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Mission practitioners are typically characterized by their willingness to serve sacrificially as need be. Mission methods that practitioners employ vary by tradition, conviction, and circumstances. There are often striking contrasts between values of innovation and of faithfulness that practitioners manifest in their service. While addressing a wide range of other topics as well, this issue's articles speak to the varying ways that Christian mission practitioners exhibit enthusiasm, innovation, and faithfulness.

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Editorial

"The Duty of Discrimination"

J. Nelson Jennings

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> The Lord said to Moses, 'Speak to the people of Israel, that they take for me a contribution. From every man whose heart moves him you shall receive the contribution for me. And this is the contribution that you shall receive from them: gold, silver, and bronze, blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twisted linen, goats' hair, tanned rams' skins, goatskins, acacia wood, oil for the lamps, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense, onyx stones, and stones for setting, for the ephod and for the breastpiece. And let them make me a sanctuary, that I may dwell in their midst. Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it' (Exodus 25:1-9).
>
> And Moses called Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose mind the Lord had put skill, everyone whose heart stirred him up to come to do the work. And they received from Moses all the contribution that the people of Israel had brought for doing the work on the sanctuary…. All the craftsmen who were doing every sort of task on the sanctuary came, each from the task that he was doing…. And all the craftsmen among the workmen made the tabernacle…. (Exodus 36:2-3a, 4, 8a).

The construction of the tabernacle, its furnishings, and the priestly garments were monumental in the history of God's people. Having recently escaped Egyptian bondage, Israel now had tangible assurance of God's presence with them in the wilderness. Moreover, the tabernacle would end up matching the Egyptian sojourn in terms of longevity, serving as God's visible residence among Israel until Solomon's temple succeeded it in yet another covenantally pivotal event (I Chronicles 6:32). Of course, the tabernacle's pointing to its anti-type—Jesus tabernacling among his people—was arguably its most central role within the historical drama of God's worldwide redemption.

Several aspects of the tabernacle's construction are instructive for understanding certain key dynamics of Christian mission—and of themes treated in this January issue's various articles. One aspect is the set of impressions that the tabernacle, both in design and actual construction, must have made on the Israelites. The eye-popping colors, extensive variety and qualities of materials, and required skill of craftsmanship surely grabbed the Israelites' attention and admiration. As for this issue of *Global Missiology - English*, I dare say that its contents will make an array of impressions on readers. Mission topics addressed range from missionary training to worldwide ecclesiastical tensions to analyzing movements to Christian theologizing about religious traditions. Books reviewed discuss primal peoples' wisdom, Samo Christianity (in PNG), Southeast Asian Christian missions, and cross-cultural gospel communication. Such a range of themes point to how simply recognizing various facets of Christian mission can inspire awe in the face of all that is involved.

Along with the tabernacle's impressive design and appearance was the amazing manner in which the Israelites freely gave "more than enough" (Exodus 36:5) of the required materials. This overflowing, heartfelt, and willing response came on the heels of the Israelites having created the idolatrous golden calf while impatiently waiting on Moses to descend from Mt. Sinai (Exodus 32).

Moses's account stresses the Israelites' heartfelt willingness to contribute materials, time, and skills for the construction project: "Whoever is of a generous heart," Moses appealed (Exodus 35:5); then, "Everyone whose heart stirred him, and everyone whose spirit moved him" contributed (Exodus 35:21); "All who were of a willing heart" (22) brought needed objects; "All the women whose hearts stirred them to use their skill spun the goats' hair" (Exodus 35:26). In sum, "All the men and women, the people of Israel, whose heart moved them to bring anything for the work that the Lord had commanded by Moses to be done brought it as a freewill offering to the Lord" (Exodus 35:29).

It almost goes without saying that Christians' heartfelt participation in missions is a vitally important matter. This issue's two articles that deal with missionary preparation and training deal directly with the topic. Struggles within the worldwide Anglican Communion to serve together wholeheartedly in mission are examined in another article. How to relate wisely and from the heart with adherents of other religions is also taken up. Moreover, three articles address the why's and how's of understanding with integrity our attitudes toward movements. All of the authors no doubt hope that readers will come away serving in Christian mission enthusiastically.

Along with the tabernacle's impressive design and construction, toward which God's people willingly gave even more than what was needed, was the striking manner in which the Israelites had acquired the items they contributed for holy use. Just prior to the final plague, God commanded the Israelites to ask their Egyptian neighbors "for silver and gold jewelry and for clothing" upon their impending exodus—"and they let them have what they asked. Thus they plundered the Egyptians" (Exodus 11:2, 12:35-36). As Origen and later Andrew Walls have pointed out, in the end "Materials that were being misused in the heathen world were thus used, thanks to the wisdom of God, for the worship and glorification of God." Origen and Walls note as well how God's people are all too easily influenced adversely from sinful environments. Even so, Christians are to learn "the duty of discrimination" (not racial discrimination, but religious discernment) from the Israelites' example in using cultural tools provided within God's providence (Origen 1911; Walls 2017, 32).

Just as the intermingling of Egyptian materials and Israel's divinely designed tabernacle demonstrate, a central theme of Christian mission involves cross-cultural and interreligious encounters. In particular, such encounters include missionaries and recipients alike having to make decisions about the compatibility of current cultural realities and biblical standards. Evangelicals have wrestled with such decisions under the banner of "contextualization," all the while warning against polluting, adulterating, changing, or otherwise adversely affecting the gospel by "syncretism." Post-Vatican II Roman Catholics have approached gospel-culture interactions as "inculturation" or "accommodation" (John Paul II 1990; Phan 2016), while Orthodox missiologists have been slower "to make their missionary presentation of the Gospel and the Church as culturally relevant as possible" (Rommen 2018). Many of the increasing numbers of churches that do not fit into an "Orthodox-Catholic-Protestant" classification scheme have had to deal with the added burden of disentangling external traditions imposed on them as non-negotiable necessities. No matter the tradition or group, all Christians throughout the generations have in fact been discriminating gospel-cultural interactions in whatever contexts they have been living.

All of this issue's articles, along with the books reviewed (and the reviews themselves), navigate in their own ways contextualization matters. For all of us as readers, missiologists, and mission participants, at least two related needs of Evangelicals are of central importance. One is

the imperative to shift away from a seemingly ingrained focus on the human messenger (the missionary) as the primary "contextualizer." Instead, the primary agents are the Holy Spirit and followers of Jesus—with the messengers (especially expatriates) serving more as catalysts (Jennings 2003). Catalysts are necessary but of secondary importance in such processes as "contextualization." Note as well that "followers of Jesus" include gospel messengers, all of whom have our/their own contextual traits in need of examination. The second need is coming to grips with the biblical reality that the good news, the "gospel," is always and inherently situated contextually—not contextually relative, but contextually conveyed and understood. Evangelicals seem prone here as well to an instinct that clings to an elusive and imaginery "decontextalized" gospel. Thanks be to God for effectively communicating the gospel to actual people who are scattered throughout his world of manifold contexts.

The evangelical commitment to biblical faithfulness will especially resonate with a fourth important aspect of the tabernacle's construction emphasized in God's strict command to Moses, "Exactly as I show you concerning the pattern of the tabernacle, and of all its furniture, so you shall make it" (Exodus 25:9). From the items gathered to the design to the actual construction, Moses and the craftsmen were to follow not their own tastes or examples of religious structures in Egypt but specially revealed divine instructions—"Exactly as I show you." Faithfulness to God's design was paramount.

How does faithfulness in mission service connect to how Moses and the Israelites were to construct the tabernacle "exactly" as God instructed? How did "Bezalel and Oholiab and every craftsman in whose mind the Lord had put skill" exercise creative judgment as they actually made the tabernacle, its furnishings, and the priestly garments? What characterizes "faithful" mission service, and how does creative judgment come into play? Assuming Moses and the Israelites "faithfully" followed God's command, including in how they gathered and used Egyptian materials, how does the "faithfulness" criterion pertain to missionary training, theologies of religion, ministering in contexts of confused and contested sexual identities, and current discusssions about mission movements?

This issue's contents help in considering such questions. However we might enthusiastically, creatively, and faithfully work through our particular avenues of mission service, may God continue to guide us in our necessary exercise of "the duty of discrimination."

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Reformed Theology and Movements: What Can We Learn from Each Other?

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Abstract

In some current missiological discourse, Reformed theology and movement thinking are portrayed as contrary to each other. This article models and advocates constructive dialogue between these two streams of thought. Demonstrating connection points between Reformed theology and movement approaches, it suggests ways in which each can benefit from the other and offers paths for ongoing dialogue.

Key Words: Church Planting Movements, Reformed Theology, Disciple Making Movements, Motus Dei, Reformed Missions

Introduction

In recent years, many missiologists and practitioners have reported tens of millions in unreached people groups coming to saving faith in Christ (Long 2020, 39; Garrison 2014; Coles & Parks 2019). These reports have stimulated much missiological discussion. However, the little existing interaction of Reformed theologians and missiologists with movement advocates has primarily taken the form of critique (Terry 2017; Rhodes 2022; Clark 2022), often with the two sides speaking past one another.

This article's purpose is modest and invitational: how, for the sake of collective commitment to the mission Christ gave his Church, can constructive dialogue mutually enrich two groups that have often remained in separate silos? A product of dialogue among movement scholar-practitioners and a Presbyterian Reformed field worker, this article progresses through three topics: (1) connections between Reformed understandings and some movement practices, (2) ways Reformed understandings might enhance movement practice, and (3) ways Reformed leaders might learn from movements. First, some preliminary definitions.

Definitions: Movements and Reformed Theology

This article focuses on common characteristics among "movements," variously described as Church Planting Movements, Disciple Making Movements, Kingdom Movements (Coles & Parks 2019, 314), or Discipleship Movements (Farah 2021). (Such descriptors should not be confused with "Insider Movements," a label representing a paradigm that includes different issues and thus will not be covered here.)

David Garrison first defined a Church Planting Movement (CPM) as "a rapid and multiplicative increase of indigenous churches planting churches within a given people group or population segment" (Garrison 2004, 8). An expanded and widely used definition adds: "When consistent, multiple-stream 4th generation reproduction of churches occurs, church planting has crossed a threshold to becoming a sustainable movement" (Coles & Parks 2019, 315).

Distinction should be made between Church Planting Movements themselves and the methods that have been used to catalyze and nurture them (Farah 2020, 3). One of the best-known of these methods is "Disciple Making Movements" (DMM). Popularized by David Watson, DMM refers to a method of working toward a CPM (Farah 2022, 7). Other movement-oriented models and methodologies include T4T, Four Fields, Zúme, and Focus on Fruit. While

these different tools and approaches for nurturing CPMs differ in various respects, they share a family resemblance in "DNA" and "movement principles" which emphasize reproducible methods, viral multiplication, every-believer evangelism, reaching groups and existing social networks, immediate obedience to Scripture, and training and releasing indigenous leaders (Farah 2022, 8-9).

As for Reformed theology, this article focuses on confessions such as the Westminster Confession of Faith

In addition, several movement practices are concrete examples of the clarity of Scripture in practice. First, ordinary people gather around the word—organized in specific, intentional ways—to discover the message of salvation. Second, most movements use intentionally selected Scripture passages that help develop a clear understanding of the gospel story. Creation-to-Christ overviews, for example, are common as they allow people to discover slowly but clearly across the span of redemptive history what God has done in Christ and how that must reorient their lives if they respond in faith. Third, the simple, easily reproduced questions (What does the passage teach us about God and people/ourselves?) naturally lead people to come face-to-face with what Scripture says about who God is, who they are before him, and therefore how they must respond to him. Potential for multiplication is increased because young believers can easily invite their friends and family to study the Scriptures in community, to discover the salvation "so clearly propounded" (WCF 1.7).

When we consider ecclesiology, we discover further connection points between Reformed theology and movement practice.

The Marks of the Church

Reformed confessions discuss visible marks which identify the presence of a true church. The Westminster Confession (25.5) notes that individual churches can be determined to be more or less pure "according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them" (WCF 25.4). Some streams of Reformed theology have described the marks slightly differently than Westminster. Calvin focused on the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments (Vos 2016, 23), whereas the Belgic Confession (Article 29) formalized the practice of church discipline as the third mark of the church. Bavinck describes the third mark as being manifest in the holiness of believers' lives, with the exercise of discipline aimed towards that end (Bavinck 2008, 312). In gathered worship, all the marks come together. To summarize, Reformed ecclesiology insists on (1) the word being taught in such a way that the gospel is clear, (2) the gospel being visibly present through baptism and the Lord's Supper, particularly in gathered worship, and (3) the word being lived out such that discipline is implemented in cases of gross disobedience and unrepentance.

While this article acknowledges divergence between movements and the Reformers' conception of the marks of the church, movements do in fact focus on areas quite similar to the Reformed marks of the church: word, sacraments, and accountability. Underlying theological convictions of various movement advocates affect the details of each mark's application, yet movement thinkers note it "is difficult to start a church if you do not have a clear idea in mind of when a group moves from being a cell group or Bible study to a church" (Smith 2019a, 76). Some movements use a diagnostic tool with groups that are developing into churches to aid in that transition. One such tool, the Church Circle, diagrams elements that should be present in a group for it to be considered a church (Smith 2019a, 82). When certain elements are not present, a group studies together the missing elements, then implements them to ensure that their life and practice together align with the Scriptures.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are considered essentials for church in movement literature, thus the Church Circle tool includes these. Smith defines a local church as "a group of baptized believers who recognize themselves as Christ's body and are committed to meeting together regularly" (Smith 2019a, 77). In the significant movement among the Bhojpuri, they "baptize people as soon as they come to faith in Christ" (John and Coles 2019, 167). Similarly, believing communities in movements around the word regularly share in the Lord's Supper in their gatherings.

The focus on obedience and accountability within movements points, in a different and limited fashion, toward the third mark of the church. From the earliest phases of group gatherings, participants hold each other accountable to submit to the authority of the word. In each study, participants commit to following the word in a specific way that week, and in the next meeting everyone is asked to share how they obeyed. This process lays the foundation for accountability, inculcating the norm and expectation that God calls believers to do the word, rather than hear the word only (James 1:22). As the group matures, this built-in DNA points toward discipline, should any members refuse to repent of sin or begin to spread false teaching (John and Coles 2019, 219; Watson & Watson 2014, 150). While movement advocates do not explicitly describe church discipline as a mark of the church as do the Reformed confessions, the accountability element in movements shows that the gospel must be "heard and heeded" (Clowney 1995, 103) and that holiness of the church's members is critical (a'Brakel 1992, 34).

We now turn to consider how both the Reformed and movement practitioners highlight God's work through existing social networks.

Another connection point between Reformed theology and movements arises from the perspective of covenant theology and its emphasis on the central role of the family and household within redemptive history. Essential to that role are God's promises to Abraham (Gen. 12:3) and the promise in Acts 2:38-39, as well as the household (oikos) baptisms in Acts. In light of these biblical themes, covenant theology has identified that God primarily works through family units (though not exclusively per Matt. 19:29). Flip Buys describes the distinctly "Reformed contribution in evangelism and mission work": the Reformed "seek individuals, yes, but we hasten to add 'and thy house'" (Buys 2020, 101). Roger Greenway, Reformed urban missiologist, has stated that knowing "the Christian faith has spread via 'chains of families,'" should not surprise "Reformed people who have believed all along that God works covenantally through believers and their families" (Greenway 1976, 46). Wilhemus a'Brakel, seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed pastor, suggested that families should function as "small congregations" and "be instrumental in the conversion of the unconverted" (a'Brakel 2012, 55).

This Reformed emphasis on the centrality of families finds a clear counterpart in movements. A principle often repeated by movement advocates and observed within movements is, "Groups, not individuals" (Larsen 2018, 173); Watson & Watson 2014, 143). Smith specifically relates this principle to the household (oikos) concept: "From Creation to Consummation, God's promise and pattern is this: you will be saved, you and all your household" (Smith 2018, 44-47). In movements, disciple-makers look for those on whom the Spirit is working and who will open up their oikos to hear the gospel. Those pre-existing family and other social networks then provide a path for gospel progress through a people group, with a common practical question at the end of each Bible study asking each participant to identify someone from their network with whom they can share what they just learned. This may mean households coming to faith at once, or over a period of time, as family members see the life transformation of those who have begun to follow Christ.

Note the clear connection: Reformed, covenantal theology represents a long theological tradition of reflecting on God's covenantal working through households, and movements put into practice an emphasis on evangelizing and discipling households among unreached people groups. Covenant theology aligns well with a missiological approach which honors pre-existing social networks—of which the household is foundational.

Having examined three important connections between Reformed theology and movements, the discussion now turns to ways Reformed understandings of Scripture may enrich movements.

Reformed Enrichments to Movements

Given the Protestant Reformation's bedrock foundation of Scripture, it should come as no surprise that certain aspects of Reformed theology's understanding of Scripture would enhance understandings and methodologies within movements.

Scripture Interprets Scripture Clarity in Action

Reformed theology of Scripture can contribute to movement practice through emphasizing an important principle of interpretation: Scripture interprets Scripture. The Westminster Confession describes this "infallible rule of interpretation": when any question arises about the meaning of a Scripture passage, "it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly" (WCF 1.9). How might this enrich the study of the word in movements?

A common Bible study approach in movements generally focuses on one or two passages at a time. Whenever a group member makes a comment about the passage being studies, a key question used in the Discovery Bible Study (DBS) approach is, "Where do you see that in the text?" This question intentionally restricts the discussion to the text under consideration. This restriction is intended to (1) teach basic Bible study skills of observation, and (2) ensure that the authority of the word stands clearly above other ideas that group members might bring into the discussion (Steinhaus 2021, 5). A Reformed approach affirms those benefits, particularly in the early days of a group primarily consisting of seekers exploring the claims of Christ.

If not situated within a larger hermeneutic, however, this practice of only one text at a time could lead to distorted interpretations. To counter this danger, a Reformed approach would suggest that the "infallible rule of interpretation" could be intentionally integrated with a discovery approach to Bible study in two ways. First, time could be taken in Bible study to intentionally relate the immediate passage under consideration with passages previously studied. This method is not unprecedented in movement thinking, though it is not always emphasized in all streams. Four Fields, for example, includes a similar question in its guide to Bible study: "Does what we have learned fit the passages studied before and after?" (Shank 2014, 66). In the framing of DBS, explicitly highlighting this point would maintain a focus on "Scripture interpreting Scripture" in practice.

Second, if questions arise related to a specific text that are not directly answered by that text or those previously studied, the facilitator could make clear that the way to answer the question is to explore more (and clearer) passages. Doing that would not require those passages be studied at that moment; it could be the next study, people could read it in between studies, or it could be incorporated into a future study series. But the principle should be explicit and clear. A new church, in this way, could work through tough issues through an expanding set of Scriptures over time, allowing their understanding to build gradually. As churches mature, they will then be able to see more and more ways in which the Scriptures all point to Christ (Luke 24:44). In so doing, a simple, reproducible means of applying the "infallible rule of interpretation" could enrich Scripture study in movements.

Scripture, Creeds, and Confessions

Another potential contribution of Reformed theology to movements is interpreting Scripture within the context of historic expressions of Christian faith. The Reformation doctrine of sola Scriptura did not reject the use of tradition for interpretation but rather subordinated it to

Scripture. The Reformers, therefore, valued the church fathers and the historic creeds of the church, and confessions were developed in the Reformation and post-Reformation era to articulate summaries of scriptural teaching. Movements avoid extrabiblical tradition, both to avoid making the gospel feel foreign and to maintain a clear focus on Scripture as the supreme standard of faith and practice. Considering that commitment, could the historic credal aspect of sola Scriptura be integrated into movements?

In fact, there are several ways one could encourage and resource those in emerging and growing movements to interpret the Scriptures alongside the illuminating insights of historic statements of faith. First, when determining what sets of Scriptures should be studied by groups, passages could be chosen that explicitly work through the content covered by historic creeds of the church. Second, follow-up questions to the core DBS questions could help people discover in Scripture, through special studies, what has been discovered in previous eras—for example about Christology. (See Shank 2011 for one example of helping new leaders in unreached areas develop a confession of faith.) Third, historic Christian statements of faith could be used explicitly with leaders as they grow in their understanding of the word and Christian history.

The Gospel as the First Mark of the Church

The first mark of the church, according to the Westminster Confession, is that "the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced" (WCF 25:4). In a broad sense, the central role of Scripture in movements connects to this mark. However, the mark is not the word in general but that the gospel must be clearly proclaimed for any group of believers to be a true church. How then does Reformed theology speak on this point into the thought and practice of movements?

First, the gospel of grace suggests avoiding the phrase "obedience-based discipleship." Though diversely explained, on the one hand this phrase is intended to describe the importance of knowledge and obedience going hand-in-hand, not that obedience is the basis of discipleship itself (Watson & Watson 2014, 4, 5, 65, 195; Farah 2020, 6; Trousdale 2012, 99). Several aspects of the function of Bible studies in movements reflect how knowledge and obedience should go together: the studies begin with what we learn about God and proceed to what we learn about man before moving to how we respond in obedience. Further, the Four Fields approach has a specific leadership training module on "Confessing the Faith," which seeks to help leaders of churches in movements articulate sound doctrine (Shank 2011), and the Bhojpuri movement uses a basic curriculum for new disciples that gives them "a basic knowledge of the Bible" (John & Coles 2019, 226). Movements emphasize obedience and knowledge growing concurrently. Life change happens in small ways as people encounter God's word, with knowledge and application remaining in close balance. In that sense, movements are urging what Payne and Marshall drew from Richard Baxter's *The Reformed Pastor*: "we should focus not only on what we are teaching, but also on what the people are learning and applying" (Marshall & Payne 2009, 109).

Nonetheless, the term "obedience-based discipleship" runs the risk of communicating that believers' obedience is the foundation of discipleship, rather than the good news of what God has done in Christ (Terry 2017, 348; Pratt 2015, 6). Although "the concern has arisen from ambiguous wording of the concept rather than lived reality among CPMs" (Coles 2021, 115), in light of broad criticism of the phrase, a Reformed understanding would recommend replacing it with something that more accurately describes the role of obedience. For example, "obedient-faith discipleship" may more faithfully represent biblical discipleship. Discipleship requires faith, but that faith should result in obedience, because faith without works is dead (James 2:17). "Obedient-faith discipleship" brings together the movement emphasis on living

out faith in obedience to Christ's commands, while also recognizing that true obedience is the "fruits and evidence of a true and lively faith" (WCF 16.2).

