

THE MISSIONS STRATEGY

Tom Horn

Introduction

A. What is a Missions Strategy?

A missions strategy is a document that will answer the question of how a church believes God wants them to achieve their unique purpose in world evangelization. It deals with priorities, goals and objectives. It deals with resources of people, prayer and finances. This term strategy comes from the military arena where it refers to a comprehensive plan or broad scope and is long ranged. It is to be distinguished from the military term "tactics" which refers to detailed and time bound plans. In the context of the church, a missions strategy is a well thought through and prayed through plan that if followed will bring about, Lord willing, the fulfillment of the goals set by the church for maximum missions impact.

B. Why have a Missions Strategy?

The fact is that few churches have ever developed a written missions strategy. What has been considered normative for the military and for businesses has been neglected by churches to their own misfortune and to the detriment of the Kingdom of God. For some churches, this is because they have never seen the need or were not prepared to take the necessary time. For other churches, they may feel that a written strategy would limit or restrict their outreach. Some denominations establish a strategy and the member churches simply join in participation. The following benefits accompany a missions strategy.

- 1) First and foremost, a strategy forces church leadership to earnestly seek God for direction. It requires much prayer, hard study, serious research and frequent discussion, all of which are a healthy spiritual practice. It recognizes that God has a plan for this church and that it is the church's responsibility to discern that plan.
- 2) A strategy stimulates good stewardship. Churches have limited resources and when committed to maximizing these resources a church must invest time and effort into choosing the best over the better. Some good things must be left undone.
- 3) A strategy encourages a church to stretch their faith. God is certainly able to do great things through a church but many churches limit God's work by their unbelief or half-heartedness. Rather, a church should dream great dreams and plan great plans and pray great prayers for the sake of God's Kingdom.
- 4) A strategy enables the church to set a unified direction. It provides a cohesiveness for people to work together in accomplishing a common agreed upon goal. It also allows for a concise way to communicate missions goals within and without the church, building confidence that something significant is happening.
- 5) A strategy permits a church to be held accountable. It has built within it an evaluation process. Because of the urgency of the gospel and the limited time to impact a generation, churches need to call themselves into account or they may have regrets when standing before the Lord.

C. Is there any biblical precedent for developing a missions strategy?

Missiologists have noted a general missions strategy for the Old Testament and one for the New Testament times. In the OT, the nation of Israel was to be a distinct people living and worshipping in the Promised Land. Their religious practices and morality was to attract people from the surrounding nations to worship God. In this way, their missions influence would be "centripetal" in nature (drawing people in). In the NT, the church also was to be a distinct people living by love and worshipping in truth but they were commissioned to take the gospel to the ends of the earth and establish churches. In this way, their missions influence would be "centrifugal" in nature (going out to people). Both strategies were and are effective means of evangelizing the peoples of the world.

Some other specific strategies found in Scripture include:

- 1) Lifestyle or friendship evangelism
- 2) Priority of urban ministry: Noah, Paul (Acts 13-19)
- 3) Teaching family members (Dt 6)
- 4) Tentmaking (Acts 18:13)
- 5) Disciple making (Mt 28:19; 2 Tim 2:2)
- 6) Priority of the less evangelized (Acts 1:8; Rom 15:20)

D. How does a church go about developing a missions strategy?

As with developing a missions policy, it will take a sizable amount of time and effort to develop a strategy that serves as a guiding document for the church. Be prepared to take a year if necessary in doing essential work so that the product truly reflects the convictions of as many people as possible.

1) Gather information:

The strategy a church develops will directly reflect the information they had to work with. Whether a church has many missionaries or none, the starting point is to have accurate information.

a) Obtain accurate records of the missionaries and projects you support. Send a questionnaire if necessary to get current data. This could take some time for responses so start right away. Where are people working, how many other missionaries are working there, who are the target people, what is the state of Christianity among the target people, what type of ministry are they involved in, what percentage of time goes where, etc. If not already in place, start a filing system for this information your receive.

b) Delegate research responsibility to the missions committee members and other interested people. It is necessary to become aware of what the Spirit of God is doing and where He is working in this generation. It is necessary to better understand various types of ministries. Strategic questions must be asked and answered during this study phase.

c) Survey the leaders of the church as to what they feel is strategic for missions. A questionnaire can be helpful to direct their thinking. People like to know they are having input at the ground level of something that will be a very important part of the church. Their input will show how well informed they are about

missions and how much education work must be done. It will also identify their areas of concern and interest which will be important when asking for their endorsement of specific ministries later.

d) Collect missions strategies from other churches as a model. Some churches are further along in this area of their church missions programme and one can learn from what others have done. Check around with other good missions-involved churches for ideas.

2) Consolidate your research and study:

After several months of research and study, you will have a sizable pool of information. The goal now is summarize the information and decide what is relevant for your church.

a) Summarize and circulate data for review by those responsible for drafting the initial strategy. Each person involved in the research and study phase should provide a written summary of his topic. An objective analysis should precede a recommendation of how important this topic is for your church's strategy. These summaries can be circulated to those involved for review.

b) The designated leader of the strategy committee should call several meetings to discuss the components appropriate for your church's missions strategy. Initial decisions must be made in order to make a draft strategy. This process could take a month or more.

c) Draft the strategy. An initial draft based upon study and research will provide a good starting point for others to interact with the strategy. Someone with the ability to consolidate information is essential at this point. First get feedback from the full missions committee. After any needed revision, obtain feedback from the governing board and other key leaders. By this time you will have involved most of the church leadership and hopefully they will feel as though they had a part in the final product. Lastly, make revisions and write the missions strategy as it will stand. Since we are now involving many people, the drafting process will take a couple of months.

d) Present the finished missions strategy to the church. A well written missions strategy that takes considerable time and effort should be printed nicely and "officially" presented to the congregation. A Sunday service can be devoted to a missions message and explaining how the strategy will guide the church in the years to come. Include a written section that tells why a strategy was needed and how it came about. This will be especially helpful in the future when people enquire about the strategy.

e) Be aware of certain roadblocks in the development of a strategy. Data: A strategy will be built upon information. If the information a church has is inaccurate or biased then the result will be limited in its effect. Priorities: One church cannot do everything but it can do something significant. For whatever reasons, most churches have not established or maintained priority where the needs are greatest and the workers are few. Most churches have settled for quick results instead of challenging opportunities. Impatience: It has been well said

that we usually over estimate what can be done in one year and under estimate what can be done in five years. Impacting peoples lives takes time. A church can set ambitious goals but should accept the Lord's timing on seeing progress. Communication: Strategies are most effective when as many people as possible can be mobilized for a task and sustained over time. Communication becomes key in keeping goals fresh in mind and people on target.

