

MISSION™ FRONTIERS

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Hunting THE Movement Killers

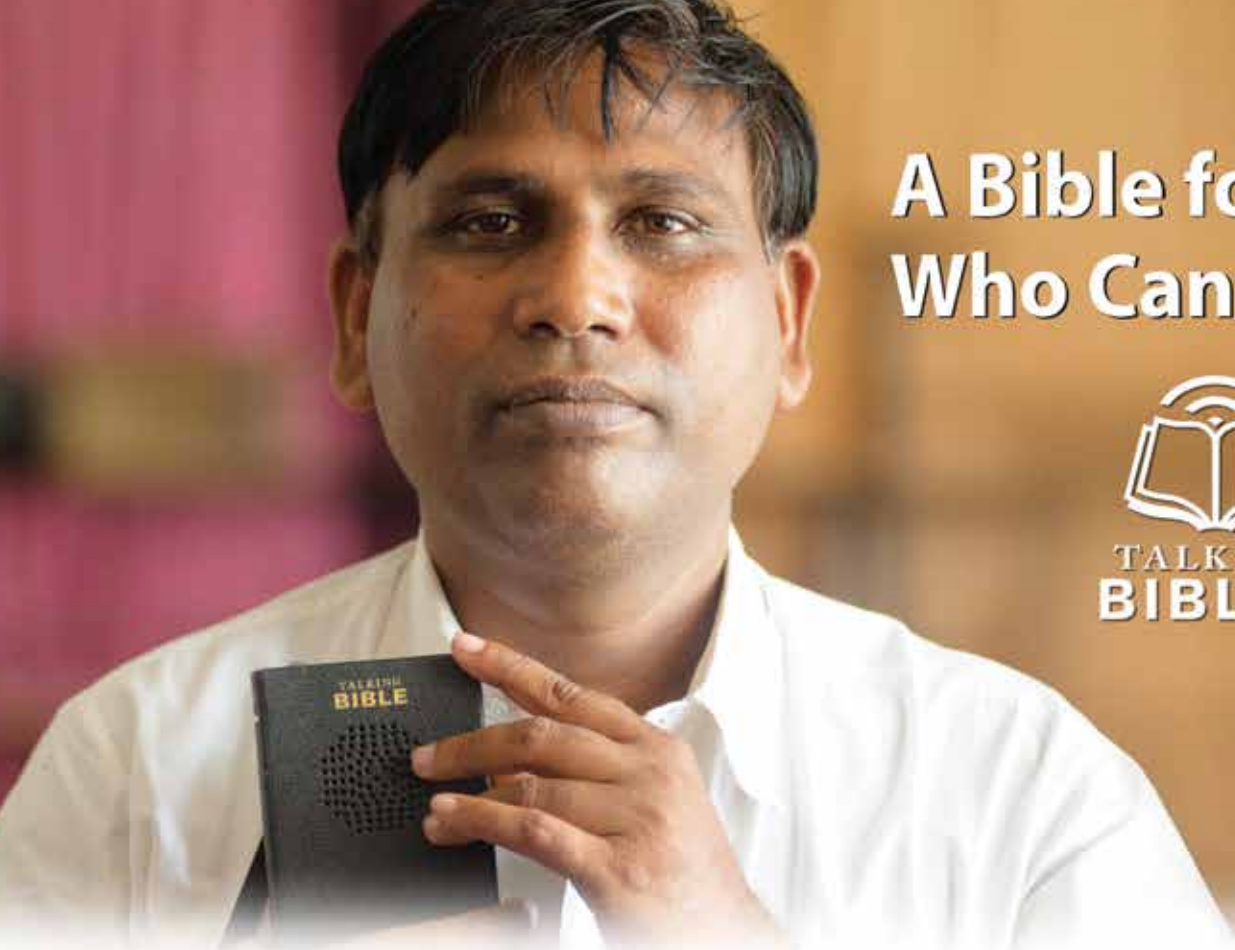


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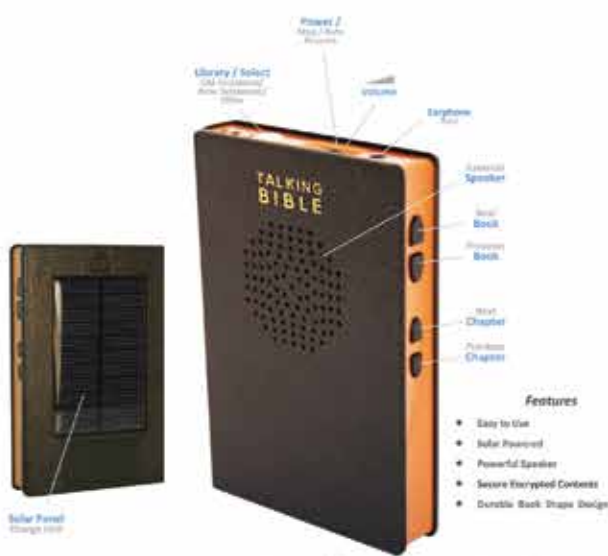
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Let's Grow Movements, Not Destroy Them



BY RICK WOOD

EDITOR OF *MF* | rick.wood@frontierventures.org

It is a simple fact of life: it is far easier to destroy than it is to build. It is the same way with fostering Kingdom Movements of disciple-making and church-planting. It is far easier to pursue popular mission practices that kill movements or keep movements from ever starting than it is to work wisely with the Holy Spirit in ways that enable movements to start and grow exponentially. Fostering growing movements is not just about doing all the right things, but also stopping all the things we do that kill movements. We need to hunt down and destroy every mission practice that kills movements, no matter how fond we are of them. These deadly mission “viruses” stand in the way of achieving our goal of growing movements to Christ in every people and place so that every person on earth may have access to the gospel. If the mission practices you are pursuing are on our “Most Wanted” list of movement killers, prepare to rethink what you are doing and align yourself with those proven mission practices that lead to multiplying movements.

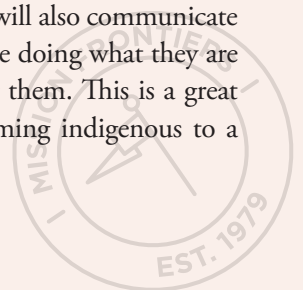
Re-Align Yourself for Growing Movements

For over 20 years mission leaders have been re-discovering the Book-of-Acts-like practices that God uses to birth disciple-making and church-planting movements. These practices are continually being honed and refined as mission workers seek to apply these movement principles to various peoples, cultures and contexts. While allowing for adaptation to specific contexts, there is also a great degree of alignment to agreed-upon movement principles that is required if a movement is to occur at all. Serious deviation from these movement principles will kill an existing movement or prevent one from ever starting. There are many mission agencies out there that want to claim they are pursuing movements for publicity and fundraising purposes, but their mission practices bear little resemblance to the movement principles that actually make movements possible. So when you hear some mission organization claim they are using movement methods in their work, be an informed mission activist and look more closely at what they are actually doing.

Every mission agency that wants to foster movements must re-align their mission practices to those of movement catalysts who have actually fostered Kingdom Movements. This is not a time for everyone to try to reinvent the “movement wheel.” There are hundreds of people out there who have real world, on-the-ground experience in successfully starting movements and who know the basic principles that make movements work. We need to learn from these movement catalysts and use them to train up thousands of new movement catalysts to start movements in every people and place. See the article by Neil Cole starting on page 27 to learn the essential qualities of multiplying movements. A key take-away from this article is that most mission strategies focus on adding new people while growing movements focus on methods that multiply disciples. Mission strategies focused only on addition is another movement killer.

Money, “the root of all kinds of evil” in Movements

You will notice that one of the movement killers most frequently mentioned in this issue of *MF* is foreign money. Over many years we have frequently talked about how foreign money can cause tremendous problems in our mission outreach. As Dr. David Garrison has said, “outside money is the surest way to kill a movement.” The wonderful article by Jean Johnson starting on page 16 goes into great detail in explaining why outside money is such a deadly force in movements. The first rule of movements is that whatever you do must be infinitely reproducible generation after generation. The ministry DNA you start with is what will be reproduced in all future generations of believers and churches. If you start with defective DNA, you may never see your disciples make more disciples. Outside money is not good reproducible ministry DNA. Not every generation of new believers can go back to the original donor for more money. Foreign money will also communicate to new believers that they need outside money in order to reach out to their friends, family and beyond. It will also communicate to unbelievers that these believers are doing what they are doing because foreigners are paying them. This is a great way to keep the gospel from becoming indigenous to a people and killing any movement.




No matter what the mission strategies are that seek to kill movements, we must identify them and stop them before they can kill again.

Become 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.

Pray: 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. 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 <http://www.frontierventures.org>, click on the **Donate** button and put MA 030 in the dialog box to cover *MF* general expenses. To donate to Rick Wood and his ministry with *MF* put MA323 in the dialog box. Thank you.

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THE 24:14 MOVEMENT DATA DASHBOARD As of Aug. 2020

The Problem: Losing Ground

One of three people have no access to the gospel message.

1985: 3.2 billion lost souls

2019: 5.5 billion lost souls

Evangelism of unreached peoples is not keeping pace with the population growth rate.

The Solution: Movements

Church Planting Movements (CPMs) grow rapidly and often exceed the population growth rate.

In the last 20+ years the number of movements has increased dramatically, spreading to every continent.

The Seven Stages of the CPM Continuum

Stage 1:

Moving purposefully (G1)

Teams on site trying to consistently establish NEW 1st Generation believers and churches

Stage 2: Focused (G2)

Some 2nd generation churches (G1 believers started them)

Stage 3: Breakthrough (G3)

Consistent G2 and some G3 churches

Stage 4: Emerging CPM (G4)

Consistent G3 and some G4 churches

Stage 5: ESTABLISHED CPM

Consistent 4th+ generation churches; multiple streams

Stage 6: Sustained CPM

Visionary, indigenous leadership leading the movement with little/ no need for outsiders. Stood the test of time.

Stage 7: Multiplying CPMs:

Catalyzing new CPMs in other unreached peoples and places.

What God is Doing Through His Body

4,500+ reports of active CPM engagements

1,369 Stage 5 CPMs, 4+ Generations

76.9 million believers in all CPM engagements

4.7 million churches in all known CPM engagements

71,000 believers per Stage 5+ CPM, average

17 average believers per church per CPM

24:14 Vision

The Good News of Jesus Christ for every person and a Church for every people

Mission: Kingdom Movements in all unreached peoples and in every place

Initial Goal: Kingdom Movement engagements in all unreached peoples and every place by December 31, 2025

24:14 Values

1. Fully reaching the unreached peoples and places of the earth
2. Reaching them through Church Planting Movement strategies
3. Engaging them through movement strategies with **urgent sacrifice** by 2025
4. Collaborating with others in the 24:14 community so we can make progress together

Join the 24:14 Community

<https://www.2414now.net/get-involved/>

Questions? Contact: data@2414now.net or visit our FAQs at <https://www.2414now.net/about-us/>

To Report: CPM engagement or progress contact Justin D. Long at Justin@justinlong.org

To view the entire Movement Data Dashboard go to: <https://www.2414now.net>



THE HUNT

Photo by Andre Klimke, unsplash.com



FOR MOVEMENT KILLERS

Mission Viruses

That Can Kill Disciple Making Movements

BY ROY MORAN

Roy Moran, author of *Spent Matches and Hybrid Church*, is chairman of the board and North American Regional Director of New Generations and has been with New Generations since they were Cityteam Int'l. He also serves on the board of Beyond. He leads efforts in his hometown, Kansas City, through DiscipleKC an effort to fulfill the Great Commission.



C. J. Peters' life is the stuff of legend.

For 30 years he traipsed the world's most remote places hunting hot viruses and then chronicled his Indiana Jones life in a fascinating book (<https://www.amazon.com/Virus-Hunter-Thirty-Battling-Viruses/dp/0385485581>). Hot viruses are the ones known to be lethal to human life, like Ebola. It is more obvious today than ever before that we need people like C. J. on the dangerous front line identifying threats to human life before they are allowed to ravage through populations, indiscriminately extinguish human lives.

Not only are there viruses that can extinguish human life, but there are also viruses that stop dead in its tracks the movement of the Good News of Jesus. Wait, I know what you are thinking, "the gospel is the power of God unto salvation." We are not saying that there is anything wrong with the biblical gospel, but often the very methods

we use to plant the gospel are counter-productive to it reaching the commission Jesus gave us.

« Not only are there viruses that can extinguish human life, but there are also viruses that stop dead in its tracks the movement of the Good News of Jesus. »

Whether it was Baron Justinian von Welz, a Lutheran noble of the 17th century, or Hudson Taylor in the 19th century who coined or popularized the term "Great Commission," it has become synonymous with the mission of Jesus' followers. We are called to "make disciples" of every *ethne*. Regardless of the etymological

arguments surrounding *ethne*, it is universally accepted that we are called to give every man, woman and child a repeated opportunity to see, hear and respond to the message of Jesus.

With the Great Commission as our primary mission, it seems necessary that we would want to hunt those things that keep this Good News from spreading. And spread it has over the past twenty years; we are seeing an increase in small outbreaks of the Good News spreading virally through populations even in the most difficult of circumstances (see Justin Long's blog for details). There are over 1,350 church planting movements currently being reported and at New Generations we are involved in 127 movements that have spread far and wide enough for us to be able to identify "virus killers" of these gospel movements.

« With the Great Commission as our primary mission, it seems necessary that we would want to hunt those things that keep this Good News from spreading. »

Just as C. J. Peters' work is valued by all sectors of society, especially in the midst of a pandemic, so must the work of our "virus hunters" be seen as paramount in gospel ministry. Why? Because there is nothing more important than eradicating gospel poverty. Early in Jesus' discipling of the Twelve He taught them to pray, "may it be on earth as it is in heaven." There is no gospel poverty in heaven. In the kingdom of heaven everything is ordered on the character of the King. The glory of God our King, in His experienced goodness, orders heaven because He is the king and it is His kingdom. Everyone there is a child of the King because of the gospel.

As we seek to fuel the efforts of fulfillment of the Great Commission we see that that fulfilling the promise of Habakkuk 2:14—finding and extinguishing everything that hinders, creates friction and stops the movement of the gospel—becomes our priority.

Biological viruses are classified on the basis of shared properties and grouped at different hierarchical levels of

order, family, subfamily, genus and species. More than 30,000 different viruses are known today and grouped in more than 3,600 species, in 164 genera and 71 families. Disciple Making Movement killing viruses also come in families with a variety of expressions. Let's look at five families of viruses and the species that find their way into some movements of the gospel.

Exceptionalism: a dependency on individuals with exceptional passions, enthusiasm, temperament, skill and gifts.

Materialism: the naive practice of allowing money into the wrong places in movements.

Professionalism: the inherent belief that the trained, qualified or certified are more dependable than those who lack formal training.

Mechanicalism: a belief that movements are a matter of physical effort rather than spiritual power.

Partialism: the practice of fusing several different movement strategies together.

Exceptionalism (not in order of priority) is a cultural phenomenon that plagues humanity. Whether it is a set of letters before or after a name or public acclamation for talent, we have a fond affection for the exceptional. It doesn't matter if it's music, athletics, academics or the Church, those with exceptional skills are often elevated to positions of influence or counted more valuable than the rest.

