

IJPM

International Journal of
Pentecostal Missiology

The Great Commission Edition

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From the Editor's Desk

The Great Commission: How are we doing with that?

Jeffery Nelson, Editor

Introduction

In this issue of the International Journal of Pentecostal Missions we are in a sense taking the vital signs of the Great Commission. How are we doing with things like reaching the world with the Good News? How are we doing with indigenous church principles (ICPs)? How are we doing with engaging and planting churches among people of diverse religions? And how is the Pentecostal missions movement progressing in its second millennium?

Trust and Vulnerability

Jim Harries, Ph.D., looks at elements of ICP's, trust and vulnerability. He, like Hudson Taylor, Roland Allen, and other practitioners turned theologians, who have gone before, wrestles with true indigenization and contextualization. If a Western missionary (or short-term missionary) does not understand language and culture, trust is blind, and conflict is inevitable.

Pentecostal Missions

In the article, Pentecostal Missions: Past 100 Years and Beyond, I identify the phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal movement since its inception on January 1, 1901 to the present. Particular focus is given to the Assemblies of God missions from its humble but audacious beginnings in 1914 to its growth as the largest Pentecostal and Protestant denomination in the world. Four reasons are presented for this growth: doctrinal, missiological, spiritual, and sociological. These factors have played significant roles in Pentecostal missions. The elements of each of these reasons are explored.

Global Missionaries

Bryan Waltrip, Ph. D., explores the changing world of missions focusing particularly on the global missionary. He states that "a global missionary is truly global. They satisfy a particular niche in ministry, but they work among several countries, not just one context." These specialized mobile missionaries are gifts to the Church through what they can bring to leaders around the world.

Iconography

Simon Kouessan Degbe's article, African Pentecostal/ Charismatic Iconography: A Study of their Significance and Relevance, grapples with the emergence of symbols in the

Pentecostal/Charismatic churches of Ghana. Degbe traces the history of Christian iconography from the Early Church through the Roman Empire to Ghana. He acknowledges the pitfalls of the veneration but suggests the theological foundation of the Pentecostal/Charismatic churches of Ghana will be successful in warding off the pitfalls and the advantages of icons will be a blessing to the churches.

A Little Child Shall Lead Them

Jennifer Schaeffer's article addresses missionary work from the perspective of a vulnerable learner within culture. She recognizes the mistakes often made by Westerners and encourage a humble attitude of co-learner in seeking to advance the Kingdom of God in a new culture.

Neophytes and Pioneer Movements

Robert Shipley addresses a criticism leveled against the Church Planting Movements, that of appointing new converts as leaders of churches. Through a meticulous exegesis of Acts 14, Titus 1, and 1 Timothy 3 and 5, he concludes that context must be applied to the prohibition of 1 Timothy 3:6, "He must not be a recent convert" and that the application of this verse must be taken to understand the background of the mature, but troubled church in Ephesus.

Contextualization in Context

Robert L. Gallagher, Ph.D., authored a concise article on the definition and history of contextualization. He provides Old and New Testament examples of cross-cultural workers adjusting their message to local languages and cultures. He highlights missionary theologians throughout the Christian era who understand and develop the value of contextualization for those advancing the Gospel to cultures not like their own.

Book Reviews

In the two book reviews Hilsinger reviews how pneumatology developed within various faith communities in "Spirit of God" and Nunez reviews "African Christian Leadership" through the study conducted by the African Leadership University. Both books are recommended by the reviews as valuable additions to libraries of relevant students.

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The *International Journal of Pentecostal Missiology* (IJPM) is a peer-reviewed, electronic journal with periodic publication.


The IJPM seeks to facilitate the engagement, research, and investigation of missiology from within a Pentecostal perspective; to encourage thinking and interaction among Pentecostal missionaries and/or Pentecostal missions scholars; and to provide a forum for dialogue and reflection about issues current within Pentecostal Missions. These parameters allow for biblical, theological, historical, and/or missiological articulations, as well as book reviews based on relevant contemporary works.

Views expressed in the Journal reflect those of the authors and reviewers and are not the perspectives or opinions of the editors, the editorial board, the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, or the participating institutions.

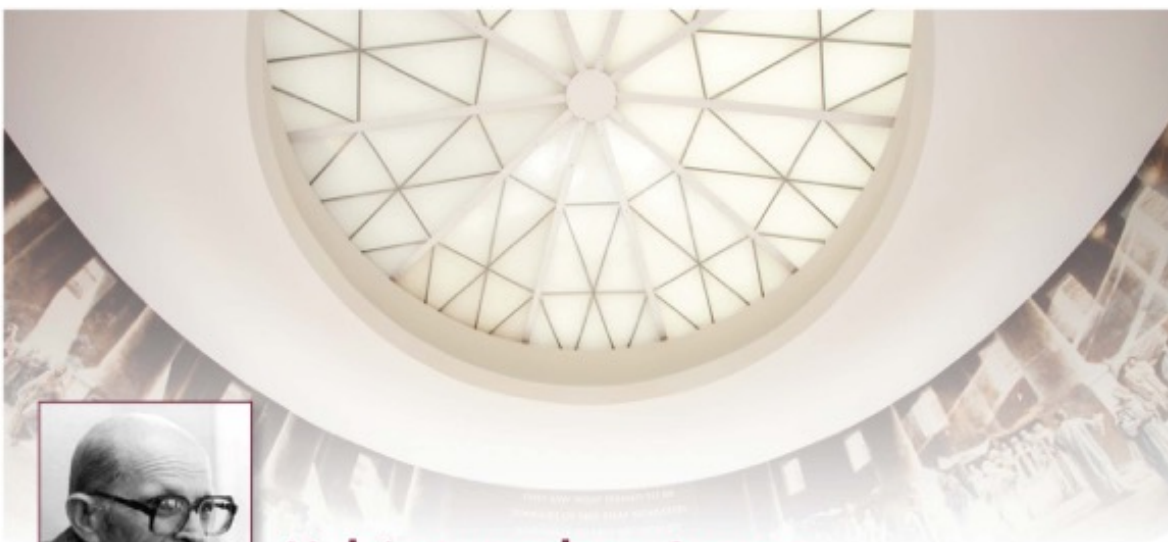
**You Are
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To the dedication
of the
Melvin L. Hodges Center
for
**Pentecostal
Missiological
Research**

Thursday, December 5 | 2-3:15 p.m.
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Reception following dedication ceremony.

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THEY SAW WHAT SEEMED TO BE
TONGUES OF FIRE THAT SEPARATED
CAME TO REST ON EACH OF
ALL OF THEM WERE FILLED
THE HOLY SPIRIT AND
IN OTHER



Melvin L. Hodges Center for Pentecostal Missiological Research

In consultation with the World Missions Commissions of the Pentecostal World Fellowship and the World Assemblies of God Fellowship and with support by missionaries from Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM USA), the Melvin L. Hodges Center for Pentecostal Missiological Research at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary seeks to promote missions and missiology, and foster missiological research by showcasing:

- ▼ The missiological degree programs at AGTS including the Master of Arts in Intercultural Studies, the Doctor of Applied Intercultural Studies and the Doctor of Philosophy of Intercultural Studies.
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 - ▼ AGTS' Center for Islamic Studies and the Summer Institute of Islamic Studies in partnership with Global Initiative: Reaching Muslim Peoples
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In addition to the research resources identified above, missiological researchers will also have access to the Flower Pentecostal Heritage Center, the largest Pentecostal Archive with a rich collection of primary source missionary documents and artefacts.

The Center honors the global missiological influence of Melvin L. Hodges whose seminal work "The Indigenous Church" (1953) and other publications shaped the missiology and missionary practice of missions endeavors across denominational lines but particularly in Assemblies of God and Pentecostal missions. The growth of the Pentecostal movement worldwide is a testament to the work of the Holy Spirit catalyzed by missionaries who practiced the sound biblical missiology proposed and disseminated in Dr. Hodges' work. Along with the significant contributions of other Pentecostal missiologists, the Center underscores the importance of Dr. Hodges' missiology for current and future generations of missionaries.



Articles

Trust and Vulnerability: being vulnerable to failures in trust as part of missionary service in Africa

Jim Harries*

Abstract

Unwarranted trust brings relational tension that could be avoided using more caution. Hence advocating “trust” is sometimes ill-advised. Inter-culturally, trust is likely to be particularly fraught, as intercultural gaps result in reduced levels of mutual understanding. Breaches of trust, both historical and contemporary, probably contribute to much mission work in recent times being short-term. Issues related to trust, such as time-keeping, how to ask questions, levels of expectation arising from particular ways of phrasing things, and financial predictability, are culturally dependent. Vulnerable missionaries, those who use local languages and local resources, can through making fewer demands on local people, while acquiring greater in-depth understanding, avoid many breaches in trust.

Introduction

“I can’t work with that person because they can’t be trusted.” We have probably heard these kinds of words before. See Acts 13:13 and then 15:36-40.¹ A lack of trust challenged the relationship between Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas travelled with Mark. Paul refused too. Presumably he had lost ‘trust’ in Mark. What does it look like to continue in a relationship after trust has been ‘broken’? Perhaps this is vulnerability?

Trust is clearly an important part of normal inter-human relationships. Without some level of trust, it is very difficult indeed to relate to someone closely. It could even be said that much of life is about developing trust. Husbands learn to trust their wives. People get to trust one another in the workplace, in social settings, in the family, in the church. It is in so far as people trust each other that they can make progress.² Where there is no trust, there could be little peace and little progress.

Where does the above kind of view of trust leave us with respect to intercultural mission? Trust would seem to be essential for inter-cultural relationships. At the same time, cultural differences can make trust difficult. The arena of intercultural communication is littered with broken relationships in which “trust” appears not to have been honored. Such broken relationships are not usually broadcast using trumpets. They are concealed, covered over, maybe even “forgiven,” but yet often hard to forget and sometimes very painful.³

Sometimes the question is *who* to trust? “When I went on short-term trips to Africa, everything seemed to be OK,” a woman told me. “But then, after I had lived there for a while, I

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discovered that things were different,” she added. She was articulating what had happened in the course of her experience as a missionary. She discovered that the African bishop she was working under did not live up to the high standards that she expected of a bishop. That was more than this British woman could cope with. She threw in the towel on her project, and under much distress, she returned home to the West. Back in the West, when she told her church leaders about the deceitfulness, untruthfulness, corruption, and immorality of the African bishop, the leaders had to choose between her and the bishop. They felt they really had no choice but to trust the integrity of the bishop. Distraught and deeply discouraged, the one-time missionary woman tried to pick up the pieces of her life and carry on.⁴ I suggest that she would have been better off had she known the appropriate ways to “trust” the African bishop in the first place.

Trust that sets One up for Failure, Division, and Conflict

Local churches in the West who do not trust neighboring churches, can at the same time develop deep implicit trust in culturally diverse faraway bodies of believers.⁵ In one’s home town back in the West, someone has a lot of choices about who to trust. One may also work through past circumstances to enlarge their trust with others. Many Protestant Christians’ distrust of Catholicism does not arise from their personal experiences with the Catholic Church. It has developed as a result of frequent warnings, teachings, and accounts of a presumed antagonism that has been passed down through the generations. A particular Protestant denomination developing a relationship with another church in Africa might have no such scruples, even though the same Protestant church that is seeking ways to relate could be vastly different from the Catholic Church down the road. A church in the West may spend vast sums in support of a project in Africa, while they may not contribute at all towards the fundraising for the Christian community next door. Hence “trust” can appear to be at a higher level inter-culturally than it is intra-culturally.

It is almost as if enormous barriers to mutual trust can necessitate trust at all costs. The very anticipated and often very real difficulties of developing mutual understanding with a body of Christian believers of a vastly different culture and in a vastly different part of the world seems to necessitate a determination to “*trust them no matter what.*” Breaking a missionary-relationship with a distant church over issues such as lack of trust could bring accusations of racism, neo-colonialism, and chauvinism, that are not there when it comes to breaking trust with the church next door back at home. The African bishop must be given a wide margin of “the benefit of the doubt.”

The dilemma a missionary may be put into, as a result of the above scenario, is not always realized. Many Westerners’ levels of trust of African churches is not, I suggest, based on experience, but on conviction, determination, idealism, and romanticism.⁶ Missionaries sent to work on the “field” are expected to honor that trust. They are expected to develop close untroubled working relationships with the African people they meet. They may express frustrations; that would only be normal, as they attempt to adjust to a different way of life. Any

suggestion that the African bishop appears to be less than ultimately honorable, genuine, honest, or trustworthy are however unlikely to be accepted. If any head will roll, it is likely to be the one belonging to the missionary. So indeed – since the West has given up leadership of many Majority World churches (especially since the 1970s⁷), missionary work has gone into decline. Many Western missionaries who do go onto the field in Africa prefer to work in technical roles with institutions affiliated with churches, rather than with the church hierarchy itself, and for relatively short periods of say four years or less.⁸ Ostensibly, this is because long-term roles are no longer needed. Other issues may be lurking under the screen of this ostensive reason.

I wonder if advocating a level of distrust may be preferred to the crises that all too easily arise when assumed trust is eventually shattered? Instead of sacrificing missionaries on the altar of broken-trust relationships, should excesses of “trust” be avoided in the first place? Might it be helpful for “trust” to be minimised between strangers? Surely this is “normal” for many working relationships? I simply do not “trust” my female work-colleague as much as I do my wife. My female work colleague, being in some ways untrustworthy, needs not preventing our working together, if we remain faithful within the limits of our work relationship and not comprise that relationship with romance. I can enjoy fellowship with a stranger, someone I meet on a bus or a train, without knowing much about him/her, without having to entrust my life to him/her. Trust levels for someone to be a “good neighbor” are relatively low. Once finance enters into a relationship, breaking of trust can become problematic. Perhaps to engender trust, financial interdependencies are best left out of some sensitive relationships. Should they also be left out of inter-cultural relationships entered into by some missionaries? Before looking at this possibility in more detail below, let us consider how language and cultural differences together threaten “trust” relationships.

Inter-cultural Linguistic Communication and “Trust”

Not saying what one thinks one is saying can undermine trust. So if I intend to say to you, “I will give this money to you, on the condition that you return it tomorrow,” but I actually say “on the condition that you return it in 10 years,” who is at fault if I do not get my money back the following day? Presumably I am at fault. This is the kind of error that could be made by someone who has not yet mastered the language he/she is using in intercultural mission. Hence this is one reason one should not presuppose too much trust between people of distinct language communities.

It can be very unwise to “trust” someone who is not familiar with the parameters and boundaries of the “trust” you are supposing. Boundaries of trust are culturally related. Someone borrowing my radio without first asking for permission may be considered to commit a breach of trust in England, but not in parts of Africa.⁹ It is said that a member of the Maasai tribe of Kenya and Tanzania, finding a colleague’s spear outside his door, will allow the owner of the spear to spend the night with his wife, an act that in some cultures would be a serious breach of trust.¹⁰ In many African ethnic groups, an African wife may not be considered trustworthy until dowry has been paid for her. The parameters of trust are culturally defined.

What should happen if we take into account difficulties in translation that arise from differences in worldview as expressed in different languages? Timekeeping would be one such example. In British English use, if someone tells you “we are just going out shopping and we’ll be back in a minute,” that does not mean “a minute” in the literal sense. Use of the term “back in a minute” implies that the person is wanting to minimize the time they take. Even if they know that it will take them at least five minutes to walk to the shop, they could still say, “I’ll be back in a minute.” If on their return 18 minutes later you consider them to have broken trust by telling you a flagrant lie, you have missed the point; language is often not used literally. If everyone knows that language is not being used literally, then there is no issue in communication. But what if ways, degrees, and cases of literalness vary between cultures? “It was amazing. Five minutes before time, nobody was there, then by a minute after the advertised start time, the hall was filled and everyone was sat quietly” were thoughts shared by an African church leader with me on one occasion, recalling a church gathering he attended in England. That evidently does not happen in his home community. Instead, many people typically arrive long after the advertised time for a gathering. Telling the African church leader, “I cannot trust you because you are never on time,” causes a breaking of trust due to ignorance; if the Westerner had known about African timekeeping, that person should have realized that the above kind of “late-coming” should not be a breach in “trust.” It is a different understanding of time that the Westerner should be aware of.

Allow me to add some more examples. Part of “trust” in Western nations like the United States and England, is being frank and what we call “honest,” even if one’s honesty may not be immediately pleasing. Perhaps a person is looking for a driver to take a sick person to hospital. The second person is asked whether they will be free to perform this role. That second person thinks about their following day’s program and says, “I am not yet certain.” So, the first person responds, “Tell me yes or no because we need someone to rely on.” My understanding of British culture is that someone will only agree to perform the said role if they are 99% certain that they will be able to make the appointment concerned (of course no one can ever be totally certain). In African cultures that I am familiar with, the offense of saying “No, I cannot do it,” to someone’s face can easily be more serious than not turning up the following day after having made a commitment. Hence someone can agree that they will pick up the sick person, even if that second person actually has another important appointment that takes greater priority at the same time. So, when the second person does not show up to help the first person, have they broken trust, or has the person looking for a driver used an illegitimate means to ask the question, and not correctly understood the answer (yes means no)?

Does success come from work or from prayer? “Pray hard to succeed” and “work hard to succeed” can seem to be equivalents. After all, one could be praying for work, or even working on prayer! So, you could say to someone, “success comes through hard work,” and they can agree. Yet, if you think their agreeing means that this person has the kind of strong work ethic recognized in the West, you may be deceiving yourself. If that person does not subsequently “work hard” as you think ought to be achieved, has trust been broken, or have you simply not understood them implementing their own cultural practices?

Fear of spirits or witches can play into issues of trust. Witchcraft is often inspired by jealousy. One way to avoid becoming the victim of witchcraft is avoiding behavior that is likely to make others jealous. This avoidance can be practiced by imprecision or even denial regarding one's personal wealth. In a society in which it is normal to try to avoid being attacked by witchcraft, it may also be normal to endeavor to avoid revealing one's wealth. Questions such as, "how many cows do you have?" should thus be avoided, because they are over-intrusive on someone's privacy.¹¹ Is giving a "wrong answer" when asked a question that should not be asked to avoid breaking trust possible to commit, or was the trust broken through the ignorance of the person who asked the question in the first place? Breaking of trust could have been avoided through better knowledge of the person's language and culture. Issues of spirits are similar. Someone may well agree that "you can't be a Christian and at the same time make sacrifices on behalf of ancestors," while at the same time, that person makes such sacrifices in order to avoid being haunted by ancestors angered through neglect. If a person who does this act is to be considered "untrustworthy," then lack of trust may appear indeed to be widespread. Such apparent incongruity may be dealt with differently by some African people.

There is a notion of "success" in spiritual circles in the West that may not include material wealth. The Egyptian desert fathers, such as St. Anthony, famously contributed to this point. St. Anthony himself gave away his family's wealth so as to live in the desert as a hermit.¹² It appears that Egyptian Christians respected him for this commitment. Voluntary poverty in God's service has become a deeply held value in Western Christianity. It may not always be a deeply held value by African Christians. On the contrary, it may be vitally important for African church leaders to acquire wealth so as to prove that they are blessed by God, and so that they should be taken seriously. Being a "good Christian," which in the West may deal with morality and denial of the world, can, when heard in Africa, include content that a Westerner would never imagine, pressurising the African believer to make money at all costs in order to give a Christian testimony.

Three more examples to conclude. In English we say that we "believe in God," to mean that we hold as true some ultimate notion that God "exists," created the world and is responsible for my eternal well-being. Taking Dholuo of Western Kenya, a language with which I am somewhat familiar, "*yie kuom Nyasaye*" is probably the closest translation we have to "believe in God." This Luo version of the English, however, frankly can be understood as something like "agree that there is a power who will bless me with material wealth." One can ask someone "is that your sister?" Let's say the girl concerned is the granddaughter of a brother to the person's grandfather. In English, in which a "sister" is someone with whom one shares a common parent, the answer should clearly be "no." In many African languages, terms translated into English as "sister" are much broader in meaning. When the African person being asked takes "sister" as a translation of their equivalent terms, they will say "yes she is my sister". Has the African person lied and been untrustworthy? According to Western English apparently yes. According to widespread African uses of English (if "sister" is taken as a translation of some African term) that is clearly not true. My final example; in the Luo language, a brother or sister can

affectionately be known as “*nyathiwa*”. Literally translated this seems to be “our child.” *Nyathiwa* however is said of a brother or sister (i.e. our fellow child) and not of a member of the next generation, as is strongly implied using English. It could be very easy to mistranslate *nyathiwa*.

The examples above should be making it clear that mutual trust requires mutual cultural and linguistic knowledge. In the absence of such knowledge, to say that one “trusts” somebody can be almost meaningless; one trusts them to do what? Does one “trust” them to the degree that one will ignore apparent breaches in trust such as listed above? What does that mean? How can one claim to truly “trust” someone if their words and behavior can be so contrary to one’s expectations?

I suggest that trust cannot be separated from linguistic-cultural understanding. This is why, when a missionary who has learned language and culture relates to people on the field, they will do so in a way that is different from the way in which a visitor from the West will relate to them. This will be the case even should there be a common language such as English that unites. A visitor from the West is a poor assessor of whether trust has been honored, or otherwise. A missionary who has reached this culturally-informed level of trust, knowing the kinds of foibles we have discussed above, might have to say to a visitor that they must not “trust” the local people, and that they should not expect to be trusted by them.

Vulnerability: An Alternative to Trust

The final paragraph in the above section suggests that a visitor from the West can be a very poor judge of the context of a Western missionary in an African context. From earlier in this article, we have learned that the visitor has usually had to decide to accept apparent breaches in trust from the African as arising from “misunderstanding.” Meanwhile, we have also learned that the African person can be very concerned that they acquire wealth. It is typically Western people who have this on offer. In any competition between the two, which are the Western missionary and the native African leader, Western supporters will often stand with the African. The informed Westerner is judged as “wrong”; how can a Western missionary be right all the time and an African church leader be “wrong” all the time? We seem to have gotten ourselves into an insoluble dilemma. The only long-term missionaries likely to survive these kinds of dilemmas may be those who choose to ignore cultural complexities while continuing to bring in plenty of funds; i.e. those who continue to be in demand for their money and refuse to take notice of what is going on around them.

Two things stand at the root of the above dilemma; the fact that the West has the resources that the African leader desires, and that the West is ignorant of the linguistic/cultural context within which the African is operating. Hence in the Alliance for Vulnerable Mission, we suggest, to avoid the above dilemmas, that some Western missionaries operate using local languages and through locally available resources.

The *vulnerability* we are looking at can be said to express itself in two ways. One, a “vulnerable” missionary who does not have a lot of wealth to hand out, is vulnerable to the pushes and shoves of the culture they are entering. Because confronting them is not to put major

resources at risk, local people can afford to be honest with them. They can be told when they are wrong. They can be ignored if they are misguided, without the risk of losing funds. Because they are not trying to be accountable for funds, they are not insisting that local people keep to some foreign standard. Instead, they are ready to go with the flow. Because they have not invested majorly in whatever project they are involved in, they can allow “their project” to collapse, and still be around and smiling.

Two, because vulnerable missionaries operate using indigenous languages (learning of which requires exposure to the culture), they can hear and understand what is being said around them. They are vulnerable in the sense that one’s eardrums are “vulnerable” to sounds. As eardrums reverberate in response to even low levels of sound, so a vulnerable missionary perceives things that a non-vulnerable missionary may not. In this sense they are “vulnerable” to the pushes and pulls of community and religious life where they are serving. For example, they know what someone means when they say, “this is my sister.” They appreciate that there is no point in getting angry with someone who said they would come tomorrow but does not show up. They appreciate that “belief in God” means “agreeing that it is good to acquire wealth,” and that to change this belief will require a lot of effort. It is as if they have finely tuned ears that can listen to whispers, whereas other missionaries may only be able to hear words that are broadcast using a loudspeaker.

Hence, I suggest that “vulnerability” is an alternative to “trust.” In a sense it is the opposite to trust. It is like a balancing counterpoint to trust. Westerners who come to Africa and on day one they say to an African, “I trust you” are implicitly assuming their own cultural superiority. They are saying, “I already understand you sufficiently for me to enter into relationship without my first having to learn about you, or your language, or your culture.” This is not to say that “trust” is not important. It is to say that true trust cannot be presupposed to exist in advance of “vulnerable relationship.” Interculturally, trust must be acquired in the course of vulnerable relationships. This applies even if both parties entering into relationship are sincere believing Christians. In a sense we can say that a vulnerable missionary is one who sees compromises of trust as learning experiences. Vulnerable missionaries are determined to ride breaches in trust rather as a surfer rides waves. They will not scuttle their craft or allow breaking waves to crush them or to wash them onto the beach. Developing the trust that arises from vulnerability can mean avoiding the confrontation of powerful players. A missionary who seeks to maneuver large amounts of resources will draw the attention of powerful figures in their target community. As a result, they can brazenly challenge people who have the power to avoid being challenged. I have said above that Western Christians sometimes allow breaches of trust with African Christians that they would never permit with their fellows at home. The vulnerable missionary does the same, but from a position from which they learn from such breaches.

It needs to be added that vulnerable missionaries set themselves up in a very delicate position with their fellow countrymen. Because they are Western in origin, they can be expected to keep high standards of trust on Western standards, while being used in operating with African ways of looking at trust. Whereas the Westerners may be ready frequently to “forgive” the

African, they may not be ready to so forgive their fellow Western missionary. Hence vulnerable missionaries expose themselves to criticism or even condemnation by their Western missionary colleagues.

Trust, Vulnerability, and Dependency

We have seen that it can be very problematic to approach a Majority World community without putting in mechanisms for learning and vulnerability, while determined to demonstrate “trust” in them in key ways, such as in the investing of major resources. Resulting breaches in trust can result in serious division, conflict, crisis, and then “failure.” A look at some intercultural linguistics gives very good reasons for these points. We have looked at vulnerability as a missionary approach that is an alternative to “trust.” In this final section, I want to consider the above in relation to unhealthy dependency.

Unhealthy dependency arises when Westerners establish ways of operating in Africa that prove to be unsustainable without ongoing outside funds or expertise, whenever the ongoing acquisition of those funds or that expertise is in some way problematic. A direct relationship between this and vulnerable mission should be evident. Vulnerable mission is practiced using local languages and resources. By definition, it is done over a long-haul (Vulnerable mission cannot succeed or be practiced over a short term. See Henry (2014).). The alternative to vulnerable mission is mission carried out using outside languages and outside resources. Establishing work using outside resources is likely to mean that it will continue to need those outside resources. The presence of outside resources tends to result in misunderstandings. Establishing work using outside languages is likely to mean that misunderstandings, in relation to the local cultural context, are incorporated.

A famous example in which use of outside resources did *not* result in ongoing dependency is that of Marshall Plan funds given to Germany after World War II.¹³ Germany had been flattened during the war. Its economy was in shambles. It might have taken it many more years to pick itself up, if America had not given Germany a leg-up in the form of large amounts of loaned capital. Many people took that as a good model and wanted to repeat what happened in Germany in the rest of the world. In doing so, unfortunately, they failed to realize that Germany had already had a powerful economy, and that German people were oriented to and capable of building up a powerful economy. The same cannot be said for much of Africa. When African people received large donations of capital, it did not help them to build sustainable industries. African communities are different from German communities.

Things have moved on since the 1950s and the Marshall Plan. Levels of education have escalated in Africa as throughout the world. Many people in Africa are as a result very familiar with the discourse of industry, development, economics, progress, and growth. Unfortunately, many of these things have not grown indigenously as they did in Germany. They have been brought in as solutions with outside input and imposed through foreign-funded education (I do not have space to consider this concern further in this article but have done so elsewhere. Suffice it to say that it is difficult to get such wholesale importation of an economic system to work.). As

a result, whether donations be to churches or to nations; *talk may not be backed up by substance*. Unless outside-controlled (outside control seems to be rising, even if it is often hidden, in Africa and other parts of the majority world (Bronkema 2015)), many projects designed in the West cannot work in Africa. They depend on outside personnel, and ongoing flows of funds from the outside. That is, they create dependency. Not to bring in outside money is to not create dependency.

The issue of “trust” is alluded to above. Many African people are highly educated. Their discourse seems to warrant that they should be “trusted” by others. But unfortunately, their discourse is *borrowed*. Thus “trusting” them can be to invite failure, embarrassment, crises, etc. To so “trust” them can also be to distract them from what they might have been doing, had they been left to their own devices instead of being encouraged to imitate Western discourse (i.e. education).¹⁴

A Westerner who comes to Africa and uses a Western language attaches presupposition that they have held (and that are true in the West) to discourses in Africa. Even when he is in Africa, when someone talks to an Englishman using English, it is very difficult for the latter not to link the terms he hears with his experience in England. Yet much of the context of England (Germany, America, etc.) is absent in Africa. Thus, the Westerner speaking, and hearing English can be misled, and misleading.

The process of learning language opens up a liminal period before serious engagement occurs. That period forces the learner to slacken off, to re-think, to adjust, to some extent at least, to their new context (The new language should, of course in so far as possible, be learned “in context” and not learned as if independent of context.). To some extent at least, the newly learned local language will rhyme with, engage with, and maintain meaningfulness in the local context. The examples cited above, of sister, of timekeeping, and of not saying “no,” all illustrate the kinds of things that a language learner should be picking up as they learn their new language. Engaging in a local language in the implementation of one’s work or project is a way of helping to align with local reality. If sufficient alignment with local reality is achieved, then the project can be sustainable in the local context without unhealthy dependency on sources for outside input. Language should be learned first. Then that language should be used in engaging people with whatever project is on hand. Thus, one can ensure, as Jean Johnson shares with us; that you start on day one as you mean to continue on day 100.¹⁵

Conclusion

Mutual trust between people can be a wonderful thing. Misplaced trust can be a terrible thing. A look at the linguistic and cultural parameters of intercultural relationship shows that intercultural / inter-linguistic understanding will always be limited. Hence it is advised that trust across cultural divides should be guarded. Vulnerability is in this article set up as a balancing counterpoint to unhealthy blind trust; vulnerability is a form of trust that favors sustainability.

The “vulnerability” here considered is that which arises when a Western missionary or development worker ensures that key ministries are engaged using local languages and

resources. This “limits” the *need for trust*, because it means that there will be no component of foreign financial investment needing outside accountability in the relationships concerned. It helps to solidify what trust there is, because through relating using the indigenous language, the outsider maximizes their receptivity to nuances and categories of local understanding. It elicits trust because the ministry of the outsider comes to be dependent on the free cooperation of locals; that is to say that the outsider cannot march on ahead and beyond the reach of local support or approval (that is not motivated by money) for their activities.

This article suggests that misplaced trust underlies a lot of unhealthy dependency in intercultural relationships. The use of globalized languages contributes to this fact. Someone hearing their own language used back to them, as many native-English speaking missionaries in Africa, link the language uses they hear to types of trust that they are accustomed to within their own more familiar culture. In addition, they may well be under pressure not to be racially biased, i.e., not to respond to communication by nationals of the people they are reaching any differently to the way they would respond to the same from their own people. They are likely to want to give the “benefit of the doubt, “should there be any. Unfortunately, once trust is extended, e.g., in the handing over of money following an agreement about terms of operation in some project, it not being honored produces problems, which includes unhealthy dependency.

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¹ “John” mentioned in Acts 13:13 is the same person as the Mark mentioned in Acts 14.

² “Only those societies with a high degree of social trust will be able to create the flexible, large-scale business organizations that are needed to compete in the new global economy” (Fukuyama 1996: back cover).

³ For an example of broken trust in intercultural mission, the reason for which seems to be shrouded in mystery, see <http://blog.rainerbrose.net/on-strike-in-the-refugee-camp-gospel-celebration-in-adjumani-uganda/>

⁴ The lady on whom I base this story wrote her own testimony here: <http://www.jim-mission.org.uk/discussion/my-experience.html>

⁵ I illustrate ways in which this happens in the article: Harries (2008).

