

## Chapter 8

### **Agencies for World Missions: Who Does What & Where?**

#### LESSON OBJECTIVE

Here we learn that:

- In order for churches and agencies to work together, they must be able to find one another
- Unreached and least-reached people groups should have missions-priority over all others
- Adopting an unreached people group has great strategic value for the Kingdom of God
- Arguments not to engage in world missions do not hold and pitfalls should be avoided
- There is plenty of missions-information available for the diligent seeker

#### LESSON OUTLINE

Topics we will discuss in this lesson are:

- Adopt a People
- Arguments NOT to Engage in Missions
- Johnstone's Re-integration Model
- How to Avoid Common Pitfalls
- Some Resources

#### LESSON CONTENTS

In this chapter we explore how to start reaching unreached people groups. Below, some data are given to help churches find organizations, which can assist them with expertise and information.

We also look at reasons why people or churches do *not* want to engage in world missions. Three of these will be considered, as well as how to avoid three of the most common pitfalls in doing missions.

We need to concentrate on reaching the unreached. Those who never heard the gospel should have priority over all others. One possibility is to adopt a people group.

### *Adopt a People*

In addition to what was already said about the necessity for partnership in the Body of Christ, I would like to add the concept of adopting unreached- and least-reached people groups. Many churches and mission agencies are working towards evangelizing them. Most, however, seem to work on their own. There are over 1,000 Evangelical churches in the world for every such people group. Imagine what the effects would be, if they worked together for their evangelization. Let's assume that, on average, they have 100 members each. What could they do, with only little effort from each member? Some imaginative calculations:

#### *Prayer*

1,000 Churches (and why should they only be evangelical?) with 100 members each, adding up to 100,000 in total: If these members could all pray for one unreached people group for one minute a day and it would translate into 100,000 minutes of prayer (= over 1,660 hours, or about 10 weeks of 24/7 prayer stuffed into *every day*). It won't be long before the first people will be ripe to accept Christ!

#### *Giving*

Now, if all 100,000 members of these 1,000 churches, still targeting their one unreached people group, would donate 1% of their income per month for that purpose, they would raise 100,000% of an average salary, that is 1,000 average month's wages *every month*. This could be used to send 1,000 missionary families to the culturally nearest unreached people group (still that same one people group)!

### *Research*

Now 1,000 missionaries for one people group may be much, but if we look at the many supporting tasks that are needed to make holistic outreach successful, we might set apart a team of 20 for research purposes. They have to find out what the felt needs of the population are, e.g. spiritually, psychologically and physically, in areas of health care, food-production and infra-structure, etc.

### *Community Development*

Then, another 100 or so could occupy themselves with developing communities in that people group, based on the findings of the research team. They could install water pumps, improve agriculture, advise in animal husbandry, forestry, build homes for the poor, increase education, establish centers for unwed mothers and abandoned children, vocational skill-training etc. You can think of anything that responds to that people group's felt needs.

### *Social Contact Centers*

Another 100 might occupy themselves with the facilitation of (pre-) evangelism by establishing coffee-bars and sports-clubs for youth, activities for children, counseling centers, helping older and disabled people, establish companies that create jobs, provide affordable transport. None of these should be an end in itself, but all geared towards sharing the gospel, once relationships have been built.

And so we can fantasize and dream for a long time. But the fact remains, that much can be done when Christ's disciples work together to reach unreached people groups. Jesus said that His disciples will be recognized by the love and unity they display among themselves and demonstrate towards the world.<sup>201</sup> But how could this be done best? Here are some ideas:

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201 John 13:35; 17:23

### *Using Existing Structures*

The most workable idea might be to make use of existing denominational structures. Each of them has many member-churches with sometimes several hundred thousands of members. If denominational leadership could be interested to structure world mission programs along these lines, the impact on their targeted people groups would be huge. Missionary-sending agencies can provide the necessary expertise, experience, advice and often even in-(target-)country facilitation. They may also be able to provide models of inter-agency partnership.

### *End the Competition*

Paul said 'It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation'.<sup>202</sup> Unfortunately not many share Paul's ambition, so for the ones that do, there are numerous opportunities: there are plenty of unreached people groups. Of course they are not the easiest to reach, but how long will we be content with 'easy'?

If you don't know where to start, realize that you don't have to re-invent the wheel; others have gone that road before you. Ten minutes of internet research can already help you well on your way. Check these 2 sites: <https://www.globaladoptapeoplecampaign.org/what-we-do.html>  
<http://www.adoptapeople.net/THEGLOBALPLAN/tabid/128/Default.aspx>

### *Arguments NOT to Engage in Missions*

The battle for the extension of God's Kingdom is a spiritual war. Satan has subtle tactics to keep the church from fulfilling the great commission. He injected wrong ideas and concepts deeply into some people's mind-sets Let me mention three:

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202 Rom. 15:20

*'God Can Do Without Us'*

This is what William Carey's colleagues told him after he tried to interest them for world missions in 18th century England. But the Bible gives the great commission to the *whole* church to bring the *whole* gospel to the *whole* world.<sup>203</sup> Therefore, no biblical church is exempt, neither is any single believer, since God has a plan for all.<sup>204</sup> Yes, God *can* do without us, but history proves that *He chose not to do so!* People, guided by the Holy Spirit, have spread the gospel since the time of the apostles. God has not changed His way of operation.

