

# FORESTS IN THE SEED

How Kingdom Movements  
are Multiplying Across the  
Unreached World

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# FOREWORD

A revolution is taking place. Though it is invisible to this world, it is powerfully changing the lives of individuals and the destinies of nations.

A quarter century ago, when I wrote a little booklet called *Church Planting Movements*, I described reports of missionaries who had blazed trails into the world's least-reached communities. I marveled at their testimonies of starting one or two churches, and then, after a season, learned that those churches had reproduced themselves. Many of these vibrant faith communities went on to multiply scores, and even hundreds of times. We called this phenomenon a Church Planting Movement.

After a decade of serving with a North American ministry, my wife and I have returned to the regions that Jesus called "the ends of the earth"—those peoples and places who have not yet heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. To our wonder, we are seeing that the multiplication of new disciples and churches has continued to spill out into every corner of darkness, bringing with them light and new life.

The authors of *Forests in the Seed* have opened a window for us into the 21<sup>st</sup> century of God's magnificent mission to bring all peoples and places into a saving relationship with him through

Jesus Christ. *Forests in the Seed* offers us concrete examples, not of what *could* be, but of what *is* happening as faith-filled men and women deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him.

As you read this book, you will hear from men and women who have been rescued from darkness and given their own lives to spread the light of the gospel to those who are walking in darkness. My prayer is that you will not just be enthralled by the stories, but that you will also be compelled to join them in this great global ingathering that God is orchestrating in our day. In short, that you, too, will join the revolution.

David Garrison, PhD  
Missionary Author, *Church Planting Movements*  
and *A Wind in the House of Islam*

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## PREFACE

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*Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See,  
I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not  
perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and  
streams in the wasteland.*

*Isaiah 43:18-19*

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We almost missed it.

Perhaps it was because we were trained to look for other things—data points more easily recognized, measured, and analyzed. Reports reached us, making us wonder if they were too good to be true.

But there it was—a fresh spark. The tiniest beginnings of what would eventually become a raging fire. To our complete surprise, the wind of the Holy Spirit has breathed life into ash, picked the embers up in a whirlwind, and ignited spiritual fires that are transforming ethnic groups in profoundly difficult-to-enter places.

The Prophet Joel foresaw this movement of the Holy Spirit: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people” (Acts 2:17). Fulfillment of his vision began on the Day of Pentecost, with wind and fire. Centuries later, the Spirit continues to

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blow—sometimes strongly and other times lightly—but moving all the same.

In our day, we see powerful evidence that the wind of the Holy Spirit has been gaining momentum from the far-flung corners of the earth and is now moving throughout the world. By God's grace, we have had front-row seats, watching the Spirit moving in some of the most forgotten and forsaken places. For the past 30 years, we have watched the Spirit blow over what many would consider nearly dead ashes. He has multiplied these tiny embers into an unquenchable, uncontrollable fire that has spread the Good News of the Kingdom into every world region, 198 countries (as of this writing), and over 1,200 languages. At its current trajectory, it seems destined to impact every tribe and language in every place.

With a sense of increasing urgency, we want to describe what we have seen and heard. We have witnessed this incredible outpouring throughout the world, and we want you to be a part of it.

These pages contain inspiring accounts of remarkable achievements and practical advice that will empower you for the imminent wave of change—touching not only you but also your loved ones and those within your sphere of influence. Most importantly, reading this book will prepare you to help multiply the Kingdom of God.

William J. DuBois

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## HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

God is at work in amazing ways around the world!

In Matthew 24, Jesus said not to be alarmed by false prophets, wars and rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes because these are the beginning of the birth pains. Jesus will come back and all the angels with Him, and He will sit on His glorious throne.

God is moving all of history toward that day when God triumphs and people from every tribe, language, people, and nation worship before His throne, crying out, “Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb” (Rev 7:10).

But before that happens, we know that Matthew 24:14 must take place. *And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.*

What must happen for this to be fulfilled?

We don’t just hope that it would happen in some distant time, many centuries from now, but that it would happen in our generation!

The need is still great: over 2 billion people lack access to the

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Gospel<sup>1</sup>, and over 3 billion people live in an ethnolinguistic<sup>2</sup> people group without enough disciples and churches to reach their own people.

This book describes some amazing works of God in our day, as He moves to bring the Gospel to all these people. To do this, we divided the book into two sections.

### PART 1: PRINCIPLES

In the first section, we describe amazing Kingdom Movements in which God is multiplying disciples, churches, and leaders. Many of these movements are in areas where Jesus Christ is still mostly unknown 2,000 years after He came.

In this section, we give illustrations, examples, lessons, and principles from these movements. Obviously, each movement has its own weaknesses, but also its own uniqueness and beauty. However, we can discern general patterns, principles, and common characteristics in all the movements.

### PART 2: ACCELERATORS

In the second half of the book, we examine some “families of movements” that have greater fruit. These families are connected relationally: often one or several initial movements will start other movements, and these movements will collaborate and serve together. The movement families we examine are typically

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- 1 Out of a desire to be honoring (but contrary to most style manuals), the authors have chosen to capitalize “Gospel” as well as pronouns when referring to God. We have not done this when directly quoting verses from the Bible.
  - 2 An ethnolinguistic is a group of people united by common ethnic and cultural identity and a common language.

over 20 years old with over 1 million disciples and are impacting over 100 Unreached People Groups (UPGs)<sup>3</sup>. We will consider what we can learn from these larger and wider movement families by focusing on seven “accelerators” that have allowed them to impact hundreds of different people groups. The need is great, and we need to maximize every potential resource and strategy to see the Great Commission fulfilled.

As you read this book, do so prayerfully, in support of all God’s laborers serving in these movements. Ask God how you can play a role in both serving and mobilizing others to serve. Ask how God wants you to help toward multiplying disciples, churches, leaders, and movements until everyone in the world has the opportunity to respond to the glorious Good News.

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3 Unreached People Groups are ethnolinguistic people groups who lack enough followers of Christ and resources to evangelize their own people without outside help.



PART 1  
**PRINCIPLES**





1  
FOR SUCH A  
TIME AS THIS

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*And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.*

*Matthew 24:14 (NLT)<sup>4</sup>*

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My (Stan's) parents served as missionaries in Indonesia, where I was born. My father tells this story of a day when a woman from a remote village came to visit their home.

When we met her, we encountered a language barrier. She spoke mainly Javanese, the complex local dialect used in Central Java, where we lived. We could barely communicate in Indonesian, the national language, though we had just finished a year of language study. It became evident

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<sup>4</sup> Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright ©1996, 2004, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Carol Stream, Illinois 60188. All rights reserved.

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we could not clearly convey to her the most important thing in the world she could ever hear: the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

So, I obtained a small, wind-up gramophone from the Gospel Recordings Mission and played an eight-minute Gospel message in Javanese for her.

The elderly woman stared at the record player and listened to a voice singing in her own dialect:

*What a Friend we have in Jesus.*

*All our sins and griefs to bear.*

*What a privilege to carry everything to*

*Him in prayer.*<sup>5</sup>

Before the song ended, tears were trickling down her weather-beaten, wrinkled cheeks. The music was followed by a raspy voice explaining what Jesus meant when He said, “Come to me, all of you who are tired from carrying heavy loads, and I will give you rest. ... For the yoke I will give you is easy, and the load I will put on you is light” (Matt 11:28, 30, GNT<sup>6</sup>).

The record ended. The story was over. She sat spell-bound. As one of our seminary students interpreted her words, she said, “That was a Holy Man talking; those were the words of a Holy Man!” And she added, “My heart felt strangely cooled.” In the warm climate of the equator, she did not want her heart warmed, as Americans would express it. Instead, she repeated, “My heart felt strangely cooled as I listened.”

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5 Joseph M. Scriven, “What a Friend We Have in Jesus,” [Hymnary.org](http://Hymnary.org), 1855, [hymnary.org/text/what\\_a\\_friend\\_-we\\_have\\_in\\_jesus\\_all\\_our\\_s](http://hymnary.org/text/what_a_friend_-we_have_in_jesus_all_our_s).

6 *Good News Bible*, © American Bible Society 1966, 1971, 1976, 1992. Used with permission.

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Next, she uttered an incredibly profound statement. She had lived for 70 years. She had just listened to eight minutes of eternal truth. She declared quietly, “If what He says is true, my whole life has been a mistake.”

Tragically, I could not disagree with her. It was heart-breaking that no one had shared the Good News about Jesus with her before now. Until that day, she never understood life’s true purpose and meaning. Gratefully, she eventually trusted Jesus as Savior, a miracle at her age.

But her statement haunted me as I asked myself, “Whose mistake was it? Was it God’s mistake that she had never heard? Why does the great, eternal God simply not broadcast the Gospel to everyone? Why have so many not yet heard the message of Jesus? Is there no way it can be done?”

There is a way. God does have a plan. He has told us His plan. It is to proclaim His message through those of us who have heard and believed it. But too few of us have obeyed!

I wrestled with the woman’s poignant statement. Perhaps it was my mistake she had never heard because I had passed through her town, 40 miles from my home. I never preached there, as I went to many other places. I was always passing through on the way to different places—to the hospital, to committee meetings, to a vacation spot in the mountains, to preach in various towns—but never stopping in hers.

Maybe it was my mistake, not hers. She had not rejected the truth. She had simply never heard it. Grappling with the woman’s statement, I reached a simple conclusion: our generation failed to share the Gospel with her and others like her.

## THE GREAT DISCONNECT

After His death and resurrection, Jesus commanded His disciples to go into all the world and proclaim the Good News, making disciples by baptizing people and teaching them to obey Jesus. Just before His ascension, He told them to wait for the Holy Spirit to empower them to be His witnesses throughout the world.

In the two thousand years since, the Church has more or less labored to keep this command—in some eras, more, and in other eras, less. While there have been many debates over what keeping this command means, how (or even whether) we might measure its keeping, and whether it can ever be “finished,” no one disagrees about whether we have finished it. There have always been people unaware of the Good News.

How do we define those who have not heard the Good News?

The world’s population stands at its highest point ever. Since the mid-1900s, global population has surged significantly. At the start of the 20th century, roughly 1.6 billion people inhabited our planet. Seventy years later, this number had more than doubled to 3.7 billion. Just 30 years later—in 2000—it had nearly doubled again to 6.1 billion and continued to grow. As of 2024, over 8 billion people live on Earth, and though population growth has slowed in many places, we will probably have nearly 10 billion by 2050.

Countless billions remain unaware of the Gospel, with millions destined to never hear it.

- 2.25 billion (28%) of the world’s people do not have access to the Gospel.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gordonconwell.edu/center-for-global-christianity/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2022/01/Status-of-Global-Christianity-2022.pdf>.

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- 3.37 billion (42.5%) of the world's people are members of the world's 7,280 UPGs with less than 2% Christians among that group.<sup>8</sup>
- Of these 7,280 UPGs, 4,890 of them are less than 0.1% Christian, with a total population of over 2 billion. There are fewer than 1 Christian among every 1,000 people in this group.
- Only 18.3% of non-Christians personally know a Christian,<sup>9</sup> and if current trends continue, that will grow to only 20% by 2050! How can they hear unless someone tells them?
- The 19th and 20th centuries witnessed some great missionary efforts, but many people and people groups of the world remain difficult for Christians to reach. As Christianity has grown, it has often remained within certain boundaries and not intersected with disconnected people and people groups. How can everyone have a chance to hear the Good News?

