



Lausanne World Pulse

Providing Evangelism & Missions News, Information and Analysis

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 mission news and information.

March 2011

PUBLISHER'S MEMO

In the Deep Midwinter Comes the Presence and Promise of God

By Lon Allison

When All Is Gloomy...

It is deep winter in the United States. Cities like Boston, where Doug Birdsall, our co-publisher lives, and Chicago, where I reside, are experiencing a very cold and snowbound winter. Days are short; nights are long. Trees are stripped of their leaves and flowers are hidden. It is terribly gloomy.

In the earth's northern hemisphere, the cold and repressive darkness of winter coincide to the church calendar. It is the season of Lent and as such, we examine our lives, opening our minds and hearts to God's pure gaze.

The Holy Spirit mercifully tells us again that we are dust, that our lives are cold and dark. We remember that at our best we are not good enough and at our worst we are worse than we thought we could be. The culmination of our sinful lives is seen in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, where once long ago, other evil people killed the Son of God. The weight of all this nearly crushes our souls.

And We Can Bear No More...

But then, when we can bear no more, comes the spring. The grip of winter loosens, warmth and rains replace cold and ice. Trees break out in glorious fashion with white blossoms, red berries, and a thousand shades of green. Tulips of bright color dot the landscape. And in our souls blows a trumpet, declaring not the dirge of a death, but rather coronation of life—Jesus Christ's life, risen and glorified.

He is risen! And the grace of God pours forth like a river bounding down a mountain side as the snow melts. A just God declares sin is forgiven, and his resurrection presence and promise dispels life's gloom.

We have chosen to remember and reflect on **the resurrection of Christ** in this issue of Lausanne World Pulse. For readers from the southern hemisphere, my apologies for using the cold and darkness of winter as a metaphor of the darkness of sin and our need for something to save us. Yet, I know you can follow the thought.

The truth of the resurrection explodes out of the Gospels, refusing to sit on dusty shelves as mere doctrine. Its meaning for the lives of believers overwhelms our minds and hearts. The risen life of Jesus means that sin's power is broken. It means that God's justice is fulfilled and the penalty for evil is assumed by the goodness and love of God. And it means two other very important things.

First, **the resurrection assures us that God is alive and present with us.** “You shall call his name Immanuel, which means God with us” (Matthew 1:23). His presence can end our fear and quell our aloneness. Whatever life situations befall us, we are not alone. Our challenges are not ours alone. The living God stands with us, “For he has said, ‘I will never leave you or forsake you,’ so we can confidently say, ‘The Lord is my helper, I will not fear; what can man do to me?’” (Hebrews 13:5b-6).

I am thinking of our brothers and sisters in Iraq under severe persecution and “religicide.” Christ is with them. I am thinking of the orphans of families where mother and father have been martyred. Christ is with them. They/we are not alone. Thank you, Lord.

Second, **the resurrection means that the promise of his imminent return is sure,** where death and despair will be vanquished forever.

The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For God has put all things in subjection under his feet...Behold I tell you a mystery. We shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall be raised...Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15:26-27, 51-52, 58).

Christ is present with us. And Christ’s promise comforts and sustains. This old, cold world, with all its brokenness, shall someday soon be made whole and new. And, so shall we.

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

NEWS BRIEFS

March News from around the World

AROUND THE WORLD: Wycliffe International Becomes Wycliffe Global Alliance

Wycliffe International has a new name: **Wycliffe Global Alliance**. This new “doing business as” name, effective 1 February 2011, reflects organizational changes already underway and helps position Wycliffe for ongoing adaptability. An accompanying tagline/cutline, *partners in Bible translation*, serves as a reminder of Wycliffe’s unchanging focus on the minority language communities of the world who still need God’s word in their heart languages. Wycliffe Global Alliance is an alliance of 105+ organizations. Forty-five carry the Wycliffe name in some way because of Wycliffe’s role in their beginnings. Most of the other 60+ organizations began as a result of local or national mission movements. (**Wycliffe Global Alliance**)

AUSTRALIA: Cyclone Yasi Complicates Flood Recovery in Australia

Cyclone Yasi slammed into the flood-ravaged northern state of Queensland as a category 5 storm. It is one more serious complication in the flood recovery efforts estimated to cost at least A\$5 billion. Australia’s government is calling the scale of flooding in Queensland and New South Wales (NSW) the greatest natural disaster to ever occur in that nation. Cleanup has begun, but seventy-five percent of Queensland and parts of northern NSW have been declared a disaster zone, covering a land mass larger than Germany and France combined. There are also concerns about inflation. (**Mission Network News**)

AUSTRALIA: Australian Anglicans Engage Atheists Online

Outspoken atheists have captured attention worldwide; now, Australian Anglicans have launched a website encouraging Christians to enter the debate. The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne's new website offers a set of resources answering the hard questions about why people can believe in God. The website was created by a committee of Anglican theologians and thinkers, including Prof. John Pilbrow, its deputy chair and a prominent physicist. "We want to equip people in the pews with the courage to sit down and talk to people who don't have the same beliefs," he said. The website collects articles and book reviews, and has an online discussion forum where a panel of theologians will respond to questions people post. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

EGYPT: Jubilation over President Ouster

Egypt is basking in the glow of making history. On 11 February 2011 President Hosni Mubarak stepped down, clearing the way for the armed forces to restore order until the September 2011 elections. SAT-7, a Christian satellite television ministry to the Middle East and North Africa, not only captured the unfolding of the events, but noted a fascinating aspect that arose: the Christmas Eve sectarian violence gave way to Muslims and Christians praying together in Tahrir Square. Terry Ascott, SAT-7 CEO, says, "It's a great time to pray for the church in Egypt...Christians and Muslims have been on the street side by side. They've recognized, in each other, a common cause. They've recognized each other as equal citizens in the Egyptian struggle." Even as SAT-7 captured the demonstrations in the streets, there was little they could do with the programming. Offices had to be closed because of the studio's proximity to the hundreds of thousands gathering. However, their team in Lebanon came through at a critical time, providing live programming from the Beirut studio. ([Mission Network News](#))

ERITREA: Renewed Crackdown on Christians

Two Christians are reported to have died in separate Eritrean prisons after being refused medical treatment amid a renewed crackdown by the authorities against unregistered churches. According to [Barnabas Aid](#), one of the martyrs is 27-year-old Seble Hagos Mebrahtu, who was arrested after being caught reading a Bible in her bedroom. Her death comes as a new wave of raids, which started on New Year's Eve, saw more than one hundred evangelical believers detained. The World Evangelical Alliance-Religious Liberty Commission (WEA-RLC) said it was no coincidence that this fresh onslaught began around the time of the Tunisian uprising, which ousted the country's president. WEA executive director Godfrey Yogarajah warned that as unrest spreads throughout North Africa and the Middle East, conditions for Eritrean Christians could worsen: "This may prompt President Isaias to tighten (his) grip on power leading to an even more severe persecution of political dissidents and those from unregistered Protestant Christian groups." Thousands of Christians are believed to be imprisoned without trial in Eritrea's notorious detention system. ([Assist News Service](#))

NIGERIA: Bible Translator Still Missing

In mid-December 2010, the Tarok Old Testament translation project was drawn to an abrupt halt after translator and project coordinator Stephen was kidnapped. Stephen was kidnapped from Jos, and although he has not been able to return home, [The Seed Company](#) recently received a report that he was able to contact his wife three weeks ago. The Seed Company has yet to hear anything else from this key translator. In the meantime, the Tarok project continues to suffer as a result. Seventy percent of the Tarok people have accepted Christ as a result of the New Testament release and are still eagerly anticipating the Old Testament. Stephen is a vital piece in completing this project. ([Mission Network News](#))