Exceptionalism in movements arises when we become dependent—for instance—on highly gifted trainers. Training rubrics that require better than average presentation skills eliminate ordinary disciples from passing on the training. The problem is not with having some gifted practitioners, but for the gospel to consistently multiply through ordinary people everything has to multiply at every level. That means that all activities that foster movement must be available to the everyday people. If outreach strategies require special skills, if training can't be delivered by ordinary people, if coaching regimes can't be accomplished by ordinary people or then a movement will experience friction due to the dependence on exceptionally talented people.

The theological antidote to exceptionalism is found in the concept of the priesthood of the believer. Peter calls each

follower of Christ a royal priest (1 Pet. 2:9) and declares that we have everything pertaining to life and godliness. (2 Pet. 1:3) Not to mention that Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations is given to every disciple since the first. However we organize the progress of the gospel, it must be bounded by the truth that every disciple gets to play, not just for a few exceptionally gifted ones. It is very common for people who seem very ordinary when they experience Disciple Making Movements (even oral learners or people who have not seen themselves as leaders before) to become extraordinary disciple-makers and church-planters.

Materialism addresses the relationship between money and movement. There is no argument that it takes resources to get the gospel where it is not. The controversy arises with how much, when and from whom does the money come.



Money paid to those involved in movement activity challenges the motives of those receiving the money and potentially creates a dependency between giver and receiver. The question arises: if there is no money will there be movement activity? Often, there is not.

Frequently money is best used to further activity that was already in progress. When you find a movement activist who could go further or faster with an investment toward transportation or Scripture resources for example, you have a situation where money and movement work. Since most movements are started by movements it is not unusual for movements to send workers to nearby neighbor groups that don't have the gospel available. Financial investment is necessary for these activities.

Not only is money and dependency an issue but also the use of money by "outside actors." More than once fruitful leaders of movement activity have been lured away with

money to another organization. The result is that the bad actors have surprising numbers they can report to their donors for a while because they have purchased them, but eventually the virus of dependency rises and often the movement slows or dies.

Professionalism is a two-edged sword. Certainly, gaining greater excellence of knowledge and skill is a worthy cause. When professionals appear, however, the masses begin to develop the attitude of leaving it to the professionals and it unintentionally creates passivity.

One of the maxims of movement is that an untrained insider is always more effective than a trained outsider. This cuts against the grain of a culture that values subject matter experts. It especially challenges cross-cultural workers and those who love to "do ministry" in foreign fields. In movements there are no heroes nor hero-makers, only ordinary people responding in obedience to Jesus.

« In movements there are no heroes nor hero-makers, only ordinary people responding in obedience to Jesus. »

Jesus, upon healing the Gerasenes demoniac, refused to allow him to accompany the disciples but instead sent him home to speak of what God had done for him. This was a far cry from the route of qualifying, certifying or even the ordaining practices that we use today. Even at the site of Jesus' last command in Matthew 28, we are told in verse 16 that while some doubted, Jesus didn't hesitate to commission both doubters and worshippers. Jesus' practice was to release the willing rather than trust the qualified.

When the West hears of viral movements of the gospel in the east, the scientific thinking of the West kicks in; dissect, isolate, formulate and repeat. The desire to spread spiritual revolution globally is innocent and virtuous. Unfortunately, movements are God ordained and even though we can isolate certain practices that contribute to movements, they are in no way mechanical.

Mechanicalism denies the supernatural nature of the Spirit in the movement of the gospel. With great regularity we can correlate impressive movements of the

gospel with equally impressive outpouring of prayer. It would be a mistake to think we can simply raise the amount of hours we pray to generate movement. I live in a city that has had 24/7 prayer for years and yet have only seen short glimpses of gospel movement. We cannot bribe God with our prayers. But when extraordinary prayer and radical obedience meet with God's heart for the lost, He tends to do amazing things.

Similarly, many have gone through Disciple Making Movements training and become enamored with Discovery Bible Study (DBS). Mistakenly believing that Disciple Making Movements are synonymous with the obedience-based discovery Bible processes, they aggressively pursue the implementation of DBS believing a movement will break out. Again, God rejoices when His followers are obedient to His wisdom, but this one element rarely spawns a movement.

« But when extraordinary prayer and radical obedience meet with God's heart for the lost, He tends to do amazing things. »

There may be a set of irreducible minimum habits found in gospel movements but they are not a mechanical process that can be reproduced at human will. When God ordains and humans cooperate, movements



can break out.


Partialism is the last family of movement viruses we will address here. More than once I have watched very smart individuals from historic institutions sit in training by experienced movement catalysts, only to leave the training and during implementation add, subtract or self-style the habits of movements.

There is something deep, especially in Americans, that when confronted with something exciting responds, "I have a better idea." In the face of experience and proven results, we often believe we can make it better. Rather than practice what we are taught and let experience be our teacher, we practice an ignorant hubris by changing well worn practices.

Another species of this virus in the western tradition is fusion. A rage in the food world now, you can find any mixture of ethnic cuisines smashed together. Oftentimes, out of naïveté, new practitioners of movement strategies take a little from here, a little from there and self-style their own version of a movement strategy.

Despite the fact that most movements end up at the same place, they don't always take the same route to get there. The reasons may reside in many different variables, but denying the differences robs practitioners of different tools they can use to be more effective in varying circumstances.

« Despite the fact that most movements end up at the same place, they don't always take the same route to get there. »

The word "movement" describes a gospel-phenomenon that signals changing from addition thinking to multiplication thinking. This thinking moves the potential of the progress of the gospel beyond population growth and bringing into view the prospect of fulfilling the Great Commission. That potential should be shepherded as aggressively as humanly possible. Viruses that threaten to kill movements must be brought into the light and killed as quickly as possible. 

MOVEMENT KILLERS

BY **JIM YOST**

Jim Yost and his wife Joan pioneered a church-planting in Irian Jaya, Indonesia (now Papua) in February of 1977 among the northern Sawi tribe located in the southern lowlands of Papua. After 20 years in that tribal location they moved to the north coast city of Sentani where they are now involved in ministry to troubled youth as well as to broken families. The power of God to transform broken lives has been evidenced in disciples making disciples who in turn are making disciples. Jim's growing burden is to catalyze Disciple Making Movements in Papua, throughout Indonesia and beyond.

For the last 20 years “movement thinking” has gained attention in the missional world. Whether you call it Church Planting Movements or Disciple Making Movements or Exponential Discipleship, it's undeniable that we are witnessing the book of Acts unfolding afresh with 3000 coming to faith in one day, 8000 in one week, 20,000 in just a few weeks. Movements are happening everywhere and if God is doing it in one place, it probably means He wants it to happen in all places!

Movements are happening everywhere, and if God is doing it in one place, it probably means He wants it to happen in all places!

I am a DMM Catalyst and often I am contacted by folks who ask me, “Would you show us how to make a movement happen?” It's almost like people think I have a bag of secrets and all I have to do is put my hand into the bag and pull one out and give it to them and then a movement will take place. I always answer, “No man or woman can make a movement happen. Only God can cause a movement to happen. But when God is on the move, we can sure get in His way! Unknowingly we can thwart or slow down what God is doing. These are called “movement killers.” Here are five movement killers that we have recognized in recent years.

POPULARITY

When something we're doing is proving successful, the word gets out and it becomes popular and everyone wants to get on the bandwagon. Then innovation begins to stall because we've started focusing on things in the past or trying to “package” something for the general public. It seems like movements continue longer when they are kept a secret so we try to keep them under wraps until they are quite obvious.

In the last few years Disciple Making Movements have become quite popular in the region where I live and serve. Books have been published, seminars conducted, and it's been marketed as the new way to grow a church! A lot of attention has been given to one element of DMM—the Discovery Bible Study. A number of churches have plateaued in their growth, so when they hear about Discovery Bible Study they grab hold of it and turn all of their cell groups into DBS groups. They succeed in turning their church into a “Discipleship Church.” However, the end goal of not-yet believers coming into faith as part of a movement is never realized.

TRADITIONAL CHURCH CRITICISM

There are times when a spark of something very “contextual” begins and starts taking off, but when news of this reaches influential traditional church leaders they condemn it as heretical because it is not under their power or control. That criticism makes emerging leaders in a new movement question what they are doing.

In one fairly isolated rural area, a movement developed with hundreds of local people coming to faith. One of their emerging indigenous leaders suggested that as they showed their allegiance to Jesus in baptism that each person should carry a piece of firewood down to the river. They would make a big fire at the side of the riverbank and each baptismal candidate would lay a piece of wood into the fire stating, “This is my sin to be burned up to ash and the wind to take it away never to be seen by me again.” Then they would go down into the water and be baptized. It was a demonstrative way that they all would “feel” how their sins were forgiven by Jesus' sacrifice. News of what they were doing traveled to a nearby area where a church had been in existence for over 10 years. When the leaders of that church heard this news they were upset. They traveled for two days to get to this location where the movement was happening to tell everyone to stop. They said, “We received the Good News about Jesus before all of you so you must do this the same way we do it.

This wood burning stuff is not of God and must stop.” For a period of time, it did stop. But when these leaders returned to their region, the local emerging movement leaders started up again! So even though the movement slowed down, it didn’t completely stop.

LACK OF SPIRITUAL “FATHERING AND MOTHERING”

This is really connected with the previous movement killer. Despite criticism and even some faltering first moves, these emerging leaders can still make it *if* they have someone backing them up in a spiritual parenting role. This is huge. There are no movements without spiritual parenting.

There are no movements without spiritual parenting.

I am a product of the Jesus People Movement in California some 50 years ago. It was during that hippie era when God really got ahold of my life. It was very messy and seemingly out of control. People were coming to faith rapidly but people were falling pretty fast, too. There was only one mature leader named Pastor Chuck Smith. He raised up leaders from the harvest—young people coming out of bad backgrounds—and put them into leadership positions only to see them fall. But Pastor Smith had a “father’s heart” and would pick the fallen back up and say, “I believe in you. You can do it.” That was the engine behind the Jesus People Movement. Movements are messy and they must have spiritual parents to succeed.

INAPPROPRIATE FUNDING

This is a tightrope that we always have to be walking. But the bottom line is this: if a movement isn’t happening without money, then it won’t happen with money. Whatever kind of assistance is needed, the timing and the people involved should always be determined by those in the middle of movements on the ground. When this type of information is offered from the outside then movements begin to stall.

A bottom-line value of movements that I’m associated with is this: no financial proposals are allowed. We take Luke 10 and Matthew 10 quite literally—the person inviting you into their house or *oikos* should provide shelter and food for you—so the not-yet believers are the

ones subsidizing movements! Why would they do that? Because they see the added value your presence makes among them. All ministry in movements is holistic and brings the kingdom of God to earth in practical ways that people see and want to get behind. People on the ground know where funds are most needed and how to get the assistance to where it’s needed without outside organizations insisting on foreign procedures.



if a movement isn’t happening without money, then it won’t happen with money.

A growing movement was beginning to gain attention from the local government because many street children were turning their lives around through the multiplying of restorative discovery groups over a large urban area. The government then gave a financial gift so the leaders of this movement could build a building and have a place to conduct their activities. The leaders received the funds from the government and then got together for a meeting to decide how to proceed. They were in a dilemma. They asked, “If we build a building, does that send the wrong message to all the young people we serve? We are about building lives and not buildings. We must give the money back to the government.” They returned the funds back to the local government who was shocked and said, “This has never happened before! No one ever gives back money we give to them. These funds are from last year’s budget so it’s too late to return them to us.” The movement leaders asked, “Could we use the funds to build a medical clinic for the poor instead?” The government officials thought about the request and finally agreed. A medical clinic serving 200 people every day is now functioning



because of appropriate funding and many people are finding faith through these medical services.

LACK OF LEADERSHIP RENEWAL

In a healthy movement, leaders are being created at all levels all the time. However, when some experienced and gifted leaders stay in positions for too long then movements will stall. We've actually started creating time limits for leaders and an age limit in our youth movement. Leaders can't be over 25 years old!

We've actually started creating time limits for leaders and an age limit in our youth movement. Leaders can't be over 25 years old!


For the past number of years, we've been seeing a youth movement happen in the region where I live and work. Some people say movements have to be based on the nuclear family in homes, and ideally that is true. That's why in rural areas where movements are recorded, the Good News about Jesus travels through the

relationships of family members. But the reality in urban areas around the world is different. When people migrate to urban cities their families come under lots of pressure. Urban lifestyle pulls husbands and wives apart and it also pulls parents from children. In these urban centers, young people look for community among their peers instead of their nuclear family so the Good News travels through these peer communities. We have many different types of movements: hip-hop movements, punk movements, sports movements, motorcycle gang movements and more and they all produce their own leaders.

Recently, when I was speaking in a church in South Korea, I noticed that the number of young people in attendance was very low. I offered the advice to the leaders to start a hip-hop ministry with young people, but they did not receive my advice very well. They responded, "You can't gyrate your body and spin on your head like that in church!" I replied, "If you don't then you will lose a whole generation." I went on to explain how South Korea was number one in the hip-hop world and that would have more influence on young people than anything else in their country.



A year ago I gathered with 20 of my top leaders from our youth movement, both guys and gals age 17 to 25. All were highly involved in hip-hop, rap and DJ lifestyles. I asked them, “How many of you when you were still a child growing up at home had both parents with you? Raise your hand.” No one raised their hand. Then I asked, “How many of you had one parent around when you were younger?” Seven of them raised their hands. Finally I asked, “How many of you had neither a mom nor a dad at home when you were growing up?” 13 raised their hands. This is normal today for this generation. They are finding their way to a new way of doing church and seeing movement happen among them and a key is always reproducing leaders. It was at this meeting that they told me the current leaders must “pension” at 25 years of age to make room for the next generation of leaders.

If we want to see movements grow and spread to all peoples, we need to identify and eliminate all of those mission practices that kill movements. 

We have many different types of movements: hip-hop movements, punk movements, sports movements, motorcycle gang movements, and more and they all produce their own leaders.



If we want to see movements grow and spread to all peoples, we need to identify and eliminate all of those mission practices that kill movements.

Using Foreign Money to Start, Sustain and Speed Up Movements

JEAN JOHNSON

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Picture this: there was a couple working in a northern province of Cambodia in the late 90s. One day, they shared with other missionaries that they had started many house churches in the area. Their testimony piqued the interest of those missionaries as they too longed for such results. On the one hand, they were elated to hear the good news. On the other, they were curious as to why this couple was so successful when they came in and out of the country and barely spoke the language.

« They were curious as to why this couple was so successful when they came in and out of the country and barely spoke the language. »



One day these House Church Movement (HCM) pioneers were waiting alongside the road in town. While waiting, they struck up a conversation with another missionary. As they were chatting, a big truck filled with motorcycles

pulled up alongside of them. Immediately, the couple explained to the missionary that they bought the motorcycles for the house church leaders so they could lighten their load as they spread the gospel to other villages. In the long run, it was a just a short time before the foreign resources bled the life out of the House Church Movement.

Now contrast this story with an account from my friend whom I will call only by her first name, Sarah. Sarah has been working diligently to launch sustainable Disciple Making Movements (DMMs) in Cambodia up to the present day. In one particular situation, Sarah had been visiting a “family of peace” for the purpose of sharing the gospel and making disciples. In this family, a brother and sister in their 20s put their faith and trust in Jesus and it was starting to look like the beginnings of a movement. But as time went along, she ran into a snag when the mother of the family and the older sister asked Sarah for money to buy a motorcycle. Sarah graciously declined to give or borrow the money for this family. From that point on, the mother forbid Sarah from visiting the family ever again.

