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Lausanne World Pulse, P.O. Box 794, Wheaton, Illinois, USA, 60187

Email: info@lausanneworldpulse.com

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

August 2007

PUBLISHER'S MEMO

Evangelizing Families to Reconciliation and Witnessing

By Doug Birdsall

This month, Lausanne World Pulse tackles the issue of evangelizing families. At no time in history has this been more strategic than right now. The family as a social unit is being both chiseled away at and vehemently attacked by our surrounding world culture.

Rising divorce rates, increasing individualism and hedonism and an increasing secularization and pluralization of schools and media are present. Adults and children alike are not encouraged to seek faith, seek truth or seek strength from within families. However, we see time and time again the great redemption of entire families into living faith in Christ Jesus. From the faith journeys of Moses' and Joshua's family, to the conversion of the Apostle Paul's jailor and the jailor's entire family, we see that God's heart and desire is for families to love and serve him.

The Lausanne Women's Network

This past June 2007, the Lausanne Women's Network gathered in Marburg, Germany, for a week of fellowship, teaching and prayer. One of the most pressing needs in the Church voiced from women from around the world was the need to bring entire families to faith. In many churches worldwide, women constitute the majority of church congregations and yet many are married to unbelieving husbands and/or have unbelieving children. At the gathering in Germany, many of the women determined that one of the most effective strategies for evangelism to families is to evangelize children, especially through education. These children can then share what they have learned with their parents.

It is in these creative ways in evangelizing to families that Christ can bring different generations together and reconcile broken relationships.

The Lausanne Bi-Annual International Leadership Meeting

Also this past June, over 350 leaders from sixty countries gathered in Budapest, Hungary, for the Lausanne Bi-Annual International Leadership Meeting. Three significant streams of leaders gathered 18-22 June: the first generation of senior leaders of Lausanne; current leaders of Lausanne; and younger emerging leaders. Every movement needs the experience of those who have gone before, the leadership of those currently engaged and the enthusiasm, vitality and promise of a new generation. Similarly, every social structure, including families, need the wisdom of the past, the strength of the present and the hope and passion for the future. How much more beautiful would the picture be of entire families redeemed and every member working synergistically for the cause of Christ to call other families into living faith in the Lord Jesus?

As we plan and pray for the future, let us be even more deliberate in the development of strategies to evangelize families and energize them to lead us into the next exciting level of world evangelization.

Thank you, once again, for your partnership in the work of the gospel. May God continue to wonderfully bless you.

Doug Birdsall is executive chair for the [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization](#), and director of the J. Christy Wilson, Jr. Center for World Missions at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. He has served as a missionary in Japan with Asian Access/LIFE Ministries since 1980. Birdsall has been president of [Asian Access](#), a mission focused on evangelism and church multiplication, since 1991.

WORLD NEWS BRIEFS

AROUND THE WORLD

According to a report carried by the [Catholic News Agency](#) (CNA), some 200 million Christians in sixty countries are at risk of suffering persecution. The report reveals that in the Sudan, for example, “thousands of Christians have been massacred and the fundamentalist government has done little to protect them.” In Iraq, “the situation is grave: Christians do not have their own militia to defend them, and Sunni and Shiite factions accuse them of collaborating with the American ‘crusaders’ and among the hundreds of victims of kidnappings this year there are a growing number of Christians.” The study also reveals that during the last year, at least seventy Christians were killed in Pakistan. In Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Christians who belong to the Russian Orthodox Church are often looked down upon. The CNA story concluded by saying, “North Korea, China, Ethiopia, Nigeria and Uganda are other countries where Christians are persecuted. North Korea has sent some fifty thousand Christians to concentration camps, while in China some forty thousand have suffered the same fate. The report also notes the increasing difficulties facing Palestinian Christians due to the progressive radicalization of the Islamic masses in the Middle East.” ([Assist News Service](#))

AROUND THE WORLD

Nearly four hundred Christian leaders met in Budapest, Hungary, recently for the Lausanne Bi-Annual International Leadership Conference. The weeklong conference was for the purpose of praying, planning and working together for the next Lausanne International Congress on World Evangelization (Lausanne III) to be held 16-25 October 2010 in Cape Town, South Africa. Lausanne III is expected to gather more than four thousand Christian leaders in South Africa and link up millions more around the world via satellite. During the conference in Budapest, Rev. Doug Birdsall, executive chair of the [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization](#), and Rev. Geoff Tunnicliffe, head of the [World Evangelical Alliance](#), formally launched their new partnership for Lausanne III. Tunnicliffe, who represents around 420 million Christians worldwide, and Birdsall were officially invited to Cape Town by Michael Cassidy, founder of [African Enterprise](#). “Lausanne III has the most enormous salvific potential for the Church in South Africa and indeed all of Africa,” Cassidy told the leaders. “We pray we will bless you and that it will be a mighty reviving, renewing and historic moment for the Church around the world, and for mission and evangelism all across our globe.” ([Assist News Service](#))

CHINA

[China Aid Association](#) (CAA) confirms that a central government-directed campaign to expel suspected foreign missionaries has been ongoing since February 2007. According to reliable China Aid sources and collaborated reports by at least five different mission agencies, over one hundred foreigners accused of being involved in illegal religious activities in China have been expelled or deported this year between April and June. Sources inside the Chinese government informed CAA that the Chinese government launched a massive expulsion campaign of foreign Christians, encoded Typhoon No. 5, in February 2007. This campaign is believed to be part of the "anti-infiltration" efforts to prevent foreign Christians from engaging in mission activities

before the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Most of those expelled are citizens from the United States, South Korea, Singapore, Canada, Australia and Israel. They were expelled when they were either working or visiting in Xinjiang, Beijing, Tibet or Shandong. This is the largest expulsion of foreign missionaries since 1954 when the Chinese Communist government expelled all foreign religious workers after taking power in 1949. ([China Aid Association](#))

KENYA

The general secretary of the [World Young Women's Christian Association](#) (World YWCA) has called on the movement to strengthen its ties to the Christian values upon which it was founded. "I believe this movement will go further if it continues to expand and teach what it means to embrace the Christian values," said Musimbi Kanyoro while addressing the World YWCA council and international women's summit in Nairobi on 4 July 2007. The YWCA describes its purpose as being inspired by Christian principles, and sees as its mission the full and equal participation of women in society. But the movement has grown to include in its membership women from all faiths, backgrounds and cultures. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

KENYA

The Anglican Church of Kenya has appointed two bishops to oversee a group of clergy and congregations in the United States, amid continuing tensions between the Kenyan denomination and the US Episcopal (Anglican) Church over homosexuality. "The Anglican Church of Kenya now provides episcopal oversight to several dozen congregations in the USA," Kenyan Anglican Archbishop Benjamin Nzimbi told journalists at the end of a 26-29 June 2007 synod meeting in Nairobi. Nzimbi and other church leaders in Africa and Asia have been persistent critics of the US Episcopal Church, in part because in 2003 it consecrated an openly homosexual bishop. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

NORTH KOREA

A [new report](#) from [Christian Solidarity Worldwide](#) has accused North Korea of international crimes, including crimes against humanity, and recommends that the United Nations establish a strong commission of inquiry. The report states that "there is a prima facie case for the commission of crimes against humanity, namely murder, extermination, enslavement/forced labour, forcible transfer of population, arbitrary imprisonment, torture, persecution, enforced disappearance of persons, other inhumane acts and, perhaps, rape and sexual violence." It also examines the possibility of genocide and concludes that there are indicators of genocide against religious groups, specifically Christians. The analysis focuses primarily on the extensive political prison camp system where 200,000 people are believed to be held. It has been written by international lawyers and provides extensive testimonies and quotes from North Koreans. It represents the culmination of seven years of research and draws heavily on interviews and consultations with over eighty North Korean defectors. ([Christian Solidarity Worldwide](#))

SOUTH ASIA

IBS-STL South Asia (formerly International Bible Society-South Asia) and STL (Send the Light) OM Books India announced plans for a strategic alliance to collaborate efforts to distribute the Bible and Christian resources throughout the subcontinent and surrounding territories. Both organizations have appointed representatives to form a joint task force to review the areas of compatibility and common interest and develop recommendations for their respective Boards by the end of the year. Both IBS-STL South Asia and STL OM Books India are non-profit organizations working toward a common mission to distribute God's Word and other Christian resources throughout South Asia. Their respective boards believe that by combining resources as the largest Bible publisher in the South Asia and the largest Christian distributor in the South Asia they will create valuable efficiencies to further advance their missions to spread the Word of God. ([IBS-STL Global](#))

SUDAN

In western Sudan, more than 200,000 people have died in the four-year Darfur region conflict between ethnic African rebels and pro-government militia. “Sadly, it is the civilians who suffer,” said Dr. Mwaya Wa Kitavi, [Bible League](#)’s associate director of Africa ministries. “Over two million displaced people struggle for survival as malnutrition and disease attack—leaving them destitute and without hope.” But Bible League is persevering to bring the Sudanese people new hope and the love of Jesus Christ through the gospel. “Even in the midst of opposition, we continue to witness lives being transformed and salvaged from spiritual darkness,” added Kitavi. Throughout the southern region of Sudan, Bible League has penetrated into six army barracks and established more than forty Bible study groups. “When we started the ministry in the army barracks, we never expected the commander to cooperate because he was not a Christian. But God—who is no respecter of any man—gave us favor,” said Kitavi. “As a result, more than one thousand soldiers have committed their lives to Christ and all have been baptized. Praise be to God!” ([Bible League](#))

