

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF FRONTIER MISSIONS

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The *IJFM* also seeks to promote inter-generational dialogue between senior and junior mission leaders, cultivate an international fraternity of thought in the development of frontier missiology.

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# Editorial: Completing the Task that Remains

One of the most profound passages of Scripture is found in Matthew 24:14, with its parallel passage in Mark 10:13. Speaking about the signs of the end of the age, Jesus said, "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." The Markan version, with the same focus on the end of the age, simply states: "And the gospel must first be preached to all nations." (NIV)

This passage is so profound because it clearly links the preaching of the gospel with the end of this present age and the ushering in of the new. No where in all of Scripture is any event so clearly linked with the statement concerning when the end will come. I want to remind our readers of the powerful commentary of the late Dr. George Eldon Ladd on this important passage of Scripture. I will quote Dr. Ladd at length since it is worth its every line. As I see it, it directly speaks to the theme of this issue on completing the task of world evangelization with the biblical impulse underlying it.

Dr. Ladd, author and scholar of the Word—especially on the Kingdom of God—says:

Perhaps the most important single verse in the Word of God for God's people today is the text: Matthew 24:14. This of course refers to the manifestation of God's Kingdom in power and glory when the Lord Jesus returns. There is wide interest among God's people as to the time of Christ's return. Will it be soon, or late? Many prophetic Bible conferences offer messages which search the Bible and scan the newspapers to understand the prophecies and the signs of the times to try to determine how near to the end we may be. Our text (Matthew 24:14) is the clearest statement in God's Word about the time of our Lord's second coming. There is no verse which speaks as concisely and distinctly as this verse about the time when the Kingdom will come.

... The Word of God does indeed teach that there will be an intensification of evil at the end of the age, for Satan

remains the god of the age. But we must strongly emphasize that God has not abandoned this age to the Evil One. In fact, the Kingdom of God has entered into this evil age; Satan has been defeated. The Kingdom of God, in Christ, has created the Church, and the Kingdom of God works in the world through the Church to accomplish God's purpose of extending His Kingdom in the world. We are caught up in a great struggle—the conflict of the ages. God's Kingdom works in this world through the power of the Gospel. 'And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, as a testimony unto all nations, and then the end will come.'

... What this verse of Scripture firmly establishes is that the Good News of the Kingdom of God, or the rule and reign of God in Christ, must first be communicated to the whole world, to all the nations, tribes and peoples of the earth—they must all have the Gospel as a testimony unto them, that is to say, they must all know its deepest message—before this age comes to an end and the new age, of a new heaven and a new earth, is ushered in. This must happen before Christ returns or before His second coming.

... Let this verse burn in our hearts. God has said this about no other group of people. This Good News of the Kingdom of God must be preached, if you please, by the Church, in all the world for a witness to all the nations. This is God's program...

This means that for the ultimate meaning of modern civilization and the destiny of human history, you and I are more important than the United Nations...the mission of the Church is more important than the march of armies or the actions of the world's capitals, because it is in the accomplishment of this mission that the divine purpose for human history is accomplished. No less than this is our mission!

... Here is the motive of our mission: The final victory awaits the completion of our task. "And then the end will come." There is no other verse in the Word of God which says: "And then the end will come." When is Christ coming again? When the Church has finished its task. When will This Age

end? When the world has been evangelized. The disciples asked: "What will be the sign of your coming and of the close of the age?" (Matthew 24:3). "This gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations; and then, AND THEN, the end will come." When? *Then*, when the Church has fulfilled its divinely appointed mission...

When we have accomplished our mission, He will return and establish His Kingdom in glory. To us it is given not only to wait for but also to hasten the coming of the day of God (II Peter 3:12). This is the mission of the Gospel of the Kingdom, and this is our mission." (Quotes taken from Dr George Eldon Ladd's article "The Gospel of the Kingdom" in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, A Reader*, Revised Edition, eds. Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne.)

Matthew 24:14 gives us a clear biblical precedent and a strong impulse to consider completion of the task that remains—looking at the main dimensions of the task with its goal to start a church movement for Christ in every people group among whom that still hasn't occurred. This is the focus and purpose of this special issue of the Journal, dedicated in its entirety to completing the task of world evangelization.

Every article in this special edition deals with that focus. The goal is that every tribe, tongue and nation will have the Church planted among them, so that all will have the Gospel "as a testimony unto them", so that all will have adequate access to the Gospel thus making the Good News available to every person on planet earth. Finally, this will make it possible for all to be able to call upon the Lord and be saved. (Romans 10:13-15) May it be soon, even by AD 2000, to the glory of our Lord and God!

*Dr. Hans M. Weerstra,  
IJFM Editor  
July 1996,  
El Paso, TX USA*

# The Unfinished Task

*God is on the move! He is superintending the events of our time.  
He is the source of the world's growing spiritual thirst.  
That means that now is the time to act!*

by Luis Bush

**I**t was nearly two thousand years ago that Jesus challenged His Church with the Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. Today, as we rapidly approach the 21st century, we are nearing a milestone that Christians once only dreamed of reaching. Within sight for the first time ever is a goal that for centuries has ignited the hearts of missionaries: "A church for every people and the Gospel for every person."

This great "Unfinished Task" is the motivational goal of the AD2000 & Beyond Movement—not only that it be done, but that it be done by the end of the millennium—by December 31, 2000!

Perhaps this overwhelming goal sounds too ambitious, too far-reaching. But consider for a moment Coca-Cola's well-publicized goal to place "a Coke in the hand of every person on earth by the year 2000." If reaching the entire world with a soft drink is not too ambitious for a business corporation, how much more should Christ's own Church be committed to reaching that same world, in the same time frame, with the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ?

A hundred years ago, evangelist D. L. Moody said concerning the spread of the Gospel to the whole world by the end of 1900, "It can be done; it ought to be done; it must be done." However, five years before the end of the century, his colleague, A.T. Pierson, conceded, "We despaired of hope."

Today, a few years before the end of our century and millennium, hope and anticipation have regained the upper hand over despair and pessimism. More than 4,000 Christian leaders representing 186 countries have committed

themselves in writing to the goal of a church for every people and the Gospel for every person by the year 2000. With that common goal in sight, they gathered in May of 1995 for the Global Consultation on World Evangelization (GCOWE '95) in Seoul, Korea, which Ralph Winter—founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission—said may have been "the most strategic Christian gathering in history."

It is apparent, then, that many Christian leaders from around the world believe "The Unfinished Task" can indeed be finished. They have committed themselves and their resources to the effort, joining hands to seek completion of the task in this century. Embracing the conviction of D. L. Moody, they have accepted even more strongly that, "It can be done; it ought to be done; it must be done."

## **It Can Be Done!**

The first thing we must understand about the goal of "a church for every people and the Gospel for every person" is that the greatest portion of the task has already been done. As Operation World author Patrick Johnstone (Chairman of the AD2000 Unreached Peoples Network) has observed, "There is cause for much praise to God in the progress over the past 200 years, and more especially in the past 30, and cautious hope for the initial attainment of our goals."

Planting "a church for every people" is a task that is already well underway and entirely within reach. Of 12,000 known ethno-linguistic peoples in the world (distinct cultures with their own ethnicity and/or language), an estimated 10,000 already have a church-

planting movement in their midst! Because of God's power and faithfulness, His many servants have prepared the way for this great moment in history.

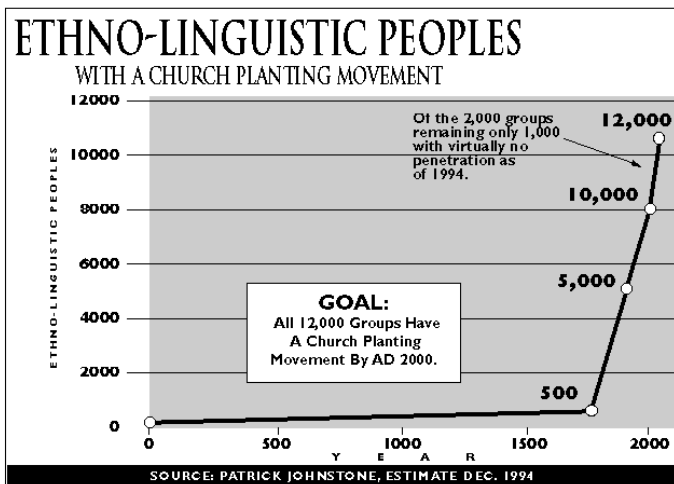
"The Gospel for every person" is entirely possible as well. We have long been told that by the year 2000, over 95% of the world's population—people from every culture, language and country—will have access to the Good News of Jesus Christ through a portion of Scripture in their own language, literature distribution, radio transmission, audio recordings, the "Jesus" film or public evangelism. In fact, it is no longer a case of one means or another in terms of access to the Gospel, but one means and others. By the end of the century, experts now tell us that 95% of the world's population will have access not only to some portion of Scripture in their own language, but also to Christian radio broadcasts...and audio recordings...and the Jesus film!

Throughout the world we see much evidence of a rapid acceleration in divine activity toward the fulfillment of the goal. God is moving as never before!

God's Word promises that He answers the prayers of His people when they pray according to His will. These promises underscore the pivotal role of a growing prayer movement focused on world evangelization. Revival expert and scholar J. Edwin Orr once wrote, "When God is about to do something new He sets His people a-praying." This is already happening in churches around the world.

In 1994 an article in *Christianity Today* asked, "Is a Global Great Awakening Just Around the Corner?" The article answered, "With millions of Chris-

## The Unfinished Task



tian believers holding mass prayer rallies worldwide, scholars and prayer movement leaders are asking whether this development foreshadows church renewal on a global scale.” It went on to cite prayer initiatives like the “Day to Change the World”, held June 25, 1994, and the AD2000 Prayer Mobilization Network’s “Praying Through the Window” of October, 1993. The article then proposed that “a prayer movement that greatly surpasses anything, perhaps in all of Christian history, is rapidly gaining momentum.”

This momentum of prayer is still growing. “Praying Through the Window II,” held in October of 1995, focused on the influential “Gateway” cities of the “10/40 Window.” A “Praying Through the Window III” scheduled for October of 1997 will focus on the least-evangelized peoples targeted by Joshua Project 2000. Add to this the thousands of churches and small groups who have committed themselves to adopting and praying for specific unreached people groups and the evidence is overwhelming: God’s people are praying as never before for the evangelization of the world!

“The Gospel for every person” means that every person on earth will have access to the Good News of Jesus Christ. But how can we know for sure that worldwide access to the Gospel can be accomplished?

has preached to more than 180 million people in more than 180 countries and territories. Yet the impact of just one day—April 14, 1996, dwarfed even that lifetime exposure. The global broadcast of Graham’s 1996 World Television Special that day to nearly every country in the world exposed more people to the Gospel than all his combined audiences in 45 years of ministry! Never before in history have so many people heard the Gospel message in a single day.

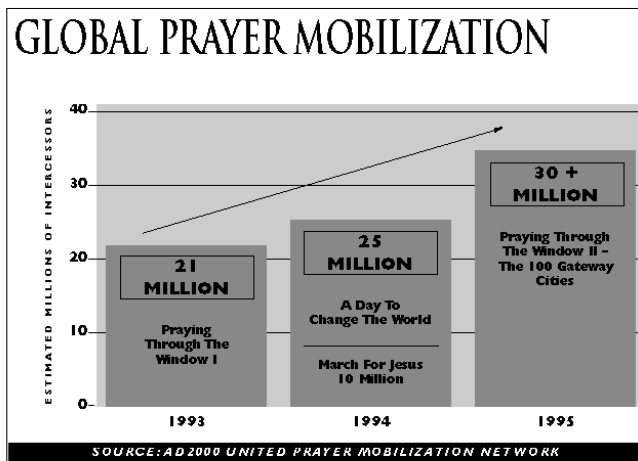
If the combination of today’s technology and one evangelist can expose so much of the world’s population to the message of Jesus Christ in such a short time, just imagine what great things—by God’s grace and power—are possible!

Second, the Gospel for every person by the year 2000 can become a reality because the Scriptures are available in the languages of the world’s people. By the year

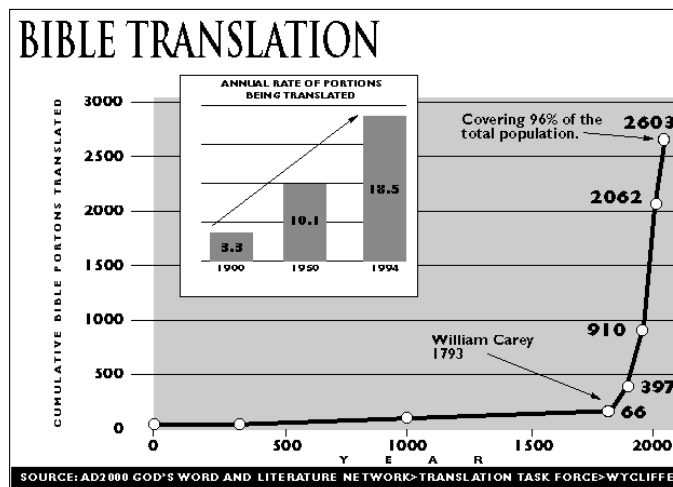
First, the Gospel for every person by the year 2000 can become reality because of the technology available today. Consider the ministry of one evangelist who is honorary co-chairman of the AD2000 & Beyond Movement—Billy Graham. Since 1949, Graham

2000, eight out of every ten people will have access to the entire Bible in their own language. Nine out of ten will have access to a New Testament. Today, the acceleration in Bible translation is so remarkable that more than 18 different language portions per year are being translated, compared to just over three per year in 1900.