Second, the first mark of the church urges movement advocates to consider carefully how the gospel stays central as disciples, churches, and movements continue to grow. Trust in our own works rather than Christ —for sanctification, not only justification—has plagued many types of Christians throughout church history. Reformed theology asserts that emphasis on multiplication of disciples and churches should be combined with emphasis on long-term maturation of believers. (A related emphasis from within CPM discourse is argued in a dissertation on developing leaders for sustainable CPMs, cf. Lafferty 2020, 141). Such maturation involves rooting obedience in the gospel, maintaining clarity concerning "the distinction between obeying God as a means of self-salvation and obeying God out of gratitude for an accomplished salvation" (Keller 2012, 65-66).

The discussion can now turn to how Reformed theology can speak into movements relative to teaching.

Teaching and Preaching

As has already been noted, many CPMs employ some type of discovery Bible study as a method for reaching seekers, discipling new believers, or as part of believer gatherings. Reformed confessions also give a clear place to preaching of the word (e.g., WCF 21.5; LBC 22.5; Belgic Confession 29). How then might Reformed ecclesiology enrich movement conversations in the area of teaching and preaching?

First, it is helpful to return to a point mentioned at the start of this article: the actual reality of movements taking place throughout the world is not synonymous with the content of literature advocating movements. One could read some movement literature and conclude that DBS is the sole means of accessing the Bible in movements. However, churches in the Bhojpuri movement, one of the largest movements in the world, have a teaching time during worship that can exceed one hour, though it is more interactive than the monologue common in most churches (John & Coles 2019, 213). The Four Fields manual notes that inductive studies are "a means to an end" and that as spiritual gifts are identified, "the participative tool can easily be adjusted to allow for more formal content development such as sermons" (Shank & Shank 2014, 68). Additionally, even in movements where DBS is used extensively, training of leaders often moves beyond DBS to analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, to foster "the types of critical or analytical mental processing that is required for leaders to be able to handle complex issues in their context" (Farah 2021, 62).

Recent efforts by movement advocates to reflect biblically and theologically on teaching and preaching (T 2021) are encouraging. The following suggestions hope to lead to more engagement in this area.

First, some ways of framing conversations about teaching in movement discourse unnecessarily dichotomize ideas which Scripture brings together. For example, movement discourse sometimes indicates that studying the word in a group is "learning from God directly" (Forlines 2017, 38), whereas teaching trains people to learn the teacher's opinions (Smith 2019b, 90-91). While all believers should learn to study the word directly (and invite their unbelieving friends and family to do so with them), this dichotomous description of the relationship between DBS and other forms of word ministry is not helpful. The Spirit certainly works directly through the word (2 Tim. 3:16-17), but Christ has also given the church teachers empowered by the Spirit to teach the word (Eph. 4:11, 1 Cor. 12:28-29). Timothy is told to devote himself both to the "public reading of Scripture" and to "exhortation and teaching" (1

Tim. 4:13), thus implying that hearing the word directly need not be set in opposition to hearing from teachers—as if only one is "hearing from God" and the other is simply "hearing others' opinions." The example of the Bereans gives a better way to frame these two approaches: equip all believers to read and understand the word themselves, which will also enable them to "check and see if these things are so" (Acts 17:11) when they encounter various forms of teaching.

Second, discussions of teaching and preaching should attend to multiple aspects of Scripture's witness to the ministry of the word: in evangelistic contexts, in the ordinary lives of believers, and in the worship of the gathered church. Charles Hodge notes that "the power is in the truth, not in the channel or method of communication" (Hodge 1882, 13), yet Reformed confessions give special attention to the worship of the gathered (e.g., WCF 21). Movement discourse advocates for all believers studying the word together and inviting unbelievers into that. J. H. Bavinck, Reformed missionary to Indonesia, argues that all forms of word ministry must be organically related: "the official proclamation of the gospel always constitutes the seed out of which grows the spontaneous witness of the ordinary church member" (Bavinck 1960, 67). Distinguishing carefully between what is meant by ministry of the word in the gathered church and ministry of the word in all of life, while ensuring an organic connection between them, will help advance a mutually beneficial dialogue in relation to preaching and teaching.

Third, movement discourse would do well to consider the role of sequential consideration of whole books or portions of the Bible in the teaching and Bible study of the church. The Reformers focused on moving sequentially through books of the Bible, building on the example of the patristic church and even the synagogue before it (Old 2002). Movement advocates commonly indicate that leaders shape the understanding of DBS groups and churches via the selection of the passages they will study (Watson & Watson 2014, 171). Such an approach is valuable, particularly in the early stages, as seekers trace the story of redemption through Creation to Christ studies. However, in the ongoing life of the church, sequential study of entire books of the Bible is one way to ensure that the church receives "the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

The discussion now turns in the other direction to consider how movements may enrich Reformed understandings and practices.

Movement Enrichments to the Reformed regarding Scripture and Ecclesiology

Those who embrace Reformed theology might be surprised at what they can learn from how movements function.

Simple, Reproducible Studies before Churches Exist

Movements use simple, reproducible methods for studying the Bible, which sow seeds for the development of churches, even in the early stages of working with seekers. As noted above, typical group Bible studies insist that seekers and believers draw answers from the text, understand what the text says about God and humanity, and what responses may be demanded of them from the text (Watson & Watson 2014; John & Coles 2019, 207). The questions to facilitate the study of the text and the interaction of the participants are standardized, being used in each study and with each text. This use of oft-repeated, simple questions serves two purposes: (1) All participants can take turns facilitating the meeting, injecting the immediate expectation that all are called to serve and minister the word to each other, and (2) if participants have other friends or family members who are interested to know more, they can start a DBS with them, patterned after what they have already experienced (John & Coles 2019, 166).

These simple studies could enrich Reformed mission efforts by providing a practical means for the outworking of sola Scriptura and the clarity of Scripture in the context of unreached people groups. Where there is no church, how should missionaries begin? How can they plant churches in places where conversion is illegal, no seminaries exist, and there is great economic and educational need? How can missionaries evangelize and start new churches in a setting with great antagonism toward foreign culture and foreign missionaries in particular? How can a missionary get Scripture into the hands of people while keeping appropriate distance, to avoid bringing unwanted attention and suspicion from others? Where there is no church, how can missionaries equip people—the "learned and the unlearned" who are newly encountering Christ—to read the Scriptures and see the truths of salvation for themselves? How can missionaries help people effectively share those truths so that their unreached friends and family might also encounter Christ in his word? The simple, reproducible methods utilized in many movements help put into practice the truths that Reformed missionaries confess, especially in contexts where gospel work must start from zero.

Living under the Authority of the Word in Practice

Sola Scriptura calls believers not only to accept the Bible's authority in principle but to live in submission to the authority of the Word in practice. How have movements implemented that call, and how might their implementation of it enrich the practice of sola Scriptura among the Reformed? In movements, life change is expected to happen based on the Holy Spirit speaking through communal study of the Word. A common mechanism for such life change to occur is a consistent pattern in group Bible studies: asking participants how they will apply or obey the text and following up in the next study to hear what happened. This pattern allows groups to exhibit submission to the authority of the Word consistently—in deed, not only in word. Several movement approaches use simple methods to help people discover and obey what Scripture says. Before articulating a specific "I will" statement, participants consider if the text clearly articulates a command to obey or an example to follow or avoid (Shank & Shank 2014, 66; Watson & Watson, 155). This process can help practically to implement WCF 14.2:

> a Christian believes to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God Himself speaking therein; and acts differently upon that which each particular passage thereof contains; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come.

In other words, movement methods of engaging lost people with the Scriptures can help Reformed gospel laborers to implement practically their commitment to the authority of the word—from the earliest stages of ministry among unreached peoples.

Seed Elements

Movements operate with the simple principle that the way groups start meeting (even before all participants are believers) may significantly shape their expectation of how the group will continue, with some describing these patterns as group "DNA" (Larsen 2018, 174; Watson & Watson 2014, 144-151) or the "implicit curriculum" (Prinz 2022, 121-22). For that reason, a consistent structure is followed. Members participate by expressing their gratitude, which later turns into praise and song. They discuss their needs, which later turns into prayer, as well as finding ways to meet each other's needs, which later helps them fulfill the "one another" commands. They discuss what they learn from God's word, which creates the expectation of continued submission to the Scriptures. They articulate how they will live out what they see in the word, which grows into the mutual speaking of truth, call to repentance, and when necessary discipline. Finally, they identify with whom they can share the truth they have encountered, which sets the DNA of evangelism from the beginning. These elements shape

even initial group studies of the word with seekers. As members of the group come to faith in Christ, key elements of what it means to be a church exist in seed form and can be developed further into full expression as a biblical *ekklesia*.

This early pattern of how groups begin helps enrich Reformed ecclesiology by connecting the dots between proclaiming the gospel for the first time among an unreached people group and forming churches that exhibit all the marks of the church. Reformed ecclesiology developed in a context in which the church—more or less pure—already existed. Thus, Reformed ecclesiology insists that all ministry flows through the established body of local believers. However, where does one start when there are no local believers, and thus no local church? As S. T. Antonio puts it, "a true church is not something which happens overnight" (Antonio 2020, 347), implying therefore that "it is crucial that even from the beginning, the embryonic church has the right 'DNA'; that is, it needs to include elements which will grow and flower into the full expression of the biblical church" (Antonio 2020, 348).

Movements show how initial gospel conversations can lead to group discovery studies, which have the seed elements present to lead that group into functioning as a church. Because the seed elements are clearly present, the ingredients for that group of believers to reproduce quickly throughout their relational network are also present, even if the outside missionary were unable to stay involved with that community. In light of the goal of fourth-generation reproduction (a common key element in the definition of a movement), movements challenge others to think through how each aspect of church may or may not be replicable down the road. This approach can help Reformed people to consider how to apply their ecclesiology in a reproducible, multiplicative way among unreached people groups.

Activating the General Office

Movement advocates regularly emphasize the priesthood of all believers. What does that mean for the role of leaders in relation to the role of all believers? This is hardly a new question. Bavinck notes that the Reformation rejected the "clergy" and "laity" categories of the Roman Catholic church (Bavinck 2008, 368) and argues that "just as all believers have a gift, so also they all hold an office," even referring to it as a "universal office" (Bavinck 2008, 375). Keller describes this "Spirit-equipped calling and gifting of every believer to be a prophet, priest, and king" as "the 'general office'" (Keller 2012, 345). None of this emphasis on every believer having an "office" need deny that there is a special office for leaders, but remembering that there is a general office as well reflects Scripture's call for believers to submit to one another (Eph. 5:21), minister the word to one another (Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16), and give a reason for the hope that is in them (1 Pet. 3:15).

Working out practically how the general office and special office flow together is a perennial issue, for Reformed people as well as others. J. H. Bavinck highlighted over 50 years ago that missionaries and churches have erred by insufficiently empowering the general office: "…one thing is sure, we—and by 'we,' I mean nearly all missionary societies and sending churches—have from the outset failed to recognize and use the tremendous power inherent in the ordinary believer. We have expected too little and therefore he has done too little" (Bavinck 1960, 213-214).

If all believers have an office, as has been explicitly articulated in Reformed theology, why does Bavinck offer such a striking criticism? We suggest that the theology of general and special office has not always been integrated from the earliest stages of gospel work in new missions contexts. Movements, by integrating the expectation of every believer engaging with the word, practicing "one-anothering" in community, and speaking the word to others, provides ways for Reformed people to activate the general office in pioneer missions contexts.

Leadership development remains essential to the growth and maturation of movements (Lafferty 2020; John & Coles 2019; Cooper 2020; Parks 2019), but such development comes along with the initial and widespread focus on ordinary believers speaking the truth and reaching their communities (John & Coles 2019, 81).

Conclusion

Little meaningful interaction has taken place between Reformed thinkers and movement advocates. This article has explored several areas in which movements align with theological principles arising from the Reformation as well as ways the two may enrich each other. Each topic in this discussion could be explored more deeply with the same mindset of mutual learning. That could lead to other potential areas for exploration and dialogue. These might include the person of peace construct and its role in evangelistic strategy, the connection between leaders of different movements and different generations within movements, the multiple leaders and levels system of Presbyterianism, consideration of who administers the sacraments, and the role of miracles in gospel work among unreached people groups. Unity in Christ can be exemplified through recognizing our limitations and the strengths of those with whom we disagree. May we all pray that increased interaction between Reformed thinkers and movement advocates will increase a desire to learn from one another for the sake of God's glory among all the nations. Soli Deo gloria!

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Happily Surprised by Works of God's Spirit

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Abstract

Throughout Church history, God has worked in "normal" ways, in and through the lives of his children, in evangelism, discipleship, and missions. He has also, on numerous occasions, worked in "unusual" ways, among significant numbers of people, to greatly advance his kingdom work via evangelism, discipleship, and missions. The terms *revival* and *movement* have both been used to describe these surprisingly positive advances of kingdom ministry. This article focuses specifically on movements involving rapid and generational church planting and considers similarities and differences between revivals and movements—in principle and in practice.

Key Words: awakening, church planting movements, Jonathan Edwards, revivals

Introduction

In 1736, Jonathan Edwards wrote "A Faithful Narrative of the Surprising Work of God in the Conversion of many hundred souls in Northampton, and the Neighbouring Towns and Villages…." This narrative described the "surprising" dynamics of the first wave of the revival now known as The First Great Awakening. It has become paradigmatic for perspectives on revivals in successive centuries. While some (Waugh 2020, 16) distinguish between revivals as local phenomena and awakenings as more widespread in geography and time, their similar dynamics are such that this article will consider them together.

In recent decades, phenomena known as Church Planting Movements (CPMs) have reported surprising kingdom advance, especially among unreached peoples. J. Nelson Jennings, wondering why various analysts have labeled particular phenomena as either "revivals" or "movements," recently commented: "One area of further study (not taken up in either this issue of *Global Missiology English* or, apparently, other relevant literature) is the overlap between how 'revivals' and 'movements' both are understood and in actuality occur" (Jennings 2022, 2). This article takes a first step toward observing that overlap, with specific reference to movements known as Church Planting Movements and Disciple Making Movements, as defined below.

Scripture portrays a marvelous confluence of human effort and divine working in ministries of evangelism, discipleship, and missions to the unreached. God has ordained that certain responsibilities must be fulfilled by obedient human beings, while all human effort in these realms remains fruitless without God's Spirit working to accomplish his purposes in people's lives.

Throughout Church history, God has worked in "normal" ways, in and through the lives of his children, in evangelism, discipleship, and missions. He has also, on numerous occasions, worked in unusual ways, among significant numbers of people, to greatly advance his kingdom work via evangelism, discipleship, and missions. The terms *revival* and *movement* have both been used to describe these surprisingly positive advances of kingdom ministry. This article will focus specifically on movements involving rapid and generational church planting, as well as consider similarities and differences between revivals and movements—in principle and in practice.

First, it is important to clarify terms and delineate the scope of the comparison. Along with Michael McClymond, this article will consider revival as "a period of time in which a Christian community undergoes revitalization…. a period of religious awakening: renewed interest in religion… ( )." McClymond adds, "'Revivals' are thus *corporate, experiential events* (emphasis original; McClymond 2016, 245). Moreover, the First Great Awakening (with prominent figures such as Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield) involved a clear understanding of God's sovereign role in salvation of the lost. The Second Great Awakening, by contrast, included greater focus on human effort and introduced "new measures" such as altar calls (Nichols 2019). These features of the Second Great Awakening became embedded in two phenomena *sounding like* revival but in fact very different: *revival meetings* (a tradition of special services scheduled in advance with the goal of reviving piety) and *revivalism* (pre-planned meetings featuring well-known preachers, from Charles Finney in the nineteenth century through Billy Graham in the twentieth century). This article's focus will *exclude* those two phenomena, looking back more distinctly to revival as a work of God.

The definition employed for CPM comes from *24:14 A Testimony to All Peoples* (Coles and Parks 2019, 315): "a multiplication of disciples making disciples, and leaders developing leaders, resulting in indigenous churches (usually house churches) planting more churches. These new disciples and churches begin spreading rapidly through a people group or population segment, meeting people's spiritual and physical needs…. When consistent, multiple-stream 4th generation reproduction of churches occurs, church planting has crossed a threshold to becoming a sustainable movement." This broad CPM definition includes phenomena described as Disciple Making Movements (DMMs) (Watson and Watson 2014), Kingdom Movements (Coles and Parks 2019), and Discipleship Movements (Farah 2021). It does *not* include Insider Movements, as described in *Understanding Insider Movements: Disciples of Jesus within Diverse Religious Communities* (Travis and Talman 2006).

Descriptions of Revival

Much has been written about revival. For example, Geoff Waugh quotes Martin Lloyd-Jones, describing revival as:

> an experience in the life of the Church when the Holy Spirit does an unusual work. He does that work, primarily, amongst the members of the Church; it is a reviving of the believers. You cannot revive something that has never had life, so revival, by definition, is first of all an enlivening and quickening and awakening of lethargic, sleeping, almost moribund Church members (Waugh 2020, 16-17).

Michael McClymond writes:

> At least since the mid-1700s, reports of Christian revivals from differing geographic regions and cultural groups have shown common themes. Participants in revivals speak of their vivid sense of spiritual things, great joy and faith, deep sorrow over sin, passionate desire to evangelize others, and heightened feelings of love for God and fellow humanity. In times of revival, people often crowd into available buildings for religious services, "Filling them beyond capacity. Services may last from morning until midnight. News of a revival usually travels rapidly, and sometimes the reports of revival—in person, print, or broadcast media—touch off new revivals in distant localities. During a revival, clergy and other Christian workers may receive many requests for their services. Sometimes people

> openly confess their sins in public settings. Another mark of revivals is generosity – individuals willing to give their time, money, or resources to support the work of the revival. Revivals are often controversial, with opponents and proponents who vehemently criticize one another. Anti-revivalism typically arises in the wake of revivals. Often there are unusual bodily manifestations in revivals, such as falling down, rolling on the ground, involuntary muscle movements, laughing, shouting, and spiritual dancing. Another common feature in revivals is the occurrence of so-called signs and wonders, such as the healing of the sick, prophecies, visions or dreams revealing secret knowledge, deliverance, or exorcism from the power of Satan and the demonic, and speaking in tongues (McClymond 2016, 245).

Waugh adds this description:

> The early church lived in revival. It saw rapid growth in the power of the Holy Spirit from the initial outburst at Pentecost. Multitudes joined the church, amid turmoil and persecution. As with Pentecost, revivals are often unexpected, sudden, revolutionary, and impact large numbers of people bringing them to repentance and faith in Jesus the Lord…. Revivals continually display the characteristics and phenomena of the Pentecost account, including:
>
> 1. Divine sovereignty (Acts 2:1,2): God chose the day, the time, the place, the people, uniting old covenant promise with new covenant fulfilment. His Spirit came suddenly and people were overwhelmed at the Pentecost harvest festival.
> 2. Prayer (Acts 1:14; 2:1): The believers gathered together to pray and wait on God as instructed by the Jesus at the ascension. All revival literature emphasizes the significance of united, earnest, repentant prayer in preparing the way for revival and sustaining it.
> 3. Unity (Acts 2:1): The disparate group meeting 'in one accord' included male and female, old and young, former zealot and former collaborator, most of the twelve and those who joined them. Their differences blended into the diversity of enriched unity.
> 4. Obedience to the Spirit (Acts 2:4): Filled with the Spirit they immediately began using gifts of the Spirit as 'the Spirit gave utterance'.
> 5. Preaching (Acts 2:14): Peter preached with anointed Spirit-empowered boldness, as did the others whose words were heard in many languages.
> 6. Repentance (Acts 2:38-39): Large numbers were convicted and repented. They were instructed to be baptized and to expect to be filled with the Spirit and to live in Spirit-led community, and that succeeding generations should expect this also.
> 7. Evangelism (Acts 2:40-41, 47): The new believers witnessed through changed lives bringing others to faith in the Lord daily.
> 8. Charismata (Acts 2:43): The era of the Spirit inaugurated supernatural phenomena including glossolalia, signs, wonders and miracles, demonstrated powerfully among the leaders, but not limited to them.
> 9. Community (Acts 2:42-47): The outpouring of the Spirit brought the church into being as a charismatic, empowered community which met regularly in homes for discipleship instruction, supportive fellowship, daily informal eucharistic meals, and constant prayer.
> 10. Rapid church growth (Acts 2:47): Typical of revivals, The Lord added to the church those who were being saved. This eventually transformed the community of Judaistic

> believers into a constantly expanding community embracing all people" (Waugh 2020, 20-21).

In summary, a revival impacts a large number of believers with a powerful sense of the reality of spiritual things, a deepened faith, and a passionate desire to evangelize others. Repentance and radical obedience become common manifestations of deep love for God and for others.

Descriptions of CPMs

In his foundational book on the subject, David Garrison describes "Ten Universal Elements" found in every CPM:

1. Extraordinary Prayer (and extraordinary faith) by ordinary believers
2. Abundant Evangelism
3. Intentional Planting of Reproducing Churches
4. The Authority of God's Word
5. Local Leadership
6. Lay Leadership [ministry is not dependent on ordained people]
7. House Churches
8. Churches Planting Churches
9. Rapid Reproduction
10. Healthy Churches (Garrison 2004, 172).

He then describes ten factors found in *most* CPMs:

1. A climate of uncertainty in society
2. Insulation from outsiders
3. A high cost for following Christ
4. Bold fearless faith
5. Family-based conversion pattern
6. Rapid incorporation of new believers
7. Worship in the heart language
8. Divine signs and wonders
9. On-the-job leadership training
10. Missionaries suffered (Garrison 2004, 221-222).

Samuel Kebreab, in "Observations Over Fifteen Years of Disciple Making Movements," describes these "Features of Disciple Making Movements":

- DMMs Depend Heavily on Prayer, which is Often Followed by Miraculous Signs. Every DMM we have the privilege of witnessing traces its origin to intense intercessory prayer and fasting….
- DMMs Equip Ordinary People to Achieve the Impossible. DMMs are simple, scalable, and sustainable, partly because they usually start through committed and obedient ordinary people….
- DMMs are Holistic: Merging Compassion and Healing with the Gospel of Kingdom Transformation….
- DMMs Require Trusting God to Supply the Resources Locally….
- DMMs Depend on Lost People Discovering God in the Bible and Choosing to Obey What they Discover About God's Will in Every Passage….

