

ROLE OF THE CROSS-CULTURAL WITNESS



SCRIPTURAL FOCUS

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers.” Ephesians 4:11

Their responsibility is “to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”
Ephesians 4:12



QUOTES

“...we have seen how Jesus lived night and day with twelve men...and made something of them. The implication for us today is obvious. To get results comparable to His, all you have to do is to be like Jesus and live close enough to few enough men for them to acquire His image through you. Very simple.” Dr. W. Maxfield Garrott, missionary to Japan

“I have but one candle of life to burn, and I would rather burn it out in a land filled with darkness than in a land flooded with light.” John Keith Falconer

“God uses men who are weak and feeble enough to lean on him.” Hudson Taylor, missionary to China

“Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.” William Carey, who is called the father of modern missions

“To know the will of God, we need an open Bible and an open map.” William Carey, pioneer missionary to India

“No reserves. No retreats. No regrets.” William Borden

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“The spirit of Christ is the spirit of missions. The nearer we get to Him, the more intensely missionary we become.” Henry Martyn, missionary to India and Persia

“In the vast plain to the north, I have sometimes seen, in the morning sun, the smoke of a thousand villages where no missionary has ever been.” Robert Moffat, who inspired David Livingstone

“No one has the right to hear the gospel twice, while there remains someone who has not heard it once.” Oswald J. Smith

“We talk of the Second Coming; half the world has never heard of the first.” Oswald J. Smith

“He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot lose.” Jim Elliot, missionary martyr who lost his life in the late 1950’s trying to reach the Auca Indians of Ecuador

“Some wish to live within the sound of a chapel bell; I wish to run a rescue mission within a yard of hell.” C.T. Studd

When James Calvert went out as a missionary to the cannibals of the Fiji Islands, the ship captain tried to turn him back, saying, “You will lose your life and the lives of those with you if you go among such savages.” To that, Calvert replied, “We died before we came here.”

“Go, send, or disobey.” John Piper

BIBLICAL VIEWPOINT ON THE TERM *MISSIONARY*

One of the problems in defining a missionary is that the term is not found in the Bible. The words mission and missionary come from the Latin *mitto*, which is a translation of the Greek *apostollo* (to send). An *Apostolos* is someone who is sent.

Strong’s Concordance tells us that an *Apostolos* is “a delegate; specially, an ambassador of the Gospel; officially a commissioner of Christ [“apostle”] (with miraculous powers): KJV – apostle, messenger, he that is sent.

The Bible uses the term *apostle* in several ways.

First, it is used to describe the twelve disciples of Christ: “*And when day came, He called His disciples and chose from them twelve, whom He named apostles.*” Luke 6:13

Second, the role of an apostle is a leadership position to equip the church: “*And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers.*” Ephesians 4:11

Their responsibility is “*to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.*” Ephesians 4:12

Third, apostle is used in a general sense to describe all believers: “*But the people of the city were divided; some sided with the Jews and some with the apostles.*” Acts 14:4. “*But when the apostles*

Barnabas and Paul heard of it, they tore their garments and rushed out into the crowd, crying out ...” Acts 14:14

“As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker for your benefit. And as for our brothers, they are messengers of the churches, the glory of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 8:23

So, while the term *apostle* can mean different things biblically, it is perhaps most instructive for us in the sense of its root meaning as “one who is sent by God”. This ambassadorship implies representing the character and will of the One who sends and extending His rule.

William E. Wenstrom, Jr. of *Bible Ministries* writes about the use of the word *Apostolos* in history: “Since the Greeks were a seafaring people, the noun *Apostolos* is first found in maritime language to designate a ship or a fleet that was sent out – it was also used to refer to military expeditions. Later it denoted the commander of a naval expedition, or a band of colonists sent overseas. So, the framework is not just of a person sent, but that of a group or person sent with the full power of the government to expand the influence of the nation in new areas.”

Who is a Missionary?

Some people would argue that everybody is a missionary. But these same people would not agree that everybody is a prophet or a pastor or a teacher or an evangelist.

Everybody is called to evangelize, but not everybody is an evangelist who has been given as a gift to the body of Christ. In the same way, everybody is called to be sent – to cross cultural barriers and share the gospel, but not everybody is gifted as an apostle/missionary/sent one.

The pastor is to equip the body to do pastoring (caring/shepherding) both by modeling it and more importantly, by helping others do it. In the same way, the missionary is to model crossing cultures but more importantly, to help others do the same. For instance, Paul would have been much less effective if he had not trained and equipped others to do the same missionary task he did.

Rather than trying to define words and parameters of “who is a missionary”, let’s look at our two best Biblical examples of missionaries – Jesus and Paul. Who they were and what they did are our best examples of being a missionary and therefore our best lessons on being a missionary.

Jesus as Missionary

The greatest missionary is Jesus Christ who gave up His prerogatives as God and left heaven to live among people on earth. Jesus became human and came to earth to “dwell” among us (John 1:1 & 14), yet the majority of people did not receive Him (John 1:12). And just as He was sent by the Father, He sends us in the same way (John 20:21).

So what did Jesus come to do?

Let’s look at some of His “I came” statements to get a better idea of why He came and see what we can learn:

“And He said to them, ‘Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.’” Matthew 4:19

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“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” Matthew 5:17

“I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” Luke 5:32

“I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled!” Luke 12:49

“Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.” Luke 12:51

“For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” Luke 19:10

And He said to them, ‘Let us go on to the next towns, that I may preach there also, for that is why I came out.’ Mark 1:38

“For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of Him who sent Me.” John 6:38

“So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, ‘I am the bread that came down from heaven.’ They said, ‘Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven?’” John 6:41-42

“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.” John 12:27

“I have come into the world as light, so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness.” John 12:46

“I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father.” John 16:28

“For I have given them the words that you gave me, and they have received them and have come to know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me.” John 17:8

“Then Pilate said to him, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.’” John 18:37

REFLECT #1

For each verse below, record **keywords** related to what it says about our **roles** as representatives of God – sent in the same way Jesus was sent.

Matthew 4:19

Matthew 5:17

Luke 5:32

Luke 12:49

Luke 12:51

Luke 19:10

Mark 1:38

John 6:38

John 6:41-42

John 12:27

John 12:46

John 16:28

John 17:8

Paul as a Missionary

Paul gives a great summary of his calling as a missionary in Romans 15:16-23:

“...to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ; and thus I make it my ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named, lest I build on someone else’s foundation, but as it is written, ‘Those who have never been told of him will see, and those who have never heard will understand.’ This is the reason why I have so often been hindered from coming to you. But now, since I no longer have any room for work in these regions, and since I have longed for many years to come to you.”

