed with His counsel. We eagerly await what God will do and how He will speak as His people seek his heart and mind. 



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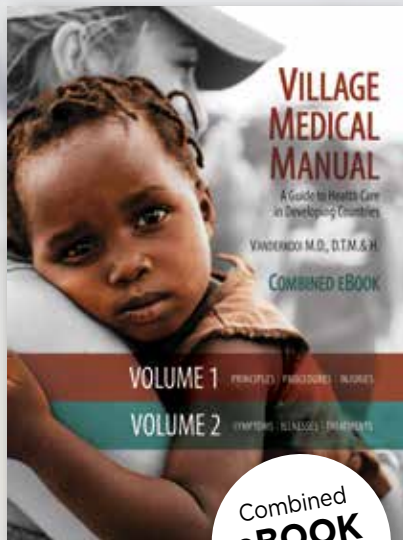
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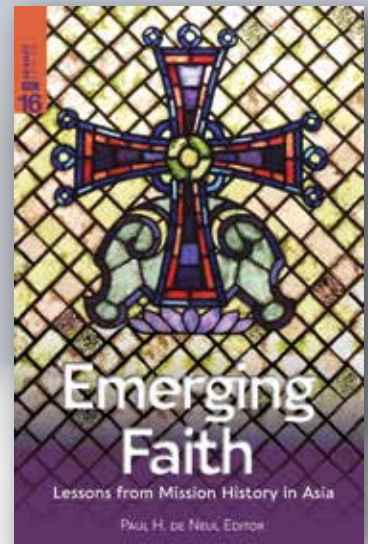
Lessons from Mission History in Asia

Paul H. de Neui, (Editor)

In non-Western contexts, sharing the gospel in non-imperialistic ways can be challenging, particularly in Asia. Every location to which God calls his messengers has its own rich history that should be shared with gospel workers and local people. Those desiring to serve interculturally must learn as much as possible about the past before joining that history.

No culture in the world is a blank slate; rather, we can look for the initiating, inviting work of the missio Dei already emerging from within every surprising source. This book showcases the writings of sixteen reflective practitioners who offer insights based on their study and experience of history.

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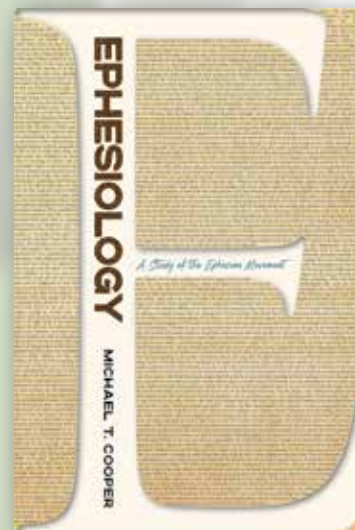


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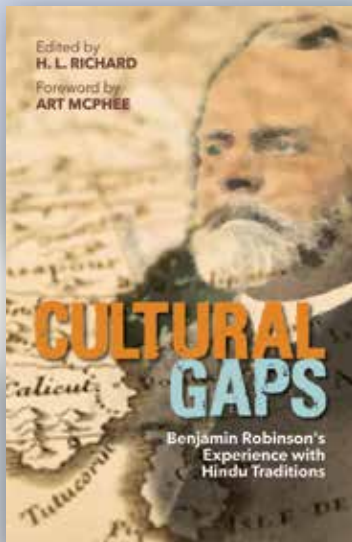
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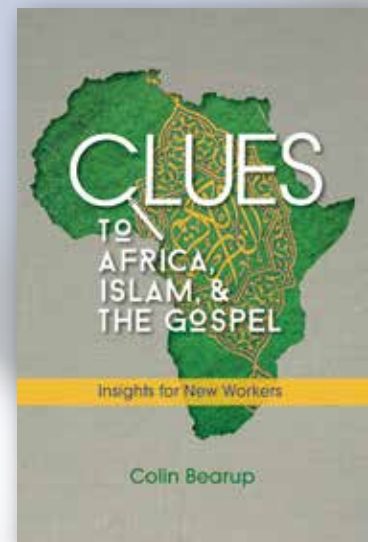
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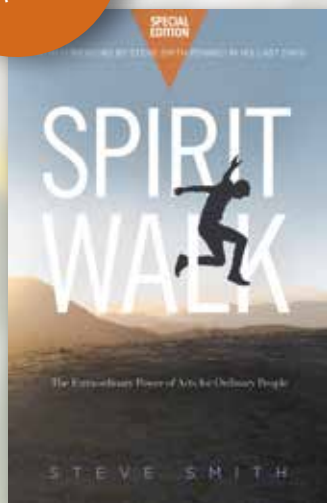
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Though we know the Bible says to walk in the Spirit, the majority of Christians are illiterate (and even nervous) about how to practically live in His power. The result is lives marred by continued brokenness and ministries plagued by fruitlessness. In contrast, believers from Acts understood the ancient path of the Spirit Walk. That extraordinary power was not just for them, but also for us.