- DMMs Involve Ordinary Disciples Making Disciples and Churches Planting Churches….
- DMMs Require Courage and Sacrifice (Kebreab 2021, 27-30).

Three advocates of different CPM approaches have together presented a summary of similarities:

> A CPM approach is one in which:
>
> 1. There is awareness that *only God can start movements*, but disciples can follow biblical principles to pray, plant, and water the seeds….
> 2. The focus is to make *every follower of Christ a reproducing disciple* rather than merely a convert.
> 3. Patterns create *frequent and regular accountability for lovingly obeying what the Lord is speaking to each person and for them to pass it on* to others in a loving environment. This requires a participative small-group approach.
> 4. *Each disciple is equipped in comprehensive ways* (such as interpreting and applying Scripture, a well-rounded prayer life, functioning as a part of the larger Body of Christ, and responding well to persecution/ su ering) in order that they can function not merely as consumers, but as active agents of kingdom advance.
> 5. *Each disciple is given a vision both for reaching their relational network and for extending the kingdom to the ends of the earth* ….
>
> Once a CPM has started – regardless of the approach used – the resulting disciples and churches have very similar DNA with similar outward expressions.
>
> - *Praying*—CPM is always accompanied by a prayer movement. Once a movement starts it is also marked by extraordinary prayer….
> - *Scriptural*—In CPMs, the Bible is taken very seriously. Everyone is expected to be a disciple and sharer of the Word, and to interpret and apply Scripture.
> - *Obeying*—The churches are devoted to listening to God's Word and obeying it individually and corporately….
> - *Indigenous*—The outsider looks for Persons of Peace and households of peace (Mt. 10, Mk 6, Lk. 9, 10) that God has prepared within a society. When these people and groups come to faith, they are immediately equipped to reach others. Since the insiders are the disciple-makers, the new churches can grow in ways that are both based on Scripture and adapted to the culture.
> - *Holistic*—By focusing on obedience to Scripture, believers become eager to show God's love to people. The disciples in these movements love those around them in practical ways, such as caring for widows and orphans, ministering to the ill, and fighting oppression.
> - *Rapidly Reproducing*—Every disciple and church is equipped to reproduce and taught to rely on the Holy Spirit to empower them (Parks, Sergeant, and Smith 2019: 39-40).

These sources convey the most common and salient features of CPMs. Further sources will be cited below to illustrate additional specific features.

Notable Similarities between Revivals and CPMs

The first notable similarity between revivals and CPMs is the foundational role of *extraordinary prayer*. Waugh states: "All revival literature emphasizes the significance of united, earnest,

repentant prayer in preparing the way for revival and sustaining it" (Waugh 2020, 20). McClymond concurs: "Devout authors tell us that fervent prayer is a 'leading indicator' of an impending revival" (McClymond 2018, 44); and, "The practice of intercessory prayer, the traditions of biblical preaching, and the very expectation of periodic 'outpourings' of the Holy Spirit are all a part of the religious culture presupposed in North American revivals" (McClymond 2018, 45); and,

> In *Humble Attempt* (1748) Edwards promoted the transatlantic "concert of prayer" in which congregations in far-flung locations united to pray for revival on the same day of the month. This work had widespread historical influence throughout the 1800s, and again, since the 1980s, reemerged as a seminal work in the international Christian prayer movement (McClymond 2016, 248).

The first of Garrison's universal elements is "Extraordinary Prayer" by ordinary believers. Parks et al. also list "Praying… extraordinary prayer" as common in all CPM approaches.

A second notable similarity between revivals and CPMs is *the essential role of Scripture* in powerfully touching people's minds and hearts. In revivals, Scripture has most commonly been presented by preachers from a pulpit to a group gathered within a church building. McClymond mentions "biblical preaching" as "part of the religious culture presupposed in North American revivals" (McClymond 2018, 45). In CPMs, partly due to their occurrence in most cases among an unreached group, Scripture is more often studied inductively in small groups or house churches. As mentioned above, Garrison listed among his universal elements "The Authority of God's Word," while Parks et al. list "*Scriptural*…. Everyone is expected to be a disciple and sharer of the Word, and to interpret and apply Scripture." Movement leader Victor John describes two of the "Principles that Guide the Movement" as "The Word is the Foundation" and "Obedience and Accountability to the Word" (John and Coles 2019, 178,180).

A third notable similarity between revivals and CPMs is *rapid expansion*. Michael McClymond writes: "In almost all cases of rapid expansion, the growth of Christianity was connected with 'religious revival' or 'awakening,' or, perhaps better, 'charismatic people movements'" (McClymond 2016, 244). Waugh describes rapid church growth as "typical of revivals" (Waugh 2020, 21).

Sam Storms cites Jonathan Edwards' comments: "One of the more distinguishing features of the awakening was the acceleration or intensification of God's activity. Edwards described it this way: "God has also seemed to have gone out of his usual way, in the quickness of his work, and the swift progress his Spirit has made in his operations on the hearts of many. It is wonderful that persons should be so suddenly and yet so greatly changed…. When God in so remarkable a manner took the work into his own hands, there was as much done in a day or two, as at ordinary times, with all endeavours that men can use, and with such a blessing as we commonly have, is done in a year" (Storms 2007, 25).

As noted above, Garrison's ninth universal element is "Rapid Reproduction." Parks et al. also list "Rapidly Reproducing" as a characteristic of all CPM approaches. This constitutes one of the most notable happy surprises common to revivals and CPMs.

The fourth notable similarity between revivals and CPMs is
in ministry. This has been variously described. McClymond writes: "Revivals refashion social and

ecclesial structure by transferring power from centre to periphery. People not previously given a voice, or a chance to lead, are suddenly thrust into the limelight. Women, people of colour, the young, and the less educated have all played central roles in Christian revivals of the past century" (McClymond 2018, 81).

Parks et al. mention "every follower of Christ a reproducing disciple," "Each disciple is equipped in comprehensive ways," and "Each disciple is given a vision both for reaching their relational network and for extending the kingdom to the ends of the earth." Movement leader Shodankeh Johnson describes "ordinary people" as one of Jesus' movement principles: "Jesus empowered people, empowered every believer. That is how ministry becomes scalable and reproducible: through ordinary people" (Johnson 2022, 15).

A fifth similarity is *more-than-normal occurrence of signs and wonders*. Not every revival or every CPM has brought an increase in such phenomena, but the presence of such has been noteworthy in a vast majority of revivals and CPMs. So much so that reports of such events have often occasioned skepticism and criticism of the accounts. McClymond reports: "Another common feature in revivals is the occurrence of so-called signs and wonders" (McClymond 2018, 74). Waugh (above) describes these as "Charismata."

One of Garrison's factors found in most CPMs is: "Divine signs and wonders." Victor John writes: "In our context, signs and wonders always follow wherever the gospel is preached. Miracles happen quite commonly in the movement, but we don't focus on those. We focus on obeying God and doing what he commands, to show his glory on earth" (John and Coles 2019, 198).

A sixth similarity is *a confluence of human and divine factors*. Both revivals and movements are powerful works of the Spirit of God; not capable of being produced simply through application of the right methods by God's people. (Though human actions can either open the door for or tend to discourage both revivals and movements.) McClymond states: "Regarding the causes of revival, my argument is that natural and supernatural explanations do not exclude one another…. Some devout authors, including even Jonathan Edwards—have invoked natural causes alongside supernatural or divine factors as causes or reasons for revivals" (McClymond 2018, 46, 82). Parks et al. observe: "There is awareness that only God can start movements, but disciples can follow biblical principles to pray, plant, and water the seeds."

Revivals and CPMs show a seventh similarity in that both blaze with a . In revival, this passion manifests itself primarily through God's people becoming more what Scripture says we should be—the bride of Christ more beautifully dressed. At the same time, many unbelievers also come to passionate saving faith in times of revival. In CPM, this passion manifests itself primarily in a focus on reaching the lost, including other unreached groups besides one's own. The passionate obedience that comes from faith then characterizes the life of these disciples. Through CPMs, the big picture vision of God's kingdom reaching every tribe, language, people and nation results in the bride of Christ becoming more complete.

An eighth similarity is a "*passionate desire to evangelize others***,**" as quoted from McClymond above and designated by Garrison as "Abundant Evangelism." This could also be described as a general "bold fearless faith" (Garrison) in speaking of spiritual things, notable in both revivals and CPMs.

A ninth similarity consists of a lowering of racial, gender, and class barriers. McClymond records: "Religious revivals, at least in their initial phases, have often been accompanied by a lowering of racial, gender, and class barriers…. Among Holiness and Pentecostal groups in their earliest years, gender and race relations were revolutionized. Women preached to men, Black men and women exercised spiritual leadership over whites. Children preached to adults" (McClymond 2018, 25, 26).

The Bhojpuri movement in North India, a context rife with divisions of caste and gender, reports: "We view women and treat women as equal partners in the good news and in the ministry. This is counter cultural and intentional on our part" (John and Coles 2019, 196). Similarly, "I consider it important to teach believers from all castes to meet and worship together, even while being sensitive to local customs" (John and Coles 2019, 28).

A tenth similarity: "In the social contexts of 'revival' there is often a *spiritual contagion* – and infectious influence transmitted by proximity—causing one person's spiritual experiences to spill over to others" (McClymond 2016, 245). Kebreab (above) has described this dynamic in CPMs as "Ordinary Disciples Making Disciples." Believers so appreciate their experience with the Lord that sharing him with others takes place naturally in everyday life.

One can see an eleventh similarity in the *social impact* of the phenomena. Jonathan Edwards wrote: "This work of God, as… the number of true saints multiplied, soon made a glorious alteration in the town" (Edwards 1984, 348). McClymond observes: "Christian revivals include…. the call for social reform and social justice" (2016, 245-246). Kebreab describes it thus: "DMMs are Holistic: Merging Compassion and Healing with the Gospel of Kingdom Transformation." Parks et al. agree: "Holistic…The disciples in these movements love those around them in practical ways, such as caring for widows and orphans, ministering to the ill, and fighting oppression." While in revivals, social impact generally comes as a *result* of revival, in CPMs, community impact often happens both as a precursor to and a fruit of CPM. Victor John observes: "When God's children live in ways that bless the community around them, that lifestyle opens doors for the good news, proclaims the good news and manifests the good news. God receives the glory as holistic service touches people and transforms whole communities" (John and Coles 2019, 67).

A twelfth similarity can be seen in *attacks against the phenomena* by defenders of the status quo. McClymond summarizes: "Revivals are typically controversial, drawing fierce opposition as well as loyal support" (McClymond 2018, 73-74). Again, "Revivals often bring deep disagreements between the participants and the non-participants" (McClymond 2010, 312). And "Christian revivals have often provoked theological debates" (McClymond 2016, 245). Waugh elaborates: "Many historians wrote from the perspective of the established church, which often opposed and suppressed revival movements…. Strong impacts of the Spirit constantly initiated new movements which criticised and threatened the established order, so these movements were opposed" (Waugh 2020, 22).

In reaction against reports of significant gospel fruit within CPMs, numerous books, articles and videos have come forth critiquing various CPM practices and patterns. See, for example, Rhodes 2021, Vegas and Kocman 2022, and Buser 2019.

Ironically, "Calvinistic or Reformed Christians have been historically prominent in arguing both pro-revival and anti-revival positions" (McClymond 2010, 310). The First Great Awakening clearly reflected this, with both its strongest proponents and strongest opponents holding to a

Reformed perspective. One can hope that further interaction will diminish misunderstanding and increase discerning affirmation of "surprising" works of God's Spirit in our day.

Having identified 12 points of commonality between revivals and CPMs, the discussion next briefly considers a few salient differences between the two phenomena.

Notable Differences between Revivals and CPMs

1. Revivals mainly occur among Christianized peoples (though frequently including conversion of the unconverted—often nominal Christians). CPMs, in contrast, are happening very significantly (though not exclusively) among unreached (non-Christian) peoples. Usage in some other languages also reflects a measure of overlap or confusion between the equivalent terms for "movement" and "revival." For example, "Many Koreans use 'revival' when they actually mean growth from some kind of 'movement'"; and, "While Korean and Japanese prayers for Japan's 'revival' include revitalizing churches, the focus is on evangelization or the non-Christian 99% coming to Christ" (Private Correspondence 2022). In light of the above-mentioned caveats and observers' assumptions (regarding among whom revivals and movements occur), this difference requires nuance and ongoing, detailed, and comparative studies of actual "revivals" and "movements."
2. CPMs feature planting of new churches, which is not generally a focus in revival. (While precise definitions of church vary from one movement to another, see for example Waterman 2011.)
3. CPMs often involve suffering (Garrison) and sacrifice (Kebreab), which are not generally notable factors in revivals.

Conclusion

Revivals and CPMs are distinct phenomena with some notable differences, yet a great number of similarities. Both are marvelous works of God's Spirit, worth our appreciation and desire for their frequent occurrence. McClymond notes: "In his foundational text *Faithful Narrative* (1737), Jonathan Edwards referred to revivals as a 'surprising work of God'. Surprising things have indeed occurred—and during the twentieth century no less than the eighteenth and nineteenth. History suggests that twenty-first-century observers should expect the unexpect ` ⅂ ḥ

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The Church Planting Movement Debate: Getting to the Heart of the Matter

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Abstract

Discussions about church planting movements, supportive and critical, have been a part of missions for the past two decades. While many individual issues have been addressed, the central issue has been less clear. This article suggests that discussions and debates about church planting movements center on implicit values. Instead of debating secondary issues, it is important to understand the different values of CPM/DMM proponents and critics and to discuss these differences more directly. While these primary values do in fact conflict with one another, they could also be seen in a complementary way in the advancement of God's kingdom.

Key Words: church planting movements, CPM, criticism, disciple making movements, DMM

Introduction

For eight years, I served as a missionary with a church planting movement organization. I sat in training after training, conference after conference, and Zoom call after Zoom call hearing about CPM, DMM, and various tools used in disciple-making. But I never had full "buy-in." In fact, some of what I heard was so outrageous and objectionable that I finally decided to leave the organization. I have met several others who share a similar experience.

For years I have wanted to write a critique of the methodology used in church planting movements and disciple-making movements based on my experience. However, when I finally decided to do so, I discovered that much of what I had observed, experienced, and wanted to write about had already been said. For most of my years as a field missionary in the organization described above, much of the critical literature, which is located in academic journals or hard to find online, was inaccessible to me. Instead, I was always being confronted with the latest promotional literature. But after some newly acquired research skills and time spent reading much of what has been written, I realized that I did not have anything new to contribute to the discussion. Instead of writing another article repeating what other critics have already expressed, I decided I would focus on making critical resources more accessible to others who need to hear an important but largely unheard voice in the church planting movement debate (Irons 2022b).

It was through a deeper review of the critical resources that I began to see what I believe to be the core issue between church planting movement practitioners and those, like myself, who are critical of movement methodology. I want to point out first, however, that I and many other critics are not *against* movements. I believe God can and does move in powerful ways among people, and has done so for ages in various forms—in revivals, people movements, and church planting movements. But I/we *are* opposed to certain methods, practices, and interpretations of Scripture that are commonly associated with movements. Those, I believe, are *not* God-ordained and should be discarded.

The Core Issue

What is the core difference between CPM/DMM proponents and critics? Why do some embrace the methods and others critique or reject them? The core issue, I believe, is one of *values* and the prioritization of such values. For CPM/DMM proponents (herein "proponents"), the highest value is reaching the unreached. For critics, the corresponding highest value is being faithful to Scripture.

Proponents place great emphasis on reaching the unreached. They want the gospel to be preached to all the world so that the end shall come (Mt. 24:14). They want disciples made of all nations. They want to finish the task. They are *passionate* and untiring about accomplishing these objectives—which, after all, have been given to them by our Lord. They rejoice when the gospel penetrates formerly resistant and previously unreached people groups. They celebrate that Jesus is being worshipped and obeyed among people who formerly worshipped idols. Reaching the unreached is their lifeblood and . Even among critics, the most frequently mentioned positive attribute of proponents is their passion for the unreached (Irons 2022a). A quote by William Carey that characterizes them is, "Attempt great things for God. Expect great things from God."

This central emphasis on reaching the unreached does *not* mean that nothing else matters to proponents. The Bible does matter. It is the Word of God. It is also where their marching orders are found. It is to be studied and obeyed. It is even used as a centerpiece in movements as the unreached learn it, obey it, and share it with others. The Jesus to be worshipped is the Jesus of the Bible. The Bible is indispensable in movements.

For CPM critics, the Bible is the ultimate standard. It is the source of orthodoxy and the guiding post for light and truth. It is the measuring rod by which methods and practices are assessed. It contains the principles, practices, and structures that are key to the life of the church and the believer. When methods do not line up with Scripture, it is the methods that have to go. But world evangelism is still important to the critics. In fact, many missionaries serving the unreached are the very ones critical of movement methods (e.g., Rhodes 2022; Wu 2014). Reaching the unreached is important, and so is making disciples of all nations. However, these tasks must be done in a way that is faithful to Scripture. A quote by Hudson Taylor that characterizes critics is, "God's work, done God's way, will never lack God's supply."

The crux of the matter is in the prioritization of these two values. At times, these values conflict and choices have to be made. I value both my family and my work—but sometimes I have to choose between them. For proponents, their priority is the unreached, and any alleged biblical constraints on reaching the unreached have to be reexamined or reinterpreted. For critics, the priority is the Bible, and methods that seem to be working have to be analyzed or even discarded. Pictorially, the conflict looks like this:

Figure 1. Pictorial representation of the conflict between critics and proponents.

Note that "fruitful" in Figure 1 could also refer to such objectives as reaching the lost, finishing the task, and completing the mission.

This implicit difference in values is the central reason that proponents and critics are unable to effectively communicate. They are on different wavelengths. They are debating secondary issues. The issue is not the CPM approach versus the proclamational method (*Debate: Church Planting Movement Model vs the Proclamational Model* 2018). Nor is it the movement approach versus the traditional approach (*Movements vs. Traditional: Church Planting Debate* 2019). Critics are only supportive of proclamational or traditional methods so long as they are biblically faithful and Scripture-based. Some analysts divide the sides into the "finish the task" and "healthy church" sides, but even what is "healthy" is largely defined by what is biblical, supported by the fact that the largest healthy church organization, 9Marks, includes "biblical" in six of its nine "marks" of a healthy church. The issue is not methods, models, or approaches, but rather the values that lie behind them.

The primary way that critics have addressed issues with movement methodology is through their highest value: a biblical lens. They have pointed out biblical questions with regard to such teachings and practices as obedience-based discipleship, definitions of church, finding persons of peace, promoting new believers to church leadership, and using discovery methods over and against proclamational ones. Critics are concerned with heresy and false teaching creeping into movements. But for proponents, these issues are secondary, and critical comments or calling certain practices "unbiblical" are largely ignored.

If critics wanted to see a change in movements methodology, they would need to offer suggestions and critiques from the proponents' core value of fruitfulness. Indeed, they have done so, pointing out that movements have died out in certain places, which ultimately means "failure." But proponents have replied by highlighting movements that have lasted (John & Coles 2019). If critics *could* point out that movements die out or that there is a better way to reach the world, then proponents might be more easily convinced to hear and incorporate certain suggestions. But pointing out that movement teachings and practices are not Bible-based largely falls on deaf ears since that does not address proponents' primary value. It is like telling a championship team that their coaching style was inappropriate or recruiting was unfair. But in missions, there is no governing body and proponents do not need to listen. If they were losing or their methods were not working, however, they would be all ears.

Similarly, in order to persuade those who primarily value a biblical approach, proponents need to promote movements on biblical grounds. In fact, they have done so. They have argued that the Book of Acts is one big church planting movement and that certain methods such as finding a person of peace are timeless biblical mission principles. Unfortunately, the arguments have been less than convincing to critics who have offered a host of rebuttals to these and other issues (*CPM Critic* 2022; Matthews 2019; Wu 2014).

Some proponents have responded that critics have not provided an alternative to CPM methodology they can evaluate and assess (Esler 2013). In fact, alternatives have been provided; however, those alternatives have not been presented in a way that proponents value. The alternatives are usually principle-centered or Bible-based rather than methodological (e.g., Vegas and Kocman 2021). As one proponent quipped, "They're kind of boring" (Roberts 2015). As a whole, critics and proponents have failed to come to an understanding since they are operating out of a different set of values.

Critics' Views of Proponents

Critics often view proponents as pragmatists (Johnson 2010; Massey 2012). Pragmatism has been defined as "action or policy dictated by consideration of the immediate practical consequences rather than by theory or dogma" (Collins 2022). For critics, the "theory" and "dogma" come from Scripture. The Scriptures are the driving force by which to judge practice. Critics see proponents as ignoring biblical principles and practices in order to achieve their goals. In critical literature, "pragmatism" often means that the end justifies the means. It is viewed as cutting corners to reach a stated objective. The corners cut are perceived by proponents to be of minor importance in comparison to reaching their objective.

From a critic's viewpoint, what is trimmed off by proponents usually has some bearing on people's conversion or a movement's reproducibility. Qualifications of biblical leaders become watered down and egalitarian so that church leaders can be raised up quickly to meet the demand of a movement. The definition of a biblical church is made as minimalist as possible so that such churches reproduce like rabbits, an analogy sometimes used by proponents (Garrison 2004; Trousdale & Sunshine 2018). One critic has remarked that ecclesiology is the "Achilles' heel" of church planting movements" (Terry 2019). Another, using a borrowed analogy from Garrison's book, has claimed that proponents are "wrinkling time in the missionary task" (Garrison 2004; Massey 2012).

I remember one of the first training events I attended on church planting. We were taught not to teach or share our opinions with national believers. Actually, this was not too different than what I was taught in seminary—that we should encourage national believers to look to the Bible for answers rather than looking to us, the foreign missionaries, as the gurus. But the trainers took it a step further. They proceeded to share with us the biblical basis for the principle they were advocating. I remember thinking, "Why don't they just tell us that this is what is *effective?* Why do they insist on making this *biblical?*" I probably would have been more accepting if the principle of not teaching national believers was sold as a *fruitful* approach without any reference to Scripture. But instead, I was supposed to believe that it was God-ordained—and that was going too far. It is still the teaching in many church planting circles that *missionaries* are *not* to teach the Bible; rather, they are to facilitate discovery among the unreached. But how could that approach possibly be seen as *biblical?*

Clearly what is biblical is a fundamental value for me—hence I am arguing here as a critic. To me, the biblical approach matters the most and takes precedence over the results. I suspect the above sentiments resonate with other critics who have similar values. Proponents, on the other hand, focus fundamentally on people getting saved and the nations being reached. From my point of view, that fundamental value—as important as it is—prevents proponents from hearing critiques about methodologies being unbiblical or pragmatic.