PAKISTAN: Protests to Amendment in Pakistan's Blasphemy Law

Some forty thousand people joined Pakistan's main opposition religious party, Jamiat-e-Islami, along with seven other parties (including Pakistan Muslim League [Q] and the banned Jamat-ud-dawa) to participate in a rally of Tehreek Namoos-e-Risalat [sanctity of the Holy Prophet] on Mall Road Lahore on 30 January

2011 against any amendments to the blasphemy law in Pakistan. Protesters demanded that the government reject Western influence and criticized Pope Benedict XVI for joining the West in what they claim is “propaganda against the Muslim state.” The Pope had led international calls to show mercy toward Asia Bibi, the 45-year-old Christian woman and mother-of-five who denies insulting the Prophet Muhammad during an argument in a Punjab province village in June 2009. Leaders threatened to stage, at the very least, a “long march” if any changes were made to the blasphemy laws. ([Assist News Service](#))

SUDAN: Churches Closing in Northern Sudan after Referendum

Some churches, parishes, and church schools in northern Sudan are closing due to a large movement of people to the south after the independence referendum. "This is the trend. There are some centers in the parishes that are far apart and the populations have decreased drastically. These are closing," Roman Catholic Bishop Daniel Adwok, the Auxiliary Bishop of the Khartoum Archdiocese, said. In the referendum, held in mid-January 2011, voters in southern Sudan overwhelmingly approved independence for their region, the site of two long civil wars. The area is expected to become independent in July 2011. Rev. Ramadan Chan Liol, general secretary of the Sudan Council of Churches (SCC), a grouping of Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox churches, confirmed that some of these parishes were mainly of southern people. "With the mass movement of the southerners and people from the Nuba Mountains, some of the churches have been left empty," he said. "Individual denominations are considering what to do with the properties of such parishes." Although many of the Christians are said to have returned to south voluntarily, some observers said they had departed because they could not be assured of their safety. Church leaders are concerned that if the Muslim government in the north adopts strict Sharia law, as it has promised, then the Church will suffer. ([Ecumenical News International](#))

THEMED ARTICLES: The Power of the Resurrection

The Power of Christ's Resurrection

By Joy Mindo-Wamutitu

“But the needy will not always be forgotten, nor the hope of the afflicted ever perish.” - Psalm 9:18

Every year during Easter, Christians celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The days that follow are a countdown of events that led to his suffering, death, and resurrection. In 1994, people in Rwanda gathered in churches on Palm Sunday. There were processions as faithful Christians re-enacted Jesus triumphant entry to Jerusalem. On Thursday, 7 April 1994, the week following Palm Sunday, the genocide began. How could neighbors sing, “Hosanna in the highest...” (Matthew 21:9), and then leave the place of worship to hunt and kill their neighbors?

Ultimate power is the ability to bring back to life that which was regarded as dead. Death is the end of life, a consequence of sin. Jesus shed his blood on the cross for the forgiveness of sin (Hebrew 9:22; 1 Peter 1:19-21), and conquered death by the power of the resurrection—which was also demonstrated when Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. He declared, “I am the resurrection and the life” (John 11:24).

Death seems more “common” in certain places in the world. Zakes Mda writes about the life of a professional mourner whose “ways of living have become the ways of dying,” where death is all around.¹ Senseless violence touches everyone, and is brutally shocking. Yet, characters in Mda's book are almost relentlessly optimistic. They have found ways to channel their despair by mourning for strangers. He writes about the experiences of death in South Africa which are indicative of the daily reality of death.

How can we speak of forgiveness, reconciliation, and hope in the context of death and suffering? Emmanuel Katongole defines the Christian mission as not being rooted in the future we are yet to achieve, but “a new community that bears witness to the fact that in Christ there is a new identity.”²

This is the way of the cross, the way of forgiveness and reconciliation demonstrated by Christ’s life and death. When we suffer, it takes a higher power that is greater than any human ability to forgive. Only God can show us how to forgive and bring back that which is broken by death and decay.

Jesus’ interactions with his disciples, with the crowd at Bethany, and with Lazarus sisters (as well as the events of his resurrection), help us better understand the power of resurrection.

To be relevant in a hurting world, we must embark on the pilgrimage that Christ invites us to make (Romans 12:9-13). I suggest four “ministries of service.”

1. The Ministry of Presence: Contextual Ministry. Places of death and misery are all around us, from hungry people who are in the midst of great drought to drug addicts in the inner cities. Jesus is *Immanuel*, God with us. He requires us to go where the need is and preach the message of forgiveness and reconciliation (Luke 24:47-50).

During his ministry, Jesus spent time with those who suffered and mourned. In the midst of a crowd experiencing pain and suffering, we also must point out where death has happened so that those we minister to may experience resurrection.

2. The Ministry of Lament: Personal Connection. We must weep with those who are weeping under the weight of sorrow. There can be no resurrection without lament. We can never know true grief until we have experienced the loss of a loved one and begin to identify with those who mourn. Jesus wept with those who mourned Lazarus. The song of the suffering servant in Isaiah 53 is a prophetic song that reminds us that Christ would go through pain and suffering on our behalf.

We must engage and weep with those who have been raped, have had homes burnt, have had children kidnapped to become child soldiers and sex slaves, and have been enslaved by ideologies and religious beliefs contrary to God’s will. A personal connection with the hurting offers hope and opens the door for healing and forgiveness.

3. The Ministry of Prayer and Petition: Intercession. Suffering and pain is our reality. We must confront it by prayer and petition. Jesus spoke with the Father on his journey to the cross and asked for forgiveness of those who would crucify him. He also prayed that those who witness the resurrection will put their faith in him and see the glory of God.

As we pray and ask God to increase the faith of those who need to be reconciled to God, it becomes a witness for the display of God’s glory and goodness (John 11:41). Jesus instructs us to pray for those who persecute us (Matthew 5:44). The miracle of forgiveness is demonstrated by the life of Christ and in many human testimonies, such as that of Grace Akallo, a Ugandan girl abducted by rebels in northern Uganda who later forgave her abductors.³

4. The Ministry of Advocacy: Voice for the Voiceless. There are many obstacles that prevent us from experiencing the resurrection power. We must intentionally shout aloud as Jesus did: “Lazarus, come out!” (John 11:43) so that others might hear.

There must be a deliberate cry against the social, economic, and spiritual obstacles that prevent us from experiencing the resurrection power. It cannot be whispered behind closed doors; it must be loud and clear for all to hear. This is the first step toward restoration of life and reconciliation one to another.

The power of Christ's resurrection is able to offer hope, reconciliation, and forgiveness. His suffering and sacrifice is the example we should follow. We must never lose faith as we wait for this hope to be revealed in us. For this is a hope that does not disappoint.

Endnotes

1. Mda, Zacks. 1991. *Ways of Dying*. Southern Africa: Oxford University Press.
2. Katongole, Emmanuel. 2009. *Mirror to the Church*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA: Zondervan, 25.
3. McDonnell, Faith J. H. and Grace Akallo. 2007. *Girl Soldier: A Story of Hope for Northern Uganda's Children*. Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA: Chosen.

Joy Mindo-Wamutitu is a mission practitioner based in Nairobi. She has served as a missionary among the Pokot people of Kenya. She was formerly mission pastor at the Mamlaka Hill Chapel in Nairobi and a lecturer in missions at the Kenya Highlands Evangelical University in Kericho. She is married to Richard and is currently embarking on her doctorate in missions and global leadership.