## KINGDOM MOVEMENTS

When Jesus spoke the Great Commission to His disciples in Matthew 28 and Acts 1, He set forth a daring challenge for His disciples of that time and all disciples in the future. With all the authority of heaven, He sends us out. He doesn't send us alone; He goes with us.

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8 Joshua Project's definition of groups where Evangelicals <= 2% Professing Christians <= 5%.

9 <https://www.gordonconwell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Status-of-Global-Christianity-2022-Center-for-the-Study-of-Global-Christianity.pdf>.

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Our mission? Reach out to our neighbors, friends, and even our enemies, as well as people around the world. Jesus called us to disciple all *ethnē*—a Greek word that goes beyond individuals to focus on entire communities defined by culture, traditions, geography, and languages. *Ethnē* is often translated in English as “nation” but the word is much closer to the describing the world’s more than 17,000 ethnolinguistic groups than it is to the approximately 200 political nations.

What does it mean to disciple an entire country or people group? Success doesn’t require that every single individual follows Jesus. Jesus told us the path to Him is narrow; not everyone will choose to walk it (Matt 7:14). Still, Revelation 7:9 shows us a magnificent image—a sea of faces from every *ethnē*, tribe, people, and language gathered before God’s throne, the result of every group disciplined.

Our mission is to bring the Good News of Jesus to these diverse groups because God’s family is not yet complete. We are to play a part in igniting a spiritual fire within every community. We are to awaken a nucleus of fervent disciples who, in turn, light up their communities and spread the light of the Gospel far and wide.

The Lausanne Committee captured this profound thought in 1982. They defined a people group as “the largest group within which the Gospel can spread as a church-planting movement without hitting barriers of understanding or acceptance.”<sup>10</sup>

Different terms have been used to describe this phenomenon, such as “Church Planting Movement,” “Disciple-Making Movement,” or “Kingdom Movement.” Most of the time, we will use the term “Kingdom Movement” or “Movement.” While the term “Church Planting Movement”<sup>11</sup> is commonly used and still a

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10 “What is a People Group?” Joshua Project [https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/what\\_is\\_a\\_people\\_group](https://joshuaproject.net/resources/articles/what_is_a_people_group).

11 Dr. David Garrison first brought this phenomenon to worldwide attention

helpful and descriptive term, we chose not to use it because many people have preconceptions of church planting that involve buildings and professional staff. In these movements, churches usually meet in homes. Ordinary people lead them because the biblical guidelines for leaders in the church nowhere include the necessity of salaries and full-time work.

We also consider “Disciple-Making Movement” a powerful phrase, but many people think of discipleship as mainly one Christian discipling a less mature Christian. Many fail to see discipleship leading to new churches. But in these movements, disciples often reach families and groups of lost people (like Cornelius and his family and friends, and the Samaritan woman and her city). They lead them to become disciples of Jesus and form new churches—which help these disciples continue growing and make disciples of more lost people.

We have chosen to use the term Kingdom Movement because it avoids some of these misconceptions and also communicates that these are holistic movements. These new disciples and churches are used by God to transform individuals, families, groups, and communities in ways informed by principles and practices we see in the Bible.<sup>12</sup> These movements are God moving in His people to answer the prayer that His entire kingdom come, that His will be done.

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with his 1999 booklet entitled *Church-planting Movements*. He followed this in 2004 with a more substantial study in *Church-planting Movements, How God is Redeeming a Lost World* (Midlothian, VA: WIGTake Resources, 2004).

- 12 People in the movement world use a variety of other terms such as Gospel Movements, Disciple Multiplication Movements, Church Multiplication Movements, or Multi-generational Church-planting. One term that we do not consider applicable to the Kingdom Movements we describe is Insider Movements.

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A Kingdom Movement can be defined as a multiplying process of disciples making disciples and leaders developing leaders, resulting in indigenous churches (usually house churches) planting more churches. These new disciples and churches begin spreading rapidly through a people group or population segment, meeting people's spiritual and physical needs. They begin to transform their communities as the new Body of Christ lives out kingdom values. When consistent, multiple-branch<sup>13</sup> fourth-generation<sup>14</sup> reproduction of churches occurs, church planting has crossed a threshold towards becoming a sustainable movement.<sup>15</sup>

## FORESTS IN THE SEEDS

Picture a tiny, near-invisible mustard seed growing into a towering tree: a sprout growing into a trunk, then budding branches, which beget more branches, ultimately creating a leafy canopy. The tree bears fruit, which contains seeds. Seed-bearing fruit falls into the nearby ground or is carried far and wide by animals and humans. The seed, placed in the soil, gives birth to a new tree—which in turn bears fruit, containing seeds, which birth trees, which bear seeds.

A single seed can become an entire forest. Although some

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13 A branch is a multiplication of generational churches that started from one original source. A movement may have multiple starting points with these various branches making up the “tree” of a movement.

14 First generation churches are the first churches started among the lost in a focus group/community. Generation 1 churches start generation 2 churches, which start generation 3 churches and so on. Generations in this context is not related to biological reproduction or an age cohort.

15 This definition is from Appendix A: Definition of Key Terms in *24:14 – A Testimony to All Peoples*, eds. Dave Coles and Stan Parks (Spring, TX: 24:14, 2019), p. 319.



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variation appears between individual trees of any given variety, their general shape and quality aren't random. Each tree creates more trees "after its kind." The DNA carried in the seed determines the kind of tree.

In the same way, each disciple following Jesus carries a spiritual seed of their faith. This seed can bear spiritual fruit as they live out their faith in daily life and work, transforming communities through Christ's love and values. This is the essence of organic multiplication: disciples making additional disciples, who make more disciples, giving rise to new churches and continuing an ever-expanding cycle.

Some real life examples from contemporary global movements are:

- An African eighth-grader catalyzing the formation of four churches among friends and families
- A young man liberated from demonic possession working with his sister to start ten churches within just two years
- A murderer incarcerated for his crimes is reformed and takes part in establishing over 100 churches
- Formerly violent jihadists become vessels of repentance, conveying the message of Jesus' love and forgiveness to extended family, loved ones, and peers.

Recent research covering 1995 to the present has made a staggering discovery. Many movements fade away before reaching multiple generations, but those that do reach multiple generations become a powerful, nearly unstoppable force. An astonishing 99% of movements that have reached multiple branches of 4+ generations of churches have thrived since their inception.

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The disciples and churches in these movements have grown exponentially at an astounding average rate of 23% yearly—much faster than the global population. The total number of disciples in these movements has doubled every 3.5 years—a testament to the potency of divine multiplication.

This global growth has occurred over four distinct stages:

- From 1995 to 2000, from 10,000 to over 100,000 disciples
- From 2000 to 2005, from 100,000 to over 1 million disciples
- From 2005 to 2015, from 1 million to over 10 million
- From 2015 to 2024, amid the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number surpassed 100 million.<sup>16</sup>

Divine direction, not human dictation, is the guiding principle of these movement families. Authentic movements resemble a flowing river, possessing an organic and untamed essence as they carve their course. A sense of empowerment comes when growth transcends human influence and recognizes the essential role of God. By prioritizing multiplication in ministry and surrendering our methods, patterns, and biases to the unobstructed work of the Holy Spirit, the Gospel's impact reaches unexpected corners and transforms lives in amazing ways.

What we see God doing today is powerful, but this is not the first time God has brought large numbers of people into the Kingdom through a rapid movement of his Spirit. Before we explore current movements, let's look back throughout history at just five of the many times God has done something similar.

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<sup>16</sup> Justin Long, "How Long to Reach the Goal?" <http://beyond.org/2023/01/25/how-long-to-reach-the-goal/>.

## 2

# NOT THE FIRST TIME

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*After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb."*

Revelation 7:9-10

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Fulfilling Jesus' Great Commission, means bringing the Gospel to every nation, tribe, people, and language, with all their various sub-segments, until everyone has had the opportunity to respond to the Gospel. Only an outmoded view thinks we can send outsiders to reach everyone in these groups. The only way everyone can hear the Gospel is for disciples within each group to multiply. Like yeast spreading through dough, we are praying for disciples and churches to permeate peoples, families, populations, and languages. This is possible. We've seen examples of it in history.

## ACTS

The Book of Acts describes the early expansion of the Church throughout the Roman Empire. Jesus' resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit ignited this. Expansion flowed from key cities such as Jerusalem, Antioch, Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, and Rome. From these hubs, Christianity spread as the Apostles and early believers shared their faith, made disciples, and gathered in churches.

Acts doesn't give a complete blueprint for what happened—only tantalizing clues. Nevertheless, we know that disciples passed their faith one to another, gathered in churches that met from house to house in each city, and sent out disciples and traveling teachers to other places.

Acts 19 gives a description of this expansion. Paul arrived in Ephesus and found some disciples who only knew John's baptism. When Paul prayed for them, they were baptized in the name of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit came upon them. Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months until he was no longer welcome. He then moved to the lecture hall of Tyrannus.

He had daily discussions there, and "this went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:10). The province of Asia (a portion of modern-day Turkey) had a population of approximately 2.5 million. Paul clearly didn't preach to all of them. God multiplied disciples who multiplied disciples, so all people were reached with the Gospel.

The Gospel brought a growing fear and honor of Jesus, with one result being the burning of sorcery scrolls worth millions of today's dollars. This caused a backlash and riot because it threatened the economics of the idol makers. But this persecution did

not stop the Church. The Gospel continued to expand in the province of Asia. The seven churches that received messages from Jesus in Revelation were all located in this province.

### 500S: THE CELTIC MISSIONARIES

Most of us know of Saint Patrick (if only because of “Saint Patrick’s Day” and green clovers). As a youth, Patrick was kidnapped from his home on the western coast of Britain and enslaved in Ireland. Years later, he miraculously escaped and returned to Europe. But dreams and visions from God called him to return to Ireland as a missionary and seek its evangelization. In the early 400s, he returned to Ireland with a team, and they catalyzed a work that spread Christianity across Ireland. The Irish *peregrini*—a Celtic missionary effort—continued to raise up disciple-makers, who made more disciple-makers and operated until the early 700s, spreading from Ireland into Europe. They had an impact in reaching people for Christ in the areas of modern England, Scotland, France, Germany, Austria, Belgium, and Northern Italy.

### 800S: CYRIL AND METHODIUS, APOSTLES TO THE SLAVS

During the 9th century, two brothers named Methodius and Cyril were born and raised in a wealthy and prestigious family in Thessalonica. They were well-educated in both secular and religious studies, and both left civil service to become priests. When the Khazar Empire<sup>17</sup> asked the Byzantine church for a Christian

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<sup>17</sup> The Khazar were a Turkic people who controlled portions of modern-day southeastern Russia, southern Ukraine, Crimea, Georgia and western Kazakhstan. “Khazar,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed 5/8/2024.

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missionary, Cyril and Methodius were sent. They learned the Khazar language and made many disciples. Soon after the success of that mission, Moravia (modern-day Slovakia and Czech Republic) requested missionaries who could preach in the local dialect.

As Cyril and Methodius moved to Moravia, they took the unique step of adapting the Greek alphabet to the Slavonic language and, as a result, created the precursor to the modern Cyrillic alphabet. They used this to translate the Bible and liturgical books. This alphabet became the primary means of written communication for large portions of the world, including modern-day Russia.