Note several elements in these verses:

- Paul is a messenger of Jesus
- Paul is a messenger to the Gentiles
- His goal is to present them as an offering to God, made Holy by the Spirit.
- He boasts only of what Christ has done through Him.
- He brings the Gentiles to God by his message and his lifestyle
- The Gentiles are convinced by power of signs and wonders and the Spirit.
- He **fully** presented the Gospel – by message, lifestyle, power, Spirit.
- His ambition is preaching Good News where Christ has never been heard and start a church where none has been started.
- Although “much remains to do”, he has finished his work in these regions.

Paul’s Missionary Strategy Evolved

I could be wrong about this, but it seems to me that Paul’s missionary strategy evolved as he went along.

Let’s take a look at Paul’s missionary journeys, observing his strategy with each.

On his first trip, he was mainly **multiplying believers**. We see Paul and Barnabas mainly as traveling evangelists. When they left a place, they seemingly did not leave leaders and instead came back later and appointed leaders.

On his second trip, Paul was mainly **multiplying leaders**. At the beginning of the trip, we now see two teams instead of one. Although the immediate reason was human disagreement, perhaps this was God’s plan to multiply their efforts. God begins to shrink Paul’s team: from Paul, Silas, Luke (Acts 16:1-40) to Paul, Silas, Timothy (Acts 17:1-13) and finally Paul alone (Acts 17:14-18:5).

The fact that God tells Paul not to be afraid indicates that he was afraid. In this time of aloneness, God shifts Paul’s mindset to focus on finding those God has prepared as followers and leaders. God says, “I have many people in this city” (Acts 18:10).

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Now we see Paul winning Aquila and Priscilla – not just as local church leaders but as missionaries (Acts 18:18).

We also see other missionaries who are raised up: Stephanas in Corinth (1 Corinthians 16:15-18), Fortunatus and Achaicus, Aristarchus in Thessalonica (Acts 20:4 19:29, 27:2) Sosthenes (Acts 18:17, 1 Corinthians 1:1), Erastus (Acts 19:22, etc.) Sopater, Secundus, Gaius, Tychicus, Trophimus in Troas (Acts 20:4) Cripus, etc.

We also see Apollos as an example of a third generation. Paul's discipling of Priscilla and Aquilla was so effectively passed to Apollos that we see Apollos mirroring Paul's work and impact.

As was Paul's custom, he went to the synagogue service, and for three Sabbaths in a row, he used the Scriptures to reason with the people. He explained the prophecies and proved that the Messiah must suffer and rise from the dead. He said, "This Jesus I'm telling you about is the Messiah." (Acts 17:2-3)

Apollos also goes to a new area and preached the Gospel:

When Apollos decided to go on to Achaia province, his Ephesian friends gave their blessing and wrote a letter of recommendation for him, urging the disciples there to welcome him with open arms. The welcome paid off: Apollos turned out to be a great help to those who had become believers through God's immense generosity. He was particularly effective in public debate with the Jews as he brought out proof after convincing proof from the Scriptures that Jesus was, in fact, God's Messiah. (Acts 18:27-28)

On his third trip, we see Paul taking an even more strategic role as he **mentors leaders to multiply churches**. He creates a regional strategy where he is based in Ephesus and sends others out. In three years, they reached all of Asia (this is probably referring to Asia Minor or what we now call Turkey). In fact, when the letter of Revelation is addressed to the seven churches, the Ephesian church is probably the mother of the other six churches. Paul writes to the Colossian and Laodicean churches but had never met them. (Colossians 2:1)

So we see Paul's strategy:

- A regional base of training was established (Acts 19:9, 20:18).
- Paul taught and mentored by life example, in large and small gatherings (Acts 20:19-20).
- Focus was on sharing of repentance and faith (Acts 20:21).
- Word grew and spread and multiplied (Acts 6:7, 8:4, 12:24, 13:49, 18:11, 19:10, 19:20).
- Holy Spirit was the leader (Acts 20:28) (*Spirit is referenced 57 times in Acts*)
- Paul invested his life in people (Acts 20:31).
- He empowered leaders and left them to God (Acts 20:32).

REFLECT #2

In your opinion, what are the key elements as it applies to Paul's specific service as a missionary in another culture?

PANORAMA

MODERN DAY ROLE OF THE MISSIONARY

Rather than following our typical PANORAMA format in this session, we are going to let some of the most effective missionaries in the world speak for themselves. After having examined some Biblical truths, now let's see how these various missionaries are God's truth with the modern world.

Below are their responses to the question: **"What is the Role of the Missionary?"**

As you read each section, pause and highlight or underline the words that jump out at you. In the REFLECT section that follows, you will write down your own thoughts.

Justin Long

Missiologist

The role of the missionary is to disciple and raise up local leaders who will launch local, contextualized ministries to reach nearby unevangelized and under-evangelized groups.

Rabi Pame

Principal, Missiological Research Center, Dimapur, Nagaland.

To me, the role of missionary has not changed from that of the first century Christian. The role of missionary is to go to the unreached people (to people where Christ is not named) to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ, persuading them to receive the free salvation provided by God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The missionary needs to proclaim Jesus Christ where people have not heard of this message. They need to do this directly, not like many missionaries doing remote evangelism today living in the cities, staying in the air-conditioned rooms, sitting in the rocking chairs with some remote-control buttons without going to the people and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ. They spend so much of their time on paperwork; so much time in organizing committee meetings and Board meetings and do not bring a single perishing soul to Christ in a whole year.

A missionary is one who is on the frontline in the spiritual battlefield snatching the people for Jesus who are under the bondage and control of sin and Satan."

This is my opinion. My understanding may be wrong with what the Bible says, but this is my conviction. I am training my students to become sacrificial and suffer for Christ.

Curtis Sergeant

Church Planting Movement Catalyst and Trainer, International Vice President E3

In my mind, a "missionary" is different from a "cross-cultural minister." The word "missionary" implies someone who is focused on where the gospel isn't. With that in mind, a missionary should himself/herself be working to see that unevangelized people groups are evangelized. This can either be done directly or indirectly by equipping near-culture or

geographically contiguous disciples to do so. In either case, a missionary's role should function as scaffolding rather than rebar.

In other words, a missionary should be temporary in any specific local context, working himself/herself out of a job by equipping new and/or local believers to fill the roles he/she is currently filling. The missionary role should be a mobile one in that the missionary should constantly be moving to the "edge" of lostness and should be often absent in order to prevent developing dependence among local disciples. There are plenty of other appropriate roles for cross-cultural ministers, but again, that is a different topic.

Keith Parks

Retired, former President of International Mission Board and former Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Missions Coordinator. Dr. Parks led the International Mission Board into their focus on Unreached Peoples and Church Planting Movements.

