

Paradigm Shifts in World Missions

“With the millennium in sight, the powerful counter-trend of the religious revival is repudiating blind faith in science and technology... The year 2000 is operating like a powerful magnet on humanity... It is amplifying emotions, accelerating change, and heightening awareness, compelling us to re-examine ourselves, our values and our institutions.” We are living in a time of unprecedented global revival and doing missions in a new way. It involves major paradigms shifts in world missions.

by Luis Bush

Jesus Christ said that the last days would be marked by “wars and rumors of wars, nation [rising] against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places” (Matthew 24:6-7). His words plainly tell us that we will be persecuted and put to death and hated by all nations because of Him (v. 9).

The 20th century has produced more martyrs than the first 19 centuries of Christian history combined. Persecution and martyrdom are common in the 10/40 Window. Christian Solidarity International, a global interdenominational organization that defends the human rights of persecuted believers and other victims of repression, has developed a map showing the countries with restricted human rights in colors on four levels. The darker the color, the fewer human rights are honored. Within the three levels of more restricted human rights are all the countries in the 10/40 Window. Satan has established a stronghold in the 10/40 Window. Indications are that this grip is loosening, but it still causes great affliction.

At the same time, the 20th century has seen a surge of interest in religion. We are living in a time of unprecedented global revival. In a 1990 follow-up to the 1982 bestseller *Megatrends*, John Naisbitt and co-author Patricia Aburdene write in *Megatrends 2000* about the tenth megatrend identified in the earlier book. The chapter “Religious Revival of the Third

Millennium” describes the “unmistakable signs of a worldwide multi-denominational religious revival.”

The “God is dead” philosophy of the 1960s has been replaced. To quote *Megatrends 2000* again, “With the millennium in sight, the powerful counter-trend of the religious revival is repudiating blind faith in science and technology.”

The focus of mission within Christendom has changed also. As Naisbitt and Aburdene write, “The year 2000 is operating like a powerful magnet on humanity, already reaching down into the 1990s and intensifying the decade. It is amplifying emotions, accelerating change, and heightening awareness, compelling us to re-examine ourselves, our values and our institutions.”

REVITALIZATION of MISSIONS

Youth With A Mission (YWAM), one of the largest evangelical mission organizations in the world today, exemplifies this new reality. In the last few years approaching the year 2000, YWAM has totally restructured to focus on reaching the unreached people groups in the 10/40 Window. Beyond 2000 this trend undoubtedly will accelerate among other organizations.

In 1997 Paul Filidis, Office Director of YWAM International Communications Network, gave the following update on

YWAM’s activities in the 10/40 Window: “We are indeed grateful for the growth of our mission in the so-called ‘10/40 Window’ countries. Following the increased call to reach the unreached, we have seen a definite increase of staff residing within that part of the world. Over the last six years, the percentage of staff that lives in the 10/40 Window rose from nine percent in 1991, to 16 percent in 1997 (in actual numbers from 630 to 1651). We have established a presence in nine more countries within the Window now totaling 41.”

God is calling all of us to re-examine our structures. During my most recent trip to Norway, I learned about the new vision of one of the largest missions there, the Norwegian Santal Mission under the leadership of Torbjorn Lied, who also chairs the Norwegian Missionary Council. Lied spoke of the complete renewal of his mission to focus on the unfinished task.

George Verwer, who leads the AD2000 network for mobilization of new missionaries, received a vision concerning the mobilization of 200,000 new missionaries, primarily for the 10/40 Window. This concept is a breakthrough in missions strategy. It is based on the idea that each life-giving church should be responsible to affirm, support and commission people from their own congregation to go to the mission field.

God is calling the Church to revitalize missions. The early Church practiced

sending members from their own congregations to preach the Gospel. For instance, the church in Antioch commissioned Paul and Barnabas. (See Acts 11:22, 29; Acts 13:1-5.)