SWAZILAND

“We are ready to assist the churches in their quest to regenerate morals in our society,” declared Sphiwe Ngwenya, executive secretary of the Bible Society in Swaziland, at a recent symposium held as part of celebrations to mark the tenth anniversary of the publication of the Bible in SiSwati. The focus of this particular event was helping people to find answers to key social and moral problems in the Bible. Nearly fifty-five people from a wide range of backgrounds gathered in June 2007 in Matsapha to discuss issues relating to the biblical perspective on moral and contemporary challenges in Swaziland. They included church leaders, politicians and theologians, all of whom were challenged by the Bible Society to review the role of the Church in Swaziland. “We need to address issues such as education, gender and politics,” Ngwenya reminded them. “Where do people turn for guidance concerning these issues? If the Church cannot play a significant role, who will? Our traditional morals are under pressure and people want answers.” ([Bible Network News](#))

TAJKISTAN

A new religion law in Tajikistan could make ministry difficult in that former Soviet bloc nation. [Slavic Gospel Association](#)’s (SGA) Joel Griffith says it could ban all unregistered religious activity. Griffith outlines some of the other restrictions: “Religiously-affiliated political parties would be banned. Children younger than seven would be banned from receiving religious education. Young people would be forbidden from being members or participants in religious organizations. All religious education in private houses would be forbidden. Only Tajik citizens could lead religious organizations.” SGA helps the local church with summer camp. Griffith says that activity would end and cause other problems. “You look at kids that get involved in drug abuse and sexual abuse, perhaps criminal gangs,” he said. “You want to give children the best opportunity of escaping these kinds of bad influences. And if children are forbidden to be instructed in the ways of Christ, obviously that’s going to cause quite a lot of problems and will have ripple effects throughout the country.” ([Mission Network News](#))

ZIMBABWE

With inflation exceeding 4,500 percent—some reports put the figure nearer eight thousand percent—currency no longer buys food and medical care in Zimbabwe. There is little food due to drought and poor harvests, and the collapse of civil infrastructure has meant basic services are no longer available to the majority of Zimbabweans. Christian churches in the country, however, are fighting poverty, hunger and HIV/AIDS among Zimbabwe’s decimated communities and helping to meet the basic day to day needs, says UK Christian relief agency [Tearfund](#). According to Peter Grant, Tearfund’s international director, “People are dying. It’s the very young, the very old, and those with AIDA who are the most vulnerable. As the year goes on with the continuing food shortages, we can expect the situation to get worse, and more people to die.” Tearfund says that even if people could afford to go to hospital, there are no longer medical supplies to treat them. HIV and Aids related illnesses have compounded the suffering, leaving many unable to work in fear and isolation. Unemployment is over eighty percent and those that can find casual work often do so for small amounts of food. Others search around for vegetables to supplement meager amounts of maize, getting by on one inadequate meal a day.

Because of the lack of food over the last five years many of Zimbabwe's children suffer from chronic malnutrition and an increasing number are too sick to go to school. Tearfund has supported church involvement in relief, development and social justice in Zimbabwe for over twenty-five years. ([Tearfund](#))

WORLD EVANGELISM & MISSIONS REPORTS

Church/Parachurch Relations: The Body of Christ at Work

By John Pellowe

Helping the members of his congregation prepare to share their faith was a dream for Glenn Driedger, pastor of Carman Pentecostal Assembly in Carman, Manitoba, Canada. It is a dream that most pastors share. Yet after six years, Driedger found his dream was still just a dream. Most church members still did not know how to give their testimony in a way they were comfortable with.

“I dreamed I could help every person in my church become a little bit more like Christ,” Driedger said. “From Monday to Saturday I wanted them to be able to tell their story in a way that wouldn’t turn off the community. I wanted them to lead others to Christ.” [Campus Crusade for Christ Canada](#), a ministry based in Langley, British Columbia, soon came and presented their *Power to Change* program to the local ministerial. Driedger saw new hope for his dream and accepted the help from the outside ministry.

Campus Crusade for Christ Canada supported Driedger’s dream by teaching his church members how to share their faith in three minutes. They then created events which both gave members opportunities to invite others and did not cost the church a lot of money. All the members had to do was invite people.

Leonard Buhler, president of Campus Crusade for Christ Canada, was involved at the time with the team that came to Carman. He says, “Glenn’s church just started growing immediately with new believers. His church was one of the most fruitful churches I’ve ever seen. I thought ‘Wow, what a great thing for the church!’”

Carman Pentecostal Assembly was transformed when it saw it could change its town. Driedger was amazed. “We never dreamed in a month of Sundays that we could influence our community [like this],” he said. As a result of his experience, Driedger eventually went to work for Campus Crusade for Christ Canada, where he now serves as director of church relations. This story of a church and a non-denominational ministry organization working together to build the Kingdom of God is an example of church-parachurch relations at its best.

Surveying Church/Parachurch Relations

The last time anyone asked pastors and parachurch leaders in Canada what they thought about the relationship with the other was in 1983. At that time, both parties had serious complaints about the other. But this is 2007. Has anything changed?

In 2006, the [Canadian Council of Christian Charities](#) conducted the largest ever survey on this

Key Findings of the 2006 Canadian Council of Christian Charities Survey

- 75% of pastors and 85% of leaders at non-

topic in Canada, with 376 pastors and 136 parachurch leaders participating. The survey confirms a significant shift in opinion has occurred. Current attitudes support greater collaboration between ministries to advance the cause of Christ. What has led to the change?

1. Parachurches rethink their ministries. Across Canada, parachurch ministries are rethinking how they do ministry and what their relationship to the local church should be. Eighty-five percent of parachurch leaders say that partnership with local churches is a priority for their ministry.

Melodie Bissell, executive director of **Child Evangelism Fellowship Ontario** (CEF), made this priority tangible by using a grant to hire five staff members, train them to do evangelism and then offer them to churches as full-time workers for eighteen months. The churches only paid a small portion of the costs.

Rod Valerio, pastor of Christ the Living Word Church in Toronto, is one of the pastors who has worked with CEF. His church was regularly losing families because of an undeveloped children's ministry. His church could not afford the full cost of the CEF program. Instead, CEF asked the church for only twenty-five percent of the cost. CEF came to the church, trained children's teachers and helped with outreaches.

Valerio had a dozen children in his church at the time. Today, there are almost three times that number. Additionally, fifty children at a nearby elementary school and their parents have come to an evening program run by his church.

Christ the Living Word is growing today because Melodie Bissell and CEF made the decision that CEF would commit to the local church. Instead of running CEF programs under their own name, they do their entire ministry in partnership with the local church. Last summer they partnered with ninety-six churches, and it was each church's name that was featured, not CEF's. Nearly 2,600 children participated in the programs, and each one was introduced to a local church. CEF lost some of its public identity but saw its mission advanced.

This kind of radical paradigm shift has also occurred at Campus Crusade for Christ Canada, under the leadership of Leonard Buhler. According to Buhler, "We coined this phrase where we shifted from saying, 'Come join us' to 'Come use us.' Where before we would say, 'Come join our project, our time, our place,' we now say, 'Here's what we're doing to build your community, your church, to reach the people that you want to reach.'"

denominational ministries (parachurches) believe parachurches augment the work of the local church.

- 89% of pastors and 91% of parachurch leaders believe the major contribution made by parachurches is in specialized ministries.
- Parachurch leaders think the biggest problem pastors have with them is that they compete for donations from church members (43% agreeing). Not so, according to the pastors. Only 7% feel the parachurch is a drain on their church's finances. The biggest problem according to pastors (59% agreeing) is lack of accountability.
- Pastors today are quite open to parachurch ministry. 75% affirm its theological legitimacy and 78% say that if a church member chose to give their volunteer service to a parachurch ministry, that would be just as acceptable to the pastor as volunteer service within their church.
- Pastors and parachurch leaders see eye-to-eye on the quality of their relationship. Exactly 50% of both groups rated the relationship as "good," while about 15% of each group rated it as "not good."
- Both pastors and parachurch leaders want new terminology to describe their organizations. Many of those surveyed feel the term "church" confuses the local congregation with the Body of Christ and places parachurch ministry outside of the church.

An example of how this change is worked out is the *Athletes in Action* program. In the past, it took kids out of their communities to attend a soccer camp run by Campus Crusade personnel. Today, they train local church members to run their own camp in their own community. During the first year under the new model, the number of soccer camps increased from nine to twenty-seven.

2. Churches rethink their ministry. The change must not be only from the parachurch ministries. Pastors must come to realize that nondenominational ministries can help them overcome some of their own limitations. Lloyd Eyre, senior pastor of Peterborough Free Methodist Church in Peterborough, Ontario, says his church wanted to plant a church and at the same time his youth pastor wanted to reach a downtown group which would not come to a conventional church. This group believed their cultures were too different.

The solution to the cultural limitation was to plant a church jointly with Kawartha Youth for Christ, who did know how to reach the downtown people. The resulting church, Third Space, now has between sixty and seventy people attending.

Local churches are also limited by their geographical location. Parachurch ministries can help local churches with global vision extend their reach. Jim Maley, missions program manager at Metropolitan Bible Church in Ottawa, says his church decides where it wants to work and then finds nondenominational ministries doing the work it wants done. He cites an example: “Wycliffe Bible Translators, based in Calgary, gives us an opportunity to get the gospel into an area where they wouldn’t otherwise have the gospel. We don’t expect Wycliffe to do anything for our church other than do this work for us.”

It Is a New Day

The Canadian Council of Christian Charities survey shows a widespread improvement in relations. Pastors are open to parachurch ministries that fit their needs, and vice-versa.

John Wilkinson, executive director of **Toronto Youth For Christ**, was asked to preview the results of this study and comment. “This study,” he says, “helps dispel many of the falsehoods existing on both sides of the debate and brings to the forefront the need for new definitions and working relationships. I couldn’t agree more that there is a lot of dissatisfaction with the conventional terms. During the past five years, there has been a growing dissatisfaction amongst parachurch bodies over the word ‘parachurch.’ and that angst is only going to increase. They see themselves as viable expressions of the Church and want to be identified as such.”

This survey suggests that it is time to put the old stereotypes behind us and move on as churches and ministry organizations to see what we can do together for the Kingdom of God.