Christ's Suffering and Sacrifice: A Basis for the Ministry of Forgiveness and Reconciliation

By Celestin Musekura

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors." - 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

Rwanda and Congo Suffering: Difficult Contexts for Forgiveness

Rwanda is my native country. In 1994, between April and July, about one million innocent Tutsis and moderate Hutus were massacred while the world watched in silence. My fellow countrymen and women, friends, colleagues, relatives, and fellow Christians suffered physical, mental, and spiritual atrocities at the hands of ruthless militia, soldiers, rebels, neighbors, and sometimes at the hands of fellow church members.

In the pursuit of vindictive justice, more innocent women, children, and elderly people were massacred by both Tutsi army and Hutu rebels. Unfortunately, this tribal and ethnic violence that started in Rwanda spilled over into the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, where many Congolese innocent people were killed by Tutsi army, Hutu rebels, Congolese army, and militia groups.

The international Rescue Committee's [survey](#) found that 5.4 million people have died from war-related causes in Congo between 1998 and 2010 as a result of the spillover of the Rwanda conflict, which fueled inter-ethnic conflicts among Congolese communities.

In this senseless tribal violence, many church leaders, bishops, pastors, priests, nuns, monks, human rights activists, and humanitarian/relief workers have been massacred. Unfortunately, some Christian leaders, pastors, evangelists, nuns, and priests have been among victims and perpetrators.

The Christian community in Rwanda and Congo is struggling to understand her call to the command of forgiveness and to the ministry of reconciliation in the context where hatred and revenge seem to make more sense than compassion, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

Christ's Suffering, Sacrifice, and the Ministry of Forgiveness and Reconciliation

The significance of the sacrifice of Christ on behalf of the sinner is much appreciated in the context where Christians have been victims of brutality and atrocities in the hands of neighbors and sometimes fellow believers. Christians in these contexts struggle with the mystery of the relationships between sacrifice, justice, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness.

To these believers, the understanding that the price for redemption, forgiveness, and reconciliation is paid for by the offended holy God causes them to realize how much God values the gift of forgiveness.

Paul's words to the Christian community in Corinth that "God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" (2 Corinthians 5:19) are not only a reminder of the relationship between justice and forgiveness, but also of the relationship between forgiveness and reconciliation.

The justice and holiness of God are satisfied by the punishment of the sin of humanity on Christ. Through Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection, the penalty of sin is paid for and men and women are reconciled to God. We are no longer guilty of our sins because "God made him who had no sin to be sin for the sinner so that in Christ all sinners might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

For Paul, Christians are made new creations through Christ's sacrifice, which makes forgiveness and reconciliation possible. In other words, reconciliation happens where forgiveness has taken place. Then to the reconciled person, God gives the responsibility to be an agent and ambassador of forgiveness and reconciliation.

The idea that a holy God will pay the cost of forgiveness and reconciliation for a sinful, disobedient, arrogant sinner is humbling to say the least. For Christians, such mercy, grace, and unmerited gifts of God become a basis for the personal and public ministry of forgiveness and reconciliation. The appreciation of what God has done and the cost he has paid for our forgiveness and reconciliation compels us to imitate him by becoming agents of forgiveness even in its imperfect demonstration.

It is this God of forgiveness who calls Christians to be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave them (Ephesians 4:31).

Forgiveness and Reconciliation Bring Hope and Healing to Communities

Forgiveness and reconciliation that inspire hope in divided and fragmented communities is inspired and empowered by the suffering and sacrifice of Christ. Christ is a perfect sufferer whose sacrifice pays the cost of forgiveness of men and women and their reconciliation with God.

God is the perfect forgiver who not only gives his Son as a payment for the forgiveness of humanity, but who also commands us to grant the same gift to each other. This gift is granted to us and we receive it, so that in turn we might grant it to each other for the healing of stained relationships (Colossians 3:13).

“There is no future without forgiveness,” writes Archbishop Desmond Tutu. Forgiveness brings hope and healing to communities that are willing to forgo the natural inclination of revenge and punitive justice after suffering unjustly. The healing power of forgiveness in our personal lives inspires us to work for forgiveness and reconciliation. Granting and receiving forgiveness are mutually reciprocating practices that lead to transformation and healing of brokenness in individual, family, and communal lives.

The realization that God’s gift of forgiveness brings restoration, hope, healing, and reconciliation with God obliges us to become instruments of forgiveness, even in situations of hopelessness. It is the appreciation of this gift that makes it possible for us as human beings to want to grant the same gift to the undeserving perpetrators.

Paul reminds those of us whose self-righteousness has rendered us unforgiving and judgmental that “when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly” and that “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:6-8). In the cultural and political contexts where vengeance, tribal/racial hatred, resentment, and punitive justice “makes sense,” Christians who have tasted and understood that it is the forgiver who pays the price for forgiveness can bring hope, healing, and transformation into their communities.

My Personal Journey

Even though I had started the ministry of forgiveness, healing, and reconciliation immediately after the genocide in my country in the fall of 1994, it was three years later when my personal journey of forgiveness began. In December 1997, my village and the church I had pastored in Rwanda for four years were attacked. More than seventy people were murdered on that fateful day. Among them were members of my congregation, family, friends, and neighbors.

I was at Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas when I received the news a week after the incident. In that dawn of 5 January 1998, I suddenly became angry with God and started questioning where he was when my family was being butchered. *Why didn’t he protect them? Who did it? And so forth.*

Suddenly my heart was filled with hatred, bitterness, and vengeance. It was during this unguarded moment that God confronted me with the reality of the ministry of forgiveness and reconciliation to which he had called me.

Then I was confronted with a different challenge. Instead of giving an answer to my anguish, the Lord rebuked me that it was time for me to practice what I preached by forgiving those who had killed my relatives and friends. God was challenging me to make a choice: “Either you forgive and let me take care of the rest, or you fail to forgive and live a life without freedom, joy, and peace.” On that morning I learned firsthand about the cost of forgiveness.

A year after my village massacre, I travelled to Kampala, Uganda, where I had been invited to train pastors from Rwanda, Tanzania, Congo, and Uganda. During the training, I discovered that some relatives of the people who murdered my family are sitting in my classes. I knew that the theory of forgiveness and reconciliation must become the practice of forgiveness.

Realizing these people are my brothers through the blood of Christ, I asked the Lord to grant me strength to not only forgive them, but also to ask their forgiveness for the intense hatred I had carried toward their families.

That day, as we confessed and forgave each other, the Lord started speaking to the crowd of pastors and church leaders. We soon discovered that they too had been silently suffering from bitterness, hatred, and a

spirit of unforgiveness toward neighbors who had killed family members and destroyed family property. That day, we all learned how to truly forgive each other. We learned that although the cost of forgiveness is great and its practice difficult, Christ has provided us the tools, model, and power to forgive.

For the last sixteen years, my colleagues and I continue to serve with **ALARM** (African Leadership and Reconciliation Ministries, Inc.), a ministry I started as a result of the genocide in my home country. Because we have been transformed by the resurrection power of Christ, we have been involved in inspiring healing, tribal reconciliation, and leadership empowerment to both religious and community leaders in Burundi, Congo, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia.

Through our own journey of forgiving those who brutally murdered our family, friends, and neighbors, we have had the courage to preach and teach forgiveness between former enemies. We have stood in the middle of men and women who committed atrocities and genocides and told them that a community without forgiveness has no future.

We have stood in the middle of militia, rebels, freedom fighters, community leaders, and politicians and given them new directions on how to bring hope in their communities. We continue to instruct pastors and church leaders on the meaning of the cross for our personal salvation and for the reconciliation of our communities. We are witnessing results because our ministry is anchored in the suffering, sacrifice, death, and resurrection of Christ through whom all humanity receives redemption and the forgiveness of our sins.