In light of the above example, we can see an emerging pattern in the Church today. Instead of relying solely on “sending agencies” to place workers on the mission field, God is asking His people to reexamine how we can facilitate a greater number of individuals to fulfill their call as “missionaries.” No organization is better equipped to determine who has a calling for missions than the local church. Sending people from a local congregation into the harvest fields requires commitment by the local body of believers.

There must be an ongoing commitment to prayer on the part of the senders for those who are being sent. Regular prayer will help keep those on the mission field from discouragement, ineffectiveness and the attacks of the enemy. A commitment to cover missionaries in prayer will enable them to accomplish the task for which they have been sent; without proper prayer coverage the likelihood of failure is greater.

There is the investment of time to build a strong support base. Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time with the believers in Antioch. Working, worshipping, praying and learning together, the church knew the character and spiritual condition of these two men. They were faithful to the Lord and committed to His people, plans and purposes.

There is a commitment of finances. In order for Paul and Barnabas to devote their time and talents to the work of the Gospel, and although Paul was self-supporting, they were supported financially by fellow believers (see Philippians 4:15-19).

Today, there are churches where members have a call on their lives for missions. However, smaller churches may not have the finances to support them while they are on the mission field. The Body of Christ has a responsibility to pro-

vide the necessary means for them to carry out their call to missions. Larger churches can aid smaller churches to send others to evangelize the unreached. Partnering with smaller churches in resourcing those whom they are sending is an innovative way to do this.

EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION

Besides the revitalization of missions, another paradigm shift needed is the concerted effort to equip the next generation to carry on where we leave off. We have yet to tap into the resources of the next generation. There are Davids and Esthers who have been strategically placed on the earth by God during this critical time in human history to be leaders in the effort to reach the lost and plant churches. They are visionaries and strategists who need to be equipped, encouraged, empowered and made aware of the vast possibilities before them. We must do whatever it takes to release them into their destiny. The Church should focus on discipling, training and mentoring them in order to improve their ability to serve effectively.

Among the resources available in Generation X are international students attending universities in the religiously free world. Is the Church alert enough to realize the opportunities these students can bring to the missions mandate? According to Tom Phillips, President of International Students Inc. in Colorado Springs, Colorado, U.S.A., 75% of these students, after acquiring a degree, will return to their country of origin. They will hold positions of importance and will significantly influence the future of their countries. A large percentage of these students are from 10/40 Window countries where we cannot openly send missionaries—like China, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia—and many other restricted access countries. God in His mercy is sending them to our doorsteps so that we can witness to them.

Now is the time to take up the challenge to tell international students about the love of the Savior of the world. Will

we let this opportunity slip from our grasp? Is there a college or university in your city that has international students? Are there ministries already at work on the campus to reach them? Can you invest a few hours a week to share your faith with these students? Are you willing to be equipped for this work? Reaching these students for Christ enhances the influence of the Gospel globally.

NEW SPIRITUALITY IN MISSIONARIES

Another significant trend in these latter days spotlights how the Holy Spirit is drawing missionaries to the 10/40 Window who have an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ. Their commitment to the Lord is so strong and devoted that they want to please Him and serve His every desire.

They know that their Father yearns to reach the lost out of His infinite love for them. These believers have developed a longing in their hearts to see the Window nations come to the Lord and share in the eternal life offered by His beloved Son. Their compassion for the lost runs so deep that these believers are willing to live out the Scripture in Revelation 12:11, “They did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.” They are willing to endure hardships, go without creature comforts and sacrifice their lives as an offering for the Lord to see the lost come to Him.

However, they do not necessarily do missions by the book. God gives them innovative ideas on how to reach the lost people groups who take a top priority on His agenda. He affirms them among the unreached peoples they serve, as He did with Old Testament leaders and New Testament apostles. These saints are driven to do things for God’s glory and not their own. They do things His way, not the way of the world. They are unique, anointed and appointed by God for such a time as this.