The Source of the Values Difference

The above discussion has merely labeled the issue; it has not explained why the issue exists. The question then becomes, "Why do some people value the biblical above the fruitful and others value the fruitful over the biblical?" While this would be an interesting research topic of its own, I would like to offer some reflections after having been involved in discussions about church planting movements discussions for two decades now.

I believe the source of the differences lies in a combination of people's backgrounds, identities, associations, relationships, and personalities. People naturally are influenced by the values of people around them and the groups to which they belong. They also prefer to fit in rather than be considered outsiders. They assume that the values of people they know and trust are right. For those who grew up in churches with a preacher who was always taking a stand and addressing issues that were "unbiblical," they would most likely internalize this value and incorporate words like "biblical" and "unbiblical" into their vocabulary. Likewise, those who attended churches that were highly evangelistic would internalize the value of reaching the lost.

Some proponents have come out of what might be called traditional approaches that were not particularly effective. The "old ways" meant that church buildings had to be built, ministers had to attend seminary and be ordained, and knowledge of God's Word was of the utmost importance. Traditional approaches also meant that missionaries taught Greek at theological institutions overseas and that national believers were taught by the missionaries—and sometimes even needed to dress like the missionaries. When church planting movements thinking emerged, its proponents were enlightened and hopped on board this new approach that emphasized house churches, church planting, lay leadership, and obedience. In many ways, the new approach *was* more biblical; but more importantly for proponents, it was *way* more fruitful.

There are also differences among believers belonging to the same group, such as in 1 Corinthians 8 and Romans 14 where some believers are able to eat food sacrificed to idols and others cannot eat without damaging their consciences. Some believers are simply more conscientious than others. Some—and probably a lot of proponents—are go-getter types. They do not question; they just *do*. Others who are more reflective, skeptical, or conscientious may be more inclined to question or wrestle over these issues. Most likely, there are all types among proponents and critics who have been influenced by a combination of the above factors.

Some have used the word "fad" when discussing church planting movements or specific movement methodologies (Rhodes 2022; Richard 2021; Stiles 2020). While I am not convinced that the "movements movement" is a fad, I do see characteristics of a *subculture*. Movements circles have certain defining Bible verses, such as Matthew 24:14 and 2 Timothy 2:2. They have their own values, slogans, and terminology. Common acronyms include CPM, DMM, T4T, MAWL, POPs, DNA, and DBS. They talk about "streams," "stages," "generations," "*oikos*," "Four Fields," "catalyzing," "starting groups," and "going slow to go fast." They are down with "tradition" and tell us that "if you keep doing what you have been doing, you keep getting what you have been getting." (This was presented to me as an acronym whose meaning we were supposed to try and guess: IYKDWYHBDYKGWYHBG. Needless to say, no one figured it out.) As a whole, how much do all of the above speak of the values of being *biblical* and faithful to Scripture in contrast to the value of *reaching a goal* and the *means of getting there?*

Among North American missionaries today, it is easier to fit in as a movement proponent, not a critic. While proponents have surely been frustrated at times over the lack of people who really "get it" and who fail to embrace movements thinking and methods, the trend in the last two decades has been increasingly towards movement approaches. If there is an "in" approach in evangelical missions today, it would be church planting or disciple-making movements.

The Need for Discernment

Some proponents have prioritized the results-orientation of movements over biblical faithfulness because they see God in it. For example, that belief is evident in the subtitles of two movement books: *How God Is Redeeming a Lost World* (Garrison 2004) and *The Movement of God to Disciple the Nations* (Farah 2021). God is behind the movements, and we simply need to join him in what he is doing, the thinking goes. Movements are taking place among historically resistant peoples. Miracles are occurring and people are being healed. How could anyone argue with this? If you oppose movements, you are opposing God (Terry 2019). As Adam Coker has noted, "To doubt the validity of CPMs is treated as an affront to the sacred" (Coker 2016, 87). And how can one argue with the reported numbers? We hear of these in another popular movements book, the subtitle of which is *How Hundreds of Thousands of Muslims Are Falling in Love with Jesus* (Trousdale 2012). The thinking is that movements are a work of God's Spirit and that God is moving in amazing ways. How then could anyone question what God is doing?

The subtle problem is that almost any spiritual movement or phenomenon has elements of God and other elements that are not. Pentecostalism has spread around the world like wildfire, but many have rejected the doctrine of a necessary second baptism of the Holy Spirit manifesting in speaking in tongues. The charismatic movement has also been a highly successful movement, but many have been critical of certain phenomena in the movement, such as "holy laughter" and being "slain in the Spirit." Megachurches have grown into the tens of thousands, but many have rightly questioned the prosperity teachings and lavish lifestyles of many megachurch leaders. The church in Corinth was a work of God, but what about their divisions, sexual immorality, and views on spiritual gifts? So then, if we say that God is the author of movements, does that mean we take everything that goes along with movements, or do we address and reject the areas that do not line up with the Scriptures and our consciences?

The problem for proponents is that faithfully following certain scriptural principles can create difficult conditions for a movement to occur. If missionaries become gospel proclaimers rather than discovery facilitators, then you become too reliant on the missionary and may be hindering a grassroots movement. If churches are required to have male elders who have been believers for some period of time, then you have to wait for the availability of men and enough time for them to be somewhat mature. If you insist that a church has to have biblically qualified leaders, then you have to wait for people to meet those qualifications. For many proponents, these conditions are trivial and secondary to the greater purpose of making Christ known.

Anticipating Reactions

Some readers may object, "But your definitions of positions that are 'biblical' are not the same as mine." Very well, since clearly not everyone has the exact same theological views, and there can be a wide range of evangelical views that are considered "biblical." A central factor in the discussion is the degree to which the Bible or movement thinking has shaped one's views. One example is Southern Baptist missionaries' views on gender roles in leadership. While the Southern Baptist Convention has maintained a complementary position on the role of women in leadership (*Baptist Faith & Message* 2000 n.d.), many Baptist missionaries have switched to a more egalitarian position—not out of a study of Scripture, but in light of movement thinking and practice (Irons 2022c).

Some proponents will retort, "But the CPM approach is the most biblical *and* fruitful approach." Such a claim, however, is a loaded one and dependent on how "church planting movements" and "biblical" are defined. Some proponents need to examine their approach in the light of Scripture to know how "biblical" it is. Others are not aware of what the criticisms are. For example, how many proponents can name not just one, but two, three, or more reasons that critics have criticized the methodology of finding persons of peace? It is highly unlikely that proponents are aware of all the issues—just as critics do not have insider knowledge of all of the movements that have taken place on the ground.

Some proponents may also argue, "Well, you just haven't heard of movement XYZ." Again, this suggestion is nothing new. I have been encouraged to connect with various individuals involved in movements and to read certain books that include movement case studies. I have read and/or reviewed Garrison (2004), Farah (2021), Coles (2019), and Larson (2018), all of which contain examples or case studies of movements. Even so, I have yet to come away thinking, "Now an example of a biblical movement!" Most have issues with biblical qualifications of leaders and a biblical definition of church, the very issues that conflict with what makes movements *move*. Most of these books are actually excellent case studies on the very point I am making, that *fruitful* trumps *biblical* in movements methodology. Even if an example of a

Church Planting Movements, 2019). More frequently, critics see proponents as fellow believers with "good motives" or "good intentions" (Johnson 2010; Kocman 2021; Morris 2014). Based on extant resources, it would seem that most (if not all) involved in the church planting movement debate see one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. But if proponents and critics belong together in Christ, then their relationships should be characterized as such. There should be mutual love, respect, and prayer for one another. We should not pass judgment on each other or put stumbling blocks in front of one another (Rom. 14:13). We should do what leads to peace and mutual edification (Rom. 14:19). But we must also encourage each other by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it; we should encourage and rebuke one another in the Lord (Titus 1:9, 2:1, 15).

In truth, I believe we would all be better off if we complemented rather than opposed one another. We need the inspiration of the go-getter, proponent types who are reclaiming God's kingdom in this world. But we also need the consciences of reflective or even outspoken critics who want to glorify God in the methods used—and to overhaul methods that are "unbiblical." We have a mutual mission to accomplish, and we have different gifts—and *values* that can be used in this mission and in building up the body of Christ. Let's employ methods of reaching the world that are both fruitful *and* biblical.

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A Pneumatological Theology of Religion: Amos Yong's Approach

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Abstract

In our religiously and culturally pluralistic "global village," Christians cannot bear witness to the gospel without engaging religious others missionally. Conventional models of the theology of religions—inclusivism, exclusivism, and pluralism—perpetuate the euro-centric hegemonic discourse on "civilizing mission" and fail to engage religious others on their own terms. Amos Yong, therefore, has proposed a Pneumatological theology of religions, which values the religious otherness of non-Christian traditions. His proposal includes a wide range of Christian practices in order to engage with religious others in the three domains of orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy.

Key Words: inclusivism, mission, orthopathy, pluralism, Pneumatology, theology of religions

Introduction

Against the predictions of proponents of the "secularization thesis," today we are living in a deeply religious world. While globalization is a worldwide phenomenon, changes in the "Western" immigration laws over the past half century have brought religious traditions and cultural practices from around the world to the West. Such accelerated immigration has radically altered the landscape of cities and towns with a mushrooming of mosques, temples, and exotic restaurants. Thus Christians, not only in the Global South but also in Europe and North America, live amid cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and others are our neighbors, colleagues, and fellow citizens. The merging of cultures and meeting of religions are unavoidable, and ignoring religious others is no longer an option in our "global village." Christians cannot bear witness to the Gospel without engaging religious others missionally and formulating a relevant theology of religion.

Theology of religion is an emerging field of study, and it has established its place in the core curriculum of most theological seminaries and universities in the West. However, a theology of religion developed in a Western context, emerging from the familiar exclusivist-inclusivist-pluralist paradigm, is inadequate for today's religiously pluralistic settings. How do we think theologically about the meaning and value of other religions worldwide? (Karkkainen 2003, 20). How can we take the particularities of each religious tradition—for example, hundreds and thousands of Islamic traditions practiced by 1.8 billion Muslims worldwide—and engage with them meaningfully and creatively? Amos Yong has made significant contributions in this regard by proposing a Pneumatological theology of religions, which values the religious otherness of non-Christian traditions. His proposal includes a wide range of Christian practices in order to engage with religious others in the three domains of orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy. This article explores the main contours of Yong's Pneumatological theology of religion.

Amos Yong's Pneumatological Approaches to Religion

Amos Yong is one of the highly influential and eminent evangelical theologians and a leading scholar in the field of Pentecostal theology of religions. He was born in Malaysia and, at the age of ten, immigrated to the US with his parents, who were first-generation converts from Buddhism

to Christianity. Yong's migration experience and his family's Taoist-Confucian-Buddhist culture and heritage equipped him to articulate an engaging Christian theology of the interreligious encounter. He is a systematic theologian and a missiologist dealing with themes such as global Pentecostalism, Asian-American evangelical theology, theology of mission, theology of disability, political theology, and theologies of Christian-Buddhist dialogue. Currently he is the Dean of the School of Mission and Theology, and Professor of Theology and Mission, at Fuller Theological Seminary. He is a prolific writer and has authored or edited over five dozen acclaimed books, over 200 articles, book chapters, and essays in a wide array of journals, over 500 book reviews, and made around 400 academic presentations. His scholarship has been foundational in the development of Pentecostal theology (Yong 2002a; 2019). William Oliverio has commented that there is "no more influential Pentecostal theologian in the academic world today than Amos Yong" (Oliverio Jr. 2020, 4).

Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism Paradigm

In 1982, Alan Race classified the Christian approaches toward other religions under the exclusivist-inclusivism-pluralist paradigm (Race 1982). All these Christian responses to many and diverse religious faiths debate the question of the salvation of non-Christians. Though exclusivists and inclusivists argue that salvation is only through Christ, the former hold that there is no salvation outside the church and Christianity. Exclusivists generally believe that a verbal declaration of faith in the saving work of Jesus Christ is necessary for salvation. In contrast, inclusivists believe God's salvific plan is open to all humanity, irrespective of their religious persuasions. However, they affirm that it is (unwittingly) through Christ that, ultimately, non-Christians are saved. Pluralists maintain that all religions are essentially salvific; therefore, Christ is just one of the many ways for salvation. They make no distinction, in terms of salvific efficacy, between various religious traditions of the world and have considered them complementary to each other. Pluralists like John Hick have argued that "all religions should give up their distinctive features and acknowledge the existence of one single reality behind all phenomenological, doctrinal and conceptual differences" (Karkkainen, 354). However, we cannot ignore the ambiguity and overlap between these mutually informing broad categories of theologies of religion.

In the twenty-first century, in a religiously and culturally pluralist world, Christians cannot understand the meaning of the gospel or engage in God's mission in isolation. Terry Muck, therefore, has argued that, in order to contextualize the gospel, we should enter fully into the religious and cultural world of other people, "doing religious thinking alongside them, using their terms, asking their questions, using methods common to their way of thinking religiously" (Muck 2007, 20). J Dudley Woodberry, who was the former professor of Islamic Studies at Fuller Theological Seminary, has echoed the same feeling in arguing that "any meaningful dialogue with Muslims needs to start by walking with them, listening to them, and asking them questions" (Woodberry 1989, xiii). That is, it is impossible to develop a relevant theology of religion without engaging people of other faiths on their own terms. However, it is significant to note here that familiar existing conceptual categories—namely exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism—consider soteriology as the exclusive theological framework to understand Christian responsibility towards religious others. That framework requires us neither to take into account the particularities and religious "otherness" of non-Christian traditions nor to engage with them from their own self-understanding. Amos Yong, therefore, in his seminal work *Beyond the Impasse: Towards a Pneumatological Theology of Religion*, claims that the three-fold domains of exclusivism,

inclusivism, and pluralism created an impasse (Yong 2003, 20-22). These approaches restricted Christians' dialogical, orthopraxial, and orthopathic engagement with religious others.

Pneumatological Theology of Religion

In order to move past the *cul-de-sac* and boundaries created by conventional Christological and salvific approaches and engage with religious others positively, Yong critically analyzed the familiar frameworks (Yong 2007, 13ff). Since pluralists reject the particularity of Christ and focus on the more general level of God or "ultimate reality," Yong rejected pluralism as a viable Christian approach (Yong and Richie 2010, 252). He was equally uncomfortable with narrow exclusivism that restricts Christ and the Spirit to the church and its members (Yong and Richie 2010, 256). Moreover, Yong recognized that both exclusivist and pluralist positions do not engage religious others in their otherness while developing their theologies of religion (Yong 2020b, 184). Yong, therefore, chose the moderating position of "inclusivism'" as a compelling framework to develop his theology of religion, recognizing its ability to accommodate Christological and Pneumatological considerations (Yong 2003, 27). At the same time, he cautioned about the limit of a Christological starting point as a relevant theological framework for engaging religious others (Karkkainen 2003, 278). While centering on the particularity of Jesus Christ is important for bearing appropriate Christian witness in our dialogue with people of other faiths, Yong argued that prioritizing the work of the Holy Spirit is particularly important today when Christians need also to hear the testimony of those in other faiths on their own terms. Pneumatology enlarges a theology of religion's framework and provides the best relational framework to engage with people of other faiths (Yong 2003, 21). Hence Yong was instrumental in initiating a paradigmatic shift in the field of theology of religion by approaching religious others within a Pneumatological rather than a Christological framework.

Yong's case is built on three axioms: (1) "God is universally present and active in the Spirit" (Yong 2001, 44). (2) "God's Spirit is the life-breath of the imago Dei in every human being and the presupposition of all human relationships and communities" (Yong 2001, 47). (3) "The religions of the world, like everything else that exists, are providentially sustained by the Spirit of God for divine purposes" (Yong 2001, 47-48). The universal presence of God through the Holy Spirit is the foundational principle for Yong's Pneumatological approach to other religions. The Spirit blows where it wills, inside as well as outside the boundaries of institutional forms of church and Christian traditions (Jn 3:8). If the Spirit, which symbolizes the divine agency in the world, is active in the socio-economic and political domain of human societies, Yong wondered how we might discern the Spirit's activity in different cultural and religious contexts.

The Trinitarian Framework of Pneumatological Theology of Religion

In order to open up lines of dialogue and engagement with people of other faiths, Yong recommended that, rather than starting with Christological questions, Christians prioritize the universal work of the Spirit, especially the Spirit's sustaining of the many languages of the peoples of this world. It helped Yong "to speak of the presence of the Spirit in the world in wider terms than the strictly Christological" (Karkkainen 2003, 279-280). However, Yong's proposal to bracket Christological categories or postpone Christological questions in order to lift up the distinct economy of the Holy Spirit admittedly fueled the fear that he did not take Christology seriously. Critics also charged him with sacrificing Christology for the sake of Pneumatology or divorcing Pneumatology from Christology (Merrick 2008, 107-125). Karkkainen dismissed such objections by arguing that "Yong is too good a theologian to undermine the role of Christology in any

Christian theology of religions" (Karkkainen 2003, 278). In the same vein, Tony Richie opined that Yong desires to give "more initial attention to pneumatology as a way of overcoming Christological stumbling blocks that may derail dialogue before it ever gets started in order that subsequent conversation about Christology may actually achieve richer results" (Richie 2013, 112).

Yong's turn to Pneumatology needs to be interpreted as his commitment to formulate a fully trinitarian theology of religion. (It is significant to note here that the three-fold Christological approaches to other religions displace or downplay the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity. Therefore, they are strictly not trinitarian in their orientation). Yong's move is not a rejection or dismissal of Christology but rather a mere postponing of Christological questions in order to foreground the Spirit's work. Karkkainen notes, "Yong envisions a trinitarian theology in which there is a mutual relationship between the economy of the Son and the Spirit" (Karkkainen 2003, 279-280). In *The Spirit Poured Out on All Flesh*, Yong articulates a Spirit-Christology avoiding subordination or displacement of either Son or Spirit (Yong 2005, 81-120). Yong, therefore, does not separate Pneumatology from Christology because these two categories are not "competitive but complementary" for him (Richie 2013, 113). Yong advocates the "essential interdependence of Jesus of Nazareth and the Spirit" (Yong 2003, 135). By doing so, he has revived the patristic metaphor of Irenaeus, the second-century Church father, that the Logos (Word) and Pneuma (Spirit) are "two hands of the Father" (Yong 2003, 43). Thus, in Yong's understanding, "pneumatology can never be loosed from Christology since the World and Spirit are 'related dimensions of being'" (Karkkainen 2003, 280).

Significance of the Day of Pentecost Event

The Day of Pentecost narrative recorded in Acts 2 gives Yong insights to expand his Pneumatological theology of religion, especially on how to honor and respect the particularities of other faiths. Luke recorded that, after Jesus' Ascension, the Spirit of God was poured on 120 of Jesus's disciples who were gathered in Jerusalem. The Spirit gave them the ability to speak in different languages and reconstituted them as "new" people of God (Yong 2003, 38). At that time, diasporic Jews from 15 regions of the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe had gathered in Jerusalem for the Pentecost Feast Day. (Yong argues that Luke's list is not an exhaustive one. It is more or less suggestive rather than definite. It is a shortened version of the Old Testament "table of nations" (Gen 10; I Chron 1).) It is significant to note there that Jews were living in far-flung regions of the world—India, Afghanistan, Armenia, Germany, Spain. Yong 2019, 173). They were astounded that "we hear, each of us, in our own native language" (Acts 2:8). After studying the Acts 2 narrative, Yong noted that many tongues spoken in various regions of the ancient Mediterranean world were brought together on the Day of Pentecost. However, the "outpouring of the Spirit did not cancel out but rather enabled an eruption of a diversity of tongues…. each witnessing in its own way to God's deeds of power" (Yong and Richie 2010, 258).

Yong further reflected on the meaning and significance of tongues or languages. Languages, as well as religious beliefs and practices, are part and parcel of culture. Various components of culture—history, politics, economics, religion—cannot be separated from their constituent elements. These elements mutually shape each other and together constitute what we call culture. So, for Yong, "many tongues" recorded in Acts 2 signifies many cultures—with all of their constituent elements, including religious beliefs and practices of the ancient Mediterranean world. These cultures, with their religious traditions, declared God's goodness and beauty. In other words,

"many tongues intimated the possibility that other faiths bear witness to 'God's deeds of power'" (Act 2:11b) (Yong 2020b, 184). Here, it is significant to note that Yong is not endorsing that various languages, cultures, and religions in the world are whole conduits of God's saving grace. Rather, all cultures and religions can reveal to us various grades of God's love and beauty. Yong, therefore, advises us to discern the presence and activity of the Spirit in every cultural and religious tradition. The discernment is to identify as well as endorse those cultural and religious beliefs and practices that serve righteousness, peace, and truth—characteristic values of the Kingdom of God. Those traditions and practices that challenge the signs of the coming Kingdom need to be rejected (Yong 2018, 243-255).

Yong, therefore, argues that we need to retain the otherness of non-Christian traditions and engage them impartially and sympathetically, as they can teach us about God's deeds (Yong and Richie 2010, 252-257). However, Christians will not be able to learn from other religions if they construct other religions exclusively after the pattern of Christianity. In the same vein, Lesslie Newbigin advised us to approach each religion "on its own terms and along the lines of its own central axis" (Newbigin 1977a, 252-270). We should not lose track of the fact that each religious tradition is unique and a complete unit in itself with scripture, doctrines, practices, institutions, and traditions. Every religious tradition orients its followers to perceive the world, the ultimate reality, and society from a particular perspective. Therefore, searching for a common core underlying all religions is meaningless (Hedges 2010, 28). Hence to understand the dynamic nature of each religious tradition, Christins should not approach it from a Christian perspective but rather study it on its own terms, considering the perspective of those who practice it. Yong opined that "The goal is to allow the tongues (testimonies) of other religious people to be heard first on their own 'insider's' terms (just as we clamor to be heard on our terms)" (Yong and Richie 2010, 259). Imposing a Christian interpretive framework on other religious traditions would eliminate such serious encounters with other traditions.