In forgiveness, we give up our rights to exact justice, but we do not give up justice. When Christians understand how their forgiveness was made possible by the suffering and sacrifice of Christ, their ministry of forgiveness and reconciliation become a lifestyle, not a job or a career. They understand why they are peacemakers, ambassadors of Christ, and agents of healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation in a hurting world.

Rev. Dr. Celestin Musekura, a Rwandan and ordained Baptist minister, is the president and founder of **African Leadership and Reconciliation Ministries, Inc** (ALARM, Inc). He trains leaders and is involved in tribal and political forgiveness and reconciliation in East and Central Africa.

The Worse of Two Worlds: For the Sake of Those Who Have Never Heard

By Ferdinand Nweke

The First of Nine Wives

Mama Lotun is the first of nine wives; she is Pokot. She lives in Orus (Kenya), a cluster of villages, some made up of only four huts. She was one of the earliest Pokot to put their trust in Christ when missionaries came calling decades earlier.

Hearing that her aged husband was ill, we went for a visit. We had to bend very low to get through the entrance of his hut—like a camel passing through the eye of a needle. He lay on one of two “beds” (piles of sticks) coughing and spitting on the floor or the wall, whichever was more convenient. He let out some groans as he shifted to some more comfortable position on his “mattress” (cow hide).

The putrid smell was inescapable. In the middle of the hut, a fire burned, pouring smoke, tearing our eyes, and choking us. Breathing was difficult: this was no place for a claustrophobic or asthmatic. But the Pokot didn’t seem to mind at all: they were used to the fire: they stoked it, cooked their meals on it, and used it to heat their hut on many chilly.

The old man was living out his last days in the most squalid condition imaginable. I had seen poverty in other parts of Africa, but nothing like this. Through the smoke and stench of the dark, dank hut, we shared the love of Jesus with him. Although neither hostile to the gospel, nor prohibitive of his first wife's faith, he'd refused to believe, despite years of faithful witness.

Tonight was different. With newfound conviction which suddenly energized his weak voice, he excitedly declared his faith in Christ and prayed with us to ask Jesus to save him. We asked the Lord to heal him and gave him *The Treasure*, the amazing, solar-powered, audio Bible that will continue to bring him the message of God's love in his own language.

I was in Orus as part of an international team put together by **World Mission** ministering to the nomadic Pokot people. On one memorable evening, the Pokot speared a goat to death and roasted the meat for us. They drank the raw blood mixed with fat and ate some part of the goat intestines unwashed and raw. We slept with them in their mud and straw hut (a puny shelter from the howling wind) and preached the gospel to them. Several came to Christ.

Many primitive practices are still performed among the Pokot, including polygamy and female circumcision. The mother of a freshly-circumcised girl even gets to have a feather stuck in her hair. Until recently, the Pokot engaged their neighbors (the Samburus and the Turkanas) in fierce, internecine wars, often over cattle. These three tribes are among the earth's 2.7 billion unreached peoples who will have the worst of two worlds unless their eternity is secured through the gospel.

Two Worlds

Every individual will experience two worlds. At his trial before Pilate, Jesus told the governor, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36), implying another world no less real. Paul declared, "If our hope in Christ is good for *this* life only and no more, then we deserve more pity than anyone else" (1 Corinthians 15:19, emphasis mine). There is this world and the next; one in time, the other in eternity.

There can be no vacuum in our hearts; we must live for time or eternity, for the ephemeral or the eternal. The believer's ultimate destiny is to spend eternity in glory with Christ. No wonder the psalmist prayed, "You shall guide me by Your counsel; and afterward You will take me to glory" (Psalm 73:24).

There is an *afterward*: beyond time lies eternity. To not spend eternity with Christ is the ultimate disaster, the mother of all calamities that can befall a person. Better not to have been born than to live on earth and miss heaven. The subject of eternal punishment is not popular in a relativistic world bereft of absolute truth. But something serious made it necessary for Christ to die a shameful death on a cruel cross. Eternity was at stake. Our destiny hung in the balance, but the love of God devised Calvary to save humanity.

The *hell* of hell is this: that the real problem of hell is not the fire, torment, or lack of food, water, or rest, but that it is *forever*. If only there was an expiry date to the torments of hell. The only hope of hell's inhabitants is to pray for God to die, for that is when eternity will end. Since an immortal God is absolutely exempt from death, it implies that the lost will suffer eternal punishment as long as God is alive: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46).

The price Jesus paid on the cross makes this completely unnecessary. Instead of quibbling over the immutable truth of God's word, we must do whatever it takes to carry the saving message of Jesus Christ to those who have never heard so that people like the Pokot of Kenya, the Fulani of Nigeria, and the Yadav of India will not have the worst of two worlds.

The Poorest of the Poor

The unreached peoples of the world are also the poorest of the poor. The gospel has positive socio-economic effects, lifting communities that receive it out of poverty and squalor. Until the gospel arrives, however, the existing spiritual darkness usually crystallizes into tangible, multidimensional darkness—physical, economic, sociological, etc.—thereby enslaving the people.

Demonic oppression is rife: some are hard to even believe, like invisible spirits *stoning* people in Orus. Or the practice (until recently among the Zarandawas of northern Nigeria) of putting holes on both lips of women and sewing their mouths shut *so they don't eat the groundnuts that are to be planted in the farm*. Truly, “the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty” (Psalm 74:20).

According to the [Joshua Project](#),

The 10/40 Window is home to the majority of the world's poor. Of the poorest of the poor, more than eight out of ten live in the 10/40 Window. On average, they exist on less than a few hundred dollars per person per year. It has been said that “the poor are the lost, and the lost are the poor”...There is a remarkable overlap between the poorest countries of the world and those that are least evangelized.

The Hope of the Poor

Jesus specifically spoke of the gospel being preached to the poor: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor” (Luke 4:18). He told those sent by John, “the poor have the gospel preached to them” (Matthew 11:4-5). Or, as *The Message* translation says, “The wretched of the earth learn that God is on their side.” Often, not even their governments are on their side, but through the gospel, the poor learn that God is on their side.

Quite literally, the gospel (not the porous promises of poverty alleviation from populist politicians) is the only hope of the poor: “Give ear, my dear brothers; are not those who are poor in the things of this world marked out by God to have faith as their wealth, and for their heritage the kingdom which he has said he will give to those who have love for him?” (James 2:5-6).

If they don't get the good things of this life, and never get to experience Sentosa Island (Singapore), Hawaii, or Disneyworld, what awesome comfort it will be to “have faith as their wealth” and the kingdom for their heritage—to know the Savior here and afterward spend eternity with him in glory!

But to live in grinding poverty on earth and still spend eternity apart from God is double tragedy. The poor won't go to heaven simply because they are poor or the rich to hell on account of their wealth. Both must have saving faith in the finished work of Christ. But for the poor, it's the only way to avoid the worst of two worlds.

The story of the rich man and Lazarus comes to mind:

There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day. At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores. (Luke 16:19-21)

The tables were turned when both slipped into eternity: the rich man found himself in torments, whereas Lazarus was comforted. When the rich man begged for a drop of water to cool his tongue, Abraham told him, “Child, remember that in your lifetime you got the good things and Lazarus the bad things...Here

he's consoled and you're tormented" (Luke 16:25). The rich man on earth had become a pauper in eternity.