As the Holy Spirit captures the hearts of more and more believers, they will burn with passion for Jesus, as well as

have His zeal and compassion for the lost. Through their dedication to the Great Commission the nations of the world will be transformed. These missionaries, of course, carry on the legacy of men and women in the past who laid the foundation for our present endeavors with their dedication, commitment, vision and sometimes, the sacrifice of their lives on the vast foreign mission fields of the world. We must realize that because of their energies, love, and compassion for the unreached, we now are experiencing the fruit of their labors.

We are continuing to build on the foundation that they faithfully laid. Methods that they employed to evangelize the lost were very effective, and many of their methods are still used today. Yet, God is opening new avenues and strategies for missions into the next century.

Flexible Leadership

Current trends in organizational development reflect styles that will prove most effective in the next millennium. A series of contrasts best illustrate these changes in organizational philosophy and procedures. The emerging leadership model emphasizes personal relationship over positional relationship. The style is less structured and more flexible. The focus of loyalty has shifted from institutions to people. The source of energy comes from change and innovation rather than stability. Instead of dogmatic and authoritative leadership, effective organizations now emphasize a leadership style that is inspirational, empowering, enabling and facilitating. Rather than giving orders, the leader now coaches and teaches. Instead of a standard of quality dependent on the affordable best, the organization calls forth excellence. Associates' expectations center more on personal growth and less on security. Status comes not from title and rank but from making a difference. An effective organization considers its most valuable resources not in terms of its cash and time, but rather in terms of information, people and networks. This is the wave of the future—of 2000 and beyond.

We see this move of the Holy Spirit in powerful ways in the 10/40 Window as a trend of our times. Simultaneously, however, we also observe the move of Satan to oppose the advance of God in the 10/40 Window. Thus, the Church worldwide is beginning to move into the 10/40 Window with prayer and people, in a con-

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certed effort, cooperating together in renewed organizations with a more flexible and personal style of leadership in order to complete the mandate of preaching the Gospel to the entire world and disciple all the nations.

Indigenous Missions

Another major paradigm shift is the rise of indigenous missions. In many countries the activities of foreign missionaries have been hindered, in part, by a growing reluctance by certain governments to allow outside religious workers into their countries. Leaders of some countries are suspicious of missionaries' motives, therefore, they prohibit their entrance. However, more and more nationals are taking up the challenge to reach their country's citizens and peoples with the Gospel.

National Christian workers have advantages over foreign workers. Frequently they already know the language and customs of the people they are trying to reach. Often they understand the culture and the mind-set of those with whom they are working.

Foreign missionaries must learn the culture, language and customs and spend great amounts of money and time to do so. Often mission-sending agencies require theological degrees and training that involves time and money. While there is a great need for both foreign and indigenous missionaries, in many cases it is more effective to equip, send and support nationals in ministry within their own country.

Strategic Alliances and Partnerships

In order for the Body of Christ to overcome darkness, believers must repent of ways we have cooperated with the enemy. Many of the Window churches suffer from lack of unity and cooperation. James 4:1-3 warns against such disunity. We have heard horror stories about pastors turning in other church leaders to governmental officials because someone else's church was flourishing more than theirs. This has happened in Window churches more often than we would like to admit. Much prayer is required to ensure that jealousy, envy and disunity do not prevail among the believers and ministries in the 10/40 Window. It would serve the cause of the Gospel and the Great Commission if we would remember the words of the apostle Paul, "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:3-6).

What can be done to break the powers of darkness that have penetrated the Church? Jesus' high priestly prayer for all

believers in John 17:20-26 gives insight to overcoming Satan, his plans and the schemes he has unleashed against the Church. We should pray according to Jesus' petition that the Body of Christ be brought to complete unity as a witness that He is the Son of the Living God (John 17:24). Following Christ's model of humility and servanthood is the most effective means to demolish the powers of darkness (Philippians 2:5-9).

As the Church learns to network and build strategic alliances and partnerships, we have discovered a key principle. Working together in concert is much more effective than each ministry trying to work alone. A story is told about two prized draft horses that finished first and second at a county fair competition. The grand champion horse pulled a sled with 4,500 pounds on it; the runner-up pulled 4,400 pounds. Someone wondered how many pounds the two horses could pull together. It would be reasonable to assume that the horses would double their capacity. But that was not the case. Hitched together as a team, they were able to pull more than 12,000 pounds!