⁶ I have articulated in more detail elsewhere ways in which citizens of Western countries consider themselves to be “trusting” of others so as to avoid accusations of racism (Harries unpublished). Western people are reluctant to let go of poorly founded notions of romanticism of non-Western communities (Pinker 2002:26).

⁷ After African countries became politically independent, and when there were calls for a missionary moratorium.

⁸ http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/jbtm/05-1_103.pdf

⁹ Maranz, David, 2001, *African Friends and Money Matters: observations from Africa*. Dallas: SIL International. 34.

¹⁰ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/kenya/1477968/Aids-threatens-impooverished-Masai.html>

¹¹ To say that they are “intrusive on someone’s privacy” is a native English equivalent to a concern held in parts of Africa that one does not want to be too quick to reveal details about one’s personal wealth.

¹² <http://www.idahomonks.org/sect401.htm>

¹³ <http://www.history.com/topics/world-war-ii/marshall-plan>

¹⁴ For more on this see the immorality of aid (Harries 2011).

¹⁵ <http://mikejentes.com/2013/04/02/quotes-from-we-are-not-the-hero-by-jean-johnson/>

Pentecostal Missions: Past 100 and Beyond

Jeffery Nelson*

Abstract

This paper identifies the phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal movement since its inception on January 1, 1901 to the present. Particular focus is given to the Assemblies of God missions from its humble but audacious beginnings in 1914, to its growth as the largest Pentecostal and Protestant denomination in the world. Note that this paper was first presented to the Alaska Ministry Network of the Assemblies of God at the Network Conference in April 2017.

Introduction

Three days before the 1901 New Year Rev. Charles Parham, Bible school leader, gave his students an inductive Bible assignment: study “the baptism in the Holy Spirit and determine its biblical evidence.”¹ On New Year’s Eve the “students concluded that speaking in tongues was the evidence of this baptism,”² and a prayer meeting began at Bethel Bible School at Stone’s Folly, Topeka, Kansas. While others throughout recent and ancient Christian history had experienced speaking in tongues, this was the birth of the Pentecostal movement with Pentecostal theology’s formation. After Midnight (January 1, 1901) Agnes Ozman, one of his students, was the first to be baptized in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of speaking in another tongue.³

Many others were filled with the Holy Spirit and the Pentecostal movement began to spread. Charles Parham faded from the scene, but the Azusa Street Revival, led by William J. Seymour, became the epicenter of Pentecostal activity in 1906. “Under his leadership...sinners repented, believers were sanctified, prayer was offered for the sick, and many received visions...an extremely important aspect of this revival is that many who received the Pentecostal baptism also felt a heightened concern for world evangelism.”⁴

The Assemblies of God was formed in 1914 and the second General Council, held in Chicago in November 1914, resolved to achieve “the greatest evangelism that the world has ever seen.”⁵ This was an audacious goal. Those in attendance may have been struck with the reality that Pentecostals were the despised stepchild of Christianity, but also with the awareness that the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy (Joel 2:28-29) was God’s intention for his creation.

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Many missionaries traveled from their Pentecostal experience to remote parts of the world sensing the missionary zeal to fulfill the Great Commission before Jesus' return. Among the early pioneers were Charles and Florence Personeus, the first Pentecostal missionaries to Alaska. They were married in 1916 and landed in Juneau in 1917. While others were staking their claim for gold, the Personeus' staked a claim "to introduce people to the love and grace of God."⁶



7

Could the Assemblies of God be a part of the "greatest evangelism that the world has ever seen?"⁸

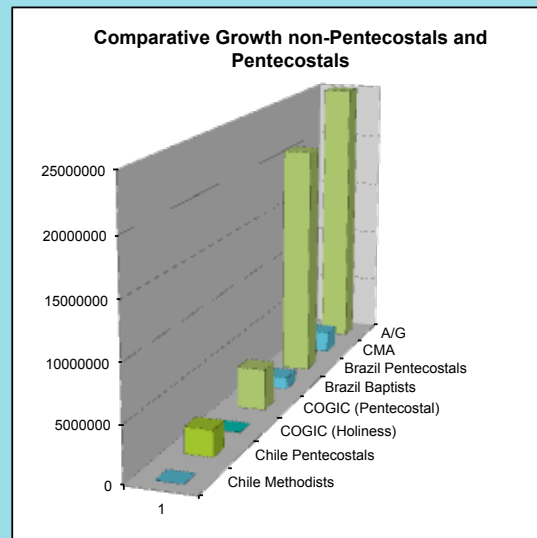
Fastest Growing Phenomenon

What has happened since those early days of the twentieth century are nothing short of miraculous. "The AG was founded just over a century ago, in April 1914...Pentecostal and Charismatic movements make up about 25% of the world Christian population, a massive expansion that has taken place within a little over a century."⁹ "Charismatic and Pentecostal Christianity is the fastest growing phenomenon in world religious history."¹⁰ What proof is there that this movement is the fastest growing phenomenon in world religious history?

Vinson Synan conducted an exhaustive study comparing similar non-Pentecostal and Pentecostal churches around the world over the past century. Vinson Synan demonstrates the contrast between Pentecostal and non-Pentecostal mission efforts in the twentieth century.¹¹ Here are some examples from his study: In Chile, the Methodists grew to approximately 5,000 members, while the Pentecostals grew to 2,371,000. In Brazil, the Baptists grew to 1,050,000, while the Pentecostals grew to over 21 million. Worldwide, the Christian and Missionary Alliance grew to 1.9 million, while the Assemblies of God has surpassed 25 million. These statistics are illustrated in the figure.

“POLICY DECISIONS ON TONGUES AS AN INDICATOR OF FUTURE CHURCH GROWTH”

Vinson Synan



12

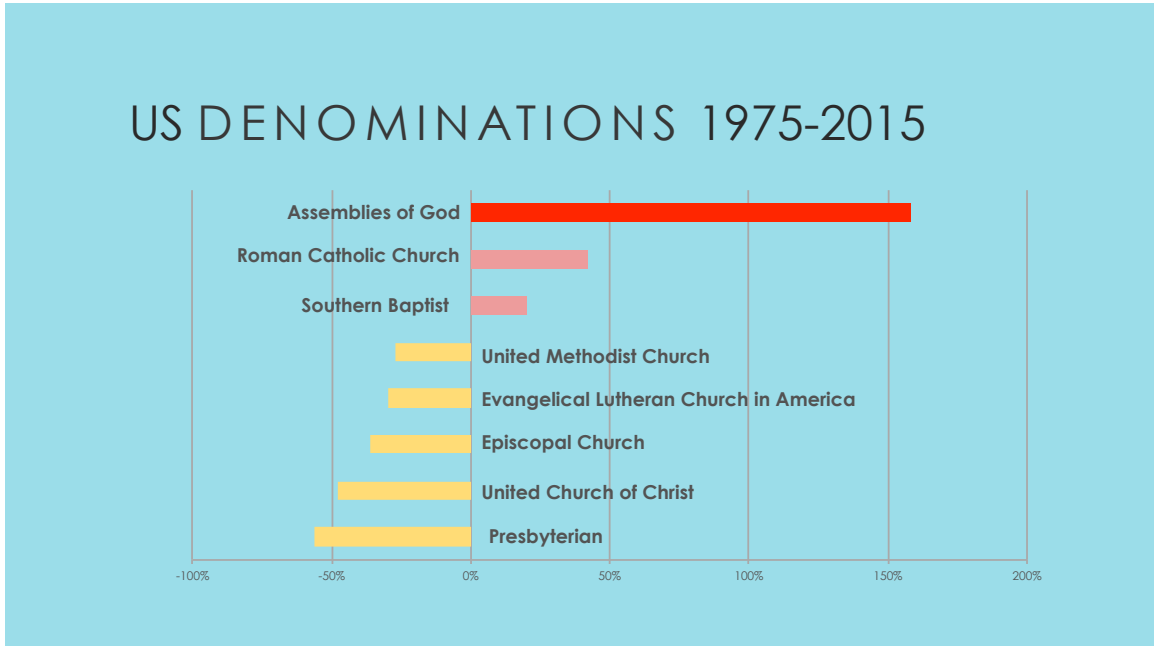
Figure 1. Comparative Growth non-Pentecostals and Pentecostals

This figure demonstrates that in every example, similar churches with similar doctrine except for Pentecostalism, those that were Pentecostal grew much greater than those that were not.

The audacious vision of the members of the 1914 General Council is becoming a reality around the world.

Assemblies of God and U.S. Denominations

The Assemblies of God saw growth from the beginning. This is contrasted especially in the last forty years in the United States when compared to other Protestant and Catholic churches. The figure illustrates that of the eight major denominations identified, five have lost membership since 1975 (Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and United Methodist Church) and three have sustained growth (Southern Baptist Convention at 20%, Roman Catholic Church at 42%, and the Assemblies of God at 158%).

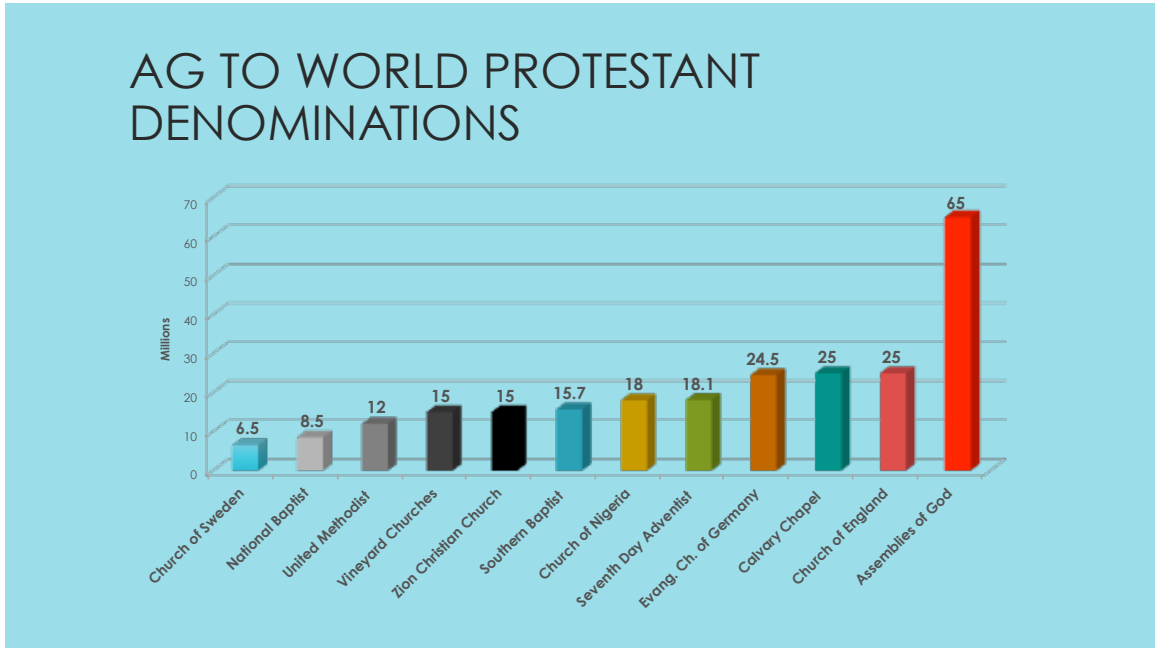


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The audacious vision of the members of the 1914 General Council is becoming a reality in the United States. The growth of the Assemblies of God in the U.S. gives evidence that this movement is the fastest-growing phenomenon in world religious history.

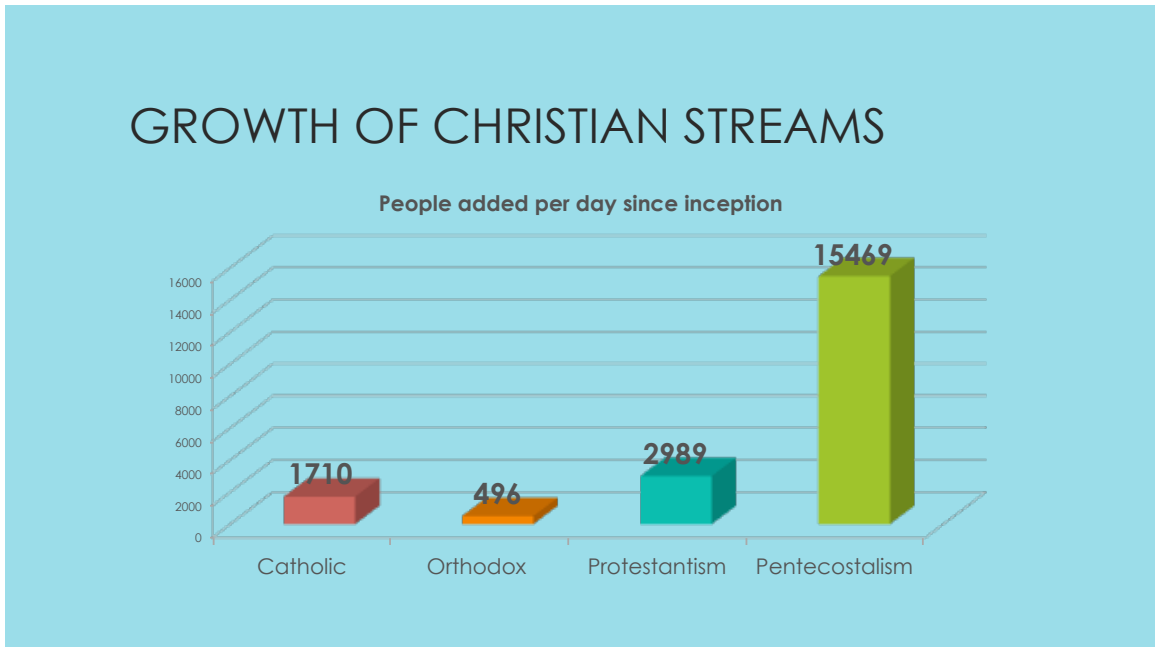
AG and Pentecostal to World Christian Denominations

But one could ask, “Is this growth phenomenal compared to other world-wide Christian churches?” When compared to world Protestant denominations, the next figure illustrates twelve of the largest. Beginning with the Church of Sweden at 6.5 million members to United Methodists at 12 million, Southern Baptist Convention at 15.7 million, to Calvary Chapel and the Church of England at 25 million, the largest Protestant denominations in the world are presented. The Assemblies of God worldwide now has more than 65 million adherents, which is more than two and one-half times larger than the next largest Protestant denomination.



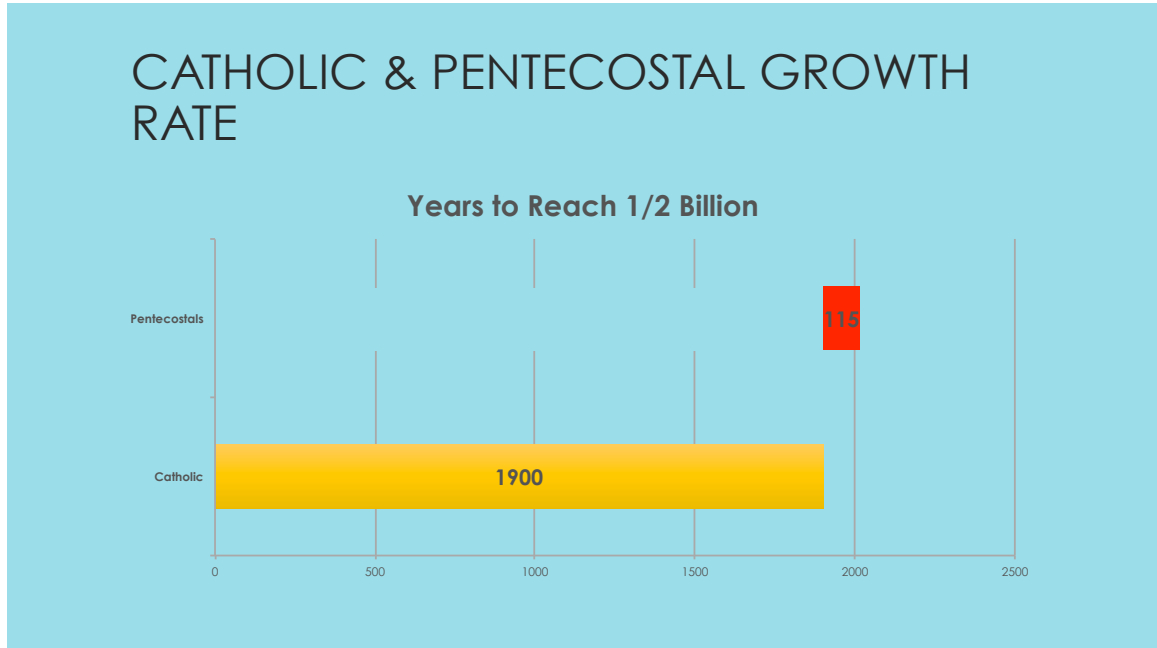
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When the four great streams of Christianity are compared, the Roman Catholic Church is the largest, but the Pentecostal stream has now taken second place, followed by Protestantism and Orthodox Churches. When one considers the growth of these streams since inception, the phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal stream is evident: Roman Catholic (AD 30) 1,710 people per day; Orthodox (AD 451) 496 people per day; Protestantism (AD 1517) 2,989 people per day; and Pentecostalism (AD 1901) 15,469 people per day.



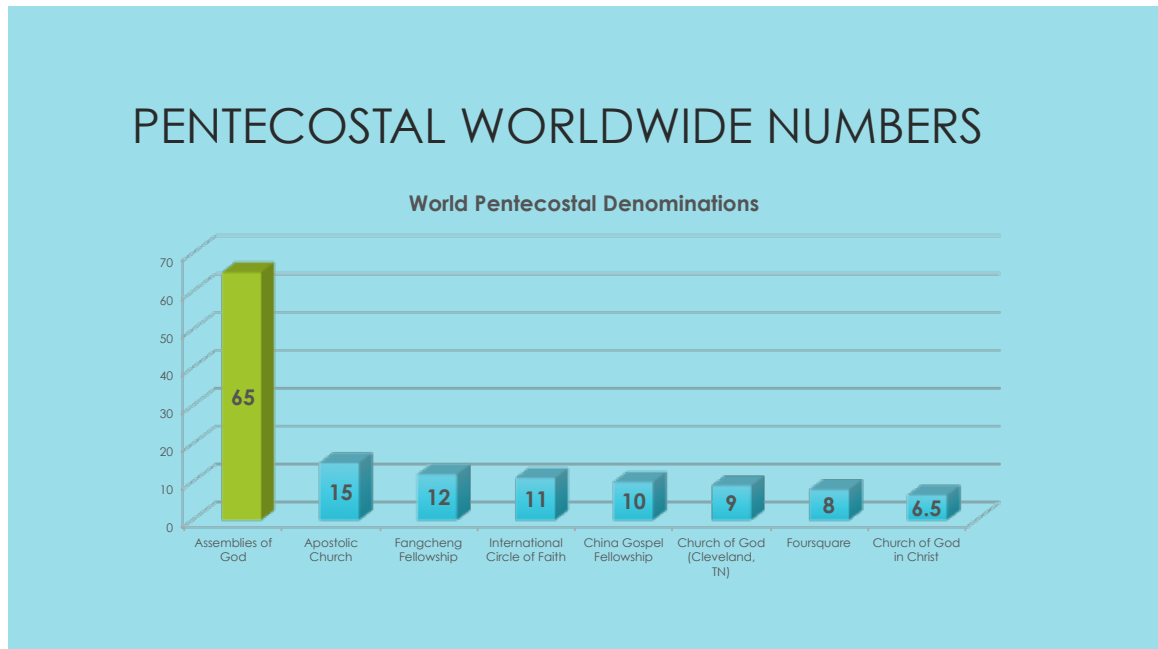
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What one may find fascinating is the rapid growth of Pentecostalism. “The major strands of Pentecostalism now represent at least one quarter of all Christians, according to the *World Christian Database*, ranking second only to Catholicism in the number of followers. In direct and indirect ways, Pentecostal beliefs and practices are remaking the face of world Christianity.”¹⁶ The Roman Catholic Church grew from its first members (AD 30) to one-half billion members over 1,900 years. The Pentecostal movement grew from its first members (1901) to one-half billion members in just 115 years.



17

The rapid growth of Pentecostalism around the world gives evidence that this movement is the fastest growing phenomenon in world religious history. The Assemblies of God leads all Pentecostal denominations. The eight largest Pentecostal denominations around the world range from the Church of God in Christ at 6.5 million adherents, Foursquare at 8 million, Church of God (Cleveland, TN) at 9 million, China Gospel Church at 10 million, and the Apostolic Church at 15 million to the Assemblies of God, at 65 million adherents worldwide.

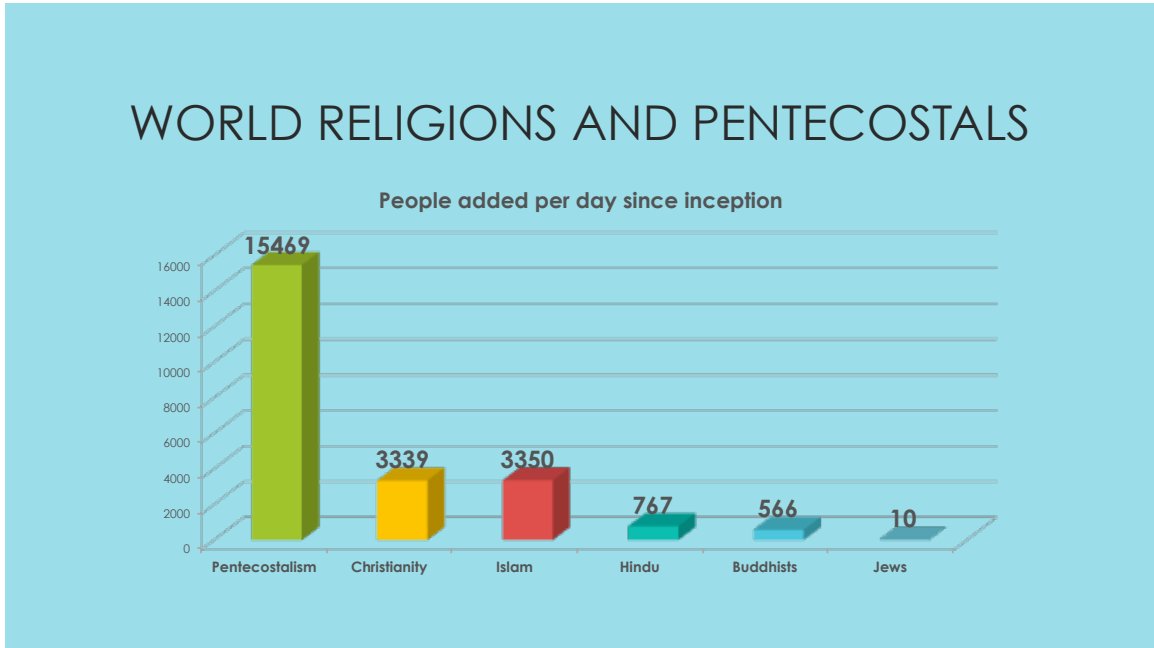


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This is more evidence toward the statement that Pentecostalism is the greatest phenomenon in religion this world has ever seen. But how does Pentecostalism fare against religions outside of Christianity?

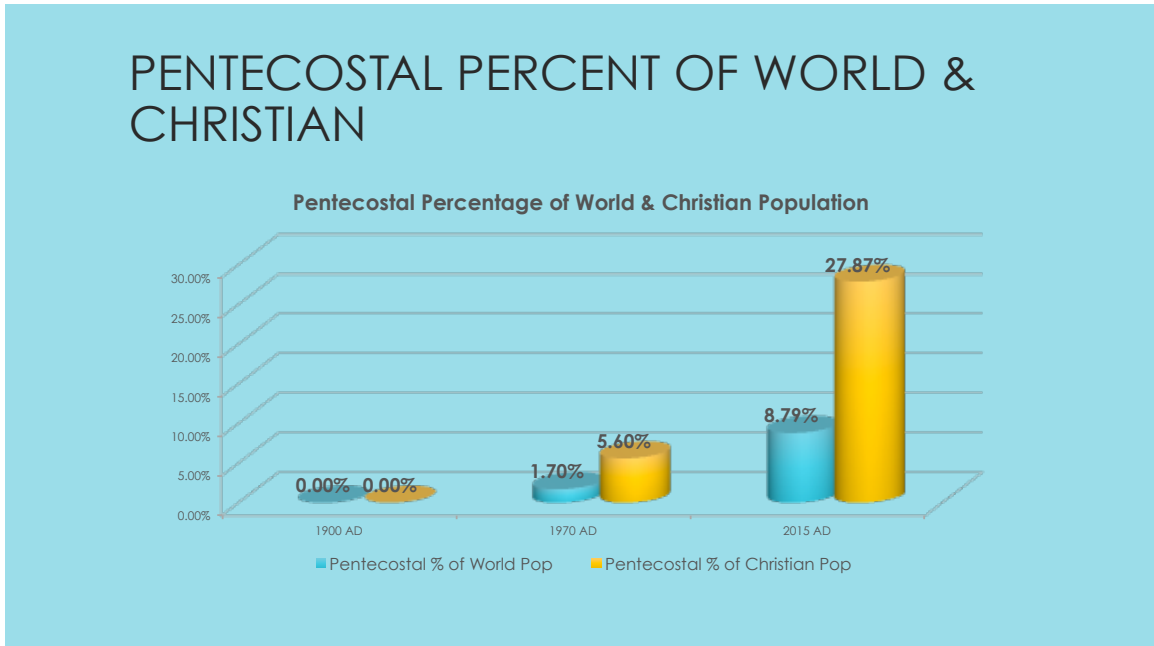
Pentecostals and World Religions

But one could ask, “Is this growth phenomenal compared to world-wide religions?” When one looks at the growth of each religion since inception Islam (AD 622) has added 3,350 people per day, Hinduism (1500 BC) has added 767 people per day, Buddhism (500 BC) has added 566 people per day, and Judaism (1812 BC) has added 10 people per day. Christianity (AD 30) as a whole has added 3,339 people per day. But in stark contrast to these religions, Pentecostalism (AD 1901) has added 15,469 people per day.



19

Pentecostalism had no members and zero percent of the world population in AD 1900. By 1970 it had grown to 1.7% of the world population and 5.6% of Christianity. By AD 2015 it had grown to 8.8% of the world population and 27.9% of Christianity.



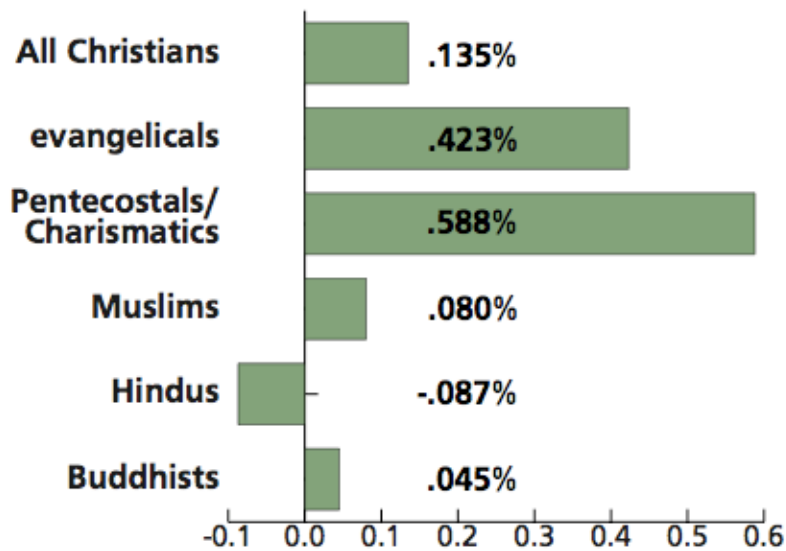
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More than one quarter of the world's Christians was Pentecostal within only 115 years since Pentecostalism began.

It is often stated, “Islam is the world's fastest growing religion.”²¹ While this is true in comparison to Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc., there are two factors concerning Pentecostalism that are remarkable. First, when you compare growth by conversion, Christianity in general and Pentecostalism in particular, are growing faster than Islam. Islam grows most rapidly by birth. When the religious culture allows up to four wives and encourages multiple children, this is not surprising.

**Annual Conversion Growth in
The Largest World Religions
Avg. Annual %, 1990-2000**

Figure 3



22

Second, Pentecostalism as a subgroup of Christianity is growing faster than Islam as a whole. This has already been demonstrated in the figure above.

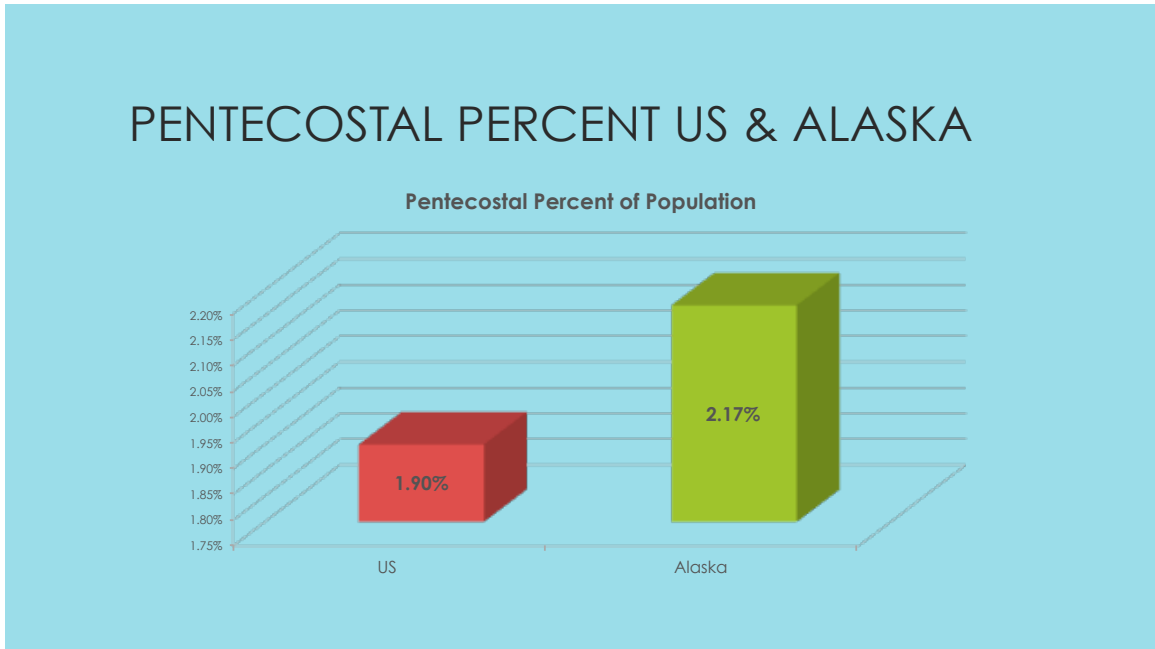
Pentecostals in Alaska and Kenya

Before concluding this section allow an indulgence to the author’s two connections: Alaska, the church that sent us out, and Kenya, the land of our missionary service.

