



# Lausanne World Pulse

Providing Evangelism & Missions News, Information and Analysis

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**A free, monthly online publication that provides you with evangelism and mission news and information.**

December 2009

## **PUBLISHER'S MEMO**

### **2010-2020: This Could Be the Start of Something Big**

By Lon Allison

**This week I had a group of graduate students doing research in our [Billy Graham Center Archives](#).** One student, Sean, an area director for [Young Life](#) in Arizona, wanted to look at the “roots” of his organization. He found some letters written by the founder of Young Life, Jim Rayburn. Sean nearly wept as he discovered in Rayburn’s script from the early 1940s the same passion that burns in Sean today to reach kids who don’t know Christ. He also discovered that in 1943 a young Jim Rayburn flew to Chicago from Texas to speak at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, USA. He was picked up at the airport by a student named Billy Graham. And so it goes.

We know that Jim Rayburn asked Dawson Trotman, founder of [The Navigators](#), to help figure out a way to disciple teens coming to faith. We know that Graham asked Trotman for the same help in his early crusade days. Graham then heard of some great property in Colorado in which to build a conference center. After praying over the idea, he instead asked Trotman if his little organization couldn’t make better use of it. Thus you have the linking of Young Life, the [Billy Graham Evangelistic Organization](#), and The Navigators.

But more, we have a thread of a story of young, trusting evangelism leaders who, through relationships, aided each other in doing more for God’s kingdom than any could’ve imagined. This is just one example. David Howard, one of that era’s finest leaders, has written about that time as a “golden age” of mission and evangelism. The participants were legion. To be sure, the younger ones had older mentors to guide them. There was Dr. V. Raymond Edman, president of Wheaton College; Torrey Johnson and Evan Hedley of [Youth for Christ](#); Henrietta Mears of Hollywood Presbyterian and Forest Home; and many more. My point is that a group of young and not-so-young men and women, sold out for God, believed the Father wanted to do something significant in their era. And he did.

### **Seventy Years Later Evangelism Fire Stills Burns Deeply**

Fast forward nearly seventy years. Recently, I was on a conference call with over twenty leaders of some of the finest Christ-honoring and serving organizations in America and the world. They represented churches, colleges, para-organizations, and the marketplace. Most of us were quite a bit older than Rayburn, Graham, and Trotman in the 1940s—although several did fit the younger leader category with wonderful gifts and godliness. Together, we were offering our counsel and the resources of our organizations to kingdom causes larger than any of our organizations.

Here's what is happening. We are praying for God to do something grand in his world in the next decade of 2010-2020. We are praying and believing together for the evangelization of the world in our generation. In this regard, we follow in the footsteps of the "golden age of the 1940s" and further back to the turn of the twentieth century and the student volunteer movement with names like John Mott and Robert Spears.

But now, an added dimension is at hand. Geography is eliminated. Affordable and high-speed travel and digital communication mean that our group of twenty in the U.S. can join with Christian leaders around the world to pray and dream together for the evangelization of the world. New names join the calls now, names like Ramez from Egypt, Esme from South Africa, Bishop Yua from Malaysia, and Joy from the Philippines. There is Sunil from India and Roberto from Brazil, and on and on it goes. It is God's global Church and it is beautiful. It is especially beautiful when it comes together to reach more than four billion souls who do not yet have the saving life of Jesus in them.

In 2010 much of the global evangelical Church will gather under the banner of **Lausanne**. The vision is to be "a worldwide movement that mobilizes evangelical leaders to collaborate for world evangelization." National meetings will take place in many countries. In the U.S., five hundred or more will gather in Dallas in January 2010 to meet, pray, and seek collaboration. In October 2010, four thousand participants from nearly two hundred nations will gather in Cape Town, South Africa, for a **Global Congress**. Many thousands more will be meeting during the same days in classrooms, churches, living rooms, and in front of computer screens as content from Cape Town is broadcast throughout the world. And that is but the beginning. 2010 is the launch, but only the launch. We are praying and devoting ourselves to the world in this decade. Please pray, give, and devote yourself to reaching your neighborhood, village, and town. By faith, and with hope, we dare to believe that this could be the start of something big.

**Dr. Lon Allison** is executive director of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois, USA. He also serves as director for the Institute for Strategic Evangelism at Wheaton College. He is co-publisher of *Lausanne World Pulse*.

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## NEWS BRIEFS

### December News from around the World

**AFRICA: Development Associates International Brings MA Program to French-Speaking Africa**  
Since 2004, **Development Associates International's** (DAI) Master of Arts in Organizational Leadership program has grown to more than five hundred students from twenty-two countries. In addition to its English curriculum, DAI also offers the MA program to French-speaking students. With groups meeting in four countries, more than two hundred students travel from around French-speaking Africa to take part in the program. Both lay people and clergy use the educational experience to redefine their ministry. Although distance learning has challenges, many leaders have shown great interest in continuing their education through DAI's part-time educational system, which partners with local academic institutions such as the Katanga Methodist University in Mulungwishi Town, Congo, and Faculte de Theologie Evangelique de Bangui in Central African Republic. The MA program's approach allows participants to learn without having to give up their jobs. (**Development Associates International**)

### **AROUND THE WORLD: Better Connection and Collaboration through Godreports**

**ASSIST News Service** veteran senior writer Mark Ellis has started a website that allows missionaries to share their own stories. On [www.Godreports.com](http://www.Godreports.com), missionaries and ministry organizations can create their own web pages—their "Godreports," where they can share their vision, passion, prayer requests,

needs, and updates. They can link photos, video, and worship music to their page. "They can also raise funds for vital mission projects," Ellis notes. Responding to spiritual and physical needs is an important goal of the website. "Suppose a missionary needs Bibles, food, or medical supplies to meet an urgent need and he's unaware that someone is working only fifty miles away who could help with that need," Ellis says. "I'm hopeful Godreports will help build greater collaboration on the mission field....From the local church to the highest levels of the missions' movement, there is a lack of networking and communication." ([Assist News Service](#))

### **AROUND THE WORLD: Creating Music from the Heart**

Begun in 2008, *Resonance*, a ministry of [WEC International](#), is creating music in the "heart languages" of people around the world. Its vision is for all peoples to express their heart's devotion to God with music they cherish, rather than music that feels foreign to them. This ministry does not simply translate worship songs from English to a local language, but works to make music in the style and culture of local believers. WEC workers learn musical instruments such as the African harp-lyre or the Asian long-necked lute. Instruments such as these are often an emblem of cultural identity and tradition. ([WEC International](#))

### **AROUND THE WORLD: Heart Language Translations Are Essential**

[Faith Comes By Hearing](#) (FCBH) is using technology to bring God's word to the poorest regions of the earth, where misuse of scripture can result from the lack of understandable translations. International director Morgan Jackson said recently, "Half of the world's people are illiterate and too poor to afford a Bible." Jackson added that another problem is misuse of scripture, sometimes accidental and sometimes intentional. Citing witchcraft and adultery, Jackson said, "People will hear and memorize one story or passage and build whole doctrines (or even denominations) on it, and leaders can mislead the people." Bringing scripture to people in their heart language is important in combating this problem. FCBH is therefore using the Proclaimer, a self-powered audio player that can be used in the most remote and rugged locations. The device has an embedded microchip pre-loaded with the Audio Drama New Testament in the heart languages of the world. Indigenous believers take these life-changing Audio Bibles into their villages and towns and start listening groups. ([Mission Network News](#))

