

Asian Frontier Mission Initiative

AFMI/ASFM BULLETIN

Asia Society for Frontier Mission

Editorial Comment.... Are you ready to go through paradigm shifts in mission ?



Early missionaries' dormitory? (Cappadocia, Turkey)

Paul Hiebert says, “paradigm shifts are like rebuilding a house using parts and pieces of the old, but with a radically new way of ordering the fundamental configuration.” (“Transforming worldviews”, Baker Academic, 2008, p. 317.)

We are living in a rapidly and radically changing post-modern world, demanding a new paradigm, not only to cope with those changes but also to play a decisive role in developing the Kingdom of God on the earth. We are grappling with the Bible old issues that even Jesus provoked among many leaders in the religion of Judaism in His age. Yes... the pieces that we hold are the Bible old ones. But, Jesus is still asking us to prepare for a new wine skin. Now the issue is how we adopt a radically new way of ordering the fundamental configuration. Even scientists understand that a new paradigm is necessary when we start to see many anomalies here and there that cannot be adjusted any more according to an old frame of reference. Living in post-postmodern era, we definitely need rediscovery of the Kingdom of God.

When the Christendom expansion was fading out, we observed the rising of the Post-Christendom while the influence of the old paradigm of Christendom still continued. Who knows if we now face a resurgence of the Bible old paradigm of the Kingdom of God in the post-postmodern era. The remaining task is vivid. We desire to see or even now see *the Biblical Jesus movements in other socio-religious traditions*, which must be “insider movements”.

David Lim, who will be serving *the Asian Mission Leader's Forum 2010* as the director, stimulates our thinking in the area of frontier mission with “insider movements” understanding, by introducing some practical steps that we can take for paradigm shift, especially in our understanding on the church. He shares too his comment on some challenges we Asians face.

Rudiyanto, a follower of Isa Almasih, shares somewhat perplexing insider's view that might be challenging those who insist on the salvation within Christendom paradigm. We welcome any feedback on his testimonial comment as an insider.

Phil Emmaus deals with specific role as outsiders in facilitating the insider movements. He encourages the global cooperation by saying “An Asian organization entering a joint venture with a Western one should not become assimilated by their Western counterparts. Neither should the Westerners be made to feel that they should become more Asian. Each group brings

unique strengths and gifts to bear.”

On 27-30 October 2010, we will gather together by the demand of “Global Cooperation between the Global North and South”, “Asian Initiative for Frontier Mission” and “Insider Perspectives”. We appreciate your fervent prayer support and direct/indirect involvement in such an urgent need of Asian dynamics for the remaining task. Asian mission leaders or reflective field practitioners are cordially invited. And non-Asians (Westerners) working in Asian contexts are also welcome to join. We will have simultaneous events between **AMLF** and **ASFM**. The AFMI trainees will be also allowed to attend those events.

AFMI provides indispensable training opportunity to help organizations as well as individuals who want to serve among the unreached in frontier mission areas. Folks can learn how to make disciples of Jesus in the other cultures with the help of respected/experienced leaders from frontier mission oriented organizations. Among others, **Chong Kim** (BB), **Kevin Higgins** (GT), **John Kim** (INS), and **Young Kim** (CAR) will take major parts in the training. (See the last three pages for more details.)

AFMI will continue to seek for the Kingdom cooperation with many more organizations and individuals. You are encouraged to be influencers through this new Asian initiative by bringing and sharing your good resources and papers.

May His abundant blessings be with you as you seek for His Kingdom.

John Kim
Coordinator, AFMI

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ASFM (Asia Society for Frontier Mission)

The purpose of ASFM is to promote cutting edge thinking and sharing on an international level with a specific focus on Asia and/or Asians in the area of frontier missiology.

The six main objectives:

1. To promote within the global Christ-following community the cause of the Asian peoples who have the least access to the gospel.
2. To encourage and empower Asians to be more effective reflective practitioners and take greater responsibility toward reaching the UPGs of Asia through cooperation and sharing of resources.
3. To promote, though not exclusively, thinking and focus on insider perspectives and to support insiders who have heart and faith allegiance to Jesus and the Bible.
4. To promote intergenerational dialogue between senior and junior mission leaders and to cultivate an Asian as well as an international fraternity of thought in the development of frontier missiology.
5. To catalyze frontier mission initiatives and promote societies for frontier mission across Asia including the Asian diaspora worldwide.
6. To publish the Asian Journal of Frontier Missiology as a means toward these other objectives

Comment from the View of Global Cooperation — Global Cooperation between Global North & Global South

Chong Kim

I am one who thinks that we can bypass “parental” stage in missions moving from “pioneer” stage to “partner” stage. Modern missions has often viewed the parental stage as an obligatory stage we must pass through between the pioneer and partner stages. The problem is, once we enter into the parental stage, it often becomes paternalistic, despite all the good intentions in the beginning. The result is that the current missions movement is paying the price of digging ourselves out of the paternalistic stage. Unless we recognize this predicament, we cannot healthily enter into what is truly a global cooperation with more “players” cooperating as equals and true partners.

An important first step is that as we, the global north or global south field harvesters, go to pioneer, we pioneer in ways that empower creativity on the part of the people we are trying to reach. We must empower them with the four self principles from the beginning. Most people agree on the four self principles as a crucial “espoused theory”, but in terms of “theory in practice”, we still have a long way to go. How we pioneer in the beginning is critical for this global cooperation to become more of a reality. This affects not only the current challenges and issues but also how we train our field workers. These challenges are precisely what **AFMI training** attempts to address.

The other two foci provide the necessary context in which the global cooperation described above should take place. (Continues to page 3)

Southeast Asia, September 2–5

In early September 2009 a strategic joint meeting was held in Southeast Asia between the Asian Frontier Mission Initiative (AFMI) and the International Society for Frontier Missiology (ISFM). Predominantly from Asia, more than 50 participants (representing 12 different countries and 20 different organizations and networks) gathered around the theme: “Global Cooperation, Asian Initiative, and the Insider Paradigm.” The first full day of the joint conference was organized by the AFMI and the second full day by the ISFM.

Some 20 presentations and/or discussion groups focused on such topics and issues as “Catalyzing Insider Movements among the Unreached”; “The Growing Church in China and its Possible Contribution Towards Asian Mission”; “Facilitating Insider Movements: Challenges Facing the Outsider”; “Creator or Creature?: Describing Allah in a Contextualized Malay-Indonesian version of the Taurat”; “Empowering Creativity” “New Faith, Renewed Identity: How Muslims are Finding the Goodness of the Good News”; and more. We also heard the testimonies of two Muslim followers of Jesus. Noticeably absent from the presentations and discussions was the Hindu World, a situation we hope will be corrected in the future.

A New Society is Born

One exciting outcome of the joint meeting was the formation of the Asia Society for Frontier Mission (ASFM), the first regional embodiment of the Society for Frontier Missiology outside of the United States. Historically, what was initially the U.S. Society for Frontier Missiology had by default become the “International” Society, but this new Asian sister initiative will now bring non-Western thinking on frontier missiology to a larger audience than ever before. Among other things it hopes to accomplish, the ASFM aspires to publish, in the near future, the works of Asian reflective practitioners in the context of frontier missiology. The first ASFM conference is tentatively scheduled to take place in late October, 2010 in Southeast Asia. **UJFM**

—Chong Kim, Steering Committee Member, AFMI

Comment from the View of Asian Initiative—Facing the Challenge of the Evangelization of Asia

David S. Lim, Ph.D.

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest to send forth workers into his harvest field.” Matthew 9:36-38

Can Asian Evangelicals together with our international partners work cooperatively to get Asia effectively evangelized and discipled by 2020? By the mercies of God, we should at least try. The obvious biblical rationale is that this is the priority of God: God wants all peoples saved! (2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:3-5). Yet there are also 3 historically important reasons why we must emphasize the “evangelization of Asia” in this new decade.

1. Asia remains the least evangelized continent. In recent years, Asia is filled with fast-emerging global economic centers, like many mega-cities in China, India and Indonesia, which have joined those in Japan, South Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia and Thailand. Yet in these fast-secularizing, fast-urbanizing cities of the global post-modern age of mass media, internet and mobile phones, the spiritual influence and transformational impact of Christianity seems to be very negligible indeed.