Alaska and Kenya both have a significant animistic background population and a strong Christian presence. However, both have a significant group of hidden peoples.²³ In Alaska there are more than 100 communities without a church.²⁴ In Kenya there are still tribes that do not yet have a church strong enough to reach their own people in their own language.²⁵

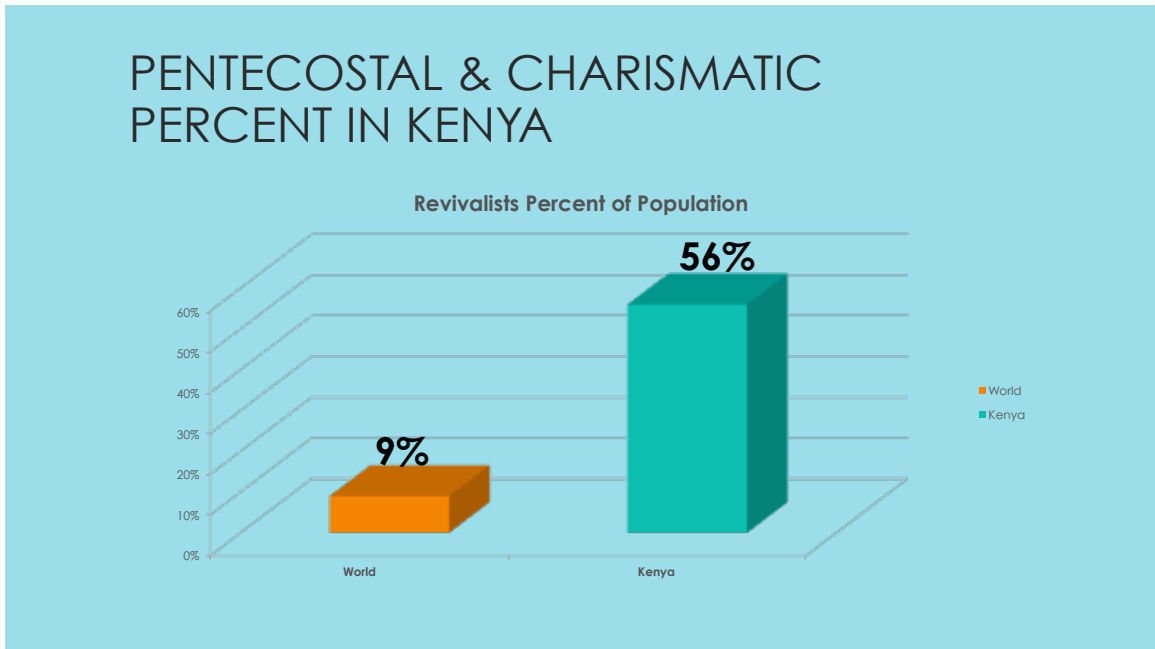
Alaska has experienced a greater Pentecostal growth than the U.S. as a whole. The Alaska Pentecostal population is about 14% higher than the average for the United States. There

is still a great work to be done, however, in order to reach the 100 communities without a church, the small towns, and the metropolitan areas.



26

Kenya has one of the highest Revivalist (Charismatic/Pentecostal) percentages in the world at 56% of the population and the highest Pentecostal percentage in the world.²⁷



28

The Kenya Assemblies of God, established as an indigenous church by the American Assemblies of God, would come to be the fastest growing denomination in Kenya in the 1990s at thirty-eight percent annual growth.²⁹ Peter Njiri became the first permanent Kenyan General Superintendent in 1982 when there were about 300 churches in the KAG. He is now the longest serving Assemblies of God superintendent in the world and has stewarded so that nearly 3,800 churches have been established.³⁰ But the work in Kenya is yet unfinished. There are many hidden people groups that do not yet have a church in their own language and culture strong enough to reach their own people.

The question was asked at the beginning, “What proof is there that this movement is the fastest growing phenomenon in world religious history?” The evidence is overwhelming. Pentecostalism is the fastest growing phenomenon in world religious history and the Assemblies of God leads the Pentecostal movement worldwide.

Reasons for Pentecostal Growth

The first section demonstrated the evidence that Pentecostalism is the fastest growing phenomenon in world religious history. This section looks at four reasons for this growth: doctrinal, missiological, spiritual, and sociological. Understanding and embracing these reasons will equip Pentecostal members, ministers, and missionaries to extend the victories of the past 100 years into the future.

Doctrinal

What makes Pentecostal doctrine distinct from other Christian doctrine? Two elements stand out. Both have connection to speaking in tongues, which was identified at that New Year’s Eve prayer meeting in Topeka, Kansas in 1901. The first reason is separability or subsequence. The second reason is evidential tongues. Because these are so integral to Pentecostalism, they deserve investigation here.

Classical Pentecostals believe that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit as an experience given by God is separate from and subsequent to the salvation experience. While this might seem obvious to us, it is not widely accepted in Christianity. For the students at the Bethel Bible School, when they read the Scripture, it was obvious that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit was a separate event from salvation. The believers were already born again, but they were told to wait in Jerusalem for the promise of the Father, which was the Holy Spirit. When Paul asked the believers in Ephesus, “Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed,” it seems obvious that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit follows the salvation experience. But for many, in fact most, Christian denominations define the Baptism in the Holy Spirit as an event that takes place at the moment of salvation.

The importance of separability/subsequence in Pentecostal doctrine should not be understated especially as it relates to missions. Acts 1:8 states that the purpose for the Father giving the Spirit is so the followers of Jesus would be witnesses to the ends of the earth.

“If...Pentecostals can no longer speak of an enabling of the Spirit that is distinct from conversion and available to every believer...nor can Pentecostals maintain that the principal purpose of this gift is to grant power for the task of mission.”³¹ The impetus that sent so many missionaries to the mission field including the Personeus in the early days to the twentieth century was the focus on fulfilling the Great Commission in the power of the Spirit. It was an outward focus embedded in this distinct Pentecostal doctrine. If Pentecostals believed like other churches believed that the Baptism in the Holy Spirit came at the moment of salvation, there would have been no need to seek for this empowerment for witness. Much more has been written on this subject, but this paper does not allow for full coverage.

A reduction in the importance of the doctrines of separability/subsequence and evidential tongues would produce disastrous results. The first would be a loss of the church planting and mission zeal and effectiveness of the church. A primary difference between the Pentecostals and other Christians is found in the result of their theology. Those who believe Spirit baptism is part of the conversion/initiation process then must conclude that spiritual gifts are primarily for operation within the body; they are for edification. The focus is therefore inward. Those who believe Spirit baptism is separate from the conversion/initiation process then conclude that God gave the Spirit baptism for power to witness. The focus is therefore outward. Losing the distinct doctrine of separability/subsequence threatens the missionary thrust of the church.

The second significant distinctive is evidential tongues. Evidential tongues are the doctrine that the initial physical evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking in tongues. The Bible school students also identified this distinguishing doctrine at the prayer meeting at Stone’s Folly on December 31, 1900. When asked what was the evidence that one was baptized in the Holy Spirit, they said that in the Bible, people who were filled in the Holy Spirit began to speak in an unknown tongue. This too seems obvious as one reads the Bible. But for those outside Pentecostal churches this is a battleground. Some say that speaking in tongues was only for the first generation of believers and it ceased when the last one died.³² Others argue that speaking in tongues is simply one gift among many, which is primarily for the edification of the body, and is not a sign intended for all believers.

Pentecostal authors encourage believers to retain the doctrinal distinctive of evidential tongues. “Whenever we...begin to let down on this particular point (evidential tongues), the fire dies out, the ardor and fervor begin to wane, the glory departs.”³³ “It is unthinkable that the Pentecostal movement could have developed as it did without the initial evidence position.”³⁴ And “I hope Pentecostals will increase their emphasis upon speaking in tongues. It would be an untold tragedy to back away from that part of our heritage that most directly gives evidence of God’s determination to bless all nations through Christ, the seed of Abraham (Gal. 3:16).”³⁵ To allow evidential tongues to fade from the theology or practice of Pentecostal believers would be a terrible mistake and millions of souls would be affected.

Missiological

Two related features of Pentecostalism that are missiological are the purpose of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit for witness and the outward rather than inward focus that it brings. Early Pentecostals strongly believed that the infilling of the Spirit was given for believers to have bold witness. The outward posture was emphasized, rather than highlighting the inward edification of the church.

Luke wrote, “When the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses...to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8). The focus is external. Paul wrote that the gifts were to edify the church (1 Corinthians 14:12, 26). The focus is internal. Both are scriptural. But the internal without the external focus results in deficit missiology. “Pentecostals maintain that the principal purpose of this gift is to grant power for the task of mission...this conviction, I would add, is integral to Pentecostalism’s continued sense of expectation and effectiveness in mission.”³⁶ The early missions focus of Pentecostals was built on a Pentecostal theology that emphasized going out with boldness to fulfill the Great Commission.

This Pentecostal missiology is slightly different from our closest theological cousins, the Charismatics. Charismatics stress the gifts (charisma means gift) for the edification of the believers. Charismatics embrace the gifts of the Spirit as described in 1 Corinthians and elsewhere in the Scripture, but they do not generally support the Pentecostal theologies of separability/subsequence or evidential tongues. To the Charismatic believer speaking in tongues is one gift among many, should not be expected for all believers, and is not the initial physical evidence of being baptized in the Holy Spirit. Pentecostal theology makes an impact on Pentecostal missiology. Holy Spirit Baptism is for the purpose of witness and this brings an outward focus to the believers.

Spiritual

Pentecostals believe the spiritual power that was present in Jesus and His followers in the New Testament is available for His followers today. Healings, casting out demons, opening blind eyes, deaf hearing, lame walking, and dead-raising power are active through Pentecostal believers in this age. God wants to show Himself strong, and when He does, one should never waste a miracle. These two factors are important to Pentecostal missions.

God wants to show Himself strong where darkness is the darkest. In villages without a church, among people groups without a witness, and in the midst of the powerful world religions, God wants to demonstrate His love and power. When Pentecostal believers enter a new culture to share the love of Christ, God often provides opportunity to demonstrate His spiritual power. Like Elisha on Mount Carmel, a showdown takes place between the power of God and the power of Satan. God brings a dream or vision, He heals the sick, or He sets the demoniac free.

When this happens, it is the privilege of the Pentecostal missionary to proclaim the message: the Good News. If one remains silent after the miraculous demonstration of God’s power, the miracle is wasted. Every miracle creates curiosity in the people living in darkness.

When God stirs the curiosity through the miraculous preach the word. Never waste a miracle through silence.

This author led a team of Bible school students and a U.S. church team on a mission. God showed Himself strong by delivering a young boy. The miracle was not wasted as the Good News was proclaimed. The result was more than 150 people received Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

As we were walking from hut to hut in the village of Oloiborototo, a Maasai mother, Nalari Molo Wiy came up to our group. She said through an interpreter, "I hear you are people of God. Would you please come and pray for my son, Rengoine Molo? He is sick with many diseases. He has been fainting daily. Last night was the worst incident we have had. We have taken him to the doctors, and they have taken many tests. They say that there is nothing wrong with him, yet when we take him home, he is still sick." We went to pray for him at her boma (homestead). As we were praying for his healing, I sensed the Spirit of Jesus say, "The boy is wearing charms. I want to heal him, but these must be removed." I stopped praying and opened my eyes. I asked the mother, "What are these items around Rengoine's neck?" She explained that they were given to him by the Maasai traditional healers to ward off diseases. I stated that we were praying to God. If God were to heal, we might not know if it was God or these charms that brought the healing. I asked if it would be all right if we took them off. She said it would be ok. We cut off the necklaces and prayed again. She and her son came to our services every day. I asked her on Friday, "How is your son?" She said, "He hasn't been sick at all since you prayed on Monday." She gave her testimony on Sunday before more than 300 community members at the first service in the new tabernacle. She said, "The preacher asked us to take off the charms if we believed God alone had the power to heal. We took them off. God has healed my son and he has not been sick once since we prayed."

Throughout the world the Pentecostal message has experienced phenomenal growth because missionaries have boldly believed, "As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you" (John 20:21). A fundamental reason for the growth is the belief and practice of the spiritual in the life of the believers.

Sociological

In addition to doctrinal, missiological, and spiritual reasons are sociological reasons. Two great holistic factors have influenced the phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal movement. The first is the three-world view of animistic-based cultures. The second factor is the indigenous church principles. The world, especially Latin America, Africa, and Asia, has been receptive to the holistic approach of Pentecostal missions.

The Christians with a Western worldview see two worlds: the physical world and the spiritual world that is otherworldly. This spiritual world includes God and Satan, Heaven and Hell, salvation and damnation. The animistic worldview however includes a third world: the spiritual world that is this worldly. This spiritual world includes the spirit world that interacts

with this world. Causes for physical activity that are difficult to explain are attributed to the spirit world. This includes sickness, draught, and infertility.

Most of the Latin, African, and Asian world sees through these lenses. Pentecostals and Charismatics have a holistic view of God's power and believe that spiritual power is for today. They are therefore suited to answer the holistic worldview of the world. Other churches shy away from matters of the spirit world.

In practice, however, most churches do not take healing seriously. They have "room" for divine healing as a doctrine, but as a practice it is minimized or ignored completely. It is mainly Pentecostals and Charismatics who give divine healing an important position in church practice. The Catholic Church rarely uses the Rite of Anointing in the context of divine healing. Protestants talk about divine healing, but in practice they generally pray for the sick with the same kind of expectations they have when praying for a new roof on the church.³⁷

One sociological reason that Pentecostalism has grown so quickly is because Pentecostals are willing and able to address the spirit world that interacts with this world through healing the sick, casting out devils, etc.

The second sociological reason for the phenomenal growth is the indigenous church principles embraced by the Assemblies of God and many Pentecostal denominations. The three indigenous church principles articulated by Roland Allen are self-supporting, self-governing, and self-propagating³⁸. This means that the local church planted on the mission field would be able to generate its own funds to pay the pastor, would select its own leadership, and would evangelize its own people. Other missionary work often retained leadership and funds from a foreign country.

Great missionary writers and thinkers who formed and fostered indigenous church principles were Anthony Groves, Rufus Anderson, Henry Venn, John Nevius, Hudson Taylor, and Roland Allen. Assemblies of God writers included Alice Luce and Melvin Hodges. David Bosch added the fourth element, self-theologizing, much later in 1981.

Pentecost arose toward the end of the colonial period during the era of the two great wars when people were throwing off the yoke of foreign powers and finding independence from political and ecclesiastical powers. Pentecostal missionaries offered freedom to govern themselves. Pentecostal missionaries trusted them to spread the Gospel to their own people and believed they could be missionaries themselves. Pentecostal missionaries trusted them to keep their own funds and use them as they saw fit. The churches became sisters rather than subordinates, partners rather than property. This religious social experiment result was the phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal church around the world.

These two factors: three worlds and indigenous church principles, were the sociological factors that contributed to the spread of Pentecostal Christianity around the globe in one hundred years.

Four powerful factors contributed to the phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal movement in the past 100 years, making it the most significant religious movement in religious history. Doctrinal factors included separability/subsequence and evidential tongues.

Missiological factors included the purpose of being a witness and the outward focus of Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Spiritual factors included God wanting to show how strong He is in the darkest areas and the missionary's effort to never waste a miracle. Finally, the sociological factors included the three worlds in the animistic-background worldview and the indigenous church principles embraced by Pentecostal missionaries.

The phenomenal growth of the Pentecostal movement has been documented. The four reasons for this growth have been surveyed. Finally, our attention turns to the next 100 years.

Pentecostal Missions in the Future

The great question before the Pentecostal church in this moment is this: If the phenomenal success of missions over the past 100 years has been through Pentecostal missions, how then should we do missions in the next 100 years? We will look at three sections briefly. First, what is the ratio of Pentecostal believers to the world population? Second, pancake and waffle missiology will be considered as methods to finish the task. Finally, how will knowing the history of the past one hundred years impact the church beyond today?

Pentecostal Believers to World Population

When Jesus left the Twelve and ascended into Heaven, there were approximately 300 million people. This was a ratio of one Apostle to 25 million people to reach for Jesus Christ. When the day of Pentecost came and 3,000 were added to the church, the ratio changed to 1 believer to 100,000 people. Today there are over 650 million Pentecostals in a world of 7 billion people. Today every Pentecostal believer is not responsible for 25 million lost souls like the Apostles, or 100,000 like those first believers at Pentecost. Today if every Pentecostal believer (650 million) would bring eleven people to Christ, the world (7 billion) would be won.

Let that statistic sink down into your being. If every Pentecostal believer alive today would win just eleven people to Christ, every person on earth would be won to Christ. Does that sound impossible or achievable? Maybe you are yet to lead your first disciple to Christ. Let us pray that this be the year.

Pancake or Waffle Missiology

However before concluding that the task is all but done, another missiological reality must be considered. J. Scott Holste illustrated this as Pancake or Waffle mission.³⁹ In years past we often believed that if a missionary went to a particular nation and planted churches there, the work was done. The people of that country would be able to evangelize the entire nation from the original churches planted. When the Personeus came to Alaska in 1917 and began the work, some might have believed that it would spread over the state of Alaska like syrup pours over a pancake. When missionary Dale Brown first went to Kenya in 1967,⁴⁰ some might have believed that the churches planted would automatically spread across that great nation like syrup spreads over a pancake. But the reality in Alaska, Kenya, and across the globe today is that there are still

hidden people that have not yet to hear a witness in their own language or culture of the love of Jesus Christ.

As mentioned before, there are more than 100 villages in Alaska that do not have a church. There are nearly 7,000 unreached people groups around the world that do not have a church in their language and culture that are strong enough to plant churches among them. These hidden individuals will not be reached through pouring syrup on a pancake, because the syrup stops at the walls of the village or tribe. Alaska and Kenya are more like a waffle than a pancake. How will the 1,600 people in Fritz Creek, Alaska hear of the Good News unless someone leaves their waffle square and goes to Fritz Creek? How will the 2.5 million Somalis in Kenya hear the gospel unless someone leaves their waffle square and goes to the Somalis to share with them the news that Jesus loves them and died for their sins? Every Pentecostal believer may only need to win eleven lost people to Christ, but many will have to leave home and enter a new culture in order for the lost, the hidden, and the unreached to be reached.

Today God is looking for some to leave their waffle square and go to a village without a church, to go to a city people group that has no relevant witness, to go to a university that needs to see what Jesus really looks like, to go to an unreached people group among the Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, or animists and show people the way, the truth, and the life. I challenge you today to say yes to God. Then ask Him what the question is.

Past 100 and Beyond

The growth of the Pentecostal movement has truly been the most phenomenal growth in religious world history. The reasons for the growth have been identified. The need for Pentecostal missionaries to win the lost is a given. But where and how to reach them is the challenge now set before us. During this great 100th anniversary of the first Pentecostal missionary to Alaska, and as we reflect on what God has done in Kenya, and around the world, we can rejoice in what God has done. But the challenge our Bishop Bill Welch has laid before us, indeed what God has laid before us is that this need is not to rest on our laurels.

If the phenomenal success of missions over the past 100 years has been through Pentecostal missions, how then should we do missions in the next 100 years? Do we have the vision of our early missionaries? Do we have the willingness to develop stamina, the fortitude to preserve, and the willingness to sacrifice? And equally important, do we have the doctrine, missiology, and spiritual life that they did?

If the greatest religious growth this world has ever seen has been as a result of Pentecostal missions through Spirit-filled, tongues-speaking, and demon-casting missionaries who have gone to the most difficult places and faced the most dangerous obstacles for Jesus, then how should missions be done in the next 100 years?

We are going to give God an opportunity to speak to us for a few minutes. Before we do, I want us all to say, “yes” to God. Just simply say, “yes”. Whatever He asks us to do, wherever He asks us to go, to whomever He asks us to speak, can we just say yes? Then, I want us to listen

to God. Let Him whisper to you. In this moment of “yes,” may we be sensitive to whatever God wants to do with us today and beyond.

Let us say “yes” together. Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord. Yes, Lord.

Now let us quietly sit in His presence as He whispers to us.

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The Global Missionary: The Emerging Roles of North American Missionaries in the Twenty-First Century

Blayne C. Waltrip*

INTRODUCTION

The face of global mission is changing and evolving in the twenty-first century. The Christian West is going through a process of de-Christianization. Meanwhile, Christianity is growing and thriving in Africa, Latin America, and much of Asia. During the Great Missionary Century (i.e. the nineteenth century) and the early Pentecostal Movement (i.e. early twentieth century), North America and Europe sent missionaries all around the world. Despite many mistakes committed by those early Western missionary pioneers, they planted the seed for the growth that we are experiencing today in the Global South. Having been a missionary for several years, my spiritual heritage is rooted in these missionary endeavors. Stories of early missionaries such as William Carey and Hudson Taylor, along with those of my own tradition (e.g. Pearl Stark, Herman Lauster, Margaret Gains), encouraged and motivated me to pursue my missionary career. I owe a great debt to those pioneers.

The reality today is that North America and Europe are clearly becoming post-Christian. Consequently, fewer Western missionaries are being sent out as full-time career missionaries. What does this mean for global missions? First of all, the task of global missions is not finished. In fact, it is growing. For example, there are still 6,872 Unreached People Groups, Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world, the West is increasingly post-Christian, and the effects of war, poverty, and urbanization are pervasive. To meet these challenges, the Global South is now sending out missionaries. Furthermore, the work of the North American missionary is not concluded, but rather their roles are evolving to adapt to the emerging trends in global missions. In this article, I first want to highlight briefly the main trends that are affecting missionary sending. In light of those trends, I will evaluate the changing role of the North American missionary and analyze the trajectory of their emerging functions in global missions. It is my contention that the North American missionaries, by the most part, are becoming highly specialized missionaries working in a diversity of contexts to assist the growing indigenous churches. They are becoming “Global Missionaries.”

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*EMERGING TRENDS IN SENDING MISSIONARIES: TOWARDS GLOBAL RECIPROCITY**Trends in Sending Missionaries*

The United States (USA) has historically been a mission force, having sent thousands of missionaries in the past two hundred years. In a June 2013 report by the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC) at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, the USA sent 127,000 missionaries in 2010, making them still the number one missionary sending nation. Brazil was the number two sending nation.¹ One trend is that the Global South is sending more missionaries every year. Nations like India, South Korea, Brazil, Argentina, Guatemala, Ghana, Nigeria, and the Philippines (and many others) are sending missionaries around the world. For example, Latin American missionaries are going all around the world. While many of the missionaries from the Global South have traditionally focused on their own Diaspora populations, a growing number of them are doing cross-cultural mission work. My wife and I worked with a missionary couple from Argentina to plant a French church in Montpellier, France. I have known and worked with many others from Africa, Asia, and Latin America. They are a mission force. Their mission passion is evidence of the growth and maturation of the Church in the Global South. While the Global South has become a mission force, the West has become a mission field. The CSGC also reported that the USA was also the largest missionary receiving nation. North America, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand have become target mission fields for many of the missionaries from the Global South. They are claiming that it is time to bring the Gospel back to the post-Christian West.

While international missionaries are increasingly coming from the Global South, the CSGC stated that “missionary sending from the global North is declining significantly.”² They are sending fewer career missions, including the Southern Baptists. Although the USA is sending fewer fulltime missionaries, Don Fanning of Liberty University wrote in 2009 that “Short Term Missions” is growing exponentially.³ This is the clear trend in missionary sending. Patrick Johnstone pointed this out in *The Future of the Global Church Denominations*. He admits that the USA has seen growth, “but a large proportion of this has been in short-term workers and those who train and facilitate their ministry overseas. The trend has accelerated exponentially every year and there does not appear to be any peaking of this trend in sight.”⁴ Johnstone is correct that the “whole paradigm of missions has now changed.” In my opinion, the sending of missionaries by the Global South is an amazing development ordained by God. Regarding the trend of sending part-time missionaries from North America, there are positive and negative implications. Although we could argue on the merits of the implications, “Short Term Missions” (i.e. one week to two years) is the reality of the changing paradigm of global missions.

I have witnessed this trend in my own tradition. I am ordained in the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) and was a career missionary in Europe for several years. When my wife and I served as career missionaries, we had many colleagues that were career missionaries. Through the years, the Church of God sent numerous full-time career missionaries around the world. They have a rich heritage of missionary sending. However, in the past ten years, the number of full-

time career missionaries has diminished dramatically. Consequently, it is clear that the vast majority of the missionaries are serving in various short-term capacities. Despite the rich mission heritage, the trend in mission sending from the USA is affecting the Church of God. However, as Johnstone indicated, the Church of God is not alone. It is the overarching trend in mission sending from North America.

Causes for Fewer Career Missionaries from North America

There are numerous perspectives on the merits and reasons for the trend of sending fewer full-time career missionaries from North America. I am convinced that the missional God has strategic reasons. In reality, He is sending more missionaries, but they are no longer just going from the West to the rest of the world. On the contrary, they are going from everywhere to everywhere. The Lord of the Harvest is strategically changing the role of North America in this new mission paradigm of reciprocity.

I do not believe that God is finished with sending North American missionaries. However, the reality is that there are increasingly more short-term missionaries. For many, the shift towards part-time missionary sending is concerning, but for others, it is an exciting development. The changing paradigm leads me to various conclusions on the causes for the shift. I evaluate the causes as follows:

The Changing Culture:

The influence of the postmodern worldview on Western culture has affected the desire by emerging generations to heed a call for fulltime mission work. Although the postmodern generations (i.e. Generation X and Millennials) love global missions, they simply prefer shorter commitments. This may be due to two factors. One factor is globalization. Because of the Internet and media, Postmoderns are exposed to the entire world and the many needs. Many choose to help with a diversity of needs around the world rather than focusing on one context. The second factor is denominational mission structures. We live in a post-denomination culture. Postmoderns are suspicious of institutional structures and do not respond well to denominational leadership styles. Overall, denominations are in decline in the West. As a result, many postmoderns choose to go to the mission field via local churches or para-church organizations. Many of those assignments are short-term. According to Leonard Sweet in *Postmodern Pilgrims*, postmodern generations are much more experiential and participatory. As a result, they want to experience and participate in mission. In *Postmodern Pilgrims*, Sweet looks at today's economy as evidence.⁵ The economy traffics in experiences. For example, tourism is an experience industry. Postmoderns seek adventure and they want to experience what life is. Sweet mentions that this pursuit of adventure is reminiscent of the period of the Crusades. "Total experience" is the watchword for postmodern worship, and I would include for postmodern missions. Postmoderns also like to customize their experience and transform their situations. Sweet calls this the "democratization of creativity," meaning participation is customized.⁶ Gen-Xers and Millennials are not content on allowing others to do missions. They want to participate to be part

of the transformation that happens on the field. Moreover, they want to customize their mission work. Therefore, they will likely work in multiple contexts according to their interests.

Local Churches:

The phenomenon of the increase in short-term missions is also realized in how local churches do global missions. Short-term mission trips have become very popular among local churches. Churches continue to support full-time missionaries, but they are becoming increasingly involved in short-term trips to visit the field. They want to “experience” and “participate” rather than just send a missionary they rarely see. There are advantages and disadvantages to this approach. While the argument is that the local churches are more mission minded after short-term mission trips, others maintain that the funds would be better suited for supporting a full-time missionary who will have a greater impact in a particular context. In addition, those local churches would be able to support more missionaries. Despite the debate, local churches are doing more short-term missions. They are also more inclined to support national workers with whom they have a relationship. In their opinion, the national/indigenous worker will always be more effective than ex-patriate missionaries because the nationals intimately know the culture. In most cases, this is true. However, there are situations that require a missionary. For example, missionaries are still needed for Unreached People Groups until there are enough indigenous ministers to do the work. In addition, missionaries may have special talents, gifts, experience, or education that the indigenous workers do not have for certain specialized mission work. Nevertheless, the ultimate goal should always be to equip the national churches for the tasks in their own contexts.

Lastly, many local churches in North America have simply lost their missional heart. There are many factors for this loss of interest in mission and beyond the scope of this article. In short, the major factors are the influence of Western culture on local church congregants and the effects of institutionalism within denominations.

Restricted Access Nations:

Many nations around the world have closed their doors to missionaries and religious workers, especially in the Muslim World. As a result, missionaries may not be able to reside in the nation. When they do enter the country, they must come as a secular professional, such as a businessperson, teacher, social worker, and so on. Of course, this factor requires missionaries to become either non-residential missionaries (i.e. live in another country and commute in on trips) or as tentmaker missionaries (i.e. missionaries who work in the nation to earn a wage or profession while also doing mission work). Either way, these categories of missionaries require special skills, education, or experience.

The Economy:

There are economic reasons that hinder the ability of denominations and local churches to support full-time missionaries. It has become very expensive to keep a full-time North American

missionary on the field. Because of the impact on the economy after 9/11 and the Great Recession in 2008, it has become more difficult for denominations and local churches to raise the necessary funds for sending and supporting fulltime missionaries. In local churches, members are nervous about the economic situation and are consequently slow to commit to long-term mission support. Overall, many churches are convinced that it is better to support national workers and/or take short-term mission trips than to commit to long-term support of a missionary.

Need for Partnership

In the past, the West was a mission force, sending missionaries to the rest of the world. However, the trends in mission sending seem to indicate that the future of North American mission sending is declining, at least for full-time career missionaries. As Christianity grows in the Global South, several of the churches in those contexts are mature enough not to need full-time missionaries from the West. Consequently, there has been the argument that global missions is no longer the “West to the rest,” but rather the “rest to the West.” However, the reality of global missionary sending is “everywhere to everywhere.” Mission sending has become reciprocal. Patrick Johnstone makes this observation in *The Future of the Global Church*: “The century ended with missionaries going all over the world from almost every country that had a Christian presence.”⁷ Global missions today is about reciprocity. Although the West is sending fewer career missionaries, they have not stopped sending missionaries. The North American missionaries are still needed, but their roles are changing.

There is an ongoing need for specialized short-term missionaries from North America to come alongside indigenous churches and missionaries from the Global South. Likewise, there is also a need for missionaries from the Global South to plant churches and help re-evangelize the West. As a result, there is a true need for global partnerships for the cause of global mission. The nature of partnerships requires adjusting roles for the greater good. Rather than arrogantly thinking that we have all the important gifts and abilities, we recognize our strengths and weaknesses in a spirit of interdependency. We must network cross-culturally. The global Church is massive. By applying our various gifts according to the needs, we will be more effective in God’s mission. However, global partnership in missions requires more effort by all to listen to each other beyond our cultural and tribal (i.e. theological and denominational tribes) perspectives and strategize together on how best to apply the necessary resources. Although reciprocity and partnership will take major effort and require changing the way we do things, the result will be a greater Harvest.

THE GLOBAL MISSIONARY

What is a Global Missionary?

The definition of a missionary is a person who is sent with a message of the Gospel. As Patrick Johnstone explains, the word “missionary” is a Latin derivation of the Greek word

“apostle” (apostolic = sentness) in the New Testament. Johnstone writes, “The Christian missionary is someone commissioned by a local church or denomination to evangelize and disciple people outside his or her home area, and often among people of a different race, culture, or language.”⁸ For North American churches, Johnstone points out, this historically meant to do ministry outside of one’s country. For many Europeans and Latin Americans, it was understood that a “missionary” was a person who did ministry cross-culturally, whether in their own nation or not. Lastly, Asians and Africans believe a missionary is anyone doing ministry outside their home area, whether it is cross-cultural or not.

As I have highlighted, the USA is increasingly sending short-term missionaries. Regardless of the merits, this is the reality in the new paradigm of global missions. Many short-term missionaries are not only doing cross-cultural ministry in one country or context, but they are also doing ministry among several nations. They come alongside national churches in a support role by providing a certain expertise, such as teaching/training, social ministry, medical expertise, construction skills, and/or ministry experiences, such as helping with children. Because of their ministry experience, North American missionaries normally have a global perspective, because many are educated and have been career missionaries in the past. They understand how to do ministry cross-culturally but now want to take their expertise to several contexts. Many short-term missionaries do ministry globally. As a result, I call them “global missionaries.”

There are already short-term missionaries that meet the missional needs. What is distinctive about *global missionaries* from other short-term missionaries? Are they the same? The answer is yes and no. They fill many of the same roles of short-term missionaries. In fact, they are short-term missionaries. However, the primary distinctive is that a *global missionary* is truly global. They satisfy a particular niche in ministry, but they work among several countries, not just in one context.

In today’s global society, people are very mobile. The cost of travel is much more reasonable now than any other time in history. In a mobile society, *global missionaries* can work throughout a particular region, a continent, or on a truly global level. I contend that *global missionaries* fulfill certain roles in global missions and have particular characteristics.