### **ERITREA: Authorities Arrest More Christians**

According to [Open Doors USA](#), in October 2009 Eritrean security forces raided the home of the founding elder of the Full Gospel Church in Asmara, Pastor Tewelde Hailom. Three people were arrested during the raid. Pastor Hailom was not arrested, apparently because of his frail health due to an ulcer. He was, however, placed under house arrest with guards positioned outside his home. Later, seven more people from this congregation were taken in. The government's arrest and detention without trial of its citizens continues amidst reports of hunger and desperation in the country. It is estimated more than 2,800 Christians remain behind bars for their persistence to worship outside of the state-sanctioned Orthodox, Lutheran, and Catholic churches. At least ten believers have died as a result of the harsh treatment and medical neglect they endure while being incarcerated. ([Mission Network News](#))

### **INDIA: Warli Ministries Plants New House Group**

Warli Ministries reported that in June 2009 a new house group was planted in a remote village in the Khonpada mountains, about 150 miles north of Mumbai. The indigenous church is growing in area villages, although new believers need training and a facility in which to receive training. Pastor Pratap Aghamkar and others on his team who meet with people in Khonpada must travel for more than eight hours to reach them. The organization also reported that its children's home ministry is in need of larger facilities as it continues to get requests from hundreds of children in need. Information can be obtained by email at [warlilife@hotmail.com](mailto:warlilife@hotmail.com).

### **INDIA: Gospel for Asia Continues Work in Flooded West Bengal**

Less than four months after Cyclone Aila pounded the Bay of Bengal, West Bengal, India, was again deluged in early September 2009. The latest round of flooding was caused by heavy rainfall as well as a release of water from local reservoirs. Almost two million people in five districts of West Bengal have been affected by the floods. It is estimated that more than thirty-seven thousand people have been rendered homeless, and at least twenty-three people have died. [Gospel for Asia](#) (GFA) missionaries, mobilized since Aila struck in May 2009, are working in the hardest-hit areas sharing relief supplies and the love of Jesus. Even several days after the flooding started, many villagers were still stranded on rooftops waiting for relief. At least twenty-four believers lost their homes in the flood and seventy took temporary refuge in the rented home of Indrani Sarin and Priya Verma, two GFA-supported missionaries doing their internship. ([Assist News Service](#))

### **NEPAL: GLOMOS Program Uses Multiplication Effort**

Today in Nepal, more than one million people claim Christ as their Savior, and the number of churches is growing. [Global Action](#) (GA) is helping facilitate that growth with their Global Module Studies program (GLOMOS). According to GA founder Lars Dunberg, GLOMOS trains pastors who hold some other occupation and can't come for a whole week or a whole month. Instead, they train for three days a month for ten months. This year, GLOMOS graduated sixty-nine students. Last year, it had sixty-five graduates. Dunberg says GLOMOS is a multiplication effort. "Each of them will in turn train a minimum of five other leaders using the same material, who will in turn start other churches. So we will see a chain reaction of new churches springing up in the villages, out in areas where there is no Christian witness." The demand for the program isn't diminishing for next year's GLOMOS program. Dunberg says, "We have about one hundred fifty on the waiting list. How can we pick seventy to seventy-five people out of one hundred fifty? These are the most needy and the ones who will benefit most. We need to pray that we have the finances to put them through the program." It costs about \$900USD per year (\$75 a month) to sponsor a pastor in training. ([Global Action](#))

### **PAKISTAN: Taliban Sends Threats to Christian Institutions**

[International Christian Concern](#) (ICC) learned that on 6 October 2009, members of the Taliban sent threatening letters in Sargodha, Pakistan, warning Christian leaders to convert to Islam or face dire consequences. A copy of the letter obtained by ICC warns Christians to convert to Islam, pay *Jizya* tax (an Islamic tax imposed on religious minorities), or leave the country. If Christians refuse to accept the choices given to them, the letter explains that they "would be killed, their property and homes would be burnt to ashes, and their women would be treated as sex slaves. And they themselves would be responsible for this." An ICC spokesperson said the Islamists sent letters to St. Peter's Middle School, Sargodha Institute of Technology, Sargodha Catholic High School, St. John's Primary School, and Fatima Hospital. ICC's Jonathan Racho said, "Christians in Pakistan are soft targets for attacks by Islamic extremists. Over the past four months alone twelve Christians have been killed by Muslims due to their faith. We are alarmed by the increase in attacks against Christians in Pakistan. We urge Pakistani officials to take the threatening letters seriously and take measures to protect the Christians and their institutions from attacks." ([International Christian Concern](#))

### **PAKISTAN: Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students Cherishes Fellowship while Training Volunteers**

Earlier this year, the president of Pakistani signed a bill introducing Sharia law to the northwest of the country. Some Christians fear increased Islamism in the whole country. In this context, fellowship is particularly meaningful to the Christian students who are part of Pakistan Fellowship of Evangelical Students (PFES), part of the [International Fellowship of Evangelical Students](#) (IFES) movement there. In July 2009, PFES held two national events: a conference for forty-five medical and engineering students, and a mission camp. Nearly one hundred students from twelve cities took part in the mission camp. PFES

general secretary Huma Philip shared that PFES has a vision to strengthen the ministry from the grassroots, so staff are working to establish well-trained volunteer teams of student leaders and graduates who can lead Bible study groups. PFES currently has eighty Bible study groups across sixteen cities. (International Fellowship of Evangelical Students)

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## **THEMED ARTICLES: Celebrating the Creative Gifts of the Spirit**

### **Mission, Evangelism, Contextualization, and the Arts**

**A part of the planning for the Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization: Cape Town 2010 includes a strong artistic presence.** In recent times, we have been seeing a renewed interest in the arts among Christians, as well as discussions about the special place the arts may have in the missional task of the Church. The brief piece below is adapted from the Lausanne paper titled “Redeeming the Arts” that was produced out of the consultation in Pattaya, Thailand, in the fall of 2004. The adaptation was done by John Franklin, one of the writers for the original “Redeeming the Arts” document and a member of the arts and media committee for Cape Town 2010. Franklin lives in Toronto, Canada.

#### **The Great Commission and the Arts**

Near the end of his earthly ministry, Jesus instructed his disciples, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations (*ethnos*), baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you...” (Matthew 28:19-20). The Great Commission, as it is known, has been at the core of Christian mission since its inception. By integrating the use of story (teaching), symbol and ritual (baptism), and cross-cultural communication (all nations), it draws our attention to the strategic role that the visual and the symbolic must play in our work of carrying out this commission.

Understanding the nature and purpose of the arts is vital for evangelism and missions, because of the strategic role they play in every culture. Every people group reinforces and passes on its story through the arts. Generation after generation, people find themselves through the artistic legacy of story, music, and image. Art has its own unique way of “speaking” and “meaning.” It does not function well when we try to make it into something it is not.

To put it directly, art is not a good preacher—it is, by nature, allusive and indirect. The arts should therefore not attempt to evangelize *per se*, but they can “bear witness” to truth. For example, stories, contemporary parables, and allegories are very creative, art-friendly, and meaningful ways to engage the imagination, highlight the human condition, and allow the Holy Spirit to “point” people toward the truth of the gospel.