They started a process that resulted in teaching thousands to read the script. The Gospel spread throughout the region through the use of the Scripture and liturgical materials in the local language. They started missionary training schools, such as the one at Ohrid, Bulgaria, that trained over 3500 students. The disciples and the texts spread north and east, laying the groundwork for the spread of Christianity through the Slavic world, from Russia to the modern Czech Republic.

### 1100S: THE WALDENSAINS

Peter Waldo was a wealthy merchant from Lyon, France. He made the radical decision to give away his wealth to the poor and commit himself to a life of poverty and preaching. In those days, Roman Catholic priests were often criticized for opulence and corruption. As others followed his example, the Waldensians—as they came to be called—were inspired by the simplicity and purity of the early Christian church. They sought to return to the fundamentals of the faith.

They went against Catholic doctrine that the Bible could only be in Latin and instead translated it into local languages. They met with Pope Alexander III, who forbade them from preaching

because they were laypeople. The Waldensians were eventually excommunicated and, by the 1180s, pursued as heretics.

They continued their mission, going underground and spreading their teachings across Europe. They formed tight-knit communities (often in isolated areas because of persecution) that emphasized education and scriptural study—not unlike the monastic centers formed by the Celts and the Slavs.

The Waldensians' impact extended beyond spiritual matters; they advocated for social justice, poverty alleviation, and community welfare. They were precursors to later movements like the Hussites and the Protestant Reformation.

### 1700S: THE METHODISTS

Methodism, born out of the Anglican Church in 18th-century England, rapidly evolved into a formidable church-planting movement, reshaping Britain's and America's religious landscapes. Methodism, led by the brothers John and Charles Wesley, initially aimed to reform the Church of England from within. Yet, its emphasis on lay leadership, mass evangelism, holiness, and social justice set the stage for a distinct religious tradition, especially as Methodism traveled across the Atlantic.

John and Charles had a knack for adaptation. George Whitefield taught them mass engagement, while the Moravians showed them small-group disciple-making. The Wesleys synthesized these methods, taking the church to the common people, and using every possible avenue to spread their message. They even adapted the time, preaching at 5 a.m. before most people started work.

To manage the booming growth, they designed Methodist societies—small, tightly knit communities functioning like local churches. One of their key insights was the necessity for

disciplined growth in spiritual maturity. They found that preaching without setting up new societies led to failure in disciple-making.

The Wesleys decentralized authority while maintaining a strict theological and organizational code. When Methodism crossed the Atlantic, it continued to grow in a decentralized fashion, enabling ordinary people, regardless of their social standing, to become spiritual leaders. Methodism constituted 2.5% of America's religionists in 1776; by 1850, it had grown to over 34%. Notably, Methodism's inclusive approach extended to both women and minorities. In Britain, Methodists stood at the forefront of social reforms such as the abolition of the slave trade. In America, they became a moral voice against slavery, though the issue would eventually split the church into northern and southern factions before the Civil War.

### 1900S: THE NAGA

Before the arrival of Christian missionaries in the late 19th century, the Naga tribes of Northeast India practiced worship of nature and ancestors. Inter-tribal conflicts, headhunting, and lack of centralized governance marked the Naga people.

The arrival of Christian missionaries began a profound change process for the Naga tribes. The Naga tribes initially resisted this foreign religion. However, the missionaries engaged the Naga culture rather than imposing foreign customs and traditions. They learned the Naga languages, adapted Christian hymns to local tunes, and incorporated indigenous symbols and practices into Christian worship. This approach allowed the Naga people to embrace Christianity while retaining their cultural identity.

The Bible was translated and distributed widely in various Naga dialects. Missionaries also provided access to formal education, healthcare, and social services. The impact of Christianity on



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Naga society was transformative. Churches became community centers, serving not only as places of worship but also as schools and hubs for social activity. Over 90% of the Naga became Christians, and their commitment to peace, reconciliation, and love for one's neighbor fostered unity among formerly warring tribes. Naga Christians have actively participated in mission work within their region and beyond, sharing their faith and experiences with others as they became missionaries throughout the Indian subcontinent.

Not all of these historical movements have lasted until modern times. Some have stopped growing over the years, and some have significant percentages of nominal Christians today. Nevertheless, they demonstrate the historical reality of rapidly multiplying movements. These movements show the ongoing advance of God's kingdom into previously unreached peoples as a continuation of what began in the book of Acts. Today, this trend has accelerated. Currently, we see more movements in more places than ever before documented. Now, let's explore the spread of movements worldwide.



### 3

## AMAZING WORKS OF GOD IN OUR DAY

God is once again bringing large numbers of people into the Kingdom through rapidly multiplying movements.

- David Garrison first described these modern movements in a 1999 booklet entitled “Church Planting Movements.” He wrote a more in-depth perspective in the 2004 book *Church Planting Movements: How God Is Redeeming a Lost World*.<sup>18</sup>
- In 2011 Steve Smith and Ying Kai wrote about a movement that reached 1.8 million new believers in ten years in *T4T: A Discipleship Re-Revolution: The Story Behind the World’s Fastest Growing Church Planting Movement and How it Can Happen in Your Community!*
- In 2012 Jerry Trousedale added movement stories from Africa in *Miraculous Movements: How Hundreds of Thousands of Muslims Are Falling in Love with Jesus*.
- In 2014 Garrison added fresh insights and described kingdom progress in all nine “houses” of Islam in *A Wind in the*

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<sup>18</sup> See Appendix A: 2004 Elements of Church Planting Movements.

*House of Islam: How God is Drawing Muslims around the World to Faith in Jesus Christ.*

- Victor John gave an inside perspective in 2019 on the largest Kingdom Movement in the world today in *Bhojpuri Breakthrough: A Movement that Keeps Multiplying*. Since then, an increasing number of books, articles, podcasts, and videos about movements have continued to add to our understanding.<sup>19</sup>

These movements have collectively grown from about 10,000 known disciples in 1995 to a staggering 114 million known disciples in 2022. One reason for this: not only are disciples, leaders, and churches multiplying disciples, leaders, and churches; movements are multiplying movements in new peoples and places.

The Bhojpuri movement in northern India started in the mid-1990s. Since then, it has grown to consist of millions of believers. While it originally centered on largely Hindu Bhojpuri speakers, it has intentionally spread by sending workers into eight other multi-million-person language groups, with their multiple ethno-linguistic people groups, and from the largely low-caste Bhojpuri into middle and higher castes, as well as into some Muslim and Buddhist groups.

Victor John tells us some of the history of this movement:<sup>20</sup>

The movement started in 1998. I began to focus on work among the Bhojpuri in 1992, and in 1994, we began the ministry in earnest. We held the first Bhojpuri

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<sup>19</sup> See [2414now.net/resources](http://2414now.net/resources).

<sup>20</sup> Dave Coles, “A Still Thriving Middle-aged Movement: An Interview with Victor John by Dave Coles,” *Mission Frontiers*, May-June 2019, archived at [www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/a-still-thriving-middle-aged-movement](http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/a-still-thriving-middle-aged-movement).

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

consultation, began a systematic survey of all the Bhojpuri districts, and made a decision to focus on obedience-based discipleship. We didn't start with a blueprint for how the ministry would unfold; everything has been evolving through the years. The real breakthrough with significant numbers happened when we released the first edition of the Bhojpuri New Testament in 1998. After that, the movement began growing exponentially. It wasn't a huge movement at that time. Things were happening in various places, but we had no idea of the big picture of what the Lord was doing.

In 2000, an audit was done by the International Mission Board (IMB), and they pointed out that exponential growth was taking place. In 1998, things suddenly skyrocketed, marking a tipping point. We only had 800 pastors and all of their ministries had grown within the previous two or three years. The IMB's audit showed the rapid growth curve, and it hasn't stopped since then. Additional audits have been done by other groups in subsequent years, showing the endurance and growth of the movement. Every generation of believers starts a new church. We don't count the number of believers (how many people got saved). We count the number of churches started.

The RUN (Reaching Unreached Nations) Family of Movements began with various works that started in the early 2000s. These have since grown to encompass over 60 different branches, actively engaging over 800 language groups. While originally focused largely on fundamentalist Muslims, this family of movements has stretched into some Hindu and Buddhist groups as well. This story from Abdullah offers one example of radical Muslims being transformed and becoming radical disciples of Jesus who multiply disciples:

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

When Abdullah<sup>21</sup> received the mercy of God, his heart changed, and he realized he needed to begin studying the Word of God as diligently as he used to study the Qur'an. He couldn't find a New Testament in his own heart language, but he managed to find a copy in a regional trade language that he understood.

For the next few months, Abdullah spent hours each day trying to learn more about Jesus from the precious truths of God's Word. One day, he came across James 1:27: "True religion..."

At that moment, something happened to Abdullah's heart. Long-suppressed emotions suddenly resurfaced. As tears began to flow down his cheeks and memories began to surface, Abdullah knew he had to do something.

Within weeks, he built a coalition of men, all now followers of Jesus, but with similar stories of their past. At the ages of two, three, or four, they had been sent away by their parents to a religious school called a *madrassa* to be trained as jihadi fighters. They shared their stories with one another and discovered a common pattern. They all felt abandoned by their parents and had been verbally, physically, and often sexually abused. They were all forced through training exercises designed to sear their consciences and make them comfortable with violence and evil.

As they shared their journeys, a sudden conviction began to grow in their hearts. Abdullah read James 1:27 to the group and asked them what God wanted them to do to reach the next generation of young boys who had been

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21 For the sake of ensuring safety, certain names have been altered in the stories shared.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

sent away. Conversations carried on through the night and the following day.

After several more days of prayer and conversation, the conviction in their hearts grew into a plan. To honor Jesus, they must rescue these orphans of war and share with their parents the news of forgiveness and restoration found in Jesus. Today, the burden of Abdullah and the other men in his house church has spread across multiple Kingdom Movements in more than a dozen countries. Thousands of children are being rescued and returned to their families. Trauma healing is being offered to the children, training is being given in biblical parenting, and God is transforming entire communities.

Kingdom Movements in Africa are impacting hundreds of Unreached People Groups.<sup>22</sup> These movements are praying and collaborating to send workers to every one of the over 1,000 UPGs in Africa and also seeking to help reach the rest of the world. The following story of the town of Hante shows how the impact of God's powerful intervention can spark a chain reaction that impacts many other people:<sup>23</sup>

Gonda had heard about a town named Hante. This community engaged in a horrific business of murder and

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22 Trevor Larson, *Focus on Fruit! Movement Case Studies and Fruitful Practices*, Kindle Edition (Self-published, 2018), Kindle locations 378-380, 586-591, 1376-1383.

23 Jerry Trousdale & Glenn Sunshine, "Prayer and Spiritual Warfare," excerpted from *The Kingdom Unleashed: How Jesus' 1st-Century Kingdom Values Are Transforming Thousands of Cultures and Awakening His Church*. (DMM Library, 2018). The story is condensed for length and edited slightly for clarity from <https://2414now.net/multiplying-movements-initiation-and-cross-pollination-part-2-2/>.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

exportation of human blood and body parts to other countries for demonic purposes. So Gonda began to pray to God on behalf of this town. He learned that the community's chief was deeply involved in religious practices that gave him supernatural abilities. People feared him and his mystical powers. Gonda prayed for guidance and waited.