* In Singapore, 29% of the churches with a strong missions emphasis have a written strategy. Most of the remaining churches recognized the importance of a strategy and desired assistance in drafting one.

1. Strategic Considerations

Before going on to discuss the actual components of a missions strategy, it is necessary to become aware of previous strategies that have guided the Church and current trends shaping the world today.

A. Previous strategic considerations of the modern missions movement:

1) Rural verses urban ministries:

Urbanization began about 1800 with the coming of the industrial revolution, first in the West and spreading to other parts of the world. Up until this time most of the people of the world were living in rural settings. By 1900, 15% of the world's population was urban. Today almost 50% of the world's population is urban.

2) Coastal verses inland ministries:

As the modern missionary movement began around the turn of the 19th century, focus was on the coastal populations. These people were without Christ so ministry did not need to spread inland. By the end of the 1800's a definite shift had occurred with focus on the inland areas (CIM, AIM, SIM). A bit later still came a focus on the more remote areas (WEC, RBMU, UFM, NTM).

3) Medical\education ministries:

The western nations were distancing themselves rapidly from the less developed nations in scientific knowledge and applications by 1800. Compassionate Christians sought to demonstrate the love of Christ in tangible ways and found open doors among the impoverished peoples of the world. Hospitals and schools often paved the way for church planting.

4) Emergence of missions societies:

Prior to the modern missionary movement, missionary work was done by the Catholics (Jesuits) and a few Protestant groups (Moravians, Danish-Hall). From the beginning of the 1800's we find denominations and missions societies developing a specialized focus on certain geographic areas.

5) Go anywhere:

It was not until the 1900's that nations became sufficiently organized to create visa restrictions on people entering their country. Most missionaries had unrestricted access to countries that today are very restricted nations.

B. Contemporary strategic considerations for missions:

1) Church Planting among neglected peoples:

In 1974 at the Lausanne Congress on World Evangelization, Dr Ralph Winter startled the Christian world by graphically portraying the status of world evangelization using current statistics. He showed in a powerful way how most missionary endeavors were focusing on those peoples who had already heard the gospel or who were able to hear the gospel in a relevant way in their language. Multitudes remained outside of missionary efforts and would remain so unless someone went to them as a cross-cultural missionary.

2) Urban Ministries:

By the early 1980's there arose a growing awareness that the population explosion was resulting in a population implosion. Prophetic voices like Ray Bakke, Harvey Conn, and David Barrett informed the Christian community of how masses of people were flocking to the cities of the world and how many new cities were being formed every year. Whereas in 1900 there were only 20 cities with a population over 1 million, by 1990 the total reached 330. Whereas in 1900 15% of the earth's population lived in cities, by 1990 46% were urban dwellers. Specialized approaches and training are needed to bring Christ to the cities.

3) Tentmaking:

With the release of the book Tentmaking Today in 1979 by J. Christy Wilson, tentmaking began to become popular. Many nations were restricting missionary visas and creative access strategies were needed. George Otis founded Issachar in 1981 and several other organizations sprang up to herald the call for professional trained men and women to find employment in needy countries. It was calculated that in 1986 that 77 countries restricted access to missionaries and it was estimated that by the year 2000 almost half the nations of the world would restrict missionary access. Billions of people lay isolated from the gospel behind political walls.

4) The Missionary Sending Church:

The essential role of the Church in world evangelization has been understood yet it was uncommon until recently to find churches seeing missions as their primary responsibility. In 1975 the Association of Church Missions Committees (now Advancing Church Missions Commitment) was formed in America by concerned laymen and missions leaders to awaken the church in America to their global responsibility. Gradually the movement grew and was exported by missionaries and missions speakers. Now churches around the world are taking biblical leadership in recruiting, training and sending their home grown

missionaries.

5) National Missionaries:

As missionaries from the last generations did their job of planting churches and training nationals, there arose a host of nationals prepared to serve as pastors, evangelists, and church planters. By the mid 1940's, Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission (now known as Partners International) began to connect financial resources from the West with worthy nationals and national agencies in need of support. National missionaries have the advantage over expatriates in that they cost less, they either know the language or can probably learn it easier than an expatriate, they are closer to the target culture, and they often have easier access and mobility. Sadly in the 1980's some financial scandals discredited the support of nationals but partnerships of this kind are still very much alive.

6) International Students:

Whereas visas and costs restrict Christians from going to many countries, students from the countries of the world are flocking to developed nations for education. Churches can have an important role in pre-evangelism by "hosting" international students. By showing acts of kindness and hospitality to lonely and displaced students, many return to their home with a good opinion of Christians and some even become Christians. This ministry allows all members of the congregation to be involved in a cross-cultural type of ministry, right at their door steps.

7) Training Non-Western Missionaries:

Over the last few decades, key national leaders have been sponsored for biblical study at western seminaries. Some return to their country and fill positions of leadership. Others only become enamored with a better standard of living and instead of returning to their home country, they decide to remain abroad. Training such leaders within their own country or in a nearby country has proven when possible to be a better alternative. Except for totally unreached areas, the major role of the expatriate missionary is becoming more and more one of training.

8) Social Concerns:

Hardly a day goes by without news of some catastrophe somewhere around the world. People are victims of political oppression, natural disaster, and poor personal decisions. A vital part of the gospel is helping to bring relief to the poor, the sick, and the under privileged. Believing in the dignity of man and the impartial love of God has led many churches to participate in relief ministries. Organizations like World Vision have provided excellent opportunities for involvement at various levels. With global trends forecasting increases in health, economic and education problems coupled with biblical prophesy telling of increased difficulties in the end times, serious thought must be given to the role of social action in world missions.

9) Research and Literature:

Information is changing at such a rapid pace that rarely do we have all the information available before making decisions. The strategies we set will reflect the type and quality of information we had access to. The secular world recognizes the value of current and accurate information and consequently pays a high price to have it and update it (because they know they pay a higher price without it!). The Church should be equally concerned about obtaining the best data possible in their strategic planning. The most popular research report is probably Operation World by Patrick Johnstone which proves to be indispensable for prayer and statistics. There is also a severe lack of quality literature available on most subjects by non-western authors. Projects must be encouraged to assist capable people to write culturally relevant material for church growth, especially in missions.

10) The Non-Residential Missionary and Adopting Unreached People Groups:

A recent strategy in missions is that of a career missionary targeting an unreached people group but living in a location where he or she can better facilitate ministry to that people than living in their midst. Sometime living among certain people is very difficult or impossible because of restrictions. Like tentmakers, this strategy allows for creative involvement. The goal of this non-residential missionary is to encourage and coordinate various types of ministries to adopt the target group. The adoption of an unreached people group can be multi-faceted. Various missions agencies and service organizations such as the US Center For World Mission develop and maintain data files on individual people groups.

