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# **Paradigm Shifts and Trends in Missions Training—A Call to Servant-Teaching, a Ministry of Humility**

Stephen T. Hoke

**Keywords:** Missiology, training, cross-cultural, contextualisation, urbanisation, pluralism, globalisation, dialogue, church planting, synergism, andragogy, mentoring, technology

‘For every trend there is a counter-trend.’<sup>1</sup> In response to lightning change in our global society, serious questions have been raised as to whether theological and missiological education are ailing. There is widespread recognition that missionary training can no longer remain the same. But the cure must go deeper than a facelift. Bryant L. Myers, director of MARC, Monrovia, California, has said: ‘The most important and enduring challenge to missiological education in the 21st century is the need to recompose and reform itself so it makes sense and supports missions in a pluralistic, multicultural, post-modern world in which the gospel is nowhere at home.’<sup>2</sup>

Just as the cry of the exploding national churches in the 60s and 70s became ‘We need help training leaders,’ so the critical concern with the rapidly exploding Two-Thirds-World (T-T-W) missions movement today is equipping leaders for the church and missions to reap the harvest from among the nations.

In response to one or a set of problems in education, the workplace, the church, and in missions, several trends are emerging, which arrange themselves at several levels: First, a set of global contextual issues which impact how we do missions; second, a cluster of new developments in areas of specialty which impact how each stakeholder fulfils their responsibility; and third, recent innovations in the field of training itself.

## **GLOBAL CONTEXTUAL ISSUES/TRENDS**

### **1. Continuing Rapid Urbanization**

As the world becomes more urban, the emphasis on preparing missionaries to live and minister in urban settings grows. Internships in urban centres throughout North America provide nearly ideal preparation for incarnational living among the rest of the world’s

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<sup>1</sup> 1. Edith Weiner, Plenary address given at 1998 International Conference, San Francisco, June 1, 1998., American Society for Training and Development (ASTD), Alexandria, VA.

<sup>2</sup> 2. Bryant L. Myers. ‘Missiological Education Through De-Centralized Partnerships’, an address at Missiological Education for the 21st Century, Fuller School of World Mission, Pasadena, Nov. 1992.

urban poor. According to Roger Greenway, missiology professor at Calvin Seminary (Grand Rapids, MI), 'The world of the 21st century will be urban, and so must our mission.'<sup>3</sup>

Phil Elkins, director of the Los Angeles-Missionary Internship (LA- MI), notes, 'Los Angeles, now called the capital of the Third World, offers an unparalleled environment of preparation.'<sup>4</sup> InnerCHANGE, a Christian order among the poor in several U.S. cities, offers three-month, one-year and two-year 'Cross-Walk' apprenticeship experiences among ethnic communities. One team which spent more than four years learning the language and culture to ministry among Cambodian refugees in Santa Ana, California, recently transplanted to Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to engage in incarnational holistic ministry among the poor.

## **2. Increasing Religious Pluralism**

The spreading Christian church increasingly encounters the people and cultures of other religions. From the prevalence of postmodernism in the West, to the dominance of Animism, Buddhism, Hinduism and Islam in the rest of the world, Christians are finding themselves living in a thoroughly pluralistic world. Thus, the environment for the task will not be any easier; competition will more than likely be high. In *The Gagging of God*, D. A. Carson states: 'For any number of reasons, many Christians similarly feel they can participate in this little corner or that, but that in the face of the extraordinary complexities cast up by the new pluralisms they find it difficult to articulate a more comprehensive vision.'<sup>5</sup>

Effective missionaries must be able to function with ease in a world culture of diversity. Darrell Whiteman, professor of anthropology at Asbury Seminary (Wilmore, KY), suggests developing a 'missionary anthropology' with an urban flavour, which would equip missionaries to understand the cities around them and detect the social networks in which they find themselves. In studying world religions, Whiteman challenges missionaries to be sure they are conversant with the dominant major world religion in which they will live, and to study it from a phenomenological perspective rather than the traditional comparative religion approach.<sup>6</sup>

## **3. Shift in Dominance from West to Two-Thirds World**

The shift in the dominance from western missionaries to the coexistence and cooperation (i.e. partnership) between missionaries from the West and the Two-Third World (T-T-W) is a welcome change that has been a long time in coming. David Tae Woong Lee, director of the Global Mission Training Centre in Seoul, Korea, notes that this development brings both good news and bad news. 'It is good news in that there are greater possibilities for an earlier closure to the Global Task. Real and active cross-fertilization is now possible to become truly global in our missionary work. Interdependent partnerships can be pursued with a real servant spirit. But it is bad news as well. Complacency could set into the

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<sup>3</sup> 3. Roger Greenway, 'World Urbanization and Missiological Education', an address at Missiological Education for the 21st Century, Fuller School of World Mission, Pasadena, Nov. 1992.

<sup>4</sup> 4. For information on LA-Missionary Internship contact: Dr. Phil Elkins, 3800 Canon Blvd., Altadena, CA 98001. (626) 797-7903. Email: [philelkins@aol.com](mailto:philelkins@aol.com)

<sup>5</sup> 5. D. A. Carson. *The Gagging of God*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing, 1996), p. 405.

<sup>6</sup> 6. Darrell Whiteman, 'The Role of the Behavioral Sciences in Missiological Education', an address at Missiological Education for the 21st Century, Fuller School of World Mission, Pasadena, Nov. 1992.