Bleeding the Life Out of Movements

Wow! Two very different mindsets and methodologies between these two movement catalysts. Sarah was thinking ahead and the other couple was only thinking about the short-term. Sarah worked to sustain and multiply her movement efforts without injecting foreign money and the other couple crippled their movement efforts using foreign money.

Personally, I would rather have potential Persons of Peace reveal the true intentions of their heart or spiritual condition than have them half-heartedly join in a movement effort for Jesus Christ because of mixed motives. Furthermore, Sarah understood that if



« Garrison doesn't say that foreign resources *might* cripple a movement, but rather that it is the *surest* way to cripple a movement. »

she brought foreign money into the movement at any junction, it would eventually be the very means that killed it. David Garrison, well-known for his descriptive book on Church Planting Movements (CPMs), wrote:

One of the surest ways to cripple a Church Planting Movement is to link church reproduction to foreign resources. Whenever pastors look beyond their own membership and local resources for salaries or buildings, they bleed the life out of their movement.¹

Garrison doesn't say that foreign resources *might* cripple a movement, but rather that it is the *surest* way to cripple a movement.

« Sarah understood that if she brought foreign money into the movement at any junction, it would eventually be the very means that killed it. »

Why is the Injection of Foreign Funding So Crippling?

Why does the injection of foreign funding bleed the life out of indigenous movements? First, the moment we bring in foreign funds to help at any stage of a locally rooted movement is the very moment that we introduce non-reproducibility and non-scalability into the movement. From that point on, those in the movement will become dependent on outside funds and will stop looking to mobilize those within the movement to support and sustain those aspects. Second, we will fulfill the perception and complaint of the non-believing persons among the Unreached People Groups that foreign money and power are always behind everything to do with Jesus. Third, on the heels of foreign money is always some degree of foreign culture. Even if donors merely enforce accountability measures for the funds, it will inevitably match their systems of reporting, accounting, and appealing to donors. What is more, the recipients will tend to adapt to their donors more so than to their own context and colleagues. Fourth, money that comes from outside instead of from inside the harvest is harmful to the recipients' selfhood, community-image, motivation, determination, unity, self-giving and so much more.

¹ David Garrison, *Church Planting Movements: How God Is Redeeming A Lost World* (WIGTake Resources LLC; 6th Printing edition, 2004).

Why Do We Feel a Need to Inject Foreign Money to Start, Sustain, and Speed Up Movements?

We have been warned and exhorted by people like Garrison that foreign funding can cripple and bleed the life out of movements. So why do we feel a need to inject foreign money into locally rooted movements? I can think of three big reasons why I unwisely used outside funds or was tempted to use outside funds.

First, as an American I am driven like so many others. My culture has taught me that moving things along through my own ingenuity, prowess and weight is worthwhile—even though I continually say that movements are “a move of the Spirit” working through the local people. There were times I wanted to see more progress and thought, “*Ah, if they only had this or that, things would move faster and they wouldn’t struggle so much.*” But every time I moved things along with outside resources, I broke the very rules and rhythms of movements such as simplicity, transferability, local resources, lay leadership, volunteerism and extraordinary prayer. Honestly, sometimes I think our drive to outrun our statistics leads to this sense that we have to artificially inseminate indigenous movements with foreign funding. We have all seen the websites where the numbers increase as we increase our efforts. Might this driven nature of ours actually make us take shortcuts?

« But every time I moved things along with outside resources, I broke the very rules and rhythms of movements such as simplicity, transferability, local resources, lay leadership, volunteerism and extraordinary prayer. »

Second, I often felt compassion towards peoples’ plights. I could see that something was hard for them in regard to making disciples or their own family situation. I just wanted to make life and ministry easier for them. Have you watched the *Sheep Among Wolves Volume II* documentary? It seems that the Iranian Jesus-followers wouldn’t think of having foreigners lighten their load.

Suffering has a way of fueling their movement. I fell into the trap of buying two motorcycles for a team of church-planters to share and to use at will because I wanted to make their efforts easier. But this outside intervention made the emerging movement dependent on outside help as everyone on down the generations of multiplication knew where the motorcycles came from and expected the same when it was their turn—there is no such thing as confidentiality in many cultures.

« What is often labeled as partnership is really sponsorship, which has no degree of reciprocity built into it—it’s just the wealthy serving in patron roles of the relationships. »

Third, I was tempted to use funds to accommodate my needs. There was that occasional time that it would be easier to offer a training on CPM or DMM in a centralized location, rather than train in micro-locations where local people didn’t have to travel. You know the drill—save time in my busy schedule and my back from the grueling travel along rugged roads. But in these centralized training cases, there are suddenly costs involved for lodging, food and transportation. Then comes the inevitable question, “Jean, will you subsidize the training?” With this price tag comes modeling without the possibility of reproducibility.

In general, movements tend to start out as grassroots, organic, non-institutional and non-hierarchical structures. But as these movements grow, we desire to track, network and develop leaders and leadership for the movements. It is often at this stage that we want to relax the reproducibility and self-sustaining principles. Outside funding begins to pour in to support top movement leaders. These leaders will spend time in other countries raising funds to support themselves and their movements.

Another reason we desire to get overly involved is that we are used to and we like leading the pack. If we provide funds, we somehow become integral to the movements in other peoples’ countries. It feeds our need to be the pioneers, the frontrunners, the needed and the indispensable. What is often labeled as partnership is really

sponsorship, which has no degree of reciprocity built into it—it's just the wealthy serving in patron roles of the relationships. J. R. Meydan and Ramsay Harris have revealed that the Muslim world has a disproportionately large number of Christian donors seeking partnership in relationship to a disproportionately tiny number of recipients, which means that foreign money can't help but cause crippling effects.²

« They were afraid their Western-funded movement models would undermine all their hard work in developing movements that were self-sustaining and self-supporting. »

I have seen organizations that center their vision and mission around partnering with local leaders in least reached areas of the world to help develop DMMs and CPMs, all the while raising millions of dollars. I know of one group that was lamenting about another group that was coming to their area. They were afraid their Western-funded movement models would undermine all their

hard work in developing movements that were self-sustaining and self-supporting.

Yes, But . . .

You may conclude that minuscule help is not a big deal in the larger scheme of things. Dmmsfrontiermissions.com posted a blog about how members of a short-term missions team gave their boots to new disciple-makers in Bangladesh because they were originally wearing flip flops through monsoon-flooded areas as they visited villages to share the gospel. The visiting team thought this small act of love would be a great blessing but their gift of boots had the opposite effect. The newer disciples of this movement stopped going out and about to share the gospel or find Persons of Peace. They reckoned that only people who owned boots should do that type of ministry.³

One other area that messes us up is the deduction that social-economic help and projects used to gain favor 'get a pass' from being reproducible. But how can this be? If we use non-reproducible compassion services to enter an area and to gain approval, how will the ordinary believers of the second, third, and fourth generation work their way into new areas? I remember the day I helped a church-planter start a business to support himself. He retrieved water from a source and brought it to the village in a truck. Those who paid for his services had the water poured into their cisterns. This livelihood that

² J. R. Meydan and Ramsay Harris, "Are We Nourishing or Choking Young Plants with Funds," *From Seed to Fruit*, ed. J. Dudley Woodberry (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011), 226.

³ Dmmsfrontiermissions.com, "Money — It Both Helps and Hurts," June 10, 2017.

was supposed to help him to support himself and readily relate to his neighbors actually backfired. His neighbors were jealous that he received a fair equity loan that wasn't available to them. They also concluded that he was a believer in Jesus merely because of the help he received, which weakened his credibility.

Let's Make the Most of It

It is really amazing to think what we could do to reverse misperceptions among the Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus by not funding locally rooted movements.

Buddhists

All Buddhists we interviewed expressed the view that there were foreign funds in the attempt to convert Buddhists to Christianity. Therefore, evangelical expansion in the country has been classified as "unethical conversion." In this way, Buddhist activists have brought the issue to the realm of public debate and have created a Buddhist public hostility to Christianity in general.⁴

Muslims

Muslims assume that the principal methods Christian missionaries intentionally use to lure Muslims away from Islam and into Western Christian culture is by buying them off with gifts and money . . .⁵

Hindus

Foreign funding contributes to India's significant resistance to Jesus, even when given to "reach India." Hindus are deeply aware of this foreign funding . . . Because of the incredible amounts of money involved, Hindus also use a metaphor of the "Christian enterprise" as *missionary or conversion business*.⁶

« It is really amazing to think what we could do to reverse misperceptions among the Buddhists, Muslims, and Hindus by not funding locally rooted movements. »

4 G. P. V. Somaratna, "Buddhist Perceptions for the Christian Use of Funds in Sri Lanka," *Complexities of Money and Missions in Asia*, ed. Paul De Neui (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2012), 8.

5 J. R. Meydan and Ramsay Harris, "Are We Nourishing or Choking Young Plants with Funds," *From Seed to Fruit*, ed. J. Dudley Woodberry (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2011), 226.

6 Paul Pennington, *Christian Barriers to Jesus* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2017) 184-186.

You see?! We finally have some methods among our global mission realm that have built within its DNA a way to reverse these Buddhist, Muslim, and Hindu barriers to Jesus—DMMs and CPMs that are meant to function with "less is more." The surest way to empower movements is to encourage the people of these movements to look to their own people and resources for their needs. Let's make the most of these best practice movement models that we have in our mission toolbox.


« The surest way to empower movements is to encourage the people of these movements to look to their own people and resources for their needs. »

We Need to Believe

We need to believe in God enough to trust Him with these movements around the world.

We need to believe in the people of these movements enough to trust them with the development of their own movements. We need to believe in the DMM and CPM principles and practices enough to let them work.

I would love to talk more with you about this. I wish we talked about this elephant in the room more often. I wish people who have stifled or killed movements because of injecting outside funding would write about it. We need to hear these types of stories too; otherwise, we keep making the same mistakes.

I conclude with this final thought. The greatest missionary ever, the apostle Paul, did not become a donor or financial sponsor of the churches he started. He expected them to be reproducible and locally sustainable. Let's follow in his footsteps. 



Are We ACCELERATING or INHIBITING

Movements to Christ?

BY **BOB GOODMAN**

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Those with a heart for unreached peoples have the choice to pursue certain behaviors that have the potential to accelerate the spread of the gospel. These “accelerators” may help a new fellowship in an unreached people group become a large-scale movement to Christ. By contrast, we may consciously or inadvertently deploy “inhibitors” that may make it difficult for that fellowship to ever become a movement.

A Word about Movements

The term “movement” implies rapid growth in the number of believers, beyond the influence or control of the ones who introduced the gospel. “Church-planting movements”, such as the ones discussed in David Garrison’s Church Planting Movements, generally refer to Christians, whereas “insider movements” generally refer to Jesus followers who remain within their ethno-religious identity (e.g. Muslim or Hindu insider movements).

In this article my focus is on “movements” in general, whether church-planting movements or insider movements. My interest is in behaviors that tend to accelerate the spread of the gospel, regardless of the ethno-religious identity that is chosen by the new disciples of Jesus.

Expectations of Kingdom Growth

Jesus told three parables that predicted the rapid spread of the kingdom of heaven: the Parables of the Yeast, the Mustard Seed, and the Sower. The first conclusion that we can draw from these three parables is that Jesus expected dramatic growth in his Kingdom.

« Jesus expected dramatic growth
in his Kingdom. »

In the Parable of the Mustard Seed (Matt. 13:31-32), Jesus says, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard

seed... Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree.”

In the Parable of the Yeast (Matt. 13:33), Jesus says, “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough.”

And in the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:20), Jesus says, “Others, like seed sown on good soil, hear the word, accept it, and produce a crop—thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times what was sown.”

A Strategy for Kingdom Growth

The second conclusion that we can draw from these three parables is that Jesus had a specific strategy in mind for spreading the gospel in order to achieve dramatic growth. He recommended implanting the gospel like yeast so that it leavens, and planting it like a seed so that it grows in the new soil.

The common theme of these parables is that the gospel is something very small that is introduced into another culture and transforms it. Yet we often introduce the gospel into another culture with significant amounts of cultural and religious traditions associated with it. This “baggage” makes it harder for a new people to embrace the gospel because they see it as a foreign cultural and religious system, rather than a relationship with the person of Jesus that they can pursue within their own cultural and religious traditions.

Contextualizing the Gospel

Contextualization has become well-established as essential to successfully implanting the gospel in another culture. But while contextualization is indeed an excellent strategy, is it a sufficient strategy to lead to movements to Christ? Missionaries have been applying the principles of contextualization, even radical contextualization, for generations. Yet in most instances, these principles have not led to movements to Christ. What could be missing?

I believe that contextualization is insufficient on its own to lead to movements, because two other factors need to be taken into account—identity and community. While the gospel may be introduced in a highly contextualized manner, the identity that new believers choose and the way they interact with their community will have a great

effect on whether others from their culture will make a similar choice to follow Jesus.

Theory vs. Practice of Contextualization

Before I elaborate further, let me say that I believe many of the authors on contextualization intended contextualization to include both identity and community when they wrote of a contextualized approach to spreading the gospel. Therefore, it is not the theory of contextualization which is lacking, but the way it is practiced by many.

For many, the practice of contextualizing the gospel has been primarily cultural: the attempt to present the gospel consistently with local cultural forms, using local language, wearing local dress, using contextualized translations of the Bible, etc. However, these attempts to culturally contextualize the gospel are often practiced along with behaviors that are at odds with full contextualization.

« Attempts to culturally contextualize the gospel are often practiced along with behaviors that are at odds with full contextualization. »

Foreign Identities and Extracted Communities

A culturally-contextualized gospel can be presented in a way that leads new believers 1) to adopt a new identity that other locals perceive as foreign, and 2) to associate with other new believers that other locals perceive as extracted communities. Thus, a new fellowship of believers may express a culturally contextualized gospel, yet have a foreign identity and be considered an extracted community.

To the extent that new believers are perceived by others as having chosen foreign identities and joined a foreign religious community, the opportunity for the gospel to rapidly spread in that people group is dramatically diminished. This will be true even if they are highly contextualized culturally; their foreign religious identity and membership in a foreign community counteracts the benefits of their cultural contextualization.

Inhibitors vs. Accelerators of Movements

If we are to establish fellowships that have the potential to lead to movements to Christ, we need to recognize the “inhibitors” and “accelerators” of movements. “Inhibitors”

are actions that may bring short-term results, but are likely to inhibit fellowships from becoming movements to Christ. “Accelerators” are actions that may take a little longer, but are likely to encourage fellowships to become movements to Christ.

Accelerators for Individualistic vs. Communal Cultures

“Individualistic cultures” are highly individualized with fractured families that don’t live in extended community (i.e., the majority of Western cultures). “Communal cultures” are community-oriented with tight-knit families that live in extended community (i.e., the majority of Muslim and Hindu peoples). Gospel-spreading strategies that are most effective for individualistic cultures will tend to be less effective for communal cultures, and vice versa.

For example, a communal culture places a high value on keeping its members part of the community, and will tend to resist any religious invitation that will lead its members to become “separate” or “foreign.” Individualistic cultures are more fragmented, and its members have greater freedom to separate from those around them into a separate sub-culture.