C. Current trends in missions:

Probably the single most important trend that must be considered when setting strategy is the reality of CHANGE. Tofler in his popular book, Future Shock, discusses the shock our systems must absorb with massive change in a short period of time. We must learn to manage change. Although most people study the past to learn for the present, the time now requires that we study the future to learn for the present.

1) Trends regarding missions fields:

The world around us is desperately in need of Christ. No place is this more true than in Asia. Population increases have caused various and serious problems. Much of Asia is restricted for missionary visas. Satan has blinded the masses with religions of fear and idolatry. The mission field of Asia is more challenging than ever.

a) Population factors: In most countries population explosion is a fact. Asia already has about 60% of the world's population and that percentage will rise. By the year 2020, it is predicted that India will surpass China in numbers of people. While an explosion is occurring in countries, and implosion is occurring in cities. Asia has 50% of the world's largest cities with 27 in excess of 1 million. People continue to flock to the cities.

b) Social factors: In general, the world is becoming more secular and less religious. As countries modernize and industrialize, faith declines. As choice and change increases, commitment decreases. Even those with faith find the demands of life leaves little time for religion. With syncretism also prevalent, Christianity does not stand out as distinct and thus loses its power of attraction. Moreover, independence and privatization isolates people in society. Christianity is privately engaging but socially irrelevant. It is more of a hobby than a lifestyle.

c) Political factors: There has been more political change in the 1990's than in the last 50 years. Some religiously closed countries are now accessible for creative access. In other countries, persecution and suffering are very prevalent. The church in comfortable countries does not seem to prepare the younger generation for hardship.

d) Receptivity factors: For the most part, the people remaining to be reached with the gospel are the more difficult to reach people. In many countries, militancy is on the rise. Asia contains 72% of the least reached countries and 117 out of 170 least reached mega peoples. Asia remains the greatest missions challenge.

2) Trends regarding the missions force:

Although the western missionary force is shrinking, the Asian missionary force is growing rapidly. In the recent MARC Missions Handbook, North American career missionaries have decreased by 15% from 1988 to 1992 (36,600 to 31,260). Short term missionaries serving from 2 months to 2 years have decreased by 34% (11,900 to 7,882) while those serving from 2 weeks to 2 months is over 36,000. The Kingdom of God can advance forcefully if the Christian institutions rise to the challenge and utilize their resources wisely.

a) Institutions: The Church is God's ordained institution for impacting the missions field of the world. We find several bright spots in the midst of a dark continent where churches are daring to take God at His word. In general, however, we find churches unfocused and lacking missionary vision; ill equipped with missions know how; overwhelmed with secondary matters that urgently press them to action; lacking solid training in evangelism and discipleship; and blending into the world rather than standing distinct.

Missions agencies serve the purpose of assisting churches to impact the world. Again there are some bright spots of agencies that are working harmoniously with churches. However, many churches have become dissatisfied with agencies because of a bad experience. Established agencies tend to focus on maintaining existing ministries and lack resources (and sometimes vision) to pioneer new areas. An appearance of inflexibility is often perceived. When seeking to expand, sometimes the supply lines of leadership supervision are not adequate. Consequently, many missionaries don't last on their assignment and many that never pass on a missionary zeal to the churches they work with.

Training institutions are springing up all over the world and especially in Asia. This is where one of the great bottle-necks now exist. Many Asian missionaries

have gone out with only Bible college training and no cross-cultural training. The existing missionary training institutions do not have the resources or capacity to train the volume of missionaries needed today. Too often the training focus is on academics and not grassroots ministry; the costs are high; and few Asian have had sufficient missions experience to serve as trainers.

b) Resources: People are abundant in Asia. There is even an abundance of Christians in many places. Praise God for the faithful work of missionaries in the last generations! However, the current generation of Christians struggle with nominalism and worldliness. Young people are very independent and willing to give only a short term commitment to missions work. Few are willing to sacrifice and pay the price to serve the Lord in missions.

Prayer is becoming a forgotten art in many churches. This powerful resource alone could effect the kind of change needed for revival in the church so a burden for the lost became a reality. However, with the pace of society, prolonged and intensive prayer for missions has almost vanished.

Financial resources are more abundant today than in any other generation yet we find greater consumption on self to compensate for the increase. The world economy is shaky. Personal debt is significant. The cost of sending missionaries has increased as much as 100 fold over the last 40 years. Money can be difficult to transfer internationally.

3) Statistical trends:

a) According to a January 1993 report in the International Bulletin of Missionary Research, page 23, the following current statistics help concerned Christians to focus strategically:

Total World Population	5.5 Billion	
Total nominal Christians	1.0	18%
Total committed Christians	.6	11%
Total Muslims	1.0	18%
Total Hindus	.8	15%
Total Buddhists	.3	5%
Total Atheists	.2	4%
Total Tribals	.1	2%
Others (non religious or new religious)	1.5	27%
Total clearly non Christian	3.7	67%
Total people yet to hear the Gospel once	1.2	22%

b) According to a January 1991 report in the International Bulletin of Missionary Research, page 24, David Barrett, foremost missions researcher, reveals the following realities as now existing. The sad fact is that the global concern for missions to the unevangelized has not changed much in the last decade.

- 23 % of the globe (World A) is ignorant of Christianity, Christ, and the Gospel

- 97% of all Christians are out of contact with non-Christians
- 90% of all evangelism is not directed at non-Christians but at "nominal" Christians (Quotes are mine)
- 91% of all foreign missionaries are targeting populations in World C, the Christian world
- 95% of all Christian activity benefits only World C
- 99% of all Christian discussion and writing addresses only Christian interests
- 99% of the Christian world's income is spent on itself

Barrett concludes with this prophetic statement: **"If missions in the 1990's can massively redeploy its resources into direct contact with World A, it could recover its traditional vitality. Otherwise, it will remain virtually irrelevant in the unfolding global drama."**

c) The 10/40 Window: With the coming of the AD 2000 and Beyond Movement came a new graphic way of identifying to core of the remaining task of world evangelization. The core of the unreached people of our world live within a rectangular-shaped window, from 10 to 40 degrees north of the equator stretching from Africa through Asia. Within this window we find:

- The center of Biblical history: eschatologically this region plays a major role in God's redemptive program
- The least evangelized countries: One-third of the world's land area but two-thirds of the world's population; 61 countries with 37 of the 50 least evangelized nations and 97% of the least evangelized peoples
- The majority of the world's Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist peoples
- The poorest of the poor: average per capita income is less than US \$500 per year; only 8% of all missionary work
- The largest ethnolinguistic mega-peoples (over 1 million): 90%
- The majority of the least evangelized megacities: the 50 top cities
- The strongholds of Satan: essential to break before the Great Commission can be completed

2. Strategic Components

Once you become aware of strategic considerations, you have knowledge to draw upon in developing a strategy. A few guiding principles will help you properly focus on the types of strategic ministries, the focus of strategic ministries, and the means of involvement in strategic ministries.