The global Church can learn from this example, which is the same principle as presented in Leviticus 26:8: "Five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you." The Lord *commands a blessing* when we come together in unity (Psalm 133). Churches and ministries that have similar visions and focuses are forming strategic alliances to work on and complete a particular task. Some of these alliances aim for technological advancement while other alliances are field-based, consisting of nationals and bi-vocational workers actively endeavoring in concert to advance the Kingdom in their location. Still other networks have a common focus on a particular unreached people. Some associations are resource-based, seeking to generate and supply greater resources and better information to complete the unfinished task of taking the Gospel to the ends of the earth.

The AD2000 and Beyond Movement is one notable example of an effective strategic alliance working within the 10/40 Window and worldwide. The network has more than 1,000 Christian organizations, churches and ministries focusing on the unique cultural and religious issues of each region. For instance, the AD2000 United Prayer Track, linking prayer movements throughout the globe, in turn gave birth to the Praying Through The Window initiatives that have mobilized united prayer across churches, countries and continents.

The World Prayer Center in Colorado Springs is another example of strategic partnership among organizations with complementary goals. Beginning with a vision God gave to Pastor Haggard, he and New Life Church committed to establishing a prayer center that would coordinate intercession for global evangelization across the entire Body of Christ. Dedicated in September 1998, the World Prayer Center now houses the Christian Information Network, Global Harvest Ministries, the Wagner Institute for Practical Ministry and the Arsenal Bookstore and Resource Center. In addition, George Otis Jr., founder and President of the Sentinel Group in Seattle, Washington, collaborates with the World Prayer Center staff to provide strategic information from around the world. Peter Wagner, president of the World Prayer Center, anticipates linking with local prayer rooms in 5,000 U.S. churches and national prayer networks in 120 other countries by the year 2000.

VICTORIES AND COUNTERATTACKS

As the church reclaims more and more ground for the kingdom, the enemy will continue to strike back, and we will see this trend happen throughout the 10/40 Window in a stronger degree than ever because Satan knows his end is near. Christian Information Network received an insightful e-mail from Joseph Ozawa, describing current trends in the 10/40

Window. Ozawa holds a doctorate in psychology, and is Senior Psychologist for the Ministry of Community Development in Singapore. He is also a core faculty member of Bethany School of Missions, and is a licensed Anglican minister.

There is widespread interest, Ozawa noted, in strategic intercession prayer-walking, prayer mapping, and other such developments in prayer among God's people around the world. Fervor runs high for intercession. Meetings in some countries have been dramatic and incredibly powerful, notably in Singapore, the Philippines, Malaysia, Kenya, India and Hong Kong. Miracles in answer to prayer occur frequently.

One recent example was the closure and "wipe out" of the Temple of 10,000 Buddhas in Hong Kong, one of the most significant strongholds of the enemy in the 10/40 Window area. This took place while the body of Christ was praying for Hong Kong during the return of the territory to Communist China.

On July 1, 1997 the Buddhists were poised for a massive takeover as well. Their points of power included the Temple of 10,000 Buddhas in Shatin, constructing one of the largest outdoor Buddha statues in the world on Lantau Island, bringing a gigantic incense bowl to Hong Kong, and a dramatic and spectacular rally of Buddhists from all over Asia at an outdoor stadium in Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Christians, who for many months had interceded and repented of idolatry, began a spiritual offensive. Many were even led to pray for "big monsoon rains" to stop the Buddhist festivities.

In the days following the takeover, the biggest recorded rainfall in Hong Kong's history hit the city! The rain greatly dampened the Buddhists' outdoor activities. To the delight of Hong Kong intercessors, a landslide hit the Temple of 10,000 Buddhas, causing walls to collapse and idols to fall into the mud. Then, for safety reasons, the government ordered the temple shut. The center of Buddhist idolatry on the road from Hong Kong to

mainland China was closed for good! The Asian church was fired up by this victory and continues to this day to pray with increased fervor.