Driedger, in his current role as director of church relations for Campus Crusade, wants to bless pastors as he was blessed, he says. Certainly he is not alone in believing that parachurches are offering local churches the ability to more effectively carry out the Great Commission locally and globally.

John Pellowe is Chief Executive Officer of the Canadian Council of Christian Charities (CCCC), located in Elmira, Ontario, Canada. CCCC serves Canada’s local churches and parachurch ministries.

Creative Communication to Share the Gospel with Children and Their Families **By Leanne Palmer**

Picture this scene...

It is a warm, sunny, Saturday afternoon and in this usually sleepy rural village our attention is attracted by squeals, screams and some very unusual noises. Upon closer investigation we find a group of about fifty people of all ages barking, mooing and making a variety of animal noises. The players crawl around on the dirt, blindfolded, and search for the rest of their team, loudly encouraged by the cheers of those supporting. What am I observing? This is not the result of an out-of-control celebration; instead, it is the excitement of families working together. They are: considering what it means to “belong,” experiencing how hard it is hear one voice in the crowd of noises; and exploring together who Jesus is and what it means for their family to live life trusting him. This event is a Family Sports and Games program, one creative idea that is being used effectively around the world to share the gospel with children and their families.

Since 1995, **Logosdor** has been focused on communicating Jesus using cutting-edge creativity to connect with children around the world through partnerships with many organizations. The story above illustrates how, through global partnerships, creative children’s sports and games activities have been developed for use to effectively reach the whole family with the gospel.

Logosdor is a team of people dedicated to seeing the children of the world reached with the good news of Jesus Christ. It is for this purpose that the team endeavors to use every creative means possible to present the gospel message in a way that all children will understand. This has involved (1) producing an international Bible curriculum for children, (2) creating and directing four evangelistic musical stage productions for children, (3) performing puppetry, (4) producing children’s magazines, computer games and videos and (5) helping serve a sports and games outreach program used in over 137 countries involving between two and three million children.

Our involvement in the **Lausanne** 2004 Forum for World Evangelization once again convicted us of both the enormity and urgency of the task of reaching the world’s 2.3 billion children with the good news of Jesus. Children represent arguably the biggest unreached people group in the world. As Lausanne **Occasional Paper #47** reads, “With 2.1 billion children already on the planet, there can be an overwhelming sense that the best evangelistic efforts will always be outstripped by the numbers. But this is not our work; it is God’s work and we will only succeed when we participate with God in his plans. God’s solutions in the Bible were creative, profound, entirely appropriate and completely unexpected.”

Maximum Impact

No one church or organization has the resources or opportunity to reach all the children of the world. As Logosdor considered developing strategies and resources for reaching some of the least resourced and most unevangelized parts of the world, it became apparent that it is only as we work in global partnership that we have the greatest opportunity to reach every child.

In working toward this global partnership, Logosdor’s latest involvement is with a resource partnership called **Max7** that is seeking to make children’s and young people’s ministry materials, leadership development resources and family discipleship resources available for free via the internet. Max7 is about empowering and equipping children and young people to live as followers of Jesus, seven days a week. It is about sharing the gospel with children and discipling them as they grow, allowing them to explore their God-given gifts and providing opportunities for them to serve and to join in the task of sharing the gospel with others. It is also a means of drawing on the global creativity that exists abundantly in the Body of Christ.

One of the first resources available through the Max7 partnership is a video entitled “**Aim Lower**” that communicates the challenge of reaching the 2.3 billion children of the world. The video has four messages:

- *Aim lower* as we encourage churches and missions to consider children and young people.
- *Think smaller* as we share models of young people in ministry and leadership.

- *Give up* as we provide a way that churches, leaders and missions can share resources.
- *Go have a cup of coffee*, focusing on relationships within churches, organizations and people and between these groups, operating as a partnership and serving the work of evangelism and discipleship.

Working with children, introducing them to Jesus and helping them to grow and discover Jesus as their Lord and Savior is a wonderful privilege. Helping children discover they have gifts that can be used to help others to be introduced to Jesus is a vital task. Max7 provides resources for leaders to reach and disciple children and young people across the globe.

By continuing to partner with other organizations across the world, we believe that it is possible within the next ten years to have tens of millions of children hear the gospel. These children may then be discipled, equipped and empowered for ministry as they live life as followers of Jesus.

We are amazed by the opportunity God has given us to be just one of the partners working together to reach the children of the world. If you would like to partner in this huge but compelling task, log onto www.max7.org.

Leanne Palmer is global resource facilitator for **Logosdor** and supports the development of **Max7** and Global Community Games.

MAI's Europe Publishing Forum Spurs Creation of Books and Articles for Non-Christians By Dawn Herzog Jewell

“To publish for the general market is to be a faithful Christian,” stated **András Visky, Hungarian author, publisher and noted playwright.** Visky addressed fifty-five publishers, editors and authors from twenty-one European countries at **Media Associates International's** (MAI) Europe Publishing Forum 25-28 April 2007 in Schloss Mittersill, Austria. He and other speakers shared fresh ideas and models on publishing effective Christian literature for Europe's majority non-Christian population.

MAI's Forum provided opportunity for time and resource-stretched publishers to refuel, network with colleagues and exchange ideas before returning to countries where the Church is often small and struggles to gain relevancy in society.

In reaching general readers, Visky encouraged publishers to think beyond traditional failure or success to finding God in either situation. “It is better to face a failure than to live in a lukewarm way...A failure is an invitation to recreate your language, meaning and position in the world.”

Visky stressed the importance of both appreciating and involving non-Christians in publishing. His own publishing house, Koinonia, in Romania sends all its manuscripts considered for publication to fifty or sixty experts—designers, editors and scholars, both Christian and non-Christian—who are invited to provide input.

Other speakers and workshop topics included Ditmar and Elizabeth Mittelstaedt, publishers of *Lydia* magazine (Germany), on “Creating New Markets and Expanding Existing Ones”; Pat Alexander, co-founder of Lion Hudson publishing (UK), on “Developing Book and Article Ideas and the Authors Who Will Write Them”; and Anna Shirochenskaya, publisher of Triad Christian Publishing (Russia), on “Keeping Prices Affordable and Your Business Alive.”

At the end of the Forum, participants took important first steps toward the creation of books and articles for the general market. Several publicly shared ideas they plan to implement in their work.

Anna Schirochenskaya, of **Triad Publishing** in Russia, said, “I felt God putting on my heart a new series for young people, ages sixteen to eighteen. They're asking philosophical questions about life...they're so bright and talented. It would be a shame to lose them.”

Steven Dixon, of **Editions Farel** in France, added, “I'd really like to launch a new brand of books geared toward young professionals. In France, they have a whole different way of experiencing life, and the Church is not speaking to them.”

Daniela Encheva, with *Leah* magazine in Bulgaria, promised, “I will do three things: (1) start asking braver and smarter questions, (2) not feel guilty when I take risks and (3) throw a great party to celebrate our women's magazine's tenth anniversary!”

MAI is committed to helping Christian publishers in the Majority World produce locally-created books and articles that nurture the Church and attract readers to Christ. Since its founding in 1985, MAI has equipped local Christians in fifty-seven countries on five continents. As a result, budding writers have been developed, publishing houses have grown, periodicals have begun and books and magazines have been produced that speak to the hearts of readers in their own languages and cultural context.

For more information about MAI's ministry, visit www.littworld.org or email mailittworld@sbcglobal.net.

Dawn Herzog Jewell is publications and training manager for **Media Associates International** (MAI). She is also a freelance journalist. She is completing *Escaping the Devil's Bedroom*, a book on global ministry to victims of prostitution and sex trafficking.

WORLD PERSPECTIVES

Reaching Families from Different Religious Traditions

By Tuvya Zaretsky

Jewish-Gentile couples present an interesting case study for reaching families from different religious traditions. It has humorously been said, “Jews are like everybody else, only more so.” A thoughtful approach to Jewish-Gentile couples and their families may provide valuable insights for reaching couples and families from other mixed religious traditions as well.

What does this remarkable opportunity for evangelistic ministry to intermarrying Jewish people look like? What are the challenges that Jewish-Gentile couples face? What are some practical approaches that can reach couples and their families for the sake of the gospel?

Terminology

A cross-cultural case study has specialized terms. Jewish-Gentile partners are distinguished by *ethnic* backgrounds. Their different *religious* traditions add a unique cultural complexity. Let us start with the difference between *ethnicity* and *religion*.

Ethnicity is the classification of a nation as people. Jewish ethnicity refers to the people who came from Jewish parents going back to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. So, ethnicity is the common connection of people by a bloodline. It does not change except in children, through ethnically mixed marriage.

On the other hand, *religion* is a component of culture. Cultural variations are learned. Religious beliefs can change. Therein do couples from different religions experience a key source of tension.

Case Study: Jewish-Gentile Couples

Jewish-Gentile couples are a good case study for reaching families from different religious traditions. They are also a population that presents a wonderful missiological opportunity since they are in the midst of transition.

Demographic studies of Jewish people reveal surprisingly high rates of intermarriage. A 2005 study of world Jewry estimated intermarriage rates over the last twenty-five years.¹ Jews of the former Soviet Union (FSU) intermarried at a rate of eighty percent. Jews in Europe had married Gentiles in forty to sixty percent of the cases. In Australia, the rate was fifty-five percent; in the United States, fifty-two percent; and in Latin America, forty-five percent. Even in Israel, at least ten percent of the marriages since 1980 were to non-Jews. This growing population of couples from different religious traditions presents an opportunity for evangelism.

Challenges

Formulating an appropriate approach for gospel ministry to Jewish-Gentile couples begins with understanding their challenges. Social research has revealed that religious faith is an important factor in marital stability. Without spiritual harmony, couples face a greater threat of marital dissatisfaction and divorce. Studies have shown that Jews who are married to Gentiles are twice as likely to divorce than those who are married to other Jews. Spiritual help is needed.