When considering mission and culture, it is important to note that change can happen in two ways. The gospel can change a culture, and the culture can change the gospel. No culture remains entirely static. To be an agent of cultural change need not be the same as cultural domination. What is interesting about Christianity in this regard is that as a faith, it is not tied to any culture. It has gone beyond both the religion and the language of its founder, affirming that the eternal truths of God may be conveyed in everyday speech no matter what the cultural context.

When it comes to culture changing the gospel, we encounter again the problem of mixing the values of the culture with the gospel such that the essence of the gospel is changed by culture and so takes on different meaning. The important question to discern is whether the gospel of Christ has been compromised or strengthened in its adaptation to culture.

## **Heart Language**

Indigenous arts are expressive, intrinsic communication forms that are integrated within and across the structures of society, where they define and sustain cultural norms and values. We must come to see that becoming acquainted with the artistic expressions of diverse cultures is as important as attending language school in preparation for mission work. The arts provide a window to the language of the heart. Such a language is able to bypass obstacles that keep us from relating to one another. It takes time to do the research that will unravel the meanings of indigenous art, and weave well the threads and patterns of indigenous Christianity, so that the gospel can be poured into indigenous forms. This bottom-up approach is both respectful of our cultural differences and valuable for gaining fresh insights into the gospel story.

## **Contextualization**

Missionaries and the church do their work best when they champion the value of arts done by the local people in their own style, rhythm, and language, allowing them to express their praise to God. Art and music shaped by Western society is present everywhere in the world. Instead of allowing this to erode interest and respect for the traditional indigenous culture, a strong church will accept the healthy challenge to worship freely with both contemporary and indigenous music styles.

Although the approach is changing, there are still groups of missionaries insisting on Western art forms for indigenous churches. Because of teaching they have received, many Majority World churches have adopted this practice, making it a challenging task for local leadership to reclaim their traditional cultural practices. A college dance professor in Ghana observes:

In Africa, the performing arts are not just for the stage. They are part of the life of the people—a language that is seen in everyday activity. It is therefore sad that Christianity has not explored using much of the arts as they already exist in Africa. Songs that came with the faith are foreign. Our many traditional musical instruments were all rejected. So even though our people embraced the Christian faith, it is still seen today as the Europeans' religion. This is why it is necessary to initiate moves that will lead to the Christians in Africa incorporating their dances, drumming, and singing into the expression of their faith for upcoming generations to see the Christianity as their own.

Every people group has its own unique cultural traditions, artistic expressions, and festivals that are woven into their daily life. The redemptive process must involve indigenous Christian leaders of the culture in the restoration and sanctification of these symbols, ceremonies, and art forms where possible—redirecting them toward Christ. The fear of syncretism, justified as it is, should not immobilize the redemptive process from moving forward, depriving people of the opportunity to worship and celebrate in their own heart language. Only then will they see the gospel as their own.

Indigenous Christian leaders, along with others in the faith community, need to consider not just which art forms are appropriate for the church, but also what ceremonies, symbols, and rituals are to be retained in daily family, village, and city life, so that they will keep hold of their root culture. With this focus, Christians remain accessible to their non-Christian neighbors and the Christian faith will be winsome and reach deeply into the culture. One key is to look for an analogy to Christ in the stories or songs of the culture that show how God was already at work before the missionaries came.

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## **Arts for Christ: An Artistic Umbrella in the Arab World**

By A. G.

**Arts for Christ (AFC) aims to move the hearts and minds of artists to glorify God and proclaim his love.** This will be achieved through their talents and the influence of their lifestyles, whether directly or indirectly, in their societies and communities.

Believing in the power of change that can be brought by the Holy Spirit through the arts, AFC motivates a tremendous transition in the artists' lives as they explore meanings and values of life and what they can do for the community.

**Mission and vision:** To redeem arts for Christ; to spread the kingdom-based values of love, tolerance, peaceful co-existence, respect of the other, and community service; and to invest in these values in creating a collaborative work toward a better future for local communities.

**Overall goal:** To mobilize professional and amateur artists in the Arab world; to train and encourage them to explore their talents and exchange knowledge by building bridges with their societies and communities.

As God creatively brought the world into being, he also empowered humanity with unique artistic communicative talents which are one expression of the divine image we all bear. AFC encourages artists to be where God wants them to be to honor him. God seeks to bless our Bezalels (Exodus 31), the crafts workers who would creatively demonstrate God's word to the Church and the world.

### **Specific Objectives**

In doing the above, we have some very specific objectives, including:

*Objective 1:* That amateurs and professional artists from various backgrounds practice their social responsibility to develop their local communities, capitalizing on the learned values of tolerance, peaceful co-existence, and social cohesion through artistic expression and teamwork.

*Objective 2:* That partnerships be developed with educational and Christian institutions to have the vision accomplished.

Our strategies are as follows:

- Act as an umbrella for artists through facilitating camps, forums, seminars, and meetings to help artists realize the value of their gifts and encourage usage of their gifts, and also to motivate the Church to understand the real value of arts and media.
- Facilitate technical and spiritual workshops for talented people to learn how to deliver kingdom-based messages and values in a creative manner.
- Prepare and arrange two libraries (physical and electronic) to be available for the artists.
- Facilitate *Art Reach* trips to different Arab world countries, where arts play a role in community development and building different kinds of bridges.
- Support the use of artistic multimedia at churches, helping churches to develop creative praise and worship time.
- Establish arts centers in different cities in the Middle East. These centers will:
  - Carry out the mission and vision while implementing the strategies.

- Provide academic artistic teaching for Christian/non-Christian artists.
- Help build bridges between the artists and their communities.

As we work together for the advancement of the creative use of arts for Christ, we begin at a place of shared beliefs and values:

- Jesus Christ is our savior, redeemer, and the greatest artist. God is the source of creativity—he creatively founded the world and communicated with us.
- We believe in the redemptive power of God which can empower artists to glorify God while practicing their creativity.
- We value the beauty of art and its role to give praise to our creative God.
- We value tolerance and peaceful co-existence and urge artists to use different arts to celebrate these values within their communities. We believe in building bridges with the community through providing creative services where arts act as tools for communication.
- We believe in the powerful work of the Holy Spirit in and through the lives of artists. What God wants to reveal about himself and through his glory can be brought forth through artistic expression.
- The gifts, talents, and values that God has given us in order to express his beauty (in all its various forms and expressions) are guided by the work of Holy Spirit in the redeemed hearts of artists.
- We believe that we shall reap eternal results ["gold, silver, and precious stones" (1 Corinthians 3:11-14)] as we practice the talents God has given us for the glory of his name.
- We believe in encouraging amateur and young artists to continue learning about the will of God in their lives and communities.
- We believe in the power of change that can be brought into the communities through artistic expressions of various types.
- We believe in the redeeming power of Christ through arts.

### **AFC Programs**

Arts for Christ programs can take a variety of formats, meeting needs in various ways and expanding the impact of knowing and loving our creative God:

**Outreach programs for street and underprivileged children in Cairo.** Thousands of homeless children live on the streets of Cairo where they face all sorts of horrible abuse and maltreatment. These deprived children adopt hateful attitudes of violence, theft, hatred, aggression, and begging. AFC, in partnership with other social workers, is committed to providing art programs that includes practical workshops and art therapy for abused children.