Roles of Global Missionaries

One of the main roles that a *global missionary* plays is in education. Although the Global South is producing a growing number of degreed people, teachers and trainers from the West are welcomed. They teach and work in theological education in schools and seminaries around the world and do training in informal venues, such as conferences and seminars. Unfortunately, many Bible schools and seminaries in the Global South still cannot afford enough full-time faculty. As theological and Christian education is changing in North America and Europe, many schools in the West are also struggling financially. Schools continue to depend on missionary educators. Even if they could afford part-time educators, they may not have enough qualified

teachers in their context or theological tradition to teach all topics. As a result, they supplement indigenous teachers with missionary educators on a part-time basis (i.e. visiting lecturers).

The topics *global missionaries* teach vary but are normally very specialized in their field. Academic fields include missiology, systematic theology, practical theology, Biblical studies, and so on. For informal education, trainers are experts in various areas of ministry, such as youth ministry, children's ministry, worship ministry, church growth, church development, leadership development, church planting, multicultural ministry, evangelism, discipleship, and more. For example, though churches in the Global South are growing, many of them seek help with sustaining their growth. Because the Church in the West has experience and knowledge of many issues of church growth, *global missionaries* come alongside the national churches to teach, train, and consult.

Global missionaries are also involved internationally with social ministry. Because of the perpetuation of poverty and war, many nations need trained medical people, counselors, and social workers. The need may be due to a temporary crisis because of a drought, war, or violence, or an ongoing need due to systematic poverty or oppressive governments. *Global missionaries* work with denominations, para-church organizations, or with Non-Governmental Organizations to address social issues, such as poverty, war, the environment, and human trafficking. They keep the issues in front of the Global Church and call for a collaborative global effort to make concrete changes or lead the way for the Church to relieve the suffering of marginalized groups. There is a great need to address most social issues on a global level and *global missionaries* are the ones that often take up the cause to coordinate these efforts within the Global Church.

If a *global missionary* has experience working in an orphanage, they can help struggling or thriving orphanages. Like Bible schools and seminaries, orphanages need missionaries to come and work because many cannot afford workers. North American career missionaries often serve in these capacities, but they may have financial or visa restrictions that hinder longevity. As a result, they may only come for short periods of time. Since they have the experience, often as former career missionaries, *global missionaries* teach and train indigenous workers or missionaries from the Global South on particular aspects of orphanage work, such as legal compliance, resourcing, budgets, grants, health care, education, foster care, and parenting classes. Certain *global missionaries* also have the resources and expertise to establish and oversee orphanages in several nations.

Global missionaries still play leadership roles for denominations, serving several nations for a denomination or network. Others may not have a leadership position in a particular institution, but they strategize with national churches for global or regional evangelization and/or church planting. Because of their skills and trained profession, many *global missionaries* work in medical missions and counseling. In addition, *global missionaries* can be entrepreneurs, establishing new businesses or non-profit organizations for the sake of the Kingdom of God. Other *global missionaries* teach within a particular profession (e.g. teaching information systems, social media, language, business, etc.). English teachers are very popular in places like

China. The professions of *global missionaries* allow them to enter and work in restricted access nations.

The roles are abundant because the global needs are great. We live in a world of globalization. Globalization presents both a plethora of opportunities and needs. As Jesus told His disciples in Matthew 9, the Harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. The Church must mobilize the Kingdom workers to be sent around the world. The only way to mobilize the Kingdom workers to reach the global Harvest is by collaborating our resources and efforts for a common cause: God's mission.

Common Characteristics of Global Missionaries

The majority of *global missionaries* have common characteristics. Although *global missionaries* work among several nations, most of them were career missionaries at one time. Missional passion and the love for a people group drove them to leave their family, friends, and familiar way of life to live and serve in a new culture for the sake of God's mission. Living in a new culture, they learned to acculturate and assimilate. Having lived incarnationally on the field as fulltime missionaries, most characteristics of *global missionaries* developed while on the field. They now utilize what they learned on the field across a range of several cultures.

Specialized and Intelligent:

Global missionaries are very specialized in a skill or field of knowledge. In fact, they are highly intelligent. Most North American missionaries become very specialized in a particular area of ministry, such as leadership, counseling, church development, church planting, and so on. In fact, these missionaries learn an expertise prior to going to the field, but they fine tune those skills while on the field. In some cases, *global missionaries* were not full-time missionaries, but they became experts in their sphere of ministry at home. These may be pastors, youth pastors, children workers, worship leaders, Bible school or seminary teachers, counselors, or social workers. Moved by a mission call on their lives, they decide to contribute their skills or knowledge to the Church on a global level. Whether *global missionaries* learned their talents at home or on the mission field, their gifts become valuable to other contexts.

Educated:

Global missionaries are highly educated, and often at a post-graduate level. North American missionaries have easier access to theological education and practical training. Having access to theological education allows them to become highly specialized in their knowledge, such as theology, missiology, social studies, leadership development, medicine (trained doctors and nurses), and so on. If they were missionary educators previously, they should have learned to contextualize their knowledge. Due to the needs of schools around the world, opportunities open up for educators with cultural awareness to teach and lecture globally. *Global missionaries* are skilled teachers at every level of education. A greater number of church leaders are also

educated. Consequently, they are able to offer their specialized knowledge to their ecclesial tribe around the world. If they are successful leaders, they are able to teach and pass on their leadership skills to emerging leaders in and beyond their movement.

Understand Culture and Language:

Global missionaries understand culture because most of them have lived in another culture as full-time missionaries. Having worked cross-culturally, they love culture. It is in all missionaries' nature. *Global missionaries* understand cultural sensitivity and are aware of contextual issues, even as they go from one culture to another. They easily navigate in several cultures. *Global missionaries* must be very flexible and adaptable as they work from culture to culture. In addition, they know how to communicate cross-culturally on many levels. They watch and listen well, knowing the nuances of cross-cultural communication. Although *global missionaries* cannot possibly learn all the languages of the people with whom they work, they are at least proficient in another language. They are teachable and open to learn as much as possible of new languages. Characteristically, *global missionaries* speak several languages.

Competent with Technology and Social Media:

Global missionaries today are technologically competent. They utilize technology for their benefit, especially since they cannot be in all the contexts at one time. They understand how to communicate their message to both supporters and those on the field through social media. They are knowledgeable of the best use of media to stay in touch and promote their ministry. *Global missionaries* are great marketers. They have to raise funds for their ministry and convince those on the field of the benefit of their global service.

Great Networkers:

Global missionaries must network on many levels to be successful. They network among the supporting churches at home and globally among the churches with whom they work on the field. They also network within their field of expertise, such as academics, medicine, church planting networks, and so on. For the sake of the Kingdom of God, global missionaries rarely network exclusively within their own denomination. They reach across traditions to partner together for the common cause of God's mission.

Visionaries and Mobilizers:

Global missionaries are motivated by the vision that the Lord has given them. They can see the need and the preferred future, and they know how to think strategically to realize results. Because of their backgrounds, most *global missionaries* know how to develop global strategies and mobilize the necessary resources. They know how to communicate the vision to the necessary people, even cross-culturally, and mobilize others for the cause. Moreover, they make people aware of the great need, using many facets of communication (e.g. social media, one-on-one conversations, meetings, events, etc.), and persuade others that they are the ones able and

called by God to meet the need. Once *global missionaries* have developed the strategy and corresponding programs to meet the desired outcomes, they are excellent project managers, understanding budgets and knowing how best to invest their time and resources for meeting the goals. *Global missionaries* are world changers that want results because they are moved with divinely-inspired passion.

Competent, but Humble:

Global missionaries are driven for global mission, motivated by love. *Global missionaries* understand that mission is God's, and God is a God of love. They have a heart for the nations. As a result, they are humble because they deeply respect the national churches as partners and see their own role as supportive. They want to serve the nations with the gifts and talents that God has graciously bestowed on them. They are competent in many ways for their tasks and calling, but they are humbled by understanding that their gifts and abilities were given for a reason. They know that God loves all people and are grateful for His grace.

Anyone:

The amazing thing about *global missionaries* is that they are diverse ethnically and culturally. The USA is a diverse nation and the Lord is calling all cultural and ethnic groups to mission. For example, Hispanic *global missionaries* are feeling the call to work among the nations of Latin America. Americans of African and Asian descent are sent to work among the nations. *Global missionaries* in the USA who have emigrated from the Caribbean are now doing work among the Islands in the Caribbean or among the West Indian peoples living in North America. In the Church of God, for example, I know leaders, pastors, and church planters doing great ministry among West Indian immigrants in Ontario, Canada; New York; Florida; and Georgia. Not only is the Lord of the Harvest calling *global missionaries* from a diversity of ethnicities and cultures, He is calling both men and women. Women are serving as *global missionaries*. They are also generationally diverse. Although younger *global missionaries* may lack ministerial experience to serve in leadership or consultant roles, they can serve in other capacities across a range of nations. They can teach, help plant churches, or work in social ministry. They have valuable skills and insights that would benefit the indigenous churches.

CONCLUSION

I am a *global missionary*. My wife, Dr. Angie McCain-Waltrip, and I were career missionaries for several years in Europe. Although I dearly miss living in Europe, the Lord of the Harvest propels me to work globally among the nations. God has opened the door for me to influence the nations for the sake of the Kingdom. Yes, I am a networker, educator, trainer, and strategist. I have a Bachelor of Arts in International Business from California State University, Fullerton, a Masters-of-Arts in Discipleship and Christian Formation from my denomination's seminary, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Intercultural Studies from Fuller Theological Seminary.

After years of international business and ministry, I understand and love culture. I also speak several languages. Most important, I love and respect the people of all cultures and hear the call of the Lord of the Harvest. By teaching and training around the world, I have the privilege to influence the nations through my students. They are now serving around the world as emerging leaders, teachers, pastors, church planters, youth and children ministers, worship leaders, and lay leaders in their local churches. I also love working with national leaders and pastors to strategize how to prepare their people for the task of God's mission. Not only am I still working in Europe, I serve the Church in Africa, Asia, Oceania, Latin America, and North America. My ministry is a supporting role for the national churches. As a *global missionary*, I am having a wider impact than ever before in ministry.

There are many *global missionaries*. For example, Dr. Hong Yang was originally from China and has an incredible testimony of conversation. He now teaches around the world and directs Chinese ministry for the Church of God on a global level. He is mobilizing Chinese pastors and leaders, not only in China, but around the world. Also, in the Church of God is my friend Dr. Rick Waldrop. Dr. Waldrop has a passion for peace and justice. He was my professor when I was a student at the Church of God Theological Seminary in the 1990s. Like Dr. Yang and me, he teaches around the world. Most recently, he directed and mobilized churches in Latin America for social action. He now raises awareness not only throughout Latin America, but also around the world.

Dr. John Wagenveld founded a para-church organization called Multiplication Network Ministries (MNM). They partner with many denominations on a global level by training up "more churches" (planting healthy churches) and "stronger churches" (healthy church development). They train national trainers, provide resources for free and assist denominations with establishing systematic training for their pastors and church planters. Dr. Wagenveld grew up on the mission field in Argentina and later planted several churches in Latin America. Dorcas Harbin is another *global missionary*. She serves with One Another Ministries (OAM). They provide professional training, consulting, counseling, and resourcing for the development and care of Christian Mission organizations and their members around the world. OAM has a facility in England where they host missionary and indigenous ministry couples for counseling and family care. In addition, mission teams come for professional training. Dorcas Harbin was based in Montpellier, France, when we were serving in Europe. OAM was significant in helping our family when my wife and I needed them.

These *global missionaries* and many others are making an impact around the world for the sake of the Kingdom of God. God is calling "all nations to all nations." Reciprocity is the reality for global mission in the twenty-first century. It is exciting. If we listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying today, we can hear the Lord of the Harvest continue to say that the global Harvest is plentiful. He calls us to pray for the sending of workers into His Harvest fields. As His Church, we send and go. To send the workers, we have a responsibility to develop them around the world. When they go, we also provide assistance as they fulfill their call. *Global missionaries* are needed for this urgent task. The love of God for the global Church drives these missionaries.

God is not done with North American missionaries. Despite the debates and concerns of short-term missions, He is nevertheless calling a growing number of *global missionaries* for the missional tasks in today's global reality. I heard the call. If you listen closely, the Lord of the Harvest may be calling you to "everywhere."

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² *Ibid.*, 76.

³ Don Fanning, "Short Term Missions, A trend that is growing." *Trends and Issues in Missions*. Center for Global Ministries, Liberty University, 2009.

⁴ Patrick Johnstone, *The Future of the Global Church: History, Trends and Possibilities* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2011), 228.

⁵ Leonard Sweet, *Postmodern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st Century World* (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000).

⁶ *Ibid.*, 66-67.

⁷ Johnstone, p. 228

⁸ *Ibid.*, 226.

African Pentecostal/Charismatic Iconography: A Study of their Significance and Relevance

Simon Kouessan Degbe*

Abstract

African Pentecostals and Charismatics adopt one or more biblical, religious, and cultural symbols or imaginative artistic expressions in their spirituality, worship, and witness. These are often displayed on their sign posts, posters, billboards, banners, event paraphernalia, and literature. It is in relation to this that this paper seeks to explore the significance and relevance of these artistic symbols and imageries in the official logo(s) of some Ghanaian Pentecostal and Charismatic denominations and ministries. This paper also argues that the full potential of such Christian arts is yet to be explored, even though their use in African Christianity could be traced back to the era of the African Independent Churches. It also pointed out that the use of objects such as oil, water, sand, stones, fruits, and other materials in sections of Ghanaian Pentecostalism and Charismatic ministries for mediating upon the supernatural are now raising syncretistic feelings across Ghana's Pentecostal ecumenical fraternity.

Antecedent

From Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the earth; from one heartland to the other, in new areas of penetration and engagement with other cultures and traditions; and even in the continuous renewal of Christianity in all forms and expressions, the uses of logos, symbols, and images have been very conspicuous.¹ From the first-century church to the Roman Catholic church, to the Protestant Reformation, to subsequent Christian renewal movement groups, up to contemporary Pentecostal/Charismatic denominations and churches, all kinds of logos, symbols, and images have been employed and continued to be used to further express Christian themes and messages.²

The focal point of this paper is the study of the relevance and impact of the uses of logos, symbols, and images in some Ghanaian Pentecostal/Charismatic Ministries. And since African Pentecostals and Charismatics are not the first to actively engage in the use of “religious artistry” in their ministries and spiritualities, their uses of such visual communicative symbols stand in historical continuity of a practice in church history. This fact situates the focus of this paper in an established field of study known as “Christian Iconography”—a study whose content and outlines were predominantly a product of Christian Europe,³ which later incorporated that of the non-Western World as a result of cross-cultural encounters.

Iconography, which according to Andrew F. Walls was largely a Christendom phenomenon, lost its theological and ethical relevance as Christianity declined in the West and began to relocate its heartland to the southern continents.⁴ Thus, for Walls, it is the historic and

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massive growth of Christianity in Africa and Asia that eventually rescued the global Christian art movement. The pioneers of the study of the discovery of non-Western Christian art, according to Walls, were Cardinal Celso Costantini, Daniel Johnson Flemming, Arno Lehmann, and J. F. Butler.⁵ We will therefore proceed to discuss Christian arts in the non-Western world and that of early Christianity.

Christian Visual Communication in the First Millennial

The phrase, “visual communication” is used here to denote or encapsulate the whole range of artistic expressions in the form of logos, symbols, and images, etc. The same phrase elsewhere has been rendered as “visual vocabulary.”⁶ According to Mark O’Connell and Raje Airey, “visual signs and symbols”, or “[a] visual vocabulary, formulates our thoughts and dictates our reactions to the world around us.”⁷ This assertion attests to the choice and use of some specific symbols adopted by the early Christians in the Greco-Roman world, partly in response to the hostile environment in which they lived.

Some of these symbols were Alpha and Omega, Anchor, Bread and Vine, Chi-Rho (the first two letters of “Christ”), the Cross, Dove, Fire, and Fish. Others such as Lamb, Shepherd, ship, and Vine were also used.⁸ To think of those symbols as visual or conceptual representations pointing to realities beyond themselves,⁹ suggests two things: the first is, those symbols or images were not created or invented by the early Christians; they were part of their cultural, phenomenal and spiritual environment, and all they did was to adopt them and imbue them with a certain religious significance. The second is, the theologically creative and syncretistically responsible appropriation and use of those symbols occurred.¹⁰

The use of those signs and other artistic symbols in the first two or three centuries to express the Christian faith and shape its life explains why Christianity needs such religious innovations to survive from time to time. Thus, the energy that drives any notable renewal or revival of Christianity in any setting is “religious innovation.” This observation has hardly been contested by historians of Christianity. It is against this background that the following observation was also made in relation to the creative use of symbols by all forms of Christianity:

Symbolism is the vehicle of revelation. Born in encounter ... symbolisms summarize and interpret ... experience. They are ... given, born, grow, and die amid changing circumstances. At times they appear as something new; at times they bring new significance to observances which have lost their meaning, or which have been adopted from elsewhere. Taken from the realm of human experience, they relate man to that which is of ultimate concern.¹¹

This further confirms the fact that the reactions and responses that religious symbols, logos, and images dictate inspire, and are, to some extent, symbolic. It is in this sense that symbols and images transcend just mere visible signs to also include thoughts, reactions, habits, and attitudes etc. Even the very art of interpreting symbols also affirms the affinity between visual or objective symbols, and “behavioral symbols;” both are often subjected to similar systems of interpretation. The very complexity of thoughts that anything symbolic generates

particularly in religion and how it affects the impact of religion on society, also subjects religious symbols to changes, modifications, abandonment, controversies, and/or de-emphasization from time to time.

From the fifth to the eight centuries of the church, one of the theological controversies that plagued the church was about ‘icons’.¹² In what was popularly described as the “iconoclastic controversies” – the question was whether the church should or should not use images in Christian worship.¹³ The images in question were that of Christ, his mother (Mary), the apostles, saints, and scenes from the Old and New Testaments pictured in Mosaics, frescoes, bronze, and carvings in ivory. These were predominantly found in churches, chapels, and private homes.¹⁴ The division caused by the use of those images in the church partly deepened the territorial divide between the East and the West as bishops, monks, followers, and later some emperors from either side opposed and defended the veneration of the so called “Christian images.”

At the heart of the controversy was the allegation that the images used by the church were idolatrous, pagan, and unscriptural. Those who defended their use, on the other hand, claimed that they were valuable means of instructing illiterate Christians in the faith. Whether the Greek constituency favored icons, or the non-Greek opposed the use of icons, the whole controversy became an issue of cultural, political, and theological struggle in the church.¹⁵ At the end of the day, both East and West accepted the use of icons as part of the life and worship of the church. But only icons basically in the form of pictures were retained, legitimized, and restored to the church, as a matter of compromise.¹⁶

The following statement by Walls aptly summarized this whole discourse on the church’s use of religious arts or symbols in the first millennium of its existence:

There was nothing distinct about the Earliest Christian art except its subject – matter. It brought no style, form, or technique that was not already employed in pagan Roman art. Christian art needs vernacular expression, a sense of locality. The word became flesh and spoke Aramaic; presumably with a Galilean Accent.¹⁷

Christian Visual Communication in the non-Western World: Discoveries of the Modern Missionary Enterprise

This part of the discussion is based on “the Christian West’s discovery of non-Western Christian arts.”¹⁸ If Walls’ use of the term “discovery” is to be taken seriously in relation to non-Western Christian arts, then what it means is that before the missionary enterprise from the West to the non-West, those “non-Western Christian arts” were already in existence and were only waiting for discovery. Walls emphasized this by contending that Christianity does not have a univocal religious culture belonging to a particular soil to warrant a necessary transport of a symbol, or by extension an image, or a logo belonging to a specific culture to another culture, since that culture has enough of its own symbols, images, and pictures to be discovered for use in the communication of the Gospel.¹⁹

Walls supported his assertions about the universality of the Christian message and themes in relation to the discovery of non-Western Christian symbols and images from the pioneering works and documentations of Constantini, Fleming, Butler, and Lehmann.²⁰ On specific achievements, Walls made reference to these pioneers' caveat that in taking the Gospel to the non-West, the West and its Missionaries should follow the example of the Early Church by identifying revered personalities, historical figures, and sages, make use of thought forms and patterns of life, evangelize and not colonize, and also remove all forms of "foreignness" from the host culture's sacred art.²¹

Walls again highlighted the fact that the use of arts that were "value free" and "religiously neutral" as means of communicating Christian themes and was common to the discoveries of Constantini, Fleming, Butler, and Lehmann. He noted that these men actually practiced the art of communicating Christian themes through paintings, architecture, and scholarship in a manner that the host cultures resources, materials, and symbols were adopted to reflect their identity, history, culture, aspirations, and hopes.²² It is against this background that Walls cited an example of how converted Asians and their scholars and artists painted Christ as belonging to Indians as a peace-maker, healer, and a "blesser" of the poor and naked, as along with transcending time, space, race, and culture.

According to Walls, that explains why in all of these Christian artistic expressions, be it in music, liturgy, portrayals, paintings, and architecture, the image of Christ in relation to the cultural world of non-Westerners was significant. The non-Western encounters and the discovery of Christian arts, as it were, partly produced the principles of the dialogue between Gospel and culture, contextualization, adaptation, and indigenization, which were all fundamental to missiological studies.²³

Walls apparently took the pains to focus more on what took place in the discovery of Christian arts in China, India, and other Asian countries, than that of Africa, in his book on the *Missionary Movement*. When it actually comes to the question of the discovery of African Christian arts, he maintained that the focus on Christian arts in Africa at the time of its encounter with the Christian West was marginal and tentative.²⁴ Even with what happened in Asia, in his own estimation that was also marginal. His argument was that those who pioneered the Christian Art Movement in Asia were unable to persuade the great missionary conferences and councils and societies of the West to give much attention to those arts, because the focus then was rather on how Western education and civilization could impact and transform non-Western churches.²⁵

Walls also emphasized that on the question of African Christian arts in African Christian worship, witness, and life, the attitude towards that was mixed; whilst some of the newer churches at the time were eager to employ indigenous art forms, others were reluctant to do so. Even African church leaders were careful to experiment, explore, and encourage the use of indigenous arts in African Christian worship. Walls thus pointed out that Western missionaries, missiologists, anthropologists, and field workers, who foresaw the potential of indigenous art in African Christianity, resorted to advocacy, encouragement, and offering suggestions in that direction.²⁶

Lesslie Newbigin, in relation to the potential of “these arts” encouraged his fellow missionaries to be faithful in words and action, and in theology and practice by ensuring that the Gospel is transmitted in its universal, supernatural, and supra-cultural nature across cultures.²⁷ Eugene Nida also shared his experience of the “indigenous arts” factor in cross-cultural Christianity as a result of his encounters in East Africa. He described what he saw as “positive discoveries” and as “extra biblical elements.” He chided his fellow Westerners of their inability to distinguish between central and peripheral areas of the African Christian faith.²⁸ In an article entitled, “Can the West be converted?”, Newbigin again denounced the principles of “Indigenization,” which he believes focus more on the past, and “adaptation,” which also wrongly suggests that the Gospel could be “cultural-free,” and rather opted for “contextualization,” which in his view focuses on the actual context shaped both by the past and open to the future as the credible guiding principle for cross-cultural engagement.²⁹

The questions posed by Lamin Sanneh, in relation to all of these points, were instructive, particularly in the light of the encounter between Africans and the Gospel:

The real question we should ask relates to the phenomenon of the rich and diverse religious life that flourished in African societies. For example, why did people draw a careful line between the world of divinities and that of ordinary life? By what rule did a common object, such as water or a piece of stone or wood, make the transition into a ritual symbol? Did the perception of a common object and its transformation into ritual subject become a factor in the use of mediation and intercession in African Christianity?³⁰

To these and other related questions on the use of artistic materials, objects, and symbols in African Christian spiritualities, Sanneh concurred that the issue is more than just an academic interest, as it has implications for pastoral concerns and developing a meaningful theology for the church in Africa.³¹

He again contended that the confident and articulate use of Christian language and symbolism to diagnose and prescribe for the African condition was an imaginative and almost a visionary achievement by African Christian groups, such as the charismatic churches, the prophetic churches, and all the other groups that come under the category of African-initiated churches.³²

In his book, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture*, Lamin Sanneh highlights these same truths about the Gospel across cultural frontiers. In what he describes as the principle of “translatability” in Christianity, Sanneh argues that it embodies all the principles underlying the relation of the Christian Gospel to traditional cultures as the best method for spreading the Gospel.³³ The suitability of the translatability principle, according to Sanneh, is in its continuity with the culture in which the Gospel locates itself at any material time.

Translatability therefore affirms the fact that all cultures fundamentally continue with the Gospel with all the threats, risks, and vulnerabilities, and as part of the dialogue, it also makes demands for discontinuities, departures, obedience, and also encourages self-affirmations and self-transformation.³⁴ Sanneh maintains that though translation was basically a linguistic exercise

carried out by the missionary enterprises, it contributed largely to the endless renewal of the Christian message and themes in pluralist Africa.³⁵

Describing Christianity as syncretistic, including its motif, is where Sanneh underscores Christianity's transcultural appeal and its appetite for absorbing materials, concepts, symbols, and imageries from other religious traditions in order for it to survive.³⁶ And for the risks that the tendency to borrow and absorb from other religious traditions bring, that only makes Christianity to endlessly survive in all cultural societies and to continue to be renewed, revived, and reformed. In societies like that of Africa, the prophetic reforms of the Christian faith explains these syncretistic risks better.³⁷

Logo(s), Symbols and Images in General Literature

A logo is a symbol, emblem, trademark, or an image that represents an entity or a thing; a logo signifies or identifies a thing or an idea.³⁸ Logos are generally associated with businesses or corporate outlook with the intention to influence public behavior favorably towards a corporate's brand or build a trust. Logo(s) appear in unique fonts, colors, and designs.³⁹ As a matter of fact, they present a visually recognizable and memorable picture that gives information, tells the story, and relate a brand's message to its target audience.⁴⁰

A logo is an abbreviation of the term "logotype," which is a combination of two Greek words, *logos* - meaning "a word" and *tupos* or *typos*, meaning "imprint".⁴¹ Putting the two words together could literally mean "putting word into print, or a graphic, or a symbolic representative of an idea." Hence, be it "logotype," or "logography," which also could mean "putting one's word into a sign, a symbol or writing," is a long-standing tradition or practice of enterprises or organizations, or even an individual for promoting instant recognition.⁴²

Logo(s) therefore, encompass a wide range of symbols either "uniquely or exclusively" created without any prior existence, or adopted from already-existing symbols, which are culturally and naturally conditioned. Culturally and naturally conditioned logos have their established and dynamic meanings and interpretations – whilst uniquely or exclusively created logos have their assigned meanings often derived from experience, history, vision, mission, philosophy, etc.⁴³ Both categories, however, could have multiplicity of meanings apart from the established, authorial, or assigned meaning.⁴⁴

The multiple meanings of logos are often triggered by people's sensual, emotional, religious, cognitive cultural, economic, and social state of being. This is often in relation to surrounding elements, such as habits, actions, objects, climate, atmosphere, or a combination of one or two of these in different proportions.⁴⁵ Logo(s) in general are adopted, created, and also abandoned. Their visual simplicity, conceptual clarity, and corporate impact assessment also affect the decision to abandon, change, transform, or reconfigure the logo in use.

Symbols =are defined elsewhere as anything that carries and conveys to people an idea shared collectively, and also impresses an idea into the mind of people.⁴⁶ According to Forte, symbols basically include objects - both in sacred and secular use for events. They may include gestures or images.⁴⁷ It is interesting to note that even as a food-stuffed dish, like sweet potatoes

in some cultures, is given as a symbol of a promise of life in times of bereavement to the bereaved.⁴⁸ Victor Turner emphasizes what he describes as “document symbols,”⁴⁹ as including objects, activities, rituals, gestures, social relationships between people in a given context, and verbal behaviors like prayers, formulas, chants, songs, and recitations of sacred narratives, etc.⁵⁰

Symbols according to Turner have their semantic structure: some are “multivocal”, whilst others are “univocal.” The multivocal implies “many senses,”⁵¹ and the univocal, a single meaning or sense. At the heart of the semantic structure and themes being represented is “what is being signified,” or the referent.⁵² Thus, fundamentally, symbols communicate values and norms, sets of practical guidelines, and a set of paradigms for actions.⁵³ In some circles or settings, symbols do not only have meanings; they actually carry powers. As noted in respect of a ritual symbol in particular; Turner posited:

It is also a fusion of the powers believed to be inherent in the persons, objects, relationships, events, and histories represented by ritual symbols. It is a mobilization of energies as well as messages. In this respect, the objects and activities in point are not merely things that stand for other things or something abstract [:] they participate in the powers and virtues they represent.⁵⁴

Symbols in this sense, especially in religious and faith environments, assume a certain degree of ontological significance.⁵⁵ This allows us to appreciate and in many ways relate to non-human entities in terms of motivations and imbue into them immanence and transcendent realities.⁵⁶ George Lakoff, and Mark Johnson, in their book *Metaphors We Live By*, hinted that symbols as ontological metaphors serve a very limited range of purposes, but merely perceiving them as symbols also truncates their inherent cosmogonic essence.⁵⁷

As noted already in this paper, images are visual icons; beyond that they serve as mediating notions of the sacred to a religious society or environment.⁵⁸ Images are basically in the form of pictures, figures, and animals, paintings, sculpture, architecture, and any form of artistic impression, with the purpose of conveying a sense of the sacred and to preserve religious traditions.⁵⁹

The oldest of such religious images are in the form of paintings, and manufactured images of all kind. For Christianity, such images serve also as windows through which the believer is led to the sacred mysteries of Christ and the Gospels.⁶⁰ They also serve didactic purposes, and, in some areas, serve as a form of religious statement.⁶¹

Logo(s), Symbols and images of Contemporary Ghanaian Pentecostal /Charismatic Ministries in Scholarly Literature

In one of his recent books on African Pentecostalism titled, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit*; with a major sub-title, *Ghanaian Perspectives on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa*, and a minor sub-title, *Trends in African Christianity*, Asamoah-Gyadu, devoted Chapter Three of that book to symbols and logos used by some African Pentecostals.⁶² The heading of that chapter reads, “Dove, Eagle and Globe: Symbolizing Dominion Pneumatology”.⁶³

What Asamoah-Gyadu intends to illustrate in the heading of that chapter is highlighted in his own words:

In this chapter, we continue with the changing nature of mission with the rise of Pentecostalism, looking at new ways of symbolizing the Spirit and his work. Through new symbols, contemporary Pentecostals have pushed for a practical pneumatology, in keeping with the focus on power, transformation, and expansion ‘to the ends of the earth’ (Act 1:8).⁶⁴

He goes on to clarify this by saying further:

The traditional symbol of Pentecostalism has been the dove. The recent focus on motivation, expansion of territory, and empowerment means, however, that other symbols have been adopted by contemporary forms of the movement. Among those symbols are the globe, which represents the international mission aspiration of contemporary Pentecostalism and its leadership. Of particular significance in the African context is the eagle, a symbol of emancipation, accomplishment, power, and dominion that has been widely adopted based on the text in Isaiah 4: 28-31.⁶⁵

In fact, contemporary Pentecostals and Charismatics use more than just the dove, the globe, and the eagle to symbolize the Holy Spirit’s works, or to represent the practical pneumatology that Asamoah-Gyadu talks about. Again, in their use of many other symbols, the focus is not always on power, transformation, territorial expansion, emancipation, dominion, and accomplishment, etc. We will revisit this discussion later and see what the use of other symbols signifies in African Pentecostal and Charismatic spiritualities.