A. Guiding Principles:

1) Definitions

It is necessary to clarify a few definitions. Hopefully crucial terms have been defined in the Missions Policy and only need a restatement here. The first term is missions. What does the church mean by missions? Does this refer to all ministries of the church; all outreach ministries; all cross-cultural ministries? The second term to define is missionary. This definition will relate to the definition for missions. Does a missionary refer to any witnessing Christian; any

person serving in a church sponsored ministry; only those involved in evangelistic ministries; only those serving cross-culturally?

Depending on how complex a church strategy becomes will depend on what other terms may need defining. Terms like "unreached, unevangelized, adoption, church planting, tentmaker" are a few such terms.

2) Vision

The ethos of the church's missions vision should be summarized. Does the church view itself as a supporting church or as a sending church? A supporting church tends to focus on money, on a quantity of missionaries, on people who have already determined their ministry, and on viewing involvement with missionaries and projects in a partial way. A sending church by contrast focuses on people, on the quality missionaries, on opportunities in line with a pre-established strategy, and on significant involvement to the extent of sensing ownership.

Does the church see itself as carrying on a tradition of missions (duplicator) or as a pace setter in new and effective means of ministry? Most missionaries are building upon what other have done while thousands still have yet to hear the gospel. There are risks associated with pace setting.

Does the church primarily focus on sending people or reaching people? Is the goal to see someone sent out as a missionary or to see a people group reached with the gospel? There is a very real difference between the two. With the former, when the missionary departs from a people group the church's ministry ceases. With the latter, the focus is on the people and ministry continues when one missionary leaves.

3) Planning

A strategy document is really a set of faith goals that a church believes God wants them to focus on. Many churches are like the person who shoots an arrow at a wall and then proceeds to draw a bull's eye around the arrow. If we aim at nothing we are sure to hit it every time.

If we take time to set goals, we should ensure that there is a plan to see these goals accomplished. The acronym SMART is a helpful way to look at goals that we intent to reach: Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Realistic, Time-bound. Be making sure that these dimensions are included in our strategy goals, we have a better chance of reaching them.

4) Support

A major factor in establishing a missions strategy is to launch on a course of missions involvement where your resources of people and funds can be focused. The strategy will identify what areas are to be the focus and what the corresponding financial involvement will be. If not documented in detail in the missions policy, there should be guidelines present in the strategy for who qualifies for funding and the level of funding available for differing ministries.

5) Prayer

Because a strategy is to reflect God's leading for a church, prayer must permeate every step of the process in developing the strategy. Many factors can and should be considered when thinking and planning strategically. It is easy to get lost in the process if we are not careful. Prayer is needed for considering the right information; it is needed for processing the information; it is needed for presenting and discussing the information; it is needed for deciding the church's strategic focus and communicating it to the congregation. Do not neglect this crucial factor in developing the missions strategy.

B. Types of Ministries

When the modern missionary movement began, the types of ministries men and women engaged in were rather narrow. All ministries related to evangelism and church planting for there were no or few believers present. As people were converted and churches were planted, the types of ministries expanded into other realms of Christian assistance. Today we find a wide range of different types of ministries all labeled as missionary work. We will look at a few of the more common ministries.

1) Pioneering Ministries

Evangelism with the intent to plant a church is probably the most common type of ministry in missions. This ministry involves a missionary(s) dwelling amidst an unevangelized people, learning the language and culture, and going through a process of seeing a church planted. David Hesselgrave identifies a 10 step process in his book, *Planting Churches Cross-Culturally*.

- Missionaries commissioned
- Audience contacted
- Gospel communicated
- Hearers converted
- Believers congregated
- Faith confirmed
- Leadership consecrated
- Believers commended
- Relationships continued
- Sending churches convened

Within this process of establishing a missionary sending church is latitude for a multiplicity of ministries. Pioneering church planting focuses on the early stages of this process to the intentional neglect of related but distinct ministries.

Bible translation is usually a pioneering ministry since having a Bible in the language of a target people is one of the first priorities of missions. Occasionally Bible translation is being done on a minor dialect among a people that have a church in their culture.

Radio broadcasts are sometimes of a pioneering nature especially when the

broadcasts are directed at peoples who dwell in restricted access nations. Other ministries of social work can be pioneering when conducted by Christian professionals in restricted access nations.

2) Church Development Ministries

Evangelism and evangelism training in a Christian context where the focus is not on church planting is another major type of ministry. This ministry is often confused with church planting evangelism but is quite distinct. This type of evangelism is for the purpose of helping an established church grow.

Discipleship ministries seek to establish converts and equip Christians for being a disciple. This ministry is essential if a church is to become effective in impacting the lost.

Leadership training is another important form of church development where church leaders are trained for more significant responsibilities or perhaps cross-cultural missionary service. This training could range from formal teaching at an institution to informal module or personalized training.

3) Church & Community Assistance Ministries

Medical work is probably the most common ministry in this category. Christians demonstrating the love of Christ serve the physical needs of people and often lay a platform for evangelism ministries.

Many other types of ministries fall in an assistance category including radio, education, translation, teaching, administration, audio/visual production, research, literature, and community development works.

C. Focus of Ministry

Whereas the type of ministry addresses the question of WHAT should be done, the focus of ministry addresses the issue of WHERE the ministry should be done and WHO the target people should be. With the whole world before a given local church, how do we determine the geographical location and people focus? Some areas are in greater spiritual need than others. Some peoples are more receptive than others. What factors are given priority in the decision making process?

It must be stressed that the Holy Spirit has the only authority for directing the missions outreach of the Church. Biblical and historical precedents have been set that churches today must not overlook (Acts 16:6-10; Carey, Judson, Taylor, etc). There is great need for sensitivity to God and submission to His will (Joseph, Jonah, Daniel) if churches are to strategically focus their ministry.

1) Macro Targets

When one begins to look at the world, there are a few categories that have global implications. The panorama view of earth identifies geographic boundaries and large people group blocks for consideration.

Geography is often a starting point in determining a focus of ministry. Does a church believe God wants them to focus at home or abroad? Where at home or abroad should the focus be? Only through research can we distinguish between areas of differing openness, need and receptivity.

Unreached People Groups (URPG) have guided many churches in recent days. An URPG is defined as, "An ethnolinguistic people among whom there is no viable indigenous community of believing Christians with adequate numbers and resources to evangelize their own people without outside (cross-cultural) assistance." The terms hidden and frontier are often considered synonymous with unreached.