Europe was evangelized in the first millennium, the Americas in the middle of the second millennium, and Africa in the post-World War II years. Yet Asia remains largely populated with atheists (Communists and secularists largely), Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists and even folk religionists. This is not for lack of prayers, missionary efforts and even sacrificial martyrdom of national and expatriate believers. A spiritual telescopic view of heaven and hell will surely be a very sad sight – of hell mainly populated with Asians!

2. Models of effective strategies in missions have emerged recently. In the last two decades, we have collected a lot of stories of effective mass evangelization among the unreached, especially in Asia. Traditional missions have proven to be slow and ineffective, mainly transplanting denominations which looked foreign to local peoples, especially among Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist and Communist communities. Hence, *transformational missions* have become more and more prominent, now even being adopted in Western nations. It consists of the combination of church multiplication movements (CMM), contextualized spirituality (CS) and community development (CD) approaches, now popularly called “**Insider Movements**” (IM).

IM may now be the “*in thing*” for many enlightened missions today, but some of them are struggling in being wholistic or transformational, because of their church’s mono-cultural expectations. Most CD practitioners may like to also do CMM, but have been constrained by their policies of non-proselytism. Most of us have started to excel in tentmaking ministries in Communist, Buddhist and Muslim contexts, yet only in few instances have CMM occurred. So, there needs to be a quick multiplication of consultations in the next few years for “reflective practitioners” (esp. those who train missionaries) to learn from one another, and especially to learn from the successful models. In fact, a few of us have started to train and deploy missionaries in doing IM. **We hope that in our ASFM sessions, we can learn more from their updates as well as other new initiatives in IM.**

3. We need to cooperate to maximize our limited resources. We need to admit that as Evangelicals, we function almost always individualistically. This can be a strength, because new initiatives can be born through missional obedience by a few committed to a common vision and mission. But on the other hand, it has evolved a lot of duplication, if not competition in the field and even in the sending centers across Asia. This has produced a lot of wasted energies and resources that are quite limited in supply. Besides in many religiously-sensitive parts of Asia, we can not afford to commit too many mistakes; one’s lapse can affect many who work in nearby contexts.

Thus, cooperation is sorely needed. We hope that when we come together in our Asia Mission Leaders Fora (AMLF), perhaps once a year, missions executives, church leaders, “reflective practitioners,” and frontline missionaries can pray, consult, plan and work together as a convergence, as partners in the Gospel to reach Asia together for Christ. May God use AFMI and each of us to send out more effective harvesters into His desperately needy harvest-fields in Asia!

(Continued from page 2)

One is the conviction that Asians need to take initiatives in frontier missions. The other is that these cooperation and initiatives should take place with the insider perspectives in mind. These two foci are unique to Asian Mission Leaders Forum and Asia Society for Frontier Mission.

Come and join us as we probe further on this topic and as we continue to build on what we addressed last year.



Comment from the View of Insider Perspective—Whoever Is Not Against Us Is for Us

Rudiyanto

John said to him, "Teacher, we saw a man who was driving out demons in your name, and we told him to stop, because he doesn't belong to our group." "Do not try to stop him," Jesus told them, "because no one who performs a miracle in my name will be able soon afterward to say evil things about me. For whoever is not against us is for us." Mark 9:38-40

It is said that The Message of Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, **includes the Messages of the preceding Messengers**. ("The Principles of Islam" compiled by Sh. Hmoud M. Al-Lahim, Riyadh. Under the supervision of Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Propagation and Guidance) Therefore, it is **never against the Messages of the preceding Messengers**.

Let's see some Quranic verses (Surah):

- 3:84 Say (O Muhammad): We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto us and that which was revealed unto Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and that which was vouchsafed unto Moses and Jesus and the Prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered. And whoso seeketh as religion other than the Surrender (to Allah) it will not be accepted from him, and he will be a loser in the Hereafter.
- 4:163 Lo! We inspire thee as We inspired Noah and the prophets after him, as We inspired Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and Jesus and Job and Jonah and Aaron and Solomon, and as we imparted unto David the Psalms.
- 2:136 Say (O Muslims): We believe in Allah and that which is revealed unto Us and that which was revealed unto Abraham, and Ishmael, and Isaac, and Jacob, and the tribes, and that which Moses and Jesus received, add that which the Prophets received from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and unto Him we have surrendered.
- 42:13 He hath ordained for you that religion which He commended unto Noah, and that which We inspire in thee (Muhammad), and that which We commended unto Abraham and Moses and Jesus, saying: Establish the religion, and be not divided therein. Dreadful for the idolaters is that unto which thou callest them. Allah chooseth for Himself whom He will, and guideth unto Himself him who turneth (toward Him).
- 2:285 The messenger believeth in that which hath been revealed unto him from his Lord and (so do) the believers. Each one believeth in Allah and His angels and His scriptures and His messengers We make no distinction between any of His messengers and they say: We hear, and we obey. (Grant us) Thy forgiveness, our Lord. Unto Thee is the journeying.
- 3:3 He hath revealed unto thee (Muhammad) the Scripture with truth, confirming that which was (revealed) before it, even as He revealed the Torah and the Gospel.

An Iranian scholar of Islam, Seyyed Hossein Nasr concluded in his book "ISLAM: Religion, History, and Civilization":

The Prophet asserted that he brought nothing new but simply reaffirmed the truth that always was. This primordial character of the Islamic message is reflected not only in its essentiality, universality, and simplicity, but also in its inclusive attitude toward the forms of wisdom that preceded it. Islam has always claimed the earlier prophets of the Abrahamaic world and even the pre-Abrahamaic world (e.g., Noah and Adam) as its own, to the extent that these central spiritual and religious figures play a more important role in everyday Islamic piety than they do in Christian religious life. Also as a result, Islam has been able to preserve something the ambience of the Abrahamaic world in what survives of traditional Islamic life. Non-muslims from modern countries who journey to traditional Muslim areas even today are usually reminded of the world of Hebrew prophets and of Christ himself.

The Islamic message of Prophet Muhammad, *peace be up him*, is that The Lord our God is the one and only Lord and that nothing is more important than God. If anyone does anything in such a way that he or she finds it more important than God, he or she commits the sin called shirk. It is the most serious sin because we sin against the Almighty God.

It is written in the Torah Deut 6:4-10:

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land which he sware unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not"

Our Master Jesus said in the Gospel of Mark 12:29-30:

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

Seyyed Hossein Nasr wrote in his book entitled "A Young Muslim's Guide to the Modern World":

Adam was a Muslim by the fact that he was the first prophet and that he testified to the oneness of God. However, this oneness was gradually forgotten as it is in the nature of man to forget. But always Allah sent other messengers to renew the message of unity, to bring back to the awareness of the One. Hence we have a series of prophets who, although they established forms of wisdom by different names, were in the profoundest sense Muslim. That is why the Qur'an refers to Abraham as *musliman hanifan*, that is, Muslim and follower of primordial religion, although he lived millennia before the Prophet of Islam and the advent of the Qur'anic revelation. He is called Muslim by the Qur'an itself to affirm that the idea of a religion based upon divine unity (tauhid) is not new but is synonymous with the religious history of mankind.

It is said also in a book entitled "The Principles of Islam" compiled by Sh. Hmoud M. Al-Lahim published in Riyadh under the supervision of Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Endowments, Propagation and Guidance:

The lexical meaning of Islam is submission, and adherence to the commands of Allah without objection. This is the true essence of Islam. By obeying Allah and observing His commands, Muslims would be in harmony with the universe in which he lives, for everything in this universe abides by the commands of Allah. It is an established fact that everything in this universe follows certain rule, and an unalterable law to which it submits; the sun, the moon, the stars, the night, the day, the land, the trees, and the beasts; all submit to a rule which Allah, the Creator, has designated for all these things. Even man himself, when you consider his physical construction, and biological compounds, his need for water and nutrition, heat, air, light, rest, or sleep, you would find him submissive to a law under which he has no choice, just like other creatures.

This inclusive law to which everything submits, is the work of Allah, the Majestic King, to Whom belong the creation and the authority. Both of the upper and the lower worlds submit willingly to the Creator, the Capable King.