Meanwhile, of the three symbols, that is, the dove, the eagle, and the globe, Asamoah-Gyadu maintained that the dove is the traditional symbol of Pentecostalism. Just as I was trying to figure out what that assertion meant, I realized that a white spotless, beautiful dove depicted on the front cover of Cephas N. Omenyo’s book on Pentecostalism was about to land on earth.⁶⁶ Apart from that indirect confirmation that the symbol of the dove represents Pentecostalism, Larbi’s *Pentecostalism* makes no such association. And even in *African Charismatics*, such assertion was hard to find.⁶⁷ But, perhaps, the beautiful white dove symbol, which is the official symbol always on top of the cover page of *Pneuma*, “the *Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*” may also support the view of it being the symbol of global Pentecostalism.⁶⁸ These are but just a few of such evidence indications in favor of this assertion.

Classic Ghanaian Pentecostal Denominations and their Logos, Images and Symbols

The Classic Pentecostals

The classic Pentecostals in Ghana, according to Larbi, include the Christ Apostolic Church (International), the Apostolic Church of Ghana, the Church of Pentecost, and the Assemblies of God, Ghana.⁶⁹ The symbolic logo of the Christ Apostolic Church is in three different forms; meanwhile, there are two other different logos under the name Christ Apostolic

Church International.⁷⁰ The first forms are all spherical in shape and each one of them has another sub-spherical shape; inside them are the image or picture of Jesus and his sheep around him; two of these logos show Jesus lovingly holding a lamb with his right arm to his chest, and in one of the logos, Jesus is holding a long shepherd staff.⁷¹

In one of the three slightly-different types of logos of the Christ Apostolic Church, the particular type of image of Christ inserted in the sub-spherical shape looks like the type you find in Roman Catholic and Anglican churches.⁷² Jesus is depicted in what looks like a light or a cloud of glory circulating around his head. Meanwhile the inscription on all these three Logos reads, “One Fold, One Shepherd”;⁷³ and the relevant text is John 10:16. The other different types of logos that come under Christ Apostolic Church International are both slightly different in content.⁷⁴ One of them has a sub-spherical shape and the other has nothing of the sort. Both of them have John the Baptist and Jesus standing in a river - Jesus in front with John the Baptist behind him; and Jesus in white apparel while that of John the Baptist is different. In both *logos* you see “a white dove,” descending from the midst of a white cloud to land on Jesus.⁷⁵ In the other spherical shaped logo, you can actually see different cloud formations as the white dove descended on Jesus in his shining white apparel.⁷⁶

There are three forms of *logos* bearing the name Christ Apostolic Church and two under the name “Christ Apostolic International,” but apparently all belong to one religious Pentecostal denomination in Ghana. The description “international” may have been added to the Christ Apostolic Church when they started planting churches outside Ghana.⁷⁷ This description is typical of most Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Ghana. Let me now attempt to explain at least the significance of the image of Jesus, the sheep, and the dove in the official Logos of the Christ Apostolic Church International.

The Christ Apostolic Church

The image of Jesus – This is actually found at the center of all the different types or forms of *logos* that the Christ Apostolic Church International has. It obviously affirms their doctrinal and church denominational position on Christ.⁷⁸ This can be confirmed by the fact that while Christ is present in all the church’s official logos, the white dove is not. That is why as it can be seen in the church’s official name, it is Christ Apostolic, and not just any Apostolic Church. Even the official Biblical text, John 10:16, which partly talks about “one fold, one shepherd” also highlights the church’s ecumenical belief and relationship with Christ.⁷⁹ Once Christ is at the center of the church as the only shepherd, and the sheep fold is one and not many, as all the various churches across the whole world are one in fold under one shepherd called Christ.

The Sheep – As an Apostolic Church belonging to Christ, the picture of the sheep around Christ, and Christ himself holding one of the sheep in his arm are missiologically significant to the Christ Apostolic Church.⁸⁰ Christ is illustrated as a shepherd whose pre-occupation is to look for his sheep, bring them to the fold, and nurture and care for them. Hence, the name “apostolic,” to express their mission of soul-winning, evangelism, disciple-making, and church planting.

Once Christ is at the center of the church as shepherd, the ministry of bringing in the lost sheep is critical, as far as Christ's shepherd identity is unquestionable. Thus, for the Christ Apostolic Church, the lost sheep are within their national domain and international territories, and they must be brought to the fold. So, the mandate to win souls and plant churches is sacrosanct.⁸¹

If you actually study Christ Apostolic Church's *Logos*, you would realize that there are two images that come under the name Christ Apostolic International. It is in those ones that you see the white dove descending on Christ. In fact, you wonder why those *logos* also in particular come under the name Christ Apostolic Church International. This can partially be explained by alluding to the fact that the foundation of World Pentecostalism is the Holy Spirit as the inaugurator, inspirer, and sustainer. And in Acts 1:8, where Jesus promised the coming of the Spirit, the very event associated with Pentecostalism, its global character, and influence cannot be achieved without the work of the Spirit, because that was indispensable for the mandate. That was why Jesus commanded his followers to wait until the Spirit comes upon them.⁸²

It therefore stands to reason that Pentecostal Internationalism is impossible without the Holy Spirit. And wherever the Spirit is at work among the people, their impact would be capable of going across frontiers.⁸³ This may somehow account for the adoption of the dove under the name Christ Apostolic Church International.

The Apostolic Church

The official logo of the Apostolic Church is a bold drawing of the letter "A" in its minuscular form and the picture of the globe inserted within it. The letter "A" obviously represents the name "Apostolic," and the globe as well represents their geographical mandate or presence.⁸⁴ Apart from the globe, which might represent the missional vision of the church, there is nothing else about the Apostolic Church's official logo that requires any critical interpretation. However, a closer observation of the Apostolic Church's official logo as adapted by its youth movement and its Bible school are rather interesting.

That of the youth movement has the official logo alright but with a sub-spherical shape under the name, the Apostolic Church International, and then the "youth movement" written underneath. That of the Bible School also has the official logo symbol in the sub-spherical shape including a Bible, and a picture of an ancient scroll with the inscription, with "study to show thyself approved unto God" below it.⁸⁵

The addition of the word international to the Apostolic Church by the youth movement of the church might suggest that the Apostolic Church has either not yet gone international, or its youth movement has gone international. But the symbol of the globe could also suggest that they are already international, or that probably represents the aspiration and vision to go not just international, but also global. It would however be doubtful for anyone to think that the Apostolic Church has existed all this while without international branches as one of the oldest Pentecostal churches in Ghana. In all, The Apostolic Church's official symbolic logo seeks to communicate two main objectives: its apostolic identity as symbolized by the Basic Latin letter \mathfrak{a} , and its global vision symbolised by the globe.⁸⁶

The Church of Pentecost

The Church of Pentecost's official logo is a simple one. The obvious difference between it and that of Christ Apostolic and the Apostolic Church is in its triple spherical shape. Besides, it also has the white dove symbolizing the bodily form of the Holy Spirit and what looks like the drawings of the continents of the world under it. The drawings do not look like that of a typical globe but like a "world map."

There is another logo, but that is not often used, or very conspicuous. That one looks like a flame of fire encircled with woven branches of leaves. One would have expected to see this particular unofficial logo of flames of fire as the official logo because of the name "Pentecost." This is because to some extent, many of the members of the Church of Pentecost believe that their Church continues the Biblical day of Pentecost when the Spirit descended like a tongue of fire on the waiting disciples and their followers, hence the name "Pentecost," and their sense of uniqueness and prayer lifestyle.⁸⁷

The official logo, with its features, and the unofficial logo, with its flames, are meant to communicate an identity that is based on Bible and Church history. The rest are spiritual orientation and ethics, and a sense of global mission. In a casual conversation with one of the contemporary scholars of the Church of Pentecost, he hinted without comparison that, "the Church of Pentecost is a serious church."⁸⁸ It is also somehow true that members of the church of Pentecost, wherever you encounter them, have a different attitude towards other churches, their own church, and Christian spirituality. Many have attributed that to their polity, sheer visibility, numbers, growing number of churches, social institutions, and organizational excellence.⁸⁹ The phenomenal success of the Church of Pentecost, in relation to the dove, the flames of fire, and the symbol of the world map, as depicted in its composite official logo, have all been acknowledged in the following words:

The main reason the church has grown is that its people love Jesus – they have been set on fire for Him. It shows in their worship and in their lives. The church has never allowed compromise. They treat sin and reversion to cultic religious practices as seriously as each one takes his responsibility to Jesus Christ and the church. Conversion growth ... personal conversion ... personal experience ... focus on the fundamentals of mission has helped the CoP to avoid the over clericalism and nominalism associated with the ... older mission denominations.⁹⁰ [or may be the other sister Pentecostals]

Assemblies of God, Ghana

The denominational logo of the Assemblies of God, Ghana, appears to be the simplest of all in terms of its symbolic elements among that of the main classic Pentecostal traditions in Ghana. This logo is first of all in the form of a rectangle, in which "Assemblies of God" has been written, and below it, a geometric figure of a shield with AG embossed within it.⁹¹ The other forms are the one with an "open Bible" with the inscription "All the Gospel," and the one that looks like an open Bible on a cross, with the complete logo on the Bible instead. There is another

one in the form of a stylistic writing of the AG, with a flame of fire in-between the two legs of the letter “A.”⁹² From the look of things, the logo with the Open Bible in it is the one that is officially used by the church.

Therefore, as one can notice, the main symbols in the Assemblies of God, Ghana, logo are the letter AG, and the Open Bible. It will not be wrong for anyone to presume that the letters AG stand for the name Assemblies of God. But such an assumption would be incontestable only if the authors had thought of inserting the small letter “o” in between A and G, for it to read as “AoG.” Thus, to the contrary, the letters AG, as embossed in the official organizational logo of Assemblies of God, stand for something else and not the name Assemblies of God. This is evident in the doctoral thesis on the *Origins, Growth, Development and Influence of Assemblies of God, Ghana*, wherein the author, Paul Frimpong-Manso, used the abbreviation AoG for Assemblies of God, and AoGG, for Assemblies of God, Ghana.⁹³

Interestingly, the general public of Ghana identifies with the stylistic AG embossment on the Assemblies of God’s logo even more than the actual name written in the rectangular shape on top of the shield-like symbol.⁹⁴ All of these put together effectively communicate the symbolic identity of the church. Also, of notice is the Open Bible with the inscription “All the Gospel.” Perhaps, the phrase, “All the Gospel” as written on the Open Bible is what is abbreviated as AG in the logo of Assemblies of God. And for Assemblies of God, that symbol or abbreviation is fundamental to their *doctrine, life, and faith*.⁹⁵

As noted earlier, there are other symbols like the flame of fire and the cross. As the first major global and world-wide Pentecostal body or church produced by the AZUZA revival of 1906, their use of the flame and the cross was significant.⁹⁶ The cross symbolizes their emphasis on the message of salvation in Christ to the dying world and the flame of fire that their spiritual devotion and the form of their personal and corporate worship incorporates.⁹⁷ The symbol of the cross was to portray their continuity with historic Christianity, regardless of the fire or the flame. The cross also represents their commitment to the spiritual salvation and the social transformation of humanity as a shared consciousness with all forms of Christianity.⁹⁸

The Charismatics

In general, the Charismatic Churches in Ghana share some of the symbolic elements in the official logos of the older Pentecostals churches. But Charismatic churches like Victory Bible Church International and Fountain Gate Chapel, and probably a few other ones have none of those symbolic elements at all in their official logos. However, most of the official logos of the rest of the Charismatic churches have the following symbols: the dove, the eagle, the shield, the sword, the cross, a royal crown, and an open or closed Bible. The rest are: the globe, the type of oil lamp used in Biblical times, and flame of fire, among others⁹⁹

A few Charismatic Churches have changed their names in the course of their ministry. When that happens, their official logos’ symbolic elements or images also change. Most times, the change of elements is just a mere substitution with the many symbols available, or the original composite logo is just reshuffled. Usually, apart from one, two, or three of such Biblical

imageries adopted by Ghana's Charismatics for their official logos, the rest are just stylistic or aesthetic impressions in form.

The spiritual, Biblical, and contextual relevance of such visual Biblical images often compel the Charismatics to use them for their periodic and annual church events, anniversaries, revival programs, and festivals. Thus, events themes displayed on billboards, handbills, posters, and "tele-publicity" are likely to have certain relevant, appropriate, and significant Biblical symbols. Even if they are drawn for the natural or cultural repertoire of symbols, they are contextualized, spiritualized, and sacralized to convey an experiential appeal.

The use of religious symbols to communicate Biblical truth, the call to mission, and a specific message all affirm a distinct ecclesiastical identity, and to appropriate and create a certain spiritual atmosphere by African Charismatics is not new to African Christianity.¹⁰⁰ Indigenous African churches were known for their profuse use of objects, drawings, pictures, colors, and images for their spiritual mediations, devotions, and instructions. Most contemporary African Charismatics and the prophetic ministries are only continuing that practice in creative and innovative ways where you even find such communicative logos in books published by most Pentecostal and Charismatic Church leaders and pastors.¹⁰¹

Conclusion

It cannot be out of place to contend therefore that Christianity, in contemporary Africa and in its Pentecostal and Charismatic forms, in particular, employ "religious symbols," objects, images, and symbolic logos in their spirituality, worship, and witness. Though their emphasis on the Word of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit prevents them from falling into the trap of venerating the symbols and objects that are dear to them, their motive for using them might not be radically different from the Iconoclasm of the church in the era of the Holy Roman Empire.

Thus, contemporary African Pentecostal/Charismatic Iconoclasm, as evident in their logos, symbols and images, are employed to convey a distinct Christian identity; affirm a specific mission and message, demonstrate the sense of continuity with Biblical and historic Christianity and to exhibit personal, denominational, and corporate religious culture, faith, and ethos. These uses of Christian arts and symbols are creative departures from the traps that beset the uses of such Biblical, religious, and Christian arts in the first millennial history of the church. It is also a fact that the fullest potential of these artistic expressions of the Christian faith is yet to be fully exploited by African Pentecostals and Charismatics. Rather, the use of objects and elements for mediating the supernatural is what is gaining prominence in sections of African Christianity. Pentecostals and Charismatics themselves remain divided over how oil, water, stones, sand, and fruits, etc. are used in spiritual mediations as symbolic means of tapping into the supernatural for healing, deliverance, prosperity, and protection of members of African Christians.

But regardless of whatever the risks and the achievements are, Pentecostal/Charismatic Iconography will continue to crave for a theological, pastoral, and scholarly guidance and attention in order to strengthen the faith and life of the church in Africa.

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¹ See Robert C. Walton, *Chronological and Background Charts of Church History* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), p. 2; Dennis J. Mock, *Church History Survey* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), pp. 55ff; John D. Hannah, *Charts of Ancient and Medieval Church History* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2001), pp. 37ff; Kenneth Scott Latourette, *A History of Christianity* (London: Eyre and Spottiswoode Ltd., 1964), p. 251 ff.

² Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, p. 51.

³ Andrew F. Walls, *The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith* (New York: Orbis Books, 2001), p. 173ff.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 174ff.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁶ Mark O' Connell, and Raje Airey, *The Complete Encyclopaedia of Signs and Symbols* (London: Hermes House, 2006), see the front page.

⁷ *Ibid.*, front page.

⁸ Walton, *Chronological and Background Charts of Church History*, p. 1; The meanings or significance of the various symbols were as follows in the order of the listing: eternity of Christ, faith, death of Christ, Christ, death of Christ, the Holy Spirit, at baptism of Christ; the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost; Jesus Christ God's Son Savior; Christ's self-sacrifice; Christ care for his people; the Church, and Christ's union with his people.

⁹ George Arthur Buttrick (ed.), *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 472.

¹⁰ Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, p. 173ff.

¹¹ Buttrick (ed.), *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 472.

¹² Latourette, *A History of Christianity*, p. 292.

¹³ Ibid., p. 292.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 293.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 294.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 292.

¹⁷ Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, p. 173ff.

¹⁸ The precise chapter is chapter thirteen, on page, 173, in that particular book.

¹⁹ Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, p. 173; Lesslie Newbigin, 'The Enduring validity of Cross-cultural Mission' in Gerald H. Anderson et al. (eds.) *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 12, No. 2 April 1988, p. 49ff.

²⁰ Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, p. 185.

²¹ Ibid., p. 176.

²² Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, p. 177; See Andrew F. Walls, *The Cultural Process in Christian History* (New York: Orbis Books, 2004), pp. 49-56ff.

²³ Walls, *The Missionary Movement*, p. 179ff.

²⁴ Ibid., p. 180ff.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 181ff.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 181ff.

²⁷ Lesslie Newbigin, "The Enduring Validity of Cross-cultural Mission" in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, p.50.

²⁸ See Eugene A. Nida, 'My Pilgrimage in Mission' in Gerald H. Anderson, et al. (eds) *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 12, No.2, April 1988, p. 62.

²⁹ Lesslie Newbigin, "Can the West be Converted?" in Gerald H. Anderson, et al. (eds) *International Bulletin of Missionary Research* Vol. 11, No.1, Jan. 1987, p.2.

³⁰ Lamin Sanneh, *West African Christianity: The Religious Factor* (New York Orbis Books, 1983), p. 242.

³¹ Ibid., p. 242.

³² Ibid., p. 176ff; The whole section under "the African Church Movement".

³³ Lamin Sanneh, *Translating the Message: The Missionary Impact on Culture* (New York: Orbis Books, 1990), p. 36ff.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 37.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 216.

³⁶ Ibid., p.43ff.

³⁷ Ibid., p.48.

³⁸ See Logo Design (Bluesodapromo, 2013), p.5.

³⁹ Ibid., p.5.

⁴⁰ See Philip B. Meggs, *A History of Graphic Design* (3rd Ed.) (England: John Wiley & Sons, 1998), drawn from Wikipedia.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Meggs, *A History of Graphic Design*; A. Ohene-Adu, “The Evolution of a Logo Design – A Case Study of the Logo of the Presbyterian University” in *Journal of Science and Technology* Vol. 24, No. 1, 2004, p. 54ff.

⁴⁴ Victor W. Turner, “Symbols in African Ritual” in *America Association for the Advancement of Science* vol. 179, Mar. 1973, p.1100.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 1100.

⁴⁶ See James A. Forte, “Symbols and Rituals: An Interpretive Approach to Faith-Based Behavior” Presented a NACSW, Nov. 2014 also on www.nacsw.org/infor@nasesw.org/888-426-4712.

⁴⁷ Forte, “Symbols and Rituals...”, See Eugene A. Nida, *Customs and Cultures* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1954), p. 153.

⁴⁸ Nida, *Customs and Cultures*, p. 153.

⁴⁹ Turner, “*Symbols in African Rituals*”, p. 1101.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 1101.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. 1101.

⁵² Ibid., p. 1100.

⁵³ Turner, “*Symbols in African Rituals*”, p. 1102; See, J. E. T Kuwornu-Adjaottor, George Appiah and Melvin Nartey “The Philosophy behind some Adinkra Symbols and their communicative values in Akan” in *Philosophical Papers and Review* vol. 7(3), April 2016, pp. 22-33.

⁵⁴ Turner, “*Symbols in African Rituals*”, p. 1101.

⁵⁵ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), pp. 27-32.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 33.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 27.

⁵⁸ Lawren A. Cunningham et. al., *The Sacred Quest: An Invitation to the study of Religion* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1995), p. 169; Merrill F. Unger, *The New Unger's Bible Dictionary* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1988), pp. 608-609.

⁵⁹ Unger, *New Unger's Bible Dictionary*, pp.608-609; Cunningham et. al, *The Sacred Quest*, p.73.

⁶⁰ Cunningham et. al, *The Sacred Quest*, p.74.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.74.

⁶² J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit: Ghanaian Perspectives on Pentecostalism and Renewal in Africa* (Ghana, Akropong, Akuapem, Regnum Africa, 2015), p.31.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p.31.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p.31.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 31

⁶⁶ See, Cephas N. Omenyo, *Pentecost Outside Pentecostalism: A Study of the Development of Charismatic Renewal in the Mainline Churches in Ghana* (Netherlands: Beokencentrum Publishing House, 2006).

⁶⁷ E. Kingsely Larbi, *Pentecostalism: The Eddies of Ghanaian Christianity* (Accra: Blessed Publications, 2001); J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyedu, *African Charismatics: Current Development within Independent Indigenous Pentecostalism in Ghana* (Accra; Achimota: African Christian Press).

⁶⁸ See for example *Pneuma, The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies*, vol. 24 (2002) No.2.

⁶⁹ Larbi, *Pentecostalism*, pp.69-70.

⁷⁰ <https://cacihg.org>.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ *Ibid.*

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Interview with one of my students who happens to be a reverend minister in the Christ Apostolic Church International, on 9-30-2017 @ 10am.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ beta.theapostolicchurch.org.gh

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ See Opoku Onyinah, *Pentecostals and Charismatics: Similarities and Dissimilarities* (Accra: Pentecost Press Limited, 2006), pp. 41- 44.

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⁸⁹ Asamoah-Gyadu, *Sighs and Signs of the Spirit*, pp. 126-144.

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⁹² <https://ag.org/Resources/Downloads/AG-Logos>.

⁹³ Paul Frimpong-Manso, *The Origins, growth, development and influence of Assemblies of God, Ghana*, Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement of the degree of [Doctor of Philosophy] to the University of Wales, September 2014.

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¹⁰⁰ David B. Barrett, *Schism and Renewal in Africa: An Analysis of Six Thousand Contemporary Religious Movements* (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1968).

¹⁰¹ David B. Barrett (ed.) *World Christian Encyclopaedia: A Comparative Survey of Churches and Religions in the Modern World AD 1900 – 2000* (Oxford University Press, 1982); See for example, Mensa Otabil, *Beyond the Rivers of Ethiopia: A Biblical Revelation on God's Purpose for the Black Race* (Accra: Altar International, 1992), and any serious material published by any popular charismatic figure, at least in Ghana; See Hans W. Debrunner, *A History of Christianity in Ghana* (Accra: Waterville Publishing House, 1967), pp. 212-213.

And a Little Child Shall Lead Them: Implications of the Changing Face of Mission

Jennifer Schaefer*

“A wolf will reside with a lamb, and a leopard will lie down with a young goat; an ox and a young lion will graze together as a young child leads them along” (Isa. 11:6, NET).

Introduction

In this post-colonial, post-positivist, post-modern, and post-Christendom world, a debate continues as to the legacy of the missionary enterprise over the last several hundred years. Every few hundred years in Western civilization, there occur times of sharp transformation, chasmic divides even, in worldview, values, social, and political structures (Hiebert 2006, 288). Over the last century, seismic shifts have occurred in politics, economics, and social structure, as well as in communication, technology, and globalization,¹ and even in Christianity itself (Hiebert 2009, 108). Many mission leaders echo the call for a renewed “vision of what the new paradigm for missions should be for the twenty-first century” (Hiebert 2006, 288). So, have we appropriately adjusted our vision and understanding of mission? And have we done the necessary reflection on where we've come from and where we are headed (Bosch 1991), so that any new vision learns from the past and listens to what God is doing?

To forget the past and to press on toward the future, toward “Progress” is a common temptation. But it is dangerous to forget. Rather, as the eminent Ghanaian theologian John Pobee says, we must remember and reflect on our history because “a people without memory are condemned to repeat it;” (George Santayana) but with “a sense of history” comes the “concomitant of vitality, vibrancy, and viability” (2009, viii). Thus, we need to recalibrate, to review where we've been, and to come to a “more radical and comprehensive” concept of mission (Bosch 1991, 512), in which we listen to the voice of the Spirit speaking through the global church and reclaim that which is vital, vibrant, and viable in our history. We must recognize past and present errors and renew our vision of humble service to the King, for the building up of the entire body of Christ.

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Spiritual Foundations

In order to hear the voice of the Spirit speaking through the global church², a humbler outlook is required. Jesus not only teaches about humility but also exemplifies it. When the disciples were arguing about which of them was the greatest (Matt. 18:1-5; Mark 9:33-37; Luke 9: 46-48), Jesus responded by saying if anyone wants to be first, he must be the servant of all; he illustrated this by showing them a child and stating that unless they became like a little child, they would not enter the Kingdom of God. By doing this, Jesus was alluding to the future kingdom described in Isaiah where the wolf and lamb, leopard and goat, ox and lion reside together, tended by a small child (Isa. 11:6). Although Jesus has inaugurated His rule, we still don't find these creatures living peacefully, nor do we often find rulers ruling with integrity, humility, and justice. How can we come closer to this peace and justice, to this kingdom we seek?³

Worldly wisdom would say this might be achieved through power, business acumen, good people skills, enough money, or the right organizational structures and strategies. But these traits are not found in the above passages. Rather we find that God regularly is found among the least, the cast-off, and the weak. He uses the humble and those who seek Him. However, because this goes against our human inclinations, we are continually pulled toward that which seems more sensible to us.

But Paul strongly cautions in 1 Corinthians 3 and 4 that what this world considers wise is foolishness to God, and that God rather uses what the world considers foolish to bring about His purposes. And this leads us to ask what is the aim of mission? It is not *our* goals, *our* strategies, and *our* plans; those in a sense can become like the "wisdom of the world" in appealing to our desire for setting the agenda. Rather, the point of mission is submission to Christ and bringing His kingdom.

In Philippians 2, Paul describes Jesus as "emptied Himself...taking on the form of a slave" "and sharing in human nature... humbled Himself..." This emptying reflects a lack of pride, a giving up of control, and obedience to the Father, even to the point of a criminal's death. This type of trust, Jesus says, is embodied in children. In Matthew 11: 25, Jesus says, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intelligent, and revealed them to little children" (see also Luke 10:21). Thus, the epitome of the Gospel, the core of how we are to bring His Kingdom, is seen in the little child.

As Christians, missionaries, missiologists, and/or theologians, we must navigate the rough waters of change between mutually incompatible or even hostile forces (i.e. wolf, lamb, leopard, goat, ox, lion) that we see in globalization, modernism, post-modernism, Western Christendom's theological hegemony, the majority-world theologians, and the world's seeking-lost.⁴ We have no hope of doing so without following Jesus' example, emptying ourselves, becoming the sort of people who can receive his wisdom: "And a little child shall lead them" (JPS Tanakh).

Remembering Where We've Been

In hopes of achieving a better self-understanding, we seek to briefly review Western mission history and learn what kind of a legacy has resulted from Western mission activities. It is difficult to criticize a framework from within that framework. Thus, we need the help of others to accurately assess ourselves.⁵

Our lens lies in seeing the interlacing connections between religion and culture. The intersection of culture and Christianity needs to be seen and understood not only through Western eyes but also through the eyes of those who were the recipients of mission activity.⁶ In the encounter of Africans and others with the modern West, according to Lamin Sanneh, the West was simultaneously the bearer of religion, as well as bearer of “an intellectual tradition critical of religion” called modernism, or the Enlightenment worldview (1993, 15). This worldview, arising in the 1400s, ushered in the Enlightenment,⁷ and is based on science, empiricism, rationalism, technology, and the market economy, with a focus on “materialism as the ultimate reality, on rational positivism,⁸ and empirical testing as final authority of truth, and on a mechanistic worldview” (Hiebert, Shaw, Tienou 1999, 16).⁹

The missionaries' Western worldview had some unexpected consequences. One of the consequences of the reliance on science and rational empiricism was the conceptual separation of the “natural” and “supernatural,” which led to divisions such as “spiritual ministries” and “social gospel,” and, in theology, to systematic theology.¹⁰ The scientific, rational, and empirical worldview engendered naturalistic, non-theistic explanations, assigning to science the realm of fact, while relegating religion and the supernatural to the realm of belief. In this view, faith or religion was personal and private but science was viewed as public truth (Hiebert, Shaw, Tienou 1999, 16-17). This dualistic conception of the world arose from the loss of *telos*, or purpose:

The eighteenth century transferred the holy city from another world to this...[it] witnessed the birth of the doctrine of progress, a doctrine that was to rule—with fateful consequences—well into the twentieth century ... [W]e shall not be wrong, I think, if we take *the abandonment of teleology as the key* to the understanding of nature for our primary clue to understanding the whole of the vast changes in the human situation ... this is what *underlies* that decisive feature of our culture that can be described both as the *division of human life into public and private, and as the separation of fact and value*. (Newbigin 1986, 28, 34; italics mine)¹¹

This division between public/private and sacred/secular created a dualism called “split-level Christianity,” now “common in churches in the West,” which has “sapped the vitality of churches and limited Christianity to a segment of people’s lives.”¹² Once entrenched, missionaries carried this dualism around the world:

The Enlightenment division of reality into two worlds—supernatural and natural—also influenced the Western mission worldview. Most missionaries taught Christianity as the answer to the ultimate and eternal questions of life, and science based on reason as the answer to the problems of this world. They had no place in their worldview for invisible earthly spirits, witchcraft, divination, and magic of this world, and found it hard to take people's beliefs in these seriously. (Hiebert, Shaw, Tienou 1999, 19)

This division of reality led to the “secularization of science” whereby God and religion were seen as being concerned only with eternal matters such as sin, salvation, or creation, but science was viewed as explaining things that occur in the physical world of the senses. Thus, God was not usually sought for answers to everyday life problems (health, work, family) as these were met by medicine, technology, and education.

Given this separation, Western missionaries often had no answers to the problems falling in their “excluded middle:” those practical, everyday-life, physical problems that they did not believe had any relation to the spirit world.¹³ These missionaries seldom recognized the existence of evil spirits; instead “they denied the existence of the spirits rather than claim the power of Christ over them.” As a consequence of this dualism, “Western Christian Missions have been one of the greatest secularizing forces in history” (Hiebert 2009, 197; Newbigin 1966).¹⁴

Colonialism, the Enlightenment, ideas of progress, and the belief in the superiority of Western civilization all influenced the Western worldview and the missionaries as well.¹⁵ In *The World Is Too Much With Us*, Charles Taber notes, “The superiority of Western civilization as the culmination of human development, the attribution of that superiority to the prolonged dominance of Christianity, the duty of Christians to share civilization and the gospel with the “benighted heathen”—these were the chief intellectual currency of their lives” (1991, 71).¹⁶ This belief in Western superiority caused many to implement the missionary doctrine of the *tabula rasa* whereby nothing in the non-Christian culture was salvaged or reconstituted, rather it all “had to be destroyed before Christianity could be built up” (Pobee 1982, 168 in Hiebert, Shaw, Tienou 1999, 19).

Beginning to Recalibrate

Some missionaries learned that their Western assumptions about the world were negatively affecting their understanding of the Gospel and their ministry. Through their experience in another culture, Hiebert and Newbigin discovered the solution to perceiving their own hidden assumptions: “look at the worldview of another culture and to contrast it with the way we view the world” (Hiebert 2009, 190; Newbigin 1986). As a result, anthropology for missionaries and “Critical Contextualization” were developed as tools to evaluate the entanglements of any culture upon the Gospel and also to shed light on Western culture’s dualisms and bifurcated Gospel (Hiebert 1986, 1994, 1999).¹⁷

Critical contextualization is comprised of four steps: phenomenological analysis, ontological critique, evaluative response, and transformative ministry.¹⁸ The first step, phenomenological analysis, entails studying the local culture to understand the “categories, assumptions, and logic” that people use to order their world. This requires careful participant-observation, keeping in mind the two views of reality which must be considered together: the emic perspective (insider-view, particular, and organized) and the etic perspective (outsider-view, generalized, and comparative).¹⁹ One must reflect on one’s own “categories, assumptions, beliefs, and worldview to understand how these shapes the way [one] thinks,” and withhold premature judgment, for “premature judgments are generally wrong.” After this analysis, one can develop metacultural grids²⁰ for describing and comparing the culture. In the process of developing the metacultural grids, one must constantly return to the emic analysis, checking one’s assumptions and grids against the views of the people (Headland, Pike, and Harris 1990; Hiebert, Shaw, Tienou 1999, 22-23, 33).