There remain 4 main blocks of URPG. Muslim people represent the largest number at just under 1 billion and the fastest growing religion in the world (primarily due to birth). They represent the majority population in at least 40 countries and are significant minorities in other countries. However, Muslims are the least evangelized people group with the smallest percentage of missions focus.

Hindu people represent the second largest URPG with about 700 million people. It is estimated at the current population growth rate that there will be more citizens of India than China by the year 2025 and this means many more Hindu people. Most Hindu people live on or near the Indian sub-continent in countries requiring creative missionary access.

Oriental people represent a block of humanity exceeding 1 billion with a few of these people having heard and responded to the gospel. Five main religions captivate the orientals: Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, and Ancestor worship (600 million). Missionaries have worked among a number of these groups but with little progress over the years.

Tribal people constitute the smallest block of URPG with about 150 million adherents. Although their numbers are decreasing due to modernization and missionary efforts, their fascination with and fear of the spirit world is increasing rapidly around the world. Many tribes are quite small in number and require a larger number of missionaries because ethnolinguistic barriers.

Roman Catholics are not usually considered an URPG but they represent a large block of people (900 million) who have been blinded to the gospel. Secularists and "free thinkers" are a growing block of people with access to the gospel but none the less unevangelized.

2) Micro Targets

After making your way through the macro targets we come to smaller spheres of focus. These targets can still be quite massive in scope yet are approachable with carefully planned strategies.

World class cities include urban centers of over 1 million people. Beijing was the first city to reach such proportion in 1770. By AD 2000 it is expected that 433 cities will attain to this class and represent over 50% of the world's

population. Tragically, the Christian population tends to be more affluent and moves to the more comfortable suburbs as the cities get over crowded. Many social issues become essential to deal with in urban ministries.

People on the move tend to be very responsive to anyone offering friendship and help. In this category we find refugees all over the world (in excess of 50 million: Barrett). Some people are refugees because of natural disaster, political or spiritual oppression, and forced transmigration. Other people find themselves in a foreign culture for education reasons. In the US alone there are more than 350,000 international students, many of whom come from countries where missionaries are not welcomed. It is possible to impact URPG without leaving your country.

Windows of opportunity become available to the Church throughout history. It is sad when the Church is not prepared to move in step with the Spirit at such times. One Emperor in China in the 1700's called for Roman priests to come and teach the Bible - few responded. One Tzar in Russia prior to WWI called for Orthodox missionaries to come and evangelize - few responded. In the 1960's when communism was flooding Asia, Indonesia went through a time of spiritual awakening. After repression and wars in Iran, Kuwait, and Egypt, people were more open to the West and the gospel. At the break down of the Iron Curtain, Christians and cults flooded Eastern Europe and CIS. What will happen in Indo-China, China, and India if a window is opened?

Mobilizing churches to be missionary sending is a way to reproduce ministry. If you aim at what you can accomplish through your local church alone you are limited to a process of addition. If you invest effort into mobilizing other churches in missions you will multiply your effectiveness.

D. Means of Ministry

Having discussed the strategic components of types and focus of ministry, we can now look at the means for putting a strategy in action. What approaches are to be considered by a church when implementing a strategy?

1) Resource Allocation

Two issues of allocation can impact how a given church seeks to implement their strategy. Does a church want to focus their missions impact broadly in terms of geography or in a concentrated way? Some churches want to have missionary representatives on every continent or in every country in a given region. Other churches prefer to concentrate their resources in a few locations. The former allows for a greater awareness of what God is doing in different countries and cultures but a lesser impact. The latter encourages more significant impact in fewer areas.

Does a church want to support many missionaries to a lesser degree or fewer missionaries to a greater degree? As with the previous issue, the degree of impact is in question. When a church is supporting many missionaries at a minimal amount, they have the sense that they are involved throughout the entire world. However, they are a small part of the missionary's support team. When a

church supports a few people either for their full support need or with major portion of that need, they are heavily involved. Often the missionary in this category is seen as an extension of the home church staff.

Most churches have a combination of these two issues at work. Some people from the church who are involved in strategic ministry will be supported heavily. Other people who have been more loosely connected with the church and perhaps involved in a less strategic ministry will be supported partially. A church may also be focusing on a few locations for concentrated ministry but also involved in scattered locations as God seems to lead through individuals.

2) Type of Missionary

Today in missions we find people serving for short term, career, in a bi-vocational or tentmaking capacity, and in a non-residential way. Each category has significance and a church should determine which means are preferred in reaching their strategic goals.

Short term missionaries have become very popular. Significant amounts of money, time and energy goes in to coordinating short term trips. Some see the short term ministry as an end in itself - for what the short term missionary accomplishes. Others see this as a pre-field training situation or as an opportunity to discern God's leading in a person's life. Hopefully a blend of both is present in short term ministry.

Career missionary service has been the backbone of classical missionary ministry. People sent out from a church with the intention of investing many years to learn a language and a culture in order to plant or nurture a church is what we mean by career. For definition purposes and to distinguish from short term missionaries, career is often considered as more than two years. These are to people who have the potential of making maximum impact because of their longevity and experience.

Bi-vocational missionaries or tentmakers have existed since the time of the Apostle Paul. However, in recent years this type of missionary has become more prevalent especially because of the inaccessibility of missionary visas. The purpose and function of tentmakers varies widely. At one end of the spectrum are those Christians who happen to be employed in a foreign culture and see themselves foremost as a business person. At the other end are those who are equally trained in a secular profession and in Bible/missiology and see themselves foremost as a missionary.

The non-residential missionary (or strategic coordinator) is a more recent development where a person's ministry focus is on a certain people group but for a variety of reasons either cannot or does not live among them. This type of missionary has also developed because of visa restrictions in many countries.

The National missionary is another type for consideration. In places where a Christian presence has been established, often spiritually mature national believers can do a very good ministry with certain assistance. Churches interested in a particular country or people group can often financially support a

national evangelist or pastor so he or she can focus full-time on the ministry. National missionaries are strategic for several reasons: they usually cost less than expatriates, they are more familiar with the culture and language, they have little trouble with visas, and they are often more effective in evangelism.

3) Relationship between the church and missionary/agency/target people

Many churches have moved toward a procedure of supporting exclusively or primarily home grown missionaries. They are looking for God to raise up workers from within their congregation. Some churches have developed their own in house training for such missionaries as well. However, wise churches recognize that since their personnel resources are limited and the needs of the Kingdom of God are significant that they support "outside" missionaries targeting people within the church's strategy. How such people qualify for support is something to detail in the strategy.