God arranged some connections, and Gonda and two young apprentices were escorted to Hante by a former pastor who knew people there.

When they first arrived, they were stopped and aggressively questioned. After much dialogue, even though it was already 10 o'clock at night, the people who had first gathered to accost the group of strangers now insisted on hearing one of their stories. Then they would judge whether they could stay. The residents built a fire, and the visitors started telling stories from the Bible, beginning with Creation and moving through the great narratives of the Old Testament and into the Gospels. All along, they gave their listeners time to discover what it might mean for them if the stories were true. Sometimes Gonda sang a worship song, and people began to dance. This continued for a couple of hours. At about 2 a.m., some people left the fire—but not to sleep. They rushed off to awaken their families to come and hear the wonderful stories.

Eventually, about 150 people gathered around the fire, listening to chronological storytelling from the Bible. Later, people reported that they stayed all night because they had a deep fear of dying, and these stories about the Supreme God resonated with their hearts. Some families in the group had ancestors who had done terrible things, and some still followed these actions. They felt cursed and



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afraid but intrigued by the stories—almost as if the stories offered the first lifeline to hope and salvation they'd ever received. Whenever it seemed the stories might end, these families insisted the men continue.

Dialogue and Discovery Bible Studies<sup>24</sup> went on for two weeks, after which the chief decided to become the community's first Christ follower. He called a gathering of the town, confessed many sins, brought out all of his occult devices, and destroyed them before receiving baptism. Soon after, another 40 people were baptized, and a church was established in the village. Eventually, 280 people were baptized. Then, the chief traveled to the other villages in the region to tell them of the loving Creator God who heals, forgives, and changes people's hearts. With each visit, more churches were planted.

Another similar family of over 90 movements in Southeast Asia is impacting over 130 Unreached People Groups. Jimi is one of the movement catalysts in this family, and he describes some of the growth.<sup>25</sup>

A volcanic eruption launched me into ministry full-time. 250,000 people fled their homes as rocks, mud, and volcanic ash fell. Zaul and Lukas' team received many requests for help from disaster victims, and they needed a third staff person. . . During the next three years, the groups

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24 Discovery Bible Studies are a form of inductive Bible study used in many Kingdom Movement groups and churches. Read more about the process at <https://waha.app/articles/what-is-a-discovery-bible-study-2>.

25 Trevor Larson, *Focus on Fruit! Movement Case Studies and Fruitful Practices*, Kindle Edition (Self-published, 2018), Kindle locations 378-380, 586-591, 1376-1383.

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in four villages in those mountains multiplied from 102 believers (in four generations of groups and four clusters) to 3,353 believers (in seven generations and 65 clusters)—less than seven years after we had begun. Looking back, it seems to me that good DNA had been planted in those first two clusters, which was replicated in the next clusters. God supplied local leaders and a local apostolic agent. These were good conditions for continued growth. It may have been a good thing that my ability to speak the local language was so poor, as this forced local leaders to emerge, and they have done well. I continue to mentor them.

Jimi's mentor describes the next phase: Jimi started a second movement in 2011 based in a city with many universities. Some are government universities, some are private, and some are owned by the majority religion. Jimi's group fruit has blossomed on about 150 campuses. What is driving this movement? College students are disciplined with a restoration model, that guides them to the Bible and draws on movement dynamics. In 2014, the first disciples of Jimi graduated and returned to the areas they came from, many on distant islands. Many graduates had been so deeply transformed by the restoration in groups they had experienced on campus that they reproduced the same model when they moved back home or to cities for work. In this way, this restoration movement has spread rapidly and deeply in eleven UPGs—driven by recent college graduates. They came to faith through this model and experienced God transforming them, so it was natural for them to replicate this model. Deep personal transformation drives this movement.

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Yet another movement family in South Asia has spread to over 400 people groups in 12 years, intentionally sending workers to new peoples and districts. While they, too, originally focused on Hindus, they have purposefully begun to engage Muslim, Sikh, animist, and other groups, resulting in multiplying generations of churches. Kumar tells us how God used him to start these movements:<sup>26</sup>

In 1995 I started sharing the Gospel among unreached people and planting churches. My goal was to plant 100 churches by 2020. By 2007 I had planted 11 churches. Some people would consider that success, but I was devastated because I realized that at that rate, there was no way I would reach 100 churches by 2020. For two months I cried out to the Lord: “Show me the way to plant 100 churches!” Then in mid-2007 I got invited to a training in “4 Fields Zero Budget Church Planting.” I could only attend one session, but that hour changed my life and ministry. I saw that Jesus equipped his disciples to multiply in a way that required zero outside funding.

I realized I had been planting traditional churches in which new believers were passively dependent on me. I saw that I needed instead to disciple new believers to share the Gospel, make disciples, and form new churches. I started planting zero-budget churches, which began reproducing.

At first, only 14 people—unschooled oral learners—came to faith. I trained those 14 in my house over the course of one month. Since they all had regular jobs, different

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26 Kumar, “Movements Start Movements in South and Southeast Asia,” *Mission Frontiers* (Jan-Feb 2018), archived at <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/movements-multiplying-movements1>.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

people would come on different days. It was really challenging, but the Lord told me not to give up. After they were trained, they went off to plant churches.

Less than a year later, when I called them all together and did the mapping of the fruit, we had 100 churches! Using the 4 Fields (CPM model) approach, we had reached the goal of 100 churches 12 years ahead of time!

I asked the Lord, “Where should I go now?” He said, “Don’t go anywhere. Coach churches. Train the 100 churches to plant three more churches each.” As I trained my local church leaders, they trained their people. Some churches planted five new churches. Others planted none. By the next year, the network of 100 churches had grown to 422. We trained those churches to plant three more churches each. By the following year, we had 1268 churches.

Then the Lord told me: “Cast a vision to other churches.” So I began to do this in other parts of the country. I told people, “Come and see what the Lord is doing; see how our believers live and serve.” As people came and were trained, they multiplied to the third and fourth generations.

We have now engaged 56 previously UPGs. We have ministry in almost every state of our country, and the work has spread to 12 countries in South Asia and Southeast Asia.

## MOVEMENT MARKERS<sup>27</sup>

A Kingdom Movement approach is one in which:

1. There is awareness that only God can start movements, but disciples can follow biblical principles to pray, plant, and water the seeds that can lead to multiplication of movements like we see in the book of Acts.
2. The goal is to transform every Christ follower into a disciple who reproduces, not just a convert.
3. The lives of these disciples are marked by power and faith as they heal the sick, cast out demons, and tell people the Kingdom of God is near (Matt 10 and Luke 10).
4. Patterns create frequent and regular accountability for obeying what the Lord is speaking to each person and passing it on to others in a loving environment. This requires a participative small-group approach.
5. Disciples are equipped in comprehensive ways (such as interpreting and applying Scripture, having a well-rounded prayer life, functioning as a part of the church, and responding well to persecution and suffering). This allows them to not be merely consumers, but active agents of Kingdom advancement.
6. Disciples have a vision to reach their network and extend the Kingdom to the ends of the earth, focusing on the darkest places. They are equipped to minister to others in the Body of Christ.

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<sup>27</sup> Adapted from Stan Parks, Curtis Sergeant, Steve Smith, “Core CPM Distinctives,” *Mission Frontiers*, Sept-Oct 2018 archived at [https://beyond.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/24\\_14-Goal-Parks-et-al.pdf](https://beyond.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/24_14-Goal-Parks-et-al.pdf).

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

7. Reproducing churches are intentionally formed as a part of the process of multiplying disciples. The intent is that 1) disciples, 2) churches, 3) leaders, and 4) movements can multiply endlessly by the power of the Spirit.
8. The focus is on igniting movements of multiplying generations of churches.
9. The emphasis is not on the specific movement approach used but on the underlying biblical principles of multiplying Kingdom Movements.<sup>28</sup>
10. Value is placed on radical evaluation and willingness to change and grow. The goal is to ensure that elements of character, knowledge, disciple-making, and relationships are both biblical and reproducible by other generations of disciples. This requires intentional simplicity.

## MOVEMENT RESULT VS. MOVEMENT PROCESSES

When modern Kingdom Movements began to emerge in the 1990s, the term Church Planting Movements (CPMs) was used to describe the visible **results**. Jesus promised to build his church, and these movements show Him doing that in marvelous ways. He also assigned His followers a specific role toward that result: to make disciples of all *ethnē*. Our job is to implement the disciple-making **processes** by which Jesus builds His church. These processes, under God's sovereignty, can **result** in Church Plant-

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<sup>28</sup> Some of these approaches to movement would include Training for Trainers (T4T), Four Fields, and Discovery DMM. See Appendix B for more information on some of these processes and approaches.

ing Movements.<sup>29</sup>

Movement leaders are not focused on a set of tactics or methodology. Encountering God is far more important than the methodology. Sometimes that encounter starts with truth (a testimony or a spiritual bridge), but in movements, the majority start with power (a healing, exorcism, or other miracle) that then leads to sharing the truth of the Gospel.

Obviously, none of the disciples and churches in these movements are perfect. The audits and evaluations done by movements focus on quality not just quantity. They are seeking to build on strengths and addresses weaknesses.

Nor do we claim that certain steps and methodologies can guarantee a movement. Various individuals may prefer one approach or another. The key is not the tactics but transformed disciples using proven biblical strategies that result in reproducing disciples, leaders, and churches.

God is using an increasing number of customizations and hybrids between different movement approaches. In fact, unless a movement approach is customized to the context, it rarely bears much fruit. Quite a few movements have started before their leaders had any exposure to the different approaches mentioned above. As one leader said, “Nobody taught us this—we just learned about movements from the Holy Spirit!” God loves variety. Every Kingdom Movement is beautifully unique.

At the same time, we can identify common principles and results. Once a movement has started—regardless of the approach used—the resulting disciples and churches have very similar DNA with similar outward expressions. Here are some elements of that DNA:

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<sup>29</sup> See Appendix B for more information on some of Movement results vs. Movement processes and approaches.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

**Praying** — A church planting movement is always accompanied by a prayer movement. And once a movement starts, it is also marked by extraordinary prayer. Those coming to Christ are highly aware that only God can birth new disciples and churches. They are highly motivated to see God break through the darkness in the lives of their friends and neighbors.

**Scriptural** — The disciples in movements take the Bible very seriously. Everyone is called to interpret and apply Scripture as disciples and sharers.

**Obeying** — The churches are devoted to listening to God's word and obeying it individually and corporately. Obedience is expected, and everyone is held accountable for it. Jesus said that those who love Him must obey His commands (John 14:15).

**Powerful** — Most movement disciples pray for and see God do miracles on a regular basis. Healings and exorcisms often open the door to new families and communities.

**Indigenous** — The messenger from outside the group looks for persons and households of peace (Matt 10, Mark 6, Luke 9, 10) that God is preparing within a society. When these people and groups come to faith, they are immediately equipped to reach others. Since insiders are the disciple-makers, the new churches can grow in ways that are both based on Scripture and adapted to the culture.

**Holistic** — By focusing on obedience to Scripture guided by the Holy Spirit, believers become eager to show God's love to people. The disciples in these movements love



those around them in practical ways, such as caring for widows and orphans, ministering to the ill, and fighting oppression.