On the other hand, the battle remains intense. There is no room nor time for complacency or triumphalism. The enemy strikes back after waiting for us to let our guard down. Many nations face a strong resurgence of militant Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and various cults, with attempts to suppress and even destroy all vestiges of Christianity.

How is Satan working in the 10/40 Window? Specifically, he is coming against the Church through disunity, as already mentioned. The Church should be a place of unity, love and fellowship among believers of all denominations. Sadly, all too often this is not the case. Dissension between evangelical, charismatic and Pentecostal groups is ripping apart the church in many nations, especially in Japan. Orthodox and Catholic churches seem intent on battling evangelicals as they gain prominence in many countries. This is one of the battles facing Ethiopia. In the midst of disunity, however, there have been miraculous times of unity in prayer between churches.

Satan is also using materialism (mammon) to lull the church to sleep. In many countries (for example, The United States of America, South Korea and Singapore) the churches are big and comfortable. Millions are spent on buildings. Churches compete with one another, expending considerable energy, time and resources to prove which congregation is the greatest.

The enemy attacks churches in the 10/40 Window through syncretism. In Africa, for instance, witchcraft is mixed with Christianity. In some Eastern nations animism is combined with Christianity.

Another damaging influence has come through the resurgence of worldly attitudes and lifestyles filtering into the Church. We are losing a sense of holiness or separation from the practices and think-

ing of the unsaved people around us. The Church is ceasing to be distinct from the world.

There has been—and will undoubtedly be—an ongoing battle with strident Islam. Militant Hinduism in India is on the rise. Buddhists and Hindus are also learning to do spiritual mapping, prayer-

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walking and strategic intercession! (Inside one church building, Buddhists monks were found praying actively against believers inside the church.)

**Two-Thirds World
Leadership**

One of the most exciting trends (paradigm shifts) of the last several years has come out of Latin America. Unprecedented numbers of cross-cultural missionaries are arising from Latin American countries, and many have headed to the 10/40 Window. The Holy Spirit has prepared the way by giving common cultural values that win these Latins increased receptivity among the people groups they want to reach.

A few years ago, Latin American leaders from Youth With A Mission, for example, met at a 1997 Prayer Summit in Sumatra, Indonesia, and reported their observations with respect to the local

Chantik people group. "As Latins we discovered so many similarities between the Chantik and Latin cultures, e.g., the desire to make friends from the beginning, a similar lifestyle, [and] how we perceive the culture that surrounds us. All this even though we are separated by thousands of miles and speak different languages. We believe these similarities have been prepared by God to enable Latins easy access to work among the Chantik as well as in Indonesia as a whole."

**Radio and Television
Evangelism**

An elderly woman in the United States in a wheelchair attends church by watching a television broadcast presented by her local church. Chinese believers huddle around a small radio set "attending church" by listening to a Christian broadcast. In an Indian village several of the local congregations gather around a television set, watching a discipleship course being beamed across Asia via satellite. In the Middle East hundreds of thousands of Kurds turn on their own televisions and pick up evangelistic programming via satellite.

The impact of radio and television broadcasting is the equivalent of a spiritual shock wave throughout the world. These media have been able to reach those who can't go to church, don't have a church and those who don't have any conception of the Gospel.

Evangelistic coverage to non-regular listeners is far more extensive; 4.6 billion (thousand million) can receive Christian broadcasting in their mother tongue. Information indicates that 900 million Christians regularly listen to Christian radio and television. Of these, 51 million are bedridden listeners and 20 million are "radio/television believers"; that is, they have no local church and depend on the broadcasts for discipleship, training and fellowship.

I expounded on this trend when I wrote the following: "In the Arabian Peninsula, Saudi citizens have invested billions of dollars in the development of

international satellite television. By the end of 1997, 70 percent of all homes had a satellite dish. An estimated 90,000 new homes receive their first satellite dish each month. Officially, satellite dishes are illegal in Saudi Arabia! However, the growth of satellite television in this 'closed' Islamic nation has made it possible for the Gospel to penetrate the Arab world. SAT-7, an evangelical cooperative satellite initiative, began broadcasting two hours of Christian programming per week in 1997. In 1998, the total increased to nine hours of programming weekly." Other satellite companies have also been beaming programming into the Arab countries, including Middle East Television.