"Ortho"-triad: Orthodoxy, Orthopraxy, and Orthopathy

According to Yong, the diversity of tongues spoken on the Day of Pentecost invigorated a wide range of Christian practices to engage the religious others (Yong and Richie 2010, 260-263). He, therefore, argues that Christians must engage religious others at three levels of an "ortho"-triad: orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy. At the level of orthodoxy, Christians engage the religious others in interreligious dialogue in order to compare religious teachings and doctrines. Though engaging others at this discursive level is often quite "successful," often such engagement is the result of Christians' passion for articulating and defending the truth of Christian orthodoxy. The orthopraxic domain invites engagement with people of many and diverse faiths at the practical level. It includes "biblically and theologically responsible practices, actions, and behaviors, ranging from the various ritual we perform (e.g., baptism, the Lord's Supper) to the values we live out in the realm of social ethics (justice, mercy, prudence, etc.)" (Morehead and Benziger 2020, 5). At this level, Christians are invited to think about issues of the common good and envision and act together to create a just and equal society for all. However, the third component of the "ortho"-triad, orthopathy, involves engaging with religious others on the affective level. It is engaging others at the heart level "in a much kinder, humbler, and more loving, empathetic manner" (Morehead and Benziger 2020, 7). This level of engagement takes the moral significance of human passions, affections, emotions, and desires seriously (Morehead and Benziger 2020, 6). Therefore, out of the three levels, it is the deepest level of inter-faith engagement.

It is possible to understand Yong's orthopraxic and orthopathic domains of inter-religious encounters as his critique of the modern tendency to privilege the mind over the body in European epistemology and the modern construction of the category of religions (Coulter and Yong 2016). These ideas can be traced back to the writings of Rene Descartes, who is known for his famous dictum, "I think, therefore, I am." Descartes distinguished between body and mind and considered humans primarily as thinking beings. "I think" is the most important part of his slogan. Thinking, an activity of the mind, became prominent in modern Western intellectual traditions. Consequently, the domain of religious rituals and practices, which is the activity of the human body, has been downplayed. In his famous book, *Sources of the Self: Making of the Modern Identity*, Charles Taylor reflected on this issue (Taylor 1989). He described the tendency to privilege the mind in modern thinking as intellectualism or an intellectual view of the human being. Taylor used the term "excarnation" to describe this phenomenon of disembodiment of life in general and religion in particular. With excarnation, in the modern period religion came to be understood apart from the human body and affectivity. The idea of excarnation not only shaped modern notions of religion but also Western Christian engagement with people of other faiths. As a result, from being a set of beliefs and bodily practices attached to specific processes of power and knowledge, religion has been understood as an abstract and universal phenomenon originating from a rational individual in the modern period. Wilfred Cantwell Smith coined the phrase "reification of religion" to denote this phenomenon (Smith 1962). From being a set of practices, religion came to be understood as a set of doctrines and beliefs. Thus, in religious studies, learning theology and scriptures have been privileged over the study of rituals. Equally, Christian engagement with religious others was reduced to the domain of orthodoxy.

The biblical practice of hospitality is a key theme in Yong's writings. Accordingly, hospitality is an integral dimension of interreligious encounters and dialogue, which can be practiced in all three domains of orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy. Christians are known for practicing hospitality at the ideational level to defend Christianity's truth and invite others to convert. Very little honest dialogue and mutually edifying conversation with persons of other faith are assumed in such interreligious encounters. As Newbigin has noted, we often encounter religious others with the attitude that we have "nothing to lose but everything to give" (Newbigin 1977b, 19). In the same vein, John Thatamanil highlights Gandhi's encounter with English missionaries in India. Gandhi invited them to reciprocate their social Gospel by learning with an open heart as well as in humility what India can teach them (Thatamanil 2020, 193). For Yong, genuine hospitality is an invitation to open up ourselves to the ideas and teachings of religious others. "Those in other faiths have beliefs and practices that can challenge or enrich—sometimes both—our way of thinking and living." (Yong 2020b, 185). Hospitality assumes a humble posture to understand the world from others' perspectives and a commitment to be persuaded by others' ideas. So genuine dialogue is not risk-free: "The goal of dialogue is not to establish an agreement or to ignore the differences" (Richie 2013, 115). Rather, it leads to self-criticism and self-discovery, which produces "authentic transformation in both parties" (Yong 2003, 182 and 2020b, 185).

Orthopathic Engagement with Religious Others

In a recent lecture, Yong elaborated on his ideas about the orthopathic level of hospitality (Yong 2022). For him, it is the deepest level of interfaith engagement because Christians are open to the feeling of religious others. It is more profound than being open to the ideas and teachings of religious others and the willingness to work with them on issues of common interest. Yong argued that human beings are motivated and driven by the affective dimensions of our bodies. People are

driven affectively more so than discursively or intellectually. Even though the pathic dimensions of human beings are subterranean, they powerfully impact people's engagement with others and the world. Only a part of what people are feeling ever gets to the level of cognition and intellectual articulation or formulation. Thus discursive articulations of beliefs, which have been elevated highly in modern Western Christianity, are of second order. Furthermore, engaging religious others in dialoguing about doctrines and teachings take place only at a minimalist level. Engaging religious others at the orthopathic level can be more profoundly meaningful and effective than interacting with them at the ideational level.

According to Yong, mission in a culturally and religiously pluralistic world requires a wide range of Christian practices. Evangelism, witnessing, hospitality, interfaith dialogue, social activism, and organized debates are notable practices conducive to living missiologically among people of other faiths. Yong suggests the possibility of upholding various practices promoted by traditional theologies of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism: the pluralist emphasis on social justice, the inclusivist insistence on recognizing the possibility of divine revelation and activity among the unevangelized, and the exclusivist commitment to the authentic proclamation of the gospel and its redemptive power. Young warns that "pneumatological theology of religion does not and must not downplay the importance of evangelization" (Yong and Richie 2010, 251). Evangelism needs to be carried out along with interfaith dialogue, and the need for dialogue should not trump the necessities of evangelism and vice versa. However, he also warns, evangelism should not be done out of a superiority complex or contempt for other cultures and religious traditions.

Conclusion

In the wake of post-colonial studies, the euro-centric understanding of the Christian mission, tainted with economic and cultural imperialism of Europe, has been under heavy criticism for the last few decades. It was known for its reluctance to discern the activity of the Spirit in non-European cultures and traditions which, therefore, were approached as the domain of evil and darkness. Conventional models of the theology of religions—inclusivism, exclusivism, and pluralism—perpetuated the euro-centric hegemonic discourse on "civilizing mission" and failed to engage religious others on their own terms. In order to move past the boundaries created by these models and to creatively engage people of other faiths, Amos Yong has developed a theology of religion based on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. He argues that the Spirit, which symbolizes the divine presence and agency in the world, cannot be confined to institutional forms of the Church or European Christianity. If the Spirit is an active participant in all dimensions of human life, Christians need to open up lines of dialogue and engagement with people of other faiths. Yong's Pneumatological theology of religion values the religious otherness of non-Christian traditions. It pays attention to the dynamic nature of other religions and people's agency in interpreting scriptures and traditions to command good and prohibit evil. His proposal includes a variety of Christian practices to engage with religious others in the three domains of orthodoxy, orthopraxy, and orthopathy.

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Two Important Research-Based Missionary Training Principles

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Abstract

Research carried out on 75 long-term missionaries in Asia revealed two high-impact training principles. While each principle is important in its own right, when combined, training effectiveness is multiplied. These principles, however, go against recent training and equipping trends, especially in the wake of Covid-19. Also, these principles are not a given since many missionaries reported that they lacked at least one of them in their own training experience. In light of the evidence for the importance of these principles, contemporary missionary training would do well to incorporate and emphasize them.

Key Words: cross-cultural training, missionary equipping, missionary training, on-field training, pre-field training

Introduction

What are the most important principles for preparing, training, and equipping cross-cultural missionaries? Practical? Contextualized? Just-in-time? Relevant? From extensive research on long-term missionaries in Asia, two principles emerged that are among the most important in training and equipping cross-cultural missionaries. While each of the principles is important on its own, when combined their effect is compounded.

Before presenting the findings, it is important to clarify this article's use of the word "training." For many cross-cultural missionaries, "training" often conjures up the idea of sitting in an enclosed room with others at round tables that are decorated with colored sticky notes, with a trainer standing in the front of the room using a flipchart or making a PowerPoint presentation. However, this narrow concept of training is *not* what is intended here. This article uses the word "training" in an inclusive sense, meaning the preparation, education, discipling, training, and equipping that is needed for a cross-cultural missionary to do his or her job—including skills, attitudes, knowledge, character traits, and behaviors. It is important to keep this holistic idea of training in mind throughout this article.

Research Findings

This article's field research was conducted in the spring of 2020 and involved interviewing 75 long-term North American missionaries serving in Asia. The missionaries were serving in 15 Asian countries, represented over 25 sending agencies, and averaged 18 years of cross-cultural service. The interviews inquired about the training and equipping that had proved the most valuable for the missionaries during their years of missions service. Interviewees were asked about the best training they received, what they valued most about their training, those who played a significant part in their training, and what training they would recommend for prospective missionaries. The missionaries were also asked to rank various training options and the rationale for their rankings. (See Appendix A for an interview template.) This article hopes that missionary training will be strengthened by considering the findings from this research.

Three lines of evidence were considered for reaching conclusions from the research: what participants described as the most valuable training they had received, how they ranked certain training options presented to them, and their recommendations and advice to other potential missionaries. In that sense, the evidence was both descriptive and prescriptive. Some participants volunteered information by making statements such as, "The best training I ever received was …." Others revealed their perceptions in the comparisons they made as they reflected on their training experiences. If they said, "That was a helpful course" at one point and "That was an *extremely* helpful workshop" later, the inference drawn was that the workshop was more valuable than the course. The entirety of the evidence led to several key principles. From these principles, one overarching conclusion was drawn involving two of these principles.

The overall conclusion was that *experiential, relationship-based* training is the most valuable type of training for cross-cultural missionaries. As the missionaries reflected on their missionary careers, thought about the training that benefited them the most, and gave advice to prospective missionaries, with only a few exceptions (considered below), experiential, relationship-based training was most highly valued. Furthermore, while caution should be taken when generalizing research findings from one region and applying them to others, this article suggests that the same

conclusion about missionary training—with the below qualifications in mind—can be applied outside of Asia as well.

Principle One: Experiential Training

Experiential training involves "learning while doing" or "on-the-job" training. In medicine, doctors complete residencies; in the military, paratroopers go through Jump Week; in education, teachers do student teaching. The cross-cultural missionaries interviewed mentioned that their most valuable training came from experiences such as living in a Thai village and serving in their local Thai church; serving on a team in the Philippines under their Filipino team leader; spending a summer serving in the South Pacific with other college students under a dynamic leader; serving in a therapeutic wilderness camp for troubled boys; serving drug addicts in Hong Kong under a spirited leader; and, living and teaching in an intercultural community in Singapore with people from all over Asia. The interviewees spoke more highly of this type of training than any other.

Why is experiential training so valuable? First, it engages the body, mind, and heart. In that sense, it is the most holistic form of training. Second, the training environment overlaps with the environment and context in which trainees will be serving in the future. This overlap allows the missionaries-in-training to become familiar with and gain exposure to situations, challenges, cultures, and languages in which they will serve. Regarding the location of the experiential training, most missionaries said that they would want to train in the same place as they were going to be serving, or at least somewhere similar. Otherwise, they may have a great deal to "unlearn." As an example, one long-term missionary in Nepal strongly felt that cross-cultural training in Mexico would not have been beneficial for his service in Nepal.

Third, experiential training is valuable because trainees are challenged and stretched to grow, learn, and adapt in ways not possible in other forms of training. It is much more difficult to design stretching or stressful experiences in the classroom or training center than in applied settings. Fourth, these experiences are memorable and often stick with missionaries for the rest of their lives. Several missionaries recalled certain training experiences that took place years or even decades in the past. They had carried those lessons with them into the present. Fifth, experiential training helps trainees know themselves and their own training needs. They see where their skills and knowledge are inadequate or insufficient. They become aware of specialized knowledge and skills they need to gain. They are then able to tailor subsequent educational and training needs based on discoveries made about themselves and their context. As an aside, this increased self-understanding is one of the biggest advantages of receiving experiential training *before going to the field long-term*. While it is possible to continue learning virtually on the field, missionaries often get busy with language study, life, and/or ministry, and ongoing training may not be high on the priority list.

Some readers may be thinking, "Well, don't missionaries get experiential training naturally when they go to the field?" While some organizations do include on-field training as part of the process of going to the field long-term, many do not. Additionally, few church-based sending programs include an on-field training component or have the resources to do so. As a result, many missionaries get "thrown into the deep end"—including a number of the missionaries interviewed in this project. When asked what they thought about that experience, they spoke of the stress that it caused and the avoidable mistakes they made. While they did get *experience*, it was unnecessarily hard on them and their families. When I asked whether or not they would recommend or encourage that same experience for others, they unanimously responded, "No." It is also insightful to consider "being thrown into the deep end" from the perspective of other vocations. That is, should soldiers receive their training when they go to war? Should athletes receive their training in competitions? Should doctors learn to practice medicine by experimenting on patients? The answers seem obvious.

Principle Two: Relationship-Based Training

The second training principle that emerged from the research was *relationship-based training*. Relationship-based training is essentially training in which the trainee is engaged at some level with others. "Others" could include a community, a mentor, a coach, a supervisor, a team, or other peer missionaries. The form may be different, but the relational dynamic is similar. Enoch Wan, Mark Hedinger, and Tin V. Nguyen have also written about the importance of this training principle (Wan and Hedinger 2017; Wan and Nguyen 2014). Noteworthy, however, is that these authors' starting point is theological as opposed to evidence-based, as this article's research has sought to be.

Relationship-based training is vital for effective training and fulfills numerous functions. First, trainees can observe skills and attitudes being modeled. Young missionaries can "see how others do it" and observe living examples. Second, they have someone to whom they can go with questions when curious or stuck. They can also do so in real time as their life and ministry unfolds. Third, others can provide follow-up, accountability, and support. These are often vital missing pieces after receiving training. Fourth, others often have certain knowledge, experience, and skills that the trainees need. Do others need to be experts? While learning from those with experience and expertise was perceived as highly valuable, special expertise is not always necessary. That is, even if others are not experts, they can still serve as a sounding board, provide a listening ear to help the trainee process experiences, and provide the meaning and stimulation that comes from learning, experiencing adversity, and "being stretched" together.

While the importance of relationship-based training seems obvious, it is astonishing how many missionaries lack such relationships. One missionary said that he did not have anyone to train him or mentor him after arriving on the field. He proactively sought out several individuals in his location who could fill this role. Unfortunately—and to his surprise and dismay—none of them had time for him. Research with other missionaries confirmed such situations were prevalent. Participants gave several reasons. One was that equipping the next generation is not a high priority for most missionaries. It is simply not in their job description. Another reason was that missionaries are too busy. Training takes time, and missionaries are typically busy people. A third reason involved a hesitancy to invest in those who may not have a long-term commitment. One missionary said he would only invest in younger missionaries if they had been on the field for at least two years, thus indicating a commitment that would make offering personal training worth the investment. Several missionaries questioned the value of apprenticeship programs in which new missionaries learn from experienced ones. They doubted whether the missionary would invest in them, would be able to adequately train them, or would "click" well with them. One organization formerly ran a "senior missionary, junior missionary" program, but for whatever reasons had stopped the program.

The missionaries interviewed gave various other reasons why the relationship-based component was missing. One said his leader was on home assignment when he arrived on the field and that he had to figure things out by himself. Others said that they were dropped off in some remote location to learn the language and culture. One even said that he was part of an experimental program in which his organization placed new missionaries in pioneering cities to start church planting movements. When asked why he thought they would implement such a program, his response was, "I don't know."

Speaking personally about the importance of relationship-based training as a research finding, this principle was rather surprising to me. As with several interviewees just described, I received very little relationship-based training in my early years in the field. In my first one-year stint, I was sent along with three others to teach at a university overseas and to reach out to students. The four of us functioned independently, had no leader, and were not equipped to serve as a team. Years later when I returned to the field to serve long-term, I joined a team whose leader had been expelled from the country shortly before my arrival. After his departure, there was no replacement and the team became disjointed and disconnected. The relational component was largely missing from my own training experience—even though the basic importance of such training clearly emerged from this article's underlying research.

Combining the Two Principles

Experiential and relationship-based training are two of the most important principles in training effective, cross-cultural missionaries. However, while these principles are valuable individually, they also have a synergistic effect when combined. Examples include a young carpenter apprenticing with a master craftsman, a young boxer being trained by a seasoned coach, or an army cadet experiencing the camaraderie and encouragement of other cadets in training. It is instructive to imagine removing either the experiential or relationship component from yet other examples, as in the case of a young girl learning to play the piano on her own, a student studying Spanish alone and having no one with whom to practice, or a newly-appointed leader having to figure out how to lead on his own.

Combining the two principles provides some unique advantages. Several missionaries mentioned the importance of having someone "speak into their lives" while engaged in some type of experiential training. Such training surfaced emotional issues or character issues to which the trainer or mentor could then respond. Others mentioned the fact that the training can be provided at the time that is it needed. As trainees are engaged in the training experience, they become aware

of their needs and questions. They can then go to teammates or trainers to ask questions and get feedback. Such timeliness also makes trainees more receptive to receiving the training because they are aware of their need for it. In contrast, pre-field training that is "front-ended" and content-based is usually less engaging, since the trainees are unaware of its relevance or importance.

Implications and Qualifications

It is important to carefully consider current training trends and practices in light of experiential, relationship-based training principles. In the wake of Covid-19, the trend in training is to make it available online (Handley 2021). Indeed, it may be hard to imagine in our post-Covid-19 context how training could take place without Zoom! Yet even before Covid-19, training was hardly experiential or relationship-based. It often was carried out in the confines of a conference room over a specific number of days. It was common to hear missionaries on the field speak of training as, "We're going to a training in Penang over the break." Many missionaries, both potential and active, enrolled in formal intercultural studies or missions programs, assuming that such programs would equip them for cross-cultural service. In my own training, I was given an extensive book list that I was expected to read through and write reports on or discuss. These same approaches to training are still prevalent today.

However, the research results outlined in this article suggest that the most effective training is not aligned with contemporary training practices or trends. The research results also mean that books, seminars, workshops, and formal training in seminaries and Bible colleges should not be the default, go-to training for prospective cross-cultural missionaries—*unless* they include experiential, relationship-based components.

Some qualifications are needed for the sake of clarity. First, this article is *not* suggesting that other forms of training, such as books, workshops, seminars, formal training at seminaries and Bible colleges, and various forms of online training, are *not* valuable. The missionaries that were interviewed certainly benefitted from many of these training forms. The "Research Findings" section above mentioned exceptions to those missionaries who most valued experiential, relationship-based training. Here are two examples. One participant said the Perspectives course was her most valuable training. In fact, she had taken the course more than once and had become a Perspectives coordinator in her city. Another participant said that the doctoral program that he had pursued on the field in Cambodia was the best training he had received. He said that it had helped him to gain a deep understanding of the Cambodian culture, a culture that had previously baffled him. Because he was living in a village at the time, he could immediately use certain elements from his courses in his context. Both of these participants mentioned forms of training that were more content-based than experiential- or relationship-based. These exceptions could point to the fact that missionaries and their needs are unique and there is no cookie-cutter approach to training—which is undoubtedly true. It is also possible, however, that those who most valued content-based or other types of training *had not actually received* experiential, relationship-based training and thus were unable to speak of their value.

Second, this article does *not* wish to imply that experiential, relationship-based training *must* be carried out in person. It can certainly be done virtually, and many missionaries mentioned mentors, supervisors, or peer missionaries in other locations who gave valuable input into their lives. Third, this article is *not* claiming that experiential, relationship-based training always works out. There are indeed bad experiences as well as certain conditions that need to be in place. Considerations include the chemistry between the trainee and his trainer, the context and location of the training, and the timing in which training occurs. (Additional considerations are in Chapter 3 of Lin 2021.)

What this article *is* suggesting is that *relationship-based, experiential training is a superior form of training for most missionaries and that organizations would do well to plan their training with these principles in mind instead of defaulting to current training practices*.

Conclusion

Admittedly, experiential, relationship-based training can be messy, costly (in both time and human investment), and difficult to plan and execute. It is much easier for a sending organization to offer a weeklong church planting training than to arrange for an aspiring church planter to sit at the feet of a seasoned church planter who is planting churches. It is also much easier to give trainees a list of books on strategies for world evangelization than to require a trainee to engage in evangelism with an experienced team living abroad. But if experiential, relationship-based training is required to become teachers, doctors, athletes, and soldiers, why should it be any different for missionaries?

The feedback of the missionaries interviewed in this article's research project suggests the need to prioritize experiential, relationship-based training for the next generation of missionaries.

Jesus clearly employed experiential, relationship-based training with his disciples. He brought them along with him, taught them, modeled for them, spent time with them, made himself available for them, answered their questions, and sent them out to preach, heal, and cast out demons. Through Jesus's training, the disciples gained skills and knowledge and grew in character. Their experiences surfaced issues of the heart which Jesus then was able to address in real-time. It was certainly a time investment that he knew would be important in world evangelization. Jesus's example as the Master Trainer confirms the feedback of experienced missionaries living in the days of PowerPoint, Zoom, and sticky notes: experiential, relationship-based training is of central importance.

Appendix

   c. A group of fellow missionaries (your peers) who do not have the same mission. They may serve different target people groups or belong to different organizations but recognize the value of the input and counsel from others and meet weekly or bi-weekly to pray, discuss challenges one other is facing, offer solutions and ideas and suggestions to each other, and with a lesser degree, try to hold one another accountable to weekly goals.
   d. A personal coach who is not as familiar with your ministry context—they probably haven't served in [your country] or in Asia—but who is very skilled at asking stimulating questions, could help keep you focused and on track, challenge you to set big goals/SMART goals and have a big vision, and just in general, help you make progress towards your ministry goals.
11. The next questions are just to give you some space to share any additional thoughts you have about missions training and equipping. You may think of this in terms of:
   a. If you were in a room of missions trainers, what advice and suggestions would you want to share with them for implementing in their training programs?
   b. What lessons would you want to pass on to a younger person?
   c. What have you experienced regarding training that you don't want others to have to experience?
   d. What have you experienced regarding training that you would also want others to experience?
   e. What complaints do you have about the training you've received?
   f. If you were to become a director of training, what would you want to implement into your training?
12. In regard to this interview itself, as you have reflected on and assessed your own training, thought about your organization and how they do training, and thought about how to advise and direct a young person who wanted to get the best possible training, what thoughts, feelings, or reactions has this interview itself stimulated, triggered, or reinforced in you personally?