Therefore, a gospel-spreading strategy that leads to foreign identities and extracted communities will face higher resistance in a communal culture. Family members and community members will tend to exert great pressure on new believers to “return to the fold,” and if they don’t do so, they will tend to expel them from the community and have nothing further to do with them. Thus, the new fellowship of believers may seem successful from an outside perspective, yet they may have limited ability to reach back into their community with the gospel of Jesus.

Spreading the gospel in a communal culture should be done in a way that is more likely to lead to movements to Christ. It should lead to communities of believers that are not seen as “foreign,” but as “still part of our community,” so that the gospel can spread more easily.

Workers from Individualistic Cultures

One challenge is that many cross-cultural workers spreading the gospel in communal cultures (e.g., Muslims or Hindus) are themselves from individualistic cultures (e.g., North America or Europe). Therefore, they may unwittingly pursue gospel-spreading strategies that are better suited for individualistic cultures than communal

cultures. They may even be expected to do so if they are sent by Western mega-churches that have experienced great success by pursuing strategies well suited for their individualistic cultures.

Sending-churches from individualistic cultures should consider whether their church-planting strategies may actually inhibit movements to Christ in communal cultures. A concern frequently expressed by cross-cultural workers is that their sending-churches may reject them if they pursue “insider” strategies for communal cultures.

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Seven Accelerators or Inhibitors for Communal Cultures

I suggest seven dimensions where certain actions may accelerate or inhibit movements to Christ in communal cultures: Identities, Communities, Leadership, Fellowship, Practices, Doctrine, and Independence. Tables 1 through 7 suggest examples of actions in each dimension that will tend to accelerate or inhibit movements. Missionary teams and their support networks may find these tables useful in prayerful planning and evaluation. Any one action in isolation is unlikely to significantly influence a movement. But—taken in whole—consistent use of accelerators in communal cultures is more likely to result in movements to Christ than consistent use of inhibitors.

For instance, consistent use of inhibitor actions will tend to result in extracted communities of believers with foreign identities and foreign religious practices. These extracted communities will have difficulty reaching the communities from which they’ve been extracted. Conversely, consistent use of accelerator actions will lead to transformed communities of believers with insider identities and contextualized religious practices that are far more likely to spread the gospel like yeast through the dough of existing communities. (Matt. 13:33)

« The unifying theme to all these movement accelerators is “comprehensive self-contextualization.” »

Dimension #1: Identity**Preserve an Insider Identity as Believers**

- Gospel is perceived as “inside,” “natural” to their culture.
- New believers are encouraged to preserve an identity that will allow them to reach their families and communities with the gospel (rather than being expelled because they converted to a foreign religion).
- New believers remain in their culture. If that culture is strongly intertwined with religion, then believers are free to follow Jesus while remaining “inside” their ethno-religious identity. (E.g. “I’m a Muslim who follows Jesus,” rather than “I’ve converted to Christianity in order to follow Jesus.”)

Establish a Foreign Identity as Believers

- Gospel is perceived as “foreign,” “outside” their culture.
- New believers identify themselves as Christians, and are understood to have left their ethnoreligious identity.
- New believers are expelled by their family or community, or are coerced into abandoning their new faith, because they’ve chosen to convert to a foreign religion.

Dimension #2: Communities**Penetrate Existing Communities with the Gospel**

- New believers remain in and cultivate their families, even if fellowship with believers is temporarily curtailed.
- Believers start new fellowships in their existing families and communities.
- Women play a vital role in reaching existing families and communities, and in discipling the next generation.
- The gospel spreads into new communities as believers witness through existing relationships or new relationships, then those new believers reach their own families and communities.
- Arranged marriages may result in the spread of the gospel into new families and communities.

Extract Believers into New Communities

- New believers are often shunned by their families, breaking them apart.
- Believers create new communities with other believers, and have limited ability to witness to their former communities.
- Women play a vital role in connecting new communities of faith together.
- The gospel has difficulty spreading into new communities, because believers are perceived as converts to a foreign religion.
- Arranged marriages are used as a means of coercing new believers to abandon their faith and return to their traditional ethno-religious identity.

Dimension #3: Leadership**Cultivate Local Leadership**

- New believers can lead other new believers, with appropriate mentoring and discipling.
- Local believers provide leadership right away for the emerging fellowship in their family or community (rather than having foreigners provide “temporary” leadership).
- Leaders pursue biblical training appropriate for lay leaders (rather than formal seminary training appropriate for professional pastors).
- Local fellowships have natural leaders who may or may not meet the biblical criteria for elders (e.g., patriarch who has multiple wives, matriarch of the family, single man or woman).
- Elders are selected to connect local fellowships together in larger kingdom community (not to supplant natural leadership in each local fellowship).
- If persecution is high, each community fellowship meets separately and leaders travel between fellowships teaching and encouraging.
- If persecution is low, community fellowships may occasionally meet with others in larger meetings.

Start with Foreign Leadership

- Foreigners provide leadership in new fellowships because believers don’t know each other.
- Foreigners provide leadership for the new network “until they are ready.”
- Church leadership is for mature believers, often professional pastors who have had seminary training.
- Elders must be appointed in each new fellowship, since there are no natural leaders when believers don’t know each other.
- Professional pastors sometimes work together to connect their churches into a larger kingdom community.
- If persecution is high, believers meet in house churches and await the freedom to meet in church buildings.
- If persecution is low, believers meet in church buildings and typically seek to grow the size of their churches.

Dimension #4: Fellowship

Emphasize Community-Oriented Fellowship

- Fellowships emphasize relationships and community (rather than meetings and structure).
- Existing patterns of community are redeemed for Jesus-oriented fellowship, though believers also meet on other occasions (rather than treating Sunday morning worship as the only time “church” takes place).
- Fellowships meet in homes, or if necessary in buildings that local fellowships can build themselves (without referring to the building as “church” or describing the meeting as “going to church”). Fellowships avoid buildings built or funded by outsiders, because they aren’t reproducible across many local fellowships as the gospel spreads.
- Fellowships remain informal gatherings led by lay leaders so that the gospel can spread through their community and into others, rather than trending toward formal organization, buildings, and professional pastors. Emphasis is on spreading the gospel to the unreached, rather than organizing the reached.

Emphasize Meeting-Oriented Church

- Fellowships are built around meetings and structure.
- Church meetings are on Sundays and feel similar to foreign ways of “doing church.”
- Churches meet in buildings, often that foreigners pay for when they can’t afford to build themselves.
- Churches often begin by focusing on outreach, but organizational matters often consume much of their time (e.g., planning worship services, preparing sermons, administering programs, paying for buildings).

Dimension #5: Practices

Develop Contextualized Church Practices for Gatherings, Worship, and the Sacraments

- The Bible is the only authority for the fellowship’s forms/customs (not foreign church traditions), and any other practices that are developed are consistent with local culture.
- Fellowships develop their own practices for gatherings and worship that are normal for their culture.
- Fellowships develop Biblically-based practices for baptism and the Lord’s Supper that fit their local context and culture (rather than adopting foreign practices).
- Fellowships use contextualized terms and concepts in their own language, including a contextualized translation of the Bible.

Adopt Foreign Church Practices for Gatherings, Worship, and the Sacraments

- Churches gravitate toward foreign forms/customs because they are shown how to fellowship and worship by foreigners.
- Foreign church traditions often carry as much weight as Scripture in determining “how to do church.”
- Churches may use foreign terms and concepts, including a non-contextualized Bible translation.



Dimension #6: Doctrine

Develop Contextualized Doctrine	Accept Traditional Doctrine
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bible is the only authority for doctrine, and believers are free to develop their own contextualized perspectives on controversial doctrines. • The Holy Spirit is the primary guide “into all truth” (John 16:13), not church traditions or people. • Believers develop the habit of seeking answers in Scripture for themselves, rather than relying on seminary-trained professionals. • If believers are pursuing “insider” ethno-religious identities (e.g., as Muslim Jesus-followers), they are given the freedom by Christians to do so. • Other Christians give the “insider” believers freedom to develop their own contextualized biblical doctrines, without passing judgment. This follows the Acts 15 pattern where the Jews did not “make it difficult” or “burden” the Gentiles unnecessarily (Acts 15:19, 28), and the Romans admonition to “accept...without passing judgment on disputable matters” (Rom 14:1). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church traditions are combined with the Bible in determining appropriate doctrine. • Believers develop the habit of relying on seminary-trained professionals in addressing doctrinal questions. • Other Christians often pass judgment on what an emerging church should believe. Theology that conflicts with Judeo-Christian traditions may be considered heresy, even if it has biblical merit and even when Western denominations disagree about the same matters.

Dimension #7: Independence


Preserve Local Independence	Accept Foreign Dependence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellowships pursue approaches that are locally reproducible and sustainable, preserving long-term independence. • Fellowships avoid or minimize foreign funding (e.g., for buildings, seminary training) because it is not locally sustainable and frequently leads to foreign control. • When fellowships send cross-cultural workers to unreached peoples, they do so using minimal or no external funding (e.g., as tentmakers). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fellowships accept short-term approaches that are likely to lead to long-term dependence on outside resources. • Fellowships frequently accept foreign funding instead of pursuing locally sustainable strategies. • Cross-cultural workers are typically sent using partial or full foreign funding.

Conclusion: Comprehensive Self-Contextualization

The unifying theme to all these movement accelerators is “comprehensive self-contextualization.” It’s “comprehensive” because it goes beyond cultural contextualization to encompass identity, community and various aspects of church. It’s “self-contextualization” because foreigners are unreliable guides for what is appropriate for believers in a particular ethno-religious situation.

We have to be willing to allow local believers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the discipline of Scripture, to discern what is most appropriate for their context. We have to be willing to echo the early church leaders in Acts 15:28—“It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following...” The early Jewish leaders released the Gentile believers to comprehensively contextualize their identity, doctrines

and ways of “doing church.” The Gentile believers then penetrated existing communities throughout the Roman Empire and beyond with this contextualized gospel. The result was the most dramatic movement to faith in the history of Christianity!

May God bring about similar movements among all the peoples of the earth. May we be granted the wisdom to accelerate, rather than inhibit, these movements. 

Essential Qualities of a Multiplication Movement

BY
NEIL COLE

From *Rising Tides: Finding a Future-Proof Faith In An Age Of Exponential Change*

Neil Cole is founder of CMAResources and Starling Initiatives. As an apostolic catalyst he has ignited tens of thousands of small, rapidly multiplying, organic churches that meet in homes, campuses, prisons and places of business across the globe. He is the author of 15 books and has trained indigenous leaders in over 50 nations.

« The reason that the Church of Jesus Christ finds it so hard to stay on top of the Great Commission is that the population of the world is multiplying while the church is merely adding. Addition can never keep pace with multiplication. »

Among the items displayed in the old Museum of Science and Industry in Chicago was a checkerboard with a single grain of rice on the first square, two on the second, four on the third, then 8, 16, 32, 64, 128, and so on. Somewhere down the board, there was enough rice that it was spilling over into neighboring squares, so the display ended there. Above the demonstration was the question: *At this rate of doubling each square, how much rice would you have on the checkerboard by the time you reached the sixty-fourth square?*

To find the answer, you punched a button and the answer flashed on a screen above the board: *Enough to cover the entire subcontinent of India, fifty feet deep.* There would be 153 billion tons of rice—more than the world rice harvest for the next one thousand years. Walter Henrichsen, in his book *A Disciple is Made Not Born*, described this scene to illustrate the potent power of multiplication. He went on to conclude, “The reason that the Church of Jesus Christ finds it so hard to stay on top of the Great Commission is that the population of the world is multiplying while the Church is merely adding. Addition can never keep pace with multiplication.”¹ This is absolutely, unforgivingly true.

A paradox with our programs

I believe that the power of a multiplication movement is within every one of us who choose to follow Christ, no matter the age, gender, race or status. The Good News of Christ living within you is a power that can and should transform us, and eventually the world. It is both potent and viral.

There is, however, a paradox within much of current church methodology that must be explained. Our methods are ineffective for producing the spiritual results that only the gospel can do, but they can be potent at *preventing* spiritual fruitfulness. Our programs are powerless to produce movements, but powerful at preventing them. That is the paradox.

If the potential of a gospel movement is already present in each of us, it is not so much that we need to figure out how to make it happen, but instead to stop doing whatever is preventing it from happening.

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In other words, it isn't that we lack models, funding, strategy, leadership, training or doctrine. By investing so much confidence in those things instead of in the gospel itself, we are unintentionally choking any movement. Could it be that we are holding back a real movement while all the time searching for one? I believe this is true, and it is killing us.

« I believe it takes much more effort to prevent multiplication movements than to see them happen. It is harder to not multiply than it is to multiply. »

Our mission is to release the power of the gospel from one life to another in such a way that it multiplies and spreads like a virus from our neighborhoods to the nations. I believe it takes much more effort to prevent multiplication movements than to see them happen. It is harder to not multiply than it is to multiply. This is counterintuitive, but true nonetheless. The gospel should spread naturally and powerfully without our help—and leave in its wake transforming agents of the kingdom. I don't for a minute believe that the gospel itself is deficient, so I must simply acknowledge that our faith is misplaced.

Because addition may produce faster results in the beginning and multiplication takes time, we are often content with growth by addition. We choose the more immediate success and gratification of addition instead of waiting for the momentum that can build with multiplying. Don't be content with addition. Stop applauding the pathetic success we see in addition and start longing for the incredible power of multiplication. This would mean, in practical terms, to not look for immediate or large results in the early days. Christian leaders would need to invest in the few rather than in the multitudes, much like Jesus did. Authority would be distributed and decentralized. Growth would need to come from each disciple rather than from a single leader or strong personality. As leaders, we would need to think of ways to equip people to serve rather than simply serving people.

« Addition is accumulative and draws people in. Multiplication is distributive and sends people out. »

We cannot simply tack on multiplication strategies to our current addition practices, because each set has completely different requirements. Addition is accumulative and draws people in. Multiplication is distributive and sends people out. The objectives and means of accomplishing each are contrary to the other. You cannot do them both at the same time, any more than you can suck in water through a straw and blow bubbles in the glass at the same time. We must stop adding if we want to start multiplying. Could it be that our commitment to strategies that cannot multiply is in fact what is keeping us from seeing a movement here in the West?

Eight essential qualities of a real multiplication movement

Every one of these qualities is necessary if we are to see real multiplication. None can be violated and still result in a multiplication movement.

Most of these principles are counterintuitive but reveal how true multiplication movements work.



1 Slow and small wins the race

Multiplication by doubling begins slower than addition, but like a car rolling down a steep hill, it builds up momentum as it goes. A penny doubled, then doubled again can become millions, and then billions, and within a short time, trillions. In fact, you go from billions to trillions just as fast as you went from millions to billions. This is phenomenal.

This first principle is one of the hardest for missionaries and church-planters to grasp because it counters all their intuition and plans. The vast majority of church planters sent out long to grow large fast. Launching large is seen as the most viable way to success for the church-planter these days. Church-planting agencies are actually guilty of stopping any multiplication before it can start because, as I will explain, movements are

most vulnerable to being stopped at the very beginning. Church-planter salaries frequently are set up so that they decrease significantly each year, hoping that will provide motivation for them to launch big enough to make up the difference through the offerings collected in the new worship service. A church-planter is forced to launch larger in the beginning just to support his or her family. A gathering of people in a worship service that can contribute tithes and offerings has become the main objective for a church-planter. This takes precedence over reproducing disciples or bringing life and change to a community. Our systems are designed to prevent multiplication from the very start. These same systems also work overtime to make one leader key to the whole enterprise and limit church to what happens on Sunday morning between the hours of 10 o'clock and noon.