Western church, or a new form of imperialism could arise, with the West continuing to dominate and impose strategy and structuring.’<sup>7</sup>

Mission training must not only alert younger missionaries to the sea-change trend into which they will be stepping, but also equip them to work on teams composed of international Christians from several nations, as well as be able to take direction and counsel from leaders and co-workers from other countries. Servant leadership will be an essential quality and ministry skill to develop.

#### **4. Changing Role of the North American Missionary**

‘The major factor in our training of North Americans ought to be to examine and implement strategies that will turn us northerners into those that mobilize, equip and support those from the Two-Thirds World.’ ‘Generally I think T-T-W missionaries are better equipped to take the gospel to the rest of the T-T-W’, says Bob Moffitt, director of Harvest International, Tempe, Arizona.

As national churches around the world mature, the roles played by missionaries from North America must change. North Americans must be equipped as behind-the-scenes trainers, coaches, encouragers and support personnel. These higher-level leadership skills are not the skills of novices. They must be taught in a very specialized manner by competent mentors who have gained their skills through years of experience, group participation and shared leadership.

#### **5. A Changing Missiology**

Critics of North American missiology during the last thirty years would point to its strategic bias, with a supposed preoccupation with the social sciences, particularly that of cultural anthropology and theories of communication.<sup>8</sup> The subsequent number of dissonant voices expressing their dissatisfaction with this direction in missiology have exerted pressure toward reshaping the direction of the discipline. Some of the more conspicuous trends include the following:

*a) Attempts to capture a more global perspective.* The evangelical community, following somewhat behind the ecumenical churches, has become more aware of the presence and dynamic of the churches in the T-T-W. A new wave of books from Africa, Asia and Latin America have been written with this ‘globalization’ effect in mind.

*b) Increasing emphasis on a more holistic approach to ministry.* As mission agencies focus on unreached peoples, the old dichotomy between evangelism and social concern/action (relief and development) becomes artificial. Issues of poverty, hunger, disease and displacement cannot be addressed on a purely spiritual level. Theological and missions training must highlight the interlocking causes of poverty, oppression and hopelessness. Mission into the 21st century must embrace both evangelism and social responsibility in fresh and spiritually powerful ways. This means evangelists and church planters must understand how their work fits in with digging wells and distributing food. Simultaneously, relief and development workers must search for how their work can become a bridge to longer-term, relational evangelism that results in vibrant, indigenous churches.

The need for holistic approaches will challenge churches and schools to work more closely with Christian relief and development agencies to design more useful, accessible

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<sup>7</sup> 7. David Tae Woong Lee, ‘Global Vision and Major Missiological Trends: A Perspective.’ World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission, April 20, 1997.

<sup>8</sup> 8. *ibid.*, p. 2.

learning experiences and training in holistic ministry. At a minimum, new missionaries must be conversant with biblical holism, the integration of evangelism and social concern/ action, and be able to explain how their specialty relates to the broader picture of spiritual and physical hunger.

c) *Continued integration with other disciplines.* Historians have perhaps been foremost in integrating mission with the other disciplines. There have been attempts in such areas as counselling and church planting, and more recently there have been demands for a greater integration of missiology with theology and Scripture (versus the social sciences). The desire is not to blur the parameters of missiology, but rather to loose it from what some perceive to be an inordinate dependency upon the social sciences.<sup>9</sup>

d) *Heightened interest in the way to work with other religions.* Interest in other religions in the ecumenical community began as early as the International Missionary Conference held in Jerusalem in 1928. By 1971 'dialogue' had become their common practice for accomplishing mission. For evangelicals, following more cautiously, it is only in the last decades that heightened interest in other religions has developed, and that an appropriate role for 'dialogue' with other religions has been carved out.

e) *The emergence of a Two-Thirds World missiology.* Following the rise of the T-T-W church in the 60s and 70s, evangelicalism has joyously championed the rapid rise of the T-T-W mission movements in the 80s and 90s. Two-thirds of evangelicals now reside in the T-T-W, and the majority of cross-cultural missionaries are now said to come from the T-T-W. One can predict that missiology will not only be influenced by the theologizing of the T-T-W churches, but also be shaped by the T-T-W spirituality in particular.<sup>10</sup>

## 6. A Changing Strategy of Mission

Not only has the bulk of the writing and research in mission strategy been done by North Americans, for the last decade mission strategy has been dominated by the movement which anticipates closure at the end of this century. Notwithstanding the critiques concerning the current direction global missions strategy is taking us, the following positive dynamics can be cited:

a) Despite the passing of Donald McGavran, his influence is still seen in the dominant theory of priority upon '*harvest areas*'. In the 90s there has been significant effort among North American churches and agencies to redeploy missionaries from unresponsive fields to the rapidly opening harvest fields of Eastern Europe and the CIS. Actual redeployment of labourers from resistant fields to harvest fields has been much more difficult than anticipated.

b) *A shift from harvest field to hard fields.* The 90s have also given rise to a growing awareness of the critical importance of focusing greater prayer and personnel in the difficult fields of the 10/40 Window which takes in the majority of the unreached Buddhist, Hindu and Muslim worlds. This is a helpful corrective for the West which has approximately 90% of its missionary force in areas of the world considered to be largely reached or evangelized. For North American missions to relocate 20–40% of their missionary force to the unreached people groups appears to be a commendable idea.<sup>11</sup>

For some of the T-T-W sending bases, this strategy has taken greater effect than in the West. Korea, for example, has deployed approximately 45% of her missionaries in the 'unreached' areas. India dispatches more than 90% of her missionaries to the 10/40

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<sup>9</sup> 9. *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup> 10. *ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>11</sup> 11. *ibid.*, p. 4.