Due to the fact that the linguistic meaning of Islam is submission, and adherence without objection, Islam, from this point of view, **the faith of the universe**. Man in this sense, does not differ from the other creatures. Since Allah is the Creator and the Provider, He has given man the freedom of choice, and has shown him both, the path of guidance, and the path of deviation through the Messengers that He sent to mankind throughout the ages; the last of whom is Muhammad, *peace be upon them all*. Therefore, he or she who chooses the path of guidance of his own free will, and fulfills the duties with which he is charged, and refrains from the prohibition, he becomes the legitimate Muslim. As for him or her who chooses the path of deviation, neglecting the acts of worship, and committing the prohibitions, he or she is thus an unbeliever.

Our Master Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew 7:12-14:

Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

It is written in the book of Psalms 42:1:

As a deer longs for a stream of cool water, so I long for you, O God, like a deer longs for a spring of cool water.

The Qur'an says in 2:256 & 38:18-19 as follows:

There is no compulsion in religion. The difference between guidance and error has been made clear. Whoever disbelieves in idols and believes in God has grasped the firm, unbreakable handle. God is hearing and omniscient.

Lo! We subdued the hills to hymn the praises (of their Lord) with him at nightfall and sunrise, And the birds assembled; all were turning unto Him.

So whenever we long for God like a deer longs for a stream of cool, automatically, we are totally submissive to God. Whenever we are submissive to God, we are like a lamp shining in the darkness or like a city on top of a hill. We become an influence for God's truth. Being submissive to God automatically ignites a zeal in our life to do anything God's way under God's law, it goes without saying. That is the message of The Qur'an. The Qur'an urges us to simply receive the God-given Christ from God for the glory of God. Our life as a whole is transformed by God to be a means to propagate our primordial faith in the God-given Christ to impact any creature in our civilization. In the God's holy book Torah, Psalms, Gospel and Qur'an, we have discovered the beauty of divine unity (Tauhid).

Of all the so-called world's religious figures and founders of world's religions without counting the Christian ones, Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, in the Qur'an and Hadiths, is the most explicit in saying nice things about Almasih 'Isa (Christ Jesus), *peace be upon him*, and in telling us what we need to learn about who God is and who Almasih 'Isa, *peace be upon him*, really is and in telling us about our need to receive God's way in loving and saving us who have sinfully forgotten God our Creator the Almighty. The Qur'an says God gives a good news by giving mankind **His Word whose name is Almasih Christ**. The Qur'an tells us that salvation comes from God only. The Qur'an tells us the story of Prophet Abraham, *peace be upon him*, who was asked by God to kill his son as a sacrifice. This command of God was intended to know how deep Prophet Abraham, *peace be upon him*, needed God. When Prophet Abraham, *peace be upon him*, was about to sacrifice his son, God provided a great perfect lamb as a substitute for his son. His son eventually didn't get sacrificed. Prophet Abraham, *peace be*

upon him, passed God's tests twice. He passed the test by obeying God's command to sacrifice his own son. And then, at the very moment he was about to kill his son, he passed the test by obeying God's command not to sacrifice his son but to receive God-provided lamb to sacrifice instead. So instead of sacrificing his son, he simply received the God-given lamb to sacrifice. The first test from God required Prophet Abraham, *peace be upon him*, to be extremely aggressive full of deeds. The second test from God required Prophet Abraham, *peace be upon him*, to be totally submissive to the active and aggressive God. **Interestingly, after Abraham had received the God-given lamb and sacrificed it, God said in the Qur'an that God would use the story of Abraham's and his son's total submissive nature to God as a lesson for generations to come that God out of unconditional love would bless mankind and would give a relief to the burdensome mankind by providing great sacrifice to the shameful fearful burdensome mankind.**

It is written in Qur'an 37/107-110:

Then We ransomed him with a tremendous sacrifice. And We left for him among the later folk (the salutation): *Peace be unto Abraham!*

And many, many years later, the Qur'an says that God killed the sinless Jesus the Word of God on the cross. What did God kill Jesus for? It must have been a great sacrifice to give a relief to the burdensome mankind that God loves so much. Our Master Jesus is a proof of how compassionate and merciful God is toward sinful and shameful and fearful mankind. What a saving knowledge we have from the Holy Qur'an.

In the Qur'anic view, the key message of all the prophets, and what links the Qur'an, the Torah and the Psalms and the Gospel, is the belief in, and submission to, the One God. **Consequently, in the Qur'an, both observant Jews and observant Christians are collectively given the honorific title of People of the Book.**

The Qur'an shows the utmost respect and reverence towards the Torah and the Psalms and the Gospel, which the Qur'an describe as previous revelations. The Qur'an never makes disparaging statements about the Torah and the Psalms and the Gospel, which are referred to as coming from God. **The Qur'an and the examples of our Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, guide more and more Muslim toward faith in God-given Christ whose name is Jesus.**

Below are just some examples of Qur'anic messages leading Muslims toward God's truth:

God is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. (59:24)
 God is Holy, Righteous, and True. (62:1, 52:28, 10:30)
 God is also Gracious, Merciful and Forgiving. (24:1,5)
 God is Love and God is Light. (85:14, 24:35)
 God is Omnipotent and Omniscient. (2:20,29)
 God is our Provider. (51:58)
 God is the only One worthy of praise. (60:6)
 There is only one God. (112:1)
 God raises and lowers people. (56:3)
 God gives life and takes life. (53:44)
 Our Master Jesus is the Word of God. (4:171)
 Our Master Jesus is the son of Mary (2:87, 253; 3:45)
 Our Master Jesus is the Messiah (3:34; 4:157, 171)
 Our Master Jesus is the Servant of God (4:172; 19:30)
 Our Master Jesus is a Prophet (19:30)
 Our Master Jesus is an Apostle of God 4:157, 171; 5:75
 Our Master Jesus is the Word of Truth (19:34)
 Our Master Jesus is a witness (4:159; 5:117)
 Our Master Jesus is a mercy from God (19:21)
 Our Master Jesus is a sign for all peoples (19:21, 21:91)
 Our Master Jesus is great (3:45)
 Our Master Jesus is holy (19:19)
 Our Master Jesus is a life-giver (3:49, 5:110)
 Our Master Jesus was led by the Holy Spirit (2:253)
 Our Master Jesus was born of the virgin Mary and had no human father. (19:19-27)
 Mary conceived Our Master Jesus through the Holy Spirit. (21:91)
 Our Master Jesus was sinless. (19:19)
 Our Master Jesus is the will of God to love mankind (3:47)
 Our Master Jesus died and was resurrected from the dead. (3:55;

19:33)
 Our Master Jesus is the one God sacrificed on the cross for redeeming sinful men and women (4:157-158; 3:55)
 What we do is believing in God by following God's Christ (3:50)
 Our Master Jesus was raised to God. (3:55)
 Our Master Jesus is highly exalted and has the greatest honor in this world and the next. (3:45)
 Our Master Jesus is now near to God. (3:45)
 Our Master Jesus did many miracles, including raising the dead, healing a man born blind, and cleansing lepers. (5:117)
 Our Master Jesus will return in the last days to usher in the Day of Judgment. (43:61)
 The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel are written and inspired by God. (21:105, 39:65)
 The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel are truth. (2:213, 10:94)
 God preserves The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel. (15:9, 5:48)
 The Gospel confirms the Torah and The Psalms. (3:50)
 The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel contains God's commands for all mankind. (42:13)
 The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel are the standard of judgment. (5:44,47)
 The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel enlightens. (35:25)
 Obedience to The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel is the foundation for salvation. (5:68)
 God guides people through The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel. (5:44,46)
 Any doubts or disputes should be solved by going back to The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel. (10:94, 5:43)
 The Torah, The Psalms and The Gospel are authoritative. (5:47)

What a good guide the Qur'an and the examples of our Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, for more and more Muslim toward faith in God-given Christ. We are always thankful to God for the unforgettable Qur'an and the unforgettable Prophet Muhammad for becoming a good guide toward faith in God-given Christ.

The God-given Christ is the blessing God gave to Prophet Abraham.

The God-given Christ is like a spring of overflowing blessing in the community of Isaac to be channeled to also bless Prophet Ishmael's descendants, who are also the Prophet Abraham's descendants.