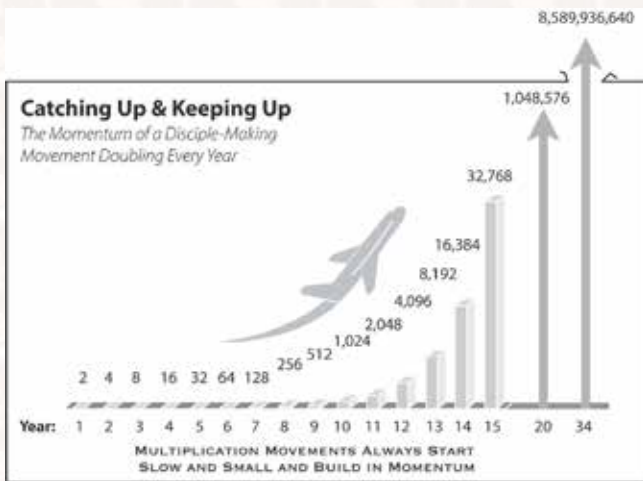


Figure 9.1

We simply must respect the long runway necessary for this movement to take off. We should allow this long, slow start to be part of the plan and expect it. Instead, when we hit the long, slow start, we lose patience, feel like we are failing and resort to addition practices. When we shift from multiplication to addition, we disrupt the natural flow of momentum that would eventually overtake all else. We may feel more successful in the early days with addition, but we forfeit the ideal results that come through multiplication.

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Patience is not just a virtue in multiplication—it's a necessity. Just as a farmer cannot quicken the growth of his crops, the church-planter who wants multiplication results must be willing to wait. "The farmer waits for the precious produce of the soil, being patient about it, until it gets the early and late rains. You too be patient; strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near." (James 5:7-8). Paul said that we will reap what we have sown *in due time*—if we do not give up. (Gal. 6:7-9)

Steven Covey asked, "Did you ever consider how ridiculous it would be to try to cram on a farm—to forget to plant in the spring, play all summer and then cram in the fall to bring in the harvest?" He went on, "The farm is a natural system. The price must be paid and the process followed. You always reap what you sow; there is no shortcut."² There are seasons. We must "be ready in season and out" and not rush the process.

The Bible is not silent on this. Do not "despise these small beginnings." (Zech. 4:10 NLT) A tiny mustard seed of faith is all that is needed to move mountains. (Matt. 17:20) A pinch of leaven is all that is needed to leaven the whole lump. (Gal. 5:9) Every person that is changed by Jesus can be a carrier of the movement, and multiplication starts there. This leads us to the next essential principle of multiplication.



Some argue that multiplication requires addition, and that is true. We cannot multiply without addition, but we certainly can add without multiplying. Multiplication in the kingdom sense of the word only works if each one that is added, adds another, then another. This highlights the big difference between addition and multiplication. The difference is seen in the multiple generations.

In multiplication, each person is equally important to the process, so there isn't an outstanding personality that can produce more of it than everyone else.³ Everyone gets to play in a multiplication movement—that is the only way to have one.

How we start will determine how we finish. Once our entire system is set up to only add, multiplying becomes impossible. In a multiplication movement, each one must reach one, again and again, for many generations. Only when everyone is empowered and each generation is being discipled and reproducing disciples can a multiplication movement happen.

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Everyone is the hero of a multiplication movement, and no single person stands out as the sole leader. Perhaps this is because in a real Jesus movement, Jesus gets the attention and affection of those involved rather than any human leader.



3 Break the Gen-4 barrier

I believe the proof of multiplication is found in the fourth generation. 2 Timothy 2:2 is the key verse about multiplying disciples in the New Testament.

And the things you [Timothy] have heard me [Paul] say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people [third generation] who will also be qualified to teach others [fourth generation and beyond]. (2 Tim. 2:2 NIV)

In this verse we see *four* generations of reproduction: Paul, Timothy, reliable people and others also. “Others also” represent more than just a fourth generation—that phrase includes every generation thereafter. Once we pass the fourth generation, the momentum kicks in and succeeding generations don't just become possible, but probable.

« A strong leader will attract other leaders, who, because they are leaders, will have followers. »

A strong leader will attract other leaders, who, because they are leaders, will have followers. In that sense, we can have three generations via addition. But to see the fourth generation, we must be doing things differently—we must be giving it all away to get through the barrier between addition and multiplication. We should hold this marker up as our scorecard of success more than the numbers that are in attendance. Once we break through the Gen-4 barrier, multiplication has a momentum of its own. It is also beyond anyone's control. What can possibly spread from one life to another past these four generations? That question leads us to the next essential principle of multiplication.



4 The gospel glue

In his seminal book *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell introduced an idea that was so descriptive and helpful that it “stuck” with me. He called it the “stickiness factor.” His terminology became sticky itself as more people began to use the phrase.⁴

The stickiness factor has to do with the memorable quality of the idea, product or method that is spread in

a movement. When the idea is so intriguing that it sticks with people enough that they *can't* forget about it—a movement can happen. This is (pardon the pun) the glue that makes a movement come together. You can sell products, ideas and even ministries with advertising and mass media promotion, but that is not a movement. To ignite a true movement, the idea *itself* must spread from one person to another—and only sticky ideas can do that.

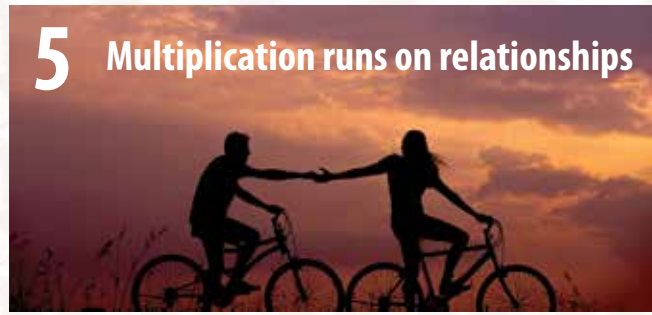
« When someone is transformed from the inside out by the indwelling presence of the Spirit of Jesus, that person cannot help but tell others. »

I believe that anything less than a Jesus movement—where lives are changed by the good news of Jesus and that transformation spreads to others—is not worthy of His name. When someone is transformed from the inside out by the indwelling presence of the Spirit of Jesus, that person cannot help but tell others. That is stickiness unlike any other.

Jesus is more than any brand of church or ministry. We would be surprised what people will do for Jesus that they will not do for our church vision statement and brand. Frankly, if the gospel doesn't drastically change lives, what is the point of church? It's better to just eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we all die. But I do believe the gospel is a spark that can ignite a fast-spreading wildfire that cannot be put out by man, demon, or even Satan himself. I believe that Jesus changes lives—He changed mine—so I will spread that news for the rest of my days.

Christ in us is the hope of glory. That is the stickiness of the gospel. This hope expressed through us in our changed lives is the contagion of the gospel. Anything else is less than a kingdom movement. This, in and of itself, is something worth giving our lives to—and giving our lives for.

The contagion, however, needs to spread from one life to another, which brings us to the next principle necessary for a multiplication movement. It doesn't matter how sticky our message is if we don't have the tracks for the movement to roll forward on and expand.



5 Multiplication runs on relationships

The gospel spreads best on the tracks of relationships. A quick survey of any Christian audience will bear this truth out. Ask how many people came to Christ anonymously, and one or two people in the crowd will raise their hands. All the others will raise their hands when asked how many came to Christ through an important relationship with a trusted friend or family member.

This is the design of God. We are made to be in relationship, and that is the context for lives to change. The term used in the Gospels to describe this is the word *oikos*, most often translated as “household” (referring to a set of familial relationships). Jesus’ instructions were to enter into a household with the gospel and stay there, letting the gospel spread from one relationship to another. Jesus instructed the apostles—and us—about extending the gospel of the kingdom with the following words:

“When you enter a house [*oikos*] first say, ‘Peace be to this house [*oikos*].’ If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them; if not, it will return to you. Stay there, [*oikos*], eating and drinking whatever they give you; for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house [*oikos*] to house [*oikos*].” (Luke 10:5-7 NIV)

« He [Jesus] wants more than simply adding converts to the membership rolls in heaven. He wants nothing less than a radically multiplying, life-changing movement of the gospel. »

Five times in the above verses, Jesus used the word *oikos* (household), emphasizing that relationships are the key to gospel extension. In fact, He goes so far as to instruct us to not greet people with our message (gospel) of peace

(*shalom*) on the way (Luke 10:4). In other words, don't evangelize void of the context of real, authentic, and vulnerable relationships. Why? He wants more than simply adding converts to the membership rolls in heaven. He wants nothing less than a radically multiplying, life-changing movement of the gospel.

I want to point out that the last command from Jesus in the passage above is in the imperative voice: “Do not move around from house to house.” Wait, uh, what? Yeah, He commands us to not go to the next household. Doesn't Jesus want the gospel to spread from house to house? Yes, He does, but He doesn't want you to do it all. He wants it to spread from one satisfied, saved and sanctified “recipient” to the next. He wants a true movement. Relationships have always been the tracks that the gospel is meant to move forward on.

For a locomotive to work, you need at least three components:

1. The locomotive
2. The tracks for it to run on
3. The energy to make it move

In a similar way, we need three parts to see a multiplication movement spread:

1. The message of the gospel (locomotive)
2. Connective relationships with hurting people who need the message (tracks)
3. Lives that have been changed by the power of the gospel (energy pushing the movement forward)

We are too often lacking one or more of these elements and so miss all chances of a multiplication movement. We may believe that the gospel is salvation in Christ by grace through faith alone—but then we act as though it is our own effort and good works that make a difference. And then we have something less than a train. If we are only moral people—“cultural Christians”—rather than true, vibrant carriers of the gospel, then we lack any energy to propel the movement. But the middle element is also frequently missing. Most Christians have good relationships with other Christians but do not have strong connections with those who need the gospel most. We have no tracks for the movement to run forward on. A train full of steam without tracks to run on is utterly useless.

« We may believe that the gospel is salvation in Christ by grace through faith alone—but then we act as though it is our own effort and good works that make a difference. »

Once someone is a Christian for longer than six months, most of their meaningful relationships are with other Christians. And their connections and friendships with people in the lost and broken world are cold and dead. If the gospel of the kingdom spreads along the lines of an *oikos* connection and their entire *oikos* is already Christian, then any potential movement is derailed.

I often say, “If we want to win this world to Christ, we're going to have to sit in the smoking section.” We simply must create avenues for the gospel to flow from relationship to relationship.

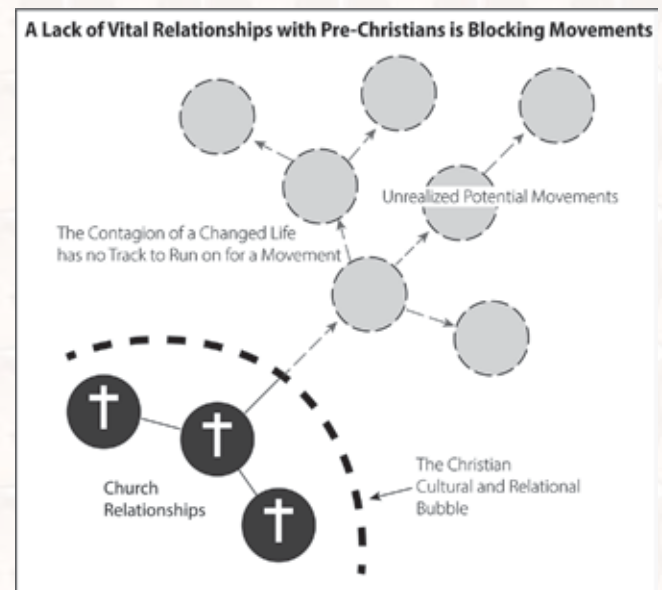


Figure 9.2

Even in the best of circumstances, this barricade to movements exists simply because a new life in Christ will be attracted to a spiritual family of like-minded people. Christ-followers, by divine design, long to be in fellowship with other followers of Christ. It is an internal and natural intent, which means that for most people, the days soonest after their rebirth may be their most productive for extending the movement from *oikos* to *oikos*. As time

passes, it is less natural and more challenging to bridge into an *oikos* that needs the gospel.

Believing that a new spiritual life is too fragile to carry the gospel contagion and withstand the temptations of the world, we intentionally erect a barrier when people come to Christ. We extract them from meaningful relational opportunities and encourage them to solely connect with other believers. This is, once again, misplaced faith that actually puts more confidence in the power of darkness than light. No matter what we say, we demonstrate by our actions that we believe our own methods and practices are better at protecting a new believer than the gospel, so we do all we can to protect them. We end up only protecting the unsuspecting world from the power of the gospel.

« The tangible realities of the gospel transformation are most noticeable to these not-yet-believers because they watch their friend change right before their eyes. »

Not only is a new follower of Christ capable of withstanding the temptations of the old life, he or she is often better suited to make a difference than an older and more mature brother or sister. Why? The fresh relationship lines connect the changing life to those who are in most need of it. The tangible realities of the gospel transformation are most noticeable to these not-yet-believers because they watch their friend change right before their eyes.

Perhaps the most embarrassing truth about this misinformed practice of withdrawing a new convert from his old relationships in an attempt to strengthen the new believer is that in doing this, we actually slow the growth and maturity of the new disciple. Nothing will accelerate a follower of Christ's spiritual development like telling others the good news. In fact, the more hostile the audience, the more the new believer will grow spiritually as they defend the gospel and practice obedience against hostility. Strength is best developed against resistance.

By "protecting" the new believer from the temptations of their old life and friends' lifestyle, we unintentionally collude with the enemy in stopping movements before they happen. We stunt the growth and development of the new disciple as well.

The core truth of the gospel is love. Love is impossible void of relationships. Relationships with those who most need such love is key to the advancement of movements.



To better understand the momentum behind multiplication movements, imagine a car without gasoline on top of a steep hill. Gasoline is not important in such a case because gravity itself can propel the vehicle. But the ground is almost flat at the top of the hill. Gravity is not tugging at the car immediately. We could simply stand in front of the two-ton car with our hand on the hood and hold it in place. Why? There is no energy behind the car—yet.

This reveals a very important principle for us: movements are most vulnerable at the start. Once the car starts rolling down the hill, its energy increases, and the car moves faster with every inch. Gravity does its work. The acceleration increases rapidly as the car rolls further down the hill. Standing in front of the car and placing your hand on the hood when it is halfway down the steep hill will not slow the car at all—and will probably leave a grease spot on the road.