*'We Have Our Hands Full in the Church'*

This is often heard in churches that are in survival-mode. Problems can be numerous: sin, sickness, lack of personnel, finance, and interest. It is one way the devil uses to keep churches from participation in world missions. But why are churches in survival-mode? Is it because world missions is not their priority? Is that, maybe, even the reason that they have these problems in the first place? If at least a core of the church would come together, pray, acknowledge their wrong priorities and ask forgiveness, set goals for a world missions program and carry them out, healing for their problems will surely come.<sup>205</sup> *Faith* is needed to *believe it* and *try it*.

*'Should We Not Rather Leave It to the Mission Societies?'*

This statement shows the disintegration between churches, mission societies and training institutions. The thought is based on either of two wrong assumptions, namely that the church does not have the know-how or the people gifted for it, or that the mission societies have all experience and expertise. Churches and mission societies should be *equal partners*, contributing their best, respecting and appreciating each other's strengths and weaknesses. Neither can do without the other, and no such separated attempt will bring in the

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203 Matt. 28:18-20; Acts 1:8

204 Eph. 2:10

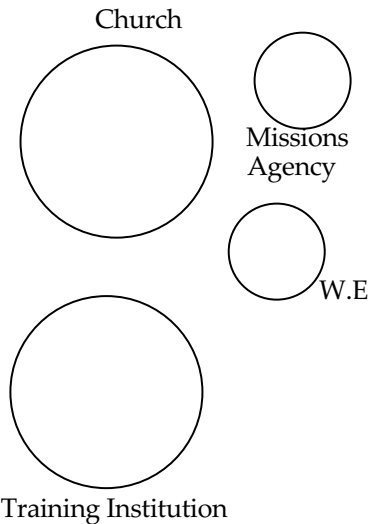
205 See e.g. 2 Chron. 7:14

harvest completely. Churches, mission societies and training institutions should integrate, as Johnstone argued:<sup>206</sup>

### Johnstone's Re-integration Model

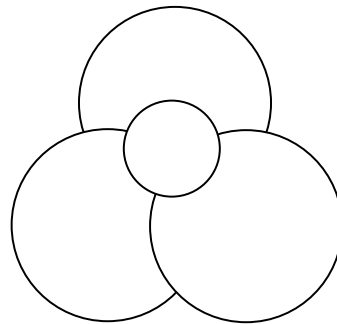
He pleads for a moving away from historic disintegration (model A) to biblical integration through partnership (Model B).

**MODEL A - W.E. *disintegrated*:**



**MODEL B – W.E. *integrated*:**

Here, W.E. forms the connecting factor between church, agency and training



Jesus worked this way. As teacher, He led the 'Bible school' of His disciples;<sup>207</sup> He participated in synagogue-life with them and in sending them He became their 'missions agency'.<sup>208</sup>

### *How to Avoid Common Pitfalls*

We are thankful for increasing mission-consciousness among a growing number of churches. The Church is central in and key to

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206 Johnstone, 1998:149-210

207 Matt. 5-7

208 Matt. 10

W.E. But churches that were not stopped by the three earlier arguments, may also have disastrous thinking errors. 'Good ideas' may ruin Kingdom presence, rather than establish it. Some examples:

*'Anyone Can Do Missions'*

Some think that years of training are unnecessary, that long-term mission work equals prolonged short-term outreach, and since most short-termers go out untrained, they assume the same applies to career workers. Some think that when a pastor fails, he can still become a missionary – as if the field were a dumping place for unsuccessful ministers!

No, *not* anyone can become a missionary. Only those that are a) gifted, called and empowered by God; b) have the right heart-attitude towards their ministry; c) know how to persevere under difficult circumstances, *and* d) are well-trained according to the demands of their work, will make successful cross-cultural missionaries.

*'We Can Do It Ourselves'*

People with an over-confident attitude towards their local church or denomination as an all-sufficient entity in itself hold this view. They dislike finding out who else is in the business. They underestimate the expertise of others and their own lack of it; are unwilling to invest in partnership development, nor value training much. They think that serving in the church equips you for everything. How could that be true?

Reasons for this attitude are often rooted in denominational exclusivism: 'We've got the *real* thing, in doctrine, in miracles' etc. Usually they are not members of any organization, such as Evangelical Mission Alliances, hate to pay fees, fill in forms or submit to procedures of mission societies – so they don't. Most mission fields know how much damage such ministries do, mainly due to lack of knowledge of the field and of cultural sensitivity.

### *'Let's Support Locals'*

'They know the language and the culture, thus can be effective quicker in ministry and they cost a fraction of a Western missionary'. In other words: 'Let's send money instead of missionaries'. This sounds economical, but Jesus said that a prophet is not honored in his own city. Also, a native may be at an even greater cultural distance from the unreached in his country, e.g. because of animosities in the past. This does not apply to foreign missionaries.

Then, how long will we send money? Money from abroad is likely to make people dependent: if the money stops, so does the ministry. Often, *national* ministry initiatives do not develop because they follow the vision of *foreign* ministries, rather than asking the Lord to give them their own vision and run with it. People that are sponsored from abroad develop life styles above local levels, which creates jealousy and lack of credibility for the worker and the gospel. Residential missionaries should rather teach people to live by faith – and be an example of how to do so.

### *Some Resources*

Operation World, 2010, by Jason Mandryk, is a prayer handbook that lists all major peoples in every country, gives items for intercession and missiological insights as well information about prayer networks, mission agencies, umbrella organizations and more. Available as hard-copy books and as CD/DVD's. See [www.operationworld.org](http://www.operationworld.org) . A new edition is scheduled for 2021.

#### *Prayer Networks*

[www.24-7prayer.com](http://www.24-7prayer.com)  
[www.ipcprayer.org](http://www.ipcprayer.org)  
[www.ethne.net/prayer.php](http://www.ethne.net/prayer.php)  
[www.jwipn.com](http://www.jwipn.com)

[www.globaldayofprayer.com](http://www.globaldayofprayer.com)  
[www.globalprayerdigest.org](http://www.globalprayerdigest.org)  
[www.win1040.com](http://www.win1040.com)  
[www.joshuaproject.net](http://www.joshuaproject.net)

#### *Evangelical Umbrella Organizations*

[www.lausanne.org](http://www.lausanne.org)  
[www.viva.org](http://www.viva.org)

[www.worldevangelicals.org](http://www.worldevangelicals.org)  
[www.worlddea.org](http://www.worlddea.org)



*Africa*

[www.aeafrica.org](http://www.aeafrica.org)  
[www.africanenterprise.org](http://www.africanenterprise.org)  
[www.aimint.org](http://www.aimint.org)

[www.capromissions.org](http://www.capromissions.org)  
[www.maniafrica.com](http://www.maniafrica.com)  
[www.afnet.org](http://www.afnet.org)

*Asia*

[www.asiaevangelicals.org](http://www.asiaevangelicals.org)  
[www.asiamissions.net](http://www.asiamissions.net)  
[www.aefi.asia](http://www.aefi.asia)  
[www.asianoutreach.org.au](http://www.asianoutreach.org.au)

[www.awm.org](http://www.awm.org)  
[www.fmpb.co.in](http://www.fmpb.co.in)  
[www.gfa.org](http://www.gfa.org)

*Caribbean*

[www.caribbeanevangelical.org](http://www.caribbeanevangelical.org)

*Europe*

[www.europeanea.org](http://www.europeanea.org)  
[www.mission-net.org](http://www.mission-net.org)  
[www.ecmbritain.org](http://www.ecmbritain.org)

[www.gemission.org](http://www.gemission.org)  
[www.wec-uk.org](http://www.wec-uk.org)

*Latin America*

[www.comibam.org](http://www.comibam.org)

*North America*

[www.aims.org](http://www.aims.org)  
[www.frontierventures.org](http://www.frontierventures.org)  
[www.bethanyinternational.org](http://www.bethanyinternational.org)

[www.emsweb.org](http://www.emsweb.org)  
[www.nae.net](http://www.nae.net)

*Pacific*

[www.worldangelicals.org/members](http://www.worldangelicals.org/members)  
[www.nzchristiannetwork.org.nz](http://www.nzchristiannetwork.org.nz)

### *Diverse Religions*

www.30daysprayer.com (Islam)  
www.omf.org/omf/buddhism/pray  
www.30daysprayer.com/hindu

### *Research*

www.pioneers.org  
www.inserv.org.za

www.joshuaproject.net  
www.operationworld.org

### RESEARCH

The websites under 'Some Resources', above, give you plenty of possibilities to exercise your research skills. Therefore, no additional sites are given under *this* heading. In case you want to see some motivating teaching videos, try these 4 by Jason Mandryk on the great commission:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MjFNGr4uw4w>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DFnoIEBiQU8>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9y1fm5QsURA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sUzr341Iz9o>

### MISCELLANEOUS

*Recommended books:* See Bibliography

## Assignments

- The author has been fantasizing about how an unreached people group might be reached with the gospel. Now you do the same. Write an essay of about 500 words, in which you lay down a plan for your church or denomination to initiate such a process
- Describe two or three more arguments you may have heard why *not* to engage in cross-cultural missions – or pitfalls that work against such involvement – and write down some solid counter-arguments
- Write down an initial plan about how to start a missionary-sending agency, including a vision-statement, a mission-statement, some policy rules with regard to screening and engaging personnel, target-domains (such as people groups, countries, religions, etc.)

## STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Describe how you would organize the adoption of a people group
2. What sort of information can you find in Jason Mandryk's "Operation World"?
3. Which 3 arguments NOT to engage in world missions were described in this chapter? State with your answer whether and why you agree or not
4. Which 3 common pitfalls were described? Did you agree with the author's concern, and if not, what would you propose?
5. If the Lord would tell you to start reaching an unreached people group, what steps would you take, and what role would you like to play in it yourself? Let your answer not exceed 50 words