The God-given Christ is an Abrahamaic blessing, that is a blessing for Prophet Abraham's descendants.

Prophet Muhammad, *peace be up him*, is one of Prophet Ishmael's descendants. Most of his followers are Prophet Ishmael's descendants and feel happy to be associated as Ishmaelites. Because we follow accurately and diligently Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, we are led to the God's Christ for God's glory.

The Lord our God is one Lord. He is our provider. The One Way He has provided us to come to Him is God's word whose name is Christ Jesus, *peace be upon him*.

We find there are many ways for people to come to faith in Christ Jesus, who is God-given, for the God's glory. This messianic message is the final message from the last Prophet Muhammad, the seal of the prophets, *peace be up them*.

We are honored by God because God inspires us to right-fully stay in our Muslim civilization as an influence for God. We are thankful to God for supporting and protecting us in our Muslim civilization to lead our Muslim brothers and sisters to come to faith in God's way, God's Christ whose name is Jesus for God's glory forever and ever.

Just like Prophet Muhammad, *peace be upon him*, was expectant about the second coming of Christ Jesus to kill *Almasih Dajjal* (the deceiver and the anti Christ) the most-hated enemy of Islam, we as the diligent and careful followers of Prophet Muhammad, *peace be up him*, are also expectant about the second coming of Christ Jesus.

May God's kingdom come.

May the will of God be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Wa laa haula wa laa quwwata illa billah.

For God's is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever.

Amen.



Rudiyanto is a follower of Isa Almasih who desires to see Jesus Movements in his people group and other people groups of Ishmaelites.





Catalyzing “Insider Movements” Among the Unreached

David S. Lim

In spite the Church Growth phenomena (esp. the mega-church kind) and talks about Church Multiplication and Church Planting Movements (CPM), there seems to have been no significant impact on the major religious affinity blocks, especially the Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Communist and Orality worlds,¹ perhaps except for some regions in China,² Vietnam, and Cambodia (Carlton 2000). As our Lord’s Great Commission includes discipling these major blocs of peoples and nations,³ which model of evangelism and mission will be effective in reaching them today, that will bear fruit and even much fruit among them? Our evangelistic and missionary efforts have not been wanting in zeal, holiness, dedication, prayer and even sacrifice. The problem seems to be with the church model and mission strategy that have been used! Are we willing to make a *major paradigm shift* for the sake of putting closure to the Great Commission, even if it may mean breaking with some of our sacred traditions in doing church and mission?

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Understanding “Insider Movements”

In the latter part of 2005, the evangelical mission community had been alerted to the

new phrase “Insider Movements (IM).” This was the theme of the September-October 2005 issue of *Mission Frontiers*. It was also the theme of the 2005 annual conference of the *International Society for Frontier Missiology* (September 12-15, 2005) in Denver, Colorado: “Insider Movements: Doing Church Where There Is No Church.”

IM is synonymous with “gospel movements,” “people movements,” “Christ-ward movements” and “disciple-making movements” as long as these phrases refer to a nuanced understanding that CPM should be combined with “radical contextualization (RC)” (cf. Lim 2003). Some even contrast IM from CPM:

The term “Church Planting” implies inventing a new structure. No matter how contextualized the “church” may be, it is still a new structure that is foreign to the people group. Church-planting work of various levels of contextualization is necessary in some contexts. However, our primary desire is for the spontaneous spread of culturally relevant Gospel movements through *pre-existing networks*. We believe that the extended family unit is the primary and foremost biblical model of *ecclesia* (“Seeking...” 2005).

They say further:

Our aim is to be *catalytic agents* in the spawning of new movements. We do not have a prescribed methodology. We focus on facilitating the inductive learning of the scriptures that will enable indigenous believers to define their own convictions in their daily living. Using the scriptures as the primary and foremost authority, we trust in the self-correcting power of God’s Word that is lived out through obedience and the work of the Holy Spirit to lead the indigenous believers (ibid.).

Call to Paradigm Shift of “Church”

Unless church leaders and missionaries who have been ministering in non-Christian-majority contexts shift paradigms of church and ministry, they will remain ineffective, even if they seem to be winning a number of converts at a time. In the milieu of rapid

population increase and growing mission activities of other religions, esp. among the poor, we need to adopt a more effective approach, otherwise millions of non-Christians will continue to die and go to eternal destruction by the millions each year!

Global Christianity (including Evangelicalism) has unwittingly fallen into a trap, which is historically known as “the Babylonian captivity of the church,” that constitutes the Christendom paradigm of church and also often called “western shape” which most third world churches have adopted. Thinking that this will result in better church growth, Christian leaders have been promoting “the local church is the base for ministry and/or world evangelization.” By “local church” is meant a *congregation* that seeks to have a full-time *pastor* (and a *pastoral staff* as it grows bigger) and her own *sanctuary* (ideally bought and owned rather than rented), in order to attract and maintain an ever-increasing attendance in her *weekly Sunday worship services*.

Though this looks appealing (and not many have seriously questioned this *tradition*), it has been a *self-defeating* (and historically, quite *self-destructive*) trap: for the *maintenance mode* of local churches have almost always killed (often sooner than later) the *mission mode* of the (whole) church! A lot of Christian resources become absorbed into the maintenance of church activities (e.g., evangelistic rallies, Sunday Schools, youth camps, mission conferences, building projects, etc.) for *nominal* believers who offer to God (often hypocritically!) what are conveniently “extras” from the “abundant *blessings*” that He provides in their middle class “*comfort zones*”! Usually only a pittance (ever calculated the percentage of church budgets that really go into missions?) are actually spent to help reach out to non-church members! In secular terms, this is NOT cost-effective! Or in spiritual terms, it is *poor stewardship*! Why?

May I suggest that there are at least three ways by which *local church* structures become hindrances to church growth: they stunt *quality growth*, *quantity growth* and *long-term growth*!

1. They hinder quality growth. In spite the zeal and fervency affirmed in the songs, prayers and sermons of worship services, they actually nurture *nominalism* (or worse, *hypocrisy*)! Disciples are made in *small* groups, not big meetings. Yet most (if not all) local churches would emphasize congregational assemblies rather than cell groups. The best proof is: where do they look to count their *weekly church attendance*? Such emphasis is perhaps inevitable, because of the *hierarchical* (perhaps undeniably elitist) and *clerical* model of church in the minds of most Christians nowadays and ever since the

Edict of Milan (in AD 313 when Constantine enforced Christianity in the Roman Empire) when the bishops introduced the diocesan and parish structures to the church!

Thereby almost inevitably, most church activities (including the central “Sunday worship services”) have helped keep Christians immature spiritually. They are kept perennially as “spiritual babies” who are *dependent* on pastors, church buildings and church programs to “feel spiritual” or even just to “be in God’s presence.” Almost all “lay-people,” even after 40-50 years in faith, would still need to be visited or counseled or prayed for/blessed (by “pastors” usually), still self-centered, and needing to be served (instead of being equipped to minister to others, cf. Eph. 4:11-16). A majority would hesitate to lead in public prayers or to do personal evangelism! Instead of spiritual empowerment, they experience spiritual disempowerment! In short, local churches normally produce “*nominal* (or *baby*) Christians,” not “committed disciples”!

2. They hinder quantity growth. Moreover, local churches stunt the amount and the rate of *numerical* increase of the church! We have mentioned above how they waste a lot of resources in maintenance, mostly on more costly ways to keep the members happy, if not “spoiled.” In fact, to attract more people to Christ, they create more “*come* structures” (read: church programs that almost always has to border on entertainment; how else are they going to be *seeker-friendly*, given the competition “out there” in the world?), rather than more “*go* structures” (read: more secular-looking programs NOT held in church buildings)!⁴

And instead of “total church mobilization” to evangelize their community and the ends of the earth, local churches elicit low commitment from their members (besides weekly church attendance and giving their offerings), hence the need to constantly cajole people to be more active in church. Meanwhile, they enhance the role of “*full-timers*” (pastors and missionaries) to be the key players in doing evangelism and missions! “Reaching out to the lost” becomes the job of specialists, and not of the whole body! No wonder the rate of growth of local churches decreases as they increase (often *slowly*) in size! How tragic! Should we not be longing for a more “*spontaneous expansion* of the church” involving the *whole* church to reach the whole world? Hardly any local church has been able to sustain rapid quantity church growth for ten years – with the only exception that they were able to institutionalize a strong cell multiplication program whereby every member is encouraged (or required!) to be a member of a small group. Yet how many

have been able to maintain and sustain such structure beyond twenty years?