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The Struggles of Generation Z and The Future of North American Mission Organizations

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Abstract

In North America, members of Generation Z (people born since 1995) are facing struggles and obstacles that previous generations have not had to face, resulting in higher rates of depression and suicide and lower levels of life satisfaction. These struggles are likely to have a negative impact on the future generation of missionaries and mission organizations. Psychological struggles due to social media, addiction related to online gaming and pornography, and fragility due to changes in parenting and education have all been amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, these challenges may make North American Generation Z missionaries less effective unless mission structures change to provide the support and accountability necessary to minimize the effects of the new cultural context.

Key Words: education, Gen Z, mission organizations, online addictions, social media

Introduction

As the Baby Boomers retire, Gen Xers (typically defined as those born between the early, or sometimes mid-, 1960s and about 1980) and Millennials (sometimes called Gen Y, typically defined as those born in the 1980s and early 1990s) have filled most of the leadership positions in North American mission organizations. The transition has gone smoothly and the missions movement has remained stable (Newell, 2017; Zurlo et al., 2021). However, the future is not at all sure. The current generation of North American young adults, Generation Z or iGen, is struggling against several important cultural elements which may severely impact the future of mission organizations (Lukianoff & Haidt, 2018; Twenge, 2017b; Zimbardo & Coulombe, 2016). We know little of how this generation will develop as they grow older, but their present high rates of depression and suicide and the lack of life satisfaction exasperated by the COVID-19 pandemic may foreshadow an ominous future. Mission organizations need to take into account the struggles of Generation Z to effectively provide those called to world evangelization the structures which will enable them to flourish.

Generation Z (Gen Z) is typically described as consisting of those born in 1995 or after (American Psychological Association, 2018; Twenge, 2017a). 1995 was the year the internet became commercially available to most Americans, making Gen Z the first generation to never know life without it. In 2007 the iPhone was introduced, and in 2010 the iPad hit the market. By around 2011, the majority of U.S.-Americans owned smartphones, the year that Gen Z started high school and the year that depression and suicide rates began to soar (Twenge, 2017b; Twenge, Joiner, et al., 2018). By 2015, two-thirds of North American teens had cell phones and checked them on average 80 times per day (Twenge, 2017b). Although it is impossible to prove that the internet and cell phones—especially the resulting access to social media, pornography, and video games—are the cause of the changes in Gen Z, there is an increasing body of longitudinal and experimental evidence that such factors have a causal influence on Gen Z's well-being (e.g., Midgley, 2019; Sherman et al., 2013). These trends all began before the COVID-19 pandemic, but many have been amplified by the social isolation that has characterized the key developmental

years of many members of Generation Z (McCarthy, 2021; Xiang et al., 2020).

The decline in well-being and mental health of Generation Z has been well-documented before the pandemic (Heffer et al., 2019; Twenge, Joiner, et al., 2018; Twenge, Martin, et al., 2018) as well as during it (American Psychological Association, 2020; Czeisler et al., 2020). Three sources of malaise in Gen Z's environment are present in ways that previous generations have not had to face: social media (especially affecting females), pornography and video games (especially affecting males), and changes in higher education, all amplified by the lockdown and restrictions in face-to-face communication. It is unknown what effect these new cultural elements may have on the future of evangelical mission organizations. Because malaise provides a motivation to change one's environment, mission organizations have the opportunity not only to form communities that enable Christ-following members of Gen Z to escape the dysfunctions associated with current trends in Western societies but also to provide structures that will make them more effective in their service for Christ.

The studies that provide information about these trends in North America are often based on data from college students, with an over-representation of White and Asian Americans. Conclusions from these studies are simply trends that are occurring across North American culture. They cannot be used to make conclusions about any specific individual or ethnic group. Different ethnic groups are likely to be affected differently by these trends, but few studies have detected meaningful differences. Similarly, young people in different Christian communities will be affected differently by these trends. Because Generation Z is so ethnically diverse, it is likely that new North American mission organizations will arise to focus on mobilizing specific ethnicities (Kim, 2020).

Malaise from Social Media

Generation Z began high school around the same time that smartphones became the norm for North American teenagers. Adolescence has long been recognized as a period of identity formation, primarily through face-to-face interaction with peers (Erikson & Erikson, 1998). However, Generation Z was only spending about half the time in face-to-face communication that teens before 2000 spent, primarily due to their increased time on phone-related activities (social media, gaming, viewing pornography, etc.), which has had a major effect on their identity formation (Twenge, 2017b) and their psychological well-being (Twenge, Joiner, et al., 2018). Once the pandemic began, face-to-face contact with peers was reduced dramatically or even eliminated—with unknown effects on identity formation.

The decrease in psychological well-being is associated with greater use of social media, especially in teenage girls (Heffer et al., 2019; Twenge, Martin, et al., 2018). Social media strongly affects girls' body image, because they tend to follow the most attractive people on Instagram and other visually-oriented social media platforms. Posts with sexy images receive the most likes, which motivates additional posting (Mascheroni et al., 2015). These patterns result in *upward social comparison* (Collins, 1996); when people are exposed to others who are superior to them in some salient dimension (e.g., physical attractiveness), their overall self-evaluations tend to decrease, resulting in a general malaise. Upward social comparison occurs not just when viewing attractive people but also when viewing groups of happy people or people doing interesting or fun things. When members of Gen Z are bored or feeling alone, the first response is often to go to social media on their phones, where they are bombarded with images of peers who are with others, happy, and doing interesting things. This phenomenon appears to be one of the main driving forces

behind the increases in depressive episodes, suicidal ideation, plans for suicide, suicide attempts, and death by suicide observed in Generation Z compared to Millennials (Duffy et al., 2019; Twenge et al., 2019).

Generation Z is not only characterized by greater psychological difficulties but also by a lower level of life satisfaction and happiness. In a major study of happiness in Generation Z, lower levels of happiness were associated with greater time spent on a wide range of phone activities: listening to music, internet surfing, computer gaming, use of social media, spending leisure time alone, texting, video chat, talking on the phone, and reading internet news (Twenge, 2019; Twenge, Joiner, et al., 2018). In contrast, greater participation in almost all of the non-phone activities that were measured—including sleeping, exercise and sports, face-to-face social interaction, volunteer work, going to the movies, attending church, reading print media, and doing homework—predicted higher levels of happiness.

Social media and smartphone use also seem to be adversely affecting the moral and theological values of Generation Z. Although members of Generation Z are having less premarital sex, participating in fewer dating activities, and drinking less than previous generations, most likely due to more time spent on the internet and less time spent in face-to-face activities (Twenge & Park, 2019; Twenge et al., 2017a, 2017b), they are far more tolerant of homosexuality and other alternate forms of sexual expression than previous generations (Twenge et al., 2016, 2017a). Similarly, members of Generation Z are less religious and less spiritual than previous generations, attending fewer religious services and spending less time praying (Twenge et al., 2015). However, these decreases in church attendance are much smaller in evangelical churches compared to mainline churches, and church attendance continues to be a predictor of psychological well-being (Twenge et al., 2015; Twenge, Joiner, et al., 2018).

Contributing factors to this decline in moral and religious values include the fear of online bullying (Kowalski et al., 2014) and the "mum effect" (Dunaetz, 2019). The mum effect describes the human reluctance to share bad news with others; it is often easier to remain mum than to share something disagreeable with others, even if it is in the others' interests to know that information (Dibble, 2017; Tesser & Rosen, 1972). For Christians, although the gospel is good news for those who believe, for those who do not believe it can be viewed as bad news (2 Cor. 2:15-16). People are hesitant to share bad news for a variety of reasons, including not wanting to hurt or offend the listener, not wanting to be judged by the listener, and not wanting to feel bad about the listener's response. Such hesitancy occurs in both face-to-face conversations and online. The online mum effect can be especially strong because of cyberbullying (Kowalski et al., 2014): anonymously attacking, sometimes viciously, someone who has posted an opinion or belief that is not shared by the attacker. Those who spend the most time online (Generation Z) are the most susceptible to this phenomenon and thus often strive to avoid posting anything controversial, even anonymously. Generation Z Christians may take on a non-Christian persona (but not anti-Christian) or avoid any mention of being a Christian or of Christian values in order to avoid cyberbullying; living out such an identity online is likely to weaken their faith and their moral behavior in daily living that involves actual, non-virtual interactions with people.

Addiction to Video Games and Pornography

Generation Z spent about six hours a day online before the pandemic, roughly divided equally between social media, gaming, and internet use (including the use of pornography; Twenge, 2017, p. 64). Whereas young women are primarily affected negatively by social media, young men tend

to experience more negative effects from gaming and pornography (Zimbardo & Coulombe, 2016). Generation Z's passion for gaming can be partially understood through Yee's (2006) taxonomy of motivations for playing online games, which includes three overarching components: achievement, social, and immersion.

The need for achievement is linked to Generation Z's desire for meaning and value (Deleuze et al., 2019). By mastering the various levels of online games, young men experience feelings of success and victory. Such successes and victories, unlike the successes and victories in real life, are not especially costly, apart from the time and subscriptions required to master the necessary techniques. Nevertheless, they provide a sense of having achieved something great, even when the participant has not achieved anything of value in real life (Zimbardo & Coulombe, 2016). Similarly, social needs can be met with little cost through online gaming. Cooperation, camaraderie, reputation, and dialog about felt concerns are all available in online gaming. However, if any relationship becomes costly or undesirable, leaving the community is easy and generally has no long-term consequences in the real world. The third motive for gaming, immersion, tends to be even more problematic. Immersion occurs when one loses one's sense of self to discover new worlds, experience new and pleasurable phenomena, and escape from the stresses of real life. This motive is also closely associated with the use of pornography. Gaming and pornography may help relieve the stress caused by failures, boredom, loneliness, or sexual desires; however, such gratification occurs at the cost of productivity and the development of lasting relationships.

In addition to limiting productive work and the development of healthy relationships, gaming and pornography may both become addictive (Gorelik, 2019; Love et al., 2015; Schüll, 2014). Because human beings, made in the image of God, are innately social, social needs drive humans to make social connections. Both online games and pornography are designed to exploit these social needs. By providing periodically rewarding experiences, bodies and brains become accustomed to the pleasure associated with dopamine rushes triggered by the stimuli provided online. The sought-after stimuli may be difficult or at least challenging to find, motivating the individual to continue to pursue the goal and providing a greater sense of satisfaction when it is achieved, contributing to its addictive nature.

Although the concept of *flow* (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) is often used to design work so that it becomes more engaging, the same conditions that make people lose themselves in productive work also cause people to fall into the *machine zone* (Schüll, 2014): the unthinking state where all problems are forgotten and only what appears on the screen matters. Both flow and the machine zone occur when four conditions are met (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990; Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2002): Each moment has a goal, the rules for making choices about how to achieve the goal are clear, immediate feedback provides information concerning how close one is to achieving the goal, and the difficulty of achieving the goals is matched by one's skill level, resulting in a challenge that is not beyond one's ability. Online activities provide exactly these conditions, resulting in total mental absorption where the participant has no sense of time, financial context, social standing, responsibility, or even existence (Schüll, 2014).

Several factors make Generation Z especially susceptible to the dangers of video game and pornography addiction (Zimbardo & Coulombe, 2016): increased fatherlessness (which makes long-term relationships less attractive), cultural changes that encourage impulsiveness (information is obtained by clicking around until one finds it rather than by in-depth reading and

analysis), fewer social skills (due to less time spent in face-to-face interactions), and increased availability of games and pornography (because few adolescents have adequate supervision to limit the time spent on their phones or the content viewed). These conditions may have a significant impact on Generation Z as they begin joining mission organizations. Those who are addicted to these online activities will have limited spiritual resources at their disposal to aid them in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18-20, Rom. 8:5-8). Moreover, even those who are not addicted may feel the temptation to escape the immense pressures of cross-cultural stress through online activities.

Fragility from Overprotection

Compared to their Millennial elders, members of Generation Z are far more concerned about safety and risk reduction. They receive fewer traffic tickets, have fewer auto accidents, get into fewer fights, date less, and have fewer sexual experiences (Twenge, 2017b; Twenge & Park, 2019; Twenge et al., 2017b). Part of these changes is due simply to spending less face-to-face time with others, but part is due to changes in education, both from parents and colleges.

Safety and Risk-Taking

Human beings have been described as *anti-fragile* (Taleb, 2012). Rather than becoming weaker from stress, humans grow emotionally and socially from stress, developing skills enabling them to better deal with future difficulties (this should be all the more true for Christians, in whom God uses trials to shape character; James 1:2-8). However, members of Generation Z have been raised by parents who often desire to protect them from any unpleasant experiences; then they attend colleges that also seek to protect them from stressful ideas and situations (Lukianoff & Haidt, 2018).

Compared to previous generations, Generation Z has grown up with a greater degree of helicopter parenting (LeMoyne & Buchanan, 2011), a parenting style in which parents constantly watch over children and their environment, ready to intervene to prevent any adversity from threatening their children's well-being. This safety-seeking, along with the *rugrat race* (Ramey & Ramey, 2009)—the pressure from parents for a child's academic success to ensure admission to a highly ranked college—significantly reduced Generation Z's unstructured time in childhood (Lukianoff & Haidt, 2018). Such over-protection may have led to greater anxiety and the inability to adapt to new situations (Gray, 2011), making missionary service more difficult for Generation Z.

Reliance on receiving news from social media and other online sources has led to an amplification of the dangers that exist around us. Since humans have a tendency to focus on dangers and threats (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Kermer et al., 2006), news headlines are often written to instill fear and maximize the likelihood of being clicked on (Altheide, 2013). This phenomenon causes people to be overexposed to negative, fear-generating events relative to positive events, amplifying the perception of danger when one interacts with people face-to-face (Intravia et al., 2017), increasing Generation Z's hesitation to take risks. Adolescents who were quarantined (either by government regulation, parental choice, or personal choice) during the pandemic had significantly higher levels of worry, helplessness, and fear than those who were not quarantined (Saurabh & Ranjan, 2020).

Call-Out Culture

Also contributing to a desire for safety and an unwillingness to take risks is the development of *call-out culture*, the willingness of members of an online community to publicly shame others in the community who express ideas that may be interpreted as offensive (Huffman, 2016). This condemnation tends to occur in public online posts in response to something the supposed offender has posted; the focus is on judgment with little emphasis placed on trying to understand the context of the post or understanding the author's intentions (Tucker, 2018). Since such a large part of Generation Z's life is online, call-out culture creates a general feeling of danger, where one false step can bring about public shaming that risks going viral (Lukianoff & Haidt, 2018). This threat amplifies the mum effect (the tendency to avoid sharing bad news because of the negative consequences), an effect that may discourage Generation Z from openly discussing their faith online.

Emotionality

Because professors and administrators are sensitive to the devastation that being public critiqued can bring both to them and to their students, there is less emphasis in classrooms on discussion and debating ideas in Generation Z's university classes, with a shift towards focusing on emotions rather than on determining what is true. This shift can especially be seen in the emphasis in higher education on the perceived danger of microaggressions (Lilienfeld, 2017; Sue et al., 2007). Although the pain that people experience when someone says something insensitive is real, an emphasis on focusing on and reporting microaggressions—specifically, beliefs that an aggression has occurred based on one's feelings rather than on the speaker's intentions within the context of the discussion—encourages cognitive distortions rather than critical thinking, which would instead involve basing one's beliefs and conclusions on the evidence rather than one's emotions.

This emphasis in higher education on emotional responses to what others say encourages misperceptions of intentions, anger, resentment, and feelings of victimization. Students are encouraged to develop an external locus of control (in contrast to an internal locus of control)—specifically, the belief that they cannot control the outcomes of these events because the outcomes are determined by forces external to themselves (Hiroto, 1974; Lukianoff & Haidt, 2018). Such beliefs will likely make members of Generation Z less sure than previous generations that they can have a positive impact on the world around them, a conviction that is essential for future missionaries.

Us Versus Them

In North America, Generation Z, compared to previous generations, is more concerned about making a living compared to developing a philosophy of life and living consistently with it (Twenge, 2017b; Twenge et al., 2012). Materialism and owning many possessions have become more attractive, perhaps due to increased exposure to advertising and decreased exposure to ideas and people who believe that living consistently with a set of values is important. Social media use is positively correlated with materialism, especially a desire for luxury items (Kamal et al., 2013). Although social media users often express concern for social issues, much of that concern may simply be an attempt to get more likes through virtue signaling (Orlitzky, 2017).

Without a coherent philosophy of life, there is an increased emphasis on identity, whether it be ethnic, social class, or political. Whereas previous generations were encouraged to view all human

beings as of equal worth, either because they were created in God's image or bound together by a common humanity, the tendency for members of Generation Z is to view themselves primarily in terms of group membership. The echo chamber of social media prevents users from hearing views held by members of other groups, making the most extreme views seem the most reasonable and cooperation with members of one's outgroup for the common good nearly impossible (Gross & De Dreu, 2019). The phenomena of ingroup favoritism (Balliet et al., 2014) and outgroup derogation (Branscombe & Wann, 1994) are pushing Generation Z to view the world as "us versus them" or "the good guys versus the bad guys."

This shift away from a coherent philosophy of life will make it more difficult for Generation Z to forsake material well-being to reach the unreached for Christ. Not only will the threat of a lower standard of living discourage people from moving to developing nations, but an emphasis on one's own group's values will make cultural adaptation more difficult as the unique aspects of the host culture that Generation Z missionaries will move into will seem less valid.

Responding to Generation Z's Struggles

The next generation of North American missionaries is facing significant challenges. Assuming a global scope of many of Gen Zers' characteristics and influences on them, the next generation of missionaries sent from other contexts will also need to overcome ominous obstacles. Social media-related struggles with psychological stability and well-being, addictions and compulsions linked with video gaming and pornography, and emotional fragility associated with changes in education, all amplified by the pandemic, stand to make it more difficult for Generation Z to be successful servants of Christ in cross-cultural settings. Mission organizations must adapt to maximize the stability and success of those who choose to serve the Lord in the most challenging locations.

One of the most promising approaches to meet Generation Z's needs is greater social support and accountability through missionary teams (Dunaetz, 2010; Thom et al., 2020). Single-sex support groups that meet regularly can help provide the stability, accountability, and focus to minimize the likelihood of succumbing to the challenges and obstacles that the missionaries will face. To minimize the possibility of destructive conflict, such groups, if possible, should be in addition to and different from ministry teams focused on accomplishing tasks. Mission organizations can also organize these support and accountability teams for groups of appointees before they leave for the field, perhaps with virtual meetings if face-to-face meetings are not possible. The development of Zoom and other video conferencing tools during the pandemic has made virtual meetings possible for everyone. On the field, missionaries should meet regularly with others in the region for support and accountability, either personally or through video conferencing. Team leaders should be trained in effective group dynamics to ensure that such teams are viewed positively and that the necessary trust develops.

Although the challenges facing Generation Z missionaries are daunting, providing the appropriate structure for developing a healthy missionary community can make missionary success more likely. Such initiatives will require creativity and flexibility—characteristics, after all, of any successful mission organization.

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Mission and Disintegration in Global Anglicanism from the 1960s through 2022: An Update to Stephen Neill's *Anglicanism*

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Abstract

Stephen Neill's masterpiece *Anglicanism*, published in 1965, still has fans and sponsors. This is especially true in the hispanophone world where well-researched resources on Anglicanism are hard to find.

The purpose of this article is to provide a summary of some important events that have deeply formed and influenced what is today global Anglicanism. Anglicanism is less centralized—not that it has ever been very centralized—than in 1960, and it is also much more heterogeneous and varied than it was then. This article briefly recounts developments in four key areas: theology, jurisdictions, Lambeth Conferences, and demography.

Key Words: Anglican, Canterbury, GAFCON, ordination

Theology

Perhaps the main theological—and ecclesiological and liturgical and thus missiological—development in the Anglican Communion was the introduction of women's ordination. The first woman ordained to the priesthood in the Communion was Florence Li Tim-Oi. She was ordained on 25 January 1944 by Ronald Hall, Bishop of Victoria, Hong Kong, in response to the crisis among Anglican Christians in China caused by the Japanese invasion. To avoid controversy, she resigned her licence (though not her priestly orders) after the end of the war.

The first woman ordained to the episcopate in the Anglican Communion was Barbara Harris, an African-American woman of the diocese of Massachusetts. She was ordained as a bishop suffragan in 1989. Since then a number of provinces, predominantly white and anglophone, have ordained other women as bishops. A number of provinces appear to allow for the ordination of a woman as a bishop, but none have yet to appoint or elect a woman for that position.

The introduction of women's ordination was unacceptable to some Anglo-Catholics. Some of them tried to continue within their jurisdictions requesting oversight from bishops who had not and would not ordain women, seeing it as an action that could call into question or even nullify apostolic succession.

In England a compromise was reached whereby congregations and their priests could request a provincial episcopal visitor (PEV), who were popularly known as "flying bishops." This concept of episcopacy by affinity (rather than territorial location) would grow and become a key factor in global Anglicanism.

Groups of Anglo-Catholics seeking reunion with the See of Peter had approached bishops of Rome requesting guidance. Some were from within the Communion, while others came from separated churches known popularly as the Anglican Continuum or Continuing Anglicans.

John Paull II had, in 1980, promulgated the Pastoral Provision, whereby an Anglican (or other Protestant) priest could be received into the Roman Catholic Church and then be ordained again. Rome had long ago decided that Anglican orders were null and void, but in this curious move the pontiff also decided that the vocation to the priesthood may well have been authentic.

As a result,

Jerusalem Statement and Declaration of 2008, and led by a Primates Council, which represents the majority of the world's Anglicans ("About GAFCON").