The basic missionary role has not changed since Paul the Apostle. First, a missionary is called and gifted specifically for a distinctive task in the Kingdom. Every Christian is not a missionary any more than every Christian is a pastor. This calling is neither superior nor inferior to others – just different.

Paul's conversion recorded in Acts 9; 22; 26 states he is being sent to the Gentiles. Romans 15 confirms Paul's understanding that he was to take the gospel to those who had not heard the Gospel. Although the definition is slippery, a missionary is basically one who is called to go beyond with the Good News – one called to extend the Kingdom of God. Through proclamation and miracles, Paul shared the message of Jesus with those who had never heard. After a short time, he left leaders with these new groups (Acts 14:23) and moved on to continue as a missionary. He did not get sidetracked into becoming a local pastor or teacher.

He reported 'what God had done' to the ekklesia that had laid hands on and prayed for him, as they sent him forth. The scripture seems to suggest the missionary team developed its own strategy by seeking the Spirit's leadership (Acts 16:6-10). He was led to population centers where he typically started with Jews who had some scriptural background but quickly moved on to those who responded, whether Jew or Gentile. He shared testimony and spiritual insight, influencing church leaders to recognize that mission outreach to all peoples is the essence of the Gospel. (Acts 15; Galatians 2:14) Through writing letters and repeat visits (Acts 14:21-22) Paul helped establish groups of new believers by teaching doctrine and applying Christian principles to ethical problems and worship issues. (As far as we know he did not tweet!) The basic role has not changed but strategies and tactics must continue to reflect contemporary developments. Widespread educational exposure along with the explosion of technologies, refined cooperative and collaborative techniques have resulted not only in change but in speed of change. This must be factored into missionary strategies.

Sometimes missiologists/missionaries are tempted to assert superiority of their views by criticizing past practices such as "the compound" mentality. Often such practices were legitimate in the beginning. The compound practice began because of health and security issues. But when original rationale no longer existed, extending the practice for wrong reasons (such as isolation from local people) resulted in less productive strategy. Today's challenge is to learn from the past and constantly reevaluate traditional approaches and their reasons. There

is also the temptation to condemn previous practices for failure to implement current and contemporary cutting-edge strategies. Critics need to recognize some approaches such as work among Unreached People Groups (UPG) were hardly possible previously without current education, transportation, and computerization. Interestingly this strategy was adopted early on by only a small minority. Adapting to this new approach has taken most groups ten to thirty years. Some have never adapted. Regrettably, there is often the presumption that “doing missions” doesn’t require professional expertise. Too many assume that whatever their experience has been in “doing church,” this can be re-enacted in any culture. Others have a vague impression of long-ago stories about missionaries, assuming that because the message hasn’t changed the strategies should remain static. Of course, this would never apply to the local church, business or education. It is important to constantly re-assess strategies and tactics lest we continue outmoded and unworkable strategies for the wrong reasons.

Beram

Executive Director, STAMP. Beram is one of the world’s most effective mission mobilizers and strategists. He is helping lead national, regional and international UPG networks.

The Missionary today needs to be one who can think **strategically** in terms of bringing to bear all the resources within his/her disposal for maximum impact in reaching the People he/she is called to serve. Missionaries need to be able (and willing) to think outside of the box. All too often missions work has been limited to the “spiritual few” when in reality, sitting in our pews are gifts and talents that HE can use, be it teachers, doctors, business people, engineers, students, sportsmen, fathers, mothers, etc.

Secondly, missions today is not just about starting a church (or a few churches) but **reaching a People**. No one individual has every resource necessary to see that happen, especially when most of the People Groups still remaining unreached number in the millions, or at least tens of thousands. Thus, the missionary needs to be willing to serve a People even if it means not being the one who will be accredited with “having reached them” (THE pioneer). The missionary needs to wisely (and humbly) discern and acknowledge that He has raised up others (missionaries and ministries) to reach the People as well, and he/she is but one of those who have been called to serve that particular People. We need Kingdom-mindsets!

Finally, the missionary today must seek out and transfer power (**empowering** missions) from the very onset – in every place, and among every People. He has called and raised up indigenous/local (or at the least near-local) men and women who have the vision and the passion for reaching their own People. The missionary must avoid the “first to land on the moon” mentality which tends to end up with “colonizing missions” approach. That strategy will only end up with limited success, at best and almost always, a dependent missions effort like a baby that never grows.

Bill O’Brien

Director of BellMitra Associates. Dr. O’Brien is a former field worker who helped lead the IMB’s effort to target and serve Unreached People Groups. He also co-chaired the 1989 Singapore meeting that birthed the AD2000 movement focused on winning unreached people groups for Christ.

Is there a general role for missionaries, or are there diverse roles based on the giftedness of

the individual missionary? Or, given the title of this session, does the term “missionary” imply there is a generic role for any and all missionaries? The primary role of a missionary is to engage in a ministry of reconciliation across lines/boundaries of race, culture, class, and religion. We are ambassadors for the King. (2 Corinthians 5:16ff)

Serving in that role, the functions will differ in diverse ways, at different times and in different places. Role and function must mutually reinforce each other. Good ambassadors know the importance of relationships and trust. Since the King we serve is all about bringing wholeness out of fragmentation, a good ambassador will faithfully represent the King’s intentions (foreign policy) and will know how to leverage and catalyze a spectrum of gifts/skills from others also engaged in serving the King.

Proclaiming the Good News of the Kingdom and applying a healing touch, and all those two functions imply, define the role of the missionary.

Larry LeGrande

Indonesian Field Worker of 20 years

Effective Field Workers currently in operation:

- A young man who established an ethno tour business.
 - An old man who gathers productive Church Planting Movement (CPM) strategies globally and presents them to various groups of leaders.
 - A middle-aged businessman whose factory is hailed by the secular government as the best influence in their community.
 - A mobilizer connecting global mission bodies from several countries for work in Unreached People Groups.
 - A young man who invested in a pastor who now has a school sending out 20 new cross-cultural missionaries annually.
 - A young lady who translated in a contextual manner the Perspective Course.
 - A middle-aged man who developed a course for lay people whereby they could share their faith with people of a different religion.
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Jerry McAtee

Director of Strategic Planning, Mission to Unreached Peoples, former field worker among the Unreached.

We serve a pack rat God who does not draw within the lines, play by the rules and who calls those whom society would not recognize as worthy. He does crazy things at unexpected times using methods both old and new. His timing is not ours and He is not concerned about our comfort or even our personal safety.

So, today’s missionary must approach their service with a blank sheet of paper of faith and offer it in faith to this amazing God to be filled in each day. This calls for being alert to His subtle movements and still small voice, to the seemingly unimportant people who cross our pathways and the events that take place each day.