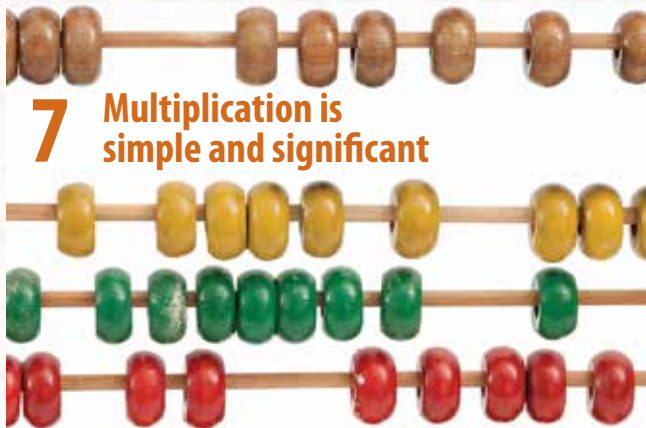


Figure 9.3

Movements are much harder to stop once the momentum kicks in, but before that, movements can be easily derailed.

As I stated firmly, the power of movements is found within every Christ-follower. Since this is true, then why do we not see more movements? This principle answers that question. The movements we could potentially see are stopped before they ever get started.

I contend that the very way we practice our faith and live in community works against multiplication movements. We create dependency on expert leaders from the very start. We frequently cut off the potential power and connection of every new Christ-follower at the very start. We make church bound to a physical address and a weekly schedule. All of these things work together to curtail movements right at the start. How we start will determine how we finish. If we want the rapid exponential growth curve at the end, we must lay the groundwork for it in the beginning.



7 Multiplication is simple and significant

As an art student in university, I learned a valuable lesson that I have integrated into all I do: Less is more. The best things are simple things.

We are often tempted to disregard simple things, believing them to be simplistic. A simple thing, however, can be very profound. In fact, I believe that simplicity can be a step *beyond* complexity. What is easy is often simple, but simple is not always easy. It takes great skill and effort to make something simple. It is easy to create something that is complex; we just keep adding “stuff” to it. To design something that is *both* simple and profound, however, is a creative challenge.

« Simple is transferable, while complex breaks down. Three of the most feared words in a parent’s vocabulary are, “Some assembly required.” »

Simple is transferable, while complex breaks down. Three of the most feared words in a parent’s vocabulary are, “Some assembly required.” Inevitably, the more complicated toys break almost immediately. One Christmas I brought home a large box for my five-year-old daughter. The box contained an entire house—a child’s toy playhouse. I opened the box with trepidation, but the first thing I noticed was that there were no small parts, nuts, or bolts—just the large heavy-duty plastic pieces. I then opened the instructions that were surprisingly simple. They were simple diagrams without words in any language.

I looked for a list of the tools I would need to construct this house, but there was no such list. This was a wonderful toy. The house was put together like a huge three-dimensional puzzle in which all the pieces snap together. Simple. That toy lasted years after our three children’s interest in it did. The designers who engineered that toy impressed me. They understood children and their parents and created something that was simple, enjoyable and virtually indestructible.

When we approach disciple-making with the desire to pass the baton on to succeeding generations, we must refine the process so that it is simple and transferable. Simplicity is the key to the fulfillment of the Great Commission in this generation. If the process is complex, it will break down early in the transfer to the next generation of disciples. The more complex the process is, the greater the giftedness needed to keep it going.

« The gospel itself is the most profound truth mankind has ever received, yet it is simple enough for a child to understand and pass on to others. »

Paul passed on to Timothy truths so profound that he would not forget them. They gripped his life and never left him. But the things Paul passed on were simple

enough that Timothy could in turn pass them on to others who could then pass them on to more. The gospel itself is the most profound truth mankind has ever received, yet it is simple enough for a child to understand and pass on to others.

Perhaps the reason that we don't see multiplication of disciples more often is that we are trying to do too much too soon in the process. We fail to grasp the fact that discipleship—following Christ in simple obedience—is a lifelong pursuit. By attempting to teach our disciples so much in the first year, we unintentionally sabotage the years to follow. We intimidate them into thinking disciple-making is too hard for common people to do and requires memorization of volumes of information. We tend to overestimate what we can do in one year and underestimate what we can do in three. A helpful idea is for us to see disciple-making and multiplying as distinct from the process of mentoring leaders. All Christians are to be disciple-makers, even those who are not yet leaders.

When we try to combine discipleship with leadership development, we eliminate a good percentage of Christians from participation in the Great Commission. In reality, disciple-making is the foundation of good mentoring and leadership development. If we allow disciple-making to happen, unencumbered by complicated training methods, more people will be able to do it, and we will increase the pool to draw from for the purpose of mentoring leaders. Once we have growing and multiplying disciples, we can build upon their emerging fruitfulness with intentional mentoring and training methods for those who demonstrate leadership potential.

What we need is a disciple-making system that is practical and profound. It must be both simple and significant. A system that is significant enough to captivate the Christ-follower's internal motivation yet simple enough that it can be easily passed on from disciple to disciple. Such a system will strengthen the Church and produce growth that is qualitative and quantitative.

We cannot easily pass on something complicated from one person to another and then another and so on. The more complex an idea is, the more people will think they are incapable of mastering it. As a result, they will not be empowered to tell others for fear of getting it wrong. A method that is complex is more likely to lose essential elements in the transfers of upcoming generations.

Simplicity, however, is not just about being able to pass something on. There is more to it. There is something powerful about the refining process that creates a simple and yet potent thing. It is not just what is excluded but about what we deem so significant that it must remain, that makes an idea potently simple. Ruthless and relentless prioritizing of an idea refines it.

This process of relentlessly prioritizing and pruning a concept solidifies it into something so important that it cannot be ignored. Seth Godin articulates this when he says, "The art of leadership is understanding what you can't compromise on."⁵ Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, best known as the author of *The Little Prince*, once quipped, "Perfection is achieved, not when there is nothing more to add, but when there is nothing left to take away."⁶

Reduction to the most essential and simple points is tricky but worth it. Albert Einstein compelled others to go as close to the edge as possible without letting the idea lose its potency. He said, "Everything must be made as simple as possible. But not simpler."

To take something valuable and reduce it to what makes it valued by eliminating anything that might compete with its significance—and leaving it there—is an incredibly important skill.

Sanity is knowing what to fight for. Insanity is fighting for anything. Cowardice is not fighting for anything. Some things are worth fighting for. Some things are even worth losing a fight over. A few things are worth dying for. I'm convinced that we are ready to lead when we are able to know the things that are worth dying for—and the things not worth fighting over. I believe we will find that after we have lived enough to know these things, more people will receive our message. Our authority increases as we realize this is what we know to be true, and all else becomes secondary.



Perhaps the most counterintuitive principle of them all is this: true multiplication is really easy. We are so accustomed to the hard work and sweat of doing ministry that we cannot believe such a thing, but it is true.

In a multiplication movement, everyone does the work, not just a few. The work is narrowed to focus on what is truly important and lesser distractions that cost so much energy are eliminated. All the effort is decentralized and shared. As each one reaches another, the work of the kingdom is spread to all and no longer rises and falls on a few leaders that do all the heavy lifting.

Jesus described the growth and work of His disciples with the following parable:


“The kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed upon the soil; and he goes to bed at night and gets up by day, and the seed sprouts and grows—how, he himself does not know. The soil produces crops by itself; first the blade, then the head, then the mature grain in the head. But when the crop permits, he immediately puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come.” (Mark 4:26-29)

When we all share the load, it becomes easy. In the parable, the farmer doesn't even know how it works. The work grows all by itself. This is something we all can do, should do, and I believe we will do. We just need to stop doing all the other stuff that takes up too much time, too much effort, and too much money—and yields but a tiny fraction of the fruit.

Multiplication is also far less expensive. When the ministry is simplified to what is most powerful and transferable to all, then it suddenly costs next to nothing monetarily. As we often say in our movement, “It doesn't cost a dime to make a disciple—it just costs your life.” Jesus paid the ultimate cost for His kingdom movement; it shouldn't cost more than what He already paid.

Is it possible that we could catch up to the world population and keep up without spending a fortune and killing ourselves in stressful effort in the process? Yes. It is very simple and completely doable. We would only have to focus on doing the very thing Jesus commanded us to do—make disciples.

If we all simply made one disciple every year that could make another the following year, we would not only catch up and keep up—we'd finish up. But to do that we would have to stop doing a lot of things that set up a few people with power, position, and steady employment.

Virtually all of our “religious” systems are designed to keep power and productivity in the hands of a few professionals. This must change. 

SIDEBAR: The Power of Doubling



Using the scale represented in Figure 9.1 on page 29, all of the background pennies on the ten pages of this article represent individual stacks of pennies—110 stacks in total, although you don't see the vast majority of pennies contained in each stack. Each stack would contain double the number of pennies contained in the stack before it. There would be a total of 6 nonillion, 490 octillion, 371 septillion, 73 sextillion, 168 quintillion, 530 quadrillion pennies, or \$64,903,710,731,685,300,000,000,000,000!

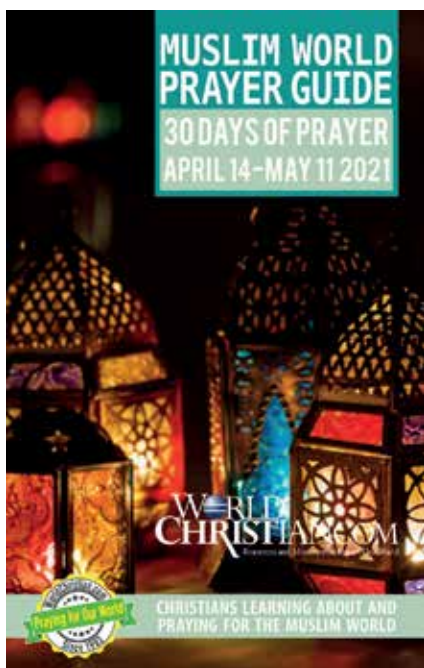
Endnotes

- 1 Walter A. Henrichsen, *Disciples Are Made—Not Born: Making Disciples Out of Christians* (Victor, 1985), p.143.
- 2 Steven R. Covey, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change*, (Simon & Schuster 1989), p. 22.
- 3 That isn't to say that a specific gift doesn't produce more multiplication than others. The apostolic gift is given to the Church to lay a foundation of multiplication. Void of this gift, the Church can only grow via addition. Why? Because the apostolic gift distributes the power to be able to reproduce disciples to everyone. An *apostolos* (Greek for apostle) is a sent one and is the foundation for launching church movements. The sent one reproduces him/herself and sends.
- 4 Chip and Dan Heath's book *Made to Stick* is influenced by Gladwell's sticky terminology. Larry Osborne's *Sticky Church, Sticky Leaders* and *Sticky Teams* all use Gladwell's terminology.
- 5 Seth Godin, *Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us* (Penguin, 2008), p. 79.
- 6 Lewis Galantieri's full translation of the first two paragraphs of the third chapter (The Tool) of *Wind, Sand and Stars*.

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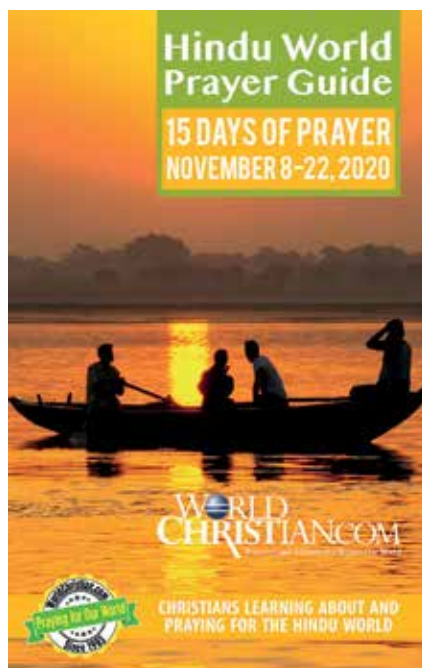
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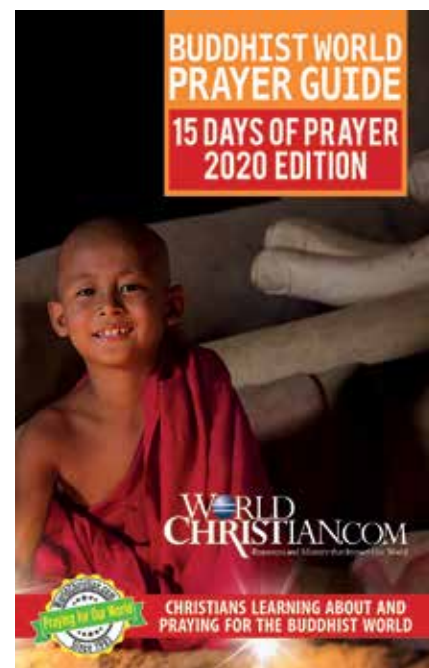
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Listening and Learning

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.

One of the things I learned by being “on the ground” among unreached peoples is the value of listening and learning. To be fair, I learned it initially by my mistakes in *not* doing so very well!

Our current climate in the USA may go down as a case study in how not to listen and how not to press into difficult issues. I refer to tough issues like the questions about re-opening while trying to balance financial and physical health, government mandates and personal freedoms; and tough issues like how to respond to the Supreme Court ruling about employment and gender and sexuality; and tough issues like race. I am deeply troubled, not just by the issues themselves, but by our current culture of “how to disagree.” To be brief, we do it poorly.

How can we change? Listen to Other Voices.

I will focus on just one area of the tough things to learn to press into.

Protests and racial tension are bringing to the forefront for some of us what is always present and real for many others. One of the excellent pieces of advice I heard relative to being good listeners and learners in this season, is to broaden our sources of news and information, and listen to other voices. I am not a podcast guy, but I *am* a music guy. Music really is my go-to source.

Awhile back I dipped into rap. There is white rap, of course, but I was listening for black voices specifically when I came across an old favorite: Tracy Chapman. I listened to her whole first album (“Tracy Chapman”).

Ok, so it was 1988, but the *words* could have been written today. For context, in 1988 Ronald Reagan was in his final year as president (for more on the Reagan years and racial issues, check out the Netflix documentary “13th”).

But back to Tracy.


Apart from her musicianship and songwriting (amazing), I was moved by the scope of issues she addresses in one album. I like playlists as much as the next person, but some artists treat their albums as a whole. Tracy Chapman’s album is worth a full listen.

She deals with racism, domestic violence, hunger, poverty, co-dependency, misogyny, longing for authentic love and more. Maybe the only major issue she did not address was the environment (which she takes up in later work).