**Artistic events for professional and amateurs artists.** No professional umbrella exists for amateurs and professional artists in Egypt (or even the whole Arab world). AFC provides a platform for artists to express themselves, learn professional techniques, and network with other artists in the field.



Artistic trips, which we call Art Reach, are organized, in which artists visit different locations that have cultural or scenic values so as to help them gain needed experiences on the artistic, social, and communicative levels. We also hold band tours, art exhibitions, seminars, and workshops as a platform to reach out to the different communities. These trips have proved to be a wonderful resource for bridge-building in the diversified communities that we find in North Africa.

Arts for Christ needs your encouragement, prayer, and the release of artists and resources. If you wish to participate in the vision of the greatest artist—the Lord of all—to reach hearts, minds, societies, and nations for his glory, feel free to visit our website at [www.artsforchrist.org](http://www.artsforchrist.org) or email [emile@artsforchrist.com](mailto:emile@artsforchrist.com).

A.G. (pseudonym) is founder and director of Arts for Christ.

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## La Fonderie: Helping Christian Artists Find Their Place in France

By Jim Beise

### Beginnings of *La Fonderie*

*La fonderie* is a ministry officially launched in the fall of 2002. It is, on the one hand, a natural response to a growing number of relationships with artists in Paris and around France; on the other hand, it is a step into the arena in which the synthesis of faith, art, and culture is not only theoretical, but also pragmatic and existential. The people in *la fonderie* are Christians working in artistic and creative professions, and the focus is on the individual in his or her art form, from music and dance to web design and architecture to poetry and film. *La fonderie* seeks “to value, inspire, encourage, and embolden” these artists.

In the first year we organized a series of artist gatherings—weekly meetings over a period of several weeks, with a short weekend retreat in the middle of each series. Each evening began with a meal and included some combination of creative expression, teaching, or storytelling; brief worship; and small-group discussion, response, and prayer. Included were debates and panel discussions, presentations of work by participating artists, and guest speakers from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.

Alongside these gatherings, which have taken different forms throughout the years, we pursue and build relationships with believing artists, many of whom have no real sense of belonging in a local church structure or the larger community of faith. With notable exceptions, the French Protestant Church is generally non-receptive to the integration of art into the life and public expression of faith and worship, and at least passively inhospitable to artists who are often dissatisfied with its forms of expression and worship, traditions, and even its spirituality. Participants have included those strongly committed to a local church; those who are believers but not connected to a particular church; spiritual seekers; as well as Buddhists, Jewish, Muslim, and atheist artists.

### Community of Committed Christians

We find a wide and positive response to the creation of a community of artists who have as their common ground a commitment to work as Christians in culture, as a part of culture, to listen and understand the real and perceived needs and questions of a secular society, and respond with art that communicates the heart of God and the full range of human experience. These artists struggle less with the content and subtlety of their communication than they do with ways of finding the means to produce the level of professionalism and excellence that is the obvious prerequisite for having a voice among the other voices in culture.

The minimum that the community of faith must provide is the spiritual and moral support that can enable the artist to stretch deep into culture, to take risks, to innovate and create, and to explore and express their vision with confidence. To value and encourage artists is to give freedom to interact with what they see and experience and understand of life, an expression of a worldview informed and shaped by their faith in Christ. This will bring them into confrontation with secular, post-modern culture, but they must not be seen as tools to speak to “the world.” Artists also have much to bring the church, including fresh messages of redemption, confrontation, repentance, reconciliation, and justice.

The French context is perhaps not unlike many others concerning the Church’s material and financial support of artists and their work. The existence of a “market” for work produced by Christians and for Christians allows the Church in the U.S. and other primarily English-speaking countries to support artists without the financial risk associated with *avant guard* and “confrontational” art. In those contexts, artists sing the songs, draw the images, and write the novels and plays of the church. The creation of these kinds of music and worship projects is certainly a valid and important role of the arts: God gives gifts to his people, and those gifts are for the Body of Christ. But they are also for the world, to bless and give hope.

In France, the artists with whom we are working are almost exclusively focused on doing their art as a part of culture, not as outsiders concerned with finding a way to market or sell a message contained in the art. It is true that clear communication of Christian spirituality may close doors in galleries, concert venues, production houses, and employment in certain firms. Yet by grace, excellence and innovation provides opportunity. We are committed to encouraging and walking with artists as they pursue training and excellence in their art, and to do so we organize ministry around their lives, helping them grow strong in the Lord and live revolutionary lives characterized by devotion to Christ.

### ***Le Pave D’Orsay and Other Outcomes of La Fonderie in France***

In 2006, *la fonderie* opened an arts space called *le pave d’Orsay* in the heart of Paris. This space provides an important tool for creative support, artistic exposure, and dialogue with culture. Primarily conceived as a non-commercial gallery, it is also extensively used as a small performance space for music and theatre. Currently, the activities of *la fonderie*, led by a French and international team, are focused in three areas:

- the artists’ gatherings, which have evolved and take various forms, including conferences and discussion groups;
- *le pave d’Orsay* schedules visual and performing arts events and continues to develop as an arts and cultural space serving artists; and
- a broader group is seeking its identity as a community of faith not made up only of artists, but one in which creativity is seen as a natural result of spirituality.

Still, the focus of *la fonderie* is on the artist: his or her journey as an artist and as a follower of Christ. In the context of intense diversity of experience and expression, the community of artists in Paris continues to morph and evolve. We remain committed to creating space for artists to gather, to be together, to (re)connect with God, and to innovate and create culture.

**Jim Beise** is the founder and executive director of *la fonderie*. He is currently living in the U.S. with his wife and children, traveling often to Paris. Beise occasionally blogs at <http://blueinfragments.blogspot.com>.

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## **PERSPECTIVES**

## Reaching an Online Generation

By Eric Célérier

**In terms of size, the Internet is already very large.** Let's just take two figures: there are 1.5 billion Internet users with 300 million of them on Facebook. At the end of 2009 Facebook will probably be as big as the USA. The new generation is online! The number of users is exploding and is going to grow to three billion in the coming years thanks to mobile phones with Internet access. The potential to spread the good news is phenomenal ([click here](#) to read more about this)

It has been twelve years since I started using the Internet to share the gospel. In 1997, I launched a website to promote the church I was planting in the south of France. Then, in 1998, I launched a Christian portal ([www.topchretien.com](http://www.topchretien.com)), and in 2003, a multi-lingual evangelistic website called [www.LookingforGod.com](http://www.LookingforGod.com). Since that time, sixty million people have visited the websites and millions have accepted the Lord or rededicated their lives to him. I am blessed and amazed to be a laborer in his harvest! But one laborer alone cannot make a big difference. Jesus said, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers [plural] into his harvest."

Therefore, together with other laborers representing different Christian organizations in about fifteen countries, we developed the Jesus Internet Project to strategically position websites on the Internet, in the main languages of the Internet. Some websites act as bridges to the main websites (landing pages), others present the gospel, others are entirely dedicated to the follow-up of seekers who want to learn more about Jesus. We are calling it the "stepping stones strategy."

Together, we want to use and promote a common brand: [Jesus.net](http://Jesus.net). We invite every person or organization on the Internet to join us. Our goal is simple: make Jesus famous on the Internet! We will develop and offer a tool which is able to transform every website into an evangelistic one. The real strength of Christians is revealed when they overcome their differences to work in unity.