Window (although all of India itself lies within that Window and thus all Indians working in other regions of India are included in this number).

c) *A shift from mission fields to sending bases.* In 1965, OMF challenged their Asian colleagues to join them in sending missionaries into the rest of Asia. The C&MA was ahead of OMF in this regard, and both of them are still ahead of most of the international mission community. Today it is no surprise, and a testament to the sovereign working of the Holy Spirit around the world, that the T-T-W sends out thousands of missionaries who serve beyond their national borders. Missionaries are now being sent out from countries that formerly only received them, as widespread as Nigeria, Ghana, Japan, Taiwan, Brazil and Colombia. By AD2000 Korea expects to have sent out as many as 5,000 to 7,500 missionaries.

d) *A shift from planting single churches to launching church planting movements.* The singular approach of one missionary planting one church per term has been dominant practice for the last 45 years. Since the rise of the Discipling A Whole Nation (DAWN) movement in the Philippines and Latin America in the 70s, however, national church leaders and missionaries around the world have been challenged to think more systemically and strategically as to how waves of multiple churches can be planted. Critical to the DAWN movement strategy is the availability of apostolic leaders gifted to plant and multiply multiple cells groups within a people group. Beyond spiritual gifting, the training of apostolic leaders should include spiritual growth dynamics, cell group multiplication, and systems thinking.

## **7. Global Partnerships**

There is increasing dialogue between churches, mission agencies and seminaries in the western world and their counterparts in the non-western world regarding missions training.<sup>12</sup> There is a new willingness to forge working partnerships for improving working strategy among unreached people groups, as well as forming cooperative working relationships for missions training. Unlike the old model in which all theological education was westernized, recent efforts involve a full partnership—one where a radical shift of ownership has taken place and missionary training consists of both mutual learning and interdependence. In 1998, The Next Step Partnership for Missions Training was launched in North America, and at this time includes over 100 member churches, agencies and training institutions and organizations. The primary concern is cooperative planning, curriculum design, resource sharing, and improved delivery systems for the most effective missions training possible.<sup>13</sup>

Partnership demands an attitude of servanthood and teachability. William Taylor, chairman of World Evangelical Fellowship Missions Commission, points out the critical lesson that must be learned: 'Listen before entering a partnership and be willing to learn from mistakes and try again. Church-to-church partnerships have real potential, but they must be entered into with wisdom, humility and a teachable spirit.'<sup>14</sup> Tite Tienou, a Burkinabe and professor of theology and missiology, Alliance Theological Seminary

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<sup>12</sup> 12. Robert Ferris (Ed), *Establishing Ministry Training* (Pasadena: WEF-Missions Commission/William Carey, 1995).

<sup>13</sup> 13. For information on The NEXT STEP Partnership in Mission Training contact: Next Step, 6190 Balboa St., Port St. John, FL 32927-8838. (407) 639-1181, Fax 639-1181. Email: [nextrain@aol.com](mailto:nextrain@aol.com) Web: [www.nextstep.com](http://www.nextstep.com)

<sup>14</sup> 14. William Taylor (Ed), [\*Kingdom Partnerships for Synergy in Missions\*](#) (Pasadena: WEF-Missions Commission/William Carey, 1994), p. 241.

(Nyack, NY) adds: 'The Western church must redefine its missiological terminology as it works in partnership with those in the "Third World".'<sup>15</sup>

## CHURCH TREND

### 8. The Emergence of the 'synergistic' Paradigm Church in North America

Missions specialist Bruce Camp has described the emergence of 'synergistic' churches that assume a greater responsibility for equipping their members in cross-cultural ministry.<sup>16</sup> While previous models of 'supporting' and 'sending' churches understood their roles mainly in terms of identifying missionary prospects, providing financial support, and sending missionaries out from North America, 'synergistic' churches ask, 'What is our congregation's role in obeying the Great Commission?'

In answering this question, these churches focus on what they can do well, often team up with other churches and organizations to achieve a greater effectiveness in missions. While some question the actual number of 'synergistic' churches, there is no doubt as to the increased desire on the part of larger churches in almost every denomination to become 'players' in the world mission arena. No longer content to stand on the sidelines, these churches are assuming greater responsibility in the selection, training and sending process. Some churches, in fact, operate as their own sending agencies, directed by their mission pastor and staff.

Along with this desire for increased participation, is a whole new sense of accountability and stewardship. Churches, like businesses, want to see a significant 'return on investment' (ROI), and want to be able to pinpoint the value-added component of any individual's or mission's involvement.

Critical to this trend is the rediscovery of missionary training as preparation *in* ministry rather than preparation *for* ministry. In the past, formal education for missions too often neglected the importance of experience, or 'praxis.' Regent College's Paul Stevens contends that understanding theological and missionary training as education *in* ministry will produce an integrated cycle of praxis, instructions and reflection.

In the past, the strength and vitality of some parachurch ministries has sometimes weakened the input of churches into missions. Many agencies are now tackling this issue head-on by declining volunteers who have not been involved in and mentored by a local church. As this trend gains momentum, local churches will be restored to their rightful place in the missionary training process.