The results are astounding. Because of Christian broadcasting, the Church averages 3 million new believers per year in a total of 200 countries, 400,000 of these being isolated radio converts. Ten thousand new isolated house churches spring into existence every year as a consequence of radio and television programs.

What happens to these believers? Many access correspondence courses from the broadcasters, which they can use to further their own discipleship. Some receive direct training via the broadcasts, learning how to share the Gospel and evangelize their neighbors. Radio programs greatly aid the spread of Christianity in restricted access countries. Eventually, "radio churches" spring up—congregations of believers that meet and listen to radio broadcasts for their worship services. These churches often contact believers in other parts of the world to receive support, then evangelize their neighbors. A cell of ten Christians today could become a major church of 1,000 believers next year.

There is still a greater need for broadcast evangelism. In many languages Christian broadcasting totals a scant 15 or 30 minutes per week each. The time allotted for broadcasts in many language groups is not nearly enough airtime for

groups whose language may be spoken by millions. We believe more and more ministries will be responding to this need in the next few years.

ILLITERACY: BLINDNESS TO THE WORD OF GOD

Another trend is highlighted by Justin Long, managing editor of the "Monday Morning Reality Check," a weekly editorial that is distributed via the Internet through Global Evangelization Movement and World Evangelization Research Center. Following is a summary of his conclusions.

One of the most powerful tools for evangelization, of course, is the Bible. A portion of the Bible or its entirety has been translated into more than 2,000 languages. It is estimated that 1.4 billion (thousand million) copies of varieties of Scriptures (portions, New Testaments or the whole Bible) are distributed every year. The impact is enormous. The Bible League, for example, has said that, on average, for every Bible distributed in China, five converts are the direct result. Certainly, evangelization efforts among any people group are severely hampered by the absence of Scripture, and the lack of Bibles among Christians yields the potential for error and heresy.

However, there is a substantial barrier, even when the Scriptures are translated into the language of unreached people groups, that many Christians interested in world evangelization haven't even thought about. This is the widespread problem of illiteracy. Nearly one in five people on our planet cannot read. Film and broadcast media are an excellent way to reach those who cannot read. This is why Campus Crusade for Christ's JESUS film has been so effective.

Illiteracy affects not only Bible distribution, but also other media outreach efforts. Simply translating and distributing the Scriptures, in many cases, will not be enough. We must teach people to read the Scriptures as well. Governments hostile to Christianity will sometimes wel-

come educational programs, including literacy programs. Charitable givers should find out if there is a literacy program attached to a Bible translation project, and determine its level of funding in comparison to the project as a whole. Literacy programs may deserve special funding.

Meanwhile, until more people are taught to read, using innovative and creative ways to present the Gospel in interesting and compelling formats can substantially circumvent the barriers of illiteracy. Dramas depicting various stories from the Bible can be developed in the primary language of the people who need to be reached. Worship that is presented in a culturally sensitive manner, using instruments, dance or other idioms familiar to the people in a region, is another excellent means to reach people who are illiterate. Door-to-door evangelism, with its personal approach, can prove effective in sharing one's faith. Preaching by nationals or visiting ministers, accompanied by a translator if necessary, can be used by God to bring illiterate people to Jesus.

MARTYRDOM: THE NATURAL STATE OF THE CHURCH

As we stated at the beginning of this chapter, martyrdom has increased dramatically in this century, and certainly qualifies as a paradigm shift in our thinking. Since the very beginning of Christianity, there has never been a century free of martyrdom or persecution. Though we are horrified at accounts of imprisonment, torture, enslavement, humiliation, rape and martyrdom, it must be remembered that persecution and martyrdom is the normal state of the church.