For many, the Internet is an additional audience for their ministry. For others, it is a way to earn money. I believe the Internet is the best opportunity for Christians to work together to make Jesus and his message known. We need to understand that the Internet is far bigger than any organization and that building one's "own little kingdom" is not the solution. Together we can do what no one can do alone!

### What Are Christians Doing on the Internet?

Christians have launched websites to present their services and their message. As a result, there are a huge number of sites, most of which receive very few visits. If you type the word "God" in Google, you will find 365,000,000 pages—one million pages to visit each day during one whole year.

Christians use the Internet in many different ways:

Type of Website	Goal	Stats	Examples	The Challenge
Institutional communication website	Make one's organization or church known	From a couple dozen to thousands of visits per day	BillyGraham.org, LifeChurch.tv	Presenting the message instead of promoting the organization/founder
Personal	Share one's point	From a	PhilCooke.com,	Visibility is essential; the

website	of view in a blog, a personal site, myspace.com, etc.	couple dozen to thousands of visits per day	TheDigitalSanctuary.org	site needs real differentiating to stand out from the rest
Evangelistic website	Share the good news	From a couple dozen to thousands of visits per day	LookingForGod.com, Jesus2020.com	Being well positioned in well-known search engines in order to reach seekers in spiritual need
Content website	Make one's content known	From a couple hundred to a few thousand visits per day	ChristianityToday.com, FocusOnTheFamily.com	Navigation, because the richer the content, the easier you can get lost
Commercial website	Sell products and services	From a couple hundred to a few thousand visits per day	ChristianBook.com	Having each item well referenced by search engines
Free resources website	Offer a free service, such as a directory, an online community, a search engine, an online Bible, an online church service, etc.	From a couple hundred to a few thousand visits per day	BibleGateway.com, YouVersion.com, ChristianGo.com	Having a simple and effective concept, because the new trend is no more the global portal but the specialized website, concentrating on one main function
Community website	To create one's own website by using existing social networks, in particular Facebook and Twitter	From a couple hundred to a few thousand visits per day	The group called "I-Love-Jesus" in Facebook already has more than one million members	Being able to answer the question, "Now, what am I going to do with all those members?"

These different ways of using the Internet combine with more or less success. But what is really trendy today is simplification. KISS (Keep It Short and Simple) applies well to the Internet. Even Microsoft, which just launched their search engine ([Bing.com](http://Bing.com)), finally understands this. Lots of Christian organizations try to mix everything in one website. As a result, very few succeed (considering the Internet scale). Moreover, the most visited religious website happens to be a Muslim one!

## Measuring the "Success" of a Website

Some people think success shouldn't be measured. In 2007, [Brown Governance](#) and the [Internet Evangelism Coalition](#) compiled an excellent survey called "International Internet Evangelism Performance Measurement Report." Below is part of the report:

Two respondents articulated that measurement should be "left to God." While God will no doubt take the final and ultimate measures of the efforts of individual Christians and Christian organizations, should this keep us from creating, implementing, measuring, adjusting, and reporting on our strategies and efforts? We believe that Christian organizations should not feel threatened by an expectation of results. Results are important to God—if they weren't, he would not have given us a mission to begin with. We believe that the Church needs to be reproducing and it should therefore engage in measurement to ensure that it is.

There are many ways to measure success for a website. As a missionary on the Internet, my best tool to measure effectiveness goes beyond figures. A ministry CEO once said, "Eric, all these figures are just virtual! It's only figures and behind them there is probably nothing more!" On that same day, a friend of mine who is a French pastor sent me a short message while he was visiting Algeria. It said, "Eric, guess what I'm doing? I'm baptizing someone who accepted Jesus on one of your evangelistic websites!" Or, consider Mariana, who is living in the Palestinian territories. When we launched [MaarifatAllah.com](#) (LookingforGod in Arabic language) in December 2006, she was the first seeker to write us. She said, "I would like to have Jesus in my life!" Since that date, more than fifty thousand Arabs (most from a Muslim background) wrote to tell us the same thing!

A successful website is one which has a lot of visits, a continuing high growth, a worldwide audience, a high conversion rate, is very visible in search engines—and which has very high offline results. To keep being successful in the long term on the Internet, we need to cleverly use not only the best existing tools, but also be ready to start new ways and approaches.

## Are New Approaches Possible to Reach the Online Generation?

I think so! Last year we participated in a brainstorming session with other pioneers of the church-planting movement (CPM) and Internet evangelism. One of the results was the launch of a blog called "[reachingtheonlinergeneration.com](#)" by Paul Watson to try to apply the principles of CPM multiplication to the Internet. With partners and friends, we are exploring the following avenues:

1. **A new online follow-up service for seekers.** The method used by most organizations involved in Internet evangelism comes from evangelistic campaigns; we ask a spiritual counsellor to take care of the "new convert" and we measure the result. But another approach is possible with Internet: using a PUSH instead of PULL approach.
2. **E-learning applied to discipleship.** For the last eight years, EO (a Dutch Christian organization) has gotten incredible results by using E-learning. For example, in Poland, fifty percent of the people following the five-week lessons of the E-learning course are joining a local church or an Alpha course.
3. **Artificial intelligence applied to evangelization and discipleship.** Why not use artificial intelligence to present the Bible in a more attractive way that is based upon the seeker's need? It's now possible.
4. **Viral effect of CPM applied to the Internet.** A real viral movement can occur on the Internet. To do so, we need to help new believers to reach their "Oikos" online.

5. **An interactive Facebook application.** What do you think of an application that would present the gospel according to your Facebook profile and that would help you testify to your online friends?
6. **An online church.** I am not talking about broadcasting church services online as many churches actually do. I am thinking about a church with services, pastors, sermons, prayer rooms, and spiritual growth resources especially dedicated to online people who don't have a church. This online church would have two main goals: make disciples and start offline churches.
7. **Using the Internet to reach cities.** It is possible to target cities according to the needs of the Internet users living in those cities. Did you know that the town where the word "depression" is the most searched on the Internet is Melbourne, Australia? And that the city where the word "suicide" is the most searched is Portland, Oregon, USA?

If you are interested in one of the projects above—and if you want to know more about it—or if you want to be involved in the Jesus Internet Project, please contact me at [eric.celerier@gmail.com](mailto:eric.celerier@gmail.com). Innovative ideas are also very welcome! Please be praying about how you can be involved in Internet evangelism.

**Eric Célérier** is a French pastor and founder of [TopChretien.com](http://TopChretien.com), a Christian Internet portal for French speaking people which receives fifteen million visits per year. He also initiated the Jesus Internet Project and is an active member of the Lausanne Strategy Working Group. He and his wife and three children live near Paris.