## AGENCY TRENDS

### 9. Flexibility in Accepting Candidates

Mission agencies are becoming more pragmatic about whom they will accept. Many are showing more and more interest in the actual competencies of their candidates than in their formal credentials or degrees. The key question asked is, 'Can they do the ministry they will be assigned to do?'

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<sup>15</sup> 15. Tite Tienou, 'The Training of Missiologists for an African Context', an address at Missiological Education for the 21st Century, Fuller School of World Mission, Pasadena, Nov. 1992.

<sup>16</sup> 16. Bruce K. Camp, 'Major Paradigm Shifts in World Evangelization', *International Journal of Frontier Missions*, vol 11:3 (July/Aug, 1994), pp. 133-138.

This may prove beneficial to missionary candidates in several ways. First, less formal theological education is demanded before the first mission term. Second, more practical, mentored, on-the-job training is provided. Third, a move toward intensive one- or two-year formal study after a first-term exposure to missions on the field helps people make wiser decisions about long-term ministry.<sup>17</sup> Fourth, the emphasis on team ministry (sharing skills and strengths on the field) has increased.

## 10. Character-Based Training

Mission agencies, in sync with the parallel trend in workplace and business training, have recognized character as the prior essential in effective leader training. Robert Greenleaf's 1977 classic *Servant Leadership* helped spark a redefinition of leadership away from power toward serving. Christian professor J. Robert Clinton of Fuller's School of World Mission fuelled the flames with his 1988 book, *The Making of a Leader*, which called for connecting with God's purpose for your life by becoming intentional in your spiritual-character formation. The dictum 'Ministry flows out of being' captures the essence of this character-based approach to leader training for Christian leaders. Stephen Covey's first book, *Seven Habits of the Highly Effective Leader* (1989), launched a tidal wave of business writing on leadership development. The initial surge has been kept in motion by the subsequent publication of Covey's *Principle-Centered Leadership* (1992) and *First Things First* (1994), and has propelled trainers worldwide into the areas of spirituality as a vital component of effectiveness.<sup>18</sup>

Christian and secular leaders alike have come to recognize that who a person is—their character, their values, the integrity between what they say and what they do, is of utmost importance in the exercise of any human endeavour. This recognition of the 'priority of interiority' has led organizational and church leaders to the realization that personal renewal must precede any corporate or community renewal. While agencies are devoting more time in early pre-field training to issues of the heart, mission agencies and schools alike are looking to local churches as vital partners in the initial stages of character formation in the lives of prospective missionaries. Churches are once again being consulted as to the role they can play in helping candidates develop basic Christian disciplines, under the tutelage of mature senior saints. Without more intentional assistance from sending churches and educational institutions in the area of character formation, agencies know they are unable to adequately prepare candidates for intense spiritual warfare.

Veteran missionary and Columbia Biblical Seminary professor Robert Ferris's (Ed.) book *Establishing Ministry Training* (1995) issued a challenge to the four stakeholders in missions training—sending churches, mission agencies, training institutions, and receiving churches—to a new partnership to redesign missionary training. The author called for a balanced approach to planning missionary training that keeps character

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<sup>17</sup> 17. For more information, contact: CBI Mission Associates Programme, P.O. Box 5, Wheaton IL 60189. (630) 665-1200. Web: [cbi@aol.com](mailto:cbi@aol.com)

<sup>18</sup> 18. Robert K. Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977). J. Robert Clinton, *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs: NAV Press, 1988). Stephen R. Covey, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. (New York: Fireside/Simon & Schuster, 1989). Stephen R. Covey, *Principle-Centered Leadership* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992). Stephen R. Covey, *First Things First* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994).



qualities, ministry competencies and knowledge goals in proper relationship to the end in mind—equipping effective field missionaries.<sup>19</sup>

Ferris comments, 'Giftedness is something which comes from the Holy Spirit, and is not an issue of training, to be sure. But ministry skills are trainable. The close linkage between character and training, furthermore, should not be overlooked. Character, unlike giftedness, is NOT a gift; it too is trainable. We don't develop Christian character by running courses and seminars on 'Christian character' ('Love 101', 'Patience 430', 'Mercy 202', etc.), however. Christian character is the product when a willing heart responds in obedience to the clear and systematic teaching of God's Word under the Holy Spirit's influence. Seminaries do that pretty well . . .'<sup>20</sup>

## 11. Customized Life-Long Training

Several critical developments in the area of international adult education have convinced agencies of the necessity of improving the quality of their in-house training if they are truly serious about sending out missionaries to be 'world changers'. The following are five of the most salient developments:

a) *Life-Long Continuous Learning—The Fifth Discipline*: MIT professor Peter Senge identified the simple principle that 'organizations work the way they work, ultimately because of how we think and how we interact ... only by changing how we interact can shared visions, shared understandings, and new capacities for coordinated action be established'.<sup>21</sup> But learning that changes mental models is immensely challenging and occurs only over the long haul within a community of learners. The 'fifth discipline' in the business world is an organization's ability to create an environment in which people can create, new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured and where people are continually learning together; i.e. to become a 'learning organization'. The obvious implication challenges churches, agencies and schools to become true learning organizations that foster the growth and development of their members.