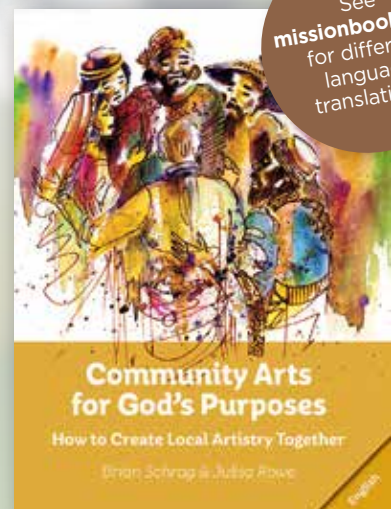
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How to Create Local Artistry Together

Brian Schrag and Julisa Rowe (Authors)

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Word, Works, Signs...

BY GREG PARSONS

Greg Parsons has been on the staff of Frontier Ventures (formerly USCWM) since 1982, and currently serves as Director of Global Connections. He and his wife, Kathleen, have two children and three grandchildren.

I've been thinking a lot lately about some of the things that shaped my life. I guess I'm at that age where you reflect and focus more on passing things on to those who will follow you.

One "shaping" element that I am very thankful for is that I grew up under leaders in a church who loved God's Word. They studied it diligently, taught it well and passed a love for it to me.

I wouldn't change any of that.

But I fear that in my living out of what I learned, I focus on the Word – sometimes with pridefulness – and minimize "works." When I teach, I emphasize the need to "do good works" based on Ephesians 2:10. We all know and memorize Eph. 2:8-9 but verse 10 is as important: *"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them."* (ESV, here and below.)

There is, of course, the long-running debate on this issue from the 1930s if not before. Perhaps the best (or worst?) characterization of that debate is between the *social gospel* and *evangelism*. I've always thought it was a false dichotomy. I understand some concerns from both "sides," and I've tended towards the importance of sharing the Word – hopefully flowing from good works.

Paul wrote about both, as Eph. 2 suggests. He also wrote about this in Romans 15, where he is explaining what he has been doing. Remember most of those involved in the Roman fellowships (there are several, see chapter 16) haven't met Paul. He is on his way to visit and raise money! (See 15:24) In 15:16 he describes the idea of "priesting" the gospel and boasts of what Christ has done. Then, in Romans 15:18-19, he uses an idea from Romans 1:5, which says: *"...to bring about the obedience of faith for the sake of his name among all the nations..."* Verses 18–19 says, "For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to **bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders**, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ..."

« We know that the reaching of these cultures is dependent on God's timing and the work of the Holy Spirit. »


When I preach on this missional passage, I focus on that last phrase and explain what I believe Paul meant by having "fulfilled the ministry." I don't usually talk about HOW he did that. Do you see it?

- Word • deed • by signs & wonders
- by the power of the Spirit....

It is clear that the Spirit of God is the one doing it. We all know that neither Paul nor you nor I could anyway. But still, somehow, in my desire not to debate issues related to



gifts and the Holy Spirit, I avoided the "signs and wonders" part. It may be that today, signs and wonders have little if anything to do with spiritual gifts. Yes, some of the N.T. gifts included things which were "signs" to point to the Son and the work of God. The key thing I need to relearn and live out is that the Holy Spirit can work in any time and in any way He wants. We need to pursue God, moment by moment listen to His Spirit, and then watch Him work through us everywhere, especially in and among the unreached.

Many have said the unreached are unreached because they are the harder to reach. Others say that "great religions" of the world don't see our western Christianity as a great improvement. Both are generalizations. Perhaps it is because we haven't actually *sent* anyone to try and connect with the people and communicate gospel truth in a way that they can understand. Others say we haven't prayed enough, but as I see huge prayer movements globally with many focused on the remaining unreached, I am encouraged that we may be close to breakthrough. Many efforts are increasing prayer for and engagement with Frontier People Groups – these are Unreached People Groups with no known movements with less than one in a thousand being a Christian of any kind.

We know that the reaching of these cultures is dependent on God's timing and the work of the Holy Spirit. Are we listening to Him as we reach out to people of other, very different perspectives? 

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