3. They hinder long-term growth. And worst, local churches are structured in such a way that *future growth* (in quality and quantity), if any, will be stunted! The emphasis on big assemblies, magnificent buildings and super-gifted “full-timers” seems to fit into the less democratic (or more authoritarian) societies in Asia. But in the long term, this breeds the “superstar complex” in the church leaders and “hero (bordering on demi-god, as in Korea) worship” among the members. Tragically, in the long term this results in the appointment or election of “lay leaders” (often called “trustees,” “elders” or “deacons”) who are chosen on the basis of their popularity – often due to their giftedness in public speaking (or singing) and/or in political savvy, including the use of wealth for self-promotion (perhaps often unintentionally). The almost inevitable rise of such populist leaders, especially as the church grows richer and becomes middle- or upper-class (known as “redemptive lift”), usually results in the degeneration of the quality of church leadership – often sooner than later. Normally the second generation of local church leaders (both clergy and lay) would be good bureaucrats (knowledgeable in *maintenance management*) rather than good entrepreneurs (who can provide *visionary* and *creative leadership*).

But more tragic, their concept of spirituality also often degenerates into “spiritual showmanship” (usually on stage, something which our Lord Jesus clearly denounced in Mt. 6:1-18), thereby placing non-functioning people (who are not doing actual disciple-making) in positions of authority, while the functioning ones (who are doing actual disciple-making) are busy taking care of the flock, often in their silent ways (even shying away from accepting administrative roles that entail a series of committee meetings). Thus, local churches produce spiritually immature (perhaps often quite hypocritical) leaders who hardly contribute to quality or quantitative church growth at all!

So, are we destined to have local churches that gradually become less and less effective in evangelism, discipleship and missions? Not necessarily, but it comes at great cost to our present local church structures. Are we willing to shift to a more *decentralized* (less hierarchical and less clerical) paradigm of church? That is, to transform our local churches into *house-church networks*, where “*small group meetings increase, while big assemblies decrease*”? The challenge is to work for the multiplication of more small churches (each self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating and self-theologizing) rather than for the addition of more mega-churches. The key is to remember: “disciples are made in *small* groups, not in *big* meetings.”

The secret to maintain a long-standing *revived state* of the church is to keep strong small group structures, just as it stretched for more than a hundred years at least *twice* in history: in the Moravian community in Herrnhut (with its cells called “choirs”), and during the Wesleyan Awakening (with its cells called “classes”). However, in both these cases, gradually “small group meetings decreased, while big worship services increased.” This is due, in my view, mainly to *human weakness*, as usual. Attendance in big meetings (where one can remain anonymous) require less commitment than participation in small groups (where one can hardly hide any secrets)! We tend towards “cheap grace” rather than “costly discipleship.” (Hence, under normal instances, mega-churches will grow at the expense and loss of small churches!)

Thus, the ultimate challenge is: Are local churches willing to die, so that house churches can be born and flourish? Then and only then will there be the possibility of *all* converts growing into mature Christians who can be *disciple-makers*, and be sent elsewhere as *tent-makers* to make more disciples. And church leaders will only be those who are true servants with proven pastoral gifts. Thereby, the *whole church* will be empowered to reach the whole world in the fastest way possible through this IM or rapid disciple-making strategy done by (hardly visible) *house-church networks*!

Biblical Basis for IM

Actually, Jesus’ mission paradigm was IM. His mission was insiders – Jews multiplying disciples among Jews without creating another organized religious system parallel or counter to the synagogue (of early Judaism). He did not intend to found a new religion, but his movement later on became an institution (Bosch 1991: 50-51). He even perhaps had secret converts in Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea, and perhaps through them, Gamaliel.

The early Christians followed the same pattern, too. They reached out to their compatriots as Jews to Jews within the Temple and synagogue structures of Jewish society, and just met “from house to house,” evangelizing and discipling a few households at a time. Within a few years of such IM, they had literally turned the Roman Empire upside down (Ac. 17:6 KJV). They did not create a clergy class, nor construct (or even rent) a religious building nor hold regular religious services, except to break bread weekly in their homes.⁵ It was the teaching and practice of the apostle Paul (perhaps the best model of a cross-cultural missionary) not to

plant a growing “local church,” but an indigenous disciple-making movement in house churches that are formed by converts who did not have to be dislocated from their homes and communities (cf. 1 Cor. 9:19-23).

This New Testament practice is not different from that of Old Testament (OT) Israel, which shows God’s design and structure for a reached, disciplined or transformed people: (1) There were no local shrines or temples in each village or town. (2) There were no weekly Sabbath worship services (synagogues came later in 200 B.C. for teaching Diaspora Jews).⁶ (3) There were no weekly nor monthly collection of tithes and offerings.⁷ And (4) there were no “full-time” clergy (the levitical priests were provided not just with cities, but also with pasturelands: Josh. 21).⁸ The OT Jews were required to celebrate communally as a people in the national Temple (note: God’s design was a portable and transportable Tabernacle) only three times a year: Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles (Dt. 16:16). The actual teaching and obedience of the “way of God’s righteousness” was in the homes (Dt. 6:1-11)!

Biblical Christianity is therefore structured as a network of *simple churches* (usually called “house churches”). It is not “*churchless Christianity*” nor “*religionless Christianity*” (cf. *IBMR* Editorial 2005; Tennent 2005),” but “*simple Christianity*.” Its mission is to reproduce simple groups of Christ-worshippers without elaborate religiosity. Thus the mission statement of the Philippine house church movement is: “to multiply God’s church throughout the world, one household at a time.” This seeks to fulfill God’s covenants with Abraham that through him every family on earth will be blessed (Gen. 12:3, cf. Gal. 3:14, 29), and with Israel that she will be a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:6, cf. 1 Pet. 2:9-10).

Practical Steps for Churches

How then can church leaders shift into the IM paradigm? Most of them look “foreign” to their own peoples.⁹ They just need to follow the simple yet effective strategy which Jesus and his first disciples used. It is based on a *simple doctrine* (“priesthood of all believers”) and a *simple practice* (“making disciples”) in a *simple structure* (“house-church networks”). Churches can be transformed from centralized Christendom (traditional local churches) to decentralized house-church structures. Although, by God’s grace, it is possible to skip some steps, it

seems best to work out a 3-5 year plan to take one’s church through the transformation process so as to avoid unnecessary conflicts and splits (cf. Southerland 1999). It may be best to transition first into a “mega-church” (church *with* cells) to a “cell church” (church *of* cells) and finally to “house church” (church *is* cells) (Zdero 2004: 110-118).

First of all, the church leadership must make a policy that membership in their church entails the commitment to be a faithful participant in a small group (maximum of 15 members in cities, and 20 in villages). If they are alone or just a few, they can start by forming a cell and multiply from there. Start like Jesus, who began with 12 disciples. Alongside this decision, training sessions for cell leaders should be scheduled. After the initial orientation and training on the basics of leading cells, the cell leaders (and their assistants) should meet at least monthly for fellowship and mutual learning. Each cell leader should know who is his/her coordinator who is facilitating their cell leaders’ meetings and monitoring their ministry. And to ensure cell growth, all cell members must be trained to do “friendship evangelism.” If they have no more non-Christian relatives and friends, they should learn how to make friends with their neighbors and work/schoolmates to win them for Christ.

Then the church is ready to become a “*cell church*” (“church *of* cells” model). They should work towards turning all church



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activities into cells: prayer meetings into “prayer cells,” youth fellowship into “youth cells,” Sunday School classes into “children’s cells,” choirs into “singing groups,” etc. They can start training and delegating the administration of the sacraments/ordinances to the cell leaders; after all, they are truly the “pastors” of their cells.