Many mission agencies have accepted this challenge and are designing pre-field and ministry internships that are highly experiential, non-formal and hands-on in nature. This practical mission training is also understood as 'life-long learning'. It reflects the growing realization that no matter how thorough the initial preparation for cross-cultural ministry is, the constantly changing global context and the exponential increase in knowledge and information demand not just 'continuing (periodic) education', but learning that is continuous and that lasts a life-time.

From the initial preparation for field assignments to continuing (and continuous) education on the field, agencies are beginning to craft programmes for their people which are comprehensive and individualized. They are comprehensive in that they take into account the initial ramp-up training, life-long learning over a career, as well as care related to personal, family and children's schooling issues. For example, Church Resource Ministries (CRM) requires all staff (both spouses) to file an annual Personal Development Plan with their supervisor, outlining key learning objectives in the area of spiritual and ministry growth. Learning can be informal, non-formal through intentional learning experiences, workshops and seminars, and formal—including a graduate degree

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<sup>19</sup> 19. Robert W. Ferris (Ed). *Establishing Ministry Training: a manual for programme developers*, (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 1995), pp. 3, 8.

<sup>20</sup> 20. *ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> 21. Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Currency/Doubleday, 1990), p. xiv.

programme. Supervisors meet with staff monthly, and at least twice a year check on each individual's progress toward their goals. Each member of staff then completes a year-end Ministry Development Profile evaluating their ministry effectiveness against key ministry indicators such as discipling, ministry coaching, training, and churches planted. To facilitate this continuous learning, all staff are encouraged and expected to find peer and upward mentors outside of the organization for accountability and advising.<sup>22</sup>

This heightened awareness of the care and nurture of missionaries over their career has led agencies to look outside for additional assistance. Mental health professionals often assist in the screening and selection process, as well as helping with re-entry transitions, mid-career assessments, and role changes, and other short- or long-term counselling needs.

*b) Training for Impact:* Secular corporations that have poured countless millions of dollars into staff training efforts over the last several decades have made an alarming discovery—not all training results in the changed behaviour desired. Trends in management training, such as management by objectives, total quality management, computer assisted instruction, and multi-media learning, have not produced the anticipated results. Industry is concerned with impact on business, return on investment (ROI), profit. This has led in the early 90s to the movement (retreat) from training by objectives to training to performance outcomes (impact). The question is no longer, What did we teach them? but, Can they perform in the desired way when they've completed training? What is the impact of the training? So, too, ministry training whether for church or mission, must be concerned with effectiveness, with fruit, with impact; not just patient, persistent faithfulness. One biblical value cannot supplant the other.

*c) Change Dynamic Focus:* Schools of business management are highlighting the importance of leaders not only understanding but being able to lead and influence the organizational change process. MBA programmes are moving away from merely theoretical discussion of case studies toward more action research in the 'change dynamics' of actual organizations in the midst of change and the re-engineering process.

Practical missionary training must be redesigned with an intra-cultural or cross-cultural change dynamic in mind, not just an inter-cultural communication process. Churches and agencies sending missionaries must re-visualize the missionary leader in the role of a change agent or facilitator of the change process. The missionary can no longer be seen primarily as a trader, but must be sent as a storyteller and facilitator, able to work amidst numerous groups and between multiple cultures.

In response to this demand for comprehensive, yet customized missionary training, many agencies are joining forces to co-sponsor pre-field orientations, church-planting seminars, and other strategic training focused on impact. InterDev (Seattle, WA) has spearheaded the design of strategic evangelism and church planting partnerships (see #7 Global Partnerships above) that bring together various mission specialties working in the same geographical region of the world. Their 'Partnership Training Course' trains facilitators to lead operational, field-based partnerships between churches and agencies for the purpose of more effective penetration of an unreached area.<sup>23</sup> Since 1995 they have witnessed the emergence of over 50 such partnerships around the world, and are

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<sup>22</sup> 22. For information on CRM's personalized learning plan, contact: Church Resource Ministries (CRM), 1240 N. Lakeview Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807. (714) 779-0370, fax 779-0189 Email: [djones@crmnet.org](mailto:djones@crmnet.org) Web: [www.crmnet.org](http://www.crmnet.org)

<sup>23</sup> 23. For information on InterDev, contact: P.O. Box 3883, Seattle, WA 98124. (425) 775-8330; Fax 775-8326 Web: [www.interdev.com](http://www.interdev.com)

conducting ongoing research to measure impact and effectiveness of those strategic partnerships in reaching targeted unreached peoples.

*d) Experiential and Interactive Learning:* Adult education since Malcolm Knowles has moved away from the theoretical and impersonal toward training that is experiential and relational. The Old Pedagogy encouraged students to come and stay so that experts could teach them the skills they would need and how to apply them. The New Andragogy provides the skills available in real time and coaches learners to seize the teachable moment. The Old Pedagogy was guided by clear purpose and process outcomes, which were easily consumed and easily applied. Even better training was logistically well supported, held in a great location, with great food and extra activities. The New Andragogy also wants to be effective and efficient, but is more results-driven and results verified where learning is tested by whether a person can actually produce the desired behaviour on the job. More than mere skills training, effective training is also 'Be-ing training,' in which the learner's capacity to see, think, feel and act are enhanced, learners are helped to learn what is needed 'just in time,' the training is often delivered by a peer, and the project is structured on-the-job.

Another benefit of the trend toward customized mission training is a change in the way mission agencies view and value training experiences. 'I believe we will move to a greater acceptance of non-formal training. Issues of proven ministry skills, character and giftedness will become the criteria for acceptance. Seminary training, while important for some missionaries in some roles, will take a back seat to these three items', says Sam Metcalf, president of Church Resource Ministries.