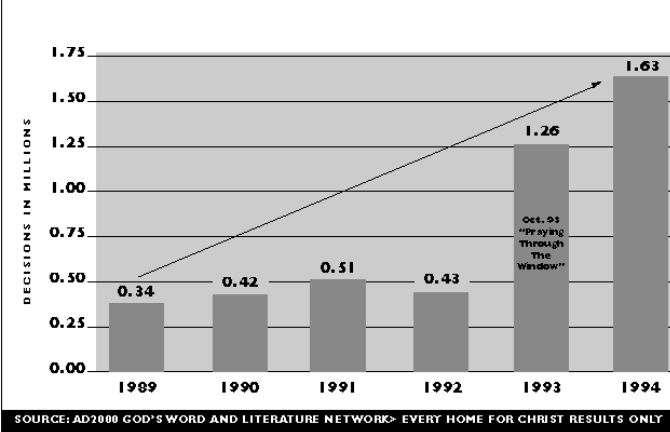
Third, the Gospel for every person by the year 2000 can become a reality because of massive literature distribution, which is occurring systematically as well as randomly throughout the world. The AD2000 God’s Word and Literature Network, for example, is systematically distributing Christian literature to every home in the world. In In-



dia, whose population will reach nearly one billion by the year 2000, Final Thrust 5000 and other agencies are working to distribute Christian literature to every home in the more than 600,000



### RESPONSE TO LITERATURE DISTRIBUTION



villages by century's end, with an average of seventeen new churches per day emerging.

Fourth, the Gospel for every person by the year 2000 can become a reality because of audio communications. This includes all radio and recorded Gospel messages as well as other media that do not require reading skills for the hearer.

Because of a dramatic rise in illiteracy, the United Nations has called the 1980s "the lost decade." Audio technology has emerged as the obvious and vital mass medium for reaching these estimated two billion non-literate people.

In less than ten years, the number of languages within evangelistic broadcasting has increased from 170 to 249. By the year 2000, radio broadcasts are expected to cover an estimated 99% of the world's population. The AD2000 Audio Communications Network, with the involvement of more than 20 agencies, seeks—through a plan called "Target 4000" to recruit at least 70 recording teams to finish the cassette recording work that began in 1940. By the year 2000, audio Gospel recordings will be available to 96% of the world's population.<sup>2</sup>

Fifth, the Gospel for every person by the year 2000 can become a reality because of the "Jesus" film. As of January, 1996, over 730 million people in 217 countries of the world have seen

world's population.

#### It Ought to be Done!

A close look at the Bible tells us that "The Unfinished Task" of "a church for every people and the Gospel for every person" ought to be done.

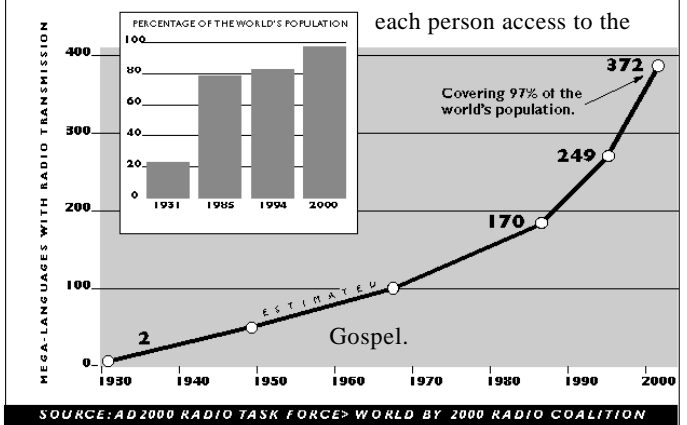
Jesus said, "If you love me, you will obey what I command" (John 14:15).<sup>1</sup> When Jesus gave the Great Commission to His followers, He commanded them, "Go and make disciples of all the nations" (Matthew 28:19). The word He used for "nations" was/is *ethne*, which can easily be translated "ethno-linguistic peoples" instead of "nations" in the sense of countries with politically drawn boundaries. In reaching the world for Christ, believers should take the Good News of Jesus Christ to all the unreached ethno-linguistic peoples of the earth!

The Bible tells us that people from every ethno-linguistic group will be in heaven. John wrote in Revelation 7:9, "After this I

this stirring film, with 42 million known decisions for Christ. With 445 churches and mission agencies involved, a new translation is being completed every 10 days. The goal is that by the year 2000, the "Jesus" film will be available in languages known by 99% of the

looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb." Scripture not only stresses the need to reach all people groups, it also emphasizes that every person should hear the Gospel message. When Jesus commissioned His disciples He said, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). Based on these verses, the AD2000 & Beyond Movement is mobilizing Christians worldwide to plant in each ethno-linguistic people a church (church movement) and to provide

### CHRISTIAN RADIO BROADCASTING

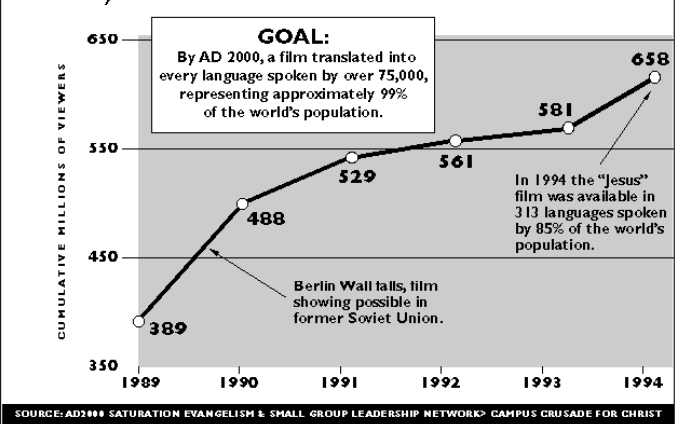


each person access to the

#### It Must Be Done!

Knowing that "The Unfinished Task" can be done and ought to be done, we also acknowledge it must be done. But what has to happen before we can realize the vision of "a church for

### THE "JESUS" FILM - ESTIMATED VIEWERS



## The Unfinished Task

every people and the Gospel for every person by the year 2000?"

Through the AD2000 & Beyond Movement process, we believe God has raised up a number of specific, effective strategies for completing the task—country-wide efforts, denominational initiatives, region-wide projects, city-wide programs, networks of agencies and partnerships between many organizations who labor together toward the year 2000. "The Unfinished Task" among unreached peoples is a common focus for all of them.

Over several years, more than 2,000 plans which target the year 2000 have emerged independently, in country after country around the world. Together they are a very strong indicator of what we must do now. We must acknowledge, support and encourage them, filling any gaps that emerge and enriching them any way we can!

The Apostle Paul admonished all believers to run the race to obtain the prize. By God's grace and provision, we have come a long way. But as we approach the end of the race, it is time to quicken our pace. It is time to begin our sprint. Paul wrote to the Romans, "The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here" (Romans 13:11-12).

We acknowledge "The Unfinished Task" includes several serious concerns. We must not oversimplify the scope and nature of the task. We must guard against a failure to cooperate within the Body of Christ. We should not underestimate the human, spiritual and financial costs of reaching the world's remaining unreached peoples.

But we must remember that God is on the move! He is superintending the

events of our time. He is the source of the world's growing spiritual thirst. That means that now is the time. Let us go forward with God's help and work together in harmony toward the year 2000 and beyond to complete "The Unfinished Task" that lies before us.

It can be done!

It ought to be done!

It must be done!

### What You Can Do!

The data shows that the Gospel will soon be available to almost every human being alive today. What can be done to assure that people respond and churches are planted, especially in the remaining least-evangelized peoples who are without a church? Joshua Project 2000 has been launched to give you a way to contribute to the completion of the task. The goal of Joshua Project 2000 is to pioneer a church-planting movement among each of the approximately 2,000 least-evangelized peoples through prayer, research and mobilizing church-planting teams targeting the remaining unreached peoples of the world.

You can pray for the least-evangelized peoples. The Joshua Project 2000 list is available (see article in this issue of the IJFM). Encourage your church, Bible study group or prayer circle to adopt an unreached people group for prayer and support. Make plans to participate in the October 1997 "Praying Through the Window III" which will focus on the least-evangelized peoples of the world.

You can form or join a research team to visit one of the Joshua Project 2000 peoples. A Joshua Project 2000 video and a training manual prepared especially for short-term research teams are available. The research data that you collect will be shared with missions

researchers and will be used to produce people profiles for prayer and strategic planning.

You can explore joining a long-term church-planting team. Your church or fellowship can link with an agency or denomination sending church planters to one of the Joshua Project 2000 peoples and support them financially and in prayer.

For more resources, referrals and specifics on how you can be involved, contact:

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Fax: (719) 576-2685

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### Footnotes

1. Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version, Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

2. The number of languages varies on the charts due to differences in definition. For instance, the Bible Translation chart reflects the known languages definitely requiring translation. The Christian Radio Broadcasting chart uses the language indicator to designate a broadcasted language understood across various dialects.

*Luis Bush is the International Director of AD2000 & Beyond Movement. He and his wife live in Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA..*

# Unreached Peoples: How Many Are There?

*Understanding the complexity of cultural barriers allows us to see distinct groupings of people who consider themselves quite distinct from others, even from their near neighbors. One of the best known missiologists attempts to quantify the number of these biblically defined groups and describes the challenge involved in trying to compute the number of these groups existing in our world today.*

by Patrick Johnstone

**T**he very term “unreached” is a challenge! Unreached peoples must be reached as soon as possible. The Church of the Lord Jesus must be mobilized to reach them. For this, we must know who they are, where they live, and how to reach them effectively. For this we need to know how many unreached people groups (UPs) there are. Yet after 13 years of talk and research, there is often more heat than light, more confusion than clarity. Why? I see three basic reasons:

## Differing Goals

Christian anthropologists and sociologists are especially interested in defining our complex society. By this means, help can be given to churches struggling to find keys for evangelizing every section of the society in which they live. To such researchers, the actual number of people groups is not important, nor is the fact that in highly developed societies, any one person may be classified in a number of professional, occupational, residential, and sociological groups. Such a classification could mean an open ended total of millions of people groups in the world.

Missionaries on the other hand are primarily concerned for the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant or promise that all the families of the earth (implying peoples) might be blessed in the gospel, and that the vision of Revelation 7:9 might become reality that there might be those redeemed of every race, tribe, people, and tongue. The command of the Lord Jesus that disciples be made of *all* the nations or peoples must be bounded and completable. For

world evangelization it is important that we define what we mean by a people group or people in this more limited sense. Revelation 7:9 gives us a good guide: these terms are predominantly ethnic and linguistic. This narrows down the number of peoples in the world to between 7,000 and 30,000, depending on the distinctions one makes.

## Differing Definitions

So much depends on the ministry of an agency as to what definition is best for the chosen medium of outreach. Take language, for example. *Christian radio strategists* tend to think in terms of using major languages, and covering small minorities in commonly understood “trade” languages. The world could be 99 percent covered by broadcasting in 400-500 such major languages.

*Bible translators* on the other hand have a stiffer criterion. Languages that already have some Scriptures or that might warrant a translation program may number 5,455 or more (the latest Wycliffe Bible Translators’ *Ethnologue* figure).

*Audio-Gospel organizations* like Gospel Recordings, Inc., prepares tape and disk evangelistic messages and can refine the program to dialects. Dialects vary from a moderate change in accentuation to a high degree of mutual incomprehension. Who could ever define every dialect in the world, 20,000 or 40,000?

Social systems can be rigid. Many advocate that Hindu caste systems should be classified as ethnolinguistic peoples—there are over 3,000 castes in India speaking 14 major officially rec-

ognized languages!

So much, therefore, depends on our definitions and classifications. So any one who propose a number for peoples and unreached peoples for the world must also give their parameters.

## Differing Cut-off Points

What is the minimal size of people that can qualify for inclusion in a world list? For instance:

*Small tribes:* At what size is a tribal group viable? Many of the Amerindian, Pacific, and African tribes are so small that they are unlikely to survive as a separate entity for long. Should they be included?

*Migrant communities:* At what size or level of integration should the many thousands of immigrant or refugee communities be recognized as unassimilated, viable, countable entities? Would, for instance, 15 migrant Uzbeks from the U.S.S.R. in Canada constitute a separate people? The total for Canada could be anything from 50 to 500 migrant ethnic communities.

## Criteria for a Suggested Model

The following is the model I used for my book *Operation World*:

First, every indigenous people within a country for which a separate cross-cultural discipling and church planting ministry is required was the standard. This would generally mean that dialect and class distinctions are not made unless local knowledge justifies this. It may prove wise for separate and specific evangelistic and early discipling strategies to be developed for these, but an integrated church to be the goal.

## Unreached Peoples: How Many Are There?

Second, all immigrant communities that retain a cultural and geographical cohesion requiring a church planting strategy in their own language. I have taken 3,000 migrants as a general lower limit for this second criteria.

Third, the total of each country gives the number of “peoples within the country.” The world total is derived by adding the totals for each country (i.e., any ethno-linguistic group found in a multiple number of countries will be included multiple times).

### Reachedness of Peoples

Using the above criteria, the results from the information that we have in our files are as follows:

—Total number of peoples within country boundaries .....	12,017
—Total number of peoples with over 50% Christian .....	6,000
—Peoples with some viable indigenous churches .....	3,000
—Peoples with missionary outreach; but no viable churches .....	1,800
—Peoples with neither missionaries nor indigenous churches .....	1,200

### Compared to Other Estimates

In the past the famous 17,000 unreached people groups out of a total of 24,000 used by Ralph Winter has

been a rallying cry that was used for more than 13 years. I see it as a conceptual total based on theoretical assumptions which now needs updating and refining in the light of the more complete data becoming available currently. This larger number can only be justified if all dialects, castes, etc. are included in the definition. To me, this makes the church planting task unnecessarily complex. Let us not assume this larger number until more detailed research obliges us to do so!

David Barrett’s peoples database already had nearly 11,000 entries when I last heard of it. His cut-off points are higher than mine in large countries—possibly explaining some of the minor discrepancies with my world total number. Bob Waymire’s (Global Mapping Project) total of 11,600 is very close to mine—but we have shared much of the definitions and data we both use.

I believe that the figure of a maximum total 12,000 unreached peoples is very close to the final total of peoples for which specific cross-cultural discipling in our generation may be required or has already minimally been achieved. This is a measurable and achievable goal. Let’s go for it, and finish the task even by AD 2000!