The second step in Hiebert’s “critical contextualization” is the ontological critique, which is comprised of two ontological tests: Scripture and reality. In applying these two tests:

Christians must recognize that they read and interpret Scripture in the categories and logics of their own cultures.... The more they read and carefully study Scripture, the more its categories and logic shape their thinking ... [especially] by studying Scripture with Christians from other communities and cultures, because others often see cultural biases more clearly than individuals do themselves. Such intercultural dialogues help Christians see how their culture has shaped their thinking and their interpretations of Scripture. (Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou 1999, 24)

In the process of the cross-cultural “reality” testing, one must examine both one’s own and other’s understanding of reality. It is easy to assume, ethnocentrically, that the way one sees life is “the way things really are.” However, when one genuinely engages and participates in another culture, this can shatter one’s ethnocentrism, enabling movement beyond monoculturalism to the development of metacultural grids, which assist in understanding other cultures (Hiebert, Shaw, Tienou 1999, 27).

Step three in critical contextualization focuses on the local church as it evaluates critically their (own) existing beliefs and customs in light of new biblical instruction and understanding.²¹ And step four takes the local congregation beyond evaluation and reformulation of beliefs to applying the new understandings to life and problems in the community, resulting in “transformative ministry” (28).

A “Critical” Response to a Core Problem

As Hiebert’s critical contextualization assists with analyzing Western cultural assumptions that have affected Western understanding of the Gospel, his approach to epistemology helps in critiquing how Western culture “knows truth.” During the twentieth century, Western philosophers concluded that, given the diversities of cultures, all knowledge was ultimately subjective, and they rejected the earlier modern, positivist belief that objective truth was fully knowable through Western thought alone. Hiebert suggested replacing both the earlier positivism and the later postmodern relativism with an approach called “critical realism.”

Hiebert’s understanding of critical realism developed through his interest in seeing the Gospel translated into various local contexts (contextualization), and this led him to think about the role of epistemology and presuppositions. In contrast to the positivist epistemology of modern Western thought or the instrumentalism and idealism of postmodernism, critical realism maintains the claim that objective reality actually exists but that our understanding of that reality is always limited and, consequently, should be open to adjustment.²²

Critical realism is based on the triadic semiotics of the nineteenth century philosopher, Charles Peirce, who rejected the positivist notion of directly linking form with meaning as well as the instrumentalist equation of mental images with meaning. Instead, Peirce proposed a third way of looking at meaning. For Peirce, “a sign has two objects, its object as it is represented and its object in itself.” In other words, a sign exists as an external, objective reality and also exists in the mind of the speaker. This understanding of signs and symbols as having two “realities” is crucial to understanding Hiebert’s approach to critical realism²³ (Barnes 2011, 75). Thus, Peirce’s triadic semiotics was in direct contrast to traditional Western semiotics that maintained a dyadic sign-object relation, which fostered the perennial dualisms of philosophy embedded in that dyadic relation (Yong 2005, 285).

In Peirce’s triad, Sign-Object-Interpretant, we find a freedom of options, as they are, not “just things, but relational functions” which yields “some significant insight into the nature of experience and reasoning” (Yong 2005, 285; 2000, 573). The implications of Peirce’s nuanced understanding of meaning remain significant: “a qualitative openness of the process of interpretation” which “emphasizes a contrite fallibilism” that still manages to undercut “relativism, skepticism, [and] nihilism ... [and] establishes how human activity proceeds in engagement with the real world” (Yong 2005, 286).²⁴

Peirce’s epistemology²⁵ is essential because “[t]he easy solution is to stress tolerance, to live our own lives and let others live theirs.... [Yet,] [o]ne of the greatest challenges to the Western church is to lay again the theological *foundations of the truth of the gospel* and to train its members how *to proclaim this with humility and love*” (Hiebert 1999, 67). We must recover our confidence in the truth of the Gospel, that the Gospel is the true, grounding meta-narrative; “not just one brick” of a “building erected on another ground-plan.” For “[t]hat was the issue which the earliest Christian thinkers had to face as they wrestled with many

attempts to accommodate the Gospel within the world-view of classical antiquity” (Newbiggin 1995). We face this same issue now. Yet, we live in exciting times that have the potential to open up new vistas of self-understanding and of "the other," including new avenues of humble collaboration.

Reviewing Non-Western Growth and Response

Today’s Christianity is diverse, and all over the world, there are Christians discussing Biblical issues. “Christianity is the religion of over two thousand different language groups²⁶ in the world. More people pray and worship in more languages in Christianity than in any other religion in the world” (Sanneh 2003, 69).

In the preface to *The Changing Face of Christianity*, Joel Carpenter observes that over the last century, the rapid rise of Christianity among non-Western societies has been one of the most important but least scrutinized changes. Christianity is now even more vigorous and vibrant in the global South than among the world's richer and more powerful regions. This creates a noteworthy case of “globalization from below rather than an imposition from the world's great powers” (2005, vii).

Noting the chasmic shifts in the Western world and in Christianity, Hiebert (2006, 2009) and Bosch (1991) stated that a “new paradigm for mission” was needed. “Within a very short period of time the conditions which have produced the phenomena characteristic of Christianity for almost a millennium have largely disappeared,” and “[t]he conditions of African and Melanesian life, the intellectual climate of India, the political battlegrounds of Latin America, increasingly provide the context within which the Christian mind is being formed” because the changes in Christianity since 1945 have come from this “fundamental southward shift” (Walls 1987, 80-81). Given these new realities, a renewed vision is needed for today’s mission.

What does mission look like in this new context? If the majority of the world's Christians live outside the West, if the lands that were the recipients of mission are now home to the majority of world Christians, then we need to expect the practice of missions in general to change and the majority of missionaries can no longer be assumed to be Western. The composition of mission agencies, education boards, and seminaries, and the majority voice of scholars will likely shift as well.

As early as 1944, Archbishop William Temple recognized that “the global feature of Christianity was the new fact of our time” (Sanneh 2005, 4). And the phenomenon has continued to grow and deepen. It is helpful to remember this pattern of global shift is not a new phenomenon for Christianity, whose expansion has always been serial in nature. “It has not maintained a single cultural or geographical center; it has always retained a substantial separate identity; it recedes as well as advances, declines, or dies out in the areas of its greatest strength and reappears, often transformed, in totally different areas of quite distinct culture...which result in a succession of different Christian "heartlands".... Changing

patterns of world order are thus integrally linked to religious history”²⁷ (Walls 1991, 147).

One way to understand these new expressions in Africa and around the world is to “put them in global and historical context,” taking note that the modern labels no longer seem to fit the situation (if they ever did); for, “[u]niquely African types and categories are now emerging, and they deserve their own places on the conceptual maps or, more likely, their own maps.” And “as the charts of Western modernity are inadequate for exploring African Christianity, so are the modern divisions of scholarship.” Thus, a “thoroughly interdisciplinary approach”²⁸ is now needed (Sanneh and Carpenter 2005, viii).

And in the face of new “types,” and in light of the multi-centric facet of the Christian Church, “there can be no automatic assumption of Western leadership; indeed, if suffering and endurance are the badges of authenticity, we can expect the most powerful Christian leadership to come from elsewhere. The same may be true of intellectual and theological leadership; multi-centric Christian mission has the potential to revitalize theological activity and revolutionize theological education” (Walls 2008, 203). In our post-colonial, post-Christendom world, the face of Christianity is shifting, and our view of mission and theological education needs to shift as well.

Over 40 years ago, John Mbiti (1974) argued that the Church had become “kerygmatically universal” while remaining “theologically provincial.” He decried the one-sided dominance of Western theology, which he found impotent in addressing the needs of the emerging church²⁹ (in Ott and Netland 2006, 310). In seeking to redress the situation and find answers to the new global questions, Tite Tienou ponders, “Why has Christian scholarship paid so little attention to the ‘majority of Christians?’” Is it because few Christian scholars, even theologians, agree with Andrew Walls that “the future of the Christian faith, its shape in the twenty-first and twenty-second centuries, is being decided by events which are now taking place in Africa, in Asia, and Latin America or which will do so in the near future” (Walls 1989, 3, cited in Tienou 2006, 44)?

Ever the prophetic voice,³⁰ Walls points out the faith of the 21st century and onward “will require a devout, vigorous scholarship rooted in the soil of Africa, Asia, and Latin America.” Christianity is now primarily a non-Western religion and given present indications it will steadily become more so. Therefore, they are the substratum of the Christian faith and life for the greater number of Christians in the world (Tienou 2006, 43). Therefore, it is no longer a question of whether or not we *include* members from the non-Western world in these endeavors. It is rather a question of whether we as Westerners will join in the global dialogue.³¹

Western Mission Responses

Western missiologists and theologians have responded in various ways to this global shift in Christianity and the rise of world Christianity.³² According to Netland, these shifts plus globalization comprise a “broader phenomenon” which continues to force “many to

reexamine basic questions about Christian identity and the relation of local Christian communities to other Christian groups and traditions. Some of the implications are being explored by missiologists (Hutchinson and Kalu 1998; Taylor 2000a; Tiplady, 2003).” However, according to Netland, the effects of these changes on “the nature and task of theology” have not been explored as much (2006, 15).

In a similar vein, Yong acknowledges that “evangelical theology has had a long and venerable history in the West— with both positive and negative results,” and will likely continue to play an “important role in the emerging world forum.” However, he notes there is “no denying that Latin, American, African [,] and Asian [theologians] will grow in prominence” and will “need to seek out, engage [,] and renew the tradition in dialogue with theologians and perspectives in the Global South”³³ (2014b, Kindle 459-469).

Similarly, to Walls, Sanneh, and Yong, Hiebert recognizes that people cannot “live in their own little worlds” but need to relate to those of other societies more and more, which requires “global systems” and “metacultural grids” similar to and utilizing the methods in his aforementioned “critical contextualization.” He develops his metacultural framework into a “metatheological framework” whereby theologians from around the world dialogue and work together to develop a metatheology,³⁴ a framework that enables them to understand, compare, and evaluate local theologies. However, the process and framework must be inclusive, involve a multidisciplinary approach,³⁵ look beyond traditional boundaries or labels and involve ongoing dialogue (300-303).

In addition to a trans-cultural metatheology³⁶ we need a missional theology. Hiebert, writing with Tienou, shows that theology is a culturally influenced “research tradition”³⁷ whereby our worldview affects “our definitions and perceptions of what constitutes ‘theology’”³⁸ (Tienou and Hiebert 2005, 117-118). The usage of different lenses (“assumptions, questions, and methods”) will lead to different types of theology. For example, the usage of philosophical methods resulted in Systematic Theology³⁹ and usage of modern historiographical methods led to Biblical Theology (119-123). Systematic theology and Biblical theology can be useful lenses in viewing the Bible, but, “we need a third way of doing theology,” which not only communicates the Gospel in human contexts but also takes account of the fact that mission is the central theme in God’s acts on earth and in the Bible (124-125). Utilizing the lens of God’s missional, rescue plan leads us not only to a missional hermeneutic but also to a missional theology.⁴⁰

An illustration of missional theology and a missional hermeneutic can be seen in the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15.⁴¹ James and the Council had to decide if the Gentiles had to become Jews in addition to believing in Jesus and what sort of discipleship must they exhibit. But through their reflection on Scripture⁴² and self-analysis, the Council recognized that they had to adjust their theological understanding of the “Temple” from a physical, earthly temple as the center of Judaism and Judaic Christianity to an understanding that the Christian community is the eschatological Temple of God, into which “Gentiles could be

admitted...without the requirements of proselytism” (Wright 2006, 518).⁴³

Self-reflection and recalibrating one’s understanding of what has gone before in order to create a new vision for the future was the process undertaken by James and the Jerusalem Council that resulted in the new era of mission to the Gentiles. This reflective, conversion-like experience is necessary when crossing boundaries, especially when seismic shifts in status quo occur, such as the Jewish-Christian faith transforming into a predominantly Gentile (Greek)-Christian faith. Such liminal periods of transition are challenging and disconcerting but also full of potential for God to redirect his people, just as He did in the First Century Church.

A number of Western missiologists have had similar “conversion” experiences.⁴⁴ Andrew Walls explains that being a missionary in Sierra Leone “shattered the classical framework” he had so “conscientiously imbibed at Oxford” (Shenk 2011, Kindle 600). The realization, that transformed him from the knowledgeable professor-teacher to an humble observer-learner, was that the second century life and worship he was “pontificating” about, was actually going on all around him.⁴⁵ This, for Walls, “set in motion a radical rethinking of Christian history,” including the idea that “present-day African Christian experience could shed light on ... earlier periods of Christian history” which “suggested there were new ways of interpreting the Christian movement.” In addition, he knew he had to jettison “the entrenched verity that the post-Reformation church was foundational for all subsequent Christian development,”⁴⁶ and subsequently embarked on a “comprehensive new research program.”⁴⁷ Paul Hiebert, Lesslie Newbigin, Roland Allen,⁴⁸ and Vincent Donovan⁴⁹ also experienced dramatic, transformative events that shaped their mission careers and writings. Similar cross-cultural experiences also shape non-Western theologians.⁵⁰

Reflecting on mission practices (in the absence of this conversion experience), Lamin Sanneh observed that some missionaries claimed a unique and normative cultural status for the West, where “spiritual values were assumed to enshrine concrete Western forms,” similar to the colonial “assimilation” policy of the French, Portuguese, and Spanish (1993, 17, 22). But he noticed that for other missionaries the Bible was the greatest authority, “so they set out to translate it into the mother tongue.” The resulting mother-tongue Scripture translation and the linguistic recording of local languages made the supposed superiority of Western culture and religion to be hypocritical. The main impact from this endeavor, he found, was that no matter what “distortions, compromises...or other interference missionaries may have introduced, the shift into the vernacular paradigm in the long run...would excite the local ambition and fuel the national feeling. In this respect, the Scriptures...are preserved in a community of memory and observance, so that in their translated form they continue to speak authoritatively to transmitter and receiver alike” (1993, 17).

Sanneh discovered that in the nexus of Gospel and culture, there is a “vital compatibility between mother tongue cultures and Christianity, however limited or distorted may have been missionary calculations of that compatibility” (1993, 18). In this vital

understanding of the particularity and the translatability of the Gospel was Sanneh's "conversion." He notes "a relevant issue" to mother tongue translation is:

how generalized abstractions about culture and language gave way to details of specificity and concrete experience. The "one" God of missionary doctrine turns out to have "many" names and symbols of local provenance.... In promoting mother tongue translations, then, missionaries and their converts moved beyond universal abstractions...and beyond the reductionism.... Thus, did missionaries discard the premise of philosophical idealism and its contending corollary of scientific positivism without necessarily knowing they were doing so (22).⁵¹

Envisioning Together

What does the future of missions hold, in light of the changes that have taken place? Although he recognizes the shift in Christianity by noting that "gone are the days when thinkers will be able to ignore either historical, cultural[,] and contextual factors or globalization trends in their envisioning and articulating of the theological task," Yong still believes that "Western Evangelicals will continue to lead the theological charge," (2014b Yong, Kindle, 470-472). In contrast, Walls and Sanneh see mission and scholarship as being "from anywhere to anywhere,"⁵² with Africa leading the way.

Looking to the future, "the engagement of [B]iblical thinking and the Christian tradition with the ancient cultures of Asia and Africa could open an era of theological creativity to parallel the encounter with Hellenistic culture in the second, third[,] and fourth centuries," [which] resulted in the great creeds and the beginnings of classical theology; so "[w]ho can say that the encounter with Africa and Asia will not be equally enriching?" (Walls 2008, 203)

While world Christianity was blossoming, many Westerners have still been trying to figure out the convergence of Gospel and Western culture. But, as Newbigin proposed, this process will be easier if we "listen to the witness of Christians from other cultures" (1986).⁵³ If we listen to Christians of other cultures, we might gain a "wider theology of the principalities and powers" and develop a theology of evil, which illuminates the connection between personal sin/guilt and systemic, structural evil, "that has stalled much of Western theological discussion" (Walls, 2008, 203). We might also come closer to being the global body of Christ with Jesus as the head; the disparate parts brought together again since the "dividing wall" separating us has been destroyed in Christ, but the eschatological Temple, the "complete humanity is found only [together] in Christ in his fullness" (203). We would approach the ecumenical unity that Sanneh (2003) referenced, the fullness of Christ that Walls describes.⁵⁴ Paul says we are to be "guides" or "stewards of the mysteries," not gatekeepers or "judges" holding court. We need to hold off judging "before the time."⁵⁵ But together, building up the body of Christ, the possibilities are amazing.

Where Do We Go from Here?

The way forward is through the past and present, in humility and solidarity. As Augustine said, “The way to Christ is first through humility, second through humility, and third through humility. If humility does not precede and accompany and follow every good work we do, if it is not before us to focus on, if it is not beside us to lean upon, if it is not behind us to fence us in, pride will wrench from our hand any good deed we do at the very moment we do it” (Claiborne, Hartgrove-Wilson, and Okoro 2010, 298).

Also, the way forward requires us to remain, through faith, in “interwoven solidarity.” Since,

Christianity is not a garment made to specifications of a bygone golden age, nor is it an add-on whimsical patchwork rigged up without regard to the overall design. Rather, Christianity is a multi-colored fabric where each new thread, chosen and refined at the Designer's hand, adds luster and strength to the whole. In this pattern of faith affirmation, we should stress the importance of interwoven solidarity with fellow believers, past, present, and future (Sanneh 2003, 56).⁵⁶

As we move through the twenty-first century, we need to build on the ideas of critical contextualization, critical realism (utilizing Peirce's semiotics), and missional theology, while constantly leaning on the Holy Spirit for direction. And we will find He will surprise us—just as He did with the exponential growth of the global church.

In doing this, we need to give more attention to the convergence of the topics of pneumatology, missiology, religious pluralism, with a focus on a pneumatological understanding of mission and evangelization in a religiously plural world, for these might give insight into rethinking the Christian encounter with other faiths (Yong 2003).⁵⁷

As mentioned, in moving forward, we need to be more aware of our own worldview and the ways our theology is culturally influenced. But if we hope to do this, we must rely on the Holy Spirit. Yong quotes Harvey Cox as saying he “hopes that Pentecostalism in the twenty-first century will represent the vitality of religious life that overcomes the creedalism characteristic of what he calls the ‘age of belief’” (327, 2011). Cox is pointing out that Christianity in the twentieth century has been characterized by creeds and a cognitive belief system that has not always led to reliance on the Spirit of God, who brings vitality and life. Yong notes that this is not all the Spirit brings: “The goal of the Spirit's activity, however, is not only a manifestation of what some call the *charismata* but the establishment of *righteousness, peace, and justice* (Is. 32: 15-17)” (2001, 44). In *Discerning the Spirit(s)* (2001), Yong depicts the extent and domains of the Spirit's work. “The Spirit is thereby the universal presence and activity of God. It is a universality that permeates both the external structures of the natural and human world and the internal realms of human hearts. It is also a universality that spans the entirety of God's work from original creation, to re-creation to

final creation” (44)⁵⁸. The breadth of the Spirit’s work is stunning: God is present and active both in our lives and in the structures of our world, be they political, social, or religious.

Therefore, given God’s Spirit working in all areas and arenas of life, we can trust Him to bring to fruition that which He has set in motion. For our part, we need to seek Him for more self-awareness, awareness of our theological, philosophical, and epistemological backgrounds, as well as of the history and progressions of world Christianity. We need to release control and develop a healthy sense of humility and grace towards our Christian family in the Global South, trusting God’s Spirit to work in their lives as He does in ours. But this process does not necessitate a letting go of “truth” nor require uncritical acceptance of “local theologies.” However, we must take the log out of our own eye first before trying to take the speck out of our global sibling's eye. We must be humble guides and stewards of the mysteries revealed to us, while dialoguing and learning about the mysteries revealed to them.

So, as we go forward in mission, let us continue to “taste and see the Lord is good” (Ps. 34:8); to taste and know that His “[W]ord is sweeter than honey” and is “light to our paths” in the midst of life and ministry (Ps. 19:10; 119:105, see also 119:103). Let us listen to the Spirit: “For the wisdom of this age is foolishness with God; so, let the one who thinks he is standing be careful that he does not fall” (1 Cor. 3:19; see also 1 Cor. 10:11).

As Andrew Walls, Lamin Sanneh, Amos Yong, David Bosch, Paul Hiebert, and many others have instructed, let us lay aside our desire for control, allowing the Spirit to lead, recognizing that the Spirit is the “chief actor in the historic mission of the church” (Taylor 1972, 1). He will guide us as we maneuver through the eddies of globalism, modernism, postmodernism, the shift of Christianity, and “a little child shall lead them.”

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¹ Hiebert notes that while scholars expound about globalization, studies show that most people still “live in local and regional settings,” so the term “glocal” has emerged to try to describe the local yet global nature of the world we live in (2006, 288-289; 2009, 118).

² The global church is the Church worldwide but here the focus is more on the individual churches making up the global church.

³ I am not intimating that we are capable of bringing about the full installment of the Kingdom of God through what we do; nevertheless, through our lives and through hope, the proleptic effects of God’s Kingdom can be experienced more and more in the here and now. “May your Kingdom come; may your will be done...” (Matt. 6: 10).

⁴ In the process of recalibrating mission, Hiebert notes, “the West today is navigating a sea change that threatens to capsize it. On the surface, cross-waves of debate occur between technological advance and ecological preservation, between the claims of science and the affirmation of other cultures, and between the uniqueness of Christianity and the recognition of other religions. Below the surface, the deep currents of traditionalism, modernity, and postmodernity; of globalism and ethnic particularism; and of truth and relativism collide in different ways in different lands. As Christian theologians and missionaries, we seek to be rooted in [B]iblical thought, but we live in human contexts that profoundly shape our thoughts. It should not surprise us that we are influenced by these currents around us” (Hiebert 1999, 1).

⁵ Newbigin recognizes this inherent difficulty by quoting a Chinese proverb: “If you want a definition of water, don’t ask a fish.” He explains that until he had spent many years in India, he was an “innocent specimen of modern European culture” in that he had “learned from childhood through school and university how things really are, and it was on this basis that [he] could begin to understand and evaluate the world of dharma under the name of Hinduism.” He asks, however, “Where shall I find the stance from which I can study Europeanism? On the basis of what perceptions can I evaluate my own perceptions of ‘how things really are’—perceptions that are part of my mental make-up from childhood?” He continues to observe that, “As a young missionary, I was confident that the critical evaluations I made about Hindu beliefs and practices were securely founded on God’s revelation in Christ. As I grew older, I learned to see that they were shaped more than I had realized by my own culture. And I could not have come to this critical stance in relation to my own culture without the experience of living in another, an Indian culture” (1986, 21).

⁶ Like Sanneh, in the process of reflecting, I myself do not want to “fall into the trap either of vilifying the modern missionary endeavor, seeing it as part and parcel with colonialism, nor of white-washing the abuses and injustices of the colonial rule and “condoning the violent or uncharitable attack on the heritage of others,” (1993, 231). Yet, we must recognize the West’s “ambiguous [at best] legacy of modern development” and colonialism in Africa, but at the same time not naively assume that the non-Western cultures were merely “prelapsarian specimens of primordial purity and innocence” (230, 232).

⁷ Hiebert places the “[A]ge of Enlightenment” from about 1700-1930, with “post-Enlightenment” lasting from 1930 to the present (2009, 65, 71), but sees the “modern” era as lasting from the fifteenth century onwards.

⁸ Hiebert calls this stream of philosophical thought “positivism” (1999). But Amos Yong (2000) and Stanley Grenz and John Franke (2001) use the term “foundationalism,” to denote the idea of being sure of one’s foundational, grounding ideas. The term seems to be a postmodern appellation to describe the philosophy that sought sure foundations.

⁹ For the purposes of this paper, we will call the “modern, Enlightenment” worldview “Western” as it is located in the West and this allows the retention of connections to the Greek-Western mindset. Hiebert (1986) brings out this connection to the “Neo-Platonic worldview of the Greeks” as the origin of the “dualism between spirit and matter (since [the seventeenth century]) which later gets reprocessed in Cartesian dualism. Lamin Sanneh elucidates these connections by noting that “the Enlightenment, the Romantic and the Modern” were “three formative stages of culture consciousness in the West,” and this “[Western] cultural project was often conceived as an alternative to religion...superseding religious injunctions” (1993, 24).

¹⁰ This is found not only in Hiebert’s *Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*, chapter five, but also in the chapter by Tienou and Hiebert where they describe how “Western philosophical theology is in danger of becoming captive to the methods of Greek logic ... in that the search for a comprehensive system ... implies that humans can grasp the fullness of truth with clarity” (2005, 121-122).

¹¹ Kusmic (1999) also shows how the loss of *telos* and subsequent reaction affected Christians’ understanding of end-times, the Kingdom of God, engagement (or withdrawal) in the world, ethics, reconciliation, and more. In a panel discussion at AGTS in December 2009, Kusmic stated that we must not only “develop a theology of reconciliation pneumatologically” but also that “the main missiological paradigm of the twenty-first century should be a theology of reconciliation, based on where we are and what is going on in the world.” See also Johan Mostert, 2014. “Ministry of Mercy and Justice,” in *Pentecostal Mission and Global Christianity*, edited by Wonsuk Ma, Veli-Matti Karkkainen and J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu. Oxford: Regnum Books International, 162-181.

¹² Hiebert notes that the term and development of the concept originated with Father Jaime Bulatao who coined it in 1962 and elaborated on it in 1992 (Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou 1999, 15). Hiebert (2009) also addressed this situation in subsequent works, developing it further and calling it the “flaw of the excluded middle,” seeing the “secularization of science” (lower tier) and the “mystification of religion” (upper tier) as creating a void or vacuum in the middle, whereby neither science nor religion addressed “the middle level of supernatural this-worldly beings and forces” (196, 198-199).

¹³ Pentecostal missionaries were the exception to this Western missionary analysis as they did believe in the supernatural and did not have the excluded middle. See: ¹³Rodney L. Henry, *Filipino Spirit World: A Challenge to the Church* (Mandaluyong, Metro Manila: OMF Literature Inc., 1986), 131. (Footnoted added by editor.)

¹⁴ Walls contends, “Theology springs out of mission; its true origins lie not in the study or the library, but from the need to make Christian decisions—decisions about what to do, and about what to think. ... the normal run of Western theology is simply not big enough for Africa, or for much of the rest of the non-Western world. It offers no guidance for some of the most crucial situations, because it has no questions related to those situations. The reason is that Western theology—whether of a more liberal or conservative tendency is irrelevant—is heavily acculturated. It is substantially an Enlightenment product, designed for an Enlightenment view of the universe. The Enlightenment universe is a small-scale one; witchcraft or sorcery, for instance, do not exist within it, its family structures have no place for ancestors, the living dead of the family. The frontier between the empirical world and the realm of the spirit, the natural and the supernatural is closed. There is no place for those “principalities and powers” that Paul sees as world rulers routed by the triumphal chariot of the cross of the Risen Christ. The Bible is not an Enlightenment book” (2008, 203).

¹⁵ This swiping analysis may be generally true, but there were a strong minority of missionaries who stood with the indigenous people and against their sending nation’s colonial practices.

¹⁶ Taber grounds these ideas in a description of the function and influence of culture on people's lives and minds. "Culture is learned," "mental" (as in existing in people's minds, versus somewhere in the observable, sensory world), "adaptive" (in that it enables humans to live in varied environments), "shared," "selective," "normative" (in the sense that it "rewards conformity and punishes deviance"), "integrated" (its different parts are supportive), "heterogeneous" (in spite of being able to differentiate between various cultures, members within a society are varied and experience that culture differently), and lastly culture is "cumulative" ("each generation enriching later generations") (1991, 4-6). Another source that wrestles with the connection and synergistic effects of culture and faith is *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture, The Papers of the Lausanne Consultation on Gospel and Culture* (Coote and Stott, eds. 1980). Lamin Sanneh also elaborates on this idea in *Encountering the West*: "In the rise of modern consciousness in the West, especially since the European Reformation, culture has assumed an important place in intellectual circles, so much so that when the West extended its domination over much of the world it has been assumed that Western culture and customs had accompanied the political and religious expansion. Notions of Western cultural superiority found a congenial niche in the Christian missionary enterprise where spiritual values were assumed to enshrine Western cultural forms, so that the heathen who took the religious bait would in fact be taking it from the cultural hook. Indeed, in numerous cases, culture and religion, as sanitation and salvation, were for many missionaries one and the same thing. There was no better harbinger of the new creation than silent plumbing, no brighter hope than electricity and no higher symbol of a redeemed humanity than the modern biomedical system. ... All this makes it understandable, though not entirely justified, that missionaries should be accused of cultural insensitivity, and of being unable or unwilling to separate the religion of the Bible from its Western cultural encapsulation" (1993, 23).

¹⁷ Hiebert's proposal also gave scope and precision to the otherwise nebulous term, "contextualization."

¹⁸ The four steps of critical contextualization are used as the basic structure for Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou's book *Folk Religions* (1999).

¹⁹ The *etic-emic* distinction originated as a linguistic term that Pike coined in 1954 in his descriptive grammatical theory Tagmemics. Other anthropologists (such as Harris, a decade later, in 1964) began utilizing this distinction and then later philosophers, psychologists, and others picked it up. Hiebert credits Ken Pike and other Bible translators like Jacob Loewen, H. A. Gleason, Eugene Nida, William Reyburn, and William Smalley "as some of the early pioneers of applying anthropological insights to missions" (1994, 9).

²⁰ The importance in this is to balance the etic with the emic and vice-versa. This "metacultural grid" gives one a "position of detachment outside both views [etic-emic] that enables them to translate from one view to the other, and to compare and test them" (Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou 1999, 33).

²¹ I think implied in this is the assumption that the local church has part or all of the Scripture in their own language, in order that they can accurately read and understand God's Word for themselves.

²² Hiebert (1994) notes that Larry Laudin, C. S. Peirce and Ian Barbour directly influenced his thinking on this; however, it appears that Peirce's critical realism and semiotics proved foundational for Hiebert's version. He states that Peirce, "one of the fathers of critical realism," called it "critical common-sensism," which by its nature "strikes a middle ground between positivism, with its emphasis on objective truth, and instrumentalism, with its stress on the subjective nature of human knowledge. It affirms the presence of objective truth but recognizes that this is subjectively apprehended. On another level...it challenges the definition of "rationality" in both positivism and instrumentalism that limits rationality to algorithmic logic. In so doing, critical realism offers a third, far more nuanced, epistemic position" (1999, 69).

²³ Peirce's semiotics has other significant implications: Amos Yong proposes a pneumatological framework that draws in great part on "the experiential and epistemological issue of how... biblical insights... can be empirically confirmed." Yong utilizes Peirce's triadic semiotics numerous times (2000, 2005, 2014a, 2014b). He points to the "human activity of sign interpretation [semiotics] as "one of the more fruitful lines of response;

[m]ost helpful...is the North American philosophical tradition, particularly the triadic semiotic of Charles Sanders Peirce and, building on Peirce, the metaphysics of experience of Donald Gelpi.” Yong also found Peirce helpful in “justifying a metaphysical framework sufficient for the science-religion dialogue...and a pneumatological theology of creation” (2005, 280, 285).