The unfolding of the events of 2003, wherein the American province ignored the clear position of the Communion, led to a further conclusion by other Anglicans: if they can do it, why can't we? Anglicans, like other catholic Christians, had an ancient tradition of territorial bishoprics. But if one province of the Communion could, without any real, observable punishment or discipline, ignore other ancient traditions (like not ordaining gay men in same-sex unions), then why could we not do the same? From their point of view, these other Anglicans were receiving pleas for help from parishes and even entire dioceses. Numerous meetings with the archbishops of Canterbury and Primates' Meetings resulted in no significant or real discipline. (A primate is a senior bishop or archbishop who has the role of representing the entire province before the Communion.) It was clear, then, that evangelical and Anglo-Catholic provinces could likewise ignore the ancient tradition of not crossing episcopal boundaries and there would be no negative consequences. The Americans (and later the Canadians) had discarded an ancient principle in the name of "justice"; these others could discard another one in the name of "mission" and pastoral exigency. And they did.

In sum, questions of gender and sex have been at the center of much of the theological development of the last decades. But these are theological issues, though both sides have failed to clearly enunciate this at times. One side is certain that they are on the side of justice, while the other is certain that they are the biblical Christians. Meanwhile, many Anglicans around the world have their own opinions on the matter but do not feel that the battle is important enough to definitively take sides. Still others do not feel they have the liberty to provoke wealthy friends in the West by emphasizing the issue, even when they disagree.

Jurisdictions

In 1979 the Church of Nigeria separated from the Province of West Africa to become its own province.

In 1980 the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church and the Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church were accepted into the Communion, though both had been established many years before.

In 1981 the five dioceses of Argentina—previously extra-provincial to Canterbury—became the Province of the Southern Cone, later (2014) to be renamed the Anglican Church of South America. In 1995 five dioceses in Mexico were officially recognized as the Anglican Church of Mexico. In 1998 the Anglican Church in the Central Region of America likewise became an autonomous province of the Communion, with its five dioceses of Panama, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. At first, the idea had been floated that the other dioceses of Province IX (an administrative region of the Episcopal Church [USA], not a province of the Anglican Communion) would likewise become an autonomous province. To date, however, this has not happened, and Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Central Ecuador, Litoral Ecuador, Honduras, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela all remain dioceses of the Episcopal Church (USA). In 2018 the General Convention of the Episcopal Church (USA) voted to readmit the diocese of Cuba.

In 1992 the Episcopal Church of Rwanda separated from the Province of Rwanda, Burundi, and Boga Zaire. In 2007 the name of the province was changed, replacing the word Episcopal with Anglican.

The Anglican Ordinariates were mentioned above, reminding us that theological issues are always, and also, jurisdictional. GAFCON has branches or provinces in New Zealand (2019), Brazil (2018), Australia (2015), and North America (2009) that not only are not part of the Communion but also overlap with members of the Communion. The ACNA ordained a missionary bishop for the United Kingdom and Europe in 2017.

In 2011 the Republic of South Sudan gained independence from Sudan. Sudan is largely Muslim and South Sudan largely Christian, with some communities practicing indigenous religions. South Sudan decided to use English as its main language, as opposed to the Arabic of Sudan. These and other factors led to local Anglicans requesting recognition as the autonomous Province of the Episcopal Church of South Sudan. This was granted by the Anglican Consultative Council and other authorities in 2017.

In 2018 the Anglican Church of Chile, originally the diocese of Chile of the Anglican Church of South America, was likewise recognized as a new province of the Anglican Communion—both are also members of GAFCON, incidentally.

In 2020 a substantial rearrangement of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East was concluded. That province had consisted of four rather disparate dioceses:

- Jerusalem (including Jordan, Palestine, Israel, Lebanon, and Syria),
- Egypt (including the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia, and North Africa but not Morocco, which is under the Church of England's Diocese of Gibraltar in Europe),
- Iran (barely functioning), and
- Cyprus and the Gulf States (whose membership is almost entirely expatriate).

Egypt withdrew from the province, split into four dioceses, and was recognized as the 41st province of the Communion under the name of the Episcopal/Anglican Province of Alexandria. This took place in 2020 with the four dioceses being Egypt, North Africa (again, minus Morocco), the Horn of Africa, and Gambella (a region in Ethiopia).

Finally, in February of 2021 a new Anglican jurisdiction (not in the Anglican Communion, but in GAFCON) came into being: the Anglican Network in Europe. It consists of the already-existing Anglican Mission in England (AMiE), which also cared for churches in Scotland that left after the Scottish Episcopal Church changed its canon on marriage to allow same sex unions, and the newly formed Anglican Convocation in Europe. Initial clergy are from England, Scotland, and Portugal.

Lambeth Conferences

Beginning in 1867 the Archbishop of Canterbury started to invite all Anglican bishops to his palace at Lambeth for consultation and adjudication. Lambeth Conferences were held in the following years of the twentieth century: 1908, 1920, 1930, 1948, 1958, 1968, 1978, 1988, 1998 and then a conference—or, more precisely, Indaba—in 2008. For the conferences in 2008 and 2022, primates from some of the most populous provinces have declined to attend.

Lambeth Conferences regularly issued statements that were, famously, non-binding on topics like ecumenical relations with the Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, Lutherans, Reformed Churches, and other traditions. Statements were issued on social and political issues related to war and unrest in different parts of the world. Various statements regarding women's ordination were issued, but—since they were non-binding—provinces and dioceses did as they pleased. The 1968 Conference passed Resolution 43 which suggested that assent to the 39 Articles of Religion no longer be required of ordinands ("Resolution 43"). Lambeth 1988 was presided over by Archbishop Robert Runcie and there were over 500 bishops present.

Lambeth 1998 was presided over by George Carey. There were over 740 bishops present, including, for the first time, some women bishops. The 1998 conference is, even outside the Anglican world, considered by many to be a landmark (or history marker) in that it represents the first time that a global body of Christian leaders voted against the explicit will of the majority of wealthy, white, Western bishops: "What emerged was a major divide between conservatives and liberals. The global shift in Anglicanism was asserting itself. The post-colonial fight-back, with support from Western conservatives, meant that the final Lambeth resolution was toughened with the insertion of a brief text declaring that 'homosexual practice is incompatible with Scripture'" (Chapman 2006).

In so far as there is any official position of the Anglican Communion on the issue, this is it. But, as has been demonstrated above, the so-called instruments of unity were either unwilling or unable to apply any sort of discipline to provinces that disregarded the Communion's position from 1998. Americans (and by extension anyone else) could completely disregard Lambeth, the Primates' Meetings, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Anglican Consultative Council and still receive invitations to the Lambeth Conference.

(Since the Communion does not have a common canon law or court, the four Instruments of Unity, also called the Instruments of Communion, have been identified as things that unite the Communion in mission and fellowship, if not in jurisprudence. They are the person of the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Primates' Meetings, and the Anglican Consultative Council.)

By 2008, the Lambeth "Conference" was no longer a conference where juridical and canonical issues would be debated and adjudicated. Rowan Williams opted for practical training in "effective, truthful and prayerful mission," and he ruled out revisiting 1998's Resolution 1.10, cited above. He also emphasized listening to different voices. But by 2008 many conservatives had concluded that "listening" was a code word signifying lack of discipline for the heterodox and even the heretical. Many conservatives—evangelical and Anglo-Catholic—believed that what was needed was decisive, disciplinary action, which was precisely what Williams had ruled out.

Only around 670 bishops were present, as numerous bishops from the non-Western world decided not to attend. Four Anglican primates announced they were boycotting the meeting—Nigeria, Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda. By that time the active membership of the first three of these four provinces was greater than that of the Church of England. A very large portion of active Anglicans in the world were not represented by their bishops at Lambeth 2008.

The first meeting of the Global Anglican Future Conference (GAFCON) took place in Jerusalem from 22-29 June 2008. GAFCON's foundational statement, the Jerusalem Declaration, was issued. Later global meetings of GAFCON would take place in Nairobi (2013) and Jerusalem (2018). To reiterate, a large majority of the members of the Anglican Communion are also, simultaneously, a large majority of the members of GAFCON. Some provinces of GAFCON have announced impaired communion or broken communion with certain provinces of the Communion (i.e., the ones who have decided to ordain non-celibate gay people to the presbyterate and also, in some cases, to the episcopate, and then later transgender people as well).

Section K of the Indaba "reflections" was on the "Windsor Process," which sought to salvage some semblance of unity and interdependence after the 2003 ordination of Robinson to the episcopate. The Windsor Process was by all accounts an utter and complete failure. This same section also mentions the so-called Instruments of Communion (§146), attempting to

bolster the Instruments' role in the governance and guidance of the Communion, but to no avail.

Section B on Mission and Evangelism commended the five marks of mission (§42) to the Communion. Those marks are to:

1. proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God;
2. teach, baptize and nurture new believers;
3. respond to human need by loving service;
4. seek to transform unjust structures of society; and
5. strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and to sustain and renew the life of the earth.

These marks of mission have provided a locus for thought and action in mission in many parts of the Communion.

From 2000 on, the Primates of the Communion have also held regular meetings every year or two. According to the Anglican Communion website, "The Primates have no authority as a body and their own national churches determine how their ministry is carried out in their own context. The customs and responsibilities vary between provinces. The Primates' Meeting was established in 1978 by the then Archbishop of Canterbury, Donald Coggan, as an opportunity for 'leisurely thought, prayer and deep consultation'."

In February 2005, the Primates met in Dromantine, Ireland. They received the Windsor Report, which as noted above came to nothing, said that many were "deeply alarmed" by the ordination of non-celibate, gay bishops in the USA and Canada, but acknowledged that those elections had taken place "in accordance with their constitutional processes and requirements." They expressed a commitment to pastoral care for homosexual people. As with all the non-binding communiques of this body which has "no authority as a body," these words were, to quote Shakespeare, "sound and fury, signifying nothing."

The 2020 meeting communiqué says not a word about homosexuality, LGBTQ, or same-sex attraction. However, various people who attended remarked that the meeting took seriously the divisions in the Communion (Davies 2020). It is now customary for some primates from GAFCON provinces not to attend these primates' meetings. For instance, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Uganda all declined the invitation to the 2020 meeting in the Kingdom of Jordan.

The most recent Lambeth Conference was in July 2022. Some 650 bishops attended, continuing the decline in numbers which started with Lambeth XIV in 2008. As with Lambeth XIV, many bishops from the most populous provinces decided not to attend because Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby had decided to invite bishops who were in same-sex unions.

At this 2022 Conference, a group called the Global South Fellowship of Anglican Churches (GSFA) sought to reaffirm that Lambeth 1998 1.10 was still the official position of the Communion. (According to their website, the GSFA are, "…a worldwide fellowship ('koinonia') of orthodox Anglican Provinces and Dioceses within the Anglican Communion. Presently, approximately 25 Provinces belong to our fellowship. We have a history rooted in mission from as far back as 1994.") Initially, a time had been allocated when this reaffirmation of 1.10 could be voted on, but vocal bishops from the USA and Canada—who represent a small portion of global Anglicans but of whom there are very many because their dioceses are often quite small—vociferously objected. Archbishop Welby surrendered to this small, wealthy, and white minority, and the opportunity for the bishops to even vote on the question was canceled.

Welby acknowledged that 1.10 had been validly passed in 1998, but he would not affirm that he actually agreed with it. He also clearly stated that he would not discipline any dissenting bishops. By the end of the conference Welby continued to opine the Communion could "walk together" in spite of these differences, while the GSFA Churches indicated that the Communion was in fact not walking together, and that questions of marriage were central to historical Anglican doctrine and were not adiaphora.

As one observer concluded:

> It is no overstatement to say that the Lambeth Conference is in a moment of deep crisis. There are now emerging two Anglican Communions: one, in the western world of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Wales, and increasingly England, which is accommodating a secular culture and giving up on Biblical authority; the other, chiefly in the Global South, together with those Christians in the western world who dissent from secular culture and hold to the authority of Scripture. Presumably, the next Archbishop of Canterbury will call for a Lambeth Conference in 2032 or thereabouts. By then, the emerging division will be even more stark, and he will be forced to pick between the two. Rowan and Justin have tried to have it both ways, to keep everyone "walking together," papering over fundamental differences while avoiding the taking of resolutions. But this cannot work forever. The next Archbishop has the opportunity to take a clear Biblical stand, to discipline unscriptural innovation, and to allow the gathered Bishops of the global Communion to again issue Resolutions affirming and applying the Biblical witness. If not, more Biblical Bishops will boycott, and the Lambeth Conference will slide into irrelevance as a gathering of the revisionist Bishops of rapidly declining churches (Johnston 2022).

Up through 1998 the Lambeth Conferences issued resolutions. The 2008 Conference resulted in reflections and meditations. The 2022 Conference resulted in "Lambeth Calls" in English, or what in Spanish we might call "invitations" or "challenges." The idea was that each bishop could return to his diocese and implement these different invitations according to the local context. According to the website formulated prior to the 2022 Conference:

> The focus of the Lambeth Conference is exploring what it means to be 'God's Church for God's World' in the decade ahead. Bishops will discuss several themes through morning Bible Expositions on 1 Peter, and plenary sessions during the Lambeth Conference.
>
> Lambeth Calls will be shared on these themes which will include:
>
> - Mission and Evangelism
> - Reconciliation
> - Safe Church
> - Environment and Sustainable Development
> - Christian Unity
> - Inter-faith Relations
> - Anglican Identity
> - Human Dignity
> - Discipleship

All the calls, which had been prepared beforehand, were adopted by the bishops present.

Demography

The majority of active Anglicans in the world today are not in the West, they are not white, and they are not for the most part liberal or progressive. The Church of England alleges a large membership, but in terms of actual people involved in their churches the number is much lower. In terms of active membership, then, the four largest provinces of the Anglican Communion are, in descending order, Nigeria, Uganda, Kenya, and then England.

While the Episcopal Church (USA) is widely known and has an exorbitant number of bishops given its small membership, its membership is, like that of England and Canada, in steady decline. Consider the following statistics for the U.S. Episcopal Church: In 2011 there were 6,736 domestic parishes and missions and about 1.92 million active baptized members. By 2018 there were 6,423 domestic parishes and missions and about 1.68 million active baptized members. The numbers for average Sunday worship were 640,142 in 2011 and 531,958 in 2018. In 1980 the reported membership was 2.78 million ("Religious Groups"). From 1980 through 2018, then, the Episcopal Church (USA) lost 40% of its membership, and this during decades when the overall US population grew substantially.

Similar figures could be provided for England, Australia, Canada, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, and more. For instance, a national poll in Britain in 2017 revealed that only 15% of Britons identified themselves as being Anglicans. The demographic implications are quite clear: first, the future of global Anglicanism is in places where the church is growing or, at least, stable. The provinces of the anglophone West are wealthy and often have centuries of resources at their disposal. Second, many of the provinces of the non-Western world are conservative and judge that the approval of same-sex marriage (SSM) and the ordination of non-celibate LGBTQ people is a clear violation of Scripture and catholic tradition. It is these latter churches that are growing. Third, there are always exceptions. For instance, the Episcopal Church in Brazil (Anglican Communion) has in many cases embraced SSM and the ordination of non-celibate LGBTQ people; likewise, there are some dioceses in the West that are still conservative—though most have left or been forced out and have gone to new, non-Communion jurisdictions or Rome.

In the end, the future of Anglicanism is one of preference and individualism. Overlapping jurisdictions are now the norm in much of the West. Demographic trends point to the eventual extinction of the progressive Anglican wing, as they tend to plant very few new churches and have very few children—both in terms of procreation and attendance. The conservative Anglicans will continue to struggle with the issue of women's ordination, which remains a bone of contention within GAFCON and the GSFA, and this is especially true in relation to women bishops. The authority of the instruments of unity is practically null and void at this point (2022). But those instruments never claimed to have any juridical or canonical authority, so perhaps this was to be expected.

In sum, after 60 years of wandering, Anglicans are less unified, more diverse, less white and less wealthy. In the West, Anglican cultural influence is much decreased but not so in certain countries in Africa. And finally, the fruit of Anglican mission in the Global South does not seem willing to succumb to the disintegration of a robust and real global Communion, while the tired provinces of the UK, Canada, and the USA are.

References

All references are cited in embedded links throughout the article.

Book Review

Jangkholam Haokip and David W. Smith, eds., *Voices from the Margins: Wisdom of Primal People in the Era of World Christianity*

Reviewed by Felicia Chinyere Priest

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Haokip, Jangkholam and Smith, David W., eds. (2022). . Langham Global Library, 168 pp., £14.99 paperback, ISBN: 9781839735349.

Introduction

is divided into two parts and contains 11 fascinating, well-researched, and instructive chapters by authors of various disciplines. The contributors have conducted research and read widely in areas related to their articles. Part one, with the heading "Primal Traditions and Christianity," has four chapters, while part two, entitled "Primal Traditions and Christianity in Northeast India," has seven articles. Each part ends with a postscript.

The title of the book buttresses and captures clearly the message or point of the contributors: primal people who were considered physically separated and isolated from the larger population of the globe, whose myths, folklores, worldviews, and culture were rejected and considered useless, are now influencing world Christianity due to the rich wisdom they bring to the understanding of the gospel. Indeed, as with Jesus our Exemplar, the stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.

Summary

In chapter one, "The Tribal Peoples of Northeast India," the author, Virginius Xaxa demonstrates how a tribal people or region once considered animist, neglected, unimportant, and unpopular could metaphase and transform into a prominent region in the country, academia, news reports, and wider discussions, using the Northeast people of India as a case study. Northeast India comprises eight states: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura, and Sikkim. One fascinating fact about the Northeast region is the place it occupies in contemporary India, namely a distinct politico-administrative category (9).

The emergence of certain government agencies brought the people of Northeast India into the limelight. The establishment of these agencies resulted in a separate budget allocation for the Northeast and changed how the Northeast is viewed today by the mainland. There were several political and social transformations that occurred in the region that promoted the image and identity of the region. The state, market, and Christianity were responsible for this transformation.

The strength of Xaxa's contribution is his ability to present who the tribal people of Northeast India are in such a way that non-Indians will have a better understanding of the people under study. The main weakness is his failure to proffer solutions to the tribal customary practices that hamper more development of the region.

In chapter two, “Unleashing the Power of Orality, Myth, and Folklore,” authors Charles B. Madinger and Rocelyn Anog-Madinger employ the responses of the Hausa people of Nigeria to HIV/AIDS to buttress the power of orality, myth, and folklore in enabling a community/people to respond positively to a pandemic.

The crux of the chapter is that orality, myth, and folklore can be used in diverse disciplines to bring the message or lesson alive, especially where the community is reluctant to accept or understand the problem being addressed or communicated through other means. Orality, myth, and folklore are used to communicate the gospel or any vital information for deeper impact.

The authors’ strength is in how they began their writing with a story. The reader gets fascinated from the beginning and will not want to stop until devouring the article to the end. Again, using a situation (HIV/AIDS) that most people could relate to in bringing home their point is noteworthy.

In chapter three, “West African Insights on Ethnic Identity, Myth, and Sacred Time,” James R. Krabill walks the reader through how the Dida people of the Ivory coast perceive themselves as an ethnic group, even though they do not constitute what some scholars claim is needed to be considered an ethnic group.

The insight into how the Dida’s concept of time differs from people of Eurocentric culture is enthralling. Krabill explains that the Dida people operate on a phenomenon calendar that is grouped into four-time divisions: Nature, Settlement, Migrations, and Origins. The Dida’s concept of time appears similar to that of the Hebrew of the Old Testament, as seen in the account of the prophet Isaiah who recorded his encounter with God using the year King Uzziah died (Isaiah 6).

The use of stories to convey meaning and lessons strengthens the chapter—including the story of Harris the Black Elijah of West Africa, who adopted indigenous beliefs and practices to contextualize the gospel in such an appropriate way that, within a few months, many tribal people embraced Christ. The three creation accounts are enriching and intriguing, especially the third one depicting how the mortar pile came crashing down after the woman’s effort to reach God and settle the score once and for all failed.

The issue with this chapter is the title. It is very general in its reference to West Africa. However, the chapter is specifically about the Ivory Coast. An appropriately specific title would have been preferable.

In chapter four, “The Crucial Role of the Arts in the Identity of Indigenous Peoples in the Southern Philippines,” the author, Rocelyn Anog-Madinger, depicts how her community arts workshops enable indigenous people to appreciate their cultural-linguistic identity, discover how it is connected to Christian identity, and embrace with confidence their personal identity in Christ. She reveals the vital role arts such as music, stories, artifacts, attires, designs, textiles, riddles, proverbs, dances, games, food, and greetings, as well as curses and blessings, play in empowering indigenous people to accept their identity instead of looking down on them. The arts also enable them to worship God in a way that resonates with them. The two case studies she offers bring her point home.

The stories in Anog-Madinger’s chapter, including the way they are told, are captivating. They bring out the message of the title of the book by showing how indigenous people in the Southern Philippines, who were ashamed of their cultural practices in the light of other neighboring communities, could suddenly change their identity and perspective through the lenses of their arts

enabled by the Ethno-Arts workshop. This is a must-read for missionaries, anthropologists, and students of knowledge.

With the beginning of part two in chapter five, “Toward a Kuki Contextual Theology of Khankho,” Jangkholam Haokip argues that the scientific world and its methodology are insufficient to deal with the reality of the spirit world and spiritual powers among indigenous people. He proffers theological perspective and methodology as an additional tool for responding to spiritual powers and the world.

The story of the church elder who allegedly died as a result of the broken egg in the omen planted in his house—despite his faith that God would save him from the evil power—appears to justify the indigenous people’s traditional belief. The weakness of this chapter is the author’s failure to demonstrate that following Jesus does not exonerate Christians from the trials of life, including death by evil powers.

Chapter six, “The Quest for Meaning in Boro Orality” by Songram Basumatary, focuses on the quest for orality and the importance of preserving it. Basumatary writes that “orality relates to the thoughts and verbal expressions of preliterate peoples concerning their worldviews and life worlds” (75). He identifies three forms of orality: primary, secondary, and oral residue.

Primary orality refers to thought and its verbal expression within cultures that are totally untouched by the knowledge of writing or print. Secondary orality is oral culture defined by written and printed words but is made possible by narrations through audio-visual technologies. Residual orality refers to remnants, legacy, or influence of a predominantly oral culture carried over into the written realm (75). The author emphasizes that oral traditions need to be preserved for future generations through textualizing to avoid their extinction by assimilation into dominant cultures.

Chapter seven is “The Inculturation of Christianity among the Khasi People of Meghalaya State,” by Fabian Lyngdoh. The crux of the chapter is the need for Christianity to be inculturated in the tribal cultures of indigenous people, using Northeast Indians as a case study. Lyngdoh opines that this can be accomplished by integrating core cultural values of tribal worldviews that resonate with biblical values while maintaining the accurate meaning of the gospel story. Except for the inculturation of the gospel occurring and addressing both the physical and spiritual (fear of spiritual powers and spirit world) world, tribal Christians will continue displaying dual allegiance.