How do we begin to extend Great Commission hope to Jewish-Gentile couples? Reaching Jewish people with the gospel is typically difficult; however, it is absolutely necessary. There is no other name by which anyone, including Jewish people, will be saved (Acts 4:12). Although Jewish people are normally gospel resistant, we are finding a much greater openness among Jewish-Gentile couples and their families.

So what are the challenges that Jewish-Gentile couples face? Through a qualitative research study², I found five key challenges:

- 1. Confusion about their different identities.** Stereotypes and wrong assumptions about what the other was “supposed” to be led to misunderstanding and poor communication. Jewish partners were unfamiliar with the religious beliefs of their Gentile partners. And Gentiles had a difficult time understanding Jewishness as an ethnicity as opposed to a religion.
- 2. Unbalanced interest in religious differences.** Jews generally did not want to know as much about Christian religious beliefs and practices as Gentiles, who were much more curious about beliefs and practices of Judaism. Religious tensions impacted in-law relations and spiritual formation for children.
- 3. Disagreements about life-cycle celebrations.** It seemed like every ritual, holiday and family gathering presented a gauntlet of conflicting cultural choices and sacred signals. Planning a wedding ceremony was often one of the most significant cross-cultural ordeals.
- 4. Differences in the pursuit of family harmony.** A couple has to agree on an identity that suits them and their children. That difficult effort is compounded when parents, in-laws and extended family bring to bear their expectations about religion, child rearing, rituals and holiday celebrations. A foundational marital threat was the inability of couples to find spiritual harmony. At the same time, this may be the most fruitful entry point for application of gospel ministry to Jewish-Gentile couples. The gospel presents hope for reconciliation of individuals with God. From there comes a potential harmony between marriage partners and their family members. Obviously, this is a good approach to reach all couples from different religious backgrounds.

5. Diverse ideas regarding spiritual formation of children. Couples need to provide answers about the ethnic heritage of the children and how to express their religious culture as rituals and life-cycle practices. Passing culture on to children was particularly tough when it involved two dissimilar religious traditions.

These five challenges give us a better appreciation for the cultural experience of Jewish-Gentile couples and their families. They are most likely cultural universals at least for couples in the United States. With this knowledge, we are better prepared to think about appropriate evangelistic ministry to couples and families from different religious traditions.

Some Practical Approaches

In spite of Jewish reaction against the gospel, salvation in Jesus is the only hope of reconciliation with God and eternal life. Jesus is the way, the truth and the life for everyone, Jews and Gentiles alike (John 14:6). If Jesus is not the Messiah for the Jewish people than neither is he the Christ for the nations. The only hope for genuine spiritual harmony for Jewish-Gentile couples is when each partner comes to repentance and finds salvation in the Messiah Jesus. Below are some things to consider when being a good witness for Christ with couples and families of different religious traditions:

1. Be a good listener. Missiologist Donald K. Smith has said that all communication is cross-cultural. Many of the challenges between Jewish-Gentile couples are the result of different cultural expectations, missed signals and misperceptions. Therefore, Christians who care to minister the gospel among Jewish-Gentile couples should train to become good listeners and to serve as cross-cultural translators.

Before we earn the right to speak, we need to listen and to learn the cultures of the partners from two different religious traditions. This holistic approach to evangelism allows us to fulfill the Great Commission while engaged in the greatest commandment, expressing the love of Christ. We love people by listening to them and learning their culture. In that process, we can effectively apply gospel truth in language that matters to them.

2. Include a strong spiritual mentor. Other Jewish-Gentile couples who have become Christians are suited to do this. They understand the dual culture environment and the possibility for spiritual harmony. Gentile Christians have a wonderful capacity to learn the cultural differences of intermarriage partners.

Community is important to this process. Partners feel isolated from respective communities. Therefore, churches and Messianic congregations of Jewish believers should be intentional about reaching Jewish-Gentile couples. They should train cross-cultural spiritual mentors to help create understanding between partners from different traditions. Congregational mentors can help couples to comprehend spiritual truth in the midst of a welcoming community.

3. Have workers trained in family unit ministry. Missions, like congregations, should be training workers specialized in ministry to family units for reaching couples from different religious traditions and their children. This can be done in small groups or by couple-to-couple mentor relationships. I recommend three areas in focusing on ministry to family units.

a. Establish definitions for the cross-cultural conversation. Help partners from different religious traditions comprehend the cultural terminology of their partner. For example, Gentiles often miss that their Jewish partner uses the word “Christian” as a synonym for “Gentile.” And many Christians assume that the term “Jewish” is synonymous with the religion known as “Judaism.” So, start by establishing meanings for unique cultural terms for communication.

b. Provide biblical answers for the challenges that the partners experience. Describe God’s design for marriage and the family (Genesis 1:27; 2:22-24). Reinforce God’s intent in the covenant of marriage (Matthew 19:4-6).

Help marriage partners see their responsibilities to one another (Ephesians 5:21-33). A discussion about God's expectations should include the impact of sin on each person's relationship with God. The hope of reconciliation with God follows in Christ's atonement. Repentance and reconciliation with God can lead to inter-personal changes that resolve many cross-cultural tensions between marriage partners.

c. Extend gospel ministry specifically for their children. Mature couples who have raised children of their own can provide spiritual advice about child rearing. We need to help parents nurture spiritual formation in their children. Kids' Bible clubs can communicate spiritual content along with rich ethnic traditions and spiritual heritage. Ancient Israelite parents were told to tell the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power and the wonders he has done in each generation (Psalm 78:4). The intent was to lead children to put their trust in God.

4. Include small group ministry. Small groups for couples from different religious traditions set apart within congregations or sponsored in partnership with mission organizations are appropriate. They help couples grapple with feelings of isolation resulting from not fitting into any traditional religious structure. Small group ministries for Jewish-Gentile couples give them a sense of identity and belonging. In a safe environment, partners can explore the truth of reconciling faith in Jesus.

5. Develop helpful cultural services. We can also help cross-cultural couples navigate the choices for symbols in various rituals, life-cycle events and appropriate religious holidays. We see such a ministry starting with premarital counseling for Jewish-Gentile couples. We urge them to seek spiritual harmony before a wedding takes place. We can also provide skillful advice about providing a wedding testimony in a culturally diverse environment.

Appropriate religious holiday celebrations are a wonderful way to embrace couples and their families. In the Jewish-Gentile context, we have sponsored Passover banquets. Jewish partners are culturally comfortable as the gospel of the Lamb of God is introduced.

Conclusion

Missiologist Paul Pierson observed that spiritual breakthroughs and renewal movements usually begin in the margins of a society. Couples from different religious traditions often see themselves as marginalized from traditional contexts. However, experience with Jewish-Gentile couples convinces me that the life-changing power of the gospel of Jesus Christ is the message that effectively can reach them.

Endnotes

1. Source: DellaPergola, Sergio, Yehezkel Dror and Shalom S. Wald. 2005. *Jewish People Policy Planning Institute Annual Assessment*. Jerusalem: Gefen Publishing House, 12.
2. Zaretsky, Tuvia. 2004. "The Challenges of Jewish-Gentile Couples: A Pre-Evangelistic Qualitative Study." Dissertation submitted to the faculty of Western Seminary, Portland, Oregon.

Tuvia Zaretsky is a [Lausanne](#) advisor on Jewish evangelism. He is also president of the [Lausanne Consultation on Jewish Evangelism](#) and serves as director of staff development with [Jews for Jesus](#).

Bringing Family Members to Christ

By Tom Elliff

Few experiences in our lives as Christians can match the joy of seeing a member of our own family come to faith in Christ. When that happens we are both now members of another family, the family of God. As

eternity-bound members of God's family, we can share a level of spiritual intimacy never known before. Every aspect of life gains a new power and encouragement through this remarkable dual relationship, which is both physical and spiritual.

Yet few duties of the Christian life seem as difficult and weighty as sharing our faith with a family member. Is it because these people know us so well, and know our weaknesses and struggles as well as our strengths? Is it because our lives at home are sometimes poor evidence of the miraculous change we are urging upon them? Or is it that our own position within the family is not one of respect and authority but one that seems inferior and weak? Perhaps we fear that encouraging our family members to faith will bring a strained and discomforting chill to the home environment. And then there is always the thought that we may have only one legitimate opportunity to witness to our family members and we feel ill-prepared at present to tackle such an incredibly significant responsibility.

Whatever the reason, witnessing to our own family members presents us with a peculiar set of circumstances. Once we come to grip with some basic issues, however, we will see that our own family members deserve our best efforts in sharing our faith. We will also discover that nothing strengthens personal faith and energizes prayer quite like bringing a family member to faith in Christ. As you think of sharing your faith with your family, consider the following:

1. In spite of the unique familial relationship you share, **apart from faith in Christ, even your most beloved family member will spend an eternity in hell, separated from God and from you.** As C. S. Lewis reminds us, there is no such thing as a "mere mortal." We are all eternity bound and will be alive millions of years from now in one of two places, either with the Lord in heaven, or without him in hell. It is difficult for us to place a family member in the same category as those we consider "heathens"; however, in this sense they are the same when without Christ...lost and separated from God. Jesus said, "No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). This would include the most cherished member of your family.

2. **We are literally commissioned to share our faith with others, including our own family members.** The opening chapter of John's Gospel tells of Andrew who *first* found his brother, Simon, and "brought him to Jesus" (John 1:42a). The writer of Proverbs captures the sense of urgency that should attend our witnessing: "Deliver those who are being taken away to death, and those that are staggering to slaughter, oh hold them back!" (Proverbs 24:11).

3. **We must never imagine ourselves excused from the responsibility of sharing our faith with our family members.** Sometimes we may know of another whom we feel would be more capable of communicating the gospel with a specific family member. Still, we should be intimately involved, through prayer and personal encouragement, in seeing that such a witness takes place. In other words, the fact that you are a member of the family is no guarantee that a person will come to Christ. *It should, however, give your family members a distinct advantage in terms of hearing the gospel and having an opportunity to respond in repentance and faith.* Paul writes that in addition to his commission he also had an obligation to share the gospel (Romans 1:14-17). We have the same, a commission and an obligation, and we must not ignore either of these!