**Exponential** — Just like the early church in Acts, these modern-day movements multiply rapidly. Every disciple and church is equipped to reproduce and taught to rely on the Holy Spirit to empower them. On average, churches in movements take about one year to reproduce another church, which often leads to doubling the number of disciples and churches every 9-18 months. It is very important to note that the movement leaders are not focused on rapid growth but rather on immediate obedience and sharing and equipping, that have the byproduct of rapid growth.



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## RAISING THE SAILS FOR MOVEMENTS

To understand what God calls us to do, let's begin with the most foundational idea. Picture yourself in a sailboat: skimming along on the water, the sun in your face, the wind rushing past you, the salty smell of the sea, and the cry of seagulls in the air. Ask yourself—what has to happen for that happy picture to become a reality?

To begin, you need a sailboat. Then the sailboat needs to be in the water. If it's stored in a garage or pulled up on a beach, it won't go anywhere, even if the wind is blowing. Merely being in the water isn't enough. You need to have the sails up. If you don't and the wind blows, the boat might get tossed around on the waves, but it won't go anywhere. When the ship is in the water, the sails are raised, and the wind blows, the boat will head off into adventure—but it will need a rudder to guide it.

The sailboat provides a parable of movements. Movements require the actions of God's servants, the wind of the Holy Spirit, and God's Word as the rudder of truth that guides our direction. Without these, no Kingdom Movement will happen.

You have to get "in the water"—a people group or place that needs a movement. You have to "raise the sails"—do what's necessary to share the Gospel and call people to follow Jesus. The

Holy Spirit has to draw people to Himself. And you need the standard of God's Word, like a rudder, to guide your actions.

We don't claim that specific steps or methodologies can guarantee a movement. The methods we've observed are only like putting the boat in the water and raising the sails. We don't control the wind of the Spirit. Our part is to make ourselves ready to go as far and fast as possible when He moves!

On the other hand, while some observers describe movements as acts of God, reducing a Kingdom Movement to simply a divine miracle dismisses the role of human responsibility. All movement practitioners quickly give God the glory because movements are, in fact, miraculous works of God. But they also require human diligence and obedience. It's a divine partnership.

To extend our sailboat analogy, God has not left us to drift without moving the boat. He commands us to pray to the Lord of the Harvest, that He will thrust forth laborers and begin the harvest in a new field. We do not control the wind, but we can ask the Holy Spirit to come, and we can trust His timing and process.

By studying Scripture and observing the Holy Spirit's work worldwide, we have learned how to hoist our sails to get ready for multiplication when the Spirit moves. We have also observed ways to hinder multiplication, such as a lack of preparation and lack of dependence on God.

### EIGHT MOVEMENT "SAILS"

From our interactions with hundreds of movement leaders around the world, we can discern eight vital patterns for "putting the boat in the water" and "raising the sails."

- 1. Pray at All Times**
- 2. Build on God's Word**

- 3. Love and Obey**
- 4. Be Empowered by the Holy Spirit**
- 5. Follow New Testament Strategy**
- 6. Develop Leaders**
- 7. Redeem Culture**
- 8. Multiply**

When done consistently with others, under the guidance and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, these patterns can result in a Kingdom Movement.<sup>30</sup>

### **1. Pray at All Times**

*Pray in the Spirit at all times and on every occasion.  
Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all  
believers everywhere.*

*Eph 6:18*

Prayer in Kingdom Movements is not an occasional practice but a way of life. Believers gather regularly to seek God's face, often fasting and interceding for hours at a time. They comprehend that prayer encompasses more than presenting requests to God; it involves aligning their hearts with His purposes and partnering with Him in redeeming the world.

One of the key principles of prayer in Kingdom Movements is the power of united intercession. When believers come together in agreement, they experience a multiplication of spiritual authority and effectiveness.

Another essential aspect of prayer in Kingdom Movements is

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<sup>30</sup> See an example in Appendix C: Critical Elements in Catalyzing Movements.

the role of fasting. Many movements have seen significant advances as believers committed to regular periods of fasting and prayer. Fasting demonstrates a desperation for God's intervention and a willingness to sacrifice personal comfort for the sake of the Kingdom. Fasting also gives us more space to grieve over the lostness of the world and thus connect with God's heart for the lostness/brokenness of the world.

Amid crisis and persecution, prayer has also been a source of strength and guidance for Kingdom Movements. During the COVID-19 pandemic, many movements turned to prayer as their primary response. They held virtual prayer meetings, organized prayer walks, and interceded for their communities. As a result, they saw God move in powerful ways, opening doors for the Gospel and bringing hope to those in despair.

The impact of prayer in Kingdom Movements cannot be overstated. Prayer has been the foundation of every significant advance, from Southeast Asia's jungles to the Middle East's urban centers. Movements have seen the sick healed, the demonized delivered, and entire communities transformed as believers have persisted in intercession.

As we consider the role of prayer in our own lives and ministries, let us be inspired by the example of these Kingdom Movements. May we prioritize prayer as our first response, not our last resort. May we seek God's face with desperation and surrender, knowing that He alone can bring the transformation we long to see. We can join the symphony of intercession arising from every corner of the earth, believing that God will give us the nations as our inheritance and the whole earth as our possession. As we pray, let us expect to see His Kingdom come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

## 2. Build on God's Word

*“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash”.*

*Matt 7:24-27*

Disciples in movements see the Bible as foundational. Scripture reveals God's design for our lives. Similar to the Berean Jews of the first century, new believers turn to Scripture to seek answers about morality and living to please God. Disciple-makers strive to direct every question not to themselves but back to Scripture with the simple question, “What does God's Word say?”

Leaders trust that since Jesus said, “They will all be taught by God” (John 6:45), and the Holy Spirit will guide the believers “into all truth” (John 16:13), they can entrust the process to God. This doesn't preclude guiding and helping, but it avoids making a human leader the ultimate authority, which is a path to heresy.

Leaders must empower and encourage believers to search the Scriptures carefully as churches and as groups of leaders to see what the Bible teaches about particular questions. Then, when the leaders aren't around, the new believers have a discipline that will lead them deeper into spiritual maturity.

This story tells of a group that came to faith and grew into maturity as God revealed Himself through the Bible:

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

Recently, we heard a story about two families from an Unreached People Group in South Asia. One of their daughters had a life-threatening illness, and this family had tried every medical and spiritual avenue for help with no success. One day, someone told them that “Jesus heals.” They searched the TV channels until they found someone preaching about Jesus. At the end of the broadcast, the preacher offered a prayer for anyone sick, and as the family received the prayer, their daughter was miraculously healed. In their excitement, they searched for and found a church in their area. However, the pastor of the church told them it was too dangerous for his church if they began attending because of the high persecution in the area. The pastor gave them a Bible, and these two families began reading it together in their homes. They were excited to realize that “not only does Jesus heal, but He also saves us from our sins!” They returned to the church and asked to be baptized, but again were refused because of the risk. So they went home and kept studying the Bible. From God’s Word, they realized that baptism did not require a pastor or a building, so they had their own baptism service. Over the next five years, they brought many of their fellow religionists to faith and started a movement of multiplying disciples and churches. They studied the Scriptures, and God guided them into crafting a five-year, biblically sound discipleship and leadership program, uniquely indigenous to their people and culture.

### 3. Love and Obey

*This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now*



## FORESTS IN THE SEED

*remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.*

*John 15:8-12*

Just before He was betrayed, Jesus spent the evening teaching His disciples to strengthen and encourage them for what lay ahead. His message could be summarized as, “If you love me, you will obey me so you can accomplish great things.” Down through the ages, disciples of Jesus have taught new disciples this same command: loving Jesus means obeying Him.

Obedience is not a hardship but rather a divine invitation. Contrary to what nonbelievers may say, our loving God is not an oppressive dictator. His commands are what we need to thrive in the good things He has planned for us.

A woman in a movement in India was astonished to hear some Christians read the Bible without asking, “How must I obey this?” For her, loving Jesus means living out His instructions daily. Like the woman in India, every believer needs to show their love for Jesus by obeying His commands.

Sometimes Christians from traditional churches react negatively to the term “obedience-based discipleship” and call it legalism. Jesus said, “If you love me, obey my commandments” (John 14:15, NLT). He also said, “When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father’s commandments and remain in his love (John 15:10, NLT). When obedience is motivated by our love for God, it is not legalism.

It doesn’t get any simpler. In truth, many churches throughout the centuries have wrongly emphasized knowledge over

obedience. Those with the most knowledge are deemed the most qualified leaders. In movements, the most obedient people are considered the most qualified to lead. This is how God raises up leaders in movements.

Church planting movements emphasize teaching people to love God and love people (Mark 12:30) and obey all that Jesus commanded (Matt 28:20). Knowledge is important, but knowledge of God should be channeled into loving and obeying God.

#### **4. Be Empowered by the Holy Spirit**

Throughout all of these movements, the work of the Holy Spirit, often shown through the miraculous, is the typical and common experience of believers, as shown in this story from India:

They requested one woman, who is part of an Indian movement, to address a large meeting with church leaders from throughout the movement. As she nervously stood in front of the enormous crowd of several thousand, she said, “I don’t know why they asked me to speak about leadership. I can’t read, and I can’t write. Every morning, my family gathers, and my niece reads the Bible to us. We do our best to remember those verses during the day as we do our work. We go out to heal the sick and cast out demons. We have seen only two people raised from the dead, and I know some of you have seen God do much more. We tell people the Good News of Jesus. Our family has been following Jesus for five years, and we have played a part in helping plant only 50 churches. I know this is just normal for disciples, so I am not sure why they wanted me to speak about leadership.”

Amazingly, despite normal human weaknesses and failures, many disciples in movements do the things we see in the early

church—sharing the Good News, healing the sick, and casting out demons. Sometimes, they even see God raise the dead through their prayers. But they don't follow a formula—they just ask in faith, knowing God will decide. One leader in India recently said, "We have seen 40 people raised from the dead across our movement, but we have probably prayed for over 4,000. That's only 1%."

Sometimes, people say not to mention people being raised from the dead because it is so hard to believe and will cause skepticism that any of this is really happening. Yet, God is still the same God today as He was 2,000 years ago. Disciples born to new spiritual life in these movements see the lives of those who led them to faith, read the book of Acts, and believe and live out what they see in ways that look similar to what we see in the New Testament.

## **5. Follow New Testament Strategy**

*When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to heal the sick. He told them, "Take nothing for the journey—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra shirt. Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that town. If people do not welcome you, leave their town and shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them." So they set out and went from village to village, proclaiming the good news and healing people everywhere.*

*Luke 9:1-6*

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

Before Jesus sent out His disciples, He modeled what they were to do. He went from village to village, preaching the Kingdom and doing miracles. Then He sent out the 12 and the 70 with instructions to do the same things He had done.

Many church planters in Kingdom Movements follow the basic pattern we see in Matthew 10, Mark 6, and Luke 9 and 10 that Jesus gave His disciples when He sent them out. To summarize: they 1) Go two-by-two where Jesus leads them; 2) Pray for laborers; 3) Go despite danger, without extra resources, and with focus; 4) Bring peace and search for a person of peace who will open their household; 5) When they find that household, stay there; 6) Eat and drink what is offered; 7) Heal the sick; 8) Proclaim “The Kingdom of God is near.” 9) When not welcome, shake the dust of the town off their feet.