Sending teams of missionaries or having missionaries work in teams rather than independently has become popular and effective. Although some people have a pioneering spirit and can get along by themselves, most people function best when working with others who have complimenting gifts and experience and where accountability is encouraged.

Partnership agreements have become prominent in missions today. Churches are entering into partnership with national churches and agencies like never before. In the past most partnership came between mission agencies and national bodies but with many churches assuming the role of the agency new partners are proliferating. However, good partnerships don't just happen. Inexperienced churches will often come up disappointed if they don't learn ahead of time how to establish realistic expectation and commonly agreed upon procedures.

The adoption of unreached people groups is a newly introduced means of ministry focus where a church can concentrate resources on a people group which does not have a strong church. The process of adoption varies considerably. For some it is a matter of prayer alone whereas others include funding and missionary personnel. For some the process is limited to a short time commitment whereas others see their commitment continuing until the planted church is strong.

Conclusion

Many factors are worthy of consideration for a good missions strategy. The more accurate your information available is when determining a missions strategy the better the final product will be. Ultimately a church wants to discern the strategic focus of the Lord for the church but God usually works through information and people. The hard part in developing a strategy is to determine the priorities God would have your church focus upon.

Robert Morrison, pioneer missionary to China, was once asked if he really expected to make an impression on the idolatry of a country as big and complex as China. His response was, "No sir, but I expect that God will." God has given us the privilege of co-laboring with Him and accomplishing great things for Him. The impact our lives make will be in proportion to how seriously we live our lives for the Lord. Investing time and energy in strategic thinking is an

sure indication that we want our lives and churches to make maximum impact for God.

Supporting Documents

The following supporting documents serve to assist a church in developing a missions strategy.

1. Missionary questionnaire: to obtain vital data on your missionaries
2. Missions Strategy Questionnaire: to obtain input from church leaders
3. Missions Strategy Statement: model form for drafting a missions strategy
4. Bibliography: missions strategy resources for study
5. Adopt a People Summary: how to adopt a people group
6. Financial Support Decisions: issues and a model for determining support

_____ Church
MISSIONARY QUESTIONNAIRE

NAME:

DATE:

CHILDREN (include ages):

FIELD ADDRESS:

Field Phone:

Fax:

MISSION ADDRESS:

Mission Phone:

Fax:

DATE you began your MISSIONARY SERVICE:

DATE you began receiving SUPPORT FROM OUR CHURCH:

DATE you next plan to be in OUR AREA:

1. To which PEOPLE GROUPS do you or your field team primarily minister:
 (for those working cross-culturally, please indicate name, and if known, size and location):

2. Indicate the percentage of time you spend in each of the following ministries:

church planting	_____	evangelism	_____
teaching	_____	administration	_____
discipleship	_____	leadership training	_____
other:	_____		_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

3. Approximately what percentage of your total financial support comes from our church's missions giving and from individual members or attenders of our church?

from the Church _____

from individuals within our church _____

4. Please name the people whom you consider your closest friends at our church and who pray for you faithfully.

Please Return TO:
 (Address)

MISSIONS STRATEGY QUESTIONNAIRE

PURPOSE: To survey the opinions of those serving in church leadership as to how they

believe God is leading the church in missions ministry.

RESULT: After gathering the opinions of as many church leaders as time allows, a draft strategy will be written to reflect the opinions of the majority whenever possible. This draft will become the basis for setting the final strategy.

Please indicate your opinion of priority by answering each question with a percentage or a tick: HS=highly strategic, MS=moderately strategic, LS=low strategic value at this time in the church life. All categories should be answered.

Geographical Distribution

1. Should we strive for a certain balance in foreign and home ministry? If so, what percentage?

Yes _____ No _____

Foreign _____ Home _____ Cross-cultural at Home _____ Balance not needed _____

2. Indicate ministry priority in respect to geographical location:

<u>Foreign:</u>		<u>Home:</u>	
Africa, Black	_____	Chinese	_____
Asia	_____	Malay	_____
Europe	_____	Indian	_____
Latin America	_____	Filipino	_____
Middle East	_____	_____	_____
Oceania	_____	_____	_____
CIS	_____		
_____	_____		

3. Should we seek to concentrate ministry in a few locations/one region or spread out broadly throughout many different countries?

Concentrate _____ Spread broadly _____ Don't focus on either _____

Types of Ministry

4. Indicate priority in terms of type of ministry:

	HS	MS	LS		HS	MS	LS
Church planting	_____	_____	_____	Evangelism	_____	_____	
Discipleship	_____	_____	_____	Teaching	_____	_____	
Training Nationals	_____	_____	_____	Funding Nat'l Mss	_____	_____	
Bible translation	_____	_____	_____	Literature	_____	_____	
Radio	_____	_____	_____	Medical	_____	_____	
Administration	_____	_____	_____	Research	_____	_____	_____

Social work	_____	_____	_____	Compassion	_____	_____
Tentmakers	_____	_____	_____	Urban ministry	_____	_____

Responsiveness

5. Should priority be given in respect to responsiveness of non-Christians? In other words, should ministry be concentrated in places where the Spirit is obviously moving or in places which need more research/seed sowing? (Tick only one)

Responsive	_____	Unresponsive	_____
Neglected	_____	Not needed	_____

Distance from the Gospel

6. Indicate ministry priority in respect to distance from Christianity:

<u>Foreign:</u>	HS	MS	LS	<u>Home:</u>	HS	MS	LS
E0 Christians _____ (Growing Christians)	_____	_____	_____	EO Christians _____ (Discipleship)	_____	_____	_____
E1 Christianized _____ (example)	_____	_____	_____	E1 Nominal _____ (most evangelism)	_____	_____	_____
E2 Unevangelized _____ (example)	_____	_____	_____	E2 Unevangelized _____ (example)	_____	_____	_____
E3 Unreached _____ (example)	_____	_____	_____	E3 Unreached _____ (example)	_____	_____	_____

Religious Beliefs

7. Indicate ministry priority in respect to religion:

	HS	MS	LS		HS	MS	LS
Muslim	_____	_____	_____	Hindu	_____	_____	_____
Buddhist	_____	_____	_____	Chinese religions	_____	_____	_____
Animist	_____	_____	_____	Atheist	_____	_____	_____
Free thinkers	_____	_____	_____		_____	_____	_____
New Age	_____	_____	_____		_____	_____	_____

Relationship to Church

8. Indicate priority of those who can qualify for support in respect to a missionary's relationship to the church:

	HS	MS	LS		HS	MS	LS
Raised in the church	_____	_____	_____	Member > 3 years	_____	_____	_____