4. As believers, **each of us will one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ and give an account for what we have done with the opportunities given us.** This, of course, is not the final or "Great White Throne" judgment of all the lost but a judgment at which each heaven-bound believer will stand "so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body according to what he has done, whether good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). The issue here will not be *whether* a person enters heaven. The question asked here is, "What did you do with what you were given?" It is with this in mind that, according to Paul, "we persuade men" (2 Corinthians 5:11). Certainly, no one is more within the scope of possibility for our witnessing responsibilities than our own family members. Surely we will give an account for how we have discharged this responsibility.

Long ago, I heard of an evangelist who told of a young boy's coming forward to the altar when the invitation was extended for people to come to Christ. "You are too young!" replied the counselor who met him there, "Go back to your seat and wait until you are older and can understand fully what it means to be saved." Dejectedly, the young boy went back to his seat, only to return a few minutes later with his older sister. Meeting the same counselor, he asked, "If I can't be saved tonight, can my older sister?" Before the appeal was concluded that night, he had brought several other members of his family to the altar. When told of this later, the evangelist said, "I don't believe he was too young to be saved. In fact, I think he was probably saved before he reached the altar the first time. After all, the first desire of a new-born Christian is to bring his family members to Christ!"

Sharing our faith with our family is an assignment we cannot avoid. We cannot decline, delay or dispute this responsibility. We must just do it—for their sake and the kingdom's!

Tom Elliff is senior vice president of the [International Mission Board](#), Southern Baptist Convention. He is pastor-at-large for over 5,100 missionaries in 186 countries. He and his wife Jeannie have four children and twenty-three grandchildren.

Jezebel: Unusual Missionary

By Ferdinand Nweke

Pretty Princess

She was born in Sidon with a silver spoon in her mouth, raised a princess and lacked nothing. Her father, a regicide, was both king and high priest, with the powers of life and death over his subjects. Their god was Baal.

As she grew, she loved the benefits of her noble birth. However, she also became increasingly intrigued by the varied rituals she attended with dad in the shady groves of Astarte on the hilltops. In time, she began to participate in the orgies and witchcrafts that formed integral parts of the worship of Baal and the fertility goddess. She enjoyed it, relished it, believed in it and became increasingly persuaded that Baal was the panacea for the world. She desired everyone, especially young women, to know the "highs" she had experienced. In her thinking, this was just what the world needed. Her name was Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians (see 1 Kings).

Her name, Jezebel, meaning "chaste, free from carnal connection," was everything she was not. The name belied the person: "a zealous idolater, extremely imperious and malicious in her natural temper, addicted to witchcrafts and whoredoms, and every way vicious."¹ When Ahab, king of historically monotheistic Israel, came asking her hand in marriage, she sensed the tug of destiny. Somehow, through her marriage to Ahab, and her position as queen, she would "evangelize" Israel. She could import her cohorts, convictions, priests and prophets into Israel. Her ministry had begun.

Ahab did what was evil in the LORD's sight, even more than any of the kings before him. And as though it were not enough to live like Jeroboam, he married Jezebel, the daughter of King Ethbaal of the Sidonians, and he began to worship Baal. First he built a temple and an altar for Baal in Samaria. Then he set up an Asherah pole. He did more to arouse the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than any of the other kings of Israel before him. (1 Kings 16:29-33)

Unusual Missionary

Jezebel was a "cross-cultural, tentmaking missionary." Her vision was to establish exclusive Baal worship in Jehovah's own Israel. Her ministry platform was her position as housewife and queen, with the influence that went with both. Together with a retinue of prophets, all supported and sustained by her (Scripture says "they ate at Jezebel's table" [1 Kings 18:19]), Jezebel pursued her mission relentlessly, even succeeding in driving God's

prophets underground! If Israel had been another nation, “missionary” Jezebel would have succeeded in foisting her version of reality on the people.

At the 1997 Tentmakers Consultation at the **Billy Graham Center** in Wheaton, Illinois, USA, the term “tentmakers” was defined as “Christian witnesses from any nation who, because of their skills or expertise, gain access and maintain themselves in another culture with the primary intention of making disciples for Christ Jesus and where possible, establish and strengthen churches.” Don Hamilton offers this definition for tentmaker: “A Christian who works in a cross-cultural situation and is recognized by members of the host culture as something other than a religious professional, and yet in terms of his or her commitment, calling, motivation and training is a missionary in every way.”

Take away “Christian” from the above definitions and Jezebel perfectly fits the description. She gained access into and maintained herself in another culture through marriage, but with the primary intention of making disciples for Baal. She was recognized in the host culture as something other than a religious professional. She was queen; however, “in terms of her commitment, calling, motivation and training” she was a missionary for Baal in every way. Nobody needed to send “support” or “raise funds” for Jezebel: She not only sustained herself, but used all instruments of her office to advance the cause of Baal.

Jezebel’s passion for Baal was unsurpassed: she threw her all into propagating Baal. Matthew Henry notes that “this one strange wife debauched Israel more than all the strange wives of Solomon.” She used her influence, and the vast resources that attended her position to preach Baal. Where persuasion failed, she resorted to ruthless repression. She did whatever she had to do to ensure Baal prospered. Adam Clarke² lists the following highpoints of Jezebel’s ignoble “ministry” in Israel:

1. She was the idolatrous daughter of an idolatrous king.
2. She practiced it openly.
3. She not only countenanced it in others, but protected it, and gave its partisans honours and rewards.
4. She used every means to persecute the true religion.
5. She was hideously cruel, and put to death the prophets and priests of God.
6. And all this she did with the most zealous perseverance and relentless cruelty.

Amazing Possibilities

What would happen for the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ if every Christian did for the Kingdom of God what Jezebel did for Baal? What could happen if every believer used their God-given platforms to advance the gospel (within righteous limits) akin to how Jezebel used hers to advance Baal?

I live in northern Nigeria, in an area of the country that is within the **10/40 Window**. Here, Islamic fundamentalists have destroyed scores of churches and slaughtered (literally, in many instances) multitudes. I see firsthand the kingdom-consciousness of Muslims. To them, “to live is Allah, and to die is gain.” Their jobs and businesses are unapologetically committed to enthroning Allah and the teachings of Islam. They build mosques on government property, with government funds, and must leave work to pray several times a day. Whatever positions they occupy—including government or political appointments—are tools to propagate Islam.

It was in this manner that Nigeria was smuggled into the Organization of Islamic Conference, an umbrella body of Islamic nations, when a Muslim was head of state. It is this kingdom-consciousness—a willingness to lay down all to serve the purposes of Allah—that is behind the current wave of terror they are spreading around the world. Western societies, hedged in by the twin evils of hedonism and humanism, stand helpless before such sacrifice.

To Change Society: Rethinking the Great Commission

Many Christians are the very antithesis of the above. To remain politically correct and accepted, they do everything to hide their Christian identity in the marketplace. The idea that the Church can change the world from inside the Church is not biblical: the early Church knew they needed to invade every facet of society with the gospel if the Great Commission was to be fulfilled.

Here are some things we could do to begin to mobilize the silent majority for the final harvest in the nations:

1. Understand that the vast majority of the lost we are sent to are not in the church. More people go to hospitals than to church. In my days in medical practice, patients trooped in. Standing for Christ in that setting, we organized evangelism in the wards and ministered to patients and their relations caring for them. We were taught in our Christian fellowship in medical school to treat the whole person (holistic medical practice they called it)—not just the body. That meant addressing both the soul and the body. We saw many saved and blessed as we ministered. In private medical practice, we witnessed to patients and saved the lives of several babies whose mothers had come seeking abortions.

The world we are called to reach is in society, in hospitals, classrooms and colleges, markets, etc. The good news is that Jesus already has people in these areas. They simply need to be trained to minister effectively.

2. “Reformat” our minds as to the true nature of our secular jobs. Sola Adebayo, director of The Kingdom Projects, which trains and sends tentmaking missionaries, lists some divine objectives for our secular jobs. Adebayo reminds us that our jobs are not just a means of livelihood but (a) a means of becoming rich for eternity, (b) a divine smokescreen for covert kingdom operations, (c) a divine tool and (d) a platform. God would still feed us if we could not find jobs, so getting something to eat could not be his primary design for planting us in the marketplace. He has strategically located us there as his witnesses. If every believer understood this, the gospel would be inescapable and the unsaved would meet it in offices, schools, shopping malls, on the airwaves, etc.

3. Lose the dichotomy between sacred and spiritual. We are integrated beings, not divided into a holy, spiritual part and an unholy, secular component. We are not redeemed to serve the Lord part-time; we are all full-timers, wholly purchased by the blood of the Lamb. The prophet Daniel was neither a pastor nor a full-time preacher, however, the depth of the prophecies that came out of his walk with God were extraordinary. Although he was thousands of miles from home, his light shone in the marketplace and witnessed for the God of Israel.

4. Take responsibility for the territories where the Lord has planted us. See yourself as the missionary in your office, at school, at your clinic. You are the “pastor”; your co-workers are your “pulpits,” your congregation. God is wanting you to help change their eternal destinies by channeling his love and saving power to them. Our pastors are not responsible for the lost souls around us; we are the agents of the kingdom.

5. Begin to systematically equip Christians to witness for Christ in the marketplace. This massive but untapped missionary force already in place should be trained on effective strategies, including lifestyle and friendship evangelism. If Christians are taught to lose their perception of the workplace as intrinsically evil and begin to see it as their God-given territories for conquest, we could see a massive ingathering of souls into the Kingdom of God.

As the Moravians used to say, *“The Lamb that was slain is worthy of the results of his suffering.”* As God’s people, let us each take a stand for him in the fields where he has planted us.