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## Exploiting Our “Outsider” Role for Good

By Samantha Baker Evens

**17 December 2007.** *Forty-eight saffron-robed Buddhist monks convened peacefully in front of the Vietnamese embassy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. They were there to submit a petition calling for the release of an ethnically Cambodian activist monk imprisoned in Vietnam, the resolution of land issues and respect for minority rights in Vietnam. In response, the Cambodian Ministry of the Interior sent anti-riot forces who attacked the monks, beat them with electric batons, and chased them through the streets for four blocks, telling shocked passers-by that they weren't really monks.*

*Two monks were seriously injured after being shocked by batons on the back of their heads, causing one to lose consciousness. Four others suffered minor injuries. The incident is all the more shocking in a country that identifies itself as Buddhist and typically reveres monks. The incident was not mentioned in the international press.*

**19 June 2007.** *Eight expatriates were arrested in Cambodia. An unusual event, it made international news at least briefly. The eight foreigners were protesting in front of the Bilateral Donor Meetings, where Cambodian leaders justify their ongoing corruption to countries who give them aid with little accountability. They were riding a truck with banners protesting the imprisonment of two young men framed for the assassination of a union leader. After a few turns, police stopped the truck, pulled out the driver and drove the truck with the protesters in it to the Immigration Police. The foreigners were detained in the office for roughly eight hours.*

*During that time, they were able to order pizza and receive visitors. They were asked to sign a document saying what they had done was illegal and that they wouldn't do it again. Worried about how this would affect their ability to renew their visas to stay in Cambodia in the future, they refused to sign the document, and were eventually able to negotiate to sign a document that said that they wouldn't do it*

*again, but that didn't say that what they had done was illegal. To date, none of the foreigners have experienced further repercussions from the incident.*

### **Foreigners in Cambodia**

Consider the contrast between the reaction of the Cambodian government in those two stories. Whether it is the lingering legacy of colonialism, a respect for tourism dollars, or current dependency upon foreign aid, there is no doubt that foreigners have tremendous immunity in Cambodia.

Foreign newspapers can print stories (even in Khmer, the language of Cambodia) that local newspapers couldn't touch. Foreign non-government organizations can print reports critical of the government with only occasional repercussions, while Cambodian opposition government officials, human rights defenders, and journalists are routinely threatened and sometimes assassinated. Even on an interpersonal level, foreigners, particularly Western foreigners and especially those with white skin, are assumed to be experts and attributed with social status and education often undeservedly.

The reality is that my family can safely attend a protest or peace rally as foreigners in Cambodia (see photo) that Cambodians could only attend at great risk. As foreigners, we have a tremendous opportunity to use this unmerited power to advocate for justice, bring international attention to issues of injustice, and even to extend some protection to Cambodian activists.

While not trying to be a “voice” for Cambodians, who are perfectly capable of being their own voice for justice, Christians in Cambodia have provided protective accompaniment to local human rights defenders and witnesses to government actions against communities as a deterrent to violence. The presence of a white face is enough to remind the police evicting poor communities or the judge at a trial that the world is watching. Foreign Christians have also met with their own embassies, many of whom represent countries that are foreign aid donors to Cambodia, to enlist their help in pressuring the government of Cambodia to follow the rule of law.

### **Using “Outsider” Status for Good**

An excellent example of how Christian foreigners can use their outsider status to support community efforts without squashing the community's own initiative happened recently in Phnom Penh. A network of communities brought over three hundred community leaders to the capital to represent land disputes in twenty different provinces of Cambodia.

They came to present petitions to government ministries and to meet with the United Nations. Because the land issue is so politically fraught, they were unable to secure accommodation and were even turned away from Buddhist temples, where widows, students, and the poor from the countryside typically stay. Foreigners from the Christians for Social Justice group were able to host roughly fifty of the community leaders in their homes. The rest stayed in NGO offices. While some of those staying in the NGO offices were hassled by police, none of the foreigners even had the police check up on them. The foreigners were able to support the community leaders in a way that empowered their actions and offered a degree of security.

So often in living cross-culturally, being an outsider is a disadvantage. We don't speak the language. We continually embarrass ourselves and others through our ignorance of the culture. As Western Christians, we bring with us our own cultural baggage of materialism and individualism. But in the struggle for God's justice for the oppressed, the outsider has a unique opportunity to leverage national efforts to seek justice and peace. This represents a “talent” that I believe God will ultimately hold us accountable to unearth and use for the good of his kingdom.

I frequently hear missionaries say they “stay out of politics” in their host country, focusing instead on strictly “spiritual” matters. The Kingdom of God, however, tolerates no such false dichotomies. We see in Jesus' ministry a regard for both the spiritual and physical healing of his people. We do not follow an apolitical messiah, but a cleverly political messiah, who was aware of timing and of how his actions were being interpreted by the wider culture, who was able to engage us on all levels of our being and our society, yet was also able to sidestep those who tried to contain his kingdom.

The truth is that the color of our skin or the country on our passport shouldn't afford us any additional privileges. However, the current reality of the world is that they do and exploiting that fact for the good of God's children is an effective way of demonstrating the good news of Christ for the poor.

As Cambodia gains more international exposure and becomes more globalized, the mystique of the outsider will, rightly, diminish. But for now in Cambodia, and I suspect in other contexts as well, the outsider can harness the power and safety of being foreign to stand alongside the oppressed for the glory of God's kingdom.

#### **Endnote**

1. From press release by ILICADHO.

**Samantha Baker Evens** has been a member of the **InnerCHANGE** community for the last eleven years in San Francisco, Australia, and (currently) Cambodia. She is married to Chris and has two small sons.

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### **Audio Bibles for India's Banjara Gypsies**

**A middle-aged Banjara man stood in front of about one hundred men, women, and children holding a small black audio player.** Everyone was transfixed on the words being broadcast across the room. “I’m so illiterate I can’t even write my own name,” he said. “For all these years I’ve heard others talk about the way to God and how to follow him, but it wasn’t until I heard the words of the Bible on this Proclaimer that I knew how to turn my life over to Jesus Christ.”

This man is participating in a listening group established under a pilot project between **Faith Comes By Hearing** (FCBH) and **e3 Partners**. Twice a week he gathers the people of his *tanda*, or village, to listen to God’s word. “Nearly half of his *tanda* is illiterate,” said Doug Harstine, a regional manager with Faith Comes By Hearing. “This is very common. About seventy percent of the people in India are illiterate.”

Across the subcontinent there are widespread gaps in literacy between urban and rural communities and men and women. Only twelve percent of Banjara men and four percent of Banjara women can read. FCBH focuses on reaching the world’s poor and illiterate people with God’s word in audio in their heart language.

The Banjara people are considered one of the least-reached people groups in the world. According to Harstine,

We are conducting a pilot project to disciple the Banjara people. They have teams working with pastors in villages to use Banjara (Lambadi) Audio New Testaments in their church planting efforts. These pastors are using Audio Bibles to help people understand God’s word. The goal is one hundred percent saturation, and the feedback has been very positive. The Banjara are particularly receptive to the gospel—we want to continue growing this project and see what God will do!



The Banjara are a community of six million spread throughout India. Experts estimate about one percent of the Banjara are believers. Most live in deep poverty either in rural villages or city slums. With nearly 1.2 billion souls, India is the world's second most populous country. "There are about one hundred major languages spoken in India," said Harstine. "And we have the Audio New Testament in twenty-four languages now, so we are only about a quarter of the way there."

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## URBAN COMMUNITIES

### God's Global Urban Mission in an Era of the Autonomous Self and Globalization

By Glenn Smith

**In 1983, I left a ministry to university students to give direction to the ministry with which I am presently involved in Montréal.** It is interesting to reflect back on how a relevant theology and missiology of the city evolved through that change. One day, as I was looking out the window from the sixth floor of our office, I asked myself a question that initiated a reflection that continues to this very day. *"I wonder what is being done in my city to reach people who work in the downtown core from Monday at 8 am until Friday at 5 pm."*

Much to my chagrin, I learned that very little was happening. I began to read about ministry with people in the marketplace and saw the relationship to the needs of urban ministry. At that same time, I was reading in Jeremiah. Having been raised in the context of a family that placed a high priority on the Bible and the church, I am not sure how many times I had read that particular book or skimmed this particular chapter.