*Patrick Johnstone has served as a missionary to Southern Africa. He is presently the Director of Research for WEC International in England.*

[Editor’s Note: This article is a reprint from *World Mission*, Part 2 Second Edition (1994) by Jonathan Lewis, Editor. Reprinted with permission from William Carey Library, Pasadena, California.]

[Additional follow-up note from *World Mission* on Patrick Johnstone’s article: There are unreached peoples of the world all around us. We find them in ethnic and social enclaves in cities and in the isolated countryside. These people have been “hidden” from the Gospel because churches have not known about them or perhaps have not wanted to look for them. The Church has often assumed that, as long as she keeps her doors open, it is the unreached who are at fault if they don’t choose to walk through those doors. The “stained glass” barrier is a very real one, and it will continue to prevent the evangelization of these peoples all around us *unless the Church is cured of her “peoples blindness” and takes the initiative to “go... and make disciples of all nations” beginning with those right at our doorsteps.*]



# The Danuwar Rai of Nepal

*A people in Eastern Nepal without the Scriptures, without the Gospel, and currently without any mission activity—an unreached people waiting for the Gospel.*

by Bethany World Prayer Center

Nepal is a small mountainous kingdom lying sheltered at the foot of the Himalayan mountains, sandwiched between India to the South and Tibet to the north. It is home to approximately 110 different ethnic groups who speak many different languages and dialects, and have many different religious beliefs.

The Danuwar Rai are part of a cluster of people known as the Rais—the largest group in eastern Nepal. The numerous groups in the cluster all speak various dialects (from which most take their name), of the same language family. Though they have pronounced Mongoloid features they claim their origin to Marema, the daughter of Nina (who was the daughter of the earth); and Mahadeva—a wanderer in the jungle of Simrangarh and Tehrathum.

Nepal is predominantly an agricultural country with more than 90% of the population dependent on agriculture for their livelihood, yet it is poor and undeveloped. The Danuwar Rai subsist primarily as rice agriculturists, but many of the men do migrate to the cities for work.

## **What are their lives like?**

As agriculturists, the Danuwar Rai have been limited by insufficient knowledge of technology. While they grow rice in the low lying areas and potatoes, maize, wheat and barley at higher altitudes, they have poor lev-

els of productivity. It is the men's job to plow the fields, while the women plant the seeds. Harvesting is done by both, and often families will unite to help each other at this special time.

Most farms produce barely enough to support one family. Farmers trade any surplus crops they may have for such important items as kerosene and salt. Others supplement their income through craftwork and tailoring. A beverage is made from barley and potato, and this is used on festive occasions and marriage ceremonies.

Like other Rai groups, the Danuwar Rai live in one or two storied wooden or stone houses with thatched gabled roofs. The houses usually have wooden verandas

Traditionally, the men wear a *daura* (cloak) and a *surrwal* (a kind of pajama). Women wear a *fariya* (a type of sari), and a *cholo* (blouse).

Collectively, the Rai are known as very brave, courageous, daring and fearless people. In recent history they have won worldwide reputation for their bravery as Gurkhas in the Royal Nepalese army. Joining the army is often a way out

of enduring economic hardship, and it also brings respect and honor especially for those of high military rank.

Marriages are facilitated by *kongpi* (middlemen) who are used by the families to work out the details of the marriage. Gifts are presented and if accepted, a marriage date will be set. Some marriages are still facilitated by the pre-arranged kidnapping of the girl of one's choice, as it is believed that these bring about good results. Gifts are still presented to the respective families. The sacrifice of an animal (usually a pig or rooster) is

often performed at this time. Marriages are very festive occasions and meat and drinks are served in abundance. Gifts are made to the parents of the bride and groom as well as to a long line of family members and village elders. Often the whole night is spent in singing and celebration.

### **What are their beliefs?**

Although the royal family of Nepal is Hindu (as is about 90% of the population of Nepal), Hinduism and Buddhism exist side by side and are intermingled. The majority of Danuwar Rai are Hindu's but there are a number of Buddhists and some animistic worshipers. As a result, there is a wide variety of deities and worship practices among the people, most evident at celebrations of birth, marriage and death. While they worship the various Hindu gods, they also follow a Buddhist way of life and obey the teachings of the Lamas. However, at the same time they have faith in the various local spirits and supernatural forces. Due to Hindu influence many of the dead are being cremated instead of being buried.

### **What are their needs?**

Nepal has long been hidden away and forgotten by most of the world. Fiercely opposed to any form of evangelism (proselytism), government restrictions and subsequent penalties on Christian witness have been harsh. Many believers have spent significant periods in prison for their beliefs.

The Danuwar Rai do not have the Scriptures or the "Jesus Film" in their own language. Currently no missions agencies are working among them. There is a small number of

believers, but they still need the support of mission efforts from the outside. For information on Unreached Peoples Prayer Profiles please contact:

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# “Thy Kingdom Come” An Analysis of a Vision

*The AD2000 Movement has a profound mission statement, and it is more profound than meets the eye:  
“A Church for Every People, and the Gospel for Every Person by the Year 2000.”*

by Ralph D. Winter

**D**o the three phrases in the above mission statement give us a crystal clear mandate? The Bible says “if the trumpet gives an uncertain sound...” Especially note the final phrase: “By the year 2000.” It is the most electrifying phrase in the statement; it also causes the most hesitation. No one objects to the idea of goals for the year 2000, but here we see “every people” and “every person.” Doesn’t the presence (twice) of the word “every” make these goals for AD 2000 seem audacious and perhaps even foolish?

Suppose we could arrive at the place where we were absolutely confident that every *person* on earth has heard the Gospel and understood it; that is, everyone who is over 2 years old, say, and also not so old as to be unable to hear, or so sick as to be unable to think. In any case, suppose we could come to the place where every “hearing” person has heard. At midnight on a certain night we would have finished the job!

One day later, over a million more tiny tots have arrived at the age of two, and over a million more people have plunged beyond a condition of intelligibility. Note that God must know what to do with all such people. There are probably 500 million children in the world at any given time under the age of two. Who knows how many older or sick folks there are?

But this is the point: is God really playing with statistics...watching curves on a computer graph? Is He mechanically waiting for a certain number of souls to be saved? Is counting peoples and persons the name of the game? Is that all He expects us to shoot for by AD 2000?

What CAN be done by the year 2000? What is it that we can all pray for? Well, what did Jesus tell us to pray for? He said that we must pray “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

What this means is that our concept of God’s desire to reach all peoples and persons must somehow be part of His desire for His Kingdom to come on earth. Other verses say that He looks toward the time when all the nations of the world will declare His glory.

What does it really mean for His Kingdom to come? Jesus once said, “If I with the finger of God cast out devils, then the Kingdom of God has come upon you” (Luke 11:20). Is this what it means for the Kingdom of God to come? Is it possible that we have become so tied up with our measurements of evangelism, social reform, and economic growth that we have forgotten that God is primarily in the business of conquering Satan?

We look forward toward the time when “the Kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever” (Rev 11:15). Surely He seeks to vanquish the “rulers of the darkness of this earth” (Ephesians 6:1)?

But this is not simply a case of political or military conquest. Jesus made that plain when He said, “My kingdom is not of this world.” So we are not looking for a Christianized United Nations any more than we are looking forward to every human being converted to Christ, or even all social wrongs righted. Indeed, in Revelation 21 we note that AFTER He returns “He shall

wipe away every tear...”

Is it possible that the essence of the return of Christ will inevitably be a moment when “measurable” evangelistic goals will be overwhelmed by a total newness of God’s own design?

Certainly we should take our evangelistic measurements seriously, but not as ultimate parameters of God’s purpose and plan. We must look forward to the year 2000, knowing that He may evaluate things by measures we cannot fully comprehend. His thoughts are higher than ours. Meanwhile, with regard to His known will, we can and must do all! Can we be overly concerned about bookkeeping tallies in heaven and less concerned about declaring His glory on earth? Can souls get saved without His name being glorified? I actually believe that brilliant evangelical thinkers who are wrestling with front-line science are part and parcel of the global struggle to glorify His name.

And, this is why breaking through into every people has got to be a precursor to reaching every person Satan *holds whole peoples in bondage*. We can’t wrestle a single soul out of his hand without challenging his authority in that particular people group.

In those groups where Satan’s hold has already been broken, it is well understood how to win souls. But, in groups where no real breakthrough has occurred, the contest is still a “power encounter” between the Spirit of God and the powers of darkness. This is why the front line of missions must be prayer! This is why Asian evangelists say they must first “bind the strong man” before entering a village that sits in darkness waiting for the great light to

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appear. We must remember that taking the light into dark places will meet fierce resistance. In the Bible the concept of *darkness* is not merely the absence of light but the presence of a malignant, destroying evil person. That is why the kingdoms of this world will not easily yield.

### Kingdoms of Darkness

The phrase "Every People" refers to these kingdoms of darkness. This is why this phrase comes first in the slogan. Only when the gates of those kingdoms are broken down can the Gospel be available "for every person."

What does a darkened kingdom look like? How can we tell when a kingdom has been brought under God's way? Isn't this the definition of spiritual mapping?

Satan wields his control over individuals by dominating their *groups*. Most people follow the lead of their own group. Very few individuals are perfectly unrestricted free thinkers for themselves. Sometimes it is baffling to missionaries to know how to penetrate a people group. Often the break through comes through a miraculous healing or the unaccountable conversion of a key person, not through normal evangelism. Yes, normal evangelism only becomes possible after that breakthrough occurs.

Back to our point: It may be therefore somewhat artificial to try to figure out how many individuals are, or aren't, won to Christ. *Maybe what we face is a much more direct question: are there still kingdoms of this world where His name is not glorified?* Every people and every person are stepping stones in that direction and are the result of the invasion of God's glory among them. But the conquering of the kingdoms of this world is both more and less than every *people* and every *person*.

That this is primarily a spiritual battle certainly does not mean we can set aside careful planning for evangelism

and pioneer penetration and just pray that God will go out and do His thing.

What it does mean is that "We fight not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Eph. 6:12).

And we know that it is our fight, not just His, and that He is fighting with us. We do not need to worry about losing. We know that in every place on earth the key effort is not going to be our wisdom or even our hard work. It will be all of that plus His sovereign power breaking down the very gates of hell. We know that He is still doing miracles.

All of this cannot be brought together into a single human plan; yet it calls upon every planning effort, all creative approaches, and all the sacrifice we can muster. We do know that our measurements of our peoples and persons are merely concrete goals. We know also that He is with us and we are acting in obedience to the call.

*We can be embarrassed by the outcome in the year 2000. But we will be embarrassed only if when that day comes we cannot say we have done everything in our power to find and approach and reach every people and every person on earth!*

### A Church for Every People

But what does "A Church for Every people" really mean? In the five-word phrase, "A Church for Every People," the word "church" means much more than an empty building or even a small congregation.

The first five words of the AD 2000 Movement slogan were launched in 1980 by a global-level meeting of mission executives coming from both the Western World and the Two-Thirds World. At that meeting the fulfillment of the phrase "A Church for Every People by the Year 2000" was certainly not

for one symbolic congregation to be planted within every group by the year 2000. I was at that meeting and know that what was meant by this simple phrase was essentially "a church movement."

The phrase "A Church for Every People" was actually based on a concept of Donald McGavran's made famous almost thirty years earlier when he spoke of "a people movement to Christ." He was there with us when a small group of people met in a private home a few months before the 1980 meeting and hammered out this new "watchword." Dr. McGavran's conviction which had influenced so many others was that *we cannot say that we have evangelized a person unless that person has been given a chance to unite with an indigenous movement within his or her own society*. Note that if we take this seriously we cannot even speak of the Gospel for Every Person without planning to achieve an indigenous "people movement to Christ" in every people group.

His concern for converts was that they ought to be encouraged to *reach* their own people rather than *separate* from them, and to do that he felt that they should stay within the social sphere of their own people. At this point we need to quote some of McGavran's "little letter." Here are two of the seven principles in McGavran's short essay:

(One)... principle is to encourage converts to remain thoroughly one with their own people in most matters. They should continue to eat what their people eat. They should not say, "My people are vegetarians but now that I have become a Christian, I'm going to eat meat." After they become Christians they should be more rigidly vegetarian than they were before. In the matter of clothing, they should continue to look precisely like their kinfolk. In the matter of marriage, most people are endogamous, they insist that "our people marry only our people." They look with great disfavor on our marrying other people. And yet when Christians come in one-by-one, they cannot

marry their own people. None of them have become Christian. Where only a few of a given people become Christians, when it comes time for them or their children to marry, they have to take husbands or wives from other segments of the population. So their own kin look at them and say, 'Yes, become a Christian and mongrelize your children. You have left us and have joined them.

All converts should be encouraged to bear cheerfully the exclusion, the oppression, and the persecution that they are likely to encounter from their people. When anyone becomes a follower of a new way of life, he is likely to meet with some disfavor from his loved ones. Maybe it's mild; maybe it's severe. He should bear such disfavor patiently. He should say on all occasions, "I am a better son than I was before; I am a better father than I was before; I am a better husband than I was before; and I love you more than I used to do. You can hate me, but I will not hate you. You can exclude me, but I will include you. You can force me out of our ancestral house; but I will live on its veranda. Or I will get a house just across the street. I am still one of you, I am more one of you than I ever was before." (We must) encourage converts to remain thoroughly one with their people in most matters.

Please note that word "most." They cannot remain one with their people in idolatry, or drunkenness or obvious in sin. It they belong to a segment of society that earns its living stealing they must "steal no more." But, in most matters (how they talk, how they dress, how they eat, where they go, what kind of houses they live in), they can look very much like their people, and ought to make every effort to do so.

(Two) A closely related principle is to try to get group decisions for Christ. If only one person decide to follow Jesus, do not baptize him immediately. Say to him, "You and I will work together to lead another five or ten or, God willing, fifty of your people to accept Jesus Christ as Savior so that when you are baptized, you are baptized with them. Ostracism is very effective against one lone person. But ostracism is weak indeed when exercised against a group of a dozen. And when exercised against two hundred it has practically no force at all. (From Donald McGavran's article "A

Church in Every People: Plain Talk about a Difficult Subject." in *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, A Reader*, pg D—103.)