²⁴ The full quote explains more completely: “On the one hand, insofar as *signs are grounded in their objects* in some respect, *their interpretants are constrained in those respects*; thus, *interpretation cannot just be a subjective matter*.... On the other hand, insofar as signs produce interpretants in certain respects, not only can interpreters miss the respects with which the signs are communicating; in addition, *all interpretants are necessarily vague* in their various respects and *thus demanding of further interpretation*. Thus, *all interpretation*, because it cannot just be an objective matter capable of definitive settlement, *is fallible*. In practice, certain things are decided upon in that their interpretants provide for settled courses of action. But *given the qualitative open-endedness* of the process of interpretation, *one cannot predict when future events may call the settled interpretant into question*. For these reasons, *Peirce’s semiotics avoids the fallacies of rationalisms* that ignore the groundedness of ideas in real objects, and of empiricisms that ignore the open-endedness of interpretants in the signifying process. It *emphasizes a contrite fallibilism* over and against either a positivistic objectivism that fixes beliefs on the basis of presumed (but unreal) access to the objects of inquiry or a relativistic subjectivism that fixes beliefs on the basis of only social conventions. So, although it is true that ‘semiosis is in principle without absolute beginning, as well as without end,’ it is also true that relativism, skepticism, or nihilism is undercut, since Peirce’s triadic semiotic establishes how human activity proceeds in engagement with the real world” (2005, 286). Peirce’s thought also included the important idea that the “context of inquiry is always a community of inquirers,” not an individual and in the idea. But his most influential contribution for evangelicalism and for critical realism was his grounding idea that “thought has access to the truth of reality;” in essence “truth is the conformity of a *representamen* [sign] to its object, *its* object, ITS [sic] object, mind you’,” since “[f]or Peirce, far from the truth being subjective, all truth is extremely objective” (Yong 2000, 577, italics in original). The reason for this is that “there is a correspondence relation between propositions and reality. The difference is that Peirce recognized the complex operations of thinking. He understood the correlation of our assertions with reality takes place not directly but only by means of a semiotic process of interpretation. And this process is a triadic relation between signs, objects, and interpretations that arise from various experiential perspectives. These respects of interpretation yield successively more determinate aspects of previously less determinate signs” (Yong 2000, 577).

²⁵ But Pike cautions, “What in non-theistic intellectualism replaces the belief in God? The answer seems to be that belief in God may be replaced by *belief in an epistemology* (a system of how we know what we know and of the validity of that knowledge); or by *trust in a philosophical system of reality*; or by *moral trust in scientific assumptions*, explicit or tacit. ... the choice of a set of assumptions is a moral *choice*... not something which merely “happens” to a person...” (1962, 16). And yet, Kelly Monroe Kullberg’s books, *Finding God Beyond Harvard* (2006) and *Finding God At Harvard: Spiritual Journeys of Thinking Christians* (1996, reprinted in 2007), remind us that often there are 7000 others who have not “bowed to Baal” (1 Kings 19:18; Romans 11:4) and thinking critically is still an option which is not necessarily mutually incompatible with trust in God.

²⁶ According to sources, the number is now close to 3,000, at 2883, as of November 2014. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bible_translations; <https://wycliffe.org.uk/wycliffe/about/vision-whatwedo.html>, accessed February 8, 2015.

²⁷ According to Walls, this religious history was noted first by historians, such as Roland Oliver (1952, 1956) and later David Barrett (1970). Shenk notes “Efraim Andersson’s 1958 *Messianic Popular Movements in the Lower Congo* went largely unnoticed” (Shenk 2011, chap. 4). Walls himself comments on the phenomenon as early as 1976, saying, “Africa was appearing as the Christian heartland.” But already, in denoting the historians first, I’ve neglected the African scholars who saw this change in “religious history,” namely C. G. Baeta (1968), Lamin Sanneh (1983), Ogbu Kalu (1996), and E. Kingsley Larbi (2001) among others. Yet, as Walls notes, “the nature of this process was long in coming to notice ... not before the years of decolonization” and even still,

“neither the churches of the North nor those of the South have yet taken in the full implications of this major movement of the Christian heartland, the theological academy least of all perhaps” (2002, 118; 2006, 77).

²⁸ Tite Tienou also suggested the necessity of “international and interdisciplinary scholarship” (2006, 51).

²⁹ Many years later, Schreiter similarly notes that we must “examine how fully participative Christian communities around the globe have become in the totality of the church, and to what extent a colonial mentality still remains (2002, 15)” (cited in Ott and Netland 2006, 310).

³⁰ In his *Christianity Today* article about Andrew Walls, Tim Stafford notes that Walls’ insights probe Christian history “to gain a prophetic vision of what ‘Christianity’ really means across an extraordinary diversity of times and cultures” (2007, 87).

³¹ Amos Yong comments on the “vernacularization of Christianity,” noting that “Asian Christian theology itself is increasingly dominated by local concerns and motivations even as indigenous voices and perspectives are sounding forth with urgent clarity,” which is exemplified “in the fairly recently published three-volume *Asian Christian Theologies*. The central motif around which materials were collected and considered for inclusion in these volumes is that of “local theology.” By this, the editors mean theology incarnated or contextualized specifically in the various regions” (2014b, chap. 1). “Local theology” as used here is what Hiebert calls “self-theologizing,” which he says is the next step beyond critical contextualization (1986, 1988, 1994).

³² Philip Jenkins as well as Doug Jacobsen have described this phenomenon: Philip Jenkins. 2003. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, and Douglas Jacobsen. 2011. *The World’s Christians: Who They Are, Where They Are, and How They Got There*. Chichester, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

³³ Yong feels Ott and Netland’s (2006) *Globalizing Theology*, and Jeffrey Greenman and Gene L. Green (2012) *Global Theology in Evangelical Perspective* lead the way in this endeavor (2014b, endnotes).

³⁴ “Hiebert states clearly the problem and the solution: “To move from local theologies to an understanding of transcultural truths revealed in Scripture, we need a metatheology, a theological reflection on how local theologies should be done and how to mediate the dialogue among them” (2006, 306). Hiebert also notes that Western theology is a form of “local theology” as well.

³⁵ Hiebert gives two necessary components and four requisites for the metatheological grid. The two necessary components include Peirce’s semiotics and the epistemological foundation of critical realism. These, he felt were significant for understanding the relationship between form and meaning and the nature of truth; both of which are necessary foundations for conversation about God’s revelation and theology related to revelation (2006, 303-304). In addition, Hiebert saw four requisites as necessary for the development of a metatheology: (1) Scripture is viewed as divine revelation and the final authority, (2) the need to distinguish between God’s revelation as recorded in Scripture and human understandings articulated in theologies, (3) the church recognized as a hermeneutical community, and (4) reliance on the Holy Spirit. Here Hiebert makes the important point that all too often “we depend primarily on human reason to discern truth,” but we “must be humble about the limitations of our knowledge and learn to discern the understanding that comes through the Spirit” (2006, 303-307).

³⁶ Hiebert’s presentation of what a metatheology encompasses is significant in three ways. First, he not only recognizes theology as a local endeavor, but also acknowledges that, by nature, it is a global enterprise in which all need to participate: “theologies...seek to communicate the gospel in local contexts, but also affirm the oneness of the gospel for all humans” (2006, 302). Second, he notes the necessity of global inclusion; for, the number of diverse voices involved in the dialogue will affect the fullness of our metatheology. Third, his

approach gives us a good foundation for understanding theologians and missiologists who write from different perspectives (like Amos Yong's global theologizing) because he provides an interdisciplinary perspective.

³⁷ Hiebert and Tienou note, "each research tradition is embedded in a worldview—the fundamental assumptions it makes about reality. Different answers or "theories" are offered to the key questions, and competing ones are debated until one or the other emerges as accepted doctrine, reigning until it is further questioned" (2005, 117)

³⁸ One of the main points of Hiebert and Tienou's chapter was a definition of theology that recognizes "there are no culture-free and history-free theologies, [and] we all read Scripture from the perspectives of our particular contexts." Yet, "this does not mean we can know no truth," rather, "we must never equate our theology with Scripture, and that we need to work in hermeneutical communities to check our personal and cultural biases" (2005, 122).

³⁹ One problem of Western philosophical theology is "the danger of becoming captive to the methods of Greek logic." An example of this is the West's "search for a comprehensive system based on ...logic implies that humans can grasp the fullness of truth with clarity. It leaves little room for the ambiguities of life, the mysteries that transcend human comprehension, and the wisdom that can deal with the contradictions and paradoxes of a rapidly changing world" (Hiebert 2005, 121-122).

⁴⁰ In analyzing systematic theology and Biblical theology, Hiebert laments that the theme of God's missional heart for his world is all but absent in these two theologies. This idea of a missional theology, a "missional hermeneutic" from which to interpret the whole Bible is the subject of Chris Wright's *Mission of God*, where he establishes that there is a missional grand-narrative which draws together the whole of the Bible and biblical history. Wright states his objective was "not only to demonstrate...that Christian mission is fully grounded in the Scripture ...but also to demonstrate that a strong theology of the mission of God provides a fruitful hermeneutical framework within which to read the whole Bible. ...[For] mission is what the Bible is all about; we could as meaningfully talk of the missional basis of the Bible as the biblical basis of mission (2006, 26, 29). To further elucidate, Wright explains that in a missiological approach we are referring to: "the purpose for which the Bible exists; the God the Bible renders to us; the people whose identity and mission the Bible invites us to share; and the story the Bible tells us about this God and this people and indeed the whole world and its future" (31)

⁴¹ Strong and Strong (2006) note that in remaining faithful to Luke's intent, "we can only secondarily derive lessons from the council's actions (Fee and Stewart 1993, 105-112);" yet, the approach by the Jerusalem Council "reveals a successful way in which diverse Christian communities with different theological concerns achieved consensus." And this lends credence to Hiebert's Anabaptist perspective, which says, "we guard against subjectivity by remaining faithful to Scripture, the leading of the Holy Spirit, and the check of the hermeneutical community" (Hiebert 1994c, 100, quoted in Strong and Strong 2006, 128).

⁴² The main text is Amos 9:11-12, with Hosea 3:5, Jer. 12:15, and Isa. 45:21 included as well.

⁴³ In the referenced section, Wright extensively quotes Bauckham (1996, 167-169). See also Strong and Strong's discussion on this missional, theological, hermeneutical, and reflectional process (2006, 128-132).

⁴⁴ Harold Dollar, after discussing the "conversion of Cornelius" and the "conversion" that Peter went through in the process of becoming willing to go to Cornelius, states that the idea that the "messenger of conversion must experience conversion can be shown throughout the history of the church." And Dollar gives several examples of contemporary missionaries who experienced "conversion" (Donovan 1978; Richardson 1974; Olson 1978). He ends by saying, "But the one thing that seems to be clear, both from the Bible and from the history of missions, is that those who are called to preach the message of conversion to others must inevitably also experience a radical reorientation themselves. And this conversion is a process that will involve struggle and failure but will eventually liberate the messenger and the message" (Dollar 1993, 14-18).

⁴⁵ Walls reflects, saying, “I still remember the force with which one day the realization struck me that I, while happily pontificating on that patchwork quilt of diverse fragments that constitutes second-century Christian literature, was actually living in a second-century church. The life, worship, and understanding of a community in its second century of Christian allegiance was going on all around me. Why did I not stop pontificating and observe what was going on?” (Shenk 2011, chap. 4)

⁴⁶ Walls continues, “The conceit that Western Christendom was the lens through which all of Christian history and theology was to be viewed was nothing more than a self-deluding provincialism” (Shenk 2011, chap. 4).

⁴⁷ According to Shenk, “Andrew Walls and Harold Turner recognized that they were living in the midst of a dynamic situation of which the Western academy in the 1950s was largely ignorant. ... How could the Western university legitimately claim to be a university if it closed its eyes to these burgeoning developments in Africa, the South Pacific, Latin America, and Asia? Among other things, this phenomenon was calling into question the leading theories about religion and secularization. Furthermore ...the specialization in every field of study posed problems. To study phenomena like new religious movements the resources of multiple disciplines were needed” (2011, chap. 4).

⁴⁸ For Allen the transformation came during the Boxers’ siege of Peking. Allen “had observed at close range the hostility of the Boxers toward the Christian community... [and] was especially disturbed at the taunts thrown at Chinese Christians [calling them ‘foreigners’].” He felt “this relationship was shaped by the model and assumptions of the missions rather than by the cultures of the peoples among whom missionaries worked. And it created dependency on the mission rather than indigenous resources” (Shenk 2005, 197).

⁴⁹ Interestingly, one formative aspect of Donovan’s “conversion” was reading Roland Allen’s writing, especially about how Allen “pleaded that the Church be placed on its own feet...for an indigenous Christianity” (Paton 1960, xvi) and how “having the Spirit...being led themselves by the Spirit was all that was needed for communion;” (1960, 194) as well as how “missionaries should look to the apostolic missionary example as a corrective” (Sanneh 2008, 233-234). Allen’s influence combined with Donovan’s experiences in East Africa, where after seven years at the mission, they had “no adult Maasai practicing Christian,” Donovan decided he couldn’t see persisting with “mission in the old style,” and rather said, “I suddenly feel the urgent need to cast aside all theories and discussions, all efforts at strategy—and simply go to these people” to be among them; which required “upending and redefining a century or more of missionary practice and teaching.” He came to the conclusion that “Western missionaries must renounce the view that civilization was required to disinfect indigenous people and render them tidy enough to receive the gospel.” Thus, Paul’s missionary method and his missionary spirit (trusting the Spirit) seemed to resonate with Donovan. The final proverbial “nail in the coffin” of Donovan’s traditional missionary ideas came when a Maasai elder explained that God ‘has searched us out and found us. All the time we think we are the lion. In the end, the lion is God;’ ...the Maasai saw the issue not so much as missionaries discovering the Maasai and preparing them [for the Gospel], as about God [already] being there for the Maasai. ...[This] was in fact a huge stride in mature discipleship, and it blew away all the meandering stratagems and hesitant steps of organized mission.” Donovan notes that the Maasai taught him well though it took a long time for the lesson to sink in. In light of his transformation, Donovan suggested “missionaries should only accept the part assigned to them in Christianity’s serial expansion rather than try to run the whole show themselves” (Sanneh 2008, 234-239).

⁵⁰ Lamin Sanneh experienced a similar but different transformation. He says he launched on a journey for the connection between faith and reason, culture and theology. For this journey, Sanneh says he relied on Newbiggin’s writings and musings in which “faith supersedes reason, though, in a surprising turn, faith is consistent with reason.” Sanneh says this transformation process is reflected in two of his books: *Encountering the West* and *Whose Religion Is Christianity?* Yet, subsequent to these books and numerous discussions with students, he “was left wondering about what effect I could have on students with a hardened secular worldview” (2012, 250). This nexus of faith and culture continued to plague him, both in church and in the classroom (256). Sanneh eventually found a spiritual rest in the idea that the “love of God is not ours to bargain with [and] the nature of love is expressed better in leaving footprints,” (258) and in Anselm’s notion, ‘O, Lord you are not

only that than which nothing greater can be conceived, but you are greater than all that can be conceived.’ [For] God is than whom is nothing greater, Reason glimpses the truth of God to come upon its own fullest scope: the more of truth reason discovers, the more of its own breadth and depth it attains. That intrinsic connection the Trinity embodies and demonstrates uniquely. Worship becomes the natural and logical next step in the Trinitarian experience of God, for it is in worship that truth can grasp us genuinely, the point at which reason fulfills its own end, who is God” (269).

⁵¹ Hawaiian Christians are an example of this principle: “Richard H. Dana Jr. noted in a report in the New York Tribune in June 1860 that the missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions had in 40 years taught the people of Hawaii ‘to read and write, to cipher and sew. They have given them an alphabet, grammar, and dictionary; preserved their language from extinction; given it a literature and translated into it the Bible and works of devotion, science and entertainment.’ ... You could be Hawaiian and Christian or Christian and Hawaiian, it amounted to the same thing as far as Christianity was concerned, for parallel conjunctions occurred... Jewish and Christian or Christian and Jewish, Gentile and Christian or Christian and Gentile.... Expanded over time and across space, we hear repeated echoes of this theme of one God active in the midst of many cultures, and of many cultures renewed from a common faith in one God” (Sanneh and Carpenter 2005, 215-216). Sanneh’s book, *Encountering the West*, also gives specifics to this principle, illustrating the nexus of faith and culture, with translation’s utilizing, penetrating and renewing of culture. “By translating the Bible, missionaries actually strengthened local cultures rather than weakened them, as many histories of mission in Africa have asserted. Moreover, by engaging in the translation process, missionaries themselves are often won over to become defenders of local culture.” Sanneh goes on to claim that mother-tongue translations allowed local people to form their own interpretation of the Scriptures against what might have been proposed by the missionaries. The very fact that the Christian Scriptures could be translated (as opposed to the situation in Islam, where the Holy Qur’an can only be understood and interpreted from the original Arabic text) conferred a dignity on local cultures that formed in turn the basis for the reassertion of African cultures in nationalist and independence movements. These are intriguing hypotheses that Sanneh extends even further in this book, proposing that such vernacularization is intrinsic to the nature of Christianity, and that current global processes should be read through this lens. Rather than incessantly apologizing for the modern missionary movement as an unremitting act of colonial imperialism, Christians and others should focus upon how missionaries supported and promoted local cultures to make them players in the new global realities” (Schreiter 1994, 779-780).

⁵² Walls expounds on this idea, saying that by the twentieth century, “God called a New Church into existence to redress the balance of the Old.” And since the Church now has many centers, “new Christian impulses and initiatives may now be expected from any quarter of the globe.” In addition, Christianity in Africa is “numerically and qualitatively, no longer on the sidelines of Christianity;” it is “no pale copy of an institution existing somewhere else.” Rather it must be seen not only as a “major component of contemporary representative Christianity” but as the “*standard Christianity of the present age*” and as such we need to “*look at Africa today in order to understand Christianity itself*” as well as the “*determinative new directions in Christian thought and activity*” (Walls 2002, 119). The obvious global character of Christianity is not new in that it has always been a global faith, for “earlier centuries saw it spread across the whole Eurasian land mass and deep into East Africa. The exceptional period of Christian history, when Christianity seemed to belong essentially to the West, is the one from which we have just emerged: the period of the Great Migration and that immediately preceding it. With its return to a non-Western religion, Christianity has reverted to type” (Walls 2008, 202).

⁵³ Newbigin asks, “[H]ow can we move from the place where we explain the [G]ospel in terms of our modern scientific world-view to the place where we explain our modern scientific world-view from the point of view of the gospel? Part of the answer will be to listen to the witness of Christians from other cultures” (1986, 22).

⁵⁴ It can no longer be the whole of Western Christianity taking the Gospel to the whole world. “All our representations of humanity are partial and incomplete; complete humanity is found only in Christ in his fullness” (Walls 2008, 203). Walls castigates, saying, that the enormity of the task requires all of us. “Christ is

full humanity, and it is only *together* that we reach his full stature. ... There are not two, but an infinite number of segments of partially converted social reality within the church. ... each is a building block belonging to a new temple still in process of construction. Like them, *each is an organ necessary to the proper functioning of a body under Christ's direction*. Only *together* will they [we] reach the fullness of Christ which is the completion and perfection of humanity” (Walls 2008, 204; italics mine).

⁵⁵ This is found in 1 Cor. 4: 1-5 but also the idea of the “wheat and the tares” is applicable (Matt. 13:36-40).

⁵⁶ Craig Ott (2006) uses this quote in his “Conclusion” of the edited volume, *Globalizing Theology*.

⁵⁷ A place to begin further study would be with Yong (2003; 2005; 2014a; 2014b) as well as with Karkkainen (2002; 2011). In Yong’s (2003) article, he concludes with five useful theses which need further discussion in order to develop a pneumatological theology of mission and evangelization in a religiously plural world: Thesis 1: A viable contemporary theology of mission and evangelization is necessarily pneumatological; Thesis 2: A viable contemporary theology of interreligious ecumenism can be understood in part as an outgrowth of a pneumatological theology of intra-Christian ecumenism; Thesis 3: A pneumatological theology of mission and evangelization in an interreligious context is able to safeguard the perennial tension that exists between dialogue and proclamation; Thesis 4: A pneumatological theology of mission and evangelization will also enable a truly “crucicentric” and, hence, liberative solidarity to emerge in the interreligious encounter; Thesis 5: On a practical level, a pneumatological theology of mission and evangelization in a religiously plural world will need to be especially alert for what the Spirit is saying and doing in and through the churches, to be sensitive to the presence and activities of religious others, and to be discerning about the broader context of Christian ministry (308-310)

⁵⁸ Yong, in this same article, goes even further to provide “three axioms of a pneumatological theology of religions” which include: 1) “God is universally present and active by the Spirit ... If human society includes politics, economics, and so on ... what is the Spirit doing in those arenas of human life? If human culture includes arts and religions, what are the purposes of the Spirit in those domains of human experience?” 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. This means there is a pneumatological dimension to each human individual that sustains intersubjective communication, interpersonal relationships and intentional, rational, moral, and spiritual life. All engagements with the “other”—whether that other be human others, the world, or the divine—are pneumatologically mediated.” And following from these, 3) “The religions of the world, like everything else that exists, are providentially sustained by the Spirit for divine purposes... Unless one is prepared to say that all forms and expressions of human culture are anti-theistic, one cannot arbitrarily separate out one dimension of culture—the religious aspect—and label it, as previous generations of theologians have, as either a solely human effort to reach God or as demonic. Rather, all human endeavors reflect either God’s permissive or active will toward ultimately divine purposes centered around the full revelation of Jesus Christ and the impending kingdom of God” (2001, 47-48).

Neophytes and Pioneer Movements: A Missiological Examination of Paul's Practice and Instructions Regarding Local Church Leadership

Robert Shipley*

Introduction

Some years ago, I visited the ruins of Ephesus. One of the items that stands out in my memory is the Basilica of St John. Among the most prominent architectural remains of the basilica is the baptistry with stairs leading into and out of a small pool. The design was quite obviously intended for baptism by immersion. From this scene I reached two conclusions. The first is obvious; baptism in fourth century Ephesus was administered by immersion rather than sprinkling. The second conclusion proceeds from the first; the primary, or anticipated, manner of church growth in the fourth century church in Ephesus was conversion of adults rather than procreation and the baptism of infants by sprinkling.

The purpose of this observation is not to argue for one manner of baptism over another. I merely want to illustrate that the interplay between context and church theology, or praxis, has long existed. The church's migration from baptism by immersion to sprinkling then, for some ecclesial traditions, back to immersion, involves not just theology but theology done in context.

Could the same be said for the qualifications we apply to church leadership? Might the fact that most ecclesial and theological conclusions are drawn by Westerners from long established churches and theological traditions influence the way we apply Scriptural instructions and prohibitions regarding church leadership?

Who Will Lead?

The church in which I will worship this Sunday is 131 years old. Would Paul expect a nascent church in Kashmir to hold to the same standards for leadership as a church that precedes its inception by 130 years? When asked in this manner the answer is an obvious no. Yet this issue of church leadership remains the single greatest objection to what have become known in the last two decades as church planting movements.

Those of us who work where, and among whom, the church does not exist must wrestle with the question of who will lead the churches God raises up through our efforts.¹

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In seeking answers many missiologists begin with a hermeneutic shaped by evangelical theological training with its historic preference for the didactic and suspicion of historical narrative. This penchant can lead missiologists to ignore Paul's practice in Acts in favor of his list of qualifications for church leaders in Timothy. The above, combined with a disregard for the difference in Paul's instruction to Titus regarding qualifications of church leadership, leads to a simple conclusion. Quickly multiplying movements with young inexperienced local leaders are less desirable than slower-growing stable work with mature local leaders.

Let us acknowledge that we have reached these conclusions within a context of older established churches and theological traditions. Would we reach the same conclusions if our context bore greater semblance to what is recorded in the book of Acts or the church growth in Iran? How would those within the new and quickly multiplying churches of Iran or Afghanistan apply Paul's instructions for church leadership?

Issues in Rapidly Developing Churches

These issues come to the fore because of a recent emphasis on what are known by various terms, such as disciple making movements (DMMs) or church planting movements (CPMs). Proponents of each term would cite variations of meaning but the basic end is the same, with multiplying groups of new Jesus followers.

David Garrison defines a *Church Planting Movement* as "a rapid multiplication of indigenous churches planting churches that sweeps through a people group of population segment."² The Beyond organization adds to Garrison's definition. CPMs are:

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. They begin to transform their communities as the new Body of Christ lives out kingdom values. When consistent multiple stream fourth generation reproduction of churches occurs, church planting has crossed a threshold to becoming a sustainable movement.³

The most controversial aspect of CPMs is rapidity. Rapid church multiplication and mature indigenous local church leadership are mutually exclusive. They simply cannot exist at the same time.

John D. Massey's critique of CPMs is representative. He calls rapidity applied to church planting, "wrinkling time in the missionary task."⁴ His implications are not positive. The large and influential International Mission Board, once a major proponent of CPMs, no longer employs the term in its publications or embraces many aspects of CPM training or methods for its missionaries. The IMB has retained its emphasis on church planting and indigeneity but has backed away from an emphasis on rapid multiplication. In a 2018 article entitled, *The Missionary Task: Forming a Healthy Church*, D. Ray Davis, Church Connections Leader for the IMB, discourages new missionaries from expecting the church to advance rapidly.⁵

In distancing himself, and IMB, from their previous held position, Davis appears to be more concerned about missionary expectations than the theological, missiological, or ecclesial issues addressed in this article. Any change in organizational strategy, however, has antecedent causes. It is not difficult to find evidence of strongly-held opinions and resulting missiological debate both inside and outside the IMB focusing on the very issues under discussion in this article, which is church leadership.

In practical terms, this controversy over rapidity and its concomitant leadership/theological challenges had been met several ways. First, by assuming that CPMs do not exist or that the numbers reported are grossly exaggerated. If CPMs do not exist and all church growth proceeds at a moderate, slow, or predictable pace, those leading the growth can address leadership issues with processes that match the pace of growth. Using a composite of Paul's requirements, church planters can identify those meeting the basic requirements for church leadership and, through a deliberate process, train, or disciple, the convert to meet the lengthier maturity requirements.

One problem with denying the existence of rapidly expanding movements to Christ is that there are simply too many reported to dismiss.⁶ While the largest numbers of movements reported are in Africa and Asia, Christian workers claim movements in every region of the world. Are they all wrong? Is this a widespread conspiracy of exaggeration among some of the world's most dedicated Christians? Is that even possible? Yes. So, is it sufficiently probable to justify wholesale dismissal, or neglect, by missiologists and missiological researchers? No.

Let's assume that CPMs are nothing more than hype or exaggeration. We are still forced to deal with the periods in Western Church history during which the church expanded or multiplied quite rapidly. How were Paul's instructions to be followed in the frontier West's Methodist Church planting or the rapidly multiplying Pentecostal Churches of the twentieth century? And what of the church's growth in the book of Acts itself? Acts covers approximately thirty years of history during which the Gospel spread to include churches on three continents. What would we think of the church leaders in Lystra or Iconium were we to meet them today? How would they compare to the requirements for church leadership Paul would later give to Timothy (I Timothy 3:1 – 10)?

Another way this challenge is addressed is by simply renaming groups of Christ followers by calling them groups, cells, fellowships, or Bible studies instead of churches. By doing this, Paul's instructions for church leaders can be reserved for those fellowships that were established longer and have had the opportunity for leaders to mature in the faith. A cell need not concern itself with the responsibilities or leadership requirements of a church.

I will simply address this by noting that Luke does not follow this path. Rather he calls the young, very-recently planted believers converted on Paul's first missionary journey to serve as the *ecclesian*, churches (Acts 14:23).

When we consider Paul's missionary practice alongside his lists of qualifications for local church leadership, I assert that we must conclude that context plays a significant role in determining who is, and who is not, qualified to exercise leadership in the local church.

In seeking answers to the missiological dilemma concerning church leadership, we will consider Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:6, 5:22; and Titus 1:5.⁷

Acts 14:23

Acts 14 establishes a sense of chronological proximity between the conversion of the believers from Paul's first missionary journey and the appointment of elders in the churches. The focus here is on timing. How long had those who were appointed elders by the apostolic band in Acts 14:23 been believers?⁸

Paul and Barnabas had been sent out on their first missionary journey in response to the missionary vision of the church in Syrian Antioch and by the command of the Holy Spirit (Acts 13:1–3). Prior to their return to Antioch (Acts 14:26), Paul and Barnabas appointed elders in each of the churches they had planted (Acts 14:23). Volumes have been written on the meaning, significance, and function of the *presbuteros*, as well as the other synonymous or overlapping terms for leadership in the New Testament churches. The focus of interest for this article however was in one very small part of the discussion on New Testament church leadership: How long had the leaders who were appointed been saved? One point is certain; the elders, chosen from among the believers in Acts 14, came from within very young congregations. Estimates for the length of Paul's first missionary journey vary from less than one year to more than three. Frederick Farrar gives voice to the shorter estimate: "Taking into account the time consumed in traveling, we are hardly at liberty to suppose that the first circuit occupied much more than a year."⁹ Even if one assumes Paul's first missionary journey to have taken two to three years, the fact remains that the last churches established were the first revisited and set in order by the appointment of elders. One must also remember that Paul spent both the beginning and ending portions of the journey in ocean travel. Thus, even the longest estimates of Paul's missionary exploits recorded in Acts 13–14 do not allow for a long period of time between conversion and appointment to service.

Commentators uncomfortable with Paul and Barnabas's actions in appointing new converts to ministry resolve their discomfort in various ways. Andrew Clarke and Alastair Campbell argue that Paul appointed elders in Acts 14:23 based on the appointed person's extant societal or familial leadership roles rather than on some type of standard for church leadership.¹⁰ Stanley Toussaint postulates that the apostles found members of the synagogue among the new converts who, by virtue of their superior knowledge of Scripture, were appointed elders.¹¹ He bases this view on assumptions about New Testament church leadership that he brought to the text, rather than direct statements or inferences from within the text and, in the process, he does not seem to recall that the very group he advocates for Paul's appointment to leadership in Acts 14 was the source of problems on Crete to be avoided by Titus (Titus 1:10).

F. F. Bruce states an alternative, more plausible, explanation: "It has more than once been pointed out that more recent missionary policy would have thought it dangerously idealistic to recognize converts of only a few weeks' standing as leaders in their churches; perhaps Paul and Barnabas were more conscious of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the believing

communities.”¹² Whether one agrees with Bruce’s conclusions regarding more recent missiology, the fact remains that Luke records the appointment of elders from among new congregations made up of new believers, indicating that most, if not all, of the appointed elders were new believers.

Titus 1:5 and 1 Timothy 3:6, 5:22

The historical setting of the Pastoral Epistles (PE) is disputed by those who hold to the view that they were written by a pseudepigrapher. However, the traditional view of Paul as author seems to answer the most questions while creating the least.¹³ Arguably, the stronger arguments against Pauline authorship of the PE are based on differences between them and his undisputed epistles. The apparent differences between the PE and Paul’s undisputed epistles may be explained by the fact that the former ones were addressed to colleagues while the latter were addressed to churches. George Knight holds this view.¹⁴ Gordon Fee suggests that the differences can be explained by the influence, or lack thereof, of an amanuensis.¹⁵

Assuming Pauline authorship still leaves the historical context unexplained. Many current scholars including Fee¹⁶ uphold the traditional view that Paul was released from the confinement described in Acts 28 and embarked on a trip east to Asia. Prior to a second Roman imprisonment, spoken of in 2 Timothy, Paul spent some time on Crete involved in evangelistic ministry. Paul concluded his season of ministry on Crete by leaving Titus to put the church in order. In transit to Macedonia, Paul and Timothy stopped at Ephesus. During this stopover, Paul discovered that false teaching had erupted from within the church. It can be assumed with some degree of confidence that the false teaching required the expulsion of two of the ringleaders Hymenaeus and Alexander (1 Tim. 1:19–20). The details of the doctrinal error are not known, although the letter indicates that it had something to do with the Old Testament and also contained some dualistic elements of Gnosticism. First Timothy 6:10 indicates that at least part of the motive behind the false teaching was financial gain. The fact that the churches on Crete had not yet been set in order, while the church in Ephesus included multiple generations of believers, established leaders, and fully developed problems with heresy, dates the church in Ephesus as older than those on Crete.

Paul begins his letter to Titus with little in the way of personal remarks. Rather, Paul moves directly to the point, instructing his associate to “appoint elders in every town” (Titus 1:5).¹⁷ It can be assumed that these elders were to be selected from among the local believers, rather than the itinerate band or Paul would have done the appointing himself. The apostle follows up with qualifications for eldership primarily related to character. In a similar list written to Timothy, Paul adds, “He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil” (1 Tim. 3:6). Paul appears to reinforce the point in 1 Timothy 5:22 when he warns his young associate: “Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.”