But in that cold winter of 1983, the words of chapter 29:4-7 took on a new meaning. As the LORD God Almighty had called those ten thousand exiles to seek the *shalom* of a foreign city, I began to see that the social and spiritual needs of downtown Montréal could not go by me easily. So began the reflection and the action that have informed life over this period. The context was shaping how I listen to the Bible. I had to join with others to pursue a contextualized action and reflection.

Yet along the way, I learned that this one text would never inform all that is the mission of God in the city. Harvey Conn taught me well. I remember him saying,

Picking one biblical text to sum up my view of urban ministry is an assignment too awesome and dangerous for me. Too awesome because wherever I turn in my Bible it shouts "urban" to me. Too dangerous because the text I select could leave out a piece of the picture too crucial in another text and distort the whole. We need a hermeneutic serious enough to link Genesis to Revelation in the unending story of Jesus as an urban lover and the church as God's copycat.

I realized that I needed to keep studying all the texts in the context of God's global mission. Many urban church leaders do cultural studies and wrestle with (the sociology of) place. On a different track, others try to get their heads around the worldviews that make up the personality of our cities (sometimes referred to as a *horizon* or a *space*). We need to help urban ministry practitioners put these two approaches together so that in examining the city as a place, we are also learning to look very closely at the worldviews and the social imaginaries that are reflected in the urban context.<sup>1</sup> *Place is space with historical meanings, different identities, varied societal preoccupations.*<sup>2</sup>

Over the past two years we have examined a variety of cities and ministries across the urban world. A common theme is *God's global urban mission*. But we have also confronted a multitude of challenges for the Church in our cities. In this concluding article of the series we want to put this all together. The purpose is to explore the mission of God in our city/regions in an era of two realities: hyper-individuality and globalisation. There is not room here to go into great details, however, if you are interested in learning more about this topic visit the [Christian Direction website](#). Otherwise, below I will offer some practical notions that congregations can pursue as an “echo” of God’s global urban mission.

### **The Way Forward—“Acting Again”**

As the Church understands that the mission of God is rooted in the undivided being and act of God, this requires an ecclesiology which will not separate God’s mission from the Church’s existence and purpose. This is because of the community of Jesus followers’ participation in the mission of the indivisible God.

But the challenges are real: Can we act afresh in this era? Hyper-individuality, the immanent frame, and the evacuation of the transcendent in the pursuit of “realising one’s potential in life” present huge challenges for local congregations that want to pursue the mission of God in their communities. As I said earlier, this does not at all give credence to the traditional view of secularization which sees a decline of religion in the city because of urbanization. Rather, as we saw, it has totally shifted our understanding of how our society is grounded. To their own peril, congregations pay far too little attention to these issues.

Once again, Barth’s missional theology provides a framework for reflection and action for the Church. “It is the Church of Jesus Christ as this missionary Church which is sent out into the world or not at all.”<sup>3</sup> Let me propose a four-fold agenda for urban churches.

**1. The local congregation as the entity that interprets the triune God to the neighbourhood.** As communities of followers of Jesus in our neighbourhoods, we are the structure of believability that brings meaning to the message of the God of Jesus Christ. Our common life together, incarnating *shalom*, will be a huge “No” to the perils of selfish individualism and a “Yes” to communities seeking public space that brings meaning to life in the face of pervasive evil and suffering.

A necessary place for congregations to play a role is in the pluralities of our cities. My city and the province I live in find themselves in a long, drawn-out debate over how to reasonably accommodate cultural and religious differences in our common public culture. How can churches, in the particularity of their own beliefs and practices based upon the word of God, contribute publicly to such a conversation?

In our neighbourhoods, congregations can be voices to challenge the myth of neutrality on these themes. We need a great deal of discussion on these issues in our cities to hear and understand one another. As an entity that embodies the triune God, we can create space for all to speak and to live their worldviews. We need to be places where differences are celebrated. We must affirm commitment to the liberty of conscience, not just the liberty of religion. Finally, we need to describe concretely what a common life together in our neighbourhood looks like. This describes our affirmation of the equality of all persons.

**2. Bearing witness to the God of Jesus Christ and all his teachings.** Witness to Jesus and mission are the essence of our vocation. In the present context, moving our discourse from offering people a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (understood as a private relationship) to a lifestyle that incarnates the good news in all that it encompasses should hardly sound radical. But the paucity of fresh reflections on the subject of Christian witness leads me to believe that this must be part of the four-fold agenda.

In our urban communities, sustainable development provides the framework to reflect and act again with integrity in our neighbourhoods. Community development is journeying in community to express

aspirations, discover assets, confront limitations, and generate solutions for peace and well-being in homes and the neighbourhood.<sup>4</sup>

A fundamental question we will need to examine at every juncture of community development is how poverty in cities affects worldview and how worldviews can transform poverty. Essentially, poverty is about relationships. It is not just about economics. Poverty is a broad concept, including economic, social, emotional, physical, and spiritual realities. It is often intergenerational.

It affects peoples' identity (social exclusion, absence of harmony in life and well-being) and vocation (deprivation at every level of life, including one's ability to participate in the welfare of the community). But as Jayakumar Christian points out, the causes of poverty can be traced to "*inadequacies in the worldview*."<sup>5</sup> These inadequacies are a web of lies beyond the mere cognitive level of deception. As Christian points out, this intricate web leads people to believe that their poverty or social status is somehow divinely sanctioned or a factor of fate. People sense that they have no choices. A worldview is a powerful instrument in perpetuating chronic poverty.

**3. Pursuing spiritual formation, church education, and discipleship.** Barth reminds us that the Christian calling as disciples "...is not to be understood as being from the outset a kind of private route to their own salvation and blessedness." Each Christian is called to gather others to Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Being a follower or disciple of Jesus Christ means living fully in the world in union with Jesus Christ and his people and growing in conformity to his person. We could say that it is a grateful and heartfelt yes to God expressed both in act and attitude—the follower of Jesus lives in obedience and imitation of Jesus Christ and walks in the disciplined and maturing pattern of love for God by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others. Spirituality, then, is the process of developing and experiencing a deep relationship with God. It also deals with how Christians live their faith in the world.

Spirituality cannot be divorced from the struggle for justice and care for the poor and the oppressed. Christians' interest in the subject of spirituality is not new, although there has been a renewed awareness in the past several years.

Curiously, the word *spirituality* in theological dictionaries is relatively recent, but the meaning of the term should not be separated from previous expressions, such as holiness, godliness, walking with God, or discipleship. All of these words emphasize a formal commitment to being alive and connected with God and fellow followers through a deepening relationship with Christ. It implies a life of personal obedience to the word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. We can say that spirituality is our self-transcendent capacity as human beings to participate together in God's creative and redemptive activity.