### The Upshot

The churches of the New Testament avidly sprouted up in part because of the impasse experienced by the Gentile "devout persons" attending Jewish synagogues out in Gentile territory. Many of the synagogues of the Jewish dispersion had generously invited

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Gentile seekers to sit in the back rows. But such invitees were not given an inch by the devout Jewish core of those synagogues when it came to laying aside the Jewish cultural tradition.

Like many Christians today, the faithful had to some extent confused their cultural tradition (diet, calendar, dress, etc.) with the faith itself. Their tradition had become traditionalism, to use Jaroslav Pelican's language: "Tradition is the living faith of the dead; traditionalism is the dead faith of the living."

Paul came along and dared to call out all such (Greek) "devout persons" into what would become essentially Gentile-run synagogues. Now the fast-

growing traits of early Christianity began to appear. Once the faith was indigenized (or "contextualized") it grew rapidly. Within two centuries more than one third of the entire population in the Eastern portion of the Roman Empire had decided to follow Christ!

But a factor more important than mere culture was involved. Paul, referring to Aquila and Priscilla, spoke of "the church that is in their house" (Romans 16:5, 1 Corinthians 16:19), a situation (unnoticeable to many American readers) where family ties and church worship went together, where church authority and family authority were often indistinguishable, where church discipline and family respect were one and the same thing, where "honor thy father and thy mother" were not different from spiritual accountability in the church. In such a "church" it is unlikely that the ostracism McGavran fears would occur. It is likely that the synagogues of the New Testament period as well as the Gentile-run churches of the New Testament period mainly consisted of a cluster of extended families guided by the elders of those families.

### Beware of the Americans

What is a church in the phrase "A Church for Every People"? In America—especially in urban America—churches have become more and more collections of unrelated individuals huddling together, individuals who for the most part have already been uprooted from their natural families with the church becoming a kind of substitute family. Married couples may have children and bring them to church (where they are normally segregated off into age-graded fellowships), but they are not often asked about their own parents. And people who are older are not asked about their children. Individual decisions in the church are as important as individualism has become in secular society. Thus, although the churches of urban America to some significant extent perform the functions of a family,

## Thy Kingdom Come

they often do so in the absence of, or possibly even at the expense of, the natural families. For example, although I have attended evangelical churches in many parts of the United States, I have never heard a sermon on why or how to have family devotions. Personal devotions, yes; but not family devotions.

But as the church of Jesus Christ grows up in the soil of traditional societies around the world (most of which are not individualistic) it often becomes a movement which normally reinforces, not dismantles, natural families, which are part of creation. However, this result is not what the average American missionary always expects. Sometimes missionaries feel they must stress that people who come to Christ do so in *opposition* to their parents lest their decisions not be real. On the other hand I heard the story of a North Korean young person that came to Christ. His father asked him what Christianity taught him. He said that it taught him to honor and respect his father and mother. The father's response was, "Good!"

If we seriously seek "A Church for Every People" we must recover this biblical harmony between natural families and "church" families. It will probably be much easier for missionaries from the Third World to do this than for Americans, whose instincts may often lead them (in their haste to "plant a church") to establish congregations composed mainly of "loosened-up individuals," social refugees, or even social "deviants." But, in actuality, to work within the culture rather than against it may often be easier, not harder!

Nevertheless, there will still be times and situations when the American practice of putting together scattered family fragments in brotherly love will be a helpful technique, especially as urban conditions around the world may evolve into *the tragic degree of family fragmentation which we now have in the U.S.* The mission theologian, Howard

Snyder, in his new book *Earthcurrents*, says, "In the United States, the most dramatic change has been the drop in households headed by a married couple—from about one half to one tenth in just 40 years," (*Earthcurrents*, p 34.)

However, the global threat of American and Western hyper-individualism, so closely allied with Christianity as it now is, may more often pose one of the most serious obstacles to the realization of "A Church for Every People."

### Missiologically Defined Peoples

In any case, only after we recognize clearly that "a people movement to Christ" should be the basic goal of missionary activity within a people is it possible to think clearly about what kind of a people we are talking about. If we see clearly that a "people movement" is highly indigenous, and that the members of the people feel a sense of belonging to each other, then it is possible to recognize the inherent barriers that result from rivalries or enmities within groups which may appear unified and without barrier to outside observers. Those of us who often count ethnolinguistic groups usually take very seriously the tangible differences in dialect or vocabulary of different groups but may not often take seriously the many different kinds of intangible "prejudice barriers" that define additional sub-groups.

In other words, if there are divisions which prevent all the people in a group joining in with a "people movement" that has grown up, it is likely that (from the stand-point of missionary strategy) there are really two or more groups, not just one, and that more than one people movement must be started to fulfill the goal of "The Gospel for Every People." This is what it will take for *every person to have access* to the gospel!

### The Gospel for Every Person

What does it mean for us to try to take seriously the statement that *we cannot say that we have evangelized a person unless that person has been given a chance to unite with an indigenous movement within his or her own society?*

If it is imperative for there to be an indigenous church movement within every people in order for every person to have a reasonable opportunity to know Christ, then it comes with equal force that if every person in a group cannot join an existing people movement, it is apparently true that such a group consists of more than one group needing the incarnation of an indigenous church movement. In other words, from the stand point of church-planting strategy there may be important subdivisions within the group which we have assumed is just one group.

This fact has caused a lot of confusion. It means we can't start out by counting how many groups there are except in a guess-work sense. Some or many of our groups may turn out to be clusters of groups. Only when a people movement gets going will it define the practical boundaries and allow us to be sure how many groups there actually are. It means that we can only count groups accurately after the gospel has come, and not before. We don't want to count more groups than really *can* be reached with a single people movement; yet we don't want to ignore silent, alienated minority groups which feel left out of a majority movement. The technical wording goes like this: a group with mission significance is "the largest group within which the gospel can spread as a church-planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance."

These words were framed by a large and representative group of mission experts at a Lausanne-sponsored meeting in March of 1982. Neither before nor after has there ever been a similar meeting to define such concepts and

terms, although people are free to ignore or oppose this definition. The most common objection is that this particular wording results in a people of a type defined by missiological criteria, which is meaningful primarily to mission strategists. Pragmatically, however, you can't find data of this kind in encyclopedias or world almanacs or reference materials coming from the United Nations. Secular researchers don't think in such terms. Rather, what you do find is data based on country units, which often (very often) split a single people group into two or more groups because of country borders.

#### Defining Groups by Ministry Tools

Christian workers may be confused partly because they naturally tend to define the world's population in terms of the groups which are reasonable targets for the particular tools of evangelism *in which they specialize*.

For example, those missionaries who hold in their hands immensely powerful radio stations have understandably concluded that they must limit their outreach to 280 groups of people in the world—those that are over 1 million in size. Missionary radio, the enormous and expensive tool in their hands, does not allow them to cope with the smaller groups within these 280 language spheres, smaller groups which have differing languages and dialects. The thought is that the smaller groups can understand through a trade language within the 290 main language groups.

Or, take Campus Crusade's amazing *Jesus* film strategy. Although the *Jesus* film strategists started out targeting the same 280 groups of 1-million or more, their indefatigable efforts have taken them deep into the grass-roots reality. As a result they have now devel-

oped less expensive ways of producing sound tracks for the film and as a result of this modification of their "tool" they are now able to focus on groups which are only 75,000 in number or larger. The new less expensive approach allows them a goal of just over 1,000 such groups. Within these groups are still smaller groups, which, if

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you were to count them all, would produce a much larger number. These still-smaller groups may be able to hear via the trade language of their areas.

Understandably, one of the oldest and largest missionary forces, the Wycliffe Bible Translators, has chosen its tool to be the printed page. That choice is the least expensive medium, and thus enables them to reach every group in the world. *Note that written materials are usable by more than one dialect!* If each dialect able to read the same text were to be pronounced out loud it very well might be unintelligible or objectionable to other groups which can nevertheless read from the same page! In any event, use of the printed page both allows and requires a total of more than 6,000 groups to be approached, only about half of which currently still need (printed) translation help.

By contrast, note the differing circumstances of the mission groups which employ the *ear-gate*. Take Gospel Recordings, for example. These marvelous people understand per-

fectly that several groups which can *read* the same printed page may *pronounce* what they see in discordant ways, and as a result the people speaking the different dialects simply will not all listen to audio or cassette that speaks one of the other dialect—even though its message may appear the same on the printed page. Accordingly, as long as Gospel

Recordings uses the *ear-gate* it has to take these sub-groups seriously. As a result, Gospel Recordings estimates more than 10,000 groups need to be reached—based on employing the *ear-gate* and the mother tongue. However, it is possible to put the minimal gospel message into cassette more easily than it is to produce a substantial portion of the Bible in printed form. Thus,

Gospel Recordings, with only a staff of 60, has already dealt with more than 4,500 groups! Peoples need the minimal gospel on a few cassettes. They also need a substantial portion of the Bible not necessarily just the New Testament.

If you ponder carefully the effect of using differing tools of evangelization, it will become clear that the goal of the gospel for *Every Person* will more likely require penetration by people movements into smaller groups—eventually, that is, into groups the size Gospel Recordings works with. Why? Because otherwise some small people groups in many places of the world will not feel part of any Christian movement.

#### Barriers of Prejudice

Tragically, near neighbors often hate and fear each other. Thus, in the early stages of evangelism such groups often refuse to become part of the same "people-movement church." In the early stages of evangelism such enmities will require such groups to be dealt with separately.

## Thy Kingdom Come

Fortunately, however, it is true that virtually all such smaller groups are part of layer clusters of groups. This makes it possible to include all remaining unreached groups without listing more than 2,500 or so groups, some of which are clusters. These are a tangible list of targets for distinctively missionary strategy. Once these clusters are successfully penetrated it gives insight into how other groups within the same cluster may yield to the gospel, even though the Gospel may not automatically flow from one group in a cluster to its near neighbor enemies.

And history shows that eventually a large host of smaller, often warring, groups once they become Christian, start to coalesce into larger groups. For example, at the time Christianity first began to be adopted in the Scandinavian area, hundreds of mutually hostile tribes inhabited the region. The Norwegian, Swedish and Danish spheres today are the result of wide spread reconciliation and consequent unification resulting from the adoption of Christian faith on the part of many smaller, formerly warring groups. Christian faith did not quite prevent the Rwanda massacres, but it is clearly the only thing that unites the two groups. Satan simply took advantage of the over all good will between the two groups whose people were living side by side and unleashed a malignant minority to do his dirty work, exploiting a subtle situation of integration. Note that for the most part one group was not won to Christ by the other group but by people from a long way away.

It is valuable for the AD 2000 and Beyond Movement to have added "and the Gospel for Every Person" to the 1980 slogan, "A Church for Every People," because it may not be obvious that reaching every *people* is the essential means of reaching every *person*. It also may not be obvious that once that essential people movement to Christ has been created by the divine-

human effort of cross-cultural evangelism (which is what missions is all about), that central achievement then essentially makes accessible and available "the Gospel for Every Person," and is perhaps the best way to define it.

### Measure to Verify

But how measurable is the presence of this "essential people movement to Christ"? It might perhaps be better to say "verifiable" than "measurable." We don't normally say a woman is partially pregnant, or that a person is partially infected by AIDS. Rather, in such cases we "verify" the presence or absence of a condition.

For example, measuring the percentage of the individuals in a group that seem to be active Christians may not be the best indicator of the presence or absence of a people movement to Christ. Two percent of a small group of 700 is only 14 people; 2% of the Minnan Chinese in Taiwan happens to be 400,000 believers in 2,000 congregations.

What makes it easier to verify the existence of an unreached people is the fact that we are looking for the groups with the least opportunity, the least access. While it may be difficult to say at just what point a people movement securely exists or not, it is certainly easy to identify those groups where there is no doubt one way or the other. You end up with three categories: 1) groups definitely unreached, 2) groups where there is doubt, and 3) groups definitely reached, which could be boiled down to 1) unreached, 2) doubtful, and 3) reached. Logically we expect to focus our highest priority energies on those that are definitely unreached. The only thing is that 2%, or any percentage, may be an indirect and misleading measurement.

But, unfortunately, it is still almost entirely theoretical to ask the simple question of whether or not a group has a people movement to Christ within it (e.g., is it reached or not by the 1982

definition?). Why? Because this is not the way the world's statistical machinery is working. The U.N. does not ask such questions. Neither do the secular encyclopedias, nor the military or political researchers.

Then who does? The three major Christian research offices, those of Patrick Johnstone, David Barrett, and Barbara Grimes, have been at work for years and control masses of data on the World Christian movement, drawing on sources all over the world but mainly upon annual publications of some kind or another, both secular and church publications, etc. These, understandably, are primarily sources for what is being done, not so much for what is not being done. Few of these sources render information on peoples with whom they do not yet work, and if they do, still fewer ask this particular, specific "unreached peoples" question. The very concept is still fairly new. Thus, there is inadequate information at the present time.

### In the Meantime

As a result, we must be content with the best we can do with the data available. This is where the kind of "less than 2% Christian" type of "available data" comes back in as better than nothing. The AD 2000 Movement has drawn together a fine group of willing researchers and has put together a list which combines differing criteria that may all be significant. These source have drawn upon data from mission agencies, from individual missionaries, from church publications and lists gathered for other purposes and with other criteria. Some research agencies tabulate the percentages of different religious adherents, some tabulate degrees of ethnicity, and so on. Thus, the practical thing to do is what AD 2000 Movement has done in this still early state of affairs namely, to take lists from various sources and various criteria and make up "a list of lists," giving all of the available information about a now fairly com-



prehensive list of peoples. This is a practical and temporary shift of attention away from the simple, missiological question, "Is this group reached?" that is, is there a "people movement to Christ" present? Rather, the question has temporarily become, "is there published information about this group which could give us light of some sort on the missiological question?"

Note that the goal has not changed! It is still "A Church for Every People and the Gospel for Every Person by the Year 2000." One of the most exciting things to see happen, following GCOWE '95 in Korea, is the vast increase of information which is bound to be uncovered in the months and years ahead.