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We will want to work at having a constant fellowship with Him and practice His presence throughout each day. As our relationship grows with Him we will be more apt to be in tune with His movements and recognize His voice.

Hopefully, this will lead us all to be more effective in doing whatever is required to get the Gospel to those who have never heard. If we are effective, it will be His power “working through us.”

“Aunty”

From Singapore is a longtime effective mission mobilize, strategically involved in helping community development in a variety of unreached areas.

“What is a missionary?”

- Someone who takes God seriously, goes on a mission, and endeavors with Him to build His kingdom. ‘Tis lifelong, towards eternity!
- Knows and uses one’s spiritual gifts to extend His kingdom by building up church, but not church building.
- Praises, prays, points out (profess) that kingdom of God is near, at hand.
- Able to perform miracles, healing, deliverance, or at least feed the poor, provide for widows, orphans
- Promotes unity in the body, not denominational or agency minded at all! Neither nationalistic nor racist truly sees all people as equal.

However, God’s call to that person is what they DO!

- Teaches, models, empowers, debriefs, encourages, and assures greater things than these will you do!
- Lives a simple life. After all, Son of man has no place to lay down his head, so “home” is a place always open to others.
- Knows how to rest, take time away, pray, has exit strategy.
- Believes all good things, expects all good things by the Blood of the Lamb!
- Has to have a holistic approach

All Christians are to be missionaries, and it seems most today would be goats! They **Fail**. Fail even to give support, fail to bless missionaries, to love them and work with them and “regard as BETTER than themselves”! Parents discourage children from the Missionary call. Children steer parents away in search of the good material life! Many “missionary leaders” within churches, in fact, treat their own missionaries like slaves, always underpaid, always cutting the missionaries budget first, does not provide adequately while leaders live luxurious, wanton lives in Singapore, eating and drinking! They call it “stewardship”, watching the churches’ pennies!

Well, Jesus sits across from the money box watching them proudly pop their money in Mark 12:41. And then off they go to five-star restaurant after Missions Committee meeting?

Too many churches cut budget of missionaries before they cut building needs, air conditioning, and in-house programs. Missionaries should be their best, paid best bonuses.

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Where did this notion come from that God's workers should be not treated as "top", paid above average? Where does this notion come from that full-time workers mean living sacrificially, reduced to almost begging?

Role of Missionaries

West to East: Westerners working in the East

- Train
- Facilitate, do not dictate
- Resource
- Help self-sustainability, do not create dependency
- Improve (with media, health, education) but do not impose!
- Foster a national church
- Foster unity
- Do not repeat division of denominations and parachurch groups from elsewhere (er, home?)
- IF there are already Christians and churches, the Westerners need to train trainers, to build up the body, not build buildings or their own ministry.
- Should seldom engage in public evangelistic activity unless that is your gifting!
- Balance the checkbook, ask the questions: how much support for you as missionary, to live in the East, spend on living expenses, children's school fees, structure versus lives impacted among locals. Cost-benefit analysis of selves?
- Less of Western leadership of their own organizations; more of leadership development alongside with locals. Should be two locals to your one expatriate!
- Emphasis is not on just individuals in the Bible, especially the New Testament. Emphasis on teams – Christ to twelve, Paul with others, nearly always....
- Drop the "superiority" of the western ways and the scientific mindset it promotes!
- White is NOT right. West is NOT best!
- And be careful. Do not treat locals and others as second-class citizens ... on earth as in heaven? Hey, Jesus was Asian (Israel is in western Asia). He also lived in North Africa (Egypt as infant, eh!).

East to West: Easterners working in the field

- Model not only simple but sacrificial living. Live simply – without privacy, without a toilet, air conditioning, water, wardrobe as necessary.
- Teach lesson of Church growth learned through persecution
- Missions call is a one-way ticket, coffin not included.
- Don't depend on Western or outside money except as disaster or starter kit.
- Focus on what is reproducible.
- Take knowledge and apply wisely.
- Don't be racist. God loves them too.

Missionary Lifestyle – a Missionary should practice:

- Lifelong Learning: can always learn especially from locals about their ways. This is part of God's creation and His creativity.
- Peer Education: learn from each other.

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- Participatory Style: see it, do it, teach it. (2 Timothy 2:2)
- Meeting Felt Needs: Not as means to get visa into the country. It is totally without integrity when you call yourself a business person and can't earn 2 cents. Whatever you call yourself, you better know it and do it right, do it well and bless others with it.
- Modeling: Moral, spiritual, simple. Don't live way above local community!
- Proclaiming Good News: Understands complete victory. Understand prayer begins with praise.
- Also know strategic prayer, not just your individual needs.
- Going Quietly: Everywhere proclaiming and declaring His words and promises
- Practicing and modeling personal spiritual gifting
- Counseling younger, newer believers
- Being honest: Stop hiding beneath "nice Christian veneer" as that promulgates dishonest Christians with NO integrity
- Correcting gently
- Loving everyone: Mixed marriages and children of mixed Christian heritage are wonderful. Missionary Kids are a true blessing, especially when they grow up and go.

Liz Adleta

Global Prayer Strategist, Mission to Unreached Peoples, Church Planting Movement (CPM) trainer and catalyst, global prayer mobilizer.

I believe today's missionary is more than anything else called to BE a disciple who BECOMES an effective disciple-maker as he/she follows hard after Jesus and His purposes among the people(s) to whom the missionary is called. A missionary is a catalyst and facilitator, one who incarnates the message which is also preached and taught. Modeling what is hopefully reproduced while following the models set forth by Jesus and those who have gone before, a missionary is a student, an apprentice of Jesus, a learner.

Following Abram's model of leaving behind country, people, and parent's house, a missionary goes everywhere Jesus is about to come (Genesis 12:1-3, Luke 10:1), not really knowing specifically where he/she is going. A perpetual pilgrim, a missionary is intent on pioneering the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit wherever God leads. A missionary lives and walks in conversational relationship with Jesus, abiding in His presence in whatever circumstances and places God guides. Prayer is the air in the lungs and the blood in the body. The Word of God is the foundation for life and practice. A missionary loves learning from the Word, guided by the Holy Spirit, and that love of learning inspires others to do likewise. Not claiming to be the expert, a missionary points to the Expert who teaches and leads into all Truth in the Word.

The missionary is learning to walk free of offense, to be an ambassador of reconciliation and to help others to become family along the way in the Body of Christ. Continually sowing seeds of the kingdom by prayers, prophetic proclamation of the Word in season and out of season, and by efforts, a missionary longs to see the communities transformed through this kind of kingdom living. A missionary is the fragrance of Christ wherever God leads.

WS

Church Planting Movement catalyst and trainer of thousands of CPMers.