The Worst of Two Worlds

While it is desirable that everyone get the best of two worlds (i.e., enjoy prosperity on earth and still spend eternity with Christ), the least we must ensure is that those who live in temporal misery on earth must not end up in eternal misery. Instead of letting luxury lull us to lethargy and slumber, those of us whose eternal destinies have been secured by faith in Christ must sacrifice some of our comfort to free up the resources that can make a huge difference for the wretched of the earth.

It was tragic that Lazarus had it rough on earth, but it would have been infinitely more tragic if he had had the worst of two worlds.

To live in places like Orus and then spend eternity in the lake of fire is not acceptable. We are not called to die on Calvary: the sacrifice of our lives can't save the camels I saw in Orus or the cows of the Fulani. Only Jesus could pay the full penalty for the sins of the world. But it is not his responsibility to preach what he purchased: that's our job.

We must lay our lives and resources down for this supreme agenda of heaven on earth. We must mobilize every strategy that sanctified minds can fathom, give everything over our real needs, and do all we can so that by all means we can change the eternal destinies of the unreached peoples of the world.

Who knows if in the process of changing their eternal destinies, we could also enrich their lives in time with the good things that accompany salvation. Then they in turn will extend to others the boundless love that lifted them from among the wretched of the earth.

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.

PERSPECTIVES

Mission Africa in the Democratic Republic of Congo

By Leonard Kiswangi

(**Editor's note:** This article is a supplement to our [January 2011 issue](#) on "The Power of Partnerships.")

Matchmaking, Partnering, and Teamwork

When we hear what has happened through the Mission Africa initiatives which took place before Cape Town 2010, we know the Lord is indeed on the move.

Michael Cassidy, founder of [African Enterprise](#) (AE), called Mission Africa a "matchmaking initiative." This matchmaking is reflected by *teamwork* and goes beyond simply *networking*. Networking can be seen as more of a joint business venture whereby each stakeholder pursues his or her own interests (occasionally with hidden agendas).

Matchmaking, however, as expressed through Mission Africa, is a reflection of the Body of Christ whereby partners physically come together on a mission to design, set up, proclaim the gospel, and follow up. In Mission Africa, we experienced that *together, everyone* doing their part, we can *achieve more*.

Ordinary men and women of God can achieve extraordinary results if we bring our individual assets and giftings to the table, share resources, and plan, pray, and engage in working together toward the fulfillment of a common purpose. God on the move rewards our efforts in advancing his kingdom.

Through teamwork, relationships, and appreciating each person's skills, we can build up one another. This idea of teamwork is biblical. Amos 3:3 stipulates that two people cannot walk together unless they are agreed. Proverbs 27:17 says, "...as iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend." Proverbs 27:19 rightly encourages, saying, "...as in water face reflects face, so a man's heart reveals the man."

Teamed up to work together in achieving mission helps us build up divine and sustainable relationships, while also committing to advancing the kingdom and responding to real physical needs.

The Apostle Paul uses the illustration of the physical body as representative of the Body of Christ. No single part can value itself while also being isolated. Nor will one part undermine other parts and still perform in a satisfactory way. The conjunction of every part of the body brings extraordinary life-giving outcomes.

Partnership Defines African Enterprise

When AE defines its mission as "evangelizing cities of Africa in Word and Deed in Partnership with the Church," it is referring to establishing alliances such as the matchmaking experiences of Mission Africa. Through Mission Africa, African host organizations and partnering international evangelists and organizations came together to share the gospel in word and deed.

Matchmaking also applies in the context whereby local churches, denominations, and other faith-based organizations team up to conduct citywide missions aimed at reaching unreached people. Together these groups have worked, combining common goals, assets, and spiritual and material resources to advance the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and his kingdom.

Matchmaking in DRC

It is with the matchmaking framework in mind that AE co-hosted Mission Africa events in Kikwit, Democratic Republic of Congo, in June 2010, and in Kinshasa/Maluku in August/September 2010.

In Kikwit, Emmanuel Maennlein, from the French organization France Evangelisation, teamed with me and leaders of ten denominations under the Bandundu provincial synod of the Church of Christ in Congo to proclaim the gospel in four main venues. These venues included an open-air gathering at the Baptist church (CUEBC/Pungu), the nursing college (ISTM/Kikwit), the education college (ISPK/Kikwit), and the urban prison of Kikwit.

Both word and deed evangelism took place as people gave their lives to Christ for the first time or rededicated their lives to him. Others received deliverance from spiritual bondage.

The Kikwit mayor attended the opening meeting and declared that it was the first time the church was able to bring together so many people and that none of the political parties had ever gathered such a crowd. Although the outreach took place the week the World Cup was launched in South Africa, the people were not distracted. Instead, the power of the gospel being preached with the anointing of the Holy Spirit was manifested with signs and miracles.

A total of thirty-one thousand people trusted in Christ during the five-day outreach.

In the prison, we brought food and soap to the prisoners and shared the gospel with the prison manager. If we are to see other “Josephs” (Genesis 48) coming out of prison transformed and ready to live lives in Christ, we must minister to them while they are in prison. Reaching out to these prisoners made us aware of their many sad stories, some who are suffering because of the unfair and corrupt justice system. This includes one woman who was sentenced to five years in prison without a proper trial. Seventy prisoners committed their lives to Christ.

At the education college, the university chaplain told us that the meetings were divine appointments. This was because the entire board of directors attended services at the Protestant University Chaplaincy and asked the chaplain to organize a special rally to open and dedicate the 2010-2011 academic year to the Lord. We were humbled by this request and gratefully participated in November 2010, during which three hundred students and twenty-five lecturers gave their lives to Christ.

One of the pastors who attended the leadership training facilitated by Maennlein said he felt he was renewed in his training. Books donated from the pack leadership project of the France Evangelisation helped us equip pastors in areas where they don’t usually have access to such basic literature and Bibles.

In Kinshasa/Maluku, the capital of DRC, we teamed up with Bishop Todd McGregory, the Anglican Bishop from Madagascar. Our meetings included leadership training, meetings with local dignitaries, evening preaching meetings at Carmel Church in Kinshasa, and open-air meetings gathering hundreds of people in Maluku, a less-served, semi-rural municipality in Kinshasa.

The closing rally in Kinshasa drew more than five thousand people to receive the message of the gospel. This was the culmination and a beautiful expression of the matchmaking initiatives we benefitted from in partnering with Cape Town 2010.

We are grateful to our international partners, including Maennlein, with whom we conducted a follow-up mission to Kikwit in November 2010. During this visit, we encouraged the church leadership who partnered with us in June 2010 and told them we are committed to undertaking other similar initiatives in DRC. We are also planning to join the training organized by France Evangelisation in Ouagadougou in May 2011.

Conclusion

The matchmaking experience for me as a hosting organization in the DRC was very fruitful. I commend this teamwork format, which gave a broader dimension to the partnership defined in our AE mission statement. I believe we are going to make a difference and maximize church growth and impact the cities of Africa through this model. Rebuilding the nation on ancient ruins (Isaiah 58:12-14) has been the theme we have used to address issues related to anti-corruption, governance, and care for venerable social strata.

It is about teamwork, not mere networking. It is the Lord’s mission and we are his servants as different parts of the body all perfectly joined together by his blood shared on the cross.

May God bless you as you seek to advance the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ beyond your own limits and constraints.

Leonard Kiswangi is the Congo DRC team leader for [African Enterprise](#). With AE DRC, he has been involved in reconciliation, peace-making, communications, and administration. Kiswangi coordinated two Mission Africa events in the Congo.