### Conclusion

One thing is sure, we have all the information we need for the new outreaches for which we are prepared right now. The more we penetrate the pioneer peoples the more we will know. We don't really need to know more than we can digest right now. We will find out a lot more about a lot of the details when we get out there and get to work!

The world is now incredibly small. There is no place on earth you cannot go in a few hours. We must keep our goals clearly in mind and not worry too much about the details. We need not suppose that everything depends on us, but we must understand that God is asking everything of us. That, in turn, is the same as saying that He wants to touch our tongues with a live coal from the altar. It means He wants our love for all the world to reflect the compassion of His love for all the world, which has already profoundly benefitted us. Therefore, Paul's motivation must become ours: "Christ died for all that those who *live might no longer live unto themselves* but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf" (II Cor. 5:15).

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# Measured by the Master's Piece, How Well Are We Doing?

*Five years of this final decade of the millennium have now passed into history. There is no better time to carefully examine the Master's Piece and make appropriate in-course corrections in order to finish the task that remains!*

by David J. Hesselgrave

**M**issionaries of a Far Eastern mission were working with me to develop a five-year church growth strategy for their target area. Suddenly during the third or fourth session, the facial expression of one of the group became almost painfully pensive. Then she said, "You know, the longer we discuss this the more convinced I become that we already have a growth plan." Sure enough, an extensive search of the mission files uncovered a five-year plan that had been developed five or six years previously. It had been carefully developed, artfully printed, dutifully filed, and promptly forgotten! No one had thought of building in periodic evaluations and in-course corrections!

All of us together have set out on a grand program for penetrating the frontiers and completing the task of world evangelization. The Lord be praised for this vision! The Holy Spirit has inspired it. And two thousand years ago our resurrected Lord mandated it. Unlike those missionaries in the Far East, we have not filed the Master's plan and forgotten it. In fact, in many churches and schools we quote Matthew 28:16-20 as often as John 3:16. But like those missionaries in Asia, we sometimes neglect to review the plan and make appropriate in-course corrections.

## **A Renowned Church Historian**

The experience of a celebrated church historian of the first part of this century, Adolf Von Harnack, is revealing. Viewing the New Testament from his higher critical perspective, in 1908 he concluded that there is no reason for believing that Matthew himself recorded the words of chapter 28 verses 16 to 20, and that these verses very

probably constitute a later addition to the biblical text. By 1924, however, he had given much more attention to the passage and as a consequence changed his mind completely. In that year Von Harnack wrote that the mission "manifesto" in Matthew 28 is a "masterpiece" and that it is impossible to say anything "more or greater" in an equal number of words! [See David Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991, p. 56).]

Few, if any, readers of these lines share Von Harnack's earlier view. We accept the text as genuine and authoritative. But certain questions remain. When reading and referring to this "mission masterpiece" do we share his later feeling of excitement at its magnificence? Do we who give so much attention to the "missionary thrust" of the passage really do justice to its "missionary substance"? If every one of the fifty-one Greek words of Christ's command in Matthew 28:18-20 is so pregnant with meaning that Von Harnack ultimately said what he did, would not anything approaching justice to the text require that we more carefully examine the meaning of those words individually and in relation to each other? Are we justified in simply using the text to support the work of our particular missionary undertaking or our special approach to Christian missions?

What exactly did our Lord command? How does what he commanded fit into the concentric contexts of Scripture? What implications might a more careful and concentrated consideration of the passage have for reaching our world for Christ? Though an exhaus-

sive examination of these questions is impossible here, it is possible to suggest some guidelines that a more studied investigation might take.

## **Command and Contexts**

It is often said that no man is an island unto himself. The same can be said of any biblical text. The Matthean form of the Great Commission must be understood in relation to the various contexts in which it is "nested."

In relation to the whole of Scripture it bears a critical relationship to God's overarching plan of world redemption and the re-establishment of Divine rule over the whole of creation centered in Christ the Son. In no sense whatsoever is Matthew 28:16-20 a merely human interpolation or machination.

In relation to the Old Testament, this text represents a continuation and expansion of the Divine program to bless all the families of the earth through Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3); to make Jehovah's way known on earth and his salvation known among all nations (Ps. 67:2). In both cases, there is a command and a promise, a commission and a covenant. The *modus operandi* may be different but the motive is the same!

In relation to the rest of the New Testament, all that follows this first appearance of the Great Commission rests upon it, providing information as to how it was carried out in the history of the early church and how it will eventually be in the church and in the kingdoms of this world becoming the Kingdom of Christ.

In relation to the other Gospels with their complementary statements of

the Great Commission, it is important to see that the Matthean statement is the most complete and therefore the "textual touchstone" for understanding the others (including Acts 1:8). Exegetes who give precedence to the Johannine statement in their interpretation of mission theory, and practitioners who give precedence to the Markan statement in mission practice, do so at the risk of distorting biblical mission!

In relation to the Book of Matthew itself, the command and promise of chapter 28 verses 18 to 20 need to be understood in the light of critical passages in the rest of Matthew such as the genealogy tracing Christ back to Abraham and David in chapter 1; the sending of the seventy (or seventy-two) to the lost sheep of the house of Israel in chapter 10; Christ's promise to build his church in chapter 16; and the Olivet Discourse with its prediction of world evangelization and the judgment of the *ethne* in chapters 24 and 26. These passages both necessitate and illuminate Christ's commission as recorded in the last chapter.

Even a rather cursory analysis reveals that the text itself will serve to alert us to how much we miss when we confine ourselves to a hasty reading of the Great Commission. Though the text merits analysis from a variety of perspectives, our present purpose is perhaps best served by attempting a brief analysis in terms of its four universals and four imperatives (looking at the original text and the NASB).

#### Four Universals:

1) Jesus said that all authority in heaven and earth had been given to him. The key words here are "all" and "authority." The Authorized Version reads, "all power" but what we think of as "power" is in view in Acts 1:8. As indicated by most modern translations, "authority" is a better translation for the word *exousia* which is used here. The point is that no one in heaven or on

earth is in a position to question either the command or the promise in Matthew 28:18-20. Both emanate from the Sovereign Lord of the universe who has all authority!

2) *Panta ta ethne* (all the nations) are to be reached. Over the past forty years much has been written concerning this universal by missiologists and theologians alike. Almost all are agreed that it does not mean "nation states" as such. Many missiologists are convinced that it means "people groups"—groups of people who share a common ethnicity, language, culture and worldview. Although that may be an acceptable interpretation, it does entail certain problems. First, there is the practical problem evident in the number of different definitions of "people group" that have been offered. Second, there is the etymological problem that is evident in the fact that other Greek words seem to fit the "people group" idea just as well or better. That great psalm of praise in Revelation 5:9-10, for example, is offered by men from all tribes, (*phule*), tongues (*glossa*), and people (*laos*) as well as all the nations (*ethne*). Third, still another interpretation has it that *panta ta ethne* is best understood as "all the Gentiles" (not exclusive of the Jews). This is the rather obvious meaning of *ethne* in a variety of other passages. However, here its significance is that, though Jesus confined his earlier commission in Matthew 10 to reaching the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," in Matthew 28 he widened it to include all the Gentiles as well as Jews.

The latter view is shared by the majority of theologians. At any rate, what must not be lost in these discussions is the importance of "*panta*—"all" the various peoples of the world are to be reached with the Gospel of Christ!

3) "All that [Christ] commanded" is to be taught so that the Lord's disciples obey it. All that Jesus commanded embraces the whole of the Old Testament

because Jesus commanded his followers to "search the Scriptures" which were available to them (John 5:39). It also includes the whole of the New Testament because Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit who would disclose the things of Christ to the apostles (John 16:14). The message, then, is inclusive of all that God has revealed in his Holy Word, that He wants them to observe and to obey!

4) The last universal has to do with a promise. The Lord Jesus promised to be with those going forth in his name, "always, even to the end of the age." There is never a time, no matter how fraught with difficulty or discouragement, that he does not accompany his sent ones! There is never a place to which, or a people to whom, Christ dispatches his representatives but that He too is there in them and with them! Note that more than the encouragement and comfort of the missionary is involved here. Christ himself is present whenever and wherever his "sent ones" are present and ministering. Therefore, the response of the *ethne* to the missionary and his/her message is really their response to Christ and his Gospel (See Matthew 10:40-42 and 25:34-46).

#### Four Imperatives:

The interpreter must be careful here. It is widely understood that, in the original text, there is only one imperative as such (i.e., "make disciples" or "disciple"). The other verbs in the passage are actually participles which participate in the imperatival force of the main verb to various degrees. That is the justification for speaking here of "four imperatives." However, though all of this is quite widely understood by mission leaders, it is all too often disregarded in their passion to involve the church in "reaching the world for Christ." But that is most unfortunate because the three participles tell us how the task of making disciples is to be carried out—by going, baptizing and teaching.

1) First, then, we are to “make disciples.” This is critical. The missionary objective is to produce exactly what those first hearers of the Great Commission in fact were: disciples, students, learners, apprentices, followers of the Lord Jesus! Of course, they were also converts and believers. And later they were called Christians. But the designation that was most encompassing was “disciple.” That is what they were, and that is what we are! And that is what we, by God’s enablement, are sent to produce in all the nations and peoples of the earth!

2) “Going” is involved. Many translations make it more forceful: “Go, therefore.” But some translate it, “As you go,” Still others retain the participial form and translate it “Going.” The differences are understandable because, given the Greek construction of the sentence, this participle has less force than “baptizing” and “teaching.” It would seem important, however, to retain some imperatival force. Note, for example, the “Macedonian call” in Acts 16:9 where the man of Macedonia says to Paul “Come (or “coming”) to Macedonia and help us.” The construction is the same as in the Great Commission. But it is difficult to understand how Paul could “help” unless he “came.” Similarly, the Great Commission to “disciple all the peoples” *panta ta ethne* of the world can hardly be carried out apart from going into all the world. So “going” is necessary, but to go without a clear understanding of what the task is and how to go about accomplishing it is quite futile. In other words, the first step in making disciples is to *go*, but unless we know what we are to *do* and how to go about doing it, the “going” in and of itself is pointless.

3) Disciples are to be made by “baptizing.” It is easy to read too much in this. It is just as easy to read too little into it. The rite of baptism is in view, but at the same time much more than the rite is in view. Those who are enroute to

discipleship must repent and be converted. They must turn from their old ways and begin walking the new way, the “Jesus way.” Basically that is what baptism is all about, and it must not be overlooked. When Philip went to the Ethiopian eunuch, he believed and was baptized (Acts 8:38). When Peter went to the household of Cornelius and

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**More and more I have come to believe that to be really effective in challenging God’s people to obey the Great Commission in its fullness, the Commission itself must be set in the context of God’s grand and encompassing plan!**

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they believed, he ordered them to be baptized (Acts 10:48). When Paul and Silas did go to Macedonia and the jailer and his household believed, they were baptized immediately (Acts 16:33). However, when the rite of baptism and the person of the baptizer became an occasion for misunderstanding the essence of Christ’s teachings, Paul was able to remind the Corinthians that he himself had baptized very few and that he was not first of all sent to baptize but to preach the Gospel (I Cor. 1:11-17). “Going” does not “make disciples” unless the “goer” does more than that. “Baptizing” does not “make disciples” unless more is involved.

4) Finally, and most important in this disciple making process, is teaching them to observe (to obey) all Christ has commanded. Depending on the situation this may require considerable time

and no small amount of patience, but it is absolutely essential if disciples are to be produced. Look at the missionary outreach in the Book of Acts, it will become immediately apparent that the heart and soul of it was preaching and teaching, and that these were not distinct nor disparate from each other. It will also become apparent that preaching/teaching was encompassing—more a recital of the whole story of revelation and divine acts than a reduction to one particular story of three or four truths of the Gospel.

#### Mid-Course Corrections

Upon looking back, almost all who have had experience in pioneering missions reflect on things they would have done differently and better if they could start over. Perhaps this is the time when all of us who share a concern for reaching the unreached and fulfilling the Great Commission catch our breath and stop long enough to review that commission and what it says vis-a-vis our present assumptions and strategies. For starters, we might consider the following four concerns:

First, there is the matter of *motivation*. It has often been said that the primary motivation for mission is obedience to Christ’s command. Indeed, Christ’s claim to absolute authority supports that idea. But he does not call for blind obedience to a command devoid of preparation or precedents. The Mandate in Matthew 28 is a kind of capstone of a divine plan to bless the world’s peoples that stretches back to a faithful Abraham and forward to a reigning Christ, indeed from eternity to eternity. The command and its promise place the obedient disciple in the very center of the eternal plan of God! More and more I have come to believe that to be really effective in challenging God’s people to obey the Great Commission in its fullness, the Commission itself must be set in the context of that grand and encompassing plan! That weak, erring, sinful humans,

although saved such as we are, could possibly be thus engaged is a staggering notion. But to that we are called! What could be more magnificent? What could be more motivating?

Second, there is the matter of *defining our mission* in the world. In a recent seminar I was called upon once again to deal with one brother theologian's proposal that socio-political action and evangelism-church planting be thought of as more or less equal partners in our mission in the modern world. Even more recently in various contexts I have been confronted with the following proposals as ways in which we can "fulfill the Great Commission":

1) Join a tour group which will take a ten-day tour of five cities in country A and devote an hour or two to passing out Gospels of John in each city.

2) Support a short-termer who would like to visit resort B in Europe and "just hang around crowded areas and talk to people about the Lord."

3) Form a "prayer team" that will go to world class city C and "just march through the city and pray."

Now certainly much can be said for ministering to the "whole person." And, depending on the circumstances, for standing on a street corner and distributing the Gospel of John; for talking to people about the Lord; for praying for a city and its people; and so on (and on). But the single most complete statement of the Great Commission is in Matthew 28:18-20 and it defines mission in terms of discipling all peoples. This is first and foremost a spiritual undertaking, though it will entail doing all manner of good things for our neighbors in need. At the same time, all "spiritual" exercises do not have the same value in discipling the peoples of the world and none of them should be thought of as the fulfillment of the Great Commission. They may, or may not, contribute to its fulfillment. But "fulfill" (read, "fill full")? Hardly!