We often see this pattern being applied in the New Testament. Whether it’s the Samaritan woman, Matthew, Zacchaeus, Cornelius, Lydia, or the Philippian jailer, this person becomes the key catalyst for their family and broader community. One large family of movements in harsh environments actually focuses on the tribal leader or the network leader rather than individual household leaders.

As these natural groups are reached with the Gospel, churches are born. Movements believe the question, “What is church?” is best answered by the Bible. In fact, when asked their definition of church, many movement leaders answer, “Acts 2:36-47.” They want to be and do the things they see there: proclaiming Jesus as Lord, calling people to repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of their sins, receiving the Holy Spirit, learning, fellowshiping and praying, sharing with each other, meeting and breaking bread together in ways that impact those in the surrounding communities.

## 6. Develop Leaders

In many ways, a Kingdom Movement is actually a movement of multiplying and developing church leaders. What makes the difference between merely planting churches and seeing sustained movements of churches? Usually leadership development. No matter how many churches are planted, unless cultural insiders become leaders, the churches will remain foreign. They will either reproduce slowly or stop growing when the initial leader(s) reach their limit.

Victor John is a leader of a massive movement among the more than 100 million Bhojpuri speakers of North India, formerly known as the “graveyard of modern missions.” John points out that although the church has existed in India for almost 2000 years, dating to the Apostle Thomas, 91% of Indians still do not have access to the Gospel! He believes this is mainly due to a lack of developing leaders.

John states that beginning in the 4<sup>th</sup> century, leaders were imported into India from the Middle East and used the Syriac language in worship, which limited leadership to only Syriac speakers. Roman Catholics in the 16th century used the local language but would never have thought of having local leaders. Beginning in the 18th century, Protestants in India appointed local leaders, but the training methods remained Western, so local leaders could not reproduce them. “The replacement of indigenous leaders was done with a major conflict of interest. No natives, nationals, or local workers could ever be called leaders—this title was reserved for the whites only. These mission organizations focused on the replacement of existing leadership and not on movement or growth.”<sup>31</sup>

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31 Victor John, “The Importance of Indigenous Leadership,” *The CPM Journal* (Jan-Mar 2006:59-60).

As we look at modern movements, we can discern some clear principles for multiplying and developing leaders. Developing leaders starts at the beginning of the ministry. The patterns used in evangelism, discipleship, and forming churches *are* developing leaders. These patterns set the stage for ongoing leadership development.

One movement has created a leadership development process with the following stages:

- choosing to become a follower of Jesus
- new believer spiritual formation
- training on leading house churches
- training on leading clusters of house churches
- training for province- or country-level leadership.

This type of systematic leadership development is found throughout movements around the world, echoing Jesus' pattern of leadership development and Paul's instructions in 2 Timothy 2:2.

### **7. Redeem Culture**

*The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into  
the neighborhood.*

*John 1:14 (The Message)*

In much of the modern world, Christianity is viewed as a foreign, Western religion. However, in movements, when a church planter enters a new area, he or she begins by looking for people of peace: spiritually hungry people from within the culture whom God is preparing to open the society through the network

of their friends and families. When these people and groups come to faith, they are immediately equipped to reach others. Since these newly-trained disciple-makers are part of the local culture—not foreigners—the new churches can grow scripturally and indigenously.

The gatherings of those people (new churches) are a culturally relevant expression of biblical faith, using local languages and cultural modes to share the Gospel, translate the Scriptures, and write new worship songs. Consequently, within a short time, the new believers coming to Christ may not know a foreigner was ever involved in the work. In their eyes, the church looks, acts, and feels homegrown.

Sometimes, we are blind to our cultural assumptions and worldview lenses. For example, many Western Christians feel that John 3:16 gives the best one-verse explanation of the Gospel. “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

However, starting with a verse about the “Son” is not the best place to start with Muslims. Most have been taught that Christians commit the heinous sin of believing that God had sex with Mary and she gave birth to a son, Jesus. So they think Christians worship three gods—God, Mary, and Jesus. So, while Muslims need to learn from the Bible about the true Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we do better not to start our witness to Muslims with a verse they will probably misunderstand.

It is not only Muslims who see Scripture through their worldview. The following story shows how Buddhists may perceive God’s gift of His Son in a way most Westerners would never anticipate.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

A Thai Christian describes trying to share the Gospel with a friend. He used John 3:16 because that was what he had been taught. His friend had no belief in a creator God, so he asked which demon this was. When he said God loved the world, his friend asked why God lusted for the world—since, for a Buddhist, desire is wrong (and leads to suffering). His friend misunderstood God “giving” his son to mean that He “killed his own son” (as a way to capture the world). The promise that those who follow God “will never perish” sounded like a threat because he sees this world as an endless reincarnation cycle of suffering. His goal is to escape this earthly hell by “dissolving” into an unconscious unity with the universe. His attempt to share the “Good News” ended up sounding like “Terrible News.”

God ensured the Bible’s relevance for all people in every era and culture. However, when outsiders teach the Bible to people in a different culture, they often convey much of their own culture and misunderstand the filters of the listener, which can destroy the intended message. We increasingly see that it is far healthier when people discover God’s truth from the Bible so God can show them how to best redeem their own culture for His glory.

### **8. Multiply**

*And the Lord added to their number  
daily those who were being saved.*

*Acts 2:47b*

As we walk in the steps of Jesus, making disciples who make disciples and seeing churches send out yet more workers, we begin to see the principle of multiplication at work. The Bible



## FORESTS IN THE SEED

celebrates multiplication, from the dawn of creation to the profound parables of Jesus and through the glory of Revelation.

- In the Creation story in Genesis, we see two people intended to multiply and fill the earth (Gen 1:28). We have seen the power of this multiplication in the growth of both the global population and the number of believers.
- In Genesis 22, God promised Abraham, “I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore” (verse 17). We can imagine Abraham looking up in the night, considering the heavens, and thinking of an uncountable number.
- Jesus’ parable of the mustard seed shows how something small can grow into something huge and life-giving, while the parable of the leaven tells us how something small can multiply to permeate something large (Matt 13:31-33).
- In Revelation 7:9, John describes the glorious vision of the result of this multiplication: a great multitude from every nation, tribe, people, and language, all standing before the Lamb in praise and worship.

Movement practitioners recognize multiplication as a divine principle illustrated through the entire biblical narrative: the Kingdom does not spread largely one-by-one, but rather one-to-many. They work to infuse the multiplication of faith across households and spiritual generations into Jesus’ mission.

One of the striking aspects of modern movements is the role of the “ordinary person.” God’s work is not restricted to trained professionals. Instead, the Holy Spirit uses ordinary people to share the Gospel, cast out demons, heal the sick, and multiply disciples

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and churches. All disciples are called to make not just disciples but disciple-makers (Matt 28:18-20). Brand new believers are powerfully bringing the Gospel to new places. They are ordinary people filled with the Spirit of an extraordinary God.

Leaders in movements focus on the leaders they reproduce—not the number of followers they personally have. They seek to empower people to reach others by training new leaders and delegating responsibilities. Just as Jesus said that His disciples would do greater things than He did, a healthy movement leader equips their spiritual children and grandchildren to surpass them.

One movement tells the story of their initial efforts:

After quite a few years, a team of church planters saw about 50 churches planted. But they realized they were only relying on the church planters to do the work and that they would never reach the millions of people in their Unreached People Group at this pace. So, the leaders gathered the church planters and told them they could no longer plant churches but had to equip and empower the churches they had planted to plant churches. Shockingly, about half the church planters quit! They said, “We are church planters! That is what we do! We don’t want to do it any differently!” It was more important to them that they planted churches than that churches got planted. Those who remained stopped planting churches personally and instead helped the new churches follow the Luke 10 pattern to start new churches. The movement expanded exponentially now that every disciple and church could plant churches instead of just a few experts doing it all. That movement now has thousands of churches.

This kind of growth—where disciples make disciples who make disciples and are responsible for each other—leads to the multiplication of worship and the multiplication of spiritual maturity. In the same way, we encourage and evaluate leaders based on their ability to develop other leaders who can, in turn, develop more leaders. As the community grows and we walk with Jesus together, we encounter many opportunities to deepen our spiritual understanding, practically obey the commands of Jesus, and grow in spiritual maturity.

Through the biblical narrative, we discover God employed the principle of multiplication from the beginning of humanity, and He will continue to do so until His Kingdom comes. Our gracious God has also given us models through Jesus and the early church to show us how to embrace the Great Commission.

Kingdom Movements are not a modern innovation. It is a new missions strategy that is 2,000 years old. God is inviting us to focus on intentional discipleship, endless multiplication, and steadfast obedience to the Great Commission. We all have a blessed calling to take part in God's grand narrative, to reach the world with the transformational power of the Gospel.

In our day, God is accomplishing great things through these movements. We are seeing God do what He has done at various times in history. Current movement efforts have been driven by putting aside human traditions and cherished church forms and examining questions like, "What was Jesus' strategy with His disciples in reaching the lost?" and "How did the Holy Spirit direct the early church to grow and expand explosively?" Much movement training worldwide focuses on helping Christians let go of human tradition and allow scriptural patterns to show us how to multiply disciples and churches. The following chapter will explore some of the DNA of movements.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

## 5 NEW DNA NEEDED

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*He replied, “Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.’ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to human traditions. ... Thus you nullify the word of God by your tradition that you have handed down. And you do many things like that.”*

*Mark 7:6-9, 13*

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Ying and Grace were highly effective church planters in Hong Kong. Ying describes the pivotal training that changed their strategy.<sup>32</sup>

On the first day of training, our training director asked each missionary unit to prepare a three-year master plan (mission strategy plan) and set an end vision within the

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<sup>32</sup> Ying Kai, “The Ying Kai Story,” accessed 05/10/2024 at [www.t4tglobal.org/the-ying-kai-story](http://www.t4tglobal.org/the-ying-kai-story).

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three-year time frame. I did not understand what they meant by end vision, so I asked the training director, “What does end vision mean?” He responded, “Ying, it is very simple: how many people can you lead to Christ in the next three years, and how many churches can you start?”

After hearing his explanation, Grace and I discussed how in three years, we had barely been able to bring fewer than 200 people to Christ and had only started three churches. As we studied the new region that the Lord was leading us to, we learned there were three cities in the area, each of which had a registered population of 5.8 million. But then, we discovered that there were more than 15 million temporary factory workers from all over the country who had come to these three cities to work in the thousands of factories! So there were actually over 20 million people in our new mission assignment. ...

There was a quote on the wall that touched my heart: “How many people in your city will hear the Gospel today?” We prayed and studied the Bible every day to ask God to give us a strategy for how to spread the Gospel as quickly as possible and for people to turn to the Lord.

We continued to read the Bible and pray daily until one day, in the middle of the night, we suddenly realized the best strategy for evangelism is in Jesus’ Great Commission! We’ve known this Great Commission (Matt 28:19-20) since we were children, memorizing this passage of Scripture. We were even able to sing it as a song. But in that moment, we discovered that we had never really followed his Great Commission!