*Stand up! Stand up! For Jesus
Ye soldiers of the cross*

*Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss.
From victory unto victory
His army shall He lead
Till every foe is vanquished
And Christ is Lord indeed.*

Endnotes

1. From Matthew Henry's *Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database*. 1991. Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.

2. From Adam Clarke's *Commentary, Electronic Database*. 1996. BibleSoft.

Dr. Ferdinand Nweke, a medical doctor in Nigeria, coordinates Eternity Ministries, which focuses on maximizing Calvary and living with eternity in view. He has authored several books and songs.

PEOPLES OF THE WORLD

Learning from Ants: Missionary Teams and the Pyramid Model

By Justin Long

Our question from the last issue was: How many pioneer missionary teams do we need to serve the unreached of the world, to help find and raise up the local evangelists who can complete the task? If we assume any given missionary team can mentor a local church planting movement that will impact at least 100,000 people (read how we got to this number by clicking [here](#)) over the space of a decade, then we arrive at a simple number: forty-three thousand teams.

How can we recruit and send that many teams? **Last month** we talked about the skyscraper model of mission. This month, we will look at the pyramid model.

Pyramids are an ancient construction, yet one thing can certainly be said for them: they endure. There are about one hundred known pyramids today in Egypt, of which the three best known were built at Giza over four thousand years ago.

Although many possible purposes for the pyramids have been proposed, most of the evidence suggests they were built as tombs—the smallest, for wealthy individuals; the largest, for the great kings of Egypt. The Great Pyramid at Giza was 481 feet high when it was originally built—about twenty percent of the size of a modern skyscraper. (It has since lost about thirty feet due to erosion). Each side measures about 750 meters feet in length, and is oriented to one of the compass points (north, south, east, west). The pyramid consists of approximately two million blocks of stone, each weighing more than two tons. (One source suggests there are enough blocks in the three Great Pyramids to build a one-foot thick wall completely around France).

Pyramids were not confined to Egypt. Some two hundred pyramids were constructed in Nubia (modern Ethiopia) as monuments for their kings and queens. The Mesopotamians also built pyramids, called ziggurats, but because they used mud bricks, little remains of them. Mesoamerican peoples built pyramids; the largest of these is the Great Pyramid of Cholula in Mexico. Pyramids have been found in ancient Rome, and there are also some in China.

There is considerable debate over how the Egyptian pyramids were built, and how many people it took. Some (mostly earlier) estimates suggested a workforce of over 100,000 people, mostly slaves (e.g., the Jews). More recent estimates suggest perhaps fewer than thirty thousand people were required to build the Great Pyramids, and these were mostly rural Egyptians who worked on the monuments during the flood season, when they could not work the fields. Whatever the truth of the matter, the pyramids represented a substantial investment of time and manpower.

What Can We Learn from Pyramids?

1. *Pyramids are carefully engineered to be stable and enduring.* To design a pyramid requires a considerable amount of engineering know-how. Every pyramid is carefully designed so each side is equal, the angles on the sides are exact and each side is oriented to one of the cardinal points of the compass. This requires a significant knowledge of math, geometry and astronomy.
2. *Pyramids were designed for one particular purpose.* One did not hold dinner or garden parties in a pyramid. They were, essentially, tombs. Egyptians invested time in these monuments so people who lived thousands of years after them would know they were there.
3. *Though not cheap, pyramids are less expensive.* They require a substantial amount of time, manpower and resources to build, as well as some fairly advanced know-how; however, they are not necessarily cutting-edge technology.

Perhaps, rather than constructing a “skyscraper” agency, we should build several “pyramids”—moderately large agencies, each with its own particular niche to play. If a typical agency has about one thousand workers, we would likely need between forty and eighty such agencies.

At present, about a dozen agencies with more than one thousand workers each exist. Some of these include the [Baptist Bible Fellowship](#), [WorldVenture](#) (formerly CBInternational), [Child Evangelism Fellowship](#), Nigeria’s Evangelical Missionary Society, the Friends Missionary Prayer Band in India, the modern [Overseas Missionary Fellowship](#) and [WEC International](#). These typically have budgets between US\$10 million and US\$100 million. So for this scenario, to reach our goal of forty-three thousand teams, we would need about five times as many agencies as presently exist, each capable of raising over US\$10 million.

One Example: Dell

Is it possible to build small niche organizations rapidly? There are several examples in the for-profit world. In the technology industry, there are a few good case studies of companies that have formed recently and enjoyed explosive growth. One in particular has grown to become the 88th largest company in the world. It owes much of its success to its singular focus and its ability to work fast, measure its progress and create opportunities. The company: Dell.

Dell is an American computer hardware company founded by Michael Dell in 1984. It became one of the five hundred largest companies in the world just eight years later. Today, it employs sixty-three thousand people worldwide and manufactures more computers than any other company in the world. It maintains assembly plants in Canada, China, Ireland, Malaysia and the United States. It is looking to open plants in other countries, including India. It has US\$55 billion in annual revenue.

Dell has taken “just-in-time” delivery to an extreme. It focuses on one thing: selling computers. It takes orders via its Internet websites and by telephone (averaging one order every twenty seconds). Its suppliers base is near Dell’s assembly plants. Within ninety minutes, needed parts are brought to Dell’s plant. Within four hours, Dell has merged the parts into a finished computer and shipped it out the door.

Dell strives to perfect this supply chain. It carries no inventory; it does not build a computer that has not already been bought and paid for. Further, its assembly lines and supply chain are one of the fastest, most efficient organizations in the world. According to the November 2004 article, “Living in Dell Time” in *Fast Company*, “Eleven years ago, Dell carried twenty to twenty-five days of inventory in a sprawling network of warehouses. Today, it has no warehouses. And though it assembles nearly eighty thousand computers every twenty-four hours, it carries no more than two hours of inventory in its factories and a maximum of just seventy-two hours across its entire operation.”

Dell does this by measuring every aspect of its operation. “When you have basically zero inventory, it’s like draining a swamp—all the stumps start to show,” says Kevin Rollins, Chief Executive Officer of Dell. “The problems reveal themselves, and you can take immediate corrective action to fix them.”

Dell is a “metrics-obsessed organization.” Company engineers viewed videotapes of the assembly of computers, constantly refining the construction of the computer models until today a trained technician can assemble one in three minutes.

Dell also measures how well its suppliers do their job. It rates every supplier on its ability to compete and posts their scores daily on a private website. Future business is awarded based on past performance.

The Pyramid Model and Missions

It might be possible to rapidly build up mission agencies focused on core niches. For example, we might build mission agencies targeting each of the major world regions (Southeast Asia, South-Central Asia, Western Asia, North Africa, West Africa, East Africa, etc). Or, we might build up agencies targeting major issues: sports partnerships like KidsGames, development agencies like [Compassion](#) or [Food for the Hungry](#), or agencies focused on persecution or education issues. We might create agencies focused on particular people group clusters (like the Horn of Africa peoples, the Iranian peoples or the Malay peoples). We might build up agencies for megacities or for particular religions (as [Frontiers](#) focuses on Muslim peoples).

By aggressively aiming for growth, and measuring and responding to every aspect of the mission, an agency could grow rapidly to meet its particular niche. They could attract people who agree with the core mission, and funding that could help them develop. However, there are some problems with this approach.

1. *Pyramids have a very narrow focus.* Pyramid-like missions do not see much outside their interests. For example, I have had some good friends who work with a global network of Christians who are absolutely, passionately, sometimes overwhelmingly focused on children. This group has partnerships with other ministries to meet the needs of their target group—but I doubt it would do much work with the elderly. They are outside its narrow focus.
2. *Pyramids do not go out of their way to partner.* The narrowness of their focus and their purpose means pyramid organizations are fairly self-sufficient. They often invite others to come partner in what they are doing, but rarely go out of their way to seek partnerships with organizations that have different goals. When they do, the partnerships are usually pretty formalized and important.
3. *Pyramids are fixed to their place and their niche.* This is an advantage that lends them stability and endurance, but it is also a danger. When you build a structure of steel or stone, chances are you will end up staying right where you are. An organization can grow stagnant and dated. World trends can pass it by, and it can become ineffective. In the long run, the pyramids of Egypt are graves—monuments to kings long dead. If they are not careful, “pyramid” organizations run the risk of dying, too.

There is a third model, but I will warn you up front: it is a little buggy. We will look at it next month.

Justin Long manages strategicnetwork.org and is senior editor for **Momentum**, a magazine devoted to unreached peoples. He can be reached at justinlong@gmail.com.

A Focus on South Asia: 340 Least-Reached Buddhist/Other People Groups Remain

Overview

Buddhism began in South Asia and has spread throughout Asia and the world. A daughter of Hinduism and deeply colored by it, Buddhism is a worldwide missionary faith which influences over 1.38 billion people. Over 120 least-reached Buddhist people groups have their home in South Asia, especially in India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan and Nepal. Bhutan is the only officially Tibetan Buddhist kingdom on earth. Lumbini in Nepal is considered the traditional birthplace of the Buddha, and Sri Lanka prides itself on being the oldest continually Buddhist country on earth. Bihar in India is the birthplace of Buddhism, traditionally considered to be the site of Buddha's enlightenment, but Buddhist thinking influences a much wider population.

A do-it-yourself religion, Buddhism has great appeal in the West and much of the funding to revitalize Buddhism in Asia comes from this source. The Tibetan form of Buddhism is especially strong. Many Tibetans were expelled from China with their spiritual and political leader, the Dalai Lama, who is now headquartered in Himachal Pradesh, India. There are still over thirty-five Tibetan settlements and numerous smaller communities in India where they seek to keep their cultural identity alive while adapting to life in a foreign country.

Neo-Buddhists also figure prominently as hundreds of thousands of Dalit and OBC (Other Backward Castes) of India seek to convert wholesale to Buddhism to escape the oppressive social evils of the caste system in Hinduism. In addition to these Buddhist groups, there are more than two hundred other smaller tribal/ethnic religious people groups. Pray for God to shine his light in the hearts of those living in the shadow of Buddha in South Asia and around the world.