Five Roles of a Missionary

- With about four billion lost people around the world, the first role is of a missionary is to be an effective cross-cultural communicator of the gospel, leading the lost to salvation.
- A second role is effectively leading new believers in growth towards spiritual maturity.
- A third role is forming new reproducing multiplying churches from those new believers formerly outside a relationship with Jesus Christ.
- A fourth role is training believers to do the above three.
- Fifth tier roles involve various cross-cultural ministries such as teaching, casting vision, research, networking, etc.

My bias is obviously on the first three or four. I say this in response to much noise from the “let the nationals do it” crowd which would denigrate the role of foreigners in effective hands-on missions. A common refrain is “Send money rather than go yourself” since nationals are so much more effective and “it is their responsibility, not yours, to win, train, and church people in their country.” Missions from the United States has primarily become a one week to three-week experience of going and doing “anything” in the name of ‘missions’ and feeling good about it. The majority of members of churches in USA probably now understand missions as anything done by a short-term trip overseas. It might be prayer, giving a shoe box of stuff to a refugee, building a pastor house in Mexico or leading a Vacation Bible School in Brazil.

Rarely is effective evangelism, discipleship or planting multiplying churches part of that picture. My bias is also because of contact with those who are dazzled by the “let’s go glorify God crowd” who have no skills or inclination to participate in the primary three tasks/roles outlined above. Anything done that requires a passport and travel that glorifies God seems to be called missions.

An additional idea that is hard to formulate involves the idea of commitment to a task, staying long enough to see results or actually accomplishing anything. This spring I met with a variety of young and not so young folks intending to go on mission trips this summer. Rarely was there much thought given to what would be accomplished in a spiritual sense in the lives of the people they were about to impact. For them, missions was more about “what I am going to do” rather than what is going to be accomplished in the lives of others.

Final idea, in a Twitter generation, the idea of staying long enough to learn a language, much less understand a new culture as a prerequisite to long-term effectiveness, is alien.

Matt Wallace

Covered Ministries, 15 years’ experience in training, assisting and supporting missionaries around the world.

I see a missionary’s role including:

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- being a God-focused and Spirit-led person who dedicates their life to being an intentional student of cultures other than their own,
 - having the goal of positioning themselves appropriately through relationships, useful skill sets, and availability with the intent to be used of God in the process of furthering the Gospel's availability and reaching those who have limited access to the Gospel,
 - or being a person that strategically positions themselves to help other missionaries accomplish these same tasks.
-

Andra Wiray

A businessman who ministers to the outcasts and their families as well as to the broader society in planting churches.

My role as a missionary is the same as a soldier on the front lines. He must know the truth and know what task is given by the commander. There is no arguing with the command, but rather an absolute belief that is the soldier's responsibility to carry out the command. The task must be implemented, with the goal, not a matter of winning or losing but abiding or not abiding.

When a soldier has this view of obedience, then he will have a lot of creativity and ability to win the war. But if he only relies on his own shrewdness – then despite all his best efforts, it will be useless. His central concern is only to the commander, not to himself (II Timothy 2:4).

Missionaries must have the mind-soul-spirit-energy of a soldier; If not, there is no need to go to the mission field, because it is a real battleground and not a place for playing or half-hearted efforts.

L.D. Waterman

20-year field worker and key national leader for both his organization and the broader Great Commission network.

I see a need for a variety of roles for missionaries in today's world. The variety is so great that I feel like I can only give a meaningful answer by framing it in terms of two sets of priorities.

Priority of Goal

First priority goal is a Church Planting Movement (or at least multiplicative church planting) among an Unreached People Group (UPG). Highest priority among unreached groups are those groups who have no known Gospel witness who also show some indication of responsiveness. Within that general framework, I encourage all to survey their gifts, abilities, and sense of calling, and pick the most strategic role and location, to make a contribution.

Evangelism Scale (EScale-1,2,3) The most effective proclamation of the Gospel can usually be done by someone within the Focus Culture (socially, but not religiously an insider). The second most effective proclamation is usually done by a person from a Near culture (unless certain cultural or historical issues make that especially problematic).

Third most effective is usually someone from a Distant culture. So whenever possible, we Westerners (usually being culturally distant from UPG cultures) want to prioritize our

interaction in light of the above dynamics. For example, someone gifted as a mobilizer or teacher can probably work more strategically in a culture near the heartland of many UPGs (i.e. Indonesia, India, West Africa) than in American suburbs. But doing so will involve many more challenging dynamics than working in one's own culture.

To take another example, a person gifted at facilitation and infrastructure can often serve more strategically by helping to develop and facilitate the infrastructure of new agencies in the developing world (often closer geographically and culturally to UPGs) rather than maintaining or strengthening infrastructure for sending Westerners to culturally distant places.

Some Key Roles for Missionaries

- Evangelists who are out seeking people of peace and discipling them (taking into account the potential and dynamics of proclamation effectiveness in light of the E scale).
- Shadow-pastoring people of peace or others who begin to serve in a leadership role.
- Mentoring evangelists who are out seeking people of peace and discipling them.
- Recruiting, training and sending evangelists (often from a culture near to the Focus culture group) who will seek people of peace and disciple them.
- Facilitating the launching of indigenous mission agencies to do CPM among UPGs, via near culture missions.
- Mobilizing Christians in non-majority-Christian cultures to discover and take up their most strategic role in CPM among UPGs (praying, giving, sending, going).

Victor John

CPM Leader and CPM Catalyst and Trainer

We are too familiar with the word “economic stimulus package” announced by different governments in different parts of the world to provide stimulation in order to get the company or group moving forward. This is a one-time action and meant for inside change that may lead to growth. It is often the case that change within the community or group happens when some form of external stimulus is involved.

The role of missionary involves some kind of “external stimulus” within the given community, people group, language group or geographical group. The missionaries should focus on inside out change that leads to growth. However, this requires perspective and skills which many are not willing to learn.

Below are some more thoughts:

- Encouraging people to do the job for themselves rather than do the job for them
- Providing analytical tools to develop positive and multifaceted view of the circumstances
- Connecting with resources of all kinds that help brings change and creates momentum
- Creating awareness and eliminating isolation
- Bringing education that improves quality and content
- Building trust with people

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- Never lying or giving false hope to people
 - Never gossiping
 - Avoiding “premature hemorrhage” by giving money or stuff that may create a diversion to the intended goal.
-

SHC

Grew up as the child of missionaries and is a 15-year field worker among the Unreached.

The key word for missionaries today is **empowerment!** They need to see themselves in terms of equipping local leadership to do everything while avoiding any dependencies. Creating forms of dependencies which locals have on outside sources also creates lines of control, thus the local leaders of the church are not adequately able to respond to the leading of the Holy Spirit. While missionaries have strived to empower for decades, it remains a crucial need to strengthen the church overseas and to provide a platform where missionaries and churches can cooperate on equal status and footing.