Ying and Grace began training disciples to start small churches that would multiply quickly. Over the next 10 years, 1.8 million

new disciples were baptized. The number of churches multiplied to 160,000, with an average annual growth rate of 50%!<sup>33</sup>

A Kingdom Movement does not merely pursue traditional church-planting methods with more and faster planting. It describes the God-given fruit of a distinctive ministry approach—a unique “DNA” oriented toward rapid, multiplying growth. These perspectives and patterns of work differ from those of church life and ministry that are prevalent in Westernized traditional churches around the world. This chapter will identify mindsets and models we have seen God change for movement practitioners around the world.

Before we examine these biblical patterns, we want to acknowledge a diversity of ministry approaches. We recognize these methods are not the sole path to effective ministry, nor do we view alternative paradigms as flawed. Our gratitude extends to movement pioneers whose dedication through the years has been the foundation upon which we build. We also pay tribute to the wider Body of Christ, acknowledging those who make the work of movements possible through their faithful and sacrificial service in various ministries. Bible translators, intercessors and prayer strategists, crisis responders, medical personnel, audio and video technologists, and many others serve as invaluable partners.

God is using many kinds of churches to accomplish His purposes in the world. Let us honor one another as diverse parts of the Body of Christ. At the same time, church history and current global realities clearly show that the Great Commission cannot be completed using only traditional church models. The amount of resources needed for a traditional Western-style church does not allow Kingdom growth to exceed population growth. Also, cultural patterns from the Western world often make a poor medium

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33 Slightly edited for clarity from Robby Butler, “Amazing Progress” in *24:14—A Testimony to All Peoples*, p. 111.

for bringing the Gospel to the rest of the world. The primary push for Kingdom Movements is to reach those not being reached and unlikely to be reached by traditional church patterns. Simple and easily-reproducible biblical patterns offer the best hope for bringing the Gospel to all peoples.

While we appreciate God's many kinds of work worldwide, we are excited about the new and amazing fruit in areas long considered unreachable. After centuries of very little progress, millions of former Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists are coming to faith in Christ. Those desiring to support these movements must ready themselves for shifts in thought and action. We must count the cost and be willing to let go of our cherished traditions.

These paradigm shifts enable us to see things differently and creatively. Changes in perspective lead to different behaviors and outcomes. Here are some key ways the Lord's great work calls us to adjust our thinking, actions, and lifestyles.

### **FROM "I CAN ACCOMPLISH MY GOALS" TO "A GOD-SIZED VISION, IMPOSSIBLE APART FROM HIM"**

One of the main reasons so many movements seem to have started in modern times is that people accepted a God-sized vision of focusing on reaching entire people groups. They passionately desire to see more than a few people from the group following Jesus; they want to see the entire people group have the opportunity to follow. But, faced with the task of reaching the whole of an unreached, *disconnected* group made up of millions of people, it becomes obvious workers cannot accomplish the whole task on their own. This "God-sized vision" requires a miraculous move of God to become possible. When the disciples wondered how anyone could be saved, Jesus said, "With man, this is impossible, but



not with God; all things are possible with God” (Mark 10:27).

As workers contemplate the scope of the vision God has given them, Jesus’ truth that “apart from me, you can do nothing” has sunk in all the more. Leaders realize with increasing clarity how much they need to abide in Jesus, listen for the direction of the Spirit, and follow hard after His leading.

As we do, we see how God does the most amazing work in the most difficult places.

- During government purges, mass incarcerations, and famines, the Church in China grew from 1 million in 1950 to over 100 million today.
- In 1979, there were an estimated 500 Christians from a Muslim background in Iran. In 2010, *Operation World* listed Iran as the fastest growing Church in the world, and Afghanistan the second fastest.<sup>34</sup> According to Joshua Project, currently there are an estimated 1.25 million Iranian Christians with an annual evangelical growth rate of 19.6%.
- Cambodia survived the killing fields and near extermination of Christianity in the 1970s and has grown to an estimated 3-5% Christian today.
- The largest single modern Church Planting Movement we are aware of is among the Bhojpuri people, whose homeland is centered on the holiest city in Hinduism.
- The largest family of movements in the world today, with hundreds of movements, is led by former jihadists who are not just reaching Muslims but also Hindus, Buddhists, Traditional Religionists, and Atheists.

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34 Jason Mandryk, *Operation World*, Biblica Publishing, 2010, p. 916.

If we are to see movements, we must shift away from our own small plans and strategies to humble ourselves before God and sit in prayer to listen for His vision and direction. Through this shift, we submit ourselves to depend on Him for every step and decision, recognizing that our efforts are insufficient to bring about the desired transformation. This requires a deep trust in God's power and willingness to do what seems impossible. We must surrender our agendas and methods and allow God to control the outcome. This demands a humble posture of dependence, constantly seeking His will and following His leading.

It's easier to work as if fruit depends on our efforts rather than God's intervention. Instead, we need to depend on God to do what only He can do. Hudson Taylor stated, "There are three stages to every great work of God; first it is impossible, then it is difficult, then it is done."<sup>35</sup>

## FROM "I AM PAUL" TO "I AM BARNABAS"

People sent out as missionaries have often been encouraged to view themselves as front-line workers, modeled after the Apostle Paul. We now realize that far-culture outsiders can have the greatest impact by finding and serving cultural insiders or near-culture neighbors who become the "Pauls" for their communities. We must see ourselves more as Barnabas, who brought Paul to the Apostles and helped him in his work.

Barnabas was also a leader who "did the work" (Acts 11:22-26;

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35 Christian Today Staff, "James Hudson Taylor: 9 Quotes from China's Pioneering Pastor," *Christian Today*, 1 Mar. 2018, [www.christiantoday.com/article/james-hudson-taylor-9-quotes-from-chinas-pioneering-pastor/126671.htm](http://www.christiantoday.com/article/james-hudson-taylor-9-quotes-from-chinas-pioneering-pastor/126671.htm).

13:1-7). Workers who want to see a movement start can begin by making disciples in their own culture. Eventually, in trying to start a new job in an unreached place, they have to work across cultures. In this effort, the shift means they look for local people *within* those cultures who are like “Paul” for that culture. Rather than seeing themselves as a “Paul,” they see themselves as a “Paul-finder.”

Even people who start out in the work of “Pauls” will, over time, have to adjust their expectations. The outside foreign workers laboring for one large movement in India studied Barnabas’ life to better understand their role. They then studied the passages with the initial “Pauls” of this movement. Those leaders, in turn, realized that contrary to their cultural patterns (that the initial leader is always preeminent), they also wanted to become like Barnabas and empower those they discipled to have an even greater impact.

The person whose ministry will most resemble Paul’s is usually the person culturally closest to those who are not yet believers. In order to extend work into new places, every disciple will find they have to transition from being a “front-line Paul” to being an encouraging “Barnabas,” sending out new “Pauls.” If we aren’t willing to make this transition, we limit how far the work can expand.

## FROM “DISCIPLING INDIVIDUALS” TO “DISCIPLING A PEOPLE GROUP”

In the Great Commission, Jesus tells His disciples to “make disciples of *panta ta ethnē*” (all the peoples). Discipling an individual or a family is a very different sort of task from discipling a people group. Any mature believer can disciple an individual, given enough time and commitment. But discipling a people group—thousands or millions of individuals—requires a different kind of

approach, one that is not limited to our own personal efforts.

Many things disciple-makers do to disciple individuals will never scale to reach an entire people. For example, if a discipleship curriculum is a few months long and costs \$10 for materials, it may work fine for a single individual. However, if the people group being discipled has a population of several million, the curriculum can cost millions of dollars, and using it will involve significant logistical challenges. (Where are the training sessions held? How many sessions are needed to encompass millions of people? What about security issues? Training for teachers? Printing the materials?)

The shift to discipling a people group involves embracing a God-sized vision and abandoning approaches that will work with a few people but not with hundreds, thousands, or millions of people. The focus is on simple, small, and scalable approaches for everyone. If it won't work for everybody, should we do it for anyone?

Chris Galanos was a megachurch pastor praying for God's next steps for his church. He describes how this goal of discipling a people group turned his world upside down.<sup>36</sup>

At our first meeting, we had 12 in our living room. We prayed that the Lord would allow us to help 10,000 people commit their lives to Christ in 10 years. On our 10-year anniversary in September 2017, we celebrated 13,337 people who indicated they had committed their lives to

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36 Chris Galanos, "From Big to Small – for a Big Movement," *Mission Frontiers*, Jan-Feb 2020, archived at [www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/from-big-to-small-for-a-big-movement](http://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/from-big-to-small-for-a-big-movement). For more about Chris' journey see his 2018 book, [www.experiencelifenow.com/store/p/from-mega-church-to-multiplication](http://www.experiencelifenow.com/store/p/from-mega-church-to-multiplication).

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Christ and 6,756 who had been baptized.

During year eight, I started asking the Lord, *What do you want our vision to be for the next 10 years?*

That's when I stumbled upon WIGTake.

As I was reading David Garrison's book *Church Planting Movements: How God Is Redeeming a Lost World*, these two sentences leaped off the page at me. "In the years that followed, Langston was joined by Calvin and Margaret Fox. Together they planned what it would take to reach all the Kui with the Gospel."

According to the Joshua Project, ... there are 1.6 million Kui. They were developing a plan to reach all 1.6 million!

...

I kept reading Garrison's book, and I continued to see this pattern of aiming to reach an entire people group. "In the late 1980s, three missionary families gathered a few Maa-sai believers and began to develop a plan to reach all of them."

David Garrison introduces the WIGTake question that these missionaries were clearly asking. He credits David Watson with initially forming the question for his work among an unreached people group in India. David Watson asked, "**What's it Going to Take** to reach everyone in the people group?"

Even Jesus' first disciples were told, in Matthew 28:18–20, to reach entire people groups.

FROM “IT CAN’T HAPPEN HERE!”  
TO “EXPECT A RIPE HARVEST”

Since the first modern movement was identified in the 1990s, people have often said, “It might have started in those countries, but that was a special circumstance. If you knew the people group I work with, you’d understand why that can’t happen here!”

We must shift from seeing all the reasons a move of God hasn’t happened in the past and can’t happen now to expecting God’s miraculous work to produce a ripe harvest.

Nowadays, some people point to the many movements in North India and say, “Of course, movements can happen in India.” They forget the region was largely considered the “graveyard of modern missions” for over 200 years.

Some said, “Movements can’t happen in the Middle East because that’s the heartland of Islam.” Yet in 2001, the *World Christian Encyclopedia*<sup>37</sup> noted that Saudi Arabs were among the world’s most spiritually responsive people groups. Many ministries have witnessed rapid church growth in Iran and throughout the Persian world. Beyond these well-known examples, many movements throughout the Muslim world are happening in incredible ways but are less reported because of their security situations.

The latest challenge comes from those who say, “It can’t happen in Europe and North America and other places with traditional churches.” Yet, we have already documented examples in these regions. Most are among diaspora people groups, but some emerging movements are developing among North American and

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37 David B. Barrett, et al., *World Christian Trends*, New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001, p. 418-419.

European peoples. These are in their early days, and many don't want to be made public for various security reasons, but they exist nonetheless.

What fruit might be waiting for harvest if we shift our thinking from expecting something can't happen to anticipating that it could? This is illustrated by a stirring account from Africa.

God directed us to go to an African city that is one of the hardest places to reach people with the Gospel. But when we announced the need for mission teams to carry the message of peace through the Jesus Film<sup>38</sup> for the people of this city, all the teams were filled within a few hours. More people than needed volunteered to sacrifice for Jesus. He had done so much in everyone's life that they wanted to share the Good News.