And finally, they are ready to become a “house church network,” where each cell is a church indeed – *self-governing* (with its own leaders), *self-supporting* (with its own budget), *self-propagating* (with its own missions program) and *self-theologizing* (with its own doctrinal beliefs)!¹⁰ Each cell can collect and spend their own funds (so-called “tithes and offerings”), giving at least 10% for the support of their “favorite” leader/minister/missionary; they should aim to allocate at least 50% for ministry beyond their in-group. The Sunday service becomes cell meetings, perhaps alongside (ministerial or practical) training workshops or open forums as needed by the network. And better, slowly lessen “celebrations” from weekly to monthly to quarterly (or even just 3 times a year, as was instituted in the Torah for O.T. Israel). The church building can be transformed into a multi-purpose *ministry center* to serve the needs in the community. If they don’t have a building, there is really no need to have one. Whenever they need a large space for big gatherings, they can resourcefully find free or rented facilities for their purposes.

By this time the church will have become a “community church,” with direct attachment, ministry and witness in her (even if it were largely non-Christian) neighborhood. The cells will be sending their members to serve in the community and to form partnerships with other Christians in their community, perhaps starting with a monthly prayer meeting and forming a “local leaders” (or ministerial) fellowship.”¹¹ They will be teaching and submitting to one another, learning to work as fellow *servant-leaders* with those who share common convictions on the essential doctrines, and allowing (and delighting) in the diversity of views on non-essential ones. Welcome to *post-denominational* Christianity!

Then they should have formed the habit of counting church membership, not according to how many attend Sunday worship services, but according to those who participate regularly in the cell meetings! What a good way to really count true “disciples of Christ” and to clear our church rolls (and David Barrett’s annual statistics on global Christianity) of “nominal Christians”!

And what’s the *curriculum* for each house church? Simply, LIFE as it comes! The agenda is set by the mem-

bers as they share *their concerns* (read: prayer requests): actual needs and interests are discerned, and thereby opened for discussion, aiming at their mutual edification (cf. 1 Cor. 14:26-33). As they follow the NT teaching to serve one another with their spiritual gifts (Rom. 12:3-8), exhort one another (Heb. 10:24), teach one another, even confess sins to one another (Js. 5:16), as they share insights into what the Bible teaches, they will find concrete applications to obey God’s word in their own context/life-situation. If they feel that they have not resolved the issues (doctrinal or practical) adequately, they can assign someone (usually the cell leader) to research (most probably to ask his mentor or co-coordinators) and report in their next meeting, or they can invite an expert to share (and be ready to give him a generous honorarium, of course!).

How then will each “full-timer” be supported? Well, there’s really no need for “full-timers” until there are about 500 members meeting in 30-40 house churches! Anyway, technically one house church can support a “full-time” minister (pastor-coordinator of about 6 co-coordinators, each serving 5 or 6 house churches) or a missionary (preferably in pairs, sent to plant house church networks elsewhere) through their regular tithes and offerings! Jesus and the Twelve had their own “common purse” and were supported by just one small group of women (Lk. 8:1-3)! Once Christians learn to relate to one another in love, and “pastors” do serve their “little flock,” their disciples will naturally provide for their family’s needs and their ministry expenses. (Remember also that their collections are no longer used for church paraphernalia and building maintenance).

IM at the Frontiers

But perhaps it is even better to start from scratch: to pioneer an IM in virgin territory among a truly unreached people group where no known Christian or church exists. The key to this incarnational or infiltrative approach is to be as low profile as possible. Until the converted become a majority, they must not be de-culturized from their social and religious communities. And even if they become the majority, they must avoid establishing elaborate structures for religious purposes.

In fact, all social affairs in non-Christian societies can be sanctified and transformed, for all things belong mainly to God; and those that have become sin-

ful and evil can be redeemed through prayer and the Word (cf. 1 Tim. 4:3-5). Even almost all religious activities can also be redeemed and transformed into Christ-centered and Christ-ward worship!¹² What makes them biblically “true follower of Jesus” is the heart or motive, almost always regardless of the forms. What counts is that these activities and rituals are led by those who have been and are being nurtured or disciplined in the low profile cells or house churches, which almost always are informal and therefore do not require formal and elaborate rituals. (Actually missionaries and new converts may create new organizations and programs, but these should be community-based (not church-based) structures that cater to the real needs and aspirations of the people).

Keeping the faith simple, to just change allegiance from their god (or no-god) to Jesus, is essential to IMs. The essence of the Biblical faith lies not in a philosophy or an ethic but in a Person. Thus any religious or cultural artifact, belief or value must be evaluated in light of God’s revelation of the historical Jesus revealed in the *four* (not *one*) gospels! Aiming just at eliciting simple faith in Christ makes evangelism quite easy, thus ensuring rapid multiplication of converts.¹³ It makes possible the easy passing on by word of mouth (even gossiping!) of the Jesus story within a community. Each person and household can be disciplined as “insiders” in their own contexts (cf. Petersen & Swamy 2003).

Historically we can also read the conversion of Armenia, the European peoples and other Christian-majority lands like Latin America, the Philippines, northeast India (Mizos, Nagas, Karens) as different forms of IMs! The missionaries were able to win the top leaders of their societies, so that these indigenous leaders influenced, if not coerced, their constituencies as a people to join them in the faith. The days of those “top-down” approach to mass conversions is almost gone. The challenge through IM today is to catalyze “bottom up” mass conversions following the pattern of Jesus and the early church, as China’s Back to Jerusalem and the Philippines’ missionary movements are trying to do: mainly through “friendship evangelism” with “an army of ants, worms and termites (and not elephants)” (cf. Hattaway 2003: 90-94).

Yet to achieve community or mass conversions, missionaries must aim at winning the leaders, especially the top two or three. This may be done through the community development approach: one must get

“immersed” or “integrated” (better: “incarnated”) in the community while befriending and serving the people, hence gaining the attention and friendship of the local leaders, including the religious leader(s); yes, even Buddhist monks, Muslim imams, Hindu priests and Communist generals!

Hence the ideal missionaries should be “tentmakers,” Christian professionals or businessmen, or skilled workers who have “secular” skills to serve and earn a livelihood in the community. Their witness to Christ will not be viewed as the expansion of a religious movement. It is interesting to note that the *Mission Frontiers* issue on IM also includes articles on “social entrepreneurs” (Lewis: 2005; Wall 2005; cf. Bornstein 2003). Community service by ordinary “lay believers” not only helps themselves gain a good reputation among a people group, it also helps gain the trust and respect of community leaders, thereby opening the opportunity for the conversion of these leaders and eventually the whole community as these influential converts protect, if not encourage the “house to house” multiplication of disciples in their midst (cf. Lim 2004).¹⁴

Conclusion

Christianity (even among predominantly non-Christian lands and peoples) will then return to what Jesus Christ originally intended His Kingdom to be: a personal *relationship* with God through simple faith in Him (liberated from sin and the complexities of both primitive/animistic/folk religions and major/great organized religions), which results in works of sacrificial love for Him and His creation/creatures (liberated from sin’s effects on the poor bound to their poverty and on the rich bound to their prosperity). No more need for elaborate *religiosity* with elaborate theologies, liturgies, temples or clergies. His kingdom and mission is to bring forth a *spiritual* (read: *moral*) transformation rather than a *religious* reformation of “nations.” And his mission *strategy* is humble service (way of the cross) rather than triumphalistic crusades (way of the world).

Let us not burden people of other faiths with “stumbling-blocks” other than the *simple* gospel of following Jesus. Let there be “more Jesus and less religion!” May IMs multiply soon across the non-Christian world, so that “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14, NIV).

(AFMI)



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¹ At least a little has been heard about CPMs among Muslims (Garrison 2005; Travis 2000, 2006) and Hindus (Richard 1999; Hoefer 2001; Raj 2004; Pierson 2004: 34-59).

² Covell 1993; Deng 2005; Pierson 2004: 60-86; Tang 2005; and Wesley 2004.

³ Spaulding 2006 raises the issue of why we are not prioritizing the least reached populations who happen to be the dominant peoples in Buddhist lands, albeit they may have a viable small church (often uncontextualized) among them.

⁴ As seen below, the best "go structure" is to "make disciples" through informal "friendship evangelism" and bringing converts and interested parties to "come and see" the (informal) body-life of one's cell group/house church (a la Ac. 2:42-47).

⁵ For biblical precedents for RC, esp. in relation to religious rituals and customs, cf. Davis 1993: 128-143 and Lim 2003.