Paul Gupta and Sherwood Lingenfelter provide clarity of the role of Western missionaries in their book *Training Leaders for a Church-Planting Movement*.

“When the missionary becomes the church planter and not the facilitator of a church-planting movement, he will attract individuals who are deviants from the local culture and are, most likely, more comfortable with the missionary’s culture.” (p60)

Some challenges facing the church: “If churches plant more churches, but the people bring little or no transformation into society, then the mission of making disciples will not succeed. Leaders must be intentional in their efforts to make disciples of the lost, inviting people into a powerfully transforming relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, and forming new missional communities that bring spiritual, social, economic, and political transformation into their villages and towns.” (p216)

Neil Mims

Neil is a CPM trainer and catalyst who has worked in South and Southeast Asia.

Missions / Missionary:

Sharing the Good News of Christ beyond the reach of the local church(es), usually with special emphasis on starting new churches. Missions will not be done if someone or some churches do not make a special effort to “go” farther than the short 1-4 day efforts.

A key difference between Ministry and Missions is ministry is often done “near” in order to build up an existing local church; missions is done to start new churches or reach people who may never join (or be able to join) an already existing church.

We say to ourselves:

“So why are we starting new churches?”

“There are already churches!”

“Why should we start new churches if there are already churches?”

“It’s harder to start new churches! Let’s just help the existing churches!”

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“We need to strengthen existing churches!” “Why don’t we just send our new converts to weak churches to make them stronger?”

“Why don’t we just send our new converts to weak churches to make them stronger?”

“Existing churches could have better programs if they grow larger!”

“Some churches are struggling and might die without our help!”

“We can’t provide what new believers need to overcome cultural barriers without sending them to existing churches!”

We can’t? Or we don’t know how?

We can’t? Or are we not willing to “Do what it takes” to find answers?

Are we willing to spend time with that person to disciple them?

Can we pair/triplet them with other new believers to search for Bible answers?

Can we “give them time” and help them develop a new “Christian culture?”

Consider this:

- It is new churches (not existing ones) that see the most growth in the overall Kingdom of God.
- It is only Church Planting Movements which will change the “percentages” of Christians vs. lost persons in the population of People Groups.

Are you an International Minister or an International Missionary? Both are GREAT! *But* you need to define who you are. Keep taking the journey. What is your call, passion, vision? *And* to balance your “call” to the “need”, what is your church or organization’s purpose (call), mission, vision?

Here are some clarifications to help you decide if you are an *International Minister* or an *International Missionary*:

I am overseas to...

- help individual Christians be discipled.
- help existing churches have better discipleship programs.
- help individual churches (or denominations) have better worship, ministry, or fellowship.
- help individual Christians or churches evangelize others to join existing churches.

Focus on these outcomes indicates your desire to be an **International Minister**.

I am overseas to...

- work where existing Christians cannot or will not reach out to.
- start new churches or church planting movements that would not start without my following the Holy Spirit.

Focus on these outcomes indicates your desire to be an **International Missionary**.

Again, both roles are great, but let’s remember to define our work as either:

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- *Missions* = New evangelism and new churches and CPM's that would not start without intentional cross-cultural presence.
- *Ministry* = Working with existing churches and Christians to improve programs and outreach that will mainly benefit existing churches.

Let's allow for some to be International Ministers and some to be International Missionaries. But if we looked at the current Expatriates living overseas committed to kingdom work, 85-95% of Christian Expats in most countries are currently working in International Ministry. They are not really Missionaries.

Three Perspectives to Consider in Missions

1. Lostness Perspective

"And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?" (Romans 10:14b)

By current methods, there are more lost people every year in area/people groups:

Births per day

minus

Deaths per day

minus

Number saved every day

equals

Number of new LOST every DAY

Few lost people are reached or are reachable by existing churches.

Remember: It is new churches (not existing ones) that see the most growth in the overall Kingdom of God. So let's start new churches!

2. Business Perspective

"He [John the Baptist] came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him (the light) ALL men might believe." (John 1:7)

The missionary's customer is the lost person. Most businesses do not measure their success by the number of sales only, but by the percentage of market share of their product/service and whether that market share is growing or declining. It is ineffective practice to use the same old existing sales methods to increase missionary market share. Incremental growth will not add many believers.

Throughout history, Church Planting Movements have been the way God has usually worked to see large numbers of people genuinely changed and disciplined (lifelong worshippers of Christ).

Remember: It is only Church Planting Movements which will change the percentages (market share) of Christians versus Lost Persons in the population of People Groups. So let's start church planting movements!

3. Unreached People Groups (UPG) Perspective

“After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from EVERY NATION, TRIBE, PEOPLE, AND LANGUAGE, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.” (Revelation 7:9)

“Then I saw another angel flying in midair, and he had the eternal Gospel to proclaim to those who live on the earth – to EVERY NATION, TRIBE, LANGUAGE, AND PEOPLE. He said in a loud voice, “Fear God and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come.” (Revelation 14:6)

If you are working with an Unreached People Group, that means (by definition) that there aren’t any/many existing churches near-by.

- Don’t get SIDE-TRACKED in a near church.
- Don’t get BOGGED DOWN in a needy church.
- Don’t SETTLE for a nice local ministry that will not result in new churches.
- Don’t get HOOD-WINKED into ineffectiveness (and just becoming part of the woodwork).

Carefully evaluate the true effectiveness of those who say they are working with your Unreached People Group. Is their work ministry or mission? Do they understand the emphasis on new churches? In their current work, is there a possibility of starting churches or starting a CPM? If not, develop a plan to challenge and train them toward mission and give them some time. Also pray and look for other ways to start new churches and a CPM among your people group.

Keep working toward MISSION among the unreached. Isn’t that worth our effort, our time and our lives? Especially if only 5 to 15% of International Ministers and Missionaries are actually focused on new churches.

S.P. Steinhaus

Author of “The Role of the Foreign Missionary in the 21st Century: Reconnaissance & Training;” field worker for 15 years.

A cacophony of voices in modern missiology has been shouting that the missionary movement must change. The January 2002 edition of *Missiology* journal is entitled “Missionaries for the 21st Century”, seeming to assume that they will be different. David Bosch, in his *magnum opus* entitled *Transforming Mission* (1991), convincingly pointed out that each epoch has had its own paradigm of how to do missions and that ours in the future will not—and *should not*—be the same. More radical appeals have been made in the recent *Changing the Mind of Missions* by William Dyrness and James Engel (2000), and in the caustic *Revolution in World Missions* by the Indian national K.P. Yohannan.