The author ably identifies the need of tribal people that Christianity has not met and provides how it can be met: inculturation. A good example is the account of the Khasi traditional priest (Mawthod). “According to Mawthoh, God has given authority to his Son, u Rangiar-khadu (sacrificial cock), to be the savior and redeemer of mankind through his self-sacrifice. It is through u Rangiar-khad and his conquest of all the powers of evil that human beings are brought back to peace and unity with God” (93). This oral tradition can be used to bring the gospel account of Jesus alive to the indigenous people with this belief. This process uses the well-known redemptive analogy in missiology—using existing myths of a community to communicate the gospel truth.

I particularly enjoyed this chapter’s different stories, given to illustrate the point of the author. I also appreciated the many Khasi traditional beliefs, teaching, and myths narrated and their connection to biblical narratives.

Chapter eight, “The Integration of Khasi Traditional Music in the Christian Churches of Shillong**,** Meghalaya,” is authored by Donovan K. Swer and Maribon Viray. The authors

emphasize the harm the early missionaries inflicted on the Christian cause among the Khasi people by the demonization of the indigenous peoples' traditional music, instruments, culture, and thought forms in the church. This egocentric behavior of the Welsh missionaries also led to Thomas Jones's dismissal for promoting the Khasi converts' economic and spiritual well-being. The Welsh missionaries described the Christian use of traditional music, instruments, and rhythm in church worship as animistic and demonic while promoting their own way of worship. I appreciate how the authors demonstrate how Jones became immortalized and honored by the Khasis Christians after some considered him a failure. The chapter shows how gospel hymnals can enrich the local people and brings a sense of ownership when the gospel is contextualized in a way that is appropriate to the culture of the people. It was very discouraging to discover that the Khasi Christians were excommunicated, suspended, and suspected of worshiping God with their local music and instruments.

The authors explain how the rejected local instruments, music, and culture are integrated and accepted into Christian worship today; Khasi Christians are proud of adopting them in their worship. Indeed, the rejected stone has become the chief cornerstone. However, precaution is needed as we call for a revival of cultural practices in Christian worship so we do not go completely native and reject the positive lessons from Western music and instruments. For example, the Khasi people were able to put their music in notes and musical keys, which were imported from the West. This chapter is a beautiful write-up, and I enjoyed reading it.

Chapter ten, "The Relevance of Spirit Consciousness for Tribal Christians in Northeast India," is authored by Elungkiebe Zeliang. Zeliang is precise and concise in his argument on the compatibility of biblical teachings and its relevance to the tradition of tribal spirit consciousness. He notes, "…converts have discovered significant points of contact between the worldviews which underlie the Bible and their own concerns with the realm of the spirit" (134). This claim is in sharp contrast with Haokip's article in chapter five, where he shows how belief in Christ alone did not solve the concern of the spirit world and spiritual power. In fact, Haokip relates a story about the church elder who allegedly died due to the broken egg in the omen planted in his house, despite his faith that God would save him from the evil power. If Zeliang's assertion is to be accepted, how does one explain why some tribal Christians still have dual allegiance? Why do they still resort to traditional practices when certain problems occur when Christ is sufficient?

This chapter shows the vital roles that education, advancement in medical science, and Christianity play in questioning tribal beliefs, especially belief in the power of spirits. I hope to see more of this same progress in tackling witchcraft accusations in Africa.

In chapter eleven, "The Emergence of World Christianity and Its Implications for Indigenous Peoples," David W. Smith avers the end of the era of expanding Europe and that the Western missionary movement has ushered Christianity into a new phase known as . Christianity is no longer possessed by the West, unlike in the previous era. In fact, it is dwindling in Western societies.

On the other hand, Christianity is experiencing geographical relocation (numerical growth of Christianity is greater in the Southern Hemisphere) and social transformation (a greater number of Christians are today found in areas of economic deprivation and among tribal people once considered inconsequential). This shift appears to be fulfilling the scripture that "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations…" (Matthew 24:14).

Today the Western possession of Christianity is ending while Christianity is steadily moving to areas where it had not introduced earlier. Smith could have added some suggestions on how the extinction of Christianity in the West could be rescued. On the one hand, Smith alludes to the migration of Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans to the cities of Europe and North America with their faith shaped via interaction between gospel and primal cultures. However, is this faith shared with its Western counterpart, or does it simply challenge long-accepted Western secularization and materialism?

Reflection

is easy to read and assimilate. The topics discussed are timely as they address issues most primal people grapple with. The contributors have provided a clear distinction between low orality reliance and high orality reliance and how a people's background determines which they adopt. Instead of focusing on either low orality reliance or high orality reliance, I think the integration of both would enhance learning and provide the best orality reliance.

One of the important marks to note about the book is that it demonstrates the authenticity, credibility, and efficacy of practices, orality, myths, folklore, beliefs, identity, and other traits of indigenous people that were discredited and ignored by the so-called enlightened mind of the West. These relevant indigenous cultural practices were considered uncivilized, irrational, and primitive by Western parameters. However, they are tremendously efficient and useful in ensuring peaceful co-existence among communities and contextualizing the gospel in a way that is appropriate to the indigenous people.

Another positive observation about the book is that it depicts how the decline of Christianity in the West and Europe has given an opportunity for the emergence of tribal religion. The book enables readers to see how tribal religious practices, worldviews, myths, and folklore can be used to communicate vital lessons, maintain peace and harmony in society, and contextualize the gospel.

Furthermore, the book depicts the irrelevance of certain Western and European worldviews and practices to the indigenous people's development and worldviews. The book demonstrates the need to preserve primal people's myths, folklore, and culture for their role in understanding the gospel, the person of God, the Trinity, and the atonement of Christ as the Supreme Saviour.

I strongly recommend this book to students of knowledge, missionaries, anthropologists, pastors, and lecturers. It is a fascinating book, and the contributors have conveyed captivating stories that make you want to read more.

Book Review

Kiem-Kiok Kwa and Samuel Ka-Chieng Law, eds., *Missions in Southeast Asia: Diversity and Unity in God's Design*

Reviewed by Tai Kim Teng

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Kwa, Kiem-Kiok and Law, Samuel Ka-Chieng, eds., *Missions in Southeast Asia: Diversity and* Langham Global Library, 330 pp., £21.99 paperback, ISBN: 9781839734366.

The two editors of this book are Kiem-Kiok Kwa, who teaches missions at Singapore's Biblical Graduate School of Theology, and Samuel K. Law, Vice Principal of Academic Affairs at Singapore Bible College. Due to a paucity of Christian literature on Southeast Asian missions, this book is indeed timely and will become essential reading material for all scholars and practitioners interested to understand Christian missions in Southeast Asia. Noteworthy is that the book written mostly by national leading missiologists familiar with the local context—which is often complicated, convoluted, and incomprehensible to outsiders.

Strategically located between the Middle East and Pacific region, Southeast Asia is increasingly becoming one of the most pivotal regions in the world. With a population of 650 million spanning over 4.5 million square kilometers, followers of all major religions in the world can be found here. Southeast Asia is thus fertile ground for contextualizing and theologizing Christian mission practices in ways that can be most useful for the global church to learn and apply on emerging missional challenges it may face in the twenty-first century. The multifaceted interaction between gospel and people in these diverse nations—all with their very own unique geographical, social, religious, economic, and political context—have resulted in a type of Christianity that can be flourishing in Philippines or floundering in Cambodia. By narrating the history of mission work done initially by Roman Catholic missionaries in the sixteenth century and then followed by Protestant missionaries in the early nineteenth century in collaboration with parachurch organizations, the fruit of the gospel can be easily seen and clearly understood. Where there have been weaknesses and gaps, reflections and adjustment to strategy have been tweaked for the gospel to have a wider and deeper impact locally. In any event, God's hand and presence can be unequivocally discerned in this vital mass of land where churches founded were largely contextually appropriate and culturally sensitive. These traits are an absolute imperative for the longevity of the church in a region where Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism and Folk religions are already deeply entrenched.

This book has 16 chapters and is divided into two parts. Part I contains nine chapters, each written by different authors narrating the national church histories of the eight major Southeast Asian countries of Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam; Laos and Timor-Leste have been omitted for some unknown reason. The historical overview of each country's mission work and subsequent progression of Christianity is presented in a succinct and readable manner, thus appealing to both research scholars and lay Christians alike. In no way are these chapters exhaustive and complete accounts of all that has transpired. They are written with the big picture in mind to interest the readers and whet their appetites for more detailed reading elsewhere.

Samuel K. Law has contributed the piece on Cambodia, where historical material on the church is lacking. Thus, he conducted field-researched interviews and surveys. The genocide of two million people under the Pol Pot regime from 1975 to 1979 stands out, with the near

annihilation of all Cambodian Christians. Out of the ashes, a new brand of Christianity in Cambodia is now emerging from the impact of globalization forces on the local context, a so-called "glocalization" phenomenon. This fourth wave of Christianity is in some ways similar to the first wave brought about by the Nestorians, second wave by the Roman Catholics, and third wave by the Protestant missionaries, where strong dependence on foreign support is prevalent. The 2017 census showed that Christians form less than 2 percent of the population (17).

The chapter on the fourth most populous country in the world, Indonesia, is written by Benyamin F. Intan. While Indonesia has the world's largest Muslim population, surprisingly Christians formed 9.9 percent of the country's population according to the 2010 census. The history of Christianity follows a similar pattern with other Southeast Asian countries: first wave by the Eastern Orthodox Church, second wave by Roman Catholic Church, and third wave by the Dutch Reformed Church. Indonesia's foundational five-fold state ideology, *Pancasila*, plays an important role in protecting religious freedom and practices. Nevertheless, the majority religion, Islam, with 87 percent of the population is increasingly assuming a dominant role in politics and social life. Christians are forced to navigate this complex, interwoven web of state and religion cautiously for the sake of the church's future.

Malaysia is another Muslim majority country with 61 percent adherents, while Christians form 9.2 percent of the population. This chapter's author, Tan Sooi Ling, notes that the first wave of Christianity came in 1511 via Franciscan and Dominican monks who accompanied the Portuguese conquerors of Melaka. In 1818, the Protestant missionary William Milne of the London Missionary Society settled at the same place. Towards the second half of the nineteenth century, migrant workers from India and China seeking greener pastures brought in Christianity of various Protestant denominations into Malaysia. Methodist missionaries from America started schools in many towns from 1885 onwards. In 1963, Malaysia became an independent secular nation, with Malays, Chinese, and Indians as the primary groups. While Malaysia is constitutionally secular, Islam is the "official religion" and is gaining dominance, eroding the religious freedom of minority groups. The *Alkitab* (Bible in the Malay language) and the word *Allah* (Malay word for "God") was at one time prohibited from use by Christians in the 1980s. Nation-building in a pluralistic society is fraught with racial and religious tensions. Increasingly, Christians are conscious of their God-given role as peacemakers.

The vast majority, 88 percent, of people in Myanmar are Buddhists while 6 percent, mainly tribal people, are Christians. Christianity, according to the author, Peter Thein Nyunt, came through the Portuguese soldiers. The Catholic priests that came after 1720 were more successful so that by 1990 there were over 300,000 Roman Catholic Christians in the country. It was Adoniram Judson from the American Baptist Mission that made a significant impact on converting Burmese Buddhists after he arrived in 1813. He also translated the whole Bible into Burmese. From 1962, the military dictatorship expelled all foreign missionaries and national leadership were forced to take over. In spite of the limited resources and training, Christianity is enjoying steady growth from the solid foundation established by the earlier missionaries.

Philippines is a Christian majority nation, with 80 percent of the 102 million people being Christian. Narry F. Santos narrates the history by going back to the sixteenth century with the arrival of Spanish missionaries through the colonial forces. Roman Catholicism flourished with three centuries of Spanish dominance. It was only after the defeat of the Spanish by Americans in 1898 that Protestantism entered Philippines. Only 10.8 percent of the population are Protestants. After gaining independence in 1946, an indigenous form of Christianity has been gaining momentum. Since the 1970s, Charismatic Christianity has experienced tremendous growth. Evangelical megachurches in the urban areas are the fastest growing religious groups,

Modernization, human migration, and global networks interact with local processes to alter our perception and affect people's experiences in different parts of the globalized world. John Cheong's use of Kentucky Fried Chicken as an example of glocalization is helpful for understanding the complex interactions of global and local factors, leading to a new global synthesis. Time-space distanciation becomes real when distant things appear near if they are online and nearby things seem far away when they are not connected. Apart from the nation-state, multinational corporations and non-governmental organizations will increasingly play a more important role in a glocalized world. For example, international megachurches or mission organizations have a global influence in a borderless world. The explosive growth of the internet has reordered space-time configurations in human interactions in many aspects (200). Christians have important roles to play in shaping and harnessing the internet for the fulfilment of the Great Commission.

Looking back at Christianity in Southeast Asia, Andrew Peh notes that the history dates back to 1000 BC with its Indic culture and Hindu religion. It was only in the late fifteenth century onwards that Christianity came through European maritime colonial expansion. The Portuguese were the first to come to the East, which included India and Southeast Asia. They captured the strategic port of Malacca in 1511 and controlled all trade plying through the Straits of Malacca. They then ventured into the Moluccas archipelago which were rich in spices. The Spanish on the other hand took control of (and renamed) the Philippines and colonized it. Both Portuguese and Spanish colonizers not only brought in commerce but also missionaries. The Augustians, Dominicans, and Jesuits of the Roman Catholic Church introduced Christianity to Malaya, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Burma, and Vietnam. The Portuguese power was supplanted by the French in Indochina and the Dutch in Malacca. Subsequently, the English took over from the Dutch. By the nineteenth century, Protestant missions entered the fray and were actively at work in most parts of Southeast Asia. They Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalist, Lutherans, Anglicans, Methodists, and Seventh-Day Adventists. In the first half of the twentieth century, Christian mission was more holistic and included education, medicine, and social welfare work. Unfortunately, this missionary work has been closely associated with Western imperialism that exploited and subjugated local populations. Aspirations for "God, gold, and glory" gave missionaries a bad reputation and stigma (222).

The Japanese occupation from 1942 to 1945 was a bleak period for Christianity in Southeast Asia as the small Christian population were decimated and church properties destroyed. Most foreign missionaries were interned or forced to leave. This adversity forced national leadership to take over, and they survived without any Western support. The next transition that took place was political independence from colonial powers: Indonesia in 1945, Philippines in 1946, Burma in 1948, Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam in 1954, and Malaysia in 1963. National churches with indigenous leadership took control and weighed in on their nation's social, political, and religious matters. The arrivals of parachurch organisation like Overseas Missionary Fellowship, Campus Crusade for Christ (CRU), and International Fellowship of Evangelical Students (IFES) were instrumental in revitalising Christianity (220). The Pentecostal movement also contributed significantly to conversions and church planting. Among the eleven nations in Southeast Asia, the interaction of gospel and people's cultures have produced a rich religious diversity that is highly variegated, frequently conflicted, and intensely dynamic. Two nations, Philippines and Timor-Leste, have Christian majority population exceeding 90 percent; all the other nine have less than 10 percent Christians, with affluent Singapore the only exception at 18 percent.

Robert Solomon writes about the importance of seminaries that, with freedom from colonial powers, have been using systematic theology texts written by Westerners to change into a

theology that is actually rooted in the Southeast Asian context (243). For example, the supernatural spirit world is often dismissed by Western theologians as mere superstitions. However, in Asian cultures the activity of spirits is a reality in people's daily lives. This situation needs to be addressed scripturally by Asian theologians in their own context. Doing so means developing a form of Asian Christianity that "sees the face of God in the faces of people" and that matches their local religious experience and cultural expectations. Asians are called to think critically and confidently in crafting their own theologies that are coherent with their context and rooted in the scriptures.

In chapter 14, Kiem-Kiok comments that the prevailing Christian worldview that missions is centered primarily on evangelism and savings souls is a narrow one. A paradigm shift towards embracing a holistic response to social injustices as an integral part of missions is imperative. This holistic approach should be grounded in the theology that reflects the fullness of God's character in prioritizing not only a right relationship with God but also human community and physical surroundings. Missions should be transformational and involved in nation-building, especially so in a pluralistic society as found in this region. Contextualization that is appropriate is vital and entails both a deep understanding of the culture and a close study of Scriptures without being shackled by Western Enlightenment approaches—yet recognizes its rich legacy by not "throwing the baby out with the bathwater." Creation care can be a vital part of missions, too.

In summary, this book is a good resource for those serious about studying the history and future of Christianity in this most diverse and complex region of Southeast Asia. It provides a succinct overview of the various challenges and opportunities found in doing mission within a context that is multiracial, multicultural, multilingual, and multireligious. The multifaceted interaction of the gospel with the people grants the reader deeper insight and better understanding of the unique identities of indigenous Christianity that has evolved in each country over each era. There are also common themes that unite all these diverse nations. Lessons gleaned will be useful for the global Christian community at large to reflect on the practice of doing God's mission for God's glory.

Book Review

J. N. Manokaran, *Christ, Culture and Communication*

Reviewed by Atul U. Khillare

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Manokaran, J. N. (2022). Christ, Culture and Communication. Bangalore: Omega Book World, 302 pp., 440.00 paperback, ISBN: 978-93-91694-88-3.

Introduction

Dr. J. N. Manokaran is one of the most intelligent scholars who has emerged from Indian soil, a mission giant and contemporary scholar who knows where to aim and how to convey thoughts and ideas. The author has successfully penned down the challenge of today's Christendom, where one needs to understand why communication is so important. In this journey of Manokaran's study, one will find various principles conveyed together with the book's structure—yet the book is quite readable, allowing its readers to keep pondering and improving.

There are 17 chapters in this book that deals with the fundamental need for communication. The author wisely separates phantom communication from real relational communication. Each chapter deals with one basic principle that can make one a wise communicator.

Key Ideas

The preface gives the solemn idea about the author's intention and the epilogue reviews his work of excellence, where he appeals for a new paradigm shift in today's local churches. Though the book has 17 chapters that systematically convey Manokaran's foundational principles, I would like to condense these wisely crafted chapters by summing them up under three key themes: Christ, culture, and communication. The book presents these themes in a different order to constructive effect.

Communication

The first few chapters give enough understanding and basics for communication. The well-crafted definition of communication not only appeals to its readers to improve but also presses quite hard to learn suggested innovative methods to be an effective communicator. While defining communication the author gives four basic aspects of communication: *the sharing of information, based on relationships, based on common location and interest, and the expression of deep intimate sharing.*

While taking readers into in-depth communication, the author develops systematic dynamics to help one to know the biblical understanding of communication. Why communication is so fundamental in mission, ministry, discipleship, and today's local churches is also discussed. At one point the author challenges readers with the question, "What can a dumb, deaf, and blind lion do?" Our quality of communication needs to be improved if we call ourselves, "Witness."

A vitally important summary statement of this section is, "Great Commission is Great Communication of the gospel" (19).

Culture (Community)

The author is very intelligent in dealing with the challenges of culture. One cannot separate communication from cultural context. What forms a community are its communication and

language. One needs to be able to communicate within a cultural context in order to share Christ with the people. In some chapters, the author raises some strong arguments and helps readers to acknowledge that we seldom care about presenting Christ to a variety of cultures around us. A variety of diseases and a variety of remedies are discussed in the middle portion of this book. The author appeals to the urgency to communicate Christ to these cultures in a systematic and better way. Every cross-culture mission should be deeply rooted in the existing culture being evangelized. The ways of contextualization and use of various methods while communicating with different cultures are the backbone of this book. *The author develops a systematic practical theology of communicating Christ s readers.* He suggests the need and means of communicating with people in various cultures, including orality, radio and TV, mobile phones, the digital world as a new opportunity, and today's challenging context.

The key summarizing statements in this instance are, “Each context has its own culture. Hence, communication must be using culture as means to communicate and not see as a barrier to be demolished”; and, “Culture is like glasses through which people see and interpret experiences and generate behaviour” (97).

Christ

The center of our history and interpretation of communication or theology is *Christ.* Christ needs to be known and made known to all through our communication and culture. Regarding God as the central Communicator, the author brings out the point that God is the one who initiates communication: he is the originator and sustainer of our communication. Of special importance is how, *in chapters 5 (73) and 13 215), the author gives typology and redemptive analogy, helping readers to ponder Christ as way of communicating with us. The author brilliantly brings out the point that the typology is for Jews whereas the redemptive analogy is for non-Jews, i.e., Gentiles. Konark Temple and the Ambala Amid War (218, 219) are some of the outstanding examples of analogy and contextualization.*

Personal Response

God is active in communication, one cannot separate communication from Scripture, theology is what we have understood about God, and Scripture is God’s word. In short, when we analyze the need for communication in respective cultures, the ultimate goal is to make Christ known.

Theological interpretation of communication, as with the Christian life more generally, has a past, a present, and a future orientation. Communication is an activity in which the words of Scripture are not simply recounted, but are made present in the immediate context. Theological communication or common communication is not owned by the academy: it is a practice sustained by the life and worship of the church.

C. S. Lewis tells us that we can rightly judge something only when we know what it is, what it is intended to do, and how it is meant to be used. Our aim of communication must line up with its purpose.

I have come to realize that one of the major crises of many contemporary interpretations of Scripture is the failure of communicating Christ to all ages, to all tribes, and all people. If communication has to be effective, it cannot be a static stereotype: it has to be dynamic.

Communication is a life-giving principle that applies to people, systems, and even written texts. Changing circumstances and new contexts always require different answers, fresh solutions, and new approaches. Through the process of transformation, new life energizes existing systems, people, cultures, texts, and contexts.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Hearty Congratulations to Dr. J.N. Manokaran as an author, minister, mentor, and missionary who knows Indian soil, who has experienced the fragments, pieces, and troubles of life, and has been through pain and agony—but has not been stopped by them. The book in this regard is highly valuable and important as this discloses the author's quality of work, dedication, research, and experience.

The author has removed the barriers and limitations in our communication. He provides the way for fresh understanding and a new shift that demands urgency and adaptability in communicating Christ in cultures. The role of an effective communicator is to reveal, disclose, relate, and share intimate transparency of truth which is made known to us by the Word and the world. One needs to study this book to be reminded and constructively troubled to become an effective communicator.