However, soon after the team's arrival at the selected locations, their enthusiasm was short-lived, and they all felt very spiritually uncomfortable as they experienced opposition that kept them from sharing Jesus.

After several weeks of living in the city, the teams had befriended and gained the trust of several people in the village. They were finally able to ask several people, "Please tell us what is happening. It seems that since we arrived, many people have felt unhappy."

A village leader replied that this sense from the team was correct. "For some reason, since the arrival of your team, individuals in many of the families have been seeing a

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38 *The Jesus Film* is a 1979 film that portrays Jesus' life using only the text of the Gospel of Luke. It has been translated into over 2100 languages as of 2024.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

new face in their dreams. During morning prayers at the mosque, this has been discussed. It seems our souls have not been at peace since you have come. And as you know, we Muslims believe this has happened because of a spiritual change in our village since you came.”

At this moment, the team leader stood up on a rock nearby and began sharing the Gospel, and then read from Romans and other books in the New Testament. He spoke non-stop for more than one and a half hours until a crowd had gathered to listen to his message about Jesus. Part-way through his message, a number of people who had seen the same strange face in the dream came and, while he was talking, expressed their confusion to others. Others were asked to quiet down and let this leader share.

Amid all this confusion, the leader realized he needed to shift his presentation. So he said, “I understand you all want to know about us. I invite you to come together tonight and see our God.” This statement caused even more of a stir and debate in the crowd.

At midnight, to everyone’s surprise, 1,400 people came. Before the film began, according to the plan, the team began serving tea. After that, the team began to show the film, only to be interrupted by people in the crowd shouting when they saw Jesus: “That’s the face I saw in my dream!” Others stood and echoed, “Yes, for the past few nights, this face has appeared to us, confirming it’s Jesus.”

On that night, by the mercy of God, hundreds of extremist Muslims accepted Jesus as God.



## FROM “WHAT CAN I DO?” TO “WHAT MUST GOD DO?”

We must move away from focusing on what I, as an individual disciple, can do with my gifting and skills. Instead, we must start asking, “What must be done that only God can do?” The Walker family describes making this paradigm shift:<sup>39</sup>

We spent many years on the field spinning our wheels. We were busy but unfruitful. In 2011, we attended a disciple-making training sponsored by our agency. The training changed our lives. For two weeks, we studied God’s Word. We didn’t read books about missions or study modern patterns in missions. We simply opened our Bibles and looked for answers to questions such as, “Did Jesus have a strategy for reaching lost people?”

God used the training to shift our paradigms. Most importantly, we faced this question: “What if, instead of focusing on what we can do (engineering, teaching, administration, communication), we focus on what needs to be done?” In all the years we’d been on the field, we had concentrated on using our skills. What if the focus wasn’t on our skills but on saving the lost?

The answer to that question would necessarily include skills we don’t have (like befriending strangers, praying with unbelievers, and following the pattern in Luke 10). What a relief to realize that obeying Jesus’ command to make disciples (Matt 28:19) doesn’t revolve around our methods, personality types, or intelligence levels. Jesus didn’t invite His first disciples to follow Him because they

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39 Walker family, “How God is sweeping through South Asia—Part 1”, <https://2414now.net/how-god-is-sweeping-through-south-asia-part-1>.

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were the best or the smartest. They were uneducated fishermen, vile tax collectors, and oppressed underdogs. But they obeyed Jesus.

We were so excited. For the first time in our lives on the field, we began to focus on God's desire that none should perish rather than on our skills.

We must stop looking solely at our own resources, church, or denomination and realize we need to involve the larger Body of Christ globally in all types of Great Commission organizations and churches.

This shift happens in part because we realize the scope of the task requires an enormous variety of giftings and vocations to address the many efforts needed: prayer, mobilization, finances, business, translation, relief, development, arts, etc. It also happens because we know Jesus wants to use the whole Church. The world will recognize us as His disciples through our unity and love.

### FROM "MEASURING FRUITFULNESS" TO "MEASURING FAITHFULNESS"

*After all, who is Apollos? Who is Paul? We are only God's servants through whom you believed the Good News. Each of us did the work the Lord gave us. I planted the seed in your hearts, and Apollos watered it, but it was God who made it grow. It's not important who does the planting or who does the watering. What's important is that God makes the seed grow. The one who plants and the one who waters work together with the same purpose. And both will be rewarded for their own hard work.*

*1 Corinthians 3:5-9, NLT*

Growth is God's responsibility: "...it was God who made it grow." If the wind of the Spirit isn't blowing, nothing will happen. Sometimes, attempting to catalyze the first multiplying churches can take several years. Field workers are told, "Only God can produce fruitfulness. Your job is to be faithful and obedient while expecting God to work."

We do our best to follow patterns of disciple-making multiplication found in the New Testament, and we trust the Holy Spirit to bring growth. We must shift from focusing on measuring the fruit of what we *do* and instead focus on who we *are*—faithful servants asked by our Lord to steward a harvest that only God can make grow. Steve Smith, a global coach who worked with many laborers over the years, said:

To fulfill the vision, you have to start at the foundation by abiding in Christ (John 15:5, Ps 78:72, Matt 11:12, 17:20)... Those who bear fruit abide. There is no way around it. Anything less gives temporary and stunted fruit. Men and women at the center of CPMs are not necessarily greater spiritual giants than other people, but they all abide in Christ. You do not get a CPM by abiding in Christ, but you don't get one if you don't. Remember, God uses men, not just methods; people, not just principles.<sup>40</sup>

This is a paradox. We have to expect that "it *can* happen here." Measuring our activities is helpful. Yet we know "the wind blows where it wills," and we cannot control when or where the Spirit moves. We have to die to ourselves and the temptation to seek credit for our own personal work, and we must live for God's

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40 Steve Smith, "Kingdom Kernels: CPM Essentials on a Napkin," *Mission Frontiers*, July-August 2013. <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/kingdom-kernels2>.

glory in the harvest.

This shift requires a deeper trust in God's sovereignty and timing. We labor diligently and intelligently, faithfully sowing the seeds, free from any pressure to produce immediate results, trusting God for the harvest, and focusing on the long-term vision.

### **FROM "LOOKING FOR MINISTRY PARTNERS" TO "BROTHERS AND SISTERS SERVING GOD TOGETHER"**

In the difficult and sometimes dangerous work among the unreached, inside catalysts<sup>41</sup> are looking for a deep family bond of mutual love. They don't want work partners. They want a family who will bear each other's burdens and sacrifice in any way possible for their brothers and sisters.

We must shift away from corporate and business-like relationships toward family relationships. Spiritual grandfathers, fathers, uncles, and cousins each have their own kind of relationship with others in the family and look to join family events and work. The following example helps us understand the importance of moving beyond "partnerships" to deeper, more familial relationships:

A few years ago, I (Stan) was at a meeting helping coach some harvest workers serving among the unreached. The group included more than 40 Americans and five people from other countries. I observed the reactions of these five. At one of the final sessions, I asked them to come forward and then asked each one what they felt about the expression that had been commonly used during that week:

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<sup>41</sup> Most Kingdom Movements in modern times are started by a team of both outside catalysts (people from outside the culture) and inside catalysts (people from the culture).

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the importance of finding your “national partner.” Every single one said it surprised and hurt them. They thought people wanted to be their brothers and sisters and work together in the harvest. Now, they found themselves questioning what it might mean that they were viewed as “partners” instead. They mentioned a few dynamics.

- Some felt they would be manipulated to achieve the outsider’s goals.
- In a partnership, the person(s) with the most money controls the partnership.
- The use of “national” may feel condescending

The five were generous, saying they felt sure nobody had these intentions. However, sometimes, even with good intentions, unhealthy subconscious dynamics can arise.

## FROM “WINNING INDIVIDUALS” TO “WINNING GROUPS”

Ninety percent (29 of 32 instances) of the salvations described in the book of Acts describe the salvation of groups—either large or small. Only ten percent of the stories described individuals who experienced salvation by themselves. Yet today, many Christians around the world expect most conversions to be individuals choosing to follow Jesus in spite of their families, not in the context of their entire family coming to faith. We have allowed Western individualism and its influence on global Christianity to guide our efforts rather than letting the biblical patterns serve as our plumb line.

In the book of Acts, we see households, multiple households,

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and even some whole communities turning to the Lord. We see that same dynamic in today's movements. Most of these movements are happening among unreached people groups, who tend to be much more communal than Westerners. Decision-making in these cultures is done by families and/or clans. Response by groups is both more rapid and more impactful in reaching new families, clans, and communities.

We see Jesus reaching households: salvation came to Zacchaeus and his entire household (Luke 19:9-10), and many Samaritans came to faith alongside the Samaritan woman (John 4:39-42). Jesus also sent out the 12 and the 70 and told them to look for households.

We must shift away from the idea of winning individuals one by one toward the idea of winning entire families or households.

Reaching groups has many advantages over reaching individuals:

- Instead of transferring "Christian culture" to a single new believer, local culture begins to be redeemed by the group.
- Persecution isn't isolated and focused on an individual but rather on a group that can support each other in persecution.
- Joy is shared as a family or community discovers Christ together.
- Unbelievers have a visible example of what it looks like for a group of people "like me" to follow Christ.

This story illustrates the impact of reaching groups.

God spoke to the leaders of a movement to commission a

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team to move to an unreached city and expand the Kingdom through a business they would “gift” to the community. After a season of prayer, the team felt impressed not to drive to their destination but rather walk 300 kilometers to the new city, spreading the news of Jesus to Muslims along the way.

In the past, this team had been trained to inspire Muslims to become radical for Islam, so they wore the same garb and approached people with the same patterns of speech, except this time, they shared the Gospel.

Since they looked like Muslim evangelists, people in each village would run and join the caravan, believing in the local teaching that if you join these special teachers, “each step for Allah will bury your sins.”

Every few hours, the team would stop, rest, and find food. But their real purpose was to gather a crowd near the mosque and share the Word of God. They felt very encouraged at the beginning of this journey but eventually began to feel the burden of a 300-kilometer walk.

Despite their weariness, God began to do a new thing in front of their eyes. People would ask questions about Jesus, and many who believed would ask if they could build a house of worship for Jesus. The team witnessed numerous families coming to Jesus. Several families chose to travel alongside the team. When the team reached the city outskirts, the local people inquired, “Who are you, and why such a large crowd?” The team explained, “We have been walking village to village, rescuing people from the devil. Some of these people in the crowd were just rescued. After days of walking and praying, we all come with a message from God.

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Immediately, the local people received these messengers and asked if they could volunteer to help make the business a success. God is great!

### FROM “TEACHING OUR DOCTRINE, PRACTICES, AND CULTURE” TO “HELPING BELIEVERS DISCOVER WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES”

We can too easily confuse our own preferences and traditions with scriptural mandates. Instead, we need to help them see Scripture as their authority rather than us. Instead of being experts with answers, let's coach and encourage people to find answers in the Scriptures themselves.

When we do this, we don't just help them answer one question. We guide them to seek life answers in Scripture, not from other people. We are also helping them to learn to measure all answers against the truth in Scripture.

A story told by Steve Smith illustrates this process.

Several of us planned to spend one week training 12 local leaders who represented 80 Ina churches in a budding