YMCA Tribute Breakfast: The “Big C” Y

By Leighton Ford

(Editor’s note: These remarks were delivered by Leighton Ford during the Charlotte [North Carolina, USA] YMCA Tribute Breakfast on 16 February 2011. The words and convictions below represent the constancy of what we are called to as followers of Christ in a changing world. Our prayer is that as you read Ford’s words, that you will be re-inspired to make your witness for Christ stronger and more deliberate where he has placed you.)

In receiving this honor this morning, I do so gratefully, and on behalf of all the wonderful staff and volunteers who make this YMCA outstanding in our city, and our world. Most of all I want to give the honor to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, whose name makes the YMCA so distinctive.

Recently, the national YMCA changed our brand name to “The Y.” That has caused some consternation. I have no huge problem with that change. After all, we all call it The Y. I tell my wife several times a week, “I’m going to the Y”—not “the YMCA.”

What *does* matter to me, and I am sure to all of us here, is that we keep this a “Big C” Y, with Christ always unashamedly central. Think of those initials: Y – M – C – A. Which of them are distinctive?

Not “A.” There are many “associations.” That’s generic.

Not “Y.” It was at one time for “young” men. No longer. Just look around at all the gray hairs (and no hairs) in this room, including mine.

Not “M.” There are as many women as men at the Y, and especially at my Saturday a.m. yoga class!

That leaves “C” as the one distinctive letter. What would we be if we lose that?

I’ve been a member of Central, now Dowd, since the mid 1960s, with hardly a break. All of our local family are members now. I’ve used the gyms at most of the Ys in Charlotte. Starting with our oldest son, Sandy, I coached youth basketball on Saturday mornings. Tom Dooley was my big nemesis as a coach. He and I worked together to recruit the first young African-American men into the basketball program. I don’t think our team ever beat Dooley’s. For some reason, when we drafted players, he always ended up with some 7-year-old who was already six feet tall!

It was my privilege to speak at the first annual Y prayer breakfast, and then to bring the address for the next half dozen or so years—until I ran out of new things to say. Whenever I tell people in other places about the Charlotte Y, I do so with pride about the size and quality and diversity of the Charlotte Mecklenburg YMCA, with some of the biggest branches in the country.

But mostly, I tell them this is a “Big C” Y—with an emphasis on the centrality of Jesus Christ in all we do and are.

We should always remember the vision of the men who founded the Y—like George Williams with his heart for young boys in the slums of London; D.L. Moody, the Billy Graham of his day, who started as a Y secretary in Chicago. And most of all, one of my spiritual heroes—John R. Mott. Let me recount a bit of his story.

Mott was the son of a small businessman in Iowa. He was ambitious to be a success and applied to transfer as a sophomore to the new Cornell University to get the best education he could. At that point, he was a more or less nonchalant church-going Christian, but he was also a born leader and speaker. He joined the fledgling YMCA at Cornell and soon was made vice-president.

A touring team of British athletes came to speak at Cornell, young men who were devoted followers of Christ. One of them was a noted cricketer, J.E.K. Studd. Mott arrived late at the meeting. As he entered, he heard Studd utter two phrases from the Bible that riveted him: “Young man, do you seek great things for yourself? Seek them not. Seek first the kingdom of God.”

Those words burned themselves into Mott’s mind and heart. An inner struggle gripped him. Would he seek a great career in business or a profession for himself? Or would he make Christ first in his life? He went down into a ravine near Cornell and wrestled with his conscience all one night, emerging with a determination to put Christ first in his life.

For some, that would have meant going into ministry. Mott always stayed a layman. He became a traveling secretary for the Y in the United States, crisscrossing the country not only to start Ys, but to call young men to serve Christ. This included visits to Duke, Chapel Hill, and Davidson here in North Carolina.

Influenced by evangelist D. L. Moody, Mott was also the prime mover in the Student Volunteer Movement, recruiting hundreds of young people to serve as missionaries overseas. He traveled to most of the world calling students to Christ, and to be leaders in the Y movement. In China, at least two thousand young men pledged their lives to Christ under his influence.

He was undoubtedly the greatest student evangelist of his generation. But he also became a leading force in missions, the key figure in the famous 1910 Edinburgh Conference. As years passed, he became the general secretary of the Y in the United States, and for years served as chairman of the World Alliance of YMCAs.

During and after the Great War, Mott was a leader in promoting reconciliation and reconstruction, and in 1946 received the Nobel Peace Prize for his leadership in promoting peace and reconciliation, and especially his service in Russia and other war-ravaged countries.

President Woodrow Wilson invited Mott to succeed him as president of Princeton, and later asked him to become America’s first ambassador to China, saying he knew China better than any other American. Mott graciously declined both offers. His call was as an ambassador of Christ to the world, and that came before any other call. With such a heritage, we should be proud that ours is a “Big C” Y.

This morning, I would like us to remember the vision Mott had for the Y—not just a “bigger vision,” but a “larger vision”—the vision of a larger Christ.

Out of curiosity, I googled the YMCA in my hometown of Chatham, Ontario, Canada. It looks as if they have a splendid program. But there was not a single reference to Christ on their website, or to anything spiritual. It is another well-run, community service organization.

I wonder what Mott (or Williams or Moody) would think if they dropped in on that Y and found it going on as if Jesus Christ and his kingdom had never been part of it? What if they dropped in here at Dowd? They’d see the chapel. The open Bible. A Bible class announced. A prayer breakfast coming. And they’d

be glad! But perhaps they'd probe further to ask: are men and women, youth and older, actually being called to know and follow Christ here?

If Mott were here this morning, I believe he would recall us not just to a "Big C" Y, but to the a larger vision Mott had for the Y—to represent a larger Christ. *And his "larger" vision would include four major distinctive.*

First, **a commitment to evangelism.** At the very end of his life, this world statesman said to a gathering of global leaders: "While life lasts, I am an evangelist." *That is the "higher" part of the larger vision—the "upward call in Christ."* As Mott said, "The pervading purpose ... of every ... agency concerned with the spread of the Kingdom of God should be that of leading people to commit their lives to Christ as Savior and Lord."

Here's a question for every Y member, staff person, and leader here: *is Jesus Christ so vitally present in my life that those I touch at the Y will be attracted to follow him?* Am I ready and able to speak of the good news of Jesus when the opportunity comes? I like to describe evangelism as "making friends for God." Do you and I have a transforming friendship to share? (And we have certainly seen Christ in many staff members.)

The Y has a unique drawing power. Many may come here who would never go to church. What an opportunity to touch their lives!

So here's another question: *is it possible that someone could belong to the Y, play basketball, work out, eat lunch, for year after year, and never be influenced to consider Christ as their Lord?* If so, how can we determine to change that, while offering generous hospitality to all?

Second, **a commitment to young people.** "The supreme importance of taking advantage of the age of adolescence," is how Mott put it. For him, that involved great student conferences and one-on-one meetings with potential leaders.

What could it mean for us? Prayers before games and chapel at camp are important. But what about a commitment for each of us to the spiritual and leadership mentoring of young people with great potential for the future. Let me ask: *is there someone at least ten years younger than you who you are mentoring as leaders for Christ in the Y and the community?*

That is the "longer" part of the larger vision: a vision for the future.

Third, **a commitment to cooperation.** Mott had a driving passion to bring leaders together. His work on behalf of missions led to relationships with leaders worldwide. Believing that disunity among Christians kept people away from Christ, he brought church leaders together. He also interacted with political leaders, including eight presidents. He was a friend of business leaders like John Rockefeller, and gained their support for the Y and other causes close to his heart.

One of his favorite quotes was the words of Jesus who prayed that his followers "might be one that the world might believe." So he was committed to reconciliation. Another challenge emerges for us today, when we are so divided in our religious and political opinions: *can the Y—with a Big C—hold firmly to Christ, but also be a place for all to meet and come together, to learn to know and trust one another?*

That is the "wider" part of the larger vision.