⁶ On the origin of synagogues, cf. Lim 1987.

⁷ 1 Cor. 16:1-4 shows weekly offerings in the early church were mainly for immediate survival needs, esp. of widows and orphans (cf. Ac. 6:1; Js. 1:27).

⁸ Were they exempt from being stewards of God's resources, to be shepherds and cowboys to provide livestock products for their neighbors and nation (cf. 2 Thess. 3:6-10)? And where else did the priests learn to be expert butchers of animal sacrifices in the Temple three times a year?

⁹ On how foreign Christianity looks in Sri Lanka, cf. Somaratna 2006; and in Buddhist societies, cf. Smith 1993: 126.

¹⁰ In *post-denominational* Christianity, churches do not need to be Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, Lutheran, Presbyterian or Reformed, Methodist, Pentecostal, Full Gospel or whatever! They can name their own names! What label(s) and theology(ies) did Paul want the factions in Corinth to have (1 Cor. 1-4)?

¹¹ The importance of this show of unity can not be over-emphasized, cf. Jn. 13:34-35; 17:21-23.

¹² On the witness of God's revelation among the religions, cf. Kraft 1979: 239-253; Richardson 1981; Seamands 1981: 173-199; and Travis 2005: 13-14.

¹³ Garrison 2004: 241-243 considers "Improving the Bible" as the second deadly sin against CPMs.

¹⁴ For more details, cf. Lim 2004.

"You show that you are a letter from Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts." (2 Cor 3:3) (NIV)



Facilitating Insider Movements – Challenges facing the Outsider

Phil Emmaus

Introduction

Each one of us is an insider of our own culture and worldview. Our identity and our values are bound up within them. Culture and worldview also affect the way in which we view our faith. If we are raised in the church, we can simply accept everything unconsciously, without thinking about it.

- Christians acquire a sub-culture and many of them find it difficult to relate to non-Christians even in their own culture.

- The more committed Christians then engage in evangelism, but many do so out of their church paradigm and find it difficult to enter the worldview of the non-Christian.

- Out of this group, a number of believers enter into Missions. However, many are unaware that they carry a package of their faith, culture and worldview along with them.

The result is that many missionaries expect the people they reach to integrate to the Christian package they bring. In essence:

- They extract these converts, expecting them to give up most of their own culture and worldview when they become Christians. In order to become insiders of the Christian faith, they must become outsiders to their

own culture.

- They preach a truncated gospel which concentrates on saving only the individual, but does not effect transformation of a culture and worldview. It does not initiate a movement.

- A more post-modern phenomenon even in the evangelical world seems to want to effect transformation, and redress the stark emphasis of the past upon “word” rather than “deed”. However, this movement seems to concentrate so much upon the physical needs of peoples, societies and even the globe that there is again a truncation of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

We need to remember that while we are insiders of our own culture, that we are outsiders to the people to whom God has called us. We will never become insiders. However, we can, under God, become facilitators of insider movements. What are some of the challenges facing us as facilitators on the outside?

Outsider facilitators critique their own culture

It is wonderful that we have an *Asian Frontier Mission Initiative* which seeks to encourage and initiate Asian frontier mission movements. There are wonderful advantages in Asian followers of Jesus reaching other Asian peoples who have not yet turned to Christ. There are similarities in worldview, e.g. the focus on relationships, on the community rather than the individual, being more holistic than analytical in thinking, shame more than guilt orientatedness, and so on.

However, while there are great similarities, there are also rich diversities in Asian culture. There are subtle – and not so subtle – distinctives between Asian cultures, which if ignored can prove to be obstacles to the Gospel. Vinoth Ramachandra disagrees with both western and Asian writers who see “peoples as disparate in historical background and general outlook as the Thais and Singaporeans all come under an all-embracing ‘East Asian culture’”.¹

It is wonderful that we have an Asian Frontier Mission Initiative which seeks to encourage and initiate Asian frontier mission movements. ... However, while there are great similarities, there are also rich diversities in Asian culture. There are subtle – and not so subtle – distinctives between Asian cultures, which if ignored can prove to be obstacles to the Gospel.



Furthermore, Ramachandra notes that leaders such as Lee Kuan Yew, Mahathir Mohammad and Deng Xiaoping all spoke of the superiority of 'Asian values'. However, he cautions against the uncritical acceptance of what he calls 'self-appointed spokesmen for the peoples of Asia'.²

Western mission has rightly been critiqued for many years, and needs ongoing critique. We speak of the "de-westernization" of the gospel which is very necessary. However, I feel that the church in Asia also needs to engage in self-evaluation. The church in Asia, while small as far as percentage is concerned, is vibrant and growing in many areas. Why then is the Gospel still so foreign? Hwa Yung argues that a major reason for this is the problem of an "alien Jesus" which comes from an uncontextualized Gospel. "Whenever the gospel has been presented in ways that fail to address the felt needs of the hearers, and/or in manners that they cannot understand because of the foreignness of the language and thought forms, then an alien Jesus is being presented."³

Has there been a lack of contextualization of the Gospel in many Asian cultures because of an importation of many cultural aspects of the missionaries which first came to Asia? I have seen this among my own people in South Africa, where some congregations still today insist upon a dress code which they consider proper for church attendance, but which is totally inappropriate for the hot African summers. However, we cannot forever lay the blame at the door of western missionaries. The time has come for the non-Western church to grapple with the issues of contextualization in their own settings. We cannot think of reaching out to other cultures contextually before we have dealt with these issues on our own turf.

My observation is that many Asian Christians have been distanced from their non-Christian fellows by virtue of the fact that they have become Christian. This is because the individual transformation which they have received has not translated further into a transformation of the culture. There has been an unquestioning rejection of many cultural aspects, which has led to an extraction of Christians from their culture, rather than an attempt on the part of the church to struggle with what the Gospel is saying to its root culture. This has led to a dualism in many Asian Christians, in that their new faith does not speak to their parent cultures. Christianity is still perceived by many Asians as a Western religion. Is this perhaps due, in part, to the fact that the Asian church is not yet truly grappling with the issues of *Contextualization* within its own cultures?

Outsider facilitators work within a "learning" paradigm, not an "instruction" one

These terms come from the world of education which is itself struggling through a paradigm shift. The instruction paradigm (IP) is highly theoretical, teacher controlled, linear and cumulative. The learning paradigm (LP) is practical, holistic and student orientated. The goal of the LP is the ability to think critically and evaluate complex situations holistically.

We note here that the LP emphasizes the student, and not the teacher. The biblical Barnabas is a good role model. He mentored Paul who was academically and presumably intellectually his superior. He sought not to clone himself, but to bring out the best in him.⁴ The teacher is not the fount of all knowledge. The teacher is a facilitator who shares his knowledge while allowing students to learn from each other and indeed teach the teacher. The facilitator is a "guide on the side" and not a "sage on the stage".

Many missionaries have an IP mentality. They are unfortunately driven by home churches which are highly results orientated, and so they are under pressure to produce. The missionary therefore tries to control the situation and sets himself up as the authority figure. He sees himself as the expert who will impart knowledge to the unreached and to the new converts. When missionaries have a LP mentality, they go with the humble expectation that the Holy Spirit is at work in the lives of their focus people, just as He is in their own lives. They do not usurp the role of the *Parakletos*. They place the authority where it belongs – on the Lord and upon His Word. They resist the temptation to teach what they have learned. Rather, they go to the Word of God along with their focus people to see what the Lord is saying to them in their context by His Spirit. "God's Word reaches [a person] in terms of his own culture, or it does not reach him at all."⁵ A learning paradigm is far more amenable to an insider movement than an instruction paradigm.

Outsider facilitators pray and work towards transformation in the movement

We have mentioned earlier that the lack of contextualization will convey a truncated gospel, and that a spiritual movement needs to be a culturally relevant one. Likewise, in striving for indigeneity, it is important that the movement be founded upon the Word of God and that it bears fruit, for by its fruit one will recognize a true movement of God (Matt. 7:20ff).