Member/attender _____ Relat'shp not critical _____

In House Training

9. Indicate priority of participation in the church's candidate preparation process (tick one):

Essential _____ Recommended _____
 Helpful _____ Only home-grown _____

Other Factors

10. What other factors do you feel should be reflected in the missions strategy? (tick appropriate ones)

Adoption of unreached people groups _____
 Greater support for fewer Missionaries _____
 Primary involvement with fewer Mission Agencies _____
 Sending out teams rather than individuals/couples _____
 Focusing on reaching people more than sending missionaries _____

Implementing the Missions Strategy

11. To what degree should future missionaries/projects conform with the strategy? (tick one)

No exceptions _____ Rare exceptions _____
 Use as a guideline _____

12. To what degree should existing missionaries/projects be brought into conformity with the strategy? (tick appropriate ones)

Existing missionaries/projects should be exempt _____
 Conformity through normal attrition _____
 When relationship with the church has loosened _____
 or when performance is unacceptable _____
 Phasing out support to non-strategic ministries _____
 Slowly (3-4 years) _____
 Rapidly (1-2 years) _____
 Immediately (1-6 months) _____
 After next furlough assignment _____

Note 1: Normal conditions would allow for 8-10% growth

Note 2: Financial constraints would mean staying at the same budget amount or actually needing to cut back support because of low income.

This questionnaire is for the use of the missions committee in setting a missions strategy. It will be considered confidential. If you would prefer that your name is not identified we will honor your request. Otherwise, we would like the prerogative to interact further with you in the future if necessary.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

MISSIONS STRATEGY STATEMENT

Vision Statement of the Church:

Expanded Missions Statement for the Church:

Purpose of this 5 Year Strategy:

-
-
-
-
-

General Emphases of this Strategy:

-
-
-
-
-
-
-

Specific Emphases of this Strategy:

Geographical:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Types of Ministry:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Relationship to the Church:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Other Factors:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Key Ministries and Supporting Activities of this Missions Strategy:

(Ministry Area)
(Budget)

(Personnel)

Annual Conference:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Education:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Prayer:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

(Ministry Area)
(Budget)

(Personnel)

Pastoral Care:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Short Term Training:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Candidate Preparation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

(Ministry Area)
(Budget)

(Personnel)

Financial Support:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Plan of Implementation:

Year 1:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Year 2:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Years 3-5:

Missions Strategy Statement Explanation

The outline provided is designed to serve as a structure for drafting a missions strategy. It can be used as a worksheet for those involved in the drafting process and also as the format for the final draft. When more space is needed than has been provided, please adapt accordingly. Remember, a strategy is most effective when it is focused and when all the various missions ministries are aligned properly with the focuses.

Date: The date of the drafts and eventually the final strategy should be recorded in the top right corner.

Name: The name of the church is to be recorded on the first line.

Duration: The period of time the strategy is concerning is to be put on the second line.

Vision statement: The overall vision (sometimes called purpose or missions) statement of the church is to be recorded in the space provided. This serves as the anchor for the strategy.

Missions statement: The vision statement should include some reference point for world missions. This reference point should be expanded to should the detail of the missions mandate for this church. Sometimes such a missions statement is included in the missions policy.

Purpose of strategy: Briefly state the reasons why the church believes a strategy is needed.

General emphases: Broadly speaking, what are the major elements of this particular strategy. What distinguishes this strategy from others. What realities provided the impetus for this strategy.

Specific emphases: Identify concisely the strategic targets under the categories listed. These categories or normally present in missions-active churches.

Key ministries: State strategic goals under each category listed. Each ministry should reflect the general and specific emphases listed above.

Supporting activities: Identify the person or group that will assume responsibility in seeing each strategic goal accomplished. Identify the funding necessary in accomplishing the goal.

Plan of implementation: State which aspects of the strategy are to be given first priority in the next year of time. Do likewise for 2 and 5 year projections. Note that much within a strategy is a dynamic and will need to be adjusted occasionally.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

MISSIONS STRATEGY ISSUES

Newsletters / Journals

Evangelical Missionary Quarterly Box 794, Wheaton IL 60189	Excellent quarterly journal addressing a variety of missions issues
International Journal for Frontier Missions PO Box 40638, Pasadena CA 91104	Somewhat technical writings on issues relating to frontier ministry
Mission Frontiers 1605 Elizabeth, Pasadena CA 91104	Magazine from the US Center for World Mission
AD 2000 and Beyond 2860 S Circle Drive, Suite 2112, Colorado Springs, CO 80906	Newsletter addressing issues relation to completing world evangelization by AD 2000
AD 2000 Global Monitor Global Evangelization Movement PO Box 129, Rockville, VA 23146	Newsletter from David Barrett's office with up-to-date research and people group profiles
World Christian News PO Box 26479, Colorado Springs, CO 80936	Newsletter with international coverage
International Bulletin of Missionary Research PO Box 3000, Denville NJ 07834	Sometimes technical and broad in coverage of mission issues
Urban Mission Westminster Theological Seminary PO Box 27009, Philadelphia PA 19118	Urban missions issues

General Readings

"Catch the Vision 2000" by Bill and Amy Stearnes (Bethany Publishing House, 1991)	Light and motivational
"DAWN 2000" by Jim Montgomery (William Carey Library, 1989)	Focus on impacting whole nations through saturation church planting.
"Serving as Senders" by Neal Pirolo (Emmaus Road Int'l, 1991)	Practical guide for making missions a priority while remaining at home
"The Great Omission" by Robertson McQuilkin (Baker, 1984)	Excellent presentation on how missions IS the priority of the church
"Focus! The Power of People Group Thinking" by John Robb (MARC, 1989)	Provides clarity on strategies to reach unreached people groups

"Our Globe and how to Reach it" by Barrett and Johnson (New Hope, 1990)	Technical account of recent research data
"Planning Strategies for World Evangelization" by Dayton and Frazer (Eerdmans, 1990)	Technical but comprehensive work on strategy setting
"Today's Choices for Tomorrow's Mission" by David Hesselgrave (Academia, 1988)	Discussion of different strategic issues

International Students

"The World at your Doorstep" by Lawson Lau (IVP, 1984)	
"The Friendship Gap" by Tim Stafford (IVP, 1984)	How to cultivate friendships with internationals

Muslim World

"The Last of the Giants" by George Otis (Chosen Books, 1991)	How what is happening in Central Asia is strategic to reaching Muslims
--	--

Nationals

"From Every People" by Larry Pate (MARC, 1989)	Documentation of trends in the non-western missionary movement
"Why the World Waits" by K P Yohannan (Creation House, 1991)	Controversial but challenging thesis on strategic partnerships with nationals
"Tuning God's New Instruments" by Denis Lane (WEF, 1990)	What is required for nationals to be training and sent as missionaries
"The Family Tie" by Finley & Lutz (Thomas Nelson Pub, 1983)	Introduction to supporting nationals
"Partnering in Ministry" by Bush & Lutz (IVP, 1990)	Discussion of crucial issues facing those involved in cross-cultural partnerships