Third, and closely related to the foregoing, is the matter of how we understand the *various components* of the Matthew mandate. Throughout the modern missions era Christians have been challenged to "go" as though that were the basic requirement of the Great Commission and willingness to "go" were the litmus test of missionary dedication. That this challenge is misguided is apparent, not only by a careful consideration of the text, but also by the fact that "going" abroad has become one of the attractive things about missions (especially short-term missions) — analogous to "Join the Navy and see the World."

Also, for whatever reasons, "disciple-making" has come to mean gathering the most promising believers together and training them to become really good, productive, leader-type believers. Now, training leaders is both good and necessary. But the Great Commission does not reinforce that idea of discipleship at all. From the very beginning, the mandated goal of mission is to make disciples. Not just decisions though decision is involved. Not just converts though conversion is involved. Not just believers though faith is involved. But *disciples*. This is not just a semantic distinction. It is a distinction that goes to the very heart of our understanding of, and approach to, world evangelization.

Fourth, then, there is the matter of missing on *strategy and methodology*. We often read that the New Testament has little or nothing to say about strategies and methods but only about men. That eminent author of *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours*", Roland Allen, would roll over in his grave if he heard anyone say that! So would the likes of Rufus Anderson, Henry Venn, John Nevius and Donald McGavran. The facts are otherwise. Not only do Acts and the epistles speak loudly and clearly on this matter but, as we have

seen, Great Commission itself lays down a basic strategy that is ignored at the peril of mission. Von Harnack was really right when he concluded that it would be practically impossible to say anything more or more important in an equal number of words than is said in these concluding words of Matthew's Gospel. Here we are told, not only what to do, but *how to go about it*. Illumined by the rest of the Scriptures, going, baptizing in the Name, and teaching all to obey what Christ has commanded constitute a basic strategy that will be used of God the Holy Spirit to disciple the world's peoples and build the Church of Christ around the world!

### In Conclusion

More words are being spoken and written about the mission of the Church than ever before in history. Praise God for mission concern, compassion and commitment. May all increase until the whole world knows the truth of Jesus Christ! But in addition this new compassion can also be frustrating. The barrage of missionary verbiage, summaries of statistical gains, plethora of innovative proposals and multiplication of worldwide ministries can effect a numbing of spiritual sensitivities and an abrogation of good sense—even our own. There is, after all, but one real Master Plan of mission—one true *magnum opus* on the subject—and it is authored by God himself. At the heart of God's great book on missions is the "Master's-Piece" of Matthew 28. As we approach the end of the millennium, there is no better time to carefully examine the Master's Piece and make appropriate in-course corrections in order to finish the task that remains for the glory of our God!

*Dr. David Hesselgrave served as missionary to Japan for many years. Currently he is professor emeritus of the School of World Mission at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.*

# To the Final Frontiers

*One mission's journey to become committed to a strong pioneering force in fulfilling Christ's commission among the final frontiers of the harvest.*

by Scott Grandi

**C**BInternational is committed to being a pioneering force in fulfilling Christ's commission to the final frontiers of the harvest. In order to do this, we have had to rethink our basic strategies to enable us to reach out to the least evangelized in our world, and to modify our "corporate culture" to make it possible.

## My Personal Odyssey

To understand how CBInternational has mobilized for Frontier Missions, it is helpful to see how my life has evolved over the past few years and then compare my story with the larger CBI transformation to a mission with a renewed commitment to mobilize all its resources to help reach the least evangelized.

For fourteen years I worked as a church planting missionary in Taiwan, firmly convinced that Taiwan was part of the least evangelized world. I would see missionaries who came to Taiwan to learn Chinese with the goal of going to Mainland China as people who were neglecting an open and least evangelized people they were studying among. When I would read articles calling for missionaries to go to the least evangelized Chinese, Hindu or Muslim peoples, I would think, missionaries would go to those places. They ought to be going to places like Taiwan!

About three years ago, I began to network with CBI's leaders in Hong Kong, Japan, Macau, and the Philippines about how CBI could minister in the greater Chinese world outside our traditional limits. Through these discus-

sions the Lord began to raise my eyes to the great opportunities and need beyond Taiwan. I began to realize that while a small percentage of the Taiwan population are converted, it nevertheless is an evangelized nation. I saw with new eyes that there were many not only unreached, but totally unevangelized nations and people groups. At first this new awareness was only toward China and the unreached peoples there... but it was a start!

## New Leadership

While I was beginning to see the need for raising my eyes to the possibilities beyond Taiwan, CBInternational was going through a change in its leadership. Our general director and several of our overseas directors retired and new leaders came unto the administrative staff.

These new leaders, building on the foundation of CBI's 50 years of church planting ministry around the world, developed a mission statement to guide CBI into the 21st Century. In vital partnership with churches at home and abroad, the mission of CBI is to be a pioneering force in fulfilling Christ's commission to the final frontiers of the harvest.

In this new mission statement one can see the influences of our current and past executive directors. Warren Webster had worked as a pioneer evangelist among the least evangelized Muslims of Pakistan. Our new executive director, Hans Finzel, had worked in Eastern Europe when it was a "restricted access" area:

## The Final Frontiers.

Growing out of this mission statement came nine strategic priorities which were to guide the ministry of CBI. It is important to notice that these strategic priorities take the concepts of "pioneering force" and "to the final frontiers" seriously.

1. Evangelizing the unreached peoples of the world.
2. Discipling a new generation of national leadership.
3. Mobilizing national Christians for effective ministry.
4. Planting vibrant local churches
5. Offering help to the poor and suffering.
6. Penetrating restricted access nations.
7. Evangelizing the great urban centers of the world.
8. Anticipating the open doors of tomorrow.
9. Applying innovation to the mission strategies of tomorrow.

Drawing upon the imperatives in the new mission statement and the strategic priorities, CBI's new leadership then developed a "Commitment to Frontier Missions."

1. CBI has an underlying commitment to maintain 50% of its work force involved in direct church planting and church development ministry.

2. CBI also has an underlying commitment to frontier missions, based on Matt. 24:14 and Rev.7:9. As a result, 50% of its work force should be involved in ministries targeting the unreached peoples of the world.

## Frontier Task Force

In order to see that these goals and priorities would be fulfilled, CBI's

## To the Final Frontiers

administrative staff decided to form a “Frontier Task Force” whose responsibility would include “discovering, researching and developing new frontier mission opportunities, especially in the 10/40 Window.”

In August of 1994 Hans Finzel talked to me about becoming the Coordinator of Frontier Missions for CBI. I had just gotten to the point in my life where I was excited about partnering in ministry among the greater Chinese world, and reaching out to new harvest fields. Now I was being asked to work with the entire least evangelized world!

Once again, I had to raise up my eyes and look at the harvest before me.

After much prayer, I accepted the challenge and began my new job on January 1, 1995. My responsibilities includes:

1) Being informed of the philosophy and strategies of frontier missions.

2) To convene the Frontier Missions Task Force, and work with the Task Force to develop a strategy and philosophy of frontier missions for CBI. The Frontier Task Force is made up of missionaries working in North Africa, Central Asia, South Asia, and China, along with our field leader from the Philippines (to help represent a potentially sending area) and a pastor from the US who is involved in frontier missions.

3) To act as the Regional Coordinator for frontier missions. To communicate regularly with missionaries working in frontier situations and visit them regularly.

4) To explore new opportunities and research these personally.

5) To work with the Personnel Department to recruit workers for frontier mission opportunities.

6) To work with the Missionary Development Department to design

needed training programs for frontier missions.

7) To work with the Communications Department in developing materials for education and prayer support.

### Frontier Mission Principles

I will continue to live in Taiwan as we are committed to a field based coordinator. I will travel a lot in order to find new opportunities for our missionaries as well as to provide support for our frontier workers. As we develop our philosophy of Frontier Missions, some of our principles will be:

1. Building on our strengths: CBI is a church planting mission, which has throughout its history pioneered into frontier areas of the world. Fifty years ago when our missionaries first went to China, they went to Southern Sichuan Province to work among the least evangelized Nosu people. For years we have been involved in pioneer evangelistic work among the least evangelized peoples in Senegal, Ivory Coast, Pakistan, and the Middle East. Our frontier task force has discovered that CBI is already working among 17 of the 211 least evangelized mega-peoples (people groups larger than 1 million people.)

2. Field based: Our Frontier Task Force is made up of people directly involved (out on the field and among the people) in Frontier Missions. Our strategies, our decisions about which people to target, our policies about security, our profile for missionary recruits will come from those working on the frontiers. As one of our missionaries told me “I want to hear it from people out there, not from someone working in an air conditioned office with a Coke machine down the hall!”

In vital partnership with churches at home and abroad: Our hope and prayer is to mobilize our US churches to a serious and deep commitment to frontier

missions. I am presently working with three churches that hope to send out church planting teams to frontier people groups. Our mutual goal is to see these men and women become appointed with CBI. As a mission we can bring all our resources to help in mobilizing these local churches do the job they believe God is calling them to do.

We also are devising ways to work in partnership with the national missionary societies that are coming into existence in some of the countries we have missionaries working. Our vision is not for CBI to appoint these non-western missionaries, but to work in a dynamic partnership with these missionaries as they are appointed and supported by their national churches.

3. Building on the strengths of our existing fields and directing them to frontier missions: Several of our fields are already making plans to work among the least evangelized. Last week I asked one of our missionaries involved in research what people group we should highlight in our new publication about the unreached. He suggested a people group from the horn of Africa. I then asked our Africa Director what he thought of this, who said it was a great idea, and did I know that our missionaries in a nearby country were praying about how to reach the long distant truck drivers from this people group that drive their trucks through their country regularly! Many of our existing fields are poised for ministry to the least evangelized. By encouraging this strategic thinking we can see the numbers of our missionaries engaged in frontier missions greatly increase.

4. Broaden our geographic base: Traditionally, CBI has been an “open country” type mission. If you wanted to work with the Muslims, you went to Pakistan. If you wanted to evangelize the Chinese, you went to Taiwan or Hong

Kong. Today we are committed to sending workers anywhere in the world to reach out to the least evangelized. We are also committed to taking our resources in missionary member care out to them wherever they might go.

5. Network with any and all involved with the task: Our goal is to see the Church of Jesus Christ established where it has not yet been established. We are committed to work in partnership with all like-minded Christian workers to see this task accomplished. I have been

encouraged by the support other missions have given us and the kind of mentoring that has been freely given to me personally.

Involving at least 50% of CBI's missionaries in frontier ministries is a tremendous challenge. Making this dramatic change in a mission as large as CBI is not an easy task. We feel we have made a good beginning, and in the power of the Lord, we prayerfully and optimistically, look to the future!

*Scott Grandi has worked with CBInternational since 1979. For fifteen years he was a church planter and field leader in Taiwan. He has been appointed CBI's first Coordinator of Frontier Missions in 1995. He and his wife Donna and their two boys live in Kaohsiung, Taiwan.*



# The Joshua Project Research Survey

*If all peoples are to be reached with the gospel by AD 2000, they will need to become the focus of earnest prayer by the Body of Christ. But intercessors cannot pray without specific information on these groups. Here is light to guide us towards our goal!*

by John Robb

Walking around at night without a flashlight can result in tripping or stumbling and missing one's way. The Joshua Project on-site research survey will function like a gigantic flashlight, illuminating the path before us, and will keep us from losing our way towards the goal of "a church for every people and the gospel for every person by the year 2000." Dr. Ralph Winter is probably right that it is "the most ambitious global research project ever to be conceived." However true as that may be, there was an earlier research survey recorded in the Bible which, though narrower in scope, gives helpful guidance even 3000 years later about how our current survey should be conducted. I would like to draw out some principles from the record of this early research project described in Deuteronomy 1, Numbers 13 and Joshua 14, and also to suggest some practical guidelines to the effective implementation of the Joshua 2000 research project.

## God Likes the Idea of Surveys

*"The Lord said to Moses send some men to explore the land of Canaan, so at the Lord's command Moses sent them out..."* [Numbers 13:1-3]. Notice that the original research survey was God's idea and Moses was just following orders in sending out the twelve spies (or researchers) into the land of Canaan. In other words, the research endeavor had been validated and supported at the highest level, by the Lord Almighty himself. Why did God command the Israelites to undertake the survey? Undoubtedly one reason was that they needed to understand as much as possible about the peoples they were being

sent in to conquer. Hittites, Jebusites, Amalekites, Amorites, and Canaanites, all peoples with different cultures, customs and situations, needed to be seen so Israel would have proper intelligence for the later conquests.

Today we are not sent to militarily conquer unreached peoples, but instead our aim is to conquer them with the love, truth and power of Jesus Christ. However, the principle is the same, God knows we need to have accurate information on who the unreached peoples are, where they are located, their cultures and situations in life so that we can pray intelligently and undertake appropriate church planting efforts to reach them. While Jesus never explicitly commanded a research survey, it is implicit in his call to his disciples to "*Lift up their eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest*" [John 4:35]. The phrase "lift up your eyes" or "look" is a research word, because research is all about careful observation. Joshua Project teams will go out to have a close up look at the fields which are white to harvest.

The information gathered by the Joshua Project 2000 teams is critical not only to the fulfillment of the AD 2000 vision, but of the Great Commission itself. If all peoples are to be reached with the gospel, they will need to become the focus of earnest, informed prayer by the Body of Christ. Intercessors cannot pray without specific information on these groups. The United Prayer Track of AD 2000 is recruiting ten churches and ten prayer groups to focus their prayer on each one of the Joshua Project peoples. Already we have seen the impact of individual

churches adopting and praying for specific unreached peoples. The most fundamental and potent mission strategy is this kind of focused and informed prayer. When Jesus saw the helpless crowds (people groups), he did not ask the disciples to raise funds or recruit an army of evangelists, but rather as the first order to pray to the Lord of the harvest that he might send forth workers into his harvest field. [Matt. 9:37, 38]

In October 1997 Praying Through the Window III will involve up to fifty million Christians praying for the unreached peoples of the world. The information gathered by the Joshua Project 2000 teams will be used to produce detailed profiles on each of these unreached groups, so that millions of believers can focus their intercession on them until a pioneer church-planting movement is established in each unreached people. These profiles will also aid mission agencies and denominations in prioritizing the work of church planting and other ministries where the need is the greatest. We can see the reasons why research is so essential to the mission task and why we believe the Lord is leading us to undertake it.