*e) Contextualized Approaches—* The best methodology is not one learned in a classroom and exported to a faraway mission setting, but a contextualized approach that takes seriously the biblical text, the cultural context, and the local community. Missionary training for the future will highlight the continuing importance of the contextualization process, and equip cross-cultural workers to engage in what Eugene Petersen calls 'contemplative exegesis'.<sup>24</sup> Several agencies and schools are currently engaged in intensive reflection and discussion of more radical contextualization approaches in areas such as developing Christian 'wats' as discipleship centres in Buddhist countries, and genuinely Christian outreach among Native Americans, Muslims, and Animists.

Mission agencies are taking an increasingly active role in developing and delivering their own programmes rather than depending on schools or churches to deliver their missionaries' and leaders' education. What is also new is the extent to which agencies can now draw from a rapidly expanding array of distance learning courses and modules being developed by schools, churches and other agencies. There is an increasing willingness to use learning modules that have proved effective for other agencies in their near-networks.

## **12. Focus on Leader Development**

There has been in the last ten years a proliferation of corporate training universities and independent centres for creative leadership training. Organizations recognize their need for expert help, and they are willing to pay as much as is needed to get the help they need. Typical one-week programmes run from \$1,500 to \$10,000 for executive level leader training. Similarly, in recent years churches, schools and agencies have refocused training

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<sup>24</sup> 24. Eugene Petersen, *Working the Angles. The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*, (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1987).

efforts on developing leaders. Leadership Network<sup>25</sup>, Leadership Catalyst<sup>26</sup>, and ReFocusing Leader Networks<sup>27</sup> are but three of the fastest growing learning networks for church leaders. In 1997, the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA) launched *LeaderLINK*, a joint effort by member missions to develop an intentional leader development track for their own missionaries and agency leaders.<sup>28</sup>

Larger agencies such as the International Missionary Board (IMB) of the SBC, OMF and CBI have jumped into the lead with comprehensive in-house leader training programmes. The IMB, for example, launched the International Centre for Excellence in Leadership (ICEL) in 1997 to provide assessment for leadership, leader development opportunities and leader resources that equip their personnel to begin and nurture church planting movements around the world.<sup>29</sup> Since the early 80s, Christian graduate schools and seminaries such as the Fuller School of World Mission have created rather extensive concentrations in leader development at both the masters and doctoral levels for church and missions leaders.

## SCHOOL TRENDS

### 13. Design of More Creative and Flexible Formal Educational Programmes

Increased costs, a declining student population and the changing face of missions have forced many schools to become more creative and flexible with their programmes and delivery systems. The most obvious trend is 'distance learning,' (DL) or delivering off-campus extension courses in a variety of modes. As more students study at home, at work, at church or on the field, technological innovations will push the availability of multi-media training farther from the campus. Schools like Columbia, Fuller, Gordon-Conwell, Moody, Trinity and Wheaton have thousands of students enrolled in a variety of extension centres and through extended courses taken for credit by cassette tape, video tape, or downloaded from the Internet.

Professor of Christian Education at Gordon-Conwell, David Kletzing suggests that the 'new found importance of distance learning will be driven by at least the four following developments: the increasing dependence of institutions upon tuition dollars generated by DL, the need to plan and evaluate DL within the context of the seminary's mission statement, the systematic integration of distance courses and faculty within the main

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<sup>25</sup> 25. For information on Leadership Network, contact: Leadership Network, 1-800-765-5323, (214) 969-5950. fax 969-9392. Web: [www.leadnet.org](http://www.leadnet.org)

<sup>26</sup> 26. For information on Leadership Catalyst, contact: Leadership Catalyst, 5060 North 19th Ave. #317, Phoenix, AZ 85015. (602) 249-7000. 1-800.249-0700. Web: [www.leadershipcatalyst.org](http://www.leadershipcatalyst.org)

<sup>27</sup> 27. For information on ReFocusing Leaders Networks, contact: Church Resource Ministries (CRM), 1240 N. Lakeview Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807. (714) 779-0370, Fax 779-0189. Email: [llarson@crmnet.org](mailto:llarson@crmnet.org) Web: [www.crmnet.org](http://www.crmnet.org)

<sup>28</sup> 28. LeaderLink is a cooperative leader development institute specifically for missions administered by the Interdenominational Foreign Mission Association (IFMA), culminating with an intensive five-day training institute each year. For information contact: IFMA, P.O. Box 398, Wheaton, IL 60189-0398. (630) 682-9270; 682-9278-Fax. Email: [ifma@aol.com](mailto:ifma@aol.com)

<sup>29</sup> 29. For information on the IMB/SBC's International Centre for Excellence in Leadership, contact: Dr. Ben Sells, ICEL, 16492 MLC Lane, Rockville, VA 23146. (804) 219-1816, Fax 219-1850. Email: [susan.welch@imb.org](mailto:susan.welch@imb.org)

curriculum, and the identification of distance students as valuable resources to the school.’<sup>30</sup>

Another innovation is the creation of degree completion programmes for missionary training of adults available on campus or via distance learning. William Carey International University administrator Ben Sells reports on the growing number of potential ‘adult’ missionary candidates who have made a missions decision at some point in their life but lack one often-required credential for appointment by mission agencies—a college degree or a year of Bible and Missions. He describes them this way: ‘Unlike recent high school or college graduates these adults just can’t pack the car and drive away to college. They have jobs. They have families. Does it make sense to give up income and take on student debt, leave their future source of prayer and financial support, and divorce themselves from established ministry in their home church?’<sup>31</sup>

Sells observes: ‘The market is moving distance education from the margins to the mainstream. Technology is moving higher education from being delivered at a place to being placeless. And accessible education means learning opportunities that are moving from being regulated by the institutions to be captured by the learner “just-in-time”.’