Prayer Points

- **Distinctive.** Pray for the Holy Spirit to reveal that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth and the life, and is the only unique Son of God who has come to bring us life and that more abundantly.
- **Doors.** Pray for God to provide divine appointments and open doors of opportunity, encounters and strategic ministry positions for believers among the Buddhist and other people groups of South Asia.
- **Daring.** Pray for believers to be bold witnesses who preach the word in season and out of season, building up the hearers and gathering an abundant harvest for God's glory.
- **Distant.** Pray for even the most remote peoples to receive messengers who are equipped to be the hands and feet of Jesus to their community.
- **Discipleship.** Pray for solid foundations to be laid in the lives of new believers so that they never turn back from following Jesus and that they grow into the full measure of the stature of Jesus Christ.

Links

- Get [resources](#) to pray, to mobilize prayer and to do outreach.
- [Discover](#) Northeast Asia's 121 least-reached peoples.

- [Pray](#) for the peoples of Northeast Asia region.
- Obtain [daily prayer guides](#) for peoples of this region.

Background

South Asia: The Original Home of Buddhism

(Compiled by Wesley Kawato)

Did you know that Buddhism originated in India, not East Asia, where it is now more widely accepted? It was a reform movement within Hinduism which began perhaps five hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, during a time when India was divided into numerous petty kingdoms. The founder of Buddhism, Siddharta Guatama, was a Hindu prince of one of India's petty kingdoms. Historians cannot agree on the date of Siddharta's birth or the date of his death. They are not even sure to which royal family Siddharta belonged. One of the few things historians agree upon is that Siddharta came from a small Indian kingdom near today's border with Nepal. That is because Siddharta spoke Pali, a language once spoken in the part of India just south of Nepal.

Little is known about Siddharta Guatama because little was written about him during his lifetime. What we know about his life comes from documents written centuries after his death. Many historians believe these documents were oral traditions eventually put in written form. According to these oral traditions, Siddharta Guatama lived a sheltered life until the age of 35, when he saw human suffering for the first time. That caused him to go on a search for spiritual truth. He tried self-gratification and self-mortification, but found no satisfaction in either extreme. Siddharta then meditated under a fig tree until a "middle path" between these two extremes was revealed to him. That is when he became known as the "Buddha," or "enlightened one."

After his death, his closest disciples held a council (traditionally thought to have taken place between 500 BC and 400 BC) to codify the teaching of their leader. This Buddhist council produced two oral records—the "Dharma," which consisted of the spiritual teachings of the Buddha, and the "Vinaya," which consisted of the rules for organizing a Buddhist monastery. Over the years, sects developed among the followers of Buddha. The key doctrinal issue was the importance of monastic life in achieving enlightenment. Some Buddhists believed it was almost impossible to be enlightened without being a monk.

The Spread of Buddhism in South Asia

Buddhism spread widely in India only after Ashoka the Great, who ruled the Mauryan Empire from 273 to 232 BC, came to power. He converted from Hinduism to Buddhism after being horrified by his own bloody conquest of the kingdom of Kalinga, in what is now the Indian state of Orissa. In Buddhism Ashoka found a religion that taught peace and tranquility and he soon sent missionaries around the world to spread this religion. We know from historical records that some of these missionaries went as far as Afghanistan, Egypt and Greece, although most traveled to other parts of South Asia. By the end of Ashoka's reign, Buddhism was practiced in all parts of India.

Around 100 BC a Buddhist council was called. A dispute had arisen because some Buddhist sects had accepted doctrinal texts written after a previous Buddhist council. This council was given the task of deciding which texts were orthodox and which were heretical. The council majority voted to translate all Buddhist texts into Sanskrit from the original Pali language. A minority faction argued that the Buddha had forbidden the translation of his teachings into non-Pali languages. The anti-translation faction walked out of the council and later formed the Theravada sect of Buddhism. The majority would later form the Mahayana sect of Buddhism.

After the council, the Theravada sect would seek refuge in Sri Lanka, fearing persecution from the Mahayana sect. Missionaries sent out by King Ashoka had converted Sri Lanka to Buddhism 150 years earlier. From Sri

Lanka, Theravada Buddhism would spread to Southeast Asia in the years to come. Mahayana missionaries took their brand of Buddhism to China, where, after a couple of setbacks, it became widely accepted. The first big wave of Chinese conversions to Buddhism happened around the time of the birth of Christ. Chinese Buddhist missionaries would eventually spread the Mahayana sect of their faith to Korea in 372 AD and Japan in 500 AD.

Buddhism Becomes an East Asian Religion

As Buddhism took root in the Far East, it was slowly dying in India. By 1000 AD, an emphasis on monasticism had turned Buddhism into an elitist religion, cut off from the masses. A new form of Hinduism was also spreading across India, one that accepted Buddha as a reincarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu.

Then, in 1192, Muslim invaders began conquering India. These invaders sacked Buddhist monasteries, killing monks or forcing them to flee. This loss of leadership caused the extinction of Buddhism in most of India. By 1300, only a few Indian villages in the Himalaya Mountains still had Buddhist majorities. The Muslim armies had bypassed these villages. Today, these are the regions of South Asia where Buddhism remains strong. Buddhism did not resume spreading in India until the 1890s, when the religion took root among India's untouchables. There was another wave of untouchables who converted to Buddhism in 1956.

Buddhism in the West

For most of its existence, Buddhism had been an Asian religion. Around 250 BC, Buddhist missionaries had reached Greece and Egypt, but they had won few converts. Years later, Roman era writers mentioned the existence of small Buddhist communities in the Eastern Roman Empire, but those communities quickly died out.

The real spread of Buddhism into the West began after 1800 AD, when European scholars began studying Buddhist documents. Some of these scholars took these documents back to their home countries and translated them into European languages. But for most of these scholars, Buddhism was only a matter of intellectual curiosity. There was no thought of converting to Buddhism.

In 1895, Frederick Nietzsche became the first Western scholar to practice Buddhism. However, only a few scholars living in university towns practiced Buddhism prior to 1960. In the United States, Buddhism arrived with the first Chinese immigrants to California around 1850, when the railroads employed them to build the Trans-Continental Railroad. The arrival of Japanese immigrants in California around the 1880s brought a second group of Buddhists to America. Heavy discrimination by the Caucasian majority prevented the spread of Buddhism beyond these Asian ethnic communities.

That changed after 1945, when American servicemen who had fought in Japan or in Korea brought home Buddhist teachings. After 1960, Buddhism took root among some members of the Boomer generation. Today, there are Buddhist temples in every major city of America. Seeing Caucasian Americans within these temples is common, even though Buddhists comprise less than one percent of America's population. Asians make up the majority of most American Buddhist congregations.

Buddhism Today

Today, Buddhism is the majority religion of a large part of Asia, from Myanmar to Japan and from Mongolia to Thailand. It also has a strong presence in the Asian minority communities of North America and Europe, along with a few Western devotees. Many of the least-reached peoples live in the remote, mountainous regions of India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh. These are the peoples that we will lift in prayer this month.

Buddhism appeals to the human pride by preaching that a person can reach a higher state, called enlightenment, by doing good works. One of the main stumbling blocks in witnessing to a person from a Buddhist background is the doctrine of sin. Many Buddhists do not consider themselves to be sinners because they evaluate themselves like a student being graded on a curve—not by an absolute standard. A Buddhist person believes him

or herself to be on the road to Nirvana (i.e., a state of non-being) if his or her community does not consider him or her to be a criminal.

As we pray this month, remember that few people practice pure Buddhism. Ancestor worship and Animism often gets mixed into the Buddhism practiced by most Asian people groups. The fear of shaming your ancestors becomes a form of community control that prevents exploration of other religions.

Pray that Christian scholars will develop new methods of outreach that will open the door to reaching Asian Buddhist people groups for Christ. May such scholars find a way to explain the doctrine of sin in a culturally sensitive way that remains true to the Bible. Pray that spiritual strongholds will be broken. Pray for power encounters that will prove that Jesus is more powerful than the spirits.

Into Their World...the Alambadi Kurichchan of India **By Laurie Fortunak**

A very proud people with an extreme devotion to the Hindu faith, the Alambadi Kurichchan of India live in the forested areas of Kerala state in southern India. Thought to be the first migrants to the Wayanad hills, they also settled as the first farmers of the western region. The Kurichcha speak Kurichiya; many also speak Malayalam. Their name, Kurichcha, comes from the word “kuri,” which is the sandalwood they put on their foreheads and chests.

The Kurichcha claim to be superior to all of the other Hindus castes, including the highest class, the Hindi Brahman, which consists of priests and scholars. This belief is partly because their society does not tolerate the destitution of any of its members, thus there are no beggars among them. Along with this comes their need to stay “pure.” If outsiders touch their hut, they will burn it down. After traveling, they will not enter their homes until they have bathed. They do not eat food or drink water that has been touched by non-Kurichiya. When visiting neighboring villages, they do not eat. If they do, they will become outcasts.

Interestingly, the Kurichcha have traditionally been a matriarchal society. Today, they are the only Indian community outside the province of Assam to continue this system.

One of the most powerful members of the Kurichcha tribe is the sorcerer. The sorcerer, who also acts as the village herdsman, is elected during a ritual performed before the idols. When a man goes into a trance and performs a frenzied dance, it is believed that he is to be the next sorcerer. Despite this traditional practice, however, the Kurichcha are one of the most devout Hindu groups in India today. Their supreme being is Shiva, the god of the hunt, however, they worship a variety of gods and demons.

Few Christian missionaries work with the Kurichcha. Pray for open hearts and open minds. Pray the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ will break into the long-held tradition of Hinduism.