Tentmaking

"God's New Envoys" by Tetsunao Yamamori (Multnomah Press, 1987)	Challenge for bold strategies of penetrating "closed countries"
"The Non-Residential Missionary" by David Garrison (MARC, 1990)	Championing the cause of an unreached people group from some outside location

"Today's Tentmakers" by J Christy Wilson (Tyndale House Pub, 1979)	General overview of tentmaking
"Tentmakers Speak" by Don Hamilton (TMQ Research, Calif. 1987)	Research report on surveys of tentmakers
<u>Urban Ministries</u>	
"Cities: Missions' New Frontier" by Greenway and Monsam (Baker, 1989)	Current challenge to focus where the masses of people are residing
"A Clarified Vision for Urban Mission" by Harvey Conn (Zondervan, 1987)	Compilation of important papers on the subject of urban mission
"Taking our Cities for God" by John Dawson (Creation House, 1989)	Contemporary challenge for urban ministry
"Cry of the Urban Poor" by Viv Grigg (MARC, 1990)	Addressing the strategy of holistic ministry
"The Urban Christian" by Ray Bakke (MARC, 1987)	Classic introduction to urban ministry

Source: Tom Horn, tomhornjr@gmail.com

How to "Adopt" an Unreached People Group

First Stage: PREPARATION

1. Appoint an Adoption Coordinator

Missions chairman? Pastor? Someone for the long term.

2. Get people motivated about the idea

The basic idea: *We will do what we can to see that this group becomes reached*

A long-term, intensive responsibility and commitment. Part of a global, coordinated plan for total world evangelization. Pastor/elders, leadership, missions &/or evangelism committee, the entire congregation. Possibly a key focus to a missions month or a missions conference. Adopt-A-People Weekend. Support the concept from the pulpit.

Second Stage: INITIATION

3. Choose or receive a group

From contact you've already had, from a mission agency, from SCEM - considering areas of preference, from a book or list (not the best), from the (USA) Adopt-A-People Clearinghouse.

We don't advise: adopting an occupational group; adopting any interesting ethnic group; adoption without coordination; everyone adopting a Singapore group.

Consider the guidelines of strategic deployment. Please inform SCEM about who you have adopted.

4. Have an adoption covenant and an adoption ceremony.

Before the Lord, determine what your involvement will be. Prayer - Learning - Giving - Going - Sending.

Third Stage: IMPLEMENTATION

5. Pray for your group

Who? When? How? How to maintain perseverance in prayer?

6. Gather information

Gathering people profiles, creating a people profile (library work and field work),

7. Give to the reaching of your group

Mission agencies, National Christian workers, Your own missionaries, Projects, Accumulating fund? "Where your treasure is"

8. Visit your group

Intercession trips, Study trips, Research trips, Who to go?

9. Promote the cause of your group

This is the cause of adoption itself

10. Send a long-term missionary or team from your church

From the start, plan towards this. Integrated with present church programmes.

Fourth Stage: CONTINUATION

11. Persevere until your group is reached

... until there is a viable, indigenous church capable of evangelizing the whole group, that is, with the resources and vision to reach out to the whole people.

12. Set regular points of evaluation and correction

Financial Support Decisions

It will not be long before a serious missions-involved church will be faced with the challenge of having more people interested in missions and in need of support than the church has funding to support. Eventually a church must decide whether they prefer to support fewer missionaries at a larger amount or to support many missionaries at a smaller amount. Because missionaries fall in different priority categories based upon a missions strategy, many churches have tried to incorporate both types of support levels in their missions ministry.

Greater Support/Fewer Missionaries

Advantages

- Church and missionary have a closer relationship
- Furlough time is concentrated in a few churches
- Greater sense of accountability and more mutual concern
- Easier for the missionary to raise his support
- Fewer mission agencies to deal with

Disadvantages

- Few missionaries means smaller involvement around the world
- Smaller prayer base for the missionary
- Greater burden on a few when support needs increase or an emergency arises
- When losing a missionary your outreach decreases significantly
- If a church splits, the missionary loses a major amount of support
- The church have to say no to some people to say yes to others

Lesser Support/More Missionaries

Advantages

- Every church can afford supporting someone
- More units giving means more potential prayer for the missionary
- Churches get reports from many places around the world

Disadvantages

- Missionary must visit many supporters when on furlough
- Relationship between the church and missionary is limited
- It is difficult for the missionary to correspond with many supporters
- It takes a long time to raise support

A Model for Determining Amount of Support

An essential part of a missions strategy is establishing priorities for financial support levels.

Not all missionaries qualify for the same amount of support because not all missionaries are serving in agreement with the missions strategy.

The following model has been used by several churches in various forms to a certain degree of success. At best it provides an objective guideline for distinguishing between opportunities while seeking to reflect strategic goals. This model is based on a point system that will correspond to a percentage of a missionary's required financial support (the numbers a church sets for each category identifies their strategic priorities). For this example we have set 50% of the missionaries support as the maximum the church will provide if the missionary falls into the highest categories. Record one number from each of the 6 categories in the space at the right and total the 6 numbers at the bottom to arrive at the qualifying percentage.

Qualifications

A. Relationship to the church:

Staff, Elder, Deacon (10) _____

Member having completed candidate preparation program (8) _____

Missionary trainee active for short time (5) _____

Church member/attender (2) _____

Non-member in an exceptional ministry (2) _____

B. Training for ministry:

Fully trained (MDiv or >) and experienced (>5 years) (10) _____

Good training and experience (7) _____

Adequate training with little experience (5) _____

Minimal training and experience (3) _____

Lacking adequate training (0) _____

C. Calling and maturity:

Strong calling affirmed by church leaders and mature in Christ (5) _____

Clear calling and growing in Christ (2) _____

Calling unclear but growing in Christ (1) _____

Ministry

D. Sending Agency:

Sent direct from the church or with a agency fully endorsed (5) _____

Acceptable sending agency (2) _____

New agency or one that is at slight odds with the church (1) _____

E. Type of ministry:

Pioneer church planting, leadership training of nationals (10) _____

Bible translation, cross-cultural evangelism/discipleship (7) _____

Tentmaking in restrictive access country (50% time in ministry) (5) _____

_____	Near culture evangelism/discipleship, research, _____	(3)
_____	Others same culture ministries	(1) _____
E. Location of ministry:		
	Asia/North Africa/Middle East (10/40 window)	(10)
_____	Unreached people groups outside 10/40 window	(5)
_____	Partially reached people group anywhere	(2)
_____	<u>TOTAL</u>	