This degree completion model for missionary training at seminaries is a welcome trend. Fuller Theological Seminary, for instance, provides a way for mature Christians over the age of 32 who may have only two years of college but have at least seven years of proven missions experience to enter the seminary’s master’s programme in mission. Schools such as Biola University and Azusa Pacific University have similar programmes available for those interested in Missions.<sup>32</sup>

The Institute of International Studies at the U.S. Center for World Mission presently offers the ‘World Christian Foundations’ (WCF) curriculum that allows adults to complete their degree at their own speed. Wycliffe Bible Translators is piloting the opportunity for people to do language surveys without a college degree if they can finish the degree on the field. In cooperation with two regionally accredited Christian colleges, the WCF provides 48 semester hours of upper division undergraduate credit. Students must have two years of earned credit and meet the other admission requirements of the respective college. The curriculum is divided into four modules of 12 semester units each. Students in the WCF programme must meet weekly with a locally qualified mentor. The student can pursue studies within a time frame that takes into account work and home commitments. But the mentoring relationship moves the studies beyond the level of correspondence work. The WCF curriculum also carries masters level credit.<sup>33</sup>

Missionary training curriculum is facing radical change in the United States in the next five years. Distance education programmes will proliferate, allowing more and more students to study at home, at work, at church, or on the mission field. Each generation of technological innovations will push the availability of multi-media training further from

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<sup>30</sup> 30. David P. Kletzing, ‘New Directions for Seminary-Based Distance Learning’, *Journal of Adult Training*, (Fall 1996), Vol. IX, No.1. pp. 8–16.

<sup>31</sup> 31. Ben Sells, ‘The Breakthrough for On-Field Mission Training’, *Mission Frontiers Bulletin*, (Sep–Dec 1998).

<sup>32</sup> 32. For information contact: BIOLA University, 13800 Biola Ave., La Mirada, CA 90639. (562) 903–6000. Web: [www.biola.edu](http://www.biola.edu) Azusa Pacific University, 901 E. Alosta Ave., Azusa, CA 91702 (626) 969–3434. Web: [www.apu.edu](http://www.apu.edu)

<sup>33</sup> 33. For information on the World Christian Foundations course, contact: William Carey International University, 1605 Elizabeth St., Pasadena, CA 91104–2127 818–398-2184, fax 818 298–2185, E-mail: [ben.sells@wciu.edu](mailto:ben.sells@wciu.edu)

campus. Developments in communication theory and missionary anthropology will continue to suggest improved practices for building bridges of love with unreached peoples. Continued missions research and strategic breakthroughs among resistant peoples will force seminaries to innovate to stay on the cutting edge.

#### **14. Increased Technology**

Many schools have been quick to implement a wider and more innovative utilization of technology to facilitate the training process. Just as ease of long-distance travel facilitates the movement of faculty and learning resources to where the learners are, so the ease of long-distance communication via telegram, telex, fax, email and the Internet now link the furthest offices in micro-seconds. The mis-communication in past decades caused by distance and prohibitive costs are now minimized as long-distance rates plummet around the world. E-mail facilitates constant communication, contact and interaction between North American leadership and missionaries in the field.

Christian colleges and seminaries are aggressively developing a full-range of distance learning self-study modular courses. The Association of Christian Continuing Education Schools and Seminaries (ACCESS) is exploring a number of cooperative projects, including the joint publication of a catalogue of all distance learning Bible and Missions courses.<sup>34</sup> Courses on the Internet will soon replace the extension courses using notebooks, cassettes, or traditional textbooks. Conference calling and workshopping will soon become common-place in agencies, and churches will expand their use of email for communication, accountability, and caring. Billy Graham's global satellite evangelistic training and campaign in early 1995 is only a preview of the power the electronic media promises for more effective missionary training.

Some would see the claim of greater effectiveness through distance learning as an oxymoron, but the two are not mutually exclusive. Increased use of technology does not have to mean less relational or less interactive adult learning. Church planting author Robert Logan comments on the move toward Web-based training: 'The research on distance learning indicates that if you initiate the on-line learning experience with a face-to-face bonding experience (such as workshop, retreat, or orientation), you greatly multiply the impact and learning of a web-based course.' Logan, who teaches church planting at Fuller School of World Mission is the creator of CoachNet, a personalised coaching system for church planters over the Internet. 'On-line follow-up and interactivity can multiply the learning effectiveness three to ten-fold after an initial training experience,' Logan adds. 'Providing participants a relationship with a Coach, focusing on key issues in a systematic way, and interacting in detail on problems, people and personal issues are just three components of an effective web-based learning experience. On-line interactivity also allows for community building, discussion and feedback, and greatly facilitates very pointed and specific coaching from one or more peer coaches.'<sup>35</sup>