Most of these voices I’ve regarded with scant attention; it seemed overly polemic and negative. Such writers, I thought, want to “throw the baby out with the bathwater” and bring the whole glorious missionary enterprise into ill repute.

However, recently a change has crystallized in my own thinking here in the field. I am increasingly turned off by Westerners who show up here with the view that they are the ones who call the shots, even when nationals are in disagreement. I’ve seen persecution, some of it

caused (at least on a human level) by Westerner's disregard of national concerns and the idea that they know better. I've been distressed by missionaries who seem to refuse to accept the reality that we no longer live in the colonial era or even the recent past. Moreover, I've had to acknowledge a general failure in missionary efforts to reach Muslims.

Most of this failure is probably attributable to an increasingly hostile field fueled by the international resurgence of Islam along with newfound freedoms of local radicals resulting in increasing pressure on Christians. However, some of the failure might have to do with the overly Western flavor of Christianity in general. As one worker ministering to Muslims in Paris puts it, "the label 'American' is far more injurious than 'Christian.'" He asks his readers the question, "Will Americans be the channel that God uses to bring Muslims to Himself?" (2002, Stice, 420). I don't believe it's time to issue a call of "Missionary, Go Home!" However, my own field experience increasingly is bringing me to the same conclusions others are writing about: it's time to change the way we do missions.

Major Criticisms of the Missionary Movement

Many of the books and papers mentioned above have made similar criticisms. These include, among others:

- the "ugly American" syndrome
- the inability of Westerners to accept the reality of the viability of "younger churches" in the Two-thirds world
- reductionism in our gospel message
- a top-down leadership model of paternalism and control
- conspicuous materialism and inability to "enculturate"
- business/secular models of how to do mission and what defines "success."

While there are many other things we could mention, these are some of the main issues involved. Perhaps the crux of the criticism boils down to the failure of Western missionaries to humble themselves and give up control and leadership to the budding Body of Christ in the field. The result is that the Two-thirds world churches end up feeling patronized.

While many of these criticisms have come out of "reached" parts of the world, it seems to me that the main application for us working among UPGs is clear as well: we must take partnership with national Christians much more seriously. This does not mean necessarily that we partner with organized churches, denominations or synods. It also doesn't mean that the nationals whom we work with must come from the part of the country where we minister. But it does mean that we cannot disdain or minimize in any way the importance of the Body of Christ in the focus culture country. Everything we do must be with the realization that the Church exists, is growing and is very visible to the average unreached person in this country. Operating within this framework will radically change the way we do missions today.

The Main Missionary Change Needed Today

William Dyrness and James Engel write, "Two-thirds of missionaries are from the Two-thirds world. Therefore, the Westerner shouldn't be the church planter. Instead, we need to come alongside in a spirit of partnership and submission, participating and facilitating" (p. 21). Could it be that Westerners are no longer needed to do church planting in the Muslim world?

I believe it is so.

Over and over again in our work—no matter what aspect—we have noticed that the more Westerners stay behind the scenes, the better are our chances of succeeding. Therefore, if we aim to plant churches, the same seems to apply. I am not suggesting a change in vision or direction; rather a change in methodology. The question is not if we need church planting, but who are the best church planters?

I am convinced that church planting remains the crying need. True fellowship is rarely experienced in local churches. The guarding of emotions and the inability to share openly betray the true health of the Body. Worship services may be lively, but social action and true character formation are often neglected. Christian ethnic groups around the country are notorious for their ugly behavior.

Pulpit ministry is weak and anecdotal. The “whole counsel” of the Word is not being proclaimed. Established churches rarely desire to reach the unreached people groups around them.

To remedy this situation, I do not think we should spend our energy on seeking to reform and revitalize the existing churches. I certainly do hope and pray that the older churches will be renewed. However, in order to reach Muslim UPGs, I believe it is crucial to recommit ourselves to the establishment of hundreds of new, truly Bible-based churches where Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) can meet and learn to minister to one another. Only through a vibrant church planting movement will we see the Kingdom coming in power to our target UPG.

However, *how* this is accomplished must change. I think all would agree that the planting of contextualized fellowships is our foremost objective; what has yet to be agreed upon is the role of the foreigner.

In my opinion, now is the time for the foreigner to move from prominence and to partnership. And— dare I say it? —sometimes even to submission to nationals. Within the last year, my national partner has told me both to reduce the frequency that I evangelize and to stop attending national churches. In both cases, I protested! What does he expect a missionary to do? However, soon I saw the wisdom in what he was saying and submitted. And I’ve increasingly seen the wisdom of that decision.

The problem is that many of us make our minds up about how things ought to be done before we ever get to the field. Our ministry methods shouldn’t be made before we arrive! That isn’t contextualization, it’s importation! Furthermore, once on the field we still must not plan and execute our methods in isolation from nationals. Instead, we should draw up our plans in *conjunction and partnership with* those nationals who are of the same heart and mind.

A church planter with 20 years’ experience in Spain wrote recently in *Evangelical Mission Quarter*, “For too long missions has been the providence of the West...Mission agencies have often trampled over the church in other lands to promote their own agendas. We are often reluctant to join forces with our international allies, particularly in the Two-thirds world. The reasons for this reluctance are manifold, but any clear-headed observer of world missions would agree that such reluctance has drastically reduced the impact of world missions” (October 2002, p. 429). So, what do we do if we feel called to plant contextualized churches among Muslims but can’t find any nationals who want to partner with us?

Historically, we would have just gone ahead and done it ourselves. Today I am suggesting we don't even begin until we find like-minded nationals. It may take more time and feel more laborious, but ultimately, I believe it is far and away the best policy. And we won't need to "pass the baton" later; the baton was never in our hands to begin with.

Too often we force our will upon our hosts and then when the persecution comes, we tell them to stand up to it while we flee. Three of my personal friends are today imprisoned for their faith in Sumatra. Every time a foreign missionary does something seen as "Christianization", these guys in prison suffer more. It's far too easy for our own ambition to get in the way of genuine service of Christ.

What then, is the role of the foreign missionary and the missionary team? I have already stated we are not the actual church planters. Perhaps instead we ought to think of ourselves as *reconnaissance & training* teams.

Reconnaissance & Training: The Role of the Expatriate Team

In modern American military action, before the artillery and ground troops are deployed, reconnaissance teams are sent in. Their goal is to quietly and secretly spy out the land and lay the groundwork for those who follow. If they are exposed, their mission is a failure. They operate covertly and are experts in intelligence, technology, culture, and strategy. They may be "computer geeks" and not muscular or brawny. They may even be recruited from among immigrants to America from the enemy country; they often don't look like typical soldiers. But their physical description matches the need; matching the stereotype of a soldier is not important. Their only goal is to facilitate the overall military campaign. They are ready to be little-known pioneers of the mission, never divulging their secrets or their identities even to their dying days.