Spiritual formation focuses our attention on the dynamics of how the Holy Spirit works in us to shape us into the image of God in Jesus Christ in every area of life. We pursue spiritual formation because of God's love for us and the consequences of evil in the world since the Fall. It is the Trinitarian work of the Godhead to stimulate followers of Jesus in their individual lives and in the local community of faith to participate in God's project for human history through the ways and means revealed in scripture. But spiritual formation is also about those spiritual exercises that the follower of Jesus pursues under the guidance of the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit so as to more readily receive God's transforming grace.

**4. Preaching and teaching to bring together heart and head.** The first three aspects of our agenda need to be underscored in the public preaching and teaching in the church and in our theological education.

Perhaps no area of the church's work needs more attention right now than this one. To address hyper-individuality, we need to address those features of secularity and globality that "bring doom to the workaday world" and a "shutting out" of the mystery of the transcendence. We have bought into the assumptions of the Age of Reason so thoroughly that we actually teach an *excarnational faith*, "...the steady disembodiment of spiritual life, so that it is less and less carried in deeply meaningful bodily forms and lies more and more 'in the head.'"7

The public proclamation of the scriptures and theological education in the Church and in academia will invite learners to a balanced spiritual life of prayer and the active life, expressed in a corporate commitment to full participation in the mission of God in the variety of our urban contexts.

## Endnotes

1. I am intentionally making the distinction between the theoretical notion of worldviews and the deep ideas that inform life that we call *social imaginaries*. I am grateful to Charles Taylor for the distinction that I have not always made in my writings. I have tended to fuse the two notions. During the research on this subject, Professor Taylor was generous with his time to dialogue on the issues.

2. One of the most recent texts on urban geography that takes these two distinct categories seriously is by A. M. Orum and X. Chen, *The World of Cities: Places in Comparative and Historical Perspective*. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2003). For these authors place is the specific locations in space that provide an anchor and meaning to who we are (see pages 1, 15, 140, and 168). Our sense of place is rooted in individual identity, community, history, and a sense of comfort (11-19). Space, on the other hand, is a medium independent of our existence in which objects, ideas, and other human persons exist behaving according to the basic laws of nature and thought (see pages 15, 140, and 160-170).

3. CD. IV/4, 199-200. See also CD. IV/3.2, 344 and CD. IV/3.2, 647-648.

4. For an in-depth examination of sustainable urban community development see: [www.direction.ca/images/stories/documents/community%20development%20in%20large%20canadian%20cities.pdf](http://www.direction.ca/images/stories/documents/community%20development%20in%20large%20canadian%20cities.pdf)

5. "Powerless of the Poor: Towards an Alternative Kingdom of God Based on the Paradigm of Response." PhD thesis. Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California, 340.

6. CD. IV/4.1, 130. Barth compliments this thought. He writes, "Certainly the question of the subjective apprehension of atonement by the individual man is absolutely indispensable."

7. Taylor, 771.

*(Editors' note: This is the last installment of the Urban Communities section. We would like to say "Thank you!" to Glenn for his wonderful work as editor of this section and his passion for urban centers. Beginning in January 2010 you will see a new section, Leadership Profiles, which will take you into the personal lives and passions of global mission and evangelism leaders.)*

**Glenn Smith** is senior associate for urban mission for the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization and is executive director of Christian Direction in Montreal, Quebec, Canada. He is a professor of urban theology and missiology at the Institut de théologie pour la Francophonie at the Université de Montréal and at the Université chrétienne du Nord d'Haïti. He is also professor of urban missiology at Bakke Graduate University in Seattle, Washington, USA.

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# LAUSANNE REPORTS

## Ephesians Study Plan Leading Up to Cape Town 2010

**God has led us to focus on Paul's letter to the Ephesians as part of Cape Town 2010 (CT2010).** We request all leadership, staff, volunteers, and participants to linger with the book of Ephesians in the year leading up to the Congress. Our ability to listen for God's voice together at the Congress will be greatly enhanced by "marinating" in Ephesians beforehand.

We're dispersed across the globe and have too few opportunities to meet, pray, and listen to God's word together. At our request, Lindsay Olesberg (who is leading the Bible exposition sessions at CT2010) has prepared a study for us based on the book of Ephesians.

We're asking everyone connected with the Congress and interested in supporting the Congress through prayer and study to use this simple program, believing that God will use it to speak to us all as we prepare for CT2010.

Thanks,

Blair Carlson  
Cape Town 2010 Congress Director

### How To Participate:

- Each month, read the entire letter of Ephesians through at least once. You may choose to read the whole book in one day or over several days.
- As you read, pay attention to the study guidelines listed with each month.
- Use a notebook to write down your observations and then pray in response to what you have seen.

### Month by Month Guide

#### November 2009

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** List verbs related to God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit (e.g., Eph. 1:4 "God chose us"; Eph. 1:20 "he raised Christ").

**Pray:** Worship God for who he is.

#### December 2009

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** List references to the people of God (e.g., Eph. 1:1 "God's holy people"; Eph. 1:23 "his body").

**Pray:** Pray for the local and global Church to seek God's will and hear his voice.

#### January 2010

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** List words and phrases related to time (e.g., Eph. 1:4 “before the creation of the world”; Eph. 2:2 “now”).

**Pray:** Give thanks to God for being the Lord of history.

## **February 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** List all references to power. What are the different types of power (e.g., Eph. 1:19 “his incomparably great power for us who believe”; Eph. 1:21 “all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that can be invoked”)?

**Pray:** Rejoice in Jesus’ resurrection power and ask for that power to be demonstrated in places you feel weak.

## **March 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** In Ephesians, Paul describes many gifts and promises to God’s people. List as many of these blessings as possible (e.g., Eph. 1:3 “blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ”; Eph. 1:7 “redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins”). **Pray:** Thank God for his abundant grace.

## **April 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** Note phrases in command form (imperative). In what section of the letter do they appear most (e.g., Eph. 2:11 “remember”; Eph. 4:3 “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit”).

**Pray:** Confess and commit yourself to obeying God in a neglected area of your life.

## **May 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** List references to prayer. What is being prayed for (e.g., Eph. 1:16 “I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers”; Eph. 6:20 “Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should”).

**Pray:** Intercede for the Church in your country using one of Paul’s prayers.

## **June 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** List as many images and metaphors as possible. Pick one and mediate on it (e.g., Eph. 1:7 “redemption”; Eph. 2:20 “Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone”).

**Pray:** Intercede for the global Church to “grow and build itself up in love as each part does its work” (Eph. 4:16).

## **July 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** Consider how the different parts of the letter fit together. Write an outline (e.g., Eph 1:1-2

Opening address; Eph. 5:21-6:9 Command “Submit to one another” followed by three illustrations—wives/husbands, children/fathers, slaves/masters).

**Pray:** Praise God for using his word to shape us.

### **August 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians and the notes you have taken.

**Write:** What does Ephesians teach you about God? e.g. God is active in accomplishing his purposes; God is generous with his grace.

**Pray:** Worship God for his qualities described in Ephesians.

### **September 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** Read through all your notes. What do you learn about the Church (e.g., the Church has received a great calling; the Holy Spirit lives in the Church)?

**Pray:** Pray that God will use Cape Town 2010 to nurture God’s people to live out the gospel of peace.

### **October 2010**

**Read:** All of Ephesians

**Write:** Read through all your notes. Why does it matter how Christians live (e.g., we aren’t stuck in darkness anymore; God commands us to live holy lives)?

**Pray:** Confess areas of your life that lack purity or integrity. Share with a close Christian friend and receive prayer.

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