Fourth, **a commitment to spiritual formation and strengthening.** Mott himself discovered early the value of a devotional life, guided by scriptures, and undergirded by prayer. He knew the value of having soul friends, a few intimates he would meet with each year after Christmas for a time of prayer and intimacy.

I think if he were here today, watching us in our hurried and distracted lives, he would remind us how Jesus would withdraw from the crowds to pray, and chide us with these words:

My dear friends, if our blessed Lord Who is our perfect example in everything else found it necessary ... to hold unhurried fellowship with the Heavenly Father, what presumptuous and alarming folly for us to assume that in these busy, noisy lives of ours, and in the midst of the dangerous cross-currents of the modern world, we can do without this truly Christ-like practice.

That is the “deeper” part of the larger vision.

Mott’s grandson, Andrew, recalls a phrase his grandfather often used: “Old things are passing away. All things may become new. Not by magic, not by wishful thinking, but by self-sacrifice and the will to bring them about in the name of Jesus Christ.”

So I leave you with this larger vision for a “Big C” Y:

- The higher vision: to follow Christ and call others to follow him
- The longer vision: to mentor young leaders for the future
- The wider vision: to live and show unity in Christ in a broken world
- The deeper vision: to “take the hand of Christ,” knowing we can do all things through Christ who strengthen us

Then, as Willie Stratford, one of the Y’s long-time and beloved trustees used to say, the YMCA can be “Christ’s representative in the marketplace.”

Leighton Ford is president of **Leighton Ford Ministries**, which focuses on raising up younger leaders to spread the message of Christ worldwide. He served from 1955 to 1985 as associate evangelist and later vice president of the **Billy Graham Evangelistic Association**. Ford is honorary life chairman of the **Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization**, having served from 1976 to 1992 as chair.

Cooperation of Evangelical Leaders for the Sake of World Evangelism Continues

By Anatoliy Glukhovskyy

On 25-26 November 2010, the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary hosted 153 participants for The Third Lausanne Eurasian Consultation Meeting. Among the participants were leaders from Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Kazakhstan. They shared their testimonies and impressions about The Third Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization in Cape Town and discussed how to apply what they learned in their local context.

Lausanne international director Lindsey Brown preached an encouraging message on the importance of being salt and light in the world in order to transform our society and shared stories about what God is doing around the world. He also shared what kind of results are to be achieved during the post-Congress period.

Two plenary sessions were held with senior and younger leaders discussing what the Eurasian region is able to contribute to Lausanne. As Eugeny Bakhmutskiy, senior bishop deputy of the Russian Baptist Union, said,

First of all, Eurasia is able to give an example of evangelical world unity; secondly, we can provide the Church with intellectual and analytical resources—people who can give analytical and honest evaluation to the contemporary world, in sake of the further mission; and lastly, we can provide with an active evangelism among youth—as we see a great potential in it.

Participants also identified three main functions of Lausanne:

1. It unifies on a regional level.
2. It informs on world situations.
3. It gives a platform for analysis of the past, contemporary, and future events on a worldwide level.

Anatoliy Glukhovskyy (DMin) is the Eurasia international deputy director for **Lausanne**. He is also president of the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary in Kiev, Ukraine.

LEADERSHIP PROFILES

Leadership Profile: George Korah, Designer, Publisher, Managing Director, India

Q. Please tell us about your family.

A. I am married to Elsa and we have three children, Andrew, Janita, and James. We live in Bangalore, India.

Q. Please give us a brief overview of your work and ministry.

A. I am from India and am founding director of **Primalogue Publishing Media**. I have a keen interest in graphic design and have been involved in Christian publishing for nearly fifteen years. Primalogue is a company that endeavors to set Christian publishing on a firm footing in India. It was the realization of a 15-year dream.

Prior to this, I worked with the **IFES** movement in India and with the **South Asia Institute for Advanced Christian Studies**. My work in these organizations helped me gain experience in publishing and develop my interest in graphic design.

I am now a specialist in design and layout and had the privilege to be the design and layout manager at the Lausanne III: Cape Town 2010. I was responsible for the layout of the daily, *Cape Town Today*, and the commemorative *Cape Town 2010*.

My two friends (Paul Joshua and Geordee) and I set up Primalogue to be a new generation publisher that focuses on high quality, high competence, and getting a good value for your money. Our services include design and layout, editing, proofreading, printing and shipping, ebook conversion for Kindle and iPad, etc.

We have worked with Paternoster, Child Theology Movement, Interserve, William Cary Library to provide design, layout, printing, and shipping to different cities in U.K., U.S., Europe, and Asia. In India, we have worked on projects with SAIACS and Union Biblical Seminary.

Evangelism. On Point.

Santosh was a good friend during my college days. During our graduate studies, we stayed in the college dorm. Although Santosh did not share my convictions about Jesus as Saviour & Lord, we had a lot in common. We would spend long hours together, talking and discussing our faith and beliefs. We agreed on matters of principles and values. Occasionally, he would join our Bible study group. He would raise questions and throw us off track.

Three years passed and it was nearing graduation. Santosh came running to me one day. He was apparently excited about something. He said that he has put his trust in Jesus.

Almost fifteen years later, I suddenly received a phone call. It was Santosh. He said he is now pastoring a church.

The latest addition to Primalogue is its new ebook division. We now have in-house capabilities for ebook publishing and offer this service to publishers who want their books converted to ebooks for various platforms like the Kindle, iPad, etc.

Q. What is your favorite quote?

A. "I have never let my schooling interfere with my education." – Mark Twain

Q. Who has been the most influential person in your life/ministry, and why?

A. It is difficult to identify one person. I must recognize the collective family of the IFES movement both in India and abroad. There are several who mentored me at different times and numerous role models who showed the way.

Q. What one issue do you believe is the greatest barrier or opportunity to evangelism, and why?

A. Denominationalism is the greatest barrier to evangelism today. Denominationalism divides. It excludes or includes. It creates fences to keep you in or out. It nurtures exclusive camps and projects a fragmented church to friends of other faiths.

Q. What book do you most often recommend to others to read, and why?

A. *Resurrection* by Leo Tolstoy. The book is a classic

examination of guilt, forgiveness, and redemption.

Q. What would you like to be doing in five years?

A. I would like to see Primalogue employing twenty-five people, providing Christian professionals a promising and rewarding career environment in publishing and media.

Q. How can people be praying for you?

A. That my partners and I would seek God for wisdom as we establish Primalogue as a professional option for publishing in South Asia.

INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHING

Satisfying the Global Hunger for the Written Word

By John Maust

In the early 1980s I took a three-month leave from the news department at *Christianity Today* and jetted south to study Spanish in Costa Rica. Little did I suspect where that journey would ultimately lead.

**International Publishing: Intro to Our
New Department**

God gave me a love for Latin America, and ultimately I left the magazine to explore full-time ministry there. During an extended trip around Central and South America, I asked missionaries and Latin pastors how a North American journalist could fit into Christian work. “We need more Latin-authored Christian books and articles,” they invariably said. “You can come and train Latin Christians to write.”

To my surprise, eighty to ninety percent of all Christian books in Spanish were translations from English or another language. It didn’t make sense. Why would Latin Americans want to read a Christian book about time management or youth ministry, for example, written by authors from a country with such different cultural, economic, and family values?

I spent four years in Peru as a missionary journalist focused on training writers. Later, I began equipping and encouraging local Christian publishers and authors, primarily in hard countries of the world, through [Media Associates International](#) (MAI).