There is sometimes much debate – theological, missiological and philosophical – about insider movements. However, the foundational question remains for each movement – is there a conforming to the pattern of this world, or is there a transformation by the renewal of the mind^{6,7} Is there a striving to be a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that [they] may declare the praises of him who called [them] out of darkness into his wonderful light?⁸ Can one sense that while in their world, they are no longer of it?⁹

This challenge is to every Christ-follower whether they may be. After living for a few months in Germany, I penned the following in my journal: *What about me needs to change? What needs to be transformed? What needs repentance? What needs growth? Where have I atrophied? What needs stretching? Am I an old or a new wineskin? Another challenge: How can faith be made viable for our young people? How can they be vibrant followers of Jesus in their time and generation? Their challenges and difficulties are different. They face different enemies and different problems. One of their greatest difficulties is that of 'tolerance', or at least the post-modern definition of it. We as Christians need to facilitate our younger generation as they seek to define what it means to be a follower of Jesus in their generation.*

I was once drawn into a debate about the baptism practiced among a group of Muslim Background Believers. Some theologians questioned the validity of this baptism as those involved were immersing their fellow believers in the name of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The theologians questioned whether these people had a Chalcedonian view of Christ, and whether they truly believed in the Trinity? The challenge to these theologians was that the mere teaching of correct dogma was not going to effect transformation. However, we as practitioners were equally faced with a challenge. Muslims believe in a sovereign, transcendent God. However, for him to become imminent, one needs to enter into relationship with Jesus Christ. This is only enabled by the work of the Holy Spirit.

In Luke 10, Jesus faces a lawyer who asks what he needs to do in order to inherit eternal life. Jesus enters into his worldview and asks him to quote the Law, something this expert could probably do in his sleep. The latter answers with the *Sch'ma Israel* in Deut. 6:4,5: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your strength and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself”. Jesus then tells the man to go and

“do this”. Herein lays the dilemma. How does one “do” it? Interestingly enough, Jesus relates a story which must have had many grinding their teeth. The thought that “doing” love to a neighbor meant touching an unclean Samaritan would have shocked them. Here Jesus was being at his most radical. This kind of “doing” was not covered in any law. In order to engage in it meant total change and thorough transformation.

Each culture has its untouchables. A true movement towards the Lordship of Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit will increasingly show healing in these areas, whether these be racial prejudices, gender issues or imbalances in ascribed or achieved status.

Outsider facilitators take a global view of movements and ministry

The world is constantly shrinking. In the past, missiologists spoke eloquently of homogeneous people groups. While this is still a reality, we must not take the mistaken view that homogeneity equates a pristine isolation.

The whole world seems to be in motion. There are 174 million migrant people in the world (living outside their countries). Asians are the largest group and about 50-60 million are Chinese. Since 2000, about 120,000 Chinese have gone abroad to study. If the figures are to be believed then by 2020, the Chinese government plans to increase that number to 300,000 per year¹⁰.

The population of many European countries is growing, not by birth, but by increasing numbers of migrants entering. Actually, the native population is dying out. The average age in Germany is 43 years. If lifestyles do not change, this will increase to 63 years in 2050. According to a study done by Andrew Walls¹¹, Germany will need about one million new foreign workers per year. He feels that they will mostly come from China and Indonesia. What lessons does this hold?

We are living in a world of constant change. We have to get used to not only constant change, but that the rate of change is constantly increasing. While modern technology is still not accessible to a large percentage of the world's population, this is itself a changing trend. What does this mean for insider movements? We will deal less and less with totally homogeneous peoples who have no contact with the outside world. The trend seems to be that migration is on the increase. Perhaps the very people groups we are focusing upon today may be scattered through the globe tomorrow.

It is important therefore for us to take a global view

of movements and indeed of our ministry. By “global”, I mean both “worldwide” as well as “holistic”. We can no longer allow ourselves to be bound by geographical perimeters. Neither can we permit that cultural boundaries hem us in. The global movement and shifting trends call us to work together or be condemned to ineffectivity.

I believe that the analogy of the body used by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12 can be applied not only to individual believers, but also to groups. Paul is speaking of the church, yes. However, the principles apply to believers and workers of different cultures as well. There is no suggestion here that through our alliances and partnerships, that we should all become the same and lose our own unique identity. An Asian organization entering a joint venture with a Western one should not become assimilated by their Western counterparts. Neither should the Westerners be made to feel that they should become more Asian. Each group brings unique strengths and gifts to bear.

There will be clashes and misunderstandings. Westerners with their analytical thinking must learn to understand the Asian holistic way of linking matters. Asians will need to get used to Western directness. “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you’”.¹²

We are speaking here of strategic alliances, partnerships and joint ventures as we seek to cooperate. There is no need for everyone to be part of the same organization. This will encourage flexibility and experimentation. It will also ensure that each group can remain true to the vision, mission and values to which God has called them. Each group’s identity will be preserved, while cross-fertilization, sharing of resources and joint ministry in select areas for specific lengths of time will be enhanced.

Conclusion

This list of challenges – that of critiquing our own culture, working within a learning and not an instruction paradigm, praying and working towards transformation in the movement and taking a global view of movements and ministry – is by no means exhaustive.

However, I hope that by raising these few points for reflection that we will be stimulated to think of more. We live in exciting days, and I look forward to all that God will do in and through all of us as we learn from each other, and grow and work together. **(AFMI)**

¹ Vinoth Ramachandra, *Faiths in Conflict*. InterVarsity Press, England, ISBN 0-85111-65007, 1999, page 36

² Ibid

³ Hwa Yung, *Missiological Issues in the First Decade of the 21st Century. A South-east Asian Perspective* (2) *The Gospel We Proclaim*.

⁴ “Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year, Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people.” (Acts 11:25-26). Note “Barnabas and Saul”, also in 13:2,7. However, as from 13:13, Paul takes precedence.

⁵ Rene Padilla

⁶ The word “*nous*” means much more than cognitive thought or understanding. It speaks also of our consciousness, character and conscience. It does not separate the cognitive from the affective and volition.

⁷ Romans 12:2

⁸ 1 Peter 2:9)

⁹ John 17:15,16,18

¹⁰ Xinhua News Agency, “The Annual Number of the Chinese Students Who Are Sent Abroad to Study Is Expected to Increase to 300,000 in 2020,” October 17, 2006 <http://www.xinhuanet.com>.

¹¹ Andrea Walls was a missionary experience in Sierra Leone and Nigeria. He founded the “centre for the study of Christianity in the non-Western world in Edinburgh”.

¹² 1 Cor. 12:21



Phil Emmaus has worked in SEA for many years in leadership for M-ministries and now plans up another journey for the Kingdom development in a new M-ministry context.

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ASIAN MISSION LEADER'S FORUM(AMLF) & ASFM CONFERENCE 2010 27—30 Oct in SEA

A *Asian Frontier Mission Initiative* (AFMI) plans to call for an invitation-only forum and an open conference in a SEA country, on 27-28 Oct and 29-30 Oct 2010, respectively.

The Asian Mission Leader's Forum (AMLF) 2010 will be held among the invited mission leaders to deepen the consensus in understanding the "Insider & Frontier" perspectives resulting in globally synergized cooperation for the remaining task and discuss contemporary missional issues to help and foster Asians more dynamic initiatives in those areas. *David Lim* will be serving as the director for the AMLF

2010. This upcoming event will be a continuation of the 1st AMLF that was held in Oct 2009 among around 50 participants from not only Asian mission leaders but also select, respected Western leaders and practitioners.

As for the **Asia Society for Frontier Mission (ASFM) 2010**, that will be served by *John Kim* as the director, will be held in simultaneous way with the AMLF 2010 at the same place. This will be an open conference for those who are interested in frontier mission issues and Asian dynamics in global mission society. Three key areas that were discussed at small group meetings of AMLF 2009 will be the main issues for the conference. They are global coop-

eration, Asian initiative and insider perspective in frontier mission. Any field practitioners, mission thinkers, theoreticians, and theologians are welcome to join.

Some of the main speakers among others are *Kevin Higgins, Rick Brown, David Lim, John Kim, Young Kim, Chong Kim, Rory Clark*, etc.

Those who are interested in the two successive events hosted by AFMI may contact David Lim at cmi-phil53@gmail.com for AMLF and/or John Kim at john_yoon@psmail.net for ASFM.

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Asian Mission Leaders' Forum Asia Society for Frontier Mission 27— 30 October 2010

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