As plans for global evangelization continue into the next millennium, extremists and repressive governments will continue to oppose the Gospel. Opposition will continue to be more hostile. Efforts to reach the unevangelized currently employ one percent of the available mission force. In 1997, 160 thousand

believers were martyred for their faith. If the number of missionaries involved in the effort to reach the unevangelized grows from one percent to five percent, we may see the number of martyrs increase to five times the number cited above. Here are three hypothetical scenarios of how the next century's martyr situation might appear:

Scenario 1: 10/40 Window plans falter out of fear. The publicity and cost of the first martyrs leads to fear and a dampening of interest in missions to the 10/40 Window. Plans for global evangelism falter, and the number of martyrs declines as Christians retreat.

Scenario 2: Growing energy is devoted to plans for global evangelization, spearheaded by Third-World nationals. Western governments refuse to intervene in what they term as "religious issues," and warn mission agencies that they proceed at their own risk. Hundreds of thousands of new missionaries surge into restricted-access areas; the number of martyrs rises dramatically, reaching 400,000 per year by 2010, and 600,000 per year by 2025. By 2050 it tapers off to 250,000 annually as global evangelization draws to a close. Countries with an increased Christian presence soften persecution.

Scenario 3: The sacrifice of the next generation. With the advent of AD2000, a new, determined, sustained push for world evangelization begins as Third-World indigenous personnel and Western youth take up the banner. Satellites, Internet communications, itinerant tourists, widespread signs and wonders, and a veritable invasion of young people take the world unaware. The number of martyrs increases to 1 million by 2010. The sight of young people executed causes world condemnation, global evangelization is a reality by 2012. Massive church growth occurs over the next ten years as martyrdom decreases to 300,000 per year.

To be sure, these are hypothetical scenarios, of course, but every agency and individual believer needs to consider these issues, devote themselves to prayer and reexamine their own level of commitment. Missionaries should have contingency plans covering the possibility of arrest, imprisonment, suffering and martyrdom. After all, this was the attitude and

expectation of the Early Church, and it mirrored the command of Christ to "take up your cross and follow Me." When we take up that cross, we ought to be in possession of a total commitment to the end at whatever the cost.

What are the next steps for God's kingdom in the 10/40 Window? In the search for a trend, both Scripture and current world reports suggest that the situation is going to get worse, not better. Revelation 12:7-9 describes a future scene, "And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him." Then verse 12 reads, "He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short." The devil will suffer final defeat, but his wrath will cause the earth and its inhabitants much suffering before then.

Knowing this truth will help us prepare for the future. Let us follow the Apostle Paul's counsel "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ... Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4:12-16).

At the same time, we can take hope knowing that God's kingdom will continue to advance until the earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. The progress mirrors a vision given to Tommi Femrite, an intercessor on 28 September 1997.

"During worship I had a vision of the 10/40 Window with layers of curtains over it. The first curtain was a 'blackout

shade' like the kind used during the war. It totally blacked out all light. I saw that this curtain has been removed—lifted. The second curtain was 'opaque.' Only the indication of light could be detected, but one could not see people, places or faces. This, too, has been removed—lifted. The third curtain was 'translucent.' Light now shines through. We can see movement and forms but we cannot make out faces or details.

"Then I saw people from around the world holding cords attached to this curtain. The Lord is ready to give His command to lift this curtain, to remove the canopy, to lift the veil. And as we pull together through prayer, His light and His glory will shine clearly through the Window to illuminate the people.

"In thinking about these curtains, I believe they have been removed through Praying Through the Window I, II, and III. "I believe there is a fourth curtain. It is transparent. Light flows through it unimpeded so that we now see the people, places and faces distinctly. This curtain must also be lifted. It stands between the Lord and the people of the 10/40 Window—between the Lord and the part of His Bride who yet lives in darkness. We must join together, pulling the cords to this curtain through prayer to let Jesus, the Light of the world, shine brightly on each face. My expectations run high for Praying Through the Window IV. May the Lord's glory and presence shine brightly on the peoples and nations of the 10/40 Window."



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