In my travels with MAI, I meet men and women with incredible stories and a passion to write and get published. But many of their stories remain untold. A striking imbalance of Western translations remains. In some countries, at least four in every five Christian books has been translated from English or originally written in a culture foreign to the reader. One of the most strategic global ministries today is vibrant local Christian publishing and authorship.¹

Books Build the Body

The Church in every country and culture needs skilled Christian writers who can speak to the unique interests and needs of its people. Indeed, the strength of a nation’s Church lies in direct proportion to its body of locally-authored and produced Christian literature.

Bright spots exist where Christian publishers and writers are effectively edifying the Church. For example, eighty-four African biblical scholars participated in the Africa Bible Commentary, a project which is equipping African nations and informing the Church worldwide. [OMF Literature](#) in the Philippines has won multiple national book awards, influencing both Christians and larger society.

Yet the preponderance of translations and imported books in many countries bolsters the false notion that Christianity is purely a Western or imported religion and thus irrelevant, if not repugnant (depending upon one’s view of Western culture).

Mark Carpenter, CEO of [Editora Mundo Cristão](#), Brazil’s largest independent Christian publisher, said,

I remember a young Brazilian Christian psychologist who vehemently disagreed with a North American author’s instruction about raising children. It took her a while to sort out what was biblical and what was merely cultural. As Brazilian Christians read our countless translated books, my concern is that some may end up thinking of evangelical Christianity as patently foreign, nice but not vital, interesting but not indispensable, commendable but not relevant.

As Colombian church leader Harold Segura says, the Church has always been “the people of the Book and of books.” Throughout Christianity, the expansion of the Church has been driven by literacy and the influence of key books. [Mission Associates International](#) (MAI) is pleased to partner with Lausanne World Pulse to present a series of articles focused on global Christian publishing.

You’ll gain a fast-paced look at trends and opportunities from top leaders in Christian publishing in the various world regions. You’ll also find reviews of significant new books published in the Majority World. Discover how the power of the written word is helping to expand the kingdom and strengthen the Church.

End the Famine of Global Christian Literature

MAI equips and nurtures talented men and women with a passion for producing Christian literature for their own people. Since our founding in 1985, MAI has equipped local Christians in sixty-three countries on five continents. As a result, we've seen budding writers developed, publishing houses grown, periodicals begun, and books and magazines produced that speak to the hearts of readers in their own languages.

We advance the gospel by equipping and encouraging Christians to produce literature that nurtures the Church and attracts readers to Christ.

The power of the written word to transform lives and nourish believers is most evident in the world's hard places. The potential impact is greatest where readers are most hungry for hope and encouragement. MAI invests in publishing initiatives that may struggle with hostile politics, volatile economics, and the desolation of war. We focus on countries with few Christians and little publishing activity.

Veteran editor Babu Verghese of India believes the ministry role of the written word will increase, not decrease, in the years ahead:

Literature is the future of Indian evangelism. The era of public Christian crusades, conventions, and open-air preaching is over in India. Witnessing has to be done very discreetly through friendship evangelism and passing on effective literature. Therefore, we need trained writers and editors who can address relevant issues. The need is urgent as the door for evangelism is being closed at a fast pace.

As an evangelistic or pre-evangelistic medium, the written word is especially effective. "In some respects, publishing has the potential to penetrate resistance and defenses better than any other medium," notes American author Tim Stafford. "Print is portable. You can take most literature anywhere you want."

MAI training is tailored to meet specific needs in consultation with local publishers. Our global network of volunteer trainers enables culturally appropriate training. These trainers are leading Christian writers and publishing professionals from around the world. For example, an editor from Singapore taught women in a closed country of Asia how to publish a magazine. The first three issues sold out quickly. The happily married writer of a featured testimony gave a copy of the magazine to her ex-boyfriend. He had deserted her while she was pregnant with his child. He was so moved by her story that he and his family received Christ.

Other MAI trainers are helping to raise up authors in the Middle East during a three-year project with a Jordanian publisher. In Europe, marketing professionals equip publishers to reach readers outside the church.

Every three years, MAI gathers Christian writers and publishers to participate in [LittWorld](#), the only international conference of its kind. Since 1988, LittWorld has attracted talented men and women from ninety-four countries. Together they sharpen their skills, broaden their perspective and renew their calling. Join us for LittWorld 2012 in Kenya (details forthcoming).

Power of the Written Word

Today's technology has created major innovations in publishing. The Internet has enabled once-isolated publishers to access business advice, to market broadly and distribute via online bookstores. Print-on-demand technology enables printing books in limited quantity, even one at a time.

E-books and social networking tools permit authors and publishers to create and promote their writings with minimal overhead costs. Notably, the publishing format with the greatest consistent sales growth in the U.S. is electronic—books formatted for download to a computer or for use with a mobile phone or e-reader. In China, twenty-five million readers read books only on their cell phones.

Despite these new opportunities, publisher Mark Carpenter says, “Christian publishers around the world continue to face daunting challenges that threaten their effectiveness, expansion, and often their very survival.” These challenges include:

- Environments hostile to Christianity
- Managing finances to publish profitably
- Developing local writers
- Recruiting and leading staff
- Launching new titles to ensure sales of initial print runs
- Training editors
- Benchmarking against the best in one’s context as a strategy for growth

Writers and publishers still need access to the best training resources to compete where the Church is struggling and readers must choose between buying bread or books. MAI continues to focus on investing in talented men and women in the “hard places of the world.”

What the West Needs to Hear

My wife and I took Kenyan writer friend Wambura Kimunyu to a Chicago-area bookstore. “I hunted for the Africa section,” she said. “I found twenty books on one shelf, and none were written by Africans.” She challenged us, “Does it matter who tells the stories?”

Not only is indigenous Christian literature critical to the maturation of a nation’s church, we in the West need to hear stories from fellow believers in the Majority World that will inspire or perhaps help jolt us from spiritual lethargy.

Nearly a decade ago, author Philip Jenkins predicted that Christianity’s core would move to the Global South—Asia, Africa, and Latin America. He was right. As of 2010, sixty percent of Christians lived in the Global South, and that number is predicted to grow to seventy percent by 2025. Ironically, publication of local authors is least active where the Church is growing fastest.

I give thanks for visionary publishers and trainers who are raising up new voices in their regions of the world. “People who have written about Africa often talk about our mellow heart, the joy and laughter in our bright smiles and sometimes about our pain. What is not captured, however, is our faith—how we live our lives in the light of God’s guidance and grace,” wrote Lillian Tindyebwe of the Uganda Faith Writers Association. “There are profound stories of the ordinary person’s enduring faith, that which compels them to smile even when they are not sure about the next meal.”

Together we can end the famine of global Christian literature. The Body of Christ partnering around the world can mobilize an international army of Christian writers. God’s kingdom will expand, and Christians worldwide will be enriched as a result.

Read insights on global publishing in John Maust’s blog, [Inside MAI](#). Stay connected to MAI on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Youtube](#).

John Maust is president of **Media Associates International** (MAI), a publishing training ministry based near Chicago. He previously served as a missionary journalist with **Latin America Mission**, and as assistant news editor at ***Christianity Today*** magazine.

Terms and Conditions of Use

All material from LWP is copyrighted by Evangelism and Missions Information Service (EMIS), its partners, and authors. All rights are reserved. Except for personal use, no part of LWP may be reproduced by any mechanical, photographic, or electronic process, or in the form of an audio recording, nor may it be stored in a retrieval system, transmitted, or otherwise copied for public or private use without written permission of EMIS. For information regarding reprints or permissions, email info@lausanneworldpulse.com.