Wouldn't it be valid to consider our presence today as expatriate missionary teams to resemble that of reconnaissance teams? Coupled with the vital role of behind-the-scenes training, I think it is a fit. Certainly, we do hope to be on the field longer-term than in a military situation, especially to facilitate training; however, overall the similarities seem to outweigh the differences. We are not the "big guns"; we are not even necessarily long-term. Instead, we exist for the sake of those who follow. Bringing in national troops to lead and execute the campaign is our aim.

If a missionary team is to function like a reconnaissance & training team, there will many ramifications. The following is a short list. The foreign missionary team would be:

- **Smaller.** The apostolic gift (gift of cross-cultural church planting) is not the end all. Other gifts such as encouragement, counseling, teaching, hospitality, helps, discipling, love and faith are equally as important. We do not need large teams but each team member should be empowering sizable numbers of locals. The ideal size would be teams of 4-5.
- **Highly trained.** Each team member needs a viable, marketable credential. Everyone also needs seminary/missions training or the equivalent study. In some areas, seminary teaching may be a valid platform, but most must also work a secular job, thereby requiring two degrees/skills sets. Perspectives Course materials, as well as training in Islamic and anthropology, is basic. On-going professional development will keep us useful and viable.

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- **Extremely careful about not being exposed.** Many of us have been cavalier in our approach to public exposure. The problem that we are finding is that when we are exposed, nationals suffer. Maybe even worse. National ministries are exposed and CP efforts stop. Focusing on mobilizing and training allows us to stay nearly invisible.
- **Focused on indirect leadership and ministry.** Gone are the days where we could initiate the work and then pass it on the work to a national. Now we must let the nationals lead from the start. We must maintain as low a profile as possible.
- **Careful in lifestyle decisions.** The size of our house, the make and year of our car, and the clothes we wear seriously impact our credibility among both believing partners and the unbelieving community. Due being in country in a secular role, we cannot live like some old-day missionaries in a very simple manner. Going too far towards the indulgent foreign consultant lifestyle will hurt us as well.
- **Committed to true partnership and facilitation.** The goal of the national visa is for the foreign expert to have reproduced himself within five years so that the outsourced expertise will no longer be needed. This government goal actually makes for good missiology. We must never be building ministries around ourselves but always be empowering our national brothers and sisters. Too often we have built ministries around foreigners resulting in dependence, envy, and premature closure.
- **Minimally invested.** Purchasing of land, houses, companies, investments, etc. in the host country will likely cause us to lose mobility and decrease our desire to move on when appropriate.

How does this look?

Our focus today must be on facilitating and partnering with like-minded nationals. How we do this is essential. Comparing action words (verbs) of traditional mission work of the past with actions needed today may be insightful.

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<u>Past</u>	<u>Present</u>
do	help
lead	support
teach	train
preach	disciple
initiate	partner
direct	submit
evangelize	mobilize
go it alone	network
minister	raise up ministers
hold	release
shepherd	mentor shepherds
command	discuss
admonish	counsel
work	pray
control	consult

While the reality is that this shift is not a black/white polarization, the need of today from Western missionaries is more of a *passionate-support* role rather than the typical go it alone attitude of the past. We do not need to reduce our passion or conceal our zeal. Instead, we need to be willing to passionately *play second fiddle*. If our ultimate goal is the establishment of truly contextualized churches among UPGs, then we must allow the context to be beyond our control and not force our ways upon others. An often-neglected part of contextualization is allowing nationals to lead in their way *from the start*.

As a foreign missionary, I end with **four key principles of partnership** that have become central to my thinking:

- Nationals deserve my respect. I seek to never cause them to lose face. I build them up—publicly and privately. I must reserve judgment; they may know better than I. I can discuss with them openly and honestly, but ultimately, I must remember they have the Holy Spirit as much as I have.
- Nationals must live here, not I. I am a guest of this country; I must remember that. Guests who go beyond the normal limits of staying in their host's homes are not appreciated. Therefore, I shouldn't go beyond the limits of being a guest and should never run ahead of my hosts. I will not force their hand. They have nowhere else to go; someday I will move on.
- Nationals must lead, not I. I must let them lead, even letting them make mistakes. If they won't lead, I will not usurp control. If faced with a total log-jam, I will seek to find others who are headed the same direction as I and train them for the job.
- Nationals can use my help. I am not superfluous. My role has changed but I can still

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be of use. I have something to contribute, and it is not only financial! Iron sharpens iron cross-culturally as much as monoculturally. My professional and seminary experience can bring much to the table. My ability to find funding can speed-up their goals. However, I will never pay nationals *directly* to do ministry, nor do I ever financially support pastors. I only find funding for national Christian *organizations*, primarily those involved in CP among Muslims.

CONCLUSION

Are we willing to do whatever it takes, dying to self so much so to even relinquish the right to “act like a missionary”?

Are we willing to act more like who we say we are—English teachers or foreign consultants—so that we won’t be exposed and the national Christian work won’t be jeopardized?

What if we have to minimize our own personal evangelism, reduce our trips to the villages, not attend a local church, and stay out of the pulpit?

Let me put it this way. Each missionary could perhaps build and maintain 20 contacts with Muslims every year. Out of those 20, over a few years, a few may come to Christ. However, when they do, we are often plagued by the problems of foreign dependence, mixed motives, where to send them for church, who disciples them, etc.

I am proposing that rather than the expat seeking to make 20 contacts per year, instead, he should seek to quietly raise-up several nationals who would *each* build 20 contacts per year. In that way, not only are *more* contacts made and more spiritual seeds planted in a more contextualized manner but when some seeds begin to bear fruit, the infrastructure is already in place for the follow-up. Mixed motives and status concerns are not nearly as problematic.

Imagine what we could accomplish in the future. What would we want to see happen? I can’t think of any goal more worthy than mobilizing and training a larger force of national laborers. If done properly, our ability to stay around in the background should not be a problem, for we are almost completely hidden.

Yet if perchance we are exposed, we should get out of the area ASAP—just like a mobile reconnaissance unit. In that way, the real army (i.e., the national workers) is not hurt by our team.

And the Lord is glorified as we imitate Christ, who emptied himself and became nothing.

REFLECT #3

Look back over the words and phrases you highlighted in the above text for each cross-cultural witness who shared his or her response to the question “What is the Role of a Missionary?”

Make a list of the poignant words/phrases.

What do these words say directly to you at this time of preparation in your own life?

PANORAMA

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR *ROLE OF THE CROSS-CULTURAL WITNESS*

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