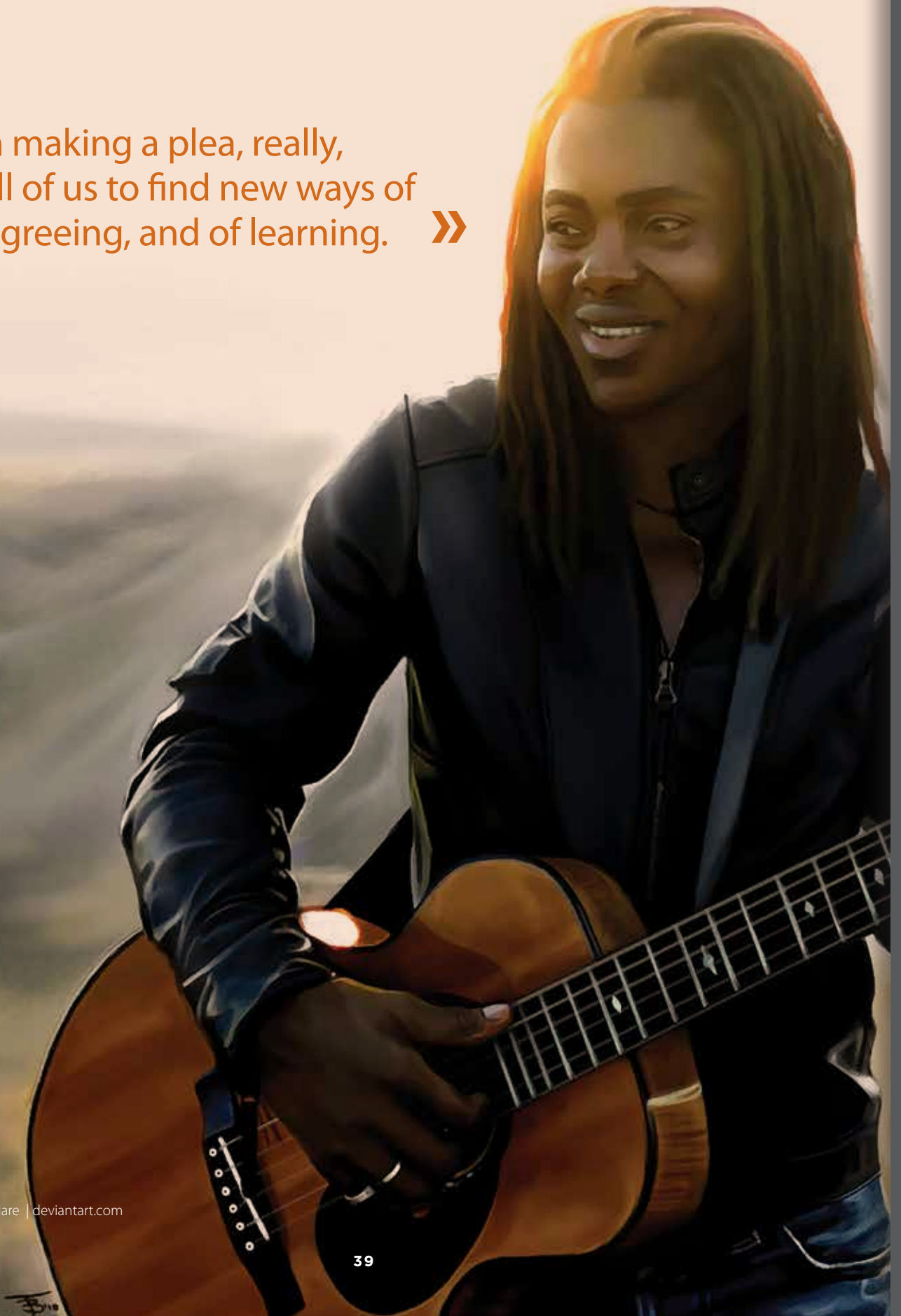
And her prophetic knife has more than one sharp side. Yes, I used the word *prophetic*, so before the maintenance light for heresy on your dashboard lights up, let me say this:

I believe prophetic words emerge from one source, but by several means. There is of course the means of direct inspiration. Then there is also the means by which a human being, standing in solidarity with other human beings, gets a glimpse of the image of God and speaks truthfully from that place. I think Tracy did that 32 years ago. But she could have sung those songs today. And in *my* heart, on a Sunday morning, she did.

The final song, which will lead to my final comment, is one called “For You”. I assume it is a love song, but I redirected it as worship. I used it for summing up all the prior 10 songs and their cries for justice and truth and reconciliation and directed them to the One I know who can cause a new kingdom to come among us...and may it be so.

Finally, my main point here is actually not just about the specific issue of racism in our country. I am making a plea, really, to all of us to find new ways of disagreeing, and of learning. That is one of the ways that, for those of us in the mission movement, we can model and display what it means to learn well from the edges of mission! 

« I am making a plea, really,
to all of us to find new ways of
disagreeing, and of learning. »



24:14 Goal

Movement engagements in every unreached people and place by 2025 (64 months)



What Movement Leaders Teach Us about Equipping

BY **CHRIS MCBRIDE**
chris@2414now.net

Chris McBride served in the Muslim world for 14 years, learning about DMM first-hand as he mentored Arabs catalyzing movements. He currently serves with the 24:14 Global Facilitation Team (<http://2414now.net>), training, coaching and operationalizing a global community to together pursue movement engagement of every people and every place globally.

For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness. Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, though we could have made demands as apostles of Christ. But we were gentle among you, like a nursing mother taking care of her own children. So, being affectionately desirous of you, we were ready to share with you not only the gospel of God but also our own selves, because you had become very dear to us. — The Apostle Paul (1 Thess. 2:5-8)

I remember sitting under Steve Smith’s insightful training as we explored Scripture pathways I had trodden many times before. Somehow I had never seen the nuggets lying there in plain view. Jesus’ commissioning of 70 disciples to go places “He himself was about to go” captured my imagination as he challenged them to “pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.” (Luke 10:1-2) Steve asked us to imagine the scenario: disciples walking down dusty roads praying for more laborers for the harvest field. Then he asked us the pointed question, “If Jesus expected their prayers to be answered, where did He expect those laborers to come from?”

The golden answer burst into my mind. Of course! The laborers for the harvest field are in the harvest! If I would start treating them like God’s chosen and approved

workmen instead of those to be “harvested,” I would see a different result than I had been seeing.

« Over the last 25 years, we have seen the emergence of Church Planting Movements impacting areas of the planet we once thought impenetrable to missionary efforts. »

Over the last 25 years, we have seen the emergence of Church Planting Movements impacting areas of the planet we once thought impenetrable to missionary efforts. Many of these growing networks of disciples have emerged from a faithful outsider befriending, mentoring and empowering a passionate insider to reach his or her own people. The shift from a hierarchical view of missionary efforts to that of a humble trainer and coach has not been easy for many Westerners, but it has borne great fruit.

At a recent meeting exploring new models of missionary training, several national Disciple Making Movement

leaders spoke about the posture of outsiders as they enter new unreached fields. Their insights can apply to any outsider entering a new harvest field. They can help us understand our role and provide a gentle corrective lens to enable us to see the gold in front of us.

I will summarize their insights in 10 recommendations:



Be an Example.

Outsiders need “street credibility.” Making disciples and planting churches involves trials and suffering. These things create a depth in the outsider that insiders notice and feel. They appreciate the patience and humility that come with walking those paths. Modeling involves not just learning theology or tools. It’s a lifestyle of prayer, labor, perseverance, releasing responsibility and trusting God.

« Modeling involves not just learning theology or tools. It’s a lifestyle of prayer, labor, perseverance, releasing responsibility, and trusting God. »



Be Relational.

Locals can feel a difference when an outsider comes with a zeal for movement methods that outweighs love for people. Relationship precedes strategy. An overly transactional desire to get the job done grates on people in a relational culture. Movement leaders in our meetings marveled at how much Western outsiders talked about “boundaries” without considering the needs and perspectives of the local people they were holding at arm’s length. Additionally, local believers are not especially impressed by outsiders’ great tools and methods. They need to know, love and respect the person with whom they partner. Working to become like family may feel slow, but it paves the best path to fruitfulness.



Be Humble.

The world operates on a hierarchical framework. As a contrast, Jesus told us “not so among you.” (Mark 10:43) Don’t come in as a boss, but treat the insider leader as a friend. Empower them and release control (something many of us find

difficult!). Knowing that control tends to kill movements, work to establish “a round table, not a rectangular one.” Listening well to others shows respect, love and care. Experienced ministers feel honored when you take the time to understand their world, and work *with* them and through them (not *for* them, or them for you).



Be a Culture Learner.

Local believers often puzzle over how culturally unaware outsiders are as they bring the gospel message to a new harvest field. We need to recognize that when we arrive as an outsider we bring with us the fragrance of our home culture. This affects how we communicate, how we correct, the alliances we create, the biases we live with and the ways we get things done. Even the tools we bring in carry cultural baggage. Commit to learn the language and operate through the local culture, discovering with local people how to bring kingdom light that makes us all more like Jesus.

« We need to recognize that when we arrive as an outsider we bring with us the fragrance of our home culture. »



Be Patient.

Movement leaders recounted how outsiders often arrive with their tools and methods and say: “I know this will work here because it has worked somewhere else.” A patient, relational approach allows for a period of settling in, where outsiders and insiders learn from one another under the direction of the Holy Spirit and trust can blossom. Patience on the part of the outsider demonstrates humility and a recognition that the cultural insider has much that they can contribute to help enculturate the principles behind fruitful tools.



Be a Prayer Leader.

Outsiders need to lead out in prayer, though they may find that local people often do it better than they do. Outsiders do, however, have the ability to catalyze outside prayer networks in strategic ways that can change realities on the ground. Connecting local believers with these prayer networks allows them access to a resource that may be hard for them to find without the connection through an outsider.



Be a Vision Caster and Catalyzer of Insiders.

Movement leaders tell stories of outsiders who cast a vision for them to be the “laborers in the harvest” and dreamed with them about what is possible. Outsiders can create a broad base of relationships and help various networks unify. We also heard movement leaders share how their connection with outsiders exposed them to a new vision to reach unreached people groups and connect to the 24:14 Vision for their region. Helping insiders connect to appropriate outside networks can also implant vision and catalyze new laborers.



Be a Mentor and Coach.

Outsiders can play an important role as a life-on-life mentor. But movement leaders caution that transactional coaching strategies fall flat in relational cultures. What local leaders crave from their outside partners is time spent together exploring problems, with questions and cultural respect.

« What local leaders crave from their outside partners is time spent together exploring problems, with questions and cultural respect. »



Be Dependent on the Word.

Outsiders having a long history with God can help provide theological frameworks and dependency on God’s leadership through his word. A commitment to seek direction together from God and his word, and obey what it says, *no matter what*, models a reproducible life in God.



Be a Connector.

An outsider will naturally be more trusted by other outsiders who have resources. An outside catalyst who has developed relationships with inside leaders can be a bridge, connecting them with Bibles, tools, or help with trainings that can help start new works. Outside catalysts can help with data gathering and reporting that helps the movement relate to other movements and networks.

When we see what cross-cultural workers need in order to succeed, we begin to understand the type of laborer

who can really serve effectively. So as we raise up next-generation movement catalysts, what should we learn? How can we improve our training processes to prepare workers for the harvest fields?

« When we see what cross-cultural workers need in order to succeed, we begin to understand the type of laborer who can really serve effectively. »

We need to heed the advice movement leaders have for us. One message most often repeated is that outside catalysts need to learn to walk in the Holy Spirit, not just implement tools. Prayerful, humble leadership characterizes a catalyst who can change lives. *Training should focus on a dependent life in God.*

Movement leaders would like to welcome outsiders who have already reproduced their life in others who do likewise. Real experience (not just theory) in generational, reproducing disciple-making allows catalysts to have credibility and mentor local leaders in reproducing their lives in others. Demonstrated skills in training and empowering others are crucial for reproduction. A catalyst cannot model just doing the work themselves. *Training should focus on demonstrated competence instead of simply finishing a training course.*

Training cross-cultural workers in relational skills and cultural humility can greatly accelerate the formation of outsider-insider partnerships. *Learning cultural humility helps catalysts see cultural blind spots that could cause problems.* These learned skills come with time and practice, but awareness of the problem can help.

« Prayerful, humble leadership characterizes a catalyst who can change lives. »

Movement leaders appreciate good tools. They caution us, however, that tools often fail if they have not been culturally adapted. Understanding the *principles* of a movement tool is actually more important than the tool itself. The ability to adapt or recreate toolsets for new environments plays a vital role in reproducing kingdom movements. Thus, *home-culture training needs to be more principle-centered and less tool-centered.* Trainees also need to realize the essential role of humble adaptation for cross-cultural success.

In addition to principle-centered tools, new movement catalysts should be equipped with a breadth of Scripture knowledge that can point insiders to God's direction on any given issue. Outsiders with wide Scripture knowledge and an ability to act as a "Bible search engine" can help local leaders discover more of the Scripture themselves and develop obedience to God, inserting reproducing DNA into a new movement without creating dependency.

Movement leaders advise outsiders to come with a long-term plan that allows for patiently building relationships and learning language and culture. Don't come with the expectation that massive reproduction of churches will happen immediately. *Come with a plan to stay.*

« In addition to principle-centered tools, new movement catalysts should be equipped with a breadth of Scripture knowledge that can point insiders to God's direction on any given issue. »

Outsiders need training in wise use of money and the potential problems outside funds can introduce.¹ While money can kill movements, not all helping hurts. Catalysts need to be cautioned in how to work with the existing Christian community on the ground so they don't poach workers or use money for control.

It would help for outsiders to have training in wise reporting practices that are culturally sensitive, technologically relevant, and don't put undue burdens on the local leaders. Movement leaders understand that being connected to the wider global Christian community requires transparency in reporting God's work and accountability for resources they receive from outside.

As we explore new models of training, understanding the best path to seeing God's family expand cross-culturally requires *taking a hard look at how we prepare people to become outside missional catalysts*. Listening to movement leaders and understanding their experience with outside catalysts can help us frame new training models. We can learn from the successes and failures of those who have gone before. MF

¹ Two helpful resources on this topic are *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty Without Hurting the Poor ... and Yourself* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert (Moody Publishers, 2014) and *African Friends and Money Matters, Second Edition*, by David E. Maranz (SIL International, 2016).





How Disciple-Makers Relate to Ever-Present Global Disruptions

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.

The other day I was on a Zoom call with a group of Frontier Mission trainers. They were there from around the globe; Africans, Asians, Europeans, Americans and more. We prayed together, seeking God, and listening to His voice. We wanted to hear what He would say to us as Frontier Mission trainers at this time. I'm grateful to serve in a movement that places a high value on hearing God's voice individually and corporately.

We shared Scripture. Then, we took the time to practice listening prayer. After a period of waiting, one of our trainers said, "I feel that the fires in Australia and the disruption of COVID-19 are just the beginning. We will experience many more disruptions. We need to be ready. We can't let these stop us from obeying God's mandate to make disciples."

« I'm grateful to serve in a movement that places a high value on hearing God's voice individually and corporately. »

I didn't particularly like hearing this. Be ready for more disruptions? Hmmm. That didn't sound good! What did that mean for me as a mission leader? How was I to be ready? Was there a way to *get ready* for more disruption and *also get ready* to bring in the harvest?

A few days after that meeting, in my home city of Minneapolis, violence erupted in our streets. Another unexpected disruption.

Only days before, cyclones hit South Asia, my home for many years, along with an unusual attack of locusts. Disruption on top of disruption.

« These are not easy times to live and minister in. When disruption hits, it is hard to keep our heads above water, our eyes fixed on Jesus. »

These are not easy times to live and minister in. When disruption hits, it is hard to keep our heads above water and our eyes fixed on Jesus. The demand on ministers of the gospel has dramatically increased. Needy people knock on our doors and ring our phones. At times, we feel overwhelmed. While helping others, we experience a rollercoaster of our own emotions.

I take courage in knowing that while disruptions surprise me, they are not a surprise to God. He was not caught off guard by the coronavirus, nor anything else happening in the world nor my personal life. As I stay connected to Him, as I abide, He will show me how to live a fruitful life as a disciple-maker amid a continual disturbance of what I perceive as normal life.