For more information on the Alambadi Kurichchan of India, visit:

www.gmi.org/ow/country/indi/owtext.html

(Information compiled from www.joshuaproject.net)

(Note: The website links above are intended to provide you with more information about this people group. Some of the links are to groups that are not religious in nature but who provide information and background that may be helpful in researching this people group. The content of each of the websites linked to is the sole responsibility of the linked-to organization. Views expressed on these websites do not necessarily reflect the opinions and beliefs of the staff or writers of Lausanne World Pulse or those of the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, Institute of Strategic Evangelism, Evangelism and Missions Information Service or Intercultural Studies Department.)

Laurie Fortunak is editorial coordinator of Lausanne World Pulse. She also serves as editorial coordinator for [Evangelism and Missions Information Service](#) (EMIS) at the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College and managing editor of [Evangelical Missions Quarterly](#) (EMQ).

STRATEGY, TRENDS & STATISTICS

World Christian Trends, Update 2007

By Todd Johnson

(The following was adapted from a plenary briefing given at the Lausanne Bi-Annual International Leadership meeting in Budapest, Hungary 18-22 June 2007.)

To understand the status of global Christianity and world evangelization, as we lead up to the 100th anniversary of the World Missionary Conference held in Edinburgh in 1910, we will consider trends both inside of global Christianity and trends outside of global Christianity.

Trends Inside of Global Christianity

1. Christianity has shifted dramatically to the South. Looking at [Slide 1](#), we can see that at first glance there has been little change in the status of global Christianity over the past one hundred years. For the entire 100-year period, Christians have made up approximately one-third of the world's population. This masks dramatic changes in the geography of global Christianity—a process stretching back to the earliest days of the world Christian movement.

[Slide 2](#) illustrates these changes by mapping the statistical center of gravity of global Christianity over the past two thousand years. One can readily see that in the modern period (highlighted in red) there has been a decisive southern shift. At the time of the 1910 Edinburgh conference, the statistical center of global Christianity was near Madrid, Spain. In fact, at that time, over eighty percent of all Christians were European. By the time we meet for the 2010 Lausanne Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, the statistical center will have shifted well south of Timbuktu in Mali. This 100-year shift is the most dramatic in all of Christian history. Only about forty percent of all Christians will be Europeans in 2010.

[Slide 3](#) shows us what the average Christian family looked like over this 100-year period. In 1907, the average Christian family can be represented by a European family with few children (although many European families were quite large at the time). Today, the average Christian family is much more likely to be African or Latin American, with more children. One observation we can make is that Christianity in the Global South might show strong demographic growth through family size.

The southern shift can also be put in context of the entire history of Christianity. [Slide 4](#) reveals that Christians of the Global South were in the majority for the first nine hundred years of Christian history. European

domination of global Christianity can be seen as a recent phase of world Christianity that has now passed. Since 1981, Southern Christians are, once again, in the majority.

Slide 5 exhibits the percentage of Christians by country in 1910. The darker colors represent higher percentages of Christians. One can easily see Christianity as a Western phenomenon—including a strong European Roman Catholic presence in Latin America, where few church leaders were Latin Americans. **Slide 6** maps the same phenomenon by province one hundred years later. The most dramatic difference between these two maps is in Africa—less than ten percent were Christian in 1910 but nearly fifty percent were Christian in 2010, with sub-Saharan Africa well over seventy percent Christian. The top ten Christian countries are presented in **Slide 7** where the southern shift can be quickly perceived. Nine of the top ten Christian countries in 1900 were in the Global North, whereas nine of the top ten in 2050 will be in the Global South.

2. Christianity is fragmented. Christians are now found in thirty-nine thousand denominations. These range in size from millions of members to less than one hundred members and are listed for each of the world's 238 countries in the **World Christian Database**. By 2025, there will likely be fifty-five thousand denominations. One should note that the vast majority of these denominations are Protestant and Independent, forming the core of global evangelicalism.

3. Christians are experiencing unprecedented renewal. There are many forms of renewal within global Christianity, including evangelical movements, liturgical renewal, Bible-study fellowships and house church movements. One of the most significant is the Pentecostal/Charismatic renewal which coincides with the 100-year period that we have been reflecting on. The percentage of Christians involved in this renewal is shown in **Slide 8**. The focus of the renewal is clearly in the Global South where the majority of its practitioners live and where it is growing the fastest. It is also interesting to see that Southern languages dominate the list of the most Renewalists by language (**Slide 9**).

4. Christians are experiencing unprecedented suffering. Christians around the world are being persecuted for their faith. Over the entire history of Christianity we estimate that seventy million Christians have been killed for their faith. Over half of these were in the twentieth century alone, a century which historian Robert Conquest referred to as “The Ravaged Century.” **Slide 10** shows the Hill of Crosses—an international shrine to martyrdom found in Lithuania.

Slide 11 highlights another aspect of suffering for Christians of the Global South, who represent sixty percent of all Christians but receive only seventeen percent of all Christian income. This puts them at a disadvantage in many areas including health, education, communications and overall quality of life. This imbalance is one of the great tragedies of global Christianity that could not have been easily predicted by our colleagues in Edinburgh in 1910.

Trends Outside of Global Christianity

1. There is enough evangelism to reach everyone in the world. One might have the impression today that what is needed is more evangelism to reach the world for Christ. But, in sheer quantity, there is already enough evangelism in the world today for every person to hear a one-hour presentation of the gospel every other day all year long. This amounts to over 1,430 billion hours of evangelism generated by Christians every year ranging from personal witnessing to television and radio broadcasting.

2. Most Christian outreach never reaches non-Christians. **Slide 12** shows that over ninety percent of all Christian evangelism is aimed at other Christians and does not reach non-Christians. Here we have graphed the deployment of the world's foreign missionaries, but close examination of virtually any Christian evangelistic

activity reveals this massive imbalance. Part of the explanation is the unanticipated success of Christian missions in the twentieth century.

Much missionary deployment is trying to keep up the growth of the churches in Africa, Asia and Latin America. What is surprising today is how missionaries from the Global South have also been drawn into mission primarily to other Christians. Deployment studies in Nigeria and India have shown this to be the case, although there is a perceptible shift in the past decade toward work among non-Christians.

3. *Christians are out of contact with Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists.* Recent research reveals that as many as eight-six percent of all Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists do not personally know a Christian. This must be viewed negatively in light of the strong biblical theme of incarnation which is at the heart of Christian witness. Christians should know and love their neighbors! In the twenty-first century, it is important to realize that the responsibility for reaching Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists is too large for the missionary enterprise. While missionaries will always be at the forefront of innovative strategies, the whole Church needs to participate in inviting people of other faiths to consider Jesus Christ. Note that Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists are increasingly found living in traditionally “Christian” lands.

4. *Many of the most responsive peoples in the world are Muslim, Hindu and Buddhist.* Our analysis in the World Christian Database reveals that of the top one hundred most responsive people groups over one million in size, twenty-two are Tribal (nine percent of the total by population), thirty-one are Hindu (forty-eight percent), thirty-one are Muslim (twenty-five percent) and four are Buddhist (nine percent). The five most responsive of these are the Jinyu of China (Buddhist), the Khandeshi of India (Tribal), the Southern Pathan of Afghanistan (Muslim), the Magadhi Bihari of India (Hindu) and the Maitili of India (Hindu). What this means is that God himself is inviting the world’s peoples into his family. Christians must be more alert to his initiative.

One related and growing phenomenon is *insider movements*—defined as “movements to Christ where the gospel flows through pre-existing communities and networks, and believing families remain inside their socio-religious communities, retaining their natural identity while living under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of scripture.” Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists around the world are following Christ while remaining within their own communities. Churches and mission agencies are just beginning to grapple with the implications of this for the world Christian community.

5. *God’s global family will include all peoples.* The biblical text (Revelation 5:9, 7:9) leads us to a world in which all peoples have access to the gospel message. The body of Christ will not reach its full stature until all peoples are worshipping at the throne of God.

In 2007, we find ourselves in an unprecedented position for the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world.

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Dr. Todd Johnson is director of the [Center for the Study of Global Christianity](#) at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. Communications to him may be directed to TJohnson@gcts.edu.

LAUSANNE REPORTS

[Hope for Europe Women's Conference in Crikvenica, Croatia](#)

By Elke Werner

What a joy to see seventy women from nearly twenty European countries gather recently at the beautiful coast of Crikvenica in Croatia for the Hope for Europe Women's Conference. Women of different languages, ages, cultures and church backgrounds met to celebrate the hope they have in Jesus Christ to transform Europe.

Bible teachers at the conference were Noor van Haaften and Reona Joly-Peterson. Emily Voorhies from [Women of Global Action](#) and I spoke at plenary sessions and held seminars.

The highlight of the conference was listening to the country reports. As this was the sixth European Women's conference, we were able to look back and see how God has used these meetings to plant interdenominational national movements among women.

We heard again how influential Christians had been in the Orange Revolution in Ukraine. We saw our sisters from Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia standing together for unity and reconciliation.

We also shared the prayer requests of our countries and were able to identify similar problems: high divorce rates, alcoholism, single moms, moral issues, post-modern thinking, trauma from the recent wars in the Balkans. Because some of us personally knew one of the Christian workers killed in Turkey recently, we spent a lot of time in prayer for the persecuted Church in Turkey and Iraq.

The last day was used to invite women from the area for an evangelistic outreach. The Logos II ship was in the harbour of the nearby town of Rijeka and was used to host this women's day. About 250 Croatian women came and about thirty responded to the invitation to become Christians.

What a joy for all of us at the conference and what an encouragement for the women in Croatia, who had never before invited to such a day! Hope for Europe was founded as an initiative to join forces of the [European Evangelical Alliance](#), the [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization](#) and the [AD 2000 Movement](#). It has continued in working groups and at annual European Roundtable meetings. The meeting of the women's track takes place every two years.

Elke Werner is the senior associate for women in evangelism for the [Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization](#). She is the co-leader of a vital interdenominational church fellowship (Christus-Treff) with centers in Marburg, Berlin and Jerusalem. Elke resides with her husband Dr. Roland Werner in Marburg, Germany.

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