## Do It Now

The Lord commanded his people: "*You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Break camp and advance into the hill country of the Amorites; go to all the neighboring peoples... See, I have given you this land, Go in and take possession of the land the Lord swore he would give to your fathers...*" [Deuteronomy 1:6-8]. In spite of God's clear urging, his people hesitated in fear and unbelief. Kadesh Barnea, that lush

oasis at which they were camping, became known as a place of vacillation and lost opportunity. As one commentator put it, “These events form a grand turning point in the history of Israel in which the whole of the future history of the covenant nation is typically reflected.”<sup>1</sup>

We are at the same point in the AD 2000 Movement today. It is time to push ahead in faith, going all out to ensure the success of the Joshua Project or sealing back our expectations regarding the fulfillment of the AD 2000 goal. God is the God of “go”: Go and make disciples, go and take possession.

The Israelite researchers brought back pomegranates, figs, and a cluster of grapes so enormous that two men had to carry it. We must remember that God has been ripening the unreached peoples as fruit which is now ready to be harvested by his people. He has prepared them by the sufferings of poverty, injustice, disaster, war, even through dreams and visions, and now is the time for harvest! He has been there working among them long before the research, prayer or church planting teams arrive on the scene. But history is tragically full of lost mission opportunities either because the Church lacked accurate information or because of complacency. This is the time. Let’s work to make it happen now!

#### **A Cooperative and Coordinated Effort**

The Lord said to Moses “from each ancestral tribe send one of its leaders” [Numbers 13:21]. Each tribe of Israel was represented in the research effort in Canaan. There was obvious team work involved as well since the twelve were not sent out separately, but as part of a coordinated plan inspired by the Lord and developed by Moses. Later on, in Joshua 14, inheritances were assigned to each tribe. The Israelites realized the task of possessing the land needed to be divided and allocated so

that every part of the land would be covered. There was careful coordination involved.

The principles of cooperation, representation, and coordination will also be important for Joshua Project 2000. Sending on-site teams to all 1800 peoples on the current Joshua Project list is an enormous undertaking and is only possible if we follow these principles. As many denominations and mission agencies as possible need to send teams, but it is essential that this intention be communicated to the AD 2000 Movement International office so that proper coordination can occur!

It is also critical for those going on teams or sending teams to be in touch with local Christian workers, either nationals or expatriate missionaries in the countries of their target peoples, so that outside teams can benefit from their expertise and guidance, and be warned of any sensitive issues in the local context. Without this kind of partnership, confusion and even harm may result just as if the Israelite researchers had carelessly gone off and done their own thing oblivious of the need to work together. Expatriates and national believers have a wealth of information to assist visiting teams, and it is essential that they be contacted before and during any visit to their country.

#### **Send Your Best**

The Lord commanded that each tribe send “one of its leaders” or as one commentator translates it “distinguished persons of rank...Those men out of the total number of the heads of the tribes and families of Israel who were the most suitable for such a mission.”

Verse 3 repeats that “*All of them were leaders of the Israelites,*” giving their names and tribal allegiances [v. 4-15]. These were not just young people out on a lark, but rather seasoned people, the cream of the crop. Caleb, we know, was forty years of age, and presumably Joshua and the others were middle

aged as well. Joshua had likely served in Pharaoh’s army before the Exodus since Moses thought him sufficiently battle-tested to be put in charge of defending Israel against the Amalekites [Exodus 17]. Why was this the case? Most likely because they would have had a maturity of judgement that only comes with age and experience. In addition, because of their leadership gifts, they could motivate the people and provide leadership for the later conquest.

In the same way we also need to send our best to lead and serve on the Joshua Project research teams. This is not to say that young people should not be involved, but clearly the importance of the mission requires seasoned, gifted brothers and sisters to take part.

Niyi Cbade who provides leadership for Project Search Light, the Nigerian unreached peoples survey, describes the kind of qualities for good researchers:

(1) “A burning heart of dedication to Jesus and His call: Are you in this to please people, satisfy your ego, get some excitement, or to please the King of Kings and help be an answer to the prayer ‘Thy kingdom come’...”

(2) “A strong prayer life: You must be a prayer warrior for the spiritual battles that lie ahead...withstand the attacks of Satan on your work and turn them into blessings instead.”

(3) “Faith: Settle it in your mind by talking to the Lord whether this project is right, is accomplishable and is for you to be involved in. Then if it is, claim God’s promises and hold on to the shield of faith despite all attacks.”

(4) “Boldness joined with wisdom: Be brave enough to go for the information even at some risk...But don’t act foolishly in the name of boldness. Let God convince you to take risks, then take them.”

(5) “A team spirit: Be ready to make this work, a real team effort. Don’t be content to just gather information academically. Stir each other up and encour-

age each other spiritually. Sacrifice for each other; bear with each other; spend time together and you will be amply rewarded for the effort you have put in. You need each other because gathering this information takes a variety of skills and personalities. Your report will be more balanced and accurate if you work on it together.”

(6) “Openness to hear the call and catch the vision: You are not in this research by accident. It is the people who do the research who should catch the vision for action first. We are the people who will know what has to be done!”<sup>2</sup>

### **Adequate Preparation and Allow Enough Time**

There is evidence of careful preparation and briefing of the Israelite researchers by Moses [Numbers 13:7-20]. He gave them a list of detailed questions and clear instructions. In addition, verse 25 tells us that they took their time—they spent forty days in the effort. In the same way our Joshua Project 2000 research teams need to be carefully prepared in advance of their survey work, and they need to allow adequate time for the whole process. Be sure to get a copy of *Life Changing Encounters* a training manual which provides valuable guidelines for recruiting and preparing Joshua Project teams. It recommends lead time of six months for this preparation process. Some of its key recommendations are:

(1) The team size should be at least two and, ideally between five to twelve. Smaller teams are easier to manage and transport around.

(2) Team members need to be teachable, submissive to authority, emotionally resilient, in good health, and, above all, willing to be flexible and adjust to another culture.

(3) All team members should go through some sort of cross-cultural orientation and training and/or take the Perspectives course. (Contact the AD

2000 and Beyond International Office for suggestions on training programs.)

(4) Ideally, the leaders should have previous experience in cross-cultural situations and team ministry, and, if possible, should visit the target country before the rest of the team to explore relationships with national believers and missionaries, and to make arrangements for the team’s stay.

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(5) The essence of good research is asking good questions. Keep the end-result in mind, discovering information that will aid in a pioneer church-planting movement being established. Use the Joshua Project 2000 Prayer Profile Survey found in the back of the *Life Changing Encounters* book or available from Caleb Project.

(6) Your goal is to gather information and to pray for that unreached people group, not to engage in evangelism, which when prematurely undertaken could actually hinder future efforts.

(7) Prepare for the trip by reading about the country, city and people group. Visit your university or research library and ask the librarian for help.

(8) Spend quality time together as a team praying and learning from one another. Involve other members of

your church or agency as much as possible so they will own and support your efforts.

(9) A few months in advance, contact field missionaries or national Christian workers who can provide briefing and any information already available on that people group as well as alert you to any political or cultural sensitivities which need to be kept in mind.

(10) Maintain security. Most governments in the 10/40 Window open and read personal mail, and often tap the phones of Christian workers. Contact the missionaries’ home organization and ask what security guidelines there may be before attempting to write or call. Write carefully, wisely and don’t mention them as being missionaries, church planters, etc. Remember: If you don’t proceed with wisdom *it could cost them their ministry or their life!* The AD 2000 and Beyond International Office may also be able to assist you with in-country contacts.

(11) Go as humble learners and listeners. Ask questions. Show interest in the culture and let the people teach you. Be alert, keep your eyes open and learn all you can, and afterwards write it down so that others will benefit from your learning experience. Like a detective looking for clues, don’t jump to conclusions. Remember that a little knowledge is a dangerous thing and that things are not always as they appear initially. See the resources list in the *Life Changing Encounters* book for helpful materials on the cross-cultural research process.<sup>3</sup>

### **Keep a Perspective of Faith**

When Israel’s researchers returned from Canaan, most of them gave way to unbelief, “*We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw the descendants*

of Anak there” [Numbers 13:27-28]. Have you ever noticed whenever the call of God comes to people, including ourselves, that the first response is “but”? Unbelief looks at the difficulties connected with the mission, and cannot see the God of the impossible towering far above it. These researchers had forgotten the wonders which the Lord had performed before their very eyes only months before in Egypt and crossing the Red Sea.

They focused on the fortifications of the cities and the fierceness of the peoples rather than on the greatness of God. There are many in the church today and in the missions movement who echo the negative viewpoint of the majority of Israelite researchers when faced with the challenge of reaching the unreached peoples by the year 2000. They say, “It’s impractical. It’s unrealistic. We can’t do it... And they are stronger!” “*We seem like grasshoppers in our own eyes and we look the same to them.*” Interestingly enough this subjective interpretation of the research data was not accurate. Rahab later confirmed that the peoples of the land were quaking in fear when they heard how God had been helping Israel [Joshua 2:9-11]. So, we must be careful to interpret our findings correctly and always with a faith perspective which takes God into full account.

Contrast their negative appraisal with Caleb’s “we can” and “we should” spirit. “*We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it*” Caleb is later praised because he “followed the Lord wholeheartedly” and asked for the most difficult part of the land to conquer—the area around Hebron where the giant sons of Anak lived.

Certainly, given the size of some

of these unreached peoples, their traditional resistance to the Christian faith, their poverty and ignorance as well as the hold which the evil one has upon them, coupled with the harsh living conditions and the probable political interference in restricted access nations, we are tempted to despair and wonder how a Christian movement could ever arise. It is then that we need the spirit of Caleb and Joshua. Caleb recognized the difficulties. However, even as an old man of 85, he went to take possession of his inheritance with this confidence, “The Lord helping me, I will drive them out just as he said [Joshua 14:12].

As one researcher put it, “Missionary research is spiritual warfare. Satan has held sway for thousands of years in many of places we will go to, and he is not about to give up his secrets or give the Kingdom of God the advantage of any strategic information. He will try to stop you with fear, illness or other circumstances. He will try to make those who have the information uncooperative. He will try to hinder you with lack of funds. He will attack you with doubt and discouragement. Research is not for the timid, but it can be successfully done by the meek. It is not at all easy, but it is altogether possible done in the power of God through the Holy Spirit and for His kingdom. All the plans in the world will fail without that power, but that is the very power we have.”<sup>4</sup>

It is appropriate that the name Joshua means “Jehovah help” or “Whose help is Jehovah.” In carrying out the Joshua Project research survey, we will need to rely completely on the help of the Lord, apart from whom we can do nothing, but with whom we can accomplish all things. Reaching these peoples with the Good News of Jesus Christ is the very heartbeat of God. We can

count on his help, and he will enable us to claim what is his and ours. As he said to Joshua, “Every place you put the sole of your foot I will give you as your territory” [Joshua 1:34]. “Ask of me and I will make the peoples your inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth your possession” [Psalm 2:8].

Whatever it is

However impossible it seems  
Whatever the obstacle that lies  
between you and it  
if it is noble

If it is consistent with God’s  
kingdom,

You must hunger after it and  
stretch yourself to reach it.

(by Charles Paul Conn)

### End Notes

1. C.F. Keil and F. Delitsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1973 Volume 1, pg. 84-85
2. Niyi Gbade, “Stories and Lessons from the Nigerian Survey” in John Robb, “Some Lessons Learned in Translating Research into Strategy” *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, Vol.9, Jan. 1992
3. Debra Sanders, editor, *Life Changing Encounters: A Handbook for Research Among Unreached Peoples* (Caleb Project, 1995)
4. Niyi Gbade, *Translating Research into Strategy*, pg.31

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# Joshua Project 2000: Research, Profiles, Prayer and Church Planting for Unreached Peoples

Joshua Project 2000 is a vision developed from within the world wide AD2000 and Beyond Movement. Its objectives are threefold: 1) to identify unreached peoples, 2) to research, produce people profiles and enlist prayer for those identified, and 3) to mobilize church-planting teams for each prioritized people. Joshua Project 2000 works cooperatively through many churches, agencies and individuals: supporting plans in progress, encouraging and educating those people who are making plans which fulfill Joshua Project 2000 objectives.

Joshua Project 2000 gained its name and strategies from the book of Joshua. God's promise in Joshua 1:3, "I will give you every place where you set your foot," is a guiding scripture for the immense task. Just as Joshua's spies infiltrated Jericho, Joshua Project 2000 research teams explore the land and gather accurate information. Just as Joshua prayed for Jericho's walls to fall, strategic prayer crumbles spiritual and cultural barriers to the gospel.

## Project Origins

On a practical level, Joshua Project 2000 and its list of priority peoples came out of a strategy process surrounding GCOWE'95 (The Global Consultation on World Evangelization, May, 1995, Seoul, Korea). On a deeper spiritual level, it was the spontaneous fruit of seeking God and interceding for the world's unreached peoples. At GCOWE, nearly 4000 missions leaders representing ministries in 186 countries met together in a working consulta-

tion to assess the status of world evangelization. A 264 page book entitled "The Least Evangelized Peoples of the World" was given to all GCOWE'95 delegates. The book, calling itself "a list of lists," merged separate lists of data collected from several sources. As the chart shows, the Joshua Project 2000 unreached peoples list began as a listing

of those unreached peoples common to four different sources of unreached peoples information. (Note these sources and their editors are noted in this issue of the Journal in the introduction to the Unreached People List.)

In the GCOWE'95 book, unreached peoples were listed three different ways. The third list was titled "Key List of Priority Least Evangelized Peoples for the AD2000 and Beyond Movement." This list contained 2,466 ethno-linguistic political peoples. Their high priority was determined because with but few exceptions they had populations over 10,000 and less than 2% Evangelical (the term "Christian" was actually used). The term ethno-linguistic political peoples refers to a

distinct culture and language, bounded by a country's border. For example, the Uzbeks of Uzbekistan and the Uzbeks of Kazakhstan were listed separately.