Intriguing Questions Arise

The three texts give rise to an intriguing question. Are Paul's cautionary notes to Timothy a contradiction of his instructions to Titus and his own missionary practice, a possibility created if Paul intended for *presbuteros* (Titus 1:5) and *episcopos* (1 Tim. 3:2) to be interchangeable terms? While scholars by no means share a consensus of opinion regarding these terms, it seems best to view the terms as interchangeable general references to church leaders without technical definition. This view is supported by the fact that Paul uses *presbuteros* in Titus 1:5 and switches to *episcopos* in verse 7 with no sign of change of subject. In his well-researched conclusion, Waldemar Kowalski contends that the PE make no concrete distinction between these words. He writes, "It appears very likely that the view held with variants by Kelley, Fee, Spicq, Dibelius and Conzelmann, and Mounce that *episcopos* and *presbuteros* are to be understood interchangeably, is the best one."¹⁸ If Paul was addressing something different in Timothy than he addressed in Titus and modeled in Acts, no contradiction would exist. However, since this article adopts the position that the terms are interchangeable, the apparent contradictions must be explored.

Both the Titus and Timothy passages deal with the qualifications for church leadership; however, the contextual differences within which Paul's instructions were to be applied vary greatly. In a cautionary note against assuming too much similarity between the contexts occasioning Paul's first letter to Timothy and the one to Titus, Hayne Griffin agrees with Fee alleging, "They are letters to different churches, addressing very different situations."¹⁹ The church in Ephesus was made up of multiple generations of believers and falling prey to false teachers. Timothy's task was clear and corrective. "As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer" (1 Tim. 1:3). Titus' task, however, was not reformation but formation.²⁰ "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you" (Titus 1:5). Apparently, Paul had been on the Island of Crete with Titus planting churches. Paul left the island at some point prior to the churches having been "set in order." Fee refers to Titus' purpose in appointing elders as a "prophylactic" against the level of doctrinal challenge faced in Ephesus.²¹ Upon Titus' departure from Crete, the elders would be responsible for rebuking those involved in doctrinal error (Titus 1:9).

Paul makes it clear, *hos ego soi dietaxamen*, that his current instructions to Titus are a repeat, by way of documentation, likely for the benefit of the Cretian believers, of what he had said earlier. In effect Paul's instructions would give Titus written authority to do what he deemed necessary to set the churches in order.

The verse that best sets forth Paul's intent for the book of 1 Timothy is 1:3: "As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer." Numerous commentators see church order and structure as Paul's overriding purpose for the letter.²² They reach this conclusion based on Paul's address on church leadership in chapters 2 and 3. Fee concludes that Paul's church leadership instructions serve the purpose of preserving the church from the false doctrine spoken of in

chapter 1, rather than being an illustration of the need for proper order.²³ This notion is also supported by the wider context of Paul's writings in which he gives great attention to doctrinal issues while setting forth little in the way of ecclesiastical structural templates.

First Timothy is ad hoc in its structure and includes portions of personal encouragement for Timothy in his task of dealing with the issues in Ephesus (This, however, should not cause the reader to conclude that the letter was to be read only by Timothy.). Both Paul's personal experience with the church and his relationship to his young associate are evident (1 Tim. 1:2).

The prohibition of the Neophyton

Those who view Paul's intentions in the PE as setting forth a pattern of church structure see the prohibition against the appointment of the *neophyton*, someone who is "newly planted" in the church,²⁴ as paradigmatic of all ages and all contexts. This position however is difficult to harmonize with Paul's instruction to Titus in Titus 1:5 and his own missionary practice as recorded in Acts 14. The problem is largely removed, however, if Fee is correct in seeing Paul's letters to Timothy not as a rigid paradigm for church structure but as an ad hoc response to a church in deep doctrinal crisis.²⁵ The reason Paul gives for disallowing new believers among the *episcopoi* is that the elevation to leadership may cause "swelled-headedness," bringing the new believer under the same condemnation as the devil.²⁶ Fee then adds, "Since this is precisely what is said of the false teachers in 6:4 (cf. 2 Tim. 3:4), one wonders whether some of them were recent converts."²⁷ Thus, the literary context, Paul's instructions to Titus, and Paul's own practice during his missionary travels indicate that the prohibition against the appointment of those who are young in the Lord to places of responsibility in the church, while wise where applicable, was not intended to preclude the service of those who are young in faith in newly planted churches.

If one accepts that 1 Timothy 3:6 is intended to address specific problems in Ephesus, this influences one's interpretation of Paul's warning in chapter 5: "Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure" (1 Tim. 5:22). Kowalski concludes that among the views as to the meaning of this verse too seem most plausible. "The most likely context, then, is either the installation of new leaders, whether in general or to replace deposed leaders who have sinned, or the restoration of penitent elders."²⁸ Those who see Paul's warning as a reference to the restoration of penitent elders do so with the view that verse 22 is a continuation of verses 19 and 20, the subject being errant elders.²⁹ Thus, Paul warned against the hasty restoration of a church leader who had sinned, a view held by Anthony Hanson.³⁰ It is preferable to see Paul's warning about the laying on of hands not as a narrow instruction regarding the restoration of fallen church leaders but as Solomon Andria views it as a general warning against hasty recognition for ministry in Ephesus, a course of action that may lead to grave consequences.³¹

Conclusion

It may appear that CPM practitioners promote a hasty practice out of line with Paul's instructions by giving leadership responsibilities to new believers. CPMs often give believers who are only months or weeks old in Christ responsibility for those yet younger in the faith. CPM coaches and trainers often address this issue.³² They respond to questions about appointing elders who are among the *neophytoi* by appealing to the context in which the appointment is made. Acts 13–14 records Paul's first missionary journey. CPM trainers and practitioners see the warning in 1 Timothy 3:6 about appointing a *neophyton* in a local rather than global context. The issue for them is not how long these people have believed when compared to other Christians around the world, but how long they have believed when compared to those for whom they have spiritual oversight. CPM trainers and practitioners see Paul's instruction both to Timothy and to Titus in relationship to the character of elders not as an issue of knowledge, but rather of obedience. They focus on whether the person has demonstrated good character by submission and obedience to Christ in those principles they know.

After examining Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, and 1 Timothy 3:6 and 5:22 in both their literary and historical contexts, it is clear that Paul did not intend to curtail the involvement of new believers in the leadership of young congregations or negate their participation in the Great Commission by his warnings in 1 Timothy 3:6 and 5:22. CPM practitioners need not feel that they are responding to contextual realities in the press of the mission without a sound Biblical rationale for their practice or a well-reasoned defense for those who differ with them based on Paul's instructions to Timothy.

¹ The author first addressed this issue of appointing new converts while serving as a missionary to Uganda in the 2000s. The Uganda Assemblies of God planted 2,800 new churches between 2008 and 2010. The study of the Biblical texts of Acts 14, Titus 1, and 1 Timothy 3 and 5 were evaluated in the author's dissertation: Shiple, Robert A. *Rabbit Churches: An Inquiry into the Enabling Assumptions of the Uganda Assemblies of God Church Planting Movement*, Lome, Togo: Pan Africa Theological Seminary, 2010.

² Garrison, *Church Planting Movements: How God Is Redeeming a Lost World*, 21.

³ <https://www.beyond.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Definitions-for-Key-Strategic-Terms-2019.02.19-1.pdf>

⁴ John D. Massey *Southwestern Journal of Theology* • Volume 55 • Number 1 • Fall 2012 Accessed online at http://www.baptisttheology.org/baptisttheology/assets/File/Massey_Wrinkling_Time_SWJT.pdf

⁵ D. Ray Davis, *The Missionary Task: Forming a Healthy Church* accessed online at <https://www.imb.org/2018/11/06/missionary-task-healthy-church/>

⁶ Researchers reporting for the 24:14 Coalition claim to be tracking more than 1,000 movements in that have reached the fourth generation of church plants in multiple streams. https://www.2414now.net/wp-content/uploads/2414-Movement-Data-Dashboard_08-17-19.pdf

⁷ For a more complete treatment of New Testament church leadership, see John M. Elliott, "Leadership Development and Relational Patterns: The Early Church and the Church in Zambia Today" (DMin. diss., Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, 2007); Waldemar J. Kowalski, "The Reward, Discipline, and Installation of Church Leaders:

An Examination of 1 Timothy 5:17–22” (Ph.D. diss., University of Gloucestershire, 2005); and Benjamin L. Merkle, *40 Questions about Elders and Deacons* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2008).

⁸This study does not include a discussion about authorship or authorial intent of the book of Acts for the following reasons. The passage addresses a simple statement of a historical nature that remains largely unaffected by arguments against Lucan authorship. Second, this study does not attempt to make a case that Luke purposed to set forth a pattern for church governance. While Luke’s authorial intent may have included instituting some normative or paradigmatic patterns for church life and leadership, it was outside of the scope of this project to pursue such interests.

⁹F. W. Farrar, *The Life and Work of St. Paul* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1902), 220.

¹⁰Andrew D. Clarke, *A Pauline Theology of Church Leadership*, Leadership Library of New Testament Studies 362 (London: T and T Clark, 2008), 86–87. See also R. Alastair Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity*, Studies of the New Testament and Its World (Edinburgh: T and T Clark, 1994), 166–171.

¹¹Stanley D. Toussaint, “Acts,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983), 392.

¹²F. F. Bruce, *The Book of the Acts*, rev. ed., New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1988), 280.

¹³Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, New International Biblical Commentary 13, New Testament Series (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), 23–31.

¹⁴George W. Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1992), 51.

¹⁵Fee, 26.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, 3–14.

¹⁷All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the New International Version.

¹⁸Kowalski, 31–32.

¹⁹Thomas D. Lea and Hayne P. Griffin, *1, 2 Timothy, Titus*, New American Commentary 34 (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1992), 276.

²⁰Fee, 172.

²¹*Ibid.*, 11–12.

²²While nearly all commentators who hold to a second-century date for the PE, see church order as the primary purpose, some commentators, such as Donald Guthrie and J. N. D. Kelly, take a proauthenticity stance and see church order as Paul’s primary purpose. See Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 52–53; J. N. D. Kelly, *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles: I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus*, Black’s New Testament Commentaries (London: A. and C. Black, 1963), 59–60. For a more recent work citing multiple purposes at work in 1 Timothy, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, Scott L. Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, the Cross, and the Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville: B and H Academic, 2009), 646.

²³Ibid., 7.

²⁴William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 669.

²⁵Paul sees no room to negotiate with the false teachers. He instructs his associate to “command” the cessation of the teaching in question. In fact, he uses this same imperative some seven times.

²⁶Fee, 83.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Kowalski, 200.

²⁹Donald Guthrie, *The Pastoral Epistles: An Introduction and Commentary*, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1957), 107.

³⁰Anthony Tyrrell Hanson, *Studies in the Pastoral Epistles* (London: S.P.C.K., 1968), 103.

³¹Solomon Andria, “1 Timothy,” in *Africa Bible Commentary*, ed. Tokunboh Adeyemo (Nairobi, Kenya: WordAlive Publishers, 2006), 1475.

³²Bill Smith, telephone interview by author, June 11, 2009. CPMs generally have what is known by various titles including strategy coordinator. This person has an ongoing responsibility for the health and direction of the movement. In addition, a small number of CPM trainers or coaches may each work with a number of CPMs, providing advice and encouragement to the strategy coordinator or training for the practitioners. The bulk of their training deals with the characteristics of CPMs as recorded by Garrison. They also address Biblical questions such as the ones addressed here. Their responses to these issues have not as yet appeared in print but are voiced in oral responses to questions that arise in training sessions and discussed on some church-planting blogs. The body of literature related to CPMs is growing, but as of this writing, theological/ecclesiological responses have not been published in printed form. The answers to some questions, such as how to respond to 1 Timothy 3:6, are part of the oral tradition passed on in CPM training events.

Missiological Reflection

Contextualization in Context

Robert L. Gallagher*

Contextualization is the process of taking the Gospel to a new context and finding appropriate ways to communicate the Good News, so that it is understandable to the people in that situation. The goal is not only to make the Christian message theologically comprehensible in a local setting, but also the way of living the faith in church life and ministry needs to be Biblically and culturally appropriate. We should not narrowly understand the term as only the religious rituals of a particular culture. It also embraces the full-orbed experiences of human reality related to history, sociology, economics, politics, and ideologies. Thus, contextualization is applicable to the church in the West as much as to the church overseas.

In August 1971, a consultation of the Ecumenical Institute of the World Council of Churches in Bossey, Switzerland focused on the topic “Dogmatic or Contextual Theology.”¹ The expression “contextualization” then emerged the next year in the publication *Ministry in Context of the Theological Education Fund* (chaired by Shoki Coe of Taiwan)² as they established principles of financial distribution for graduate students of international churches. They described contextualization as “the capacity to respond meaningfully to the Gospel within the framework of one’s own situation.”³ The foundational concern of these institutions was that Western society dominated Christian theological reflection, and it had failed to address the incarnational nature of the Gospel in a particular cultural situation.⁴ Thus began a movement of mission theory and practice that separated itself from the colonial past.

Although the term contextualization and the resulting developments of regulating self-reflection may be recent, the notion of cross-cultural workers adjusting their message to local languages and cultures is evident throughout the Bible and mission history: from Abraham, David, and Daniel to Jesus, Paul, and the early church; from Stephen of Perm, Ramon Llull, and Matteo Ricci to Herman of Alaska, Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg, and to the present day. Furthermore, the ideas of contextualization in mission practice were embedded in the historic terms of accommodation, adaption, inculturation, and indigenization all used to label ways of expressing theology in non-Western contexts; and manifested in the visual cultural forms of dress, music, language, and communication all associated with what is known as the three-self missionary philosophy: to foster churches that were self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating.⁵

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The Early Church record witnesses promoting the contextualization of the Gospel. The Holy Spirit tailored each of the speeches in Acts for the particular audience. The design of Peter's sermons in chapters two and three was for a devout Jewish crowd. Paul's speech to the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia is also appropriate for that religious congregation (Acts 13). Then Paul changes the content of his sermon for the people of Lystra in Acts 14, and the philosophers at the Athenian Areopagus in Acts 17. We need to recognize that authentic theologies for a specific cultural group are not a matter of science alone but need to be a Spirit-filled exercise. The missionaries of the first church preached the Gospel inspired with the Spirit's contextualized message for their receptors.

In Acts 4, for instance, the disciples prayed that they might witness with boldness and perform miracles of healing through their risen Lord. After they prayed, "They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God with boldness." A related aspect to this Spirit-speaking is the inter-religious conversation between the believers and people of other religions. The Holy Spirit empowered and equipped the Christian missionaries with boldness in this inter-religious encounter (Acts 13:2-4, 9-10).

During modern times, an understanding of how to contextualize the Gospel continues to be significant and crucial to the expansion of the church. Within Protestant evangelicalism of the 1970s and 1980s, there were emerging streams of contextualization such as the post-imperial missiology of missionary theologians such as Johan H. Bavinck, David J. Bosch, Michael Green, Melvin L. Hodges, Lesslie Newbigin, John R.W. Stott, Johannes Verkuyl, and Andrew F. Walls, all characterized by Western self-awareness rooted in ecclesiastical history.

Melvin Lyle Hodges was an Assemblies of God (AG) missionary to Nicaragua and El Salvador who in 1953 published *The Indigenous Church*, the first book of Pentecostal missiology⁶. This volume brought Pentecostal understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in missionary activity, and highlighted that evangelistic churches were to contextualize their Pentecostal faith. In no small measure, Hodges' insights contributed to the significant growth of Pentecostals in Central America at the end of the twentieth century. Hodges defined the indigenous church as "a native church . . . which shares the life of the country in which it is planted, and finds itself ready to govern itself, support itself, and reproduce itself."⁷ He claimed that foreign currency creates reliance and affirms colonial models within mission agencies, which then leads to unhealthy and feeble churches. He encouraged flexibility of mission to suit the local church context.

Hodges' extensive influence upon the AG missions stems from his adapting Allen's missiology from a Pentecostal perspective (within an evangelical framework) by emphasizing the Early Church's Apostolic experience of the Book of Acts. In other words, he embraced the position that the Holy Spirit in evangelism and church growth is essential for contemporary mission work. The church is God's mission agency on earth, initiated via the outpouring of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit empowers the church in mission accompanied by the working of miracles and the healing of the sick. All persons should receive and experience the life of the Spirit to establish self-propagating, self-governing, and self-supporting local

congregations developed by national leadership, using their own language and culture, together with cross-cultural workers serving only as consultants.⁸

In the last three decades of the twentieth century, practitioner scholars such as Melvin Hodges made progress in expanding ways to accomplish contextualization. Combining with the voices of the post-imperial missiologists were the pronouncements of the mission-founded churches of the majority world, the Latino Liberation theologians, and the post-colonial missiological reflection of Latin America, Africa, and Asia. The critical stance of these peripheral missiologists towards a hermeneutic of distrust evolving from expansions of spontaneous growth embracing misery and poverty challenged the time-honored values of the evangelical heritage. From this hermeneutical ferment, the question bubbled forth: does truth come primarily from human cultural experience, or from God's divine revelation?

Through these turbulent debates, evangelicals began to take seriously the role of the believer's cultural context, in addition to the Biblical record, in shaping church planting and discipleship. Further, models of contextualization⁹ were entertained that dynamically moved along a continuum of variations in emphasis of human experience, Biblical and ecclesial truth, philosophy, and epistemological understandings.

¹ Fleming Bruce C. E., *Contextualization of Theology: An Evangelical Assessment*, Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1980.

² *Ministry in Context: The Third Mandate Programme of the Theological Education Fund (1970-1977)*, Bromley, England: Theological Education Fund, 1972.

³ *Ibid.*, 20-21.

⁴ Kraft, Charles H., ed., *Appropriate Christianity*, Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2005, 198.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 17.

⁶ Hodges, Melvin, *The Indigenous Church*. Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953.

⁷ Hodges, Melvin, *On the Mission Field: The Indigenous Church*, Chicago: Moody Press edition with changes from the Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1953, 7.

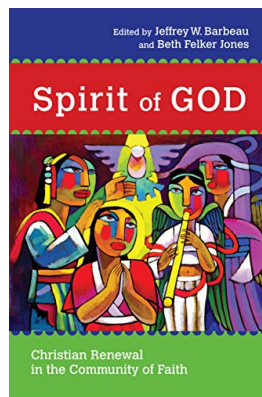
⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ Moreau, A. Scott, *Contextualization in World Missions: Mapping and Assessing Evangelical Models*, Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2012. And Bevens, Stephen B., *Models of Contextual Theology*, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1992.

Book Reviews

Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith Ray Hilsinger*

Jeffrey W. Barbeau and Beth Felker Jones, Editors, Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith, Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015.



The topic of the Holy Spirit is weighted with a theological understanding that any review of the Holy Spirit falls inadequate in mere words. This understood “Spirit of God” offers an excellent compilation of essays from well researched “[B]iblical, historical, doctrinal [,] and practical insights” (p.11). The greatest values of a book are the impact of the story told and the lessons learned by the reader, so, this review will offer a few brief lessons learned by this reader—as a recommending review of “Spirit of God.”

The “Introduction” presents a historical and current fact that, “tensions do persist for a “pneumatological orientation of all evangelical Christianity.” Added to this, Sandra Richter offers a thought-provoking question for any Christian, “What Do I Know of Holy?” She suggests that the Holy Spirit has regrettably been misunderstood or dismissed as some sort of “energy.” There is some truth to this generality but, Richter’s essay presents a brief Scriptural

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journey from the created work of the Triune God (Genesis) to the recreative work in Revelation 22 that clearly dismisses the idea of an “energy or force.”

The suggested lesson one might gain from the above reflection is two-fold: (1) What one knows about the Holy Spirit is primarily redeemed from one’s willingness to continually ask for the fullness of what God intended in the work of the Holy Spirit; and added to this is prayerful, theological reflection from reading Scripture, other books, and evidence redeemed from theological reflection offered by Biblical scholars; (2) Clearly the Word of God, which is how God (Jn. 1:1-4) reveals the truth that God is a Trinity of activity in those who will believe and accept the work of Christ.

Most existing tensions in the community of faith concerning the Holy Spirit reside within humankind’s attempts to understand who God is. Since God does not change (Heb. 1:10-12), the work of the Holy Spirit does not change. The lesson to be discovered is, “Why does the tension (relational difficulties) concerning pneumatology exist in the *community of faith*?” The volume, in its entirety, is a spiritually healthy pursuit of this lesson and a greater knowledge of the Holy.

Oliver D. Crisp’s essay, “Uniting us to God” presents a second important lesson. Crisp presents a brief expose of historical doctrinal statements from the Second Council of Constantinople (AD 553) to John Murray (Scottish Reformation) to Johnathan Edwards and John Calvin—concerning the work and role of the Holy Spirit. Crisp used this foundation (and more) to set the stage for two lesson making truths: (1) “The external work of the Holy Spirit is always in concert with the other members of the Godhead” and (2) “his peculiar work is bound up with God’s first intention to be united to His creatures.”

The lesson to hold on to here is that through the work of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit reveals, restores, and unites the relationships “with God, self, others and the environment,” (Bryant Meyers 2008, 27) that were distorted by humankind’s sin in the Garden of Eden. The work of the Holy Spirit is meant to unite the people of God, not divide.

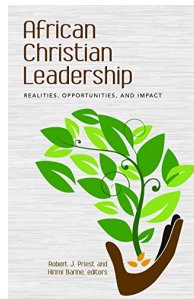
The very title of this book, “Spirit of God: Christian Renewal in the Community of Faith,” presents the necessity of understanding a third lesson as an example of review of this book. It is found in the last essay of the book, “Come, Holy Spirit.” Jeffrey W. Barbeau and Beth Felker Jones wrap this lesson in one statement, “Shouldn’t we know the Spirit more than we understand the Spirit?” (pg. 242). This does not, by any means, negate the study of the Holy Spirit or the value of every essay within this volume, as they state, “The project of recovering biblical pneumatology remains incomplete, but what is needed is not only study but also the wisdom that comes from the self-revelation of the Spirit” (pg. 251).

Basically, the depth of the evidence presented in these essays concerning the Holy Spirit must have “a way forward for the readers” (pg. 243). If clear evidence is presented concerning the incredible work of the Holy Spirit by study and personal revelation, but not put into praxis, then it remains as words on a page and an unresponsive community of faith. Renewal of the local and larger community of faith remains dormant. Similarly, if one reads the Bible and the Holy Spirit reveals an important life issue; solution to a problem or insight into what God wants to do in one’s life, but it is not implemented by faith, then it remains as ink on a page.

This excellent volume is about much more than a collection of well-researched and well-written essays. Its diversity of Biblical, historical, doctrinal, and practical insights is shouting the message that the Holy Spirit is crucial in the life of every individual that is within the *community of faith, both locally and globally*. The more Christians exercise concerted efforts towards seeking personal revelation and study of the Holy Spirit within a relationship with Jesus Christ; the less chance of tensions concerning Pneumatology, and both the more opportunity of unity among the local/global community of faith and the more opportunity Christians will gain to know the Holy Spirit, as well as accessing gain knowledge of the working essence and functions of the Holy Triune God.

African Christian Leadership: Realities, Opportunities, and Impact
Joseph Nunez*

*Robert J. Priest and Kirmi Barine. African Christian Leadership: Realities, Opportunities, and Impact. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2017. 299 pp.
ISBN: 978-1-62698-242-0*



Robert Priest and Kirmi Barine compiled a glimpse into the African context for readers from any cultural background within *African Christian Leadership*. The entire book promotes authenticity and credibility, because aside from Priest and Steve Rasmussen, African authors wrote the remainder of the book’s contents, advocating a foundation that “largely rests on African scholarship” (22). Priest introduces the central thesis as how the book’s existence relies upon: “important new contributions to understanding the realities of Christian leadership in contemporary African societies” (xv). Unified as the Africa Leadership Study (ALS), the 14 writing scholars and numerous project contributors assist the book’s practical and easy-to-understand principles that exist for how African Church leaders developed in the past and how future leaders can garner the best results into the future.

Priest wrote Chapter 1’s “The Genesis and Growth of the Africa Christian Leadership Study,” which introduces the survey’s purpose, general statistics, and research indications. Beginning in November 2011, the ALS team formed, defined their “African standpoint” for the study purposes, and developed a research plan for practical implementation (4). The ALS study surveyed a “broad cross-section of active Christians” representing Angola, the Central African Republic (CAR), and Kenya (11). The group’s focus also narrowed their results for surveying

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exclusively a literate audience, as many of the 93 questions inquired the participants' use of reading materials and technological habits (11). Priest explained where team members surveyed each country's specific cities, compiled the information in various tables printed throughout the book, and analyzed the survey's results (12-21). Most compiled results appear in Appendix B, with exceptions concerning information that revealed the anonymous interviewee content (241-278). Priest concluded his section by listing summaries for each preceding chapter.

David K. Ngaruiya wrote Chapter Two's "Characteristics of Influential African Christian Leaders," beginning with who the surveyors admired as the influencers of their faith. In his introduction, Ngaruiya asserted that when African leadership programs and courses develop, both the literature and understandings obtained from outside African resources occurs (29). While analyzing their results, ALS recognized the need for more frequent African authorship. Ngaruiya continued with showcasing the different characteristics Africans express and advocate as leaders. Those surveyed received instructions to name and rank certain leaders, which Ngaruiya gave multiple chapter examples for referencing purposes. Ngaruiya's aspects of his research permitted him to summarize how successful Christian leaders received "[exposure] to various social and cultural contexts both in and outside their immediate spheres of influence" (45). Ngaruiya then stated these leaders with these experiences then effectively possess the resources in "their 'problem-solving toolkit'" in service for and within their communities (45).

Wanjiru M. Gitau wrote Chapter Three's "Formation of African Christian Leaders: Patterns from the ALS Data," showcasing how those surveyed revealed their "interactive journey between context and relationships in a dynamic journey of growth and maturity" (49). Such variety included circumstances that participants faced, potentially including religious oppression, financial hardships from educational pursuits, sex trafficking, and/or drug usage (51). Through such results, Gitau advocated how African-context churches serve and "add value to the life of a growing person" while participants face such listed circumstances (52). Gitau concludes how men and women in churches "deemed influential in their local communities" benefit the communities' continuing outreach and leadership opportunities (61).

Steven D. H. Rasmussen, American senior lecturer at Africa International University, wrote Chapter Four's "Connected – The Role of Social Capital for Leaders with Impact," analyzing the different types of social capital and how Africans interact with human capital. Matching Chapter 3's focus, Rasmussen agreed in writing that church communities "provide many opportunities within the routines of congregational life for people to develop relationships" (68). Rasmussen additionally advocated for such relationship investments, "human capital through formal education and mentoring," and research, in that order (82).

Elisabet le Roux and Yolande Sandoua co-wrote Chapter Five's "Leadership Responses during Armed Conflict," showcasing tangibly how the ALS team handled post-interviews in CAR with the civil unrest (85-7). Despite losing sources who evacuated surveyed cities, le Roux and Sandoua explained how the Team replaced those lost sources with new sources (86). Despite the uncertain warfare circumstances' impact on survey results and residents' livelihood, both

authors indicated how faith leaders collaboratively “denounce acts of revenge and retaliation and to promote interfaith dialogue and tolerance,” as God helps (99-100).

Nupanga Weanzana wrote Chapter Six’s “Word and Deed – Patterns of Influential African Christian Organizations,” highlighting the impact of Christian organizations within Africa. Drawing from survey results, Weanzana discussed how the top organizations profiled from the trio of nations received an evaluation with “particularly effective” remarks (104). Weanzana also covered the trends and continuing work of these profiled organizations. Weanzana concluded by encouraging national Christian leaders to engage and “grapple with healthy postcolonial leadership patterns in the modern world” (112).

Michael Bowen wrote Chapter Seven’s “African Christian Organizations and Socioeconomic Developing,” acquiring initially whether “religious institutions contribute to the promotion of socioeconomic development” (115). Bowen’s answer later reveals his belief that faith-based organizations (FBOs), with their “significant impact” upon the general communities where they belong, “also have a socioeconomic purpose” (131). Sandwiched between this question and its answer, Bowen provides an in-depth perspective for how FBOs serve the public good in multiple African communities, through various means and difficult struggles.

Truphosa Kwaka-Sumba and le Roux co-wrote Chapter Eight’s “African Women’s Leadership – Realities and Opportunities,” revealing meaningfully how women historically and currently struggle in ministry. Both authors recall how their fellow female leaders received discrimination and marginalization, “both within the church and in society in general” (150). Combatting gender stigma, currently women successfully find equipping each other through mentorship as most effective, so the mentors’ past battles once fought and won can assist the mentees’ fighting and winning too in similar-looking situations (148). Ultimately, the seven women leader accounts as highlighted and their collective history as analyzed give opportunities for future female readers and leaders “to tell their stories” as a desired addition (146).

H. Jurgens Hendriks wrote Chapter Nine’s “Empowering Leadership – A New Dawn in African Christian Leadership,” revealing future trends and hope for African Christian Leadership as they rise up. One trend of choral ensembles, Hendriks beautifully described the unity found in “we are because we sing,” by earlier mentioning how “the yearning to belong and to share, to harmonize, and to enjoy the beauty and message of a song” motivates African choirs into continuing existence (161). Another trend concerning technology, Hendriks showcases Edward Munene’s insights in utilizing social media, “not in the way social media often functions, as the creator and builder of his own image” (163). Munene further continues his online ministry through recognizing “the calls for help of those who contact him and how he gets involved in their lives and pain” (163). Hendriks’ comprehensive approach reveals new insights from multiple subjects and approaches, all leading towards strengthening future African Christian Leadership.

Priest, Kirimi Barine, and Alberto Lucamba Salombongo co-wrote Chapter Ten’s “Reading and Leading – Challenges for African Christian Leaders,” presenting the data gathered and the perspectives gained when polling, and how the surveyed read in their daily lives. This

chapter heavily analyzes the content, presenting necessary conclusive thoughts listed here. First and second, the importance of writing and reading influences how then a culture “must be supported and fostered” (194). Third and fourth, the inclusion of more African Christian writers in this realm, alongside a stronger “Christian publishing and book distribution in Africa,” enhances both the coverage and discussion taking place concerning these leaders’ accomplishments for future learning contexts (194).

John Jusu wrote Chapter Eleven’s “Developing Transformational Leaders – Curricula Implications from the Africa Leadership Study,” discussing the need and “quality of instruction in formal institutions of learning” (199). Jusu encouraged that educational habits formulate ideally in the students’ homes before they arrive at schools (200). Jusu also indicated from past success stories that the number of African Christian leaders “involved in a variety of arenas frequently related to social justice and rehabilitation” strengthens the contributions that the leaders offer towards freedom, mentorship, discipleship, and raising up new leaders (201). Drawing on the importance of education, Jusu emphasized this book’s efforts in providing groundwork “for the conceptualization, design, development, and implementation of curricula for transformational leadership formation” of future leaders (213).

Mary Kleine Yehling wrote Chapter Twelve’s “Engaging Africa – The Tyndale House Foundation’s Story,” presenting the historical background for the formation of ALS (220-21). Yehling gratefully recalls how the Taylor family’s devotion for God and missions brought the necessary resources to Africa with Scripture and eventual church leadership efforts, along with affirming the ALS survey work and results.

African Christian Leadership concludes with a comprehensive evaluation of “survey results, interviews, and reports,” in a trilingual online format in English, French, and Portuguese, along with the ALS Purpose Statements and the Survey Questions and Results themselves (231-39, 241-78). As a novice learner to Christians leading in African contexts, the reviewer fully endorses this book for its attainable and clear principles, along with acknowledging that while much unworked potential still exists within this African context, the rising leaders presents him with hope that this potential’s transformation towards reality surely suggests future attainability.