When Disruption Gets Personal

Beyond the disruptions of the world, as we serve, there are personal challenges. For missionaries supported by churches and individuals, this may mean loss of income. Economies are struggling and joblessness is rising worldwide. When your financial support plummets, it hits home in a very tangible way.

Ten days after my colleague said she felt more disruptions were coming, she was diagnosed with cancer. That's personal. This past month I've faced personal challenges as well. After hurting my back, I slipped and fell, twisting my leg and ankle beneath me. I also had tooth problems, and my assistant quit suddenly, during an ever-increasing workload as we opened enrollment for my online course: *Getting Started in Disciple Making Movements: Even if You Are Busy, Can't Speak the Language Well and Have No Money*.

« External disruptions are hard. Personal disruption and challenge even more so. Are these events spiritual attacks, the pruning process of God? »

External disruptions are hard. Personal disruption and challenge even more so. Are these events spiritual attacks, the pruning process of God?

I am not a last days scholar or eschatologist. I don't consider myself qualified to speak on those matters. As a DMM practitioner, I like to keep things simple. Though I enjoy in-depth Bible study, most of the time I take Scripture at face value.

I have no clear idea about whether these are the last days. I do know that Scripture says in the last days we will experience increased times of difficulty. The Bible also speaks of a great harvest in the end times. The two go together. This understanding must inform how we respond, rather than reacting or ignoring the many disturbances that come our way.

But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. (2 Tim 3:1 ESV)

Three ways disciple-makers can relate to life's disruptions:

1 We can react in fear.

Fear is pervasive and contagious. Conspiracy theories, "fake news" and rumors feed our fearful hearts and minds. Anxiety is a very human reaction. Like pain, fear can be a good thing. It protects us when danger lurks. Abiding or chronic fear, however, is never from God. Getting stuck in fear-mode is not a reaction disciples of Jesus can afford to give in to.

Fear paralyzes. It causes us to react in selfishness. We hoard food and toilet paper instead of being generous with those in need. We focus on the bad things that could happen, rather than seeing what God is doing around us.

The Psalmist said, "When my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I." (Ps. 61:2) When we feel fearful, we must turn to Him, our solid rock. Resist fear and it will flee from you. Give in to it, feed it, and it will grow.

As disciple-makers, a fear reaction says, "I can't do anything until this is over. When the lockdown lifts, I'll be able to disciple people and start new groups or churches again. When my health is better, I'll share Jesus with my neighbors. After travel restrictions lift, I'll start going to train disciples again."

The problem with that position is we don't know how long this disruption will last. Nor do we know what new disruption might follow. Courageous action is the opposite of fear. It's what this season of difficulty asks of disciple-makers.

« The problem with that position is we don't know how long this disruption will last. Nor do we know what new disruption might follow. Courageous action is the opposite of fear. »

2. We can ignore disruptions, pretending they don't exist.



Sometimes it is easier to stick your proverbial head in the sand. We don't know how to respond, so we pretend nothing has changed. We ignore the disruption and hope in time it will disappear. In a few months, things will go back to normal, we think. Hunker down and stay safe, and in a while, things will be better.

This response is also not from God. Jesus told us to discern the times we are in. In Matthew 24, Jesus told His disciples that they could expect difficulties. Though it is not for us to know “the times or dates the Father has set by His own authority” (Acts 1:7), we cannot ignore world events. We must be watchful and aware of what is happening.

« Jesus told us to discern the times we are in. In Matthew 24, Jesus told His disciples that they could expect difficulties. »

If we ignore disruptions, we miss the great opportunities they afford us for disciple-making. There is a great spiritual openness in the world today. People are open to having spiritual conversations like never before. Governments, busy fighting Covid-19, are less focused on persecuting Christians. Dramatic changes have happened as millions have learned to access resources online.

Will we ignore this openness? This great opportunity to reach lost people and multiply disciples, if it requires us to change how we function?

Our models of what a movement looks like must shift to accommodate what is happening. Movements will cross borders differently. How we find Persons of Peace may change. Our primary method of going to these people may be through social media rather than knocking on doors or chatting in a shopping mall. House churches may predominantly meet on Zoom and through WhatsApp groups.

As I write that I cringe. I don't want that! None of us do. But if that is what it takes to go and make disciples in this time, are we willing to shift and adjust our preferences?

We don't like to think about this. It was not in our strategic plan for multiplication.

But what if all that happened is preparing us for a time when brick and mortar church buildings can no longer function due to persecution? Are we learning? Pivoting? Experimenting? Or simply wishing the disruption would end and we could go back to the way it was?

3. We can respond in faith.

As much as fear is contagious, faith and hope are even more so. When we abide in Christ and meditate on His Word, our hearts are filled with fresh confidence in God's promises. These are incredible times to be alive and work as disciple-makers. Spiritual hunger is growing virally. With everything

shaken, people are looking for a God who loves them and can provide comfort, hope and life.

By demonstrating genuine faith in these uncertain times, we reflect His glory. We shine as bright lights...and so we must!

Jesus said, “The harvest is ripe, the workers are few.” That has never been truer than it is today! “Look to the fields, they are white unto harvest,” said the Master. We must go in response to His call and the ripeness of the harvest fields. Whether that means going online, or to our neighbor while standing six feet apart or going through a phone call...we must go! Persons of Peace wait to be found. Rise to the challenge of these times and face them head on, your hand in His.

« Whether that means going online, or to our neighbor while standing six feet apart or going through a phone call...we must go! »

Let’s allow this time of disruption to strip us of old habits of disciple-making and church. Many things we did previously weren’t in line with New Testament practices anyway! Allow difficulties to prune both your ministry and your life. New growth and fruitfulness will result.

What does it mean to respond in faith? It means we prayerfully and actively go after the new wine and new wineskins Jesus is releasing. We embrace and step into them wholeheartedly. We allow God to use trials to bring lasting change in our lives as well as our ways of operating as disciple-makers.



The World Will Change

When in high school, I read the book *1984* by George Orwell. It was my junior year (class 11). I would graduate the next year in 1985. How strange to read a book written in 1949, forty years earlier, and see how closely it had predicted what our world was like. On many things, it was right on.

One thing Orwell got right was that the world was changing. Life was not going to stay the same. In that sense, he spoke prophetically.

What will the world be like in forty years? It would be foolish of me to venture a prediction. What I can say with confidence, is that it will not be the same as it is today. The world is changing and we must change with it.

A Future Hope

The future I hope for is one where the movements numbered across the globe have grown beyond our wildest dreams. Seeing organic movements to Christ has become normal. The majority of Christians have shifted from being only church members to embracing a lifestyle of disciple-making, sacrifice, love and obedience.

In that future, the Church looks different than it does today. It is far more similar to what we saw in the New Testament. Signs and wonders are common, and those that are daily being saved in every corner of the globe have become impossible to track. With this growth has come persecution and great suffering, but the body of Christ is stronger and more united than ever before. People from every tribe and tongue and nation gather to worship and love the one who died and rose again. Usually not in big gatherings— but under trees, in homes, in coffee shops, in chat rooms on the internet, on Zoom and WhatsApp, in hospital waiting rooms, in airports and train stations— they gather to worship, encourage and spur one another on to reach and serve the lost.

Let the disruptions come if that is what it takes to move us into a season of greater harvest, renewal, and disciple-making. Amid the chaos of today and tomorrow, we say, “Come, Lord Jesus, come. Let your kingdom come in me, my city, my region and among the unreached. Help me respond in faith to what You are doing. Let me cooperate with You and be an obedient disciple who follows You into the unknown future ahead. For Your glory. Amen.”





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Practicing Hope

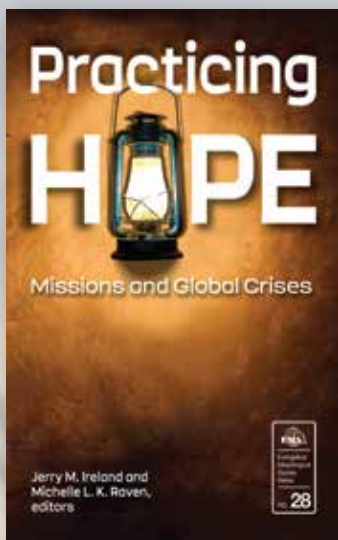
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Jerry M. Ireland, and
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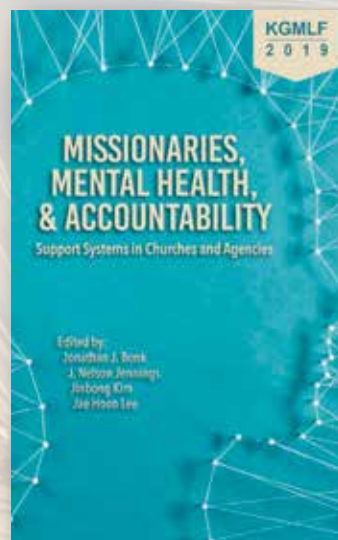
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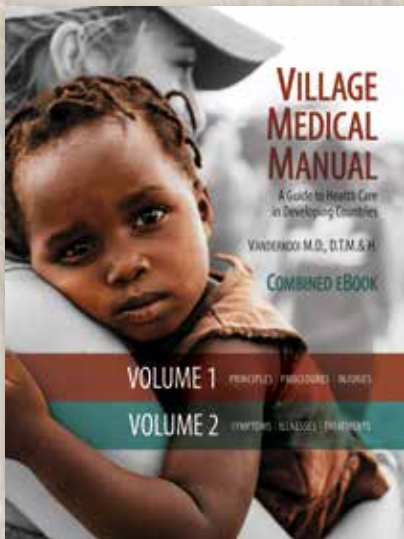
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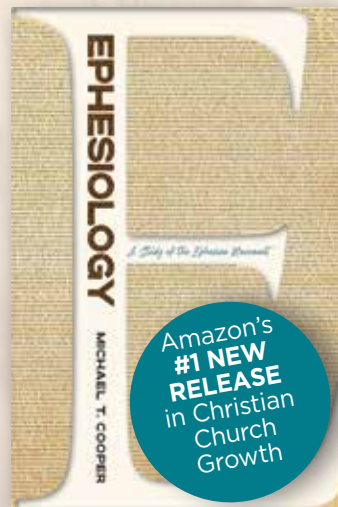
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Steve Smith (Author)

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 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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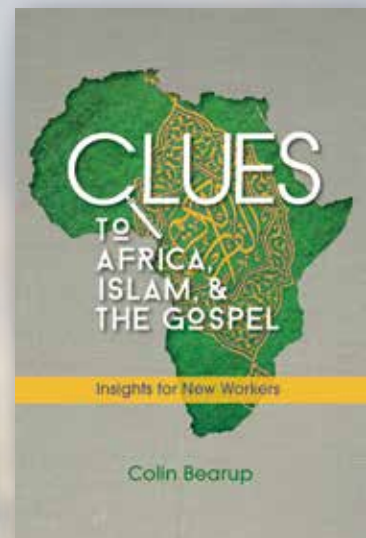
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Collin Bearup (Author)

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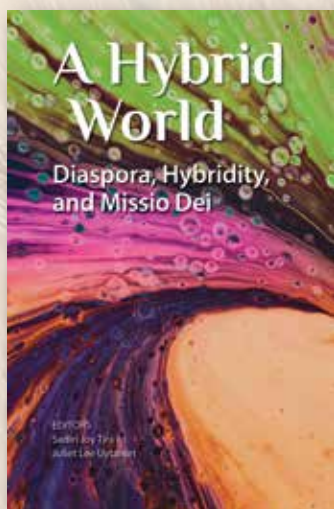
Diaspora, Hybridity, and Missio Dei

Sadiri Joy Tira and Juliet Lee Uytanlet (Editors)

The reality that people are on the move provides local Christ-followers with the challenge and opportunity of navigating both the global diaspora and mixed ethnicities.

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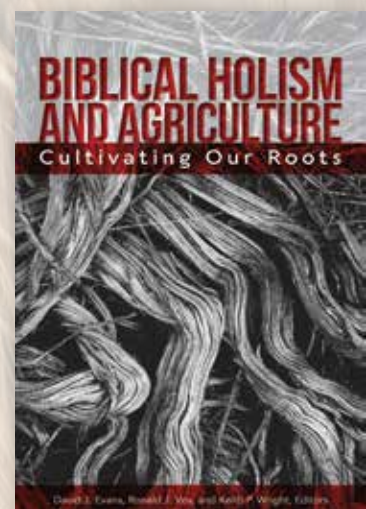
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Rockets and Murder

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.

The contrasts couldn't be starker.

In May 2020 we saw the best and worst of humanity here in the U.S. We launched men into space. We saw a man die needlessly at the hands of those appointed to “serve and protect.” We have seen both before, but both were also different this time.

The *rocket* which propelled two astronauts to the International Space Station was produced by a private company (with government funding) that used new technology, redesigned from the ground up, including a booster rocket that returns to earth to be reused.

Amazing to watch!

The *murder* of a black man by a white police officer has created a broader outcry from police officials around the country. One police chief said to her department, “If you believe that the treatment of the officer in that video is acceptable, turn in your badge.” I expect that the vast majority of police officers were horrified by what they saw also. They deeply desire to serve with honor and deserve our support to receive better training and different administrative systems so these incidents are rarer every day.

A horror to see!

What happened to George Floyd was *painful* to watch. We know it happens globally—out of the views of cameras. Yes, it *is* systemic in several ways. At the core: when people take power and authority on their own terms, not God's way, it

will end badly. That is clear throughout the Bible, from Eve and Adam down to us today.

We can't solve these kinds of problems by only “teaching our kids differently.” We know that things like this will happen again. It seems that while we can advance technology and use it to literally get off the earth, we can't change peoples' hearts.

So, beyond the need for spiritual transformation, what do we do? I have all kinds of ideas, backed by experts (or so I think). But instead, below are a few of my reflections that might give a bit of hope and perspective.

God-Ordained Authority

When you look at human-on-human evil in the world, much of it is caused (or not prevented) by police or military. Using their official capacity, they either 1) abuse those under their control, or, 2) don't resist evil done by others.

This is a crucial area of God's truth we must get right and teach. The Scriptures from Daniel to Romans 14 (among others) teach us that *God puts authorities in place*—Christian or not, from the top leader to, in this case, the police and military. They wield God's authority when they do their job. With this comes a *serious* responsibility and accountability *to God*—even if they don't believe He exists, someday they will give an account of what they have done!

Training to De-escalate


You do what you have been trained to do. A former police officer and detective whom I know served in

a major city on the east coast. When they were training in firearms, they were told to hold their shells as they fired and dispose of them when they are done. After all, the logic went: keep the firing range clean, make it quicker and easier to reset for the next group. The only problem is that when the officers finished training and were in real-life situations using their weapons, they did as they were taught. As a result, in those tense and emotion-filled situations where they were fired upon, officers were getting injured or worse!

So, they had to re-train them. Everyone went back to the firing range and were told “let shell casings fall to the ground.”

So what kinds of re-training are needed? Here is one idea:

A family we know has a son diagnosed with major emotional issues and it is a painful story. When they were living in the U.K, their son ran off in the middle of the night. When they called the local police and the “bobby” (or officer) arrived, he did not even *have* a gun. But he had skills and was trained in de-escalating situations. That night, he helped to find and calm down their son and bring the situation under control without any shouting or shooting.

It got me to thinking: do I need retraining for how I think and act related to those different from me? We all have God-given authority through the Spirit. How do we use it? 

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