In November 1995, *Mission Frontiers*, Bulletin of the U.S. Center for World Mission printed a revised version of the priority peoples list. The list had been renamed "Joshua Project 2000—Peoples List." Because of further input and analysis since GCOWE 95, the list now contained 1685 peoples.

That edition of *Mission Frontiers* was devoted to launching Joshua Project 2000. It described the three key objectives (listed above) which would fulfill its goals. While the rallying cry for the AD2000 and Beyond Movement has always been "A Church for Every People and the Gospel for Every Person by the year 2000", planting reproducing churches through Joshua Project 2000 would be its implementation strategy.

In that edition Luis Bush called the Joshua Project 2000 a "global cooperative strategy," and proclaimed the Joshua Project 2000 goal: Establishing, as a minimum a pioneer church-planting movement resulting in 100 or more believing Christians in one or more reproducing churches within every ethno-linguistic people of over 10,000 individuals by December 31, 2000.

## Project Launch

Joshua Project 2000 was officially launched at a four-day meeting in Colorado Springs in November 1995. Two hundred and sixty two participants from 77 countries attended, repre-

## Joshua Project 2000

senting 140 different ministries. The focus of this meeting was not only to present Joshua Project 2000 strategy, but to determine how AD2000's Networks and National Initiatives would contribute.

Since November, Joshua Project 2000 has been further launched at several regional and national mobilization gatherings in West Africa, Brazil, India, Myanmar, Indonesia, Singapore, Colombia and South Korea. At these events, significant portions of the Church in Asia, Africa, and Latin America committed to sending out church-planting teams to the least-evangelized peoples inside their own borders and beyond. Joshua Project 2000 provided (and will continue to provide) focus and research information to these Third World mission movements.

Korean church leaders, meeting in Seoul this past May, committed to adopt at least 1150 of the current list of 1739 Joshua Project 2000 peoples and to launch a church-planting movement in each one.

South African Willie Crew, a key planner for the upcoming Global Consultation on World Evangelization (GCOWE '97), states a desired spirit of cooperation to "research and reach all of the Joshua Project 2000 peoples in all countries south of the equator [of Africa] by the year 2000."

### The List Refined

The newest revision of the Joshua Project 2000 list is presented in this issue of the Journal. From its inception, it has elicited a great deal of discussion. List editors have received over 250 separate revisions from people asserting more accurate or up-to-date information. Many of these revisions are reflected in this listing. Other proposed revisions are still under review. The list was presented to the International Society for Frontier Missiology (ISFM) at its September 1995 conference in Colorado Springs. Since then, much discussion about definitions and methodology has

taken place in an e-mail ISFM conference.

The list committee recently decided that an interim edition of the list will be published in October 1996. A fully revised list will be published in April 1997 and updated annually thereafter. The October interim edition will deal with the 15% of the list currently marked with asterisks as "under review." The peoples which were removed from the original Joshua Project 2000 list will also be reconsidered and rationale given for their removal.

Keith Butler, one of the editors of the Joshua Project 2000—Unreached Peoples List, made the following statement on July 31, 1996:

The Editorial Committee for the Joshua Project 2000 list never intended that it be a comprehensive list. Rather, it is our desire to help focus attention on peoples we feel are in most need of the gospel, making a church among them a priority for the closing years of the 20th century.

While many different selection criteria could have been used, we were limited to using the information available to us from recognized researchers. Since one major database uses percent Christian and another percent Evangelical to indicate the status of the Church among a people group, the committee elected to use a combination of both. We chose people groups with a population of over 10,000 with less than 5% Christian and less than 2% Evangelical. We must remember that each of these figures are somewhat subjective. Therefore there is a great deal of subjectivity in determining which groups would be included.

In setting up the selection criteria for inclusion on the list, the committee recognized the need for flexibility. Some peoples that should have been included may not fit the criteria of 5% Christian and 2% Evangelical. Other peoples may fit the criteria but may not need to be included for any number of reasons. Exceptions to the 5% Christian and 2% Evangelical will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

While the Joshua Project 2000 list was made up primarily from the world's unreached ethnolinguistic peoples, the committee also recognized the need to focus attention on the world's ethnocultural peoples. However, based upon information

available to us at the time of production, we focused on the world's approximately 12,000 ethnolinguistic peoples. As more information about ethnocultural groups becomes available and can be verified, we plan to submit a sister list. However, we should remember that regardless of which view we are taking, ethnolinguistic or ethnocultural, we have the same motivation: to focus attention on groups most needing the gospel.

Recognizing that no list will ever be perfect—meeting everyone's desire for who should or should not be include—let us focus on the positive aspects of an imperfect list, and let us move forward for the glory of God among those in most need of the gospel.

Ralph Winter, founder of the U.S. Center for World Mission, says the Joshua Project 2000 list is "a logical intermediate goal and always has been an intermediate goal. Almost all unreached peoples are either in it or represented in it." Winter has long stated that there are probably as many as 10,000 remaining unreached people groups when both ethnolinguistic and ethnocultural distinctions are considered.

The vast majority of the individuals who live in unreached peoples can be found in the 1739 peoples on the Joshua Project 2000 list which adds up to 2.2 billion individuals. But the AD2000 and Beyond Movement does not limit its focus to peoples over 10,000 in population. It still maintains the goal of a church for "every" people regardless of size. National church workers, often working through AD2000 National Initiatives, are engaging local peoples under 10,000 in population.

The AD2000 national coordinator for South Africa, devised a strategy to send research teams and eventually church-planting teams to the 111 least-reached peoples in southern Africa. Many of these peoples are less than 10,000 in population, such as the unreached Mikea people of Madagascar which number only 1500. Recently, a South African research and ministry team visited the Mikea people, and produced a prayer profile. While not

within the bounds of the Joshua Project itself, such teams are well in line with the overall goals of the AD2000 and Beyond Movement.

### On-Site Research and Prayer

After identification of the unreached peoples, the second objective of Joshua Project 2000 is to research and produce people profiles. Research for profiles is often done through the mobilization of on-site research and prayer teams. Resulting profiles can then be used by churches, agencies and individuals to enlist prayer among those identified and to send church planting teams.

Ten on-site research teams have gone out so far, and twenty-four teams registered with the AD2000 International Office are planning to go soon. Ninety-four people and 119 churches or agencies have indicated that they plan to organize research teams. In addition, agencies have selected 285 unreached peoples for future research trips. One U.S. based Joshua Project team recently returned from researching the Loba people of Nepal. Upon their arrival in Kathmandu, this team linked with two Nepalese Every Home for Christ workers. Trekking twelve days into the restricted access area of Mustang, team leader Mike Clinton of Colorado Springs Every Home for Christ said that they discovered no Loba Christians. The team distributed printed gospel presentations to an estimated 90% of Loba homes.

An important aspect of a successful team experience is the link to nationals or experienced expatriots living in the country to be visited. Over 100 missionaries and national workers have offered to assist on-site research teams in 57 foreign countries, representing 1028 of the 1739 Joshua Project 2000 peoples.

Adequate pre-field training is also vital. Caleb Project, Youth With a Mission

effort.

The over 20 million strong "Praying Through the Window" movement which prayed in October 1993 for the countries of the 10/40 Window and in 1995 for the 100 Gateway Cities is now shifting its focus to the Joshua Project 2000 unreached peoples. Praying Through the Window III in October 1997 will center on the 137 Gateway Peoples from the Joshua Project 2000 list.

List editor Patrick Johnstone has identified gateway people clusters as closely related peoples who, for strategic purposes, may be clustered together. These relationships are often based on a common identity of language and name but sometimes on the basis of culture, religion, economy or dominance of one group over another. The

The Loba People of Nepal pictured with a Joshua Project 2000 researcher

(YWAM) and Kingdom Building Ministries have offered training and coordination to individuals or teams. Caleb Project has produced a 102-page training manual entitled *Life-Changing Encounters* to prepare research teams before they begin to travel.

This training manual also contains a form delineating the specific information needed to produce a prayer profile. As each team submits its completed form, Bethany World Prayer Center of Baton Rouge, Louisiana will complete the profiles. All interested church-based or agency-based teams are asked to register their trip with the AD2000 and Beyond Movement International Office before going in order to assure a coordinated

Gateway People represents one of the peoples in that cluster which is a strategic "gateway" for purposes of evangelism for that cluster. For example, the Arabian Arab cluster contains 29 peoples; the Arabian Arabs are the Gateway People. On-site intercessors plan to visit the 137 Gateway Peoples during October 1997. It is hoped that all 1739 peoples will have on-site prayer between now and 1998. The Praying Through the Window III book and video will be available in October of this year from Caleb Project of Littleton, Colorado. Book translations in twelve languages are planned.

One prayer team now associated with Joshua Project 2000 took a group of

## Joshua Project 2000

fifteen people from a church in Kansas City to the Nakhi people of China (a Joshua Project priority people). The leader of the team had met a local family preparing to go as career missionaries to the Nakhi. These fifteen prayer journeyers decided to travel to the Nakhi to pave the way in prayer for this missionary family. In addition, 200 people at home in Kansas committed to intercede in prayer for the Nakhi and the team.

When the team returned, they mobilized 93 people to pray and fast for the missionary family one day each month for a year. The missionary family is now in China learning the language. The team produced a professional video people profile which has been used to spread the vision for praying for the Nakhi. The journey leaders have started a group called Kansas City Missions Mobilizers which has brought together many churches in monthly meetings. As a result, several other Joshua Project 2000 peoples have been adopted.

### Joshua Project 2000 People Profiles

Much of the data for profiles already exists but needs to be organized and extracted into the profile format. Bethany World Prayer Center in Baton Rouge, Louisiana has taken on the task of formal production. Adopt-A-People Clearinghouse contributed their unreached people data. As of mid-July, 1996, Bethany has organized research on 287 Joshua Project 2000 peoples for profile production. Thirty-five of those peoples have complete profiles ready for printing. Those remaining of the 287 are in the editing process. Additional peoples are being assigned to researchers, but many more researchers are needed. They have also acquired photographs of 417 of the peoples, along with location maps for 130 peoples. Distribution plans for the profiles are still in progress.

A mini-profile is accessible from any computer via the World Wide Web (<http://www.ad2000.org>). (See mini-profile printout example below.) Two

hundred of these Internet mini-profiles have links to more detailed people profiles on other Web sites. For example, for the Kalmyk people shown, a computer user would click on the World Wide Web address for Caleb Project (under "Links") and be taken immediately to fur-

ther information on the Kalmyk. As the Bethany World Prayer Center completes up-to-date profiles with photos and maps, links to them will be available from the AD2000 World Wide Web site. Many mission agencies and churches are now using this free computer service.

One of 1,739 Mini profiles available now at the A2000 Web site.



# Crucial to the success of Joshua Project 2000 is the collection and sharing of who is working among what unreached people!

As many as 1400 computer users from 18 countries access the AD2000 Web site in a single day.

As of late July 1996, this database shows in regards to the 1739 Joshua Project 2000 unreached peoples.

AD2000 International Office. Like-minded people and organizations are being made aware of one another's activities.

## Tracking

Crucial to the success of Joshua Project 2000 is the collection and sharing of who is working among what unreached people!

In May of this year the AD2000 and Beyond Movement International Office sent a mailing to 2400 mission agencies and denominational sending agencies requesting such information. The mailing included a survey form for the Joshua Project 2000 list and an invitation for these leaders to attend the Mission Executives conference, one of nine parallel conferences during GCOWE '97 in Pretoria, South Africa beginning June 30. It requested that leaders provide information for a book, "Global Guide to Unreached Peoples", to be presented at the conference. The proposed compendium would provide work-among information to facilitate better distribution of mission resources.

The results would only be published if there were a 10% or more response. Two months after the mailing was sent, 286 surveys (12%) had been returned to the AD2000 International Office from mission agencies in 53 different countries. They contained an estimated 9400 check marks, each representing a level of involvement targeting one of the Joshua Project 2000 priority peoples. The information that was not marked "secure" is being made available on the AD2000 World Wide Web page. (See "Others Involved with this Group" at the bottom of the example Kalmyk profile.) The final results of the survey will be available in the final book publication.

About 60% of the data received from the survey has been recorded in the AD2000 International Office master data-

- 533 church planting in progress efforts.
- 354 future church-planting efforts

## Conclusion

A recently published Adopt-A-People Clearinghouse brochure called "Joshua Project 2000 Adoption Information Packet" indicates that adoption is a serious commitment. This commitment includes prayer as its basis but may also entail research-

- planned.
- 785 current evangelistic outreaches.
- 476 future evangelistic outreaches planned.
- 389 peoples that have an agency willing to assist a research team to that people.
- 109 agencies that would welcome candidate referrals for people interested in working with unreached peoples.
- 728 peoples for which agencies have data they are willing to share.

In addition to the information received from the survey, the following data has been collected elsewhere:

- 46 people advocates/nonresidential missionaries registered.
- 256 general people group contacts identified.
- 266 adoptions by churches or prayer groups.
- 195 people wanting to organize an adoption by their church.
- 53 people wanting to join a long-term church-planting effort to a Joshua Project 2000 people. Their names were passed on to mission agencies which focus on church planting among the least-evangelized, groups such as Mission to Unreached Peoples, Pioneers, and Frontiers.

Names and addresses for all of the people and agencies that registered the above data are maintained by the

ing a people and partnering with others to ensure a church is planted. These partnerships are now being identified and tracked. As is indicated on the list under "Agency Work," Patrick Johnstone estimates that 917 of the 1739 Joshua Project 2000 peoples already have missionaries on site.

As researchers visit the library, surf the World Wide Web and in some cases take an on-site research trip, the report often includes that they found several missionaries targeting that people. Due to security concerns we may never see the entire picture of how much ministry is being focused toward these unreached peoples. Those peoples found to have thriving churches will be moved from the unreached peoples listings. As Joshua Project 2000 proceeds and we see a clearer picture of church-planting efforts, we give God the glory that the unfinished task of a church for every people can be achieved.