Kletzing also underscores the positive way in which distance learning can address a broadening of student's needs more specifically. 'In the future we will see a wider variety of courses offered in distance learning than ever before, and we will see greater diversity in teaching strategies and delivery systems. The technology makes this possible, and new understanding of individual differences provides direction. As Christians we would that

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<sup>34</sup> 34. For more information on Association of Christian College for Extension Studies (ACCESS) of Wheaton Ill., USA, see [www.accessweb.org](http://www.accessweb.org)

<sup>35</sup> 35. Robert L. Logan (personal conversation, December 12, 1998). For more information on CoachNet, contact: Email: [jbuller@CoachNet.org](mailto:jbuller@CoachNet.org) Web: [www.CoachNet.org](http://www.CoachNet.org)

people would come with different traits, gifts, and talents which are part of who God made them to be. The flexibility which technology and distance learning offers gives seminary educators an unprecedented opportunity to communicate in ways that respect individual learning styles and other personal variables.’<sup>36</sup>

### **15. Innovative Two-Thirds World Missionary Training Centres and Programmes**

Throughout Africa, Asia and Latin America, young mission agencies are multiplying at an exponential rate. Following this trend, from the Global Missionary Training Center in Seoul, Korea, to the Nigerian Evangelical Missionary Institute in Jos, Two-Thirds World training programmes to equip the exploding numbers of missionaries from former ‘receiving nations’ are multiplying rapidly with many taking their place at the leading edge of training innovation.

Over 44 of 107 centres training missionary candidates are in the Two Thirds World. Their focus is to provide training appropriate for the needs of non-Western missionaries. As innovative new practical models and approaches are found, they will be exported back to North America, in the same way that TEE (Theological Education by Extension) started in the field in the 60s and was transplanted back to the United States a decade later. Their emphasis on learning in community with people from several differing cultures, applying spiritual disciplines, and practical courses in specific contexts may be instructive to North American programmes. Illustrative of this practical dimension is the EIC centre in Eldoret, Kenya, where missionaries will be sent to live among nomadic tribes whose life-style and livelihood revolves around their cattle, or the Global Mission Bible College in Fiji, where the art of mending fishing nets has opened doors in the evangelization of Pacific Island people.<sup>37</sup>

### **CONCLUSION: THE CALL TO DOXOLOGICAL TEACHING AND TRAINING**

The responses of theologians and Christian educators to such a widespread description of sweeping changes across the educational horizon are varied. Some will retreat in disgust and affirm the traditions of the saints once delivered. Some will recoil in fear that the sacred essentials are being desecrated. Some will attempt to defend the status quo. Some will tentatively attempt to engage with the issues and adapt them to their setting. Some will critically examine the trends and begin slowly to develop appropriate responses. Others have already decided that theological and missiological education was never really what they wanted to do anyway.

L. Grant McClung, associate professor of mission and church growth, Church of God School of Theology (Cleveland, TN), calls for involvement of the heart as well as the head: ‘The missing ingredient in missiological training in the Western church is passion. Our missiologists might as well be CEOs of multinational corporations. We have been depending too much on social sciences, management by objectives, and marketing techniques ... Where is Jesus in all this?’<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> 36. David P. Kletzing, ‘New Directions for Seminary-Based Distance Learning’, *Journal of Adult Training*, (Fall 1996), Vol. IX, No.1., pp. 10.

<sup>37</sup> 37. Hartley, David, *Preparing to Serve: Training for Cross-Cultural Mission* (Pasadena: WEF/William Carey, 1995).

<sup>38</sup> 38. L. Grant McClung, ‘Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspectives on Missiological Education,’ an address at Missiological Education for the 21st Century, Fuller School of World Mission, Pasadena, Nov. 1992.



What is needed from Christian educators is a response that is biblically responsible and reflective. I propose a response of 'doxological teaching' or training. 'Teaching,' suggests Jerry Root of Wheaton College, 'is coming shoulder-to-shoulder with a person, looking out at a reality and describing it in such a way that captures their imagination and desire to do something about it.' Doxological teaching, then, is recognizing or discovering that 'God is here! God is in this place!' and then designing learning experiences which open the learners' eyes to see how big and glorious God is. In global crisis and change, in sorrow and in joy, God is at work in our world completing the 'Big Picture' of his kingdom. God is in this place. There is hope. People Groups are becoming worshippers!

To this end, cultural changes, technological innovations, and instructional developments can be made allies in moving missions into the 21st century. But the missions educator that is needed must own more than cable TV, the latest computer, and most recent book on leadership training. We need teachers who themselves have been caught by the Lord of the universe, who can see clearly God's sovereign hand moving in the affairs of the world, and who burn with a passion to raise up other worshippers who long to tell 'the story of His glory' among the nations! They alone will be suited to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with missionary candidates from countless nations and help them detect the glorious movement of what God is doing in our day!

*'For the earth will be filled with the kingdom of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.'*

[Habakkuk 2:14](#)

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# **The Biblical Jubilee**

**Leonardo De Chirico**

**Keywords:** Jubilee, land, wealth, property, poverty, Sabbath, justice, covenant, prophecy, Messiah, servant, community

## **INTRODUCTION**

'Jubilee' is a word we hear more and more with each passing day. All over the world extraordinary efforts are being made over this event associated with the fateful date of 2000. Millions of people, lay and religious alike, are getting ready to make a form of 'pilgrimage'. Many voices are raised urging us to not make this millennial event merely a grand media event or a commercial jamboree of global proportions, and the sentiments