

REIMAGINE MISSION

ROBHOSKINS



missions in the 21st century

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INTRODUCTION

This book is for you if:

- You are a young person discovering what your place is in the world.
- You are a pastor leading the church toward a mission program with substantive outcomes.
- You are a business leader wanting to discover missional marketplace significance.
- You are a nonprofit leader trying to make sense of how to organize vision.

Every Christ follower has been given the sacred call to actively participate in life-giving missions. But what does that look like in today's world? More than just being something the Church does, the question "What is missions?" is central to the Church at large as well as the individual believer. According to Tim Tennent, "This is why missions cannot be relegated to merely a task of the

church. Missions is the very means by which the church becomes the body of Christ, realizing and manifesting the fullness of Christ.”¹

There is a lot of confusion around *what missions* is in today’s context. It is about so much more than “missional” activities. But before committing to a project, it is about being biblically grounded in a clear definition of missions.

As Stephen Neill points out, “When everything is mission, nothing is mission.”² You can do anything, but you can’t do everything. We are all continuously on a journey to discover God’s missional best for the gifts, talents, and resources He has provided in us. As we sort out our own expression of missions, we have to face the reality that while the world has changed, the core elements of missions have not changed.

It’s necessary for each one of us to reconcile the changing times with timeless truth and develop a fresh, vibrant, and relevant twenty-first-century missiology.

This book outlines best practices in defining mission and vision (what are you called to do), ministry design (how you can do it most effectively), and how twentieth-century models can sometimes hinder twenty-first-century needs. By the end of this book, you should be able to develop an intentional missions strategy that equips and excites you and those around you to participate in a life of fruitful missions—both locally and globally.

As you engage with this material, my prayer is that you will be affirmed and empowered to transform your global missions strategy to advance the Kingdom of God.

“There is no participation in Christ without participation in His mission to the world.”³

¹ Timothy C. Tennent, *Invitation to World Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2010), 89.

² Stephen Charles Neill, *Creative Tension: The Duff Lectures*, 1958 (London: Edinburgh House Press, 1959).

³ Declared at the Willingen Conference of the International Missionary Council in 1952, as quoted in Leslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 1.

CHAPTER 1: THE ESSENCE OF MISSIONS

The Spirit of the Lord fills the whole world.

The Spirit of the Lord moves over the deep.

The Spirit of the Lord warms our hearts.

The Spirit of the Lord fills all things.¹

—David Adam

One of the reasons Jesus came to our Earth was to vision cast the enduring call of the Church throughout all generations. (See Acts 1:8; cf. 28:31.) Missions is about God's Kingdom—His rule and reign—coming near both in and through the person and work of Jesus.

The message of missions has never changed. It's the Good News of God's love and hope, incarnated in the witness of the Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, for the sake of the world. The greatest commandment is a call to worship, to glorify our Creator, to love the Lord with all your heart (Matt. 22:37). Worship is the

¹ David Adam, *The Rhythm of Life* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 2007).

foundation and motivation of all mission followed by the great commandment to love our neighbor (Matt. 22:39). The Great Commission (Matt. 28:16–20) is to make disciples and the Great Collaboration (John 17) to be united as His bride. These great imperatives are the heart, mind, and soul of missions. This message is to be both proclaimed in word (Mark 16:15–16) and lived out in deed (Eph. 2:10) and expressed in love (Matt. 22:36–38). The Gospel calls all people to believe in Christ through faith.

This is the essence of missions.

Presumably if you are reading this, you are asking, “What is missions?” This may seem basic or even a waste of time, but if you were to individually ask five people, you would likely get five different answers.

An individual’s background, race, age, socioeconomic status, life experiences, and denominational background are just a few factors that help shape an individual’s answer to any question. These elements build a person’s individual narrative—the lens through which they will interpret and gain understanding of a message. Ultimately, personal narratives are stories we use to make sense of the world.

We are all individually called and equipped to participate in the Great Commission. Missions is not restricted to traveling around the world but ties into our personal calling and vocations. Some people are gifted to serve in the marketplace. Others thrive in developing the next generation as teachers. Missional people can be in any sphere of influence.

When you take the time to reimagine what missions is, you come into alignment with relevance to today’s culture and context, and you can bring clarity to your calling, get your audience on the same page, and achieve your mission to maximize Kingdom impact.

Overview

All believers have a missional calling. And while the Good News hasn't changed, the world has. Understanding mission—how one lives out the Gospel in both word and deed in unity—in a twenty-first-century context is critical to relevantly and effectively expand the Kingdom.

Questions for Reflection

- What did you think of as “missions” growing up? How has that understanding grown and changed?
- How do you sense the Lord has called you to join the Great Commission? In what ways are you uniquely gifted to serve?
- Why is it important to have a relevant theology of missions for individual believers and the Church?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, how important do you consider missions to be in your life right now?

not at all 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 *definitely*

- Why did you give yourself this rating?

CHAPTER 2: THE CHURCH AND MISSIONS

*All men matter. You matter. I matter. It's the hardest
thing in theology to believe.¹*

—G. K. Chesterton

The Church is a living, organic system made up of God's people. Within its ranks, the Church has the potential to adapt and address whatever challenges and opportunities the current climate presents. Throughout history, the Church has always adapted to present a dynamic missional response to the ever-changing cultural and societal realities it has faced.

In *Transforming Mission*, David Bosch traces the shifts that have occurred in church history from the Book of Acts to the twentieth century. In the late twentieth century, Bosch argued:

What has unfolded in theological and missionary circles during the last decades is the result of a fundamental paradigm shift, not only in mission

¹ G. K. Chesterton, *Father Brown Complete Series* (n.p.: Mosaic Books, 2017).

or theology, but in the experience and thinking of the whole world. Many of us are only aware of the crisis we are facing now. It will, however, be argued that what is happening in our time is not the first paradigm shift the world (or the church) has experienced. There have been profound crises and major paradigm shifts before. Each of them constituted the end of one world and the birth of another, in which much of what people used to think and do had to be redefined.²

The Church is always progressing in light of the historical paradigm shifts in which the church exists. I love how Hans Küng describes the Church on its journey:

It will always remain the bride of Christ. It may wander through the world poor, hungry and helpless, but the Father will always run to embrace and kiss it on its return. It may lose its way in the desert, but the shepherd will always go out after it. It may roam through the town, but the Bridegroom will always find it. It may desert him, but he will never desert it. The Church goes on its pilgrim way through the ages, along a road not of its own choosing, along the way to which it is irrevocably called. It may lose the way, make detours, take wrong turnings, it may stumble and fall, it may fall among thieves and lie half-dead by the roadside. But God the Lord will not pass by on the other side; he will pour oil on its wounds, lift it up, give it a lodging and provide for its healing even that which could not have been foreseen. The Church will always remain the holy Church. This we know in faith.³

² David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 4.

³ Hans Küng, *The Church* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2001), 344.

The Church has, is, and will constantly be reworked and formed in question, uncertainty, and wonder. Through its progression, the Church remains the divinely designed vehicle for missions throughout all generations. It is constantly on its way, discovering truth at deeper levels, and what life in Jesus looks like. The same goes for mission. The world is changing quickly, and we must serve the heartfelt needs of people in a real, relevant, and timely way. What never changes is the Good News.

Overview

The Great Commission may be a timeless calling, but how it is carried out must be constantly adapted to the cultural and societal realities of the current time.

Consider this quote in your current context: “The Church is always progressing in light of the historical paradigm shifts in which the church exists.”

- What are some of the shifts the Church has had to make in light of today’s culture?

CHAPTER 3: THE BELIEVER AND MISSIONS

The Church is a body of Christ believers. It is through these believers that the reign and rule of God can be made known. The Kingdom construct of how individual believers and the Church are to participate in the mission of God here on earth is best illustrated in a pyramid of missiology.

Biblical Pyramid of Missiology

1. The mission of God: The broadest and most foundational lens through which to consider mission is the *missio Dei* (the mission of God). The Triune God is a missionary God, and the whole of His revelation is inherently missional. Mission is the redemptive work of God for the world. It is about who God is and what God is doing in the world. Missions is the practical outworking (i.e., actions, strategies, and initiatives) of our participation with the mission of God for the world. Through missions, we participate in the world where God is actively at work.

2. The mission of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit each have a unique role and responsibility in mission.
 - The Father, the Creator and Sustainer of life, is the source and initiator of the mission of God (Rom. 8:3; Gal. 4:4).
 - The Son, the Savior of the world, is the embodiment of the mission of God (Rom. 8:3).
 - The Spirit, the Advocate and Helper, is the empowering presence of the mission of God (Luke 24:49; John 16:13), “the catalyst, the guiding and driving force of mission” (Acts 1:4–5).¹
3. The Kingdom of God: The Kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God on earth brought about by Jesus. The mission of the Kingdom is to share the message of the Kingdom to all peoples of the earth: “And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14). As the Church, we are called to serve the Kingdom. God is the One who builds His Kingdom.

Understanding this constraint, order and accountability are essential for knowing where and how to fit in God’s broader mission for the world. Much confusion and disorder are created when individuals and churches are not in harmony with God’s orderly vision for the world, His Kingdom, His bride, and His people. We are not foremost

¹ Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 115.

agents on our own personal missions quest; we are part of a connected body under the lordship of Christ, the guidance of spiritual leaders, and the relationship of brothers and sisters in the faith.

4. The global Church: The capital C Church is comprised of believers in Jesus Christ who are part of the collective body of Christ throughout the world (John 17:20–23; 1 Cor. 12:12–27; Eph. 4:4–6; 15–16). The Nicene Creed describes the Church as “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.”
5. The local church: The lowercase c church is expressed in local congregations of believers around the world in many different and disparate expressions from megachurch to house church.
6. The individual believer: This person is a follower of Jesus with unique gifts, talents, passions, and interests.

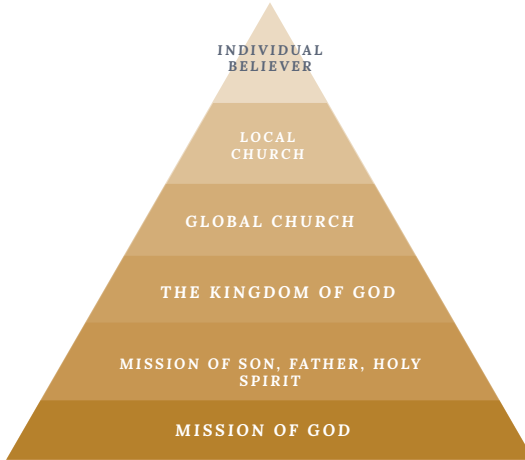


Overview

Every Christ follower has a missional calling and has been given skills and gifts to contribute to their local church expression of *missio Dei*.

Questions for Reflection

- How are the believers in your church impacting the mission?



Yes, life is a story, and we are all a part of it, but the story is not finished. It has a creation, a chosen people (Israel), a Savior (Jesus), and a new community (the Church), but the predetermined (the eschatology) has not yet come. So we are on an evolving journey toward an inevitable, glorious end, but for our part, we must understand and know what to do with our leg of this majestic race.

CHAPTER 4: DOES YOUR MISSIOLOGY MATCH YOUR ECCLESIOLOGY?

*The development of faith is a part of God's unfolding,
emerging Spirit. Staying static is not our destiny.
Transformation is.¹*

—Peter Haas

Theologian Justo González has said that one of the biggest problems with the American Church is that we have separated our ecclesiology from our missiology. It's imperative that your missiology and ecclesiology match; in order to assess if they match, you must understand each.

Missiology Defined

Missiology is “the theological study of the mission of the church, especially the character and purpose of

¹ Peter Haas, *The God Who Is Here* (Brooklyn, NY: Lantern Books, 2011) 104.

missionary work.”² Every single person has his or her own idea of what church is, what church should be, what missions is, and what missions should be. Depending on your age and experience in church, your missiology could be vastly different than the person’s sitting next to you. It’s important to pause and reflect. Consider how your personal journey is guiding and influencing your perspective.

missiology, noun

the theological study of the mission of the church, especially the character and purpose of missionary work



The reality is that culture matters. What is it that you are specifically called to do? You may already know what God has called you to do or you may be lost in the weeds of all the work that needs to be done. As you work to clearly define your missiology, consider the following:

- the passion and pain points associated with missions
- your commitment level to local and global missions
- past and present missions thinking and practices
- contemporary local and global issues
- the opportunities and challenges to doing missions in today’s world
- how to effectively minister in any culture (cultural IQ)

² Dictionary.com, s.v. “missiology (n.),” accessed February 26, 2021, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/missiology>.

By clearly defining your missiology, you won't operate on the assumption of what church is or should be or what missions is or should be. Instead, you will be on the same page, moving toward the same goal. Now let's explore ecclesiology.

Ecclesiology Defined

Ecclesiology is “the study of church doctrine.”³ It's what you understand the universal role of the church to be and how you participate in the church locally. Your missiology should flow out of ecclesiology, streaming out of who you are and what you love.

ecclesiology, noun
the study of church doctrine



By defining your purpose and then building out ideation for fulfilling that purpose, a natural bridge forms between a church's mission and how it's carried out.

Case Study

Life.Church is driven by technology; it flows out of everything they do. Creators of the YouVersion Bible app, they use technology to reach people on mobile and digital platforms. They have become the experts in this space and now teach others how to effectively use technology to advance the Kingdom.

³ Dictionary.com, s.v. “ecclesiology (n.),” accessed February 27, 2021, <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/ecclesiology>.

Q: How do you foster a healthy missiology and operate from a missional mindset in an open-system, twenty-four-hour news cycle, social media, viral video world?

A: Provide a framework and well-thought-out strategy that is easy to communicate to every single person you are influencing.

The critical question to ask is does your missiology match your ecclesiology? Does your *missions work* align with what you are currently doing *in your community*?

This activity should give you clarity.

Set a timer for forty-five seconds. Write as many words and phrases as possible that characterize the distinctives of how your community is reaching out to share the Gospel with others.

Look at your list above, and think through your *top three* distinctives of your church/ministry and how you actuate it below:

Top 3

How you activate this in a local/global context

<hr/>		<hr/>
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Overview

Our missiology should flow out of our ecclesiology. We make a mistake when we separate the two.

Questions for Reflection

- What is your ecclesiology?
- How is that demonstrated in your missions initiatives—both locally *and* globally?

CHAPTER 5: THE EVER- CHANGING MISSION FIELD

[The Bible] is...essentially a story that claims to be the story, the true story both of the cosmos and of human life within the cosmos.¹

—Lesslie Newbigin

A strong theology of twenty-first-century missions recognizes that how we do missions requires constant updating and retooling as we adapt to the rapid sociocultural changes of the day. Our missional landscape has been massively altered by massive sociological disruptions such as urbanization, globalization, pluralism, and the ever-accelerating advances of technology.

An entire generation of churches have their own mission statement. Simultaneously, we are living in a world raising a generation with a cause-oriented mindset. While traditionalists, the silent generation, and even boomers felt an allegiance and gave their resources to institutions, Generation X, millennials, and Generation

¹ Lesslie Newbigin, *A Word in Season: Perspectives on Christian World Missions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994), 85.

Z are in many cases anti-institutional, giving more to ideas and how they make them feel. Understanding why people give and what motivates them to use their spiritual gifts are important parts of building a successful missions strategy. Each generational cohort brings unique perspectives, giving preferences, and life experiences to the table. It's important that we allow for opportunities to all learn from each other. There is strength in intergenerational connectivity.

After Generation Z, Generation Alpha will follow. Wrap your brain around the question: "What kind of world/legacy are we going to set up for them?" Giving is a spiritual gift. As spiritual leaders, we have a responsibility to equip the people we serve and cultivate the gifts the Lord has given to them—including the givers.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, almost 95 percent of the global Church existed in Europe and the Americas. Today, close to 65 percent of the global Church exists in the global south, making the Western Church a minority.² It's no longer about how we, ourselves, can accomplish missions; now it's about identifying others around the world that God is raising up and working together in partnership with them.

Additionally, twenty-first-century missions is undergoing a much-needed overhaul to produce a more holistic approach of being both proclaimers *and* doers of the Word. Newer missional thinking distinct from that of the twentieth century is that missions requires the whole Church to take the whole Gospel to the whole world. The Good News is not limited to either verbal expression or practical demonstration. It's both/*and*, not either/*or*. All of us—not some who are specially

² Joseph Liu, "Global Christianity – A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population," Pew Research Center, December 19, 2011, <https://www.pewforum.org/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/>.

endowed—are commanded to both love our neighbor *and* preach the Gospel, fully embracing both aspects of the Gospel and collaborating with one another.

Overview

The holistic approach to twenty-first-century missions includes being both *proclaimers* and *doers* of the Word.

Questions for Reflection

- What does it mean for you personally to be both a “proclaimer *and* doer of the Word”?
- Write down one area where you need to increase your commitment in each, and focus on taking small consistent actions in that area.
 - Proclaimer (verbal expression—like sharing your beliefs with a neighbor)
 - Doer (practical application—like providing a meal to a family in need)

CHAPTER 6: MISSIONS MATTER NOW MORE THAN EVER

Clarifying our response to “What is missions?” is absolutely essential for our generation. There has been so much activity around the world under the banner of missions, yet when we look at our report card, we have to ask whether we are effectively sharing the Gospel or just keeping busy.

- Nearly one-third of the world has still never once heard the name of Jesus Christ.¹
- Eighty-six percent of all Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists have never even met a Christian believer.²
- The International Mission Board estimates that of the 7,275 unreached people groups, there are approximately 3,141 that remain unengaged.³

¹ “Status of World Evangelization 2020,” Joshua Project, January 2021, <https://joshuaproject.net/assets/media/handouts/status-of-world-evangelization.pdf>.

² Todd M. Johnson, “Personal Contact,” Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, April 1, 2020, <https://www.gordonconwell.edu/blog/personal-contact/>.

³ “People Groups,” International Mission Board, SBC, updated February 27, 2021, <https://www.people-groups.org/>.

- There are 3,945 languages with no Scripture—that represents 255 million people.⁴
- Christianity, the largest religion in the United States, was 73.7 percent of the total population in 2016. By 2019 this had fallen to 65 percent, and 26 percent of the total population identified as “no religion” or “unaffiliated.”⁵

When we look at the global metrics, the unfinished task of missions begs reprioritization similar to the model of missions we find in the New Testament. What that means is that who we are as a church flows out of our vision for the city, for the place where we are, where God has placed us.

We see this being done in the New Testament. Paul adapts to what he sees in his culture and context. When we understand our geographical favor, we also understand our culture and times, read our society and our setting. Then we can take tightly held beliefs and principles and apply them to our context. This is the genesis for how missions activity should flow out of who we are.

One of the ways we can reach our geographical locale is communicated in Jesus’s message of His Kingdom come. It is a holistic message that includes both *word* and *deed* expressed in unity. If God’s Kingdom has come into this world, justice has come with it. Justice projects such as digging wells, providing food security, and working against sex trafficking are all a part of the Kingdom coming, but we must not be distracted by working hard for justice causes without remembering this central truth neatly summarized by pastor Chris

⁴ “2020 Scripture Access Statistics,” Wycliffe Global Alliance, accessed February 27, 2021, <https://www.wycliffe.net/resources/statistics/>.

⁵ “Five Key Findings on Religion in the U.S.” *Gallup Research*, accessed February 27, 2021, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/200186/five-key-findings-religion.aspx>.

Hodges that “social justice without Jesus is no justice at all.”⁶

What is our goal in fighting for justice? The same as Jesus’s when He healed the sick: to glorify God, bring joy to the hurting, and point to the glorious kingdom where sickness and suffering will be no more.⁷

**—RAYSHAWN GRAVES, pastoral assistant at
Redemption Hill Church**



If word and deed are essential methods of our mission to the world, unity is Jesus’s prescribed model.

“The Spirit bears his witness to Christ and end-time salvation in and through a community. Jesus formed this community during his ministry and now sends them as a community to bear the witness of the Spirit to all nations.”⁸

I am, of course, not denying the importance of the many activities by which we seek to challenge public life with the Gospel, such as evangelistic campaigns, distribution of Bibles, and Christian conferences. But I am saying that they are all secondary, and they have never accomplished their purpose in coherence within a Kingdom and ecclesial strategy.

**Lost people matter to God, and so they must matter
to us.**

—KEITH WRIGHT



⁶ Rob Hoskins, *Hope Delivered: Affecting Destiny through the Power of God’s Word* (Lake Mary, FL: Charisma House, 2012), 139.

⁷ Rayshawn Graves, “Nothing Less Than Justice,” *Desiring God*, August 29, 2016, <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/nothing-less-than-justice>.

⁸ Michael W. Goheen, *The Church and Its Vocation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 54.

Our message—in both word and deed, expanded in unity—has to be centered in Jesus and His message and in making disciples and planting life-giving local churches. Everything points back to working toward the Great Collaboration and our part in it. When we have this clarity around the central focus of missions, we can begin to discover our particular purpose and missional calling in this world.

Overview

As Newbiggin so passionately presents, “I am suggesting that the only answer, the only hermeneutic of the gospel, is a congregation of men and women who believe it and live by it.”⁹ Twenty-first-century missional callings will likely be fused with social justice causes. However, social justice without Jesus is no justice at all.

Questions for Reflection

- What are the missional implications of the statement “Social justice without Jesus is no justice at all”?
- Write a mission statement that clearly identifies your missional calling in this world. Pray over this calling and the next steps.

⁹ Lesslie Newbiggin, *The Gospel in a Pluralistic Society* (London: SPCK Publishing, 1989), 227.

CHAPTER 7: EIGHT STRATEGIC NARRATIVE SHIFTS

*We must be global Christians with a global vision
because our God is a global God.¹*

—John Stott

As I have helped numerous churches, businesses, foundations, and families around the globe to rethink their missionary strategy, I have developed eight major narrative shifts that have changed how ministry is being done worldwide.



From an emotive narrative to an informed narrative

In the twentieth century, the typical way of engaging people in missions was to have a missionary come to the church to speak in order to emotionally excite the congregation toward the cause of missions. The goal

¹ “John R. W. Stott Quotes,” Goodreads.com, accessed February 27, 2021, <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/692344-we-must-be-global-christians-with-a-global-vision-because>.

was not as much to educate people, but rather to move them emotionally. The job of being strategic about missions was reserved for experts, and it was simply the role of church leaders to move the congregation to give financially, pray, or go on a trip. But today people want to be introduced at a far deeper level.

We live in a world where information is no longer scarce, and stakeholders at all levels are demanding to be heard. The average person can become an “expert” on missions, even if only in his or her imagination, by spending a few hours searching the internet. The task before us is to determine the best way to inform and teach our communities in such a way that they develop a healthy missiology. As a leader, it is critical for you to have a healthy missiology that can be easily conveyed to those you are leading. If you don’t help your people to develop a robust, informed approach to missions, they will develop their own, moving from one emotive pressure point to the next. Most people today are taught to develop their own personal missions statement. Helping them develop an informed, healthy mission is critical.



From a closed-denominational or culturally bound narrative to an open-Kingdom narrative

It is not difficult to see that with fluid connectivity and the decentralization of information, institutional control and influence has diminished. We have moved from closed systems to open ones. While denominations provide a covering, most churches are importing their strategy from a variety of sources inside and outside their denominations. The question that has the most value today is “who is doing the best, and how can I work

with them?” You have the option to define who you are and work with those who will help you get where God is calling you to go, regardless of what tribe you are a part of.

Open systems are not more or less safe than the traditional institutional systems of the past, but they do come with added complexity and a need for due diligence on behalf of church leadership to research and be knowledgeable of the work of potential partners. It may have been easier to simply send a certain amount of money per month to allow someone else to do the work of missions, but a more decentralized approach presents great opportunities for Kingdom partnership and relationship.

“The whole church is a laity, a people. Here the emphasis is on the universality of the church—God’s people scattered throughout the world in a myriad of specific denominations, movements, networks, and other structures. It is the inclusive, worldwide, corporate reality of the multitude of men and women who, throughout history, have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ.”²

—HOWARD SNYDER



From a “West to the rest” narrative to a “from all, to all” narrative

The narrative of the twentieth century was that of the “haves” of the north taking the Gospel to the “have nots” of the south and the east. Now that the Western Church is a minority, the idea that we are the driving force in missions is no longer based in reality, and this mindset

² H. A. Snyder, *The Community of the King* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 75.

can be tough to break. It's no longer about how we can accomplish the missions task ourselves and more about identifying those that God is raising up around the world and working together in partnership. The global Church needs what we have, but our work together must be expressed in cooperative partnership rather than driven by personal agenda.



From a unilateral narrative to a cooperative narrative

Churches and agencies are failing to adapt to a world where stakeholders at every level are cocreating the future. Unilateral decisions are seen as presumptuous and disingenuous to a majority world Church. Many of the missions techniques that have been used in the past are no longer effective. We need to think in terms of partnership and relationship as opposed to coercion and inducement, even if unintentional (showing up with money can have an unintended way of forcing an agenda). Hard power will create increasing friction and tension in a world of information abundance. Soft power will allow the majority world Church to move into open systems where they can begin to imagine their own future. Influence today has to be won; it cannot be assumed. So what is it that the United States has to offer the global Church? In many ways, it is the same things that the United States has to offer the global economy: innovation and imagination.



From a generalist narrative to a specialist narrative

In the generalist narrative of the twentieth century, the primary qualifications for being a missionary were passion and obedience. If you had an awareness of who Jesus is and sensed a call to ministry, you were well on your way to the mission field. While the same approach today may seem noble, the truth is that the global Church has lots of people who have a revelation of who Jesus is, are full of passion, and are obedient to His call upon their lives. They need partners who can help enhance these basic callings with specific training and skills that will help them get to the next level. We must be asking what the global Church needs and go in with the expertise to be able to cooperatively assist them in fulfilling the Great Commission.



From an output-based narrative to an outcome-based narrative

We love numbers. They are of great interest to church leaders today: How many souls were saved? How many converts were baptized? How many churches were planted? How many were in attendance?

But do numbers tell the whole story? What is the effective measurement of our work in missions today?

In the twentieth century, we typically measured how much we produced—outputs and activities. In the twenty-first century, there is an emphasis on looking not to just the outputs, but to the outcomes of our work—the transformation that has resulted from our efforts. For OneHope that means measuring not just how many books are distributed, but what effect the

books have on individuals, churches, communities, and regions. We cannot have outcomes without outputs, but we must look for life change and transformation rather than activity to determine success.



From a limited narrative to a holistic narrative

For the past number of years, there has been a growing tension rising between those who would see themselves as “doers” of the Word and those who would see themselves as “proclaimers” of the Word. In an attempt to make correction for the overlooked social aspects of the Gospel that were conspicuously absent from many missions models in the majority of the twentieth century, the Christian social justice movement has been gaining steam in recent years. A noble desire to demonstrate the Gospel through practical acts of service is in many ways trumping the idea of proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ in the missiology of many young people today.

In the swinging of the pendulum from proclamation to practical expressions of God’s love, we must realize that the Gospel is not limited to either verbal expression or practical demonstration. It’s both/and, not either/or. We are commanded to both love our neighbor and preach the Gospel. We are shifting toward a holistic narrative that embraces both aspects of the Gospel in fullness.



From an individualistic narrative to a cultural narrative

Much of the mission of evangelism in the twentieth century was geared toward an individualistic transaction where one person accepted Christ into his or her heart. Of course that has to take place, but unfortunately most of our programs and most of our practice were built around the concept of the individual. The Western culture is very individualistic in its nature; because of that, faith has been seen as a very personal and individual decision. What we find in the majority of the world is that instead of individualized cultures, there are collective cultures. We're beginning to see in twenty-first-century missiology the idea of the Gospel penetrating an entire culture, not only in outreach, but also in the Church having influence within that cultural context.

It is critical for us to have partnerships with a local church that is meeting the holistic needs of that community. We need to move into different spheres of influence, beyond the church sphere, not just in the spiritual work of evangelism, discipleship, and proclamation, but we also have to bring a holistic missiology into every sphere, whether it is sports, the arts, or politics. We have to begin to move from this strictly individualistic narrative to a cultural narrative if we're truly going to impact the world in our generation.

Bible Translation: A Case Study

A great example to illustrate a necessary shift in the narrative is the Bible translation movement. Here we are two thousand years after Jesus came, and more than half the languages of the world still do not have God's Word in their language. There are about 6,500 languages in

the world, and about 3,500 languages in the world don't have one word of Scripture translated into them. You can't do missions or discipleship without the Bible, so Bible translation needs to be huge on everybody's radar.

The greatest missionary is the Bible in the mother tongue. It needs no furlough [and] is never considered a foreigner.³

—WILLIAM CAMERON TOWNSEND



The strategic narrative that I grew up with of Scripture translators was actually one of the driving forces in my life. Scripture translators were my heroes. I had a book that told the story of a man who left the comfort of America and moved to the most remote dangerous place on earth and lived there for forty years to translate the Bible into a distinct tribal language so that five thousand people would have God's Word in their native tongue.

Not to devalue or diminish this beautiful twentieth-century example of faithful, pioneering missions, but to pursue that narrative through a twenty-first-century lens isn't efficient or fruitful. To continue doing translation the way we've been doing it for the last hundred years, it would take another 385 years to eliminate Bible poverty in the world.

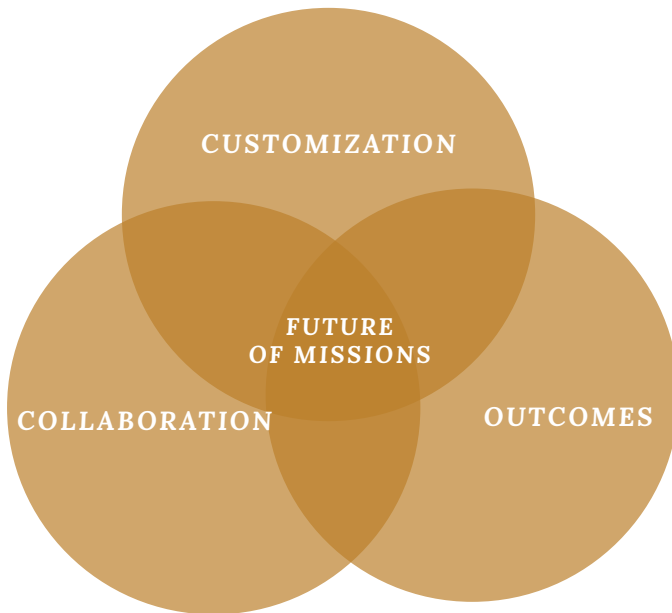
Scripture translation models have shifted to a modern-day narrative. Now instead of spending vast amounts of resources for one person to be educated, sent, and supported while working on a language translation, they do language cluster translations using indigenous translators. This model utilizes indigenous

³ Melissa Paredes, "The Greatest Missionary," Wycliffe, October 7, 2016, <https://www.wycliffe.org/blog/featured/the-greatest-missionary>.

Christians who can more quickly, easily, and cost-effectively take near-culture languages and turn them into translations. An even more recent development is the ETEN model of church-based translation, relying on translation to be birthed and driven by the context of local indigenous leaders.⁴

The Three Pillars of Missions

Good missional practice is centered around unique specialization, wholehearted collaboration, and intentional outcomes.



Customization - changing to meet the needs of specific groups or contexts

Collaboration - working together for a specific purpose

Outcomes - defining the specific desired results we want to see

⁴ "What We Do," Every Tribe Every Nation, accessed February 27, 2021, <https://eten.bible/what-we-do/>.

Case Study

Somalia has a population of more than 15 million people, with .01 percent evangelicals.⁵ More than 70,000 Somalis live in Minnesota.⁶ To reach one of the largest unreached people groups in the world, all Minnesotans need to do is reach out to their Somali neighbors.

We don't need to reinvent the wheel; we need to customize the wheel for a specific group, collaborate with a team that is using the wheel well already, and measure the outcomes.

In twenty-first-century missions, particularly as Westerners, we primarily need to find, fund, and scale as a matter of good practices. There are rare opportunities for Westerners to be generalized pioneers, but they are the exception. What served us well from the eighteenth to twentieth century is now exceptional, what should be preached and practiced is customization.

⁵ "Country: Somalia," Joshua Project, accessed March 20, 2021, https://joshuaproject.net/countries_photos/SO.

⁶ "Somalis in North America," Global Gates, December 5, 2019, <https://globalgates.info/infographics/somalis-in-north-america-2/>.

Overview

Missions are no longer an independent endeavor. Fruitful twenty-first-century missions is at the intersection of customization, collaboration, and outcomes. There are eight major narrative shifts that have changed how ministry is being done around the world:

- From emotive to informed
- From closed-denominational to open-Kingdom
- From “West to the rest” to “from all, to all”
- From unilateral to cooperative
- From generalist to specialist
- From output-based to outcome-based
- From limited to holistic
- From individualistic to cultural

Questions for Reflection

- Which narratives are you currently operating under?
- Which narratives need to shift to increase the effectiveness of your efforts?
- List examples of each of the pillars—customization, collaboration, outcomes—being done well. If you don’t have real-life examples, describe what it would look like to be done well.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

- Who can you collaborate with that is already doing this well?
- What indicators will you use to measure outcomes to ensure your mission strategy is doing what you intend for it to do?

CHAPTER 8: CHANGING THE NARRATIVE

It's no surprise that what worked in the twentieth century must be reimagined. In the same way we have shifted from the dial-up phase of the internet to 5G livestreaming, we need our mission narratives to shift to adapt and adopt to our new realities and rich strategic opportunities.

Legacy helps us know what has worked. Just because something is old does not mean it is obsolete. The Bible is two thousand years old, but it is as important and alive today as it was centuries ago.

Being intentional with our personal and legacy-oriented narratives can help us build informed strategic narratives that will improve our missional effectiveness.

Personal: individual experiences, background, race, age, socioeconomic status, or denominational background that shape our perspectives

Legacy: anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor

Strategy: a plan, method, or series of maneuvers or strategies for obtaining a specific goal or result

Narrative: stories we tell to make sense of the world

Strategic narratives are purposefully constructed, informed stories that use research and study to explain facts. Building your mission around a strategic narrative means moving beyond personal experience and assumptions to an informed, intentional ideology.

Overview

Legacy narratives must be objectively assessed, and obsolete practices should be abandoned. We need to shift to informed, strategic narratives.

Questions for Reflection

- What are some legacy narratives that can be honored in your sphere?
- What are some shifts you have seen taking place, and what information helped move them from being obsolete to strategic?

CHAPTER 9: A TRANSFORMATIONAL PROCESS: FIVE D'S OF MINISTRY DESIGN

In the book I co-authored with John Maxwell, *Change Your World*, I explain how *transformation* is a buzzword that everyone uses but few can define and fewer still can identify a process to achieve it. In my thirty-plus years of missionary activity, I am convinced that transformation is possible for anyone, anywhere, and that it can be taught and implanted as a process.

At OneHope, we use five principles in our outcome-based philosophy to design and redesign our workflow and products. OneHope has been on a Spirit-led journey for most of the last decade to explore how we can effectively steward what God has given us in order to bear much fruit. We believe outcome-based ministry design is a Gospel-centered, Spirit-led framework through which we can effectively work to glorify God and love our neighbor. The five D's in this framework are essential to ensure that ministry is fruitful.



1. Discover

Ask + Listen + Examine + Test + Diagnose

Effective ministry begins with having a crystal clear understanding of reality. Discovery tests our assumptions and reveals the true condition of our communities and needs. Simply put, discovery is reasonable research. Just to demystify research, it is nothing more than the discerning of the truth. A combination of primary, secondary, qualitative, and quantitative research methods is used to discover the truth, which becomes foundational for ministry design and action. Asset maps and needs assessments are particularly useful to know what is already happening and who to partner with—and who not to.



2. Design

Creative + Exploratory + Logical + Purposeful + Collaborative

Design envisions what a community ought to do and what Kingdom change should happen. Good design always leads to action. Through a unique blend of inspiration and ideation, key partners and influencers are brought to the table to design through challenges and generate new ministry paradigms and strategies for implementation. It always begins with the end in mind—a focus of the desired outcomes.



3. Deploy

Partner + Share + Act + Implement

This is the work of actualizing the planned activity. Our greatest plans and most creative ideas are futile unless they lead to action. Even if we don't get it right the first time, we press on toward the goal to become more effective and have lasting impact.



4. Document

Measure + Evaluate + Retest + Record

Documenting is fully demonstrating how the designs have worked operationally. What worked? How did it work? What didn't work? Why? This is the future work of refining designs to ensure that outcomes are happening.



5. Dream

Momentum + Growth + Change + Future

Dreaming is looking to the future, imagining the possibilities that will shape the future, and cultivating a willingness to pursue effective ministry.

This outcome-based transformation process should be seen as a journey not a destination. The work is never done. It is a continuous cycle of success, not a stagnant activity. Ideally starting small and measuring often and leaving room for input, feedback, and participation by all stakeholders ensures the greatest outcomes in the

long-term. The process is like a flywheel, slow at the beginning, but gains force and velocity with each turn of the transformation process.

Eswatini Epiphany

A trip to visit the “Christian” nation of Eswatini (formerly known as Swaziland) led to the realization that we needed this design process. I met, worked with, and talked to many Emaswati who claimed they were Christian and attended church on Sunday but also continued to visit shamans and practice witchcraft as usual. They had simply added God to their pantheistic catalog. In addition, this country—which self-reports being 87 percent Christian¹—also has the highest HIV/AIDS rate in the world² due to early age sexual debut encouraged by cultural and ritualistic sexual norms.

I was struck with the sad realization that evangelism efforts in this nation had been “successful” in numbers only; no lasting life change had taken place. And I was haunted by the question, “How could a nation with such a high percentage of self-identifying Christians be dying of sexual dysfunction?”

Something has to change.

This was a dark moment; it almost felt like storm clouds had rolled in and were blocking the sunlight. But sometimes these are the places where God grants us clarity; He gives us visions from thunderclouds. It was in this moment that God revealed to me the importance

¹ “International Religious Freedom Report for 2019,” United States Department of State, accessed November 13, 2020, <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/ESWATINI-2019-INTERNATIONAL-RELIGIOUS-FREEDOM-REPORT.pdf>.

² “HIV and Aids in Eswatini,” Avert, August 24, 2020, <https://www.avert.org/professionals/hiv-around-world/sub-saharan-africa/swaziland>.

of learning more about evangelizing *effectively* in every country we reach.

In order for us to understand our audience, we needed to gain on-the-ground insight into the unique customs and cultural challenges of each country we work in so that we could more effectively communicate the Gospel and affect actual life transformation.

But whether you launch a major research project or sit with a small group of thoughtful parents, teachers, and pastors as I did in Eswatini, the key is to listen, be thoughtful, and of course, allow the Holy Spirit to speak, guide, and lead the process.

Research is prophetic.

To incite our research efforts, in 2007 we launched a quantitative and qualitative research study to identify the true daily life of teens around the world. To our knowledge, this remains the largest study on this topic ever conducted. We surveyed more than 152,000 thirteen- to nineteen-year-olds in forty-four countries on five continents over the course of four years.

In 2020, we conducted an updated research study entitled *Global Youth Culture*, which surveyed 8,394 digitally connected teenagers from twenty countries. This research gave us strong insight into where culture is heading, particularly concerning mental health, religious beliefs, technology, and sexual identity. The data affirmed that committed Christian teenagers (those that read and pray at least weekly) struggle significantly less than other teenagers.

We have found that conducting ongoing research, in nations such as Eswatini and everywhere else that we work, is critical to ensuring that our efforts to deliver the Gospel, along with its potential for life-transforming impact, are fruitful.

In 2016, OneHope conducted a survey to measure the success of the *Lead Today* program in Ghana. *Lead Today* is a program that was created in partnership with John Maxwell's leadership organization EQUIP and teaches students biblically based leadership principles.

The VIA Institute on Character created and scientifically validated a 96-question survey to measure 24 character strengths of youth. We administered this survey to students before and after the *Lead Today* program, and it revealed significant growth in 16 of the 24 character strengths!

How do you know if you are being successful? Measure.

Research became prophetic. Not only did research allow us to focus on the outcomes (life changes) rather than the outputs (numbers of books distributed), but it gave us the mechanism to measure effectiveness and track life change. These processes became the stepping-stone to not only transform how we do ministry, but to tangibly chart the growth and success of our ministry efforts.

“What’s measured improves.”³

—PETER F. DRUCKER



Since implementing research and applying outcome-based ministry strategies, we have been overwhelmed with the number of short- and long-term successful life-change stories we have heard coming out of the studies we conduct after one of our products is distributed or a program takes place. Documenting these stories fuels our passion to advocate for this exciting shift in how we think about and do missions.

³ “Peter F. Drucker Quotes,” Goodreads.com, accessed November 13, 2020, https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/12008.Peter_F_Drucker.

Share What Works

Because we want to share what we have learned on our outcome-based journey, we regularly offer workshops for pastors and ministry leaders; we also make our research available for free.

Like Eswatini showed us, numbers can tell how many souls claim salvation, how many were baptized, how many churches were planted, or how many pieces of literature were handed out. But numbers can't tell the story of a transformed life or whether long-term spiritual, social, and cultural change is happening.

Overview

Applying an outcome-based philosophy and designing with measurable outcomes in mind helps ensure fruitful ministry.

Questions for Reflection

- What are some of your current metrics for effectiveness?
- What changes need to happen in how you design programs? What do you need to stop measuring (outputs) and what do you need to start measuring (outcomes, life change)?

CHAPTER 10: THREE P'S TO BUILDING A DYNAMIC MISSIONS PROGRAM

Missions is lived out strategically in local community and church contexts. Our local ecclesiology needs to be an expression of our global missiology. There needs to be a connection in our missiology between our neighborhoods and the nations, so that we're engaged in missions locally, nationally, and globally (Acts 1:8). The three P's are a helpful construct for implementing how we go about designing and implementing a life-giving missions plan or program. There are three important components that work together in building effective missions programs:

1. Define your **purpose** in missions.
2. Consider your **partners**.
3. Build vision through **popularization**.

1. Define your purpose in missions.

This is the first step toward engaging your business, community, or church in the mission to which God has called you. Take a moment to reflect on and articulate who you are. These questions can help you discern and communicate your purpose:

- What is the purpose God has uniquely equipped and called you to do?
- How can you take the gifts, talents, and abilities that are currently working really well in what you are already doing and use them to make sure you are being effective in your purpose?
- What is the makeup of your community and sphere of influence?
- What local strengths, talents, and specialties are intrinsic to your community (i.e., medical professionals, mechanics, IT professionals, etc.)?
- What are your core values?

Evaluating the true need and clearly expressing your purpose will help you to set the outcomes of your missions endeavors. As you reflect on these questions, prayerfully discern how to articulate a purpose statement for your missions initiatives. An effective purpose statement should do the following:

1. Clearly define who you are
2. Identify what you are about and what your core values are

3. Articulate what you are already doing well or decide what you will choose to concentrate on collectively

Your purpose statement for mission initiatives should be easily communicated, flexible, adaptable, and comprehensive.

2. Consider your partners.

With your purpose clearly defined, the next step is to consider who the right partners are to advance your work. God has raised up excellent, best-in-class ministries, individuals, and apostolic movements that are uniquely positioned to partner with you as you pursue its distinct purpose. Take the time to consider who the right partners are and how you might work together.

Part of choosing your partners is identifying other like-minded, life-giving churches, ministries, and movements in the world that share your mission, vision, values, and DNA. The growth and emergence of majority world churches with tremendous capacities, integrity, and strong alignment make them desirable partners for developing a sustainable and life-giving missions program.

Being proactive in your missions strategy will help you to choose partners with similar core values rather than people who are just available. This in turn will help you to establish measurable outcomes and work together with shared ownership.

Consider the following:

- Who are the right partners, individuals in your church, para-church organizations, other churches, business leaders?

- How will you work together?
- How much will you designate to your selected places, programs, and partners?
- What are the measurable outcomes?

Answering these questions and identifying the right people will empower you to be proactive rather than reactive in your missions approach.

Being proactive allows you to choose partners with similar core values rather than just people who are available and establish measurable outcomes together with shared ownership.

For Churches: Special Responsibilities and Considerations

In leading your congregation, it is important to recognize the call to pastor *all* of your congregation in the area of missions, so that missions is being integrated into all aspects of your church. There are also some special pastoral responsibilities that need to be considered and activated. As we think about our congregations, there are specific categories of people that need deeper consideration:

1. People who might engage in short-term missions
2. People who sense a call toward long-term vocational missions
3. People who have the gift of generosity who need to be cultivated as Kingdom and legacy partners

Short-Term Missions Trips and Teams

Missions teams are a popular approach to engage people in missions. But all missions teams are not alike. There are at least two different types of teams: exposure and specialized.

Consider the narrative shifts and how things have changed through globalization. While missions trips can be done well, a youth group summer trip is more for the students attending than the people it is intending to serve.

If you had the choice between an eighth grader building a clinic or a skilled laborer, which would you choose? Twenty-first-century missions often requires us to bring our best, needed assets to fit the needs and not just people who are willing to serve.

But that same eighth grader's life can forever be transformed by a mission trip; it may spring forth a calling for serving others, experiencing God in a new and real way for the first time, or help a child become comfortable sharing his or her faith.

When creating missions teams, take time to consider the full picture of who the real benefactor is and build the experience accordingly.

- How will my future missions trips be different?
- Will we focus more on exposure trips or specialized trips?

3. Build vision through popularization.

The final step in conducting strategic missions is to cast vision by popularizing your missions strategy within your community. Your missions strategy should proliferate through every facet of your life and communications:

community groups, website, social media, printed material, etc.

Everyone should be able to summarize, explain, and engage with it. When people feel they are in the know, they will get excited about your plan. Create simple and clear communication about your missions strategy in order for individuals to share it easily.

Consider the following:

- What is your missions strategy?
- Can you share it in fewer than twenty words?
- Can you share it in ten words? Fewer?
- How are you going to excite people about missions?
- How will you mobilize them to fulfill the Great Commission based on your strategy?

To effectively build vision for your missions initiatives, you have to develop popularization strategies that fit within the demographics and rhythms of your organization. This includes thinking about who is responsible for owning the communications plan for your missions initiatives and how you will create ownership. How will you engage the various demographics in your community (e.g., kids, youth, young adults, adults, etc.)? Consider the natural rhythms in life and how they might be appropriately leveraged by people in your own context to build vision around your missions strategy.

Thinking through the three P's of purpose, partners, and popularization is a tangible and tactical way to construct strategic, life-giving missions programs.

Overview

To connect your people to your expression of missiology, you'll need to do the following:

1. Define your **purpose** in missions.
2. Consider your **partners**.
3. Build vision through **popularization**.

Questions for Reflection

- Think about three or four things you do well.
- How are you putting those skills to use in your local church and community?
- How well have you defined your purpose for your people?
- Are there partners you need to leverage?
- What is one fresh way you can communicate to help expand the vision?

CHAPTER 11: VALUE DEVELOPMENT

If a vision without action is just a dream, then action without values is a nightmare.

What Is Value Development?

No one is born with a fully developed set of values. Values are developed over time. Value development is a five-stage series designed to help an individual move through each stage and strengthen their commitment to an association. By understanding these five stages, you can help guide a person through their development journey.

At each stage, individuals explore, learn, validate, or reject their attitudes and beliefs regarding an association, be it an organization, religion, relationship, etc. Individuals can reject the association at any stage, although it becomes less likely to reject an association the further an individual progresses in the value development process.

Stages of Value Development



STAGE 1—ENCOUNTER

An individual's initial introduction begins their process of forming a low-level understanding of the association. This understanding may or may not be accurate, since each individual experiences this encounter through the lens of their own personal narrative.

The most successful initial interactions are ones that align messages with the individual's personal needs, interests, values, and beliefs. Messages should be thought-provoking and give a broad-stroke introduction. The initial interaction is likely passive and one-sided (i.e., an ad, blog post, conference/event attendance, video).



STAGE 2—ENGAGE

Individuals actively pursue more information, wanting answers to questions such as the following:

- What is it?
- How does it work?
- Why is this important?
- Does this make sense?
- How does this relate to...?
- What's in it for me?
- What can I do?

During this stage, an individual will decide whether to continue this journey or walk away. He or she will develop an informed opinion and determine if he or she wants to go further. Stage 2 is likely the first dynamic interaction, although it is possible that an individual would prefer to engage solely via online content without yet engaging with an individual. Websites create an important avenue for these types of on-ramp opportunities, inciting personal one-on-one interactions through a variety of options, including:

- Contact us fields
- Instant chat
- Downloadable resources that require an email address
- Targeted online advertising

Stage 1 opened the door to awareness, but in stage 2, the individual walked in to learn more. This interaction could have happened immediately after the first encounter or could happen weeks or months later. While stage 1 is usually a static introduction by someone or something else, stage 2 is actively initiated by the individual.



STAGE 3—BELIEVE

The individual chooses to believe the message and accept it as truth. The individual either aligns the message with his or her own personal narrative or shifts his or her narrative to align with the new message.

During this stage, the individual will continue to ask questions, gather information, and validate beliefs until

veracity is achieved. Confirmation and satisfaction with engagement are essential.

Belief at this stage does not imply certitude or blind acceptance. At this stage, individuals believe but do not yet value. They continue to gather information and “experiences,” but they may not have fully committed to an ongoing relationship yet. At this stage, interaction is personal, dynamic, and both invited and pushed (meaning the individual receives information he or she may not have specifically requested but finds helpful).

This is where people value the mission of the organization and its actions and are willing to provide time and resources. A value exchange begins, and significant trust is built.



STAGE 4—CHAMPION

The previous level of belief continues to strengthen. At this stage, the individual initiates and actuates regular engagement, becoming a “champion.”

Side note: As believers referencing our spiritual lives, this stage can be called “faith”—belief and action. Faith without works is dead, and works without correct belief are done in error (James 2:14–26).

As a champion, the individual’s commitment turns into conviction. Individuals become passionate about and intentionally seek ways to introduce and encourage others to share their beliefs and values. They move from “them” to “us.”



STAGE 5—IDENTIFY

At this final stage, partnering integrates with the individual’s core values, becoming a quality of his or her character. Individuals have a high degree of certitude

and actively look for areas to partner with and share his or her belief. The individual revolves his or her life, values, and character around the new beliefs. Personal philosophy and worldview become part of the basis of his or her life purpose and action. They are the highest level of stakeholders at every level of the mission and ministry.

How to Build Value Development

The five stages of value development are focused on relationships—aligning messages with an individual’s personal beliefs and interests. Once an individual understands and believes in something, it is important to follow up with additional information to solidify his or her understanding and deepen the relationship so that he or she can champion the cause. While not all individuals who encounter a message will value it in the end, the further an individual travels on the journey of value development, the more likely he or she will be to keep and commit to the association he or she has built.

Overview

Developing relationships is a critical component of successful missions. You can help guide a person through their development journey by moving through the following stages of value development. How would you measure progress and participation with your missions enterprise across these categories?

1. Encounter
2. Engage

3. Believe
4. Champion
5. Identify

Questions for Reflection

- Think about a project, product, or program where you moved through all five stages of value development. What (or who) moved you from each stage to the next, and how did those transitions happen?
- What is something you feel passionately about? Identify someone you believe would be great to add to this initiative, and then think through how you can use these five stages of value development to help bring them on board.



CHAPTER 12: FINDING THE FUNDING

*When God gives the vision, He also
provides the provision.*

—Bob Hoskins, *OneHope* founder

Now that you have clarity on your vision, have found like-minded people to partner with, and popularized your message, it's time to make the ask.

**God's work done in God's way will never lack
God's supplies.¹**

—J. HUDSON TAYLOR



No one wants to talk about money, yet everyone needs it to fund their programs. When you communicate a clear vision upheld by a strong theology of giving, it's easy to make the ask.

¹ Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, *Hudson Taylor and the China Inland Mission* (London: Morgan and Scott LD, 1920), 42.

Consider this New Testament Church model regarding gifts:

Talk it out.

You have a responsibility to talk about money. When you do this, you're helping your constituents in the following ways:

- Stewarding givers
- Acknowledging the gift of giving
- Cultivating their gift

Remember gifts are not attributes or abilities, but rather people.

- Roles have been set in place by Christ Himself.
- Pair your team with leadership responsibilities to perform that fit their skills.

Steer away from negative responses to resources.

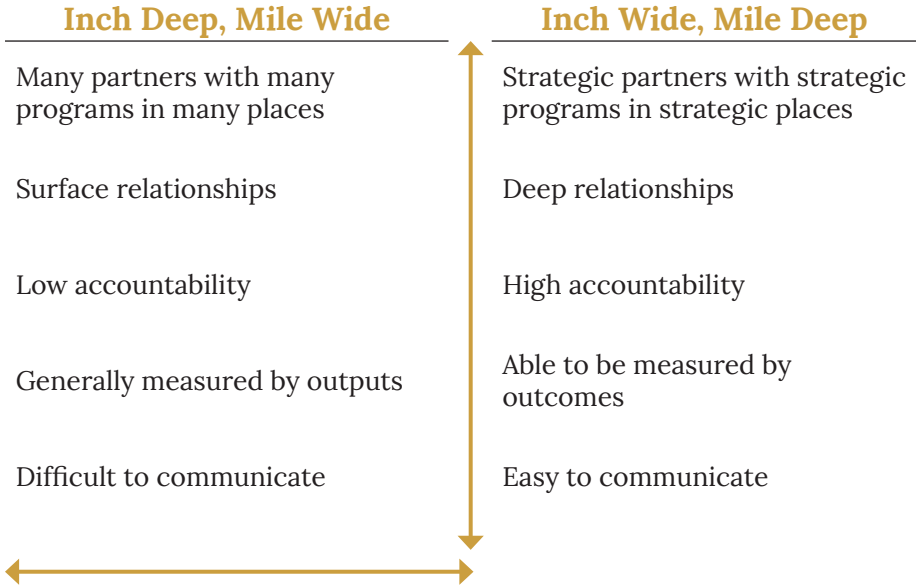
- Avoidance
- Control

Two Approaches to Missions Strategy

There are various options available when you are deciding how to fundraise. You can have a higher quantity of surface relationships or go deep with a few. Consider these questions as you move forward:

1. Clearly define who you are.

2. Identify what you are about and your core values
3. Articulate what you are already doing well or decide what you will choose to concentrate on.



Shepherding People Who Have the Gift of Generosity

Leaders must also influence the segment of their community who has the gift of generosity and equip them to understand the purpose and the partnerships they can invest into the vision. Like I mentioned before, “When God provides the vision, He also provides the provision.”

That provision often happens through the giving of God’s people. Cultivating those who have the gift of generosity is a huge part of creating and sustaining the vision of your community, church, or organization. These people will play a crucial role as legacy and Kingdom

partners to fulfill the calling to give at least 10 percent of their finances to missions.

As leaders seek to shepherd people, they will need to do so in a way that fits with the rhythms and preferences of their churches. Popularization—is a process that requires intentionality. Integral to the work is the need to provide pathways to help people grow in their missional callings and develop their gifts of generosity. Leaders should consider building out these pathways to fit the needs of unique groups of people, whether they be interested in short-term or long-term missions; volunteering; using their gifts, talents, or vocational skills; or financially supporting the missions program.

Overview

Some people have been given the gift of teaching; others have been given the gift of generosity. It's your job to develop a strong theology of giving that makes clearly communicating the vision an easy way to make the ask.

Questions for Reflection

- Which resonates with how your missions initiatives are currently operating: an inch deep or mile wide? Is that strategy successful?
- Are you an inch deep or mile wide kind of person? Which is the better strategy in your context? Why?
- What gifts have you been given to steward? How are you maximizing them to advance God's Kingdom?

- Who do you know that has been blessed with financial resources? How can you help them steward the gift of generosity they have been given?

CHAPTER 13: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

While everything around us is changing faster than any other time in the history of the world, the essence of missions remains unchanged. “The time promised by God has come at last!” Jesus said. “The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!” (Mark 1:15). “And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come” (Matt. 24:14).

The primary call of Jesus to His Church is to make disciples of all nations, and there is still so much work to be done. To be faithful to that calling, we have to refresh our missiology. Because we are living in such a sociologically disruptive era, how we approach and accomplish missions cannot remain static. It’s our job as the Church to renovate our missiology for the twenty-first century.

This material talks a lot about best practices for the mission field. However, don’t lose the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in your missions. I want to challenge you to be open to the Holy Spirit, allow Him to breathe on you

as a leader, be attentive and obedient to His Spirit calling you to do things that sometimes just don't make sense. Now, that doesn't mean you throw out all common sense, but it means that we give the Holy Spirit a vote in this.

“How little chance the Holy Ghost has nowadays. The churches and missionary societies have so bound Him in red tape that they practically ask Him to sit in a corner while they do the work themselves.”¹

—C. T. STUDD



My parents exposed me to missions as a kid. We had a book from Wycliffe about all the unreached people groups. As a seven-year-old I read through it, and there was this one people group called the Altai that stood out to me. I didn't know anything about them, but I was drawn to them. So, growing up I would always pray for them.

I remember I was out in Siberia in the '90s. We had been given permission as OneHope to go into every school in Russia and give out the *Book of Hope*. After two weeks of being in Siberia, I was exhausted and ready to go home. On the plane all I dreamed about was the smell of my wife's cooking and taking a hot shower for the first time in two weeks. I mean, in my mind I was already home.

All of a sudden, it was like the Holy Spirit woke me up. His presence was so tangible. I looked over to the guy sitting next to me reading an English-language newspaper. I asked him what was in the news, and he began telling me about a city called Kemerovo in Siberia. The Soviet Union was falling apart, so the miners were on strike. There was violence in the streets, and the

¹“Quotes on Missions,” Ministry 127, accessed November 18, 2020, <https://ministry127.com/resources/illustration/quotes-on-missions>.

city was in total chaos. As we were talking, I began to hear the Holy Spirit say, “I want you to go to the city of Kemerovo.” Nothing could have been lower on my wish list than going back to Siberia. So, I told the Lord, “Okay, Lord, the next time I come back to Russia, I’ll find out where Kemerovo is. I’ll find out if there’s a church there. I’ll see if there’s someone we can...” And the Lord said, “No, I want you to go to Kemerovo right now.”

When the plane landed in Moscow, our director was waiting for me. I looked at him and said, “The Lord told me to go to the city of Kemerovo.” And he said, “Kemerovo is back the other way!” I replied, “I know! I tried to explain it to God, but He’s not listening!” We found out that there was only one flight to Kemerovo leaving that night, and it was full. Just so God could see I was trying to be obedient, I filled out our names on the standby list with the hope that no seats would open. Fifteen minutes before the flight one seat opened. I was not happy about it, but I went.

I arrived in Kemerovo early the next morning. I knew just enough Russian to find a hotel. I walked into my room, and there was a window overlooking the city. I looked out in the city and began to weep and intercede over it. After several hours of prayer, I thought maybe God only brought me here to pray for Kemerovo. But then God spoke to me and told me to go to the university. I started praying as I walked through the university. I must have looked odd crying. God led me to the English department where I met a student named Julia. She was so excited that she went and got her peers, who were all also studying English. Fortunately, one of the student’s fathers was the minister of education. I met with him, and within fifteen minutes I was sitting in the mayor’s office witnessing to him.

Three months later we went back with seventy-five people. We spent six weeks in the city giving God’s Word

to young people. The mayor gave us the opera house every night to do a crusade. During that ministry event we received fifty-two thousand signed decision cards and planted three churches in the city of Kemerovo. The church there began evangelizing and planting churches. I later got a letter from them about a team they sent into the mountains of Kazakhstan where Jesus had never been preached. While there, they planted a church among the Altai people. I was beyond amazed! Those were the people I had been praying for since I was seven!

Ultimately God sees it all, and He knows it all. The takeaway from my story is this: let the Holy Spirit guide you in this work. He might tell you to do things that don't fit the charts, but trust Him and do it. Of course, we want to be smart about what we do. However, we also must allow the Holy Spirit to work through us; that is His job. This is our missiology; He is our advocate with the Father, He speaks to us, He guides us, and He directs us.

Overview

The world has changed, but our call to share the Good News has not. In order to be faithful to that calling, we cannot remain static. We must renovate our missiology to match our twenty-first-century culture and context.

Questions for Reflection

- How can you continue to expand your understanding of and involvement in missions?
- Who do you know that would benefit from refreshing their understanding of the importance of how to think about, develop, and deploy a relevant and effective missions strategy?

- Pray about where you need to increase your commitment.
- List the action steps you need to take to make positive, lasting change happen.

APPENDIX: RECOMMENDED READING

Leaders are readers, so here's my short list of must-reads on modern-day missiology. These books give greater understanding of the world we live in and provide a strong theological foundation for developing or refreshing a healthy missions mindset. I refer to and reread these books often as they are full of wisdom and challenging thinking. I encourage you to pick one or two you haven't read or read in a while and add them to your reading list for this year.

- *To Change the World* by James Davison Hunter
- *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* by Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington
- *The Coming Jobs War* by Jim Clifton
- *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* by David J. Bosch

- *A History of Christian Missions* by Stephen Neill
- *Amusing Ourselves to Death* by Neil Postman
- *The Next Christendom* by Philip Jenkins
- *The Post-American World* by Fareed Zakaria
- *Dead Aid* by Dambisa Moyo
- *The Story of Christianity* by Justo L. Gonzalez
- *Coming of Age in Samoa* by Margaret Mead
- *Change Your World: How Anyone, Anywhere Can Make a Difference* by John C. Maxwell and Rob Hoskins
- *When Helping Hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself* by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert

What *is* missions?

This is a foundational question to the Christian faith, yet it is often clouded with confusion. Beyond “missional” activities of the Church, every believer has been called to participate in missions—a key component to effectively expanding the Kingdom.

But what does that look like in today’s context?

You must reimagine mission for the twenty-first century to align lasting truths with timely best practices, bring clarity to your calling, get your audience on the same page, and achieve your mission to maximize Kingdom impact. You no longer need to struggle to engage others in a meaningful expression of local or global missions. This book contains guided reflections and activities in order to empower you to design effective missions strategies, share the vision, and apply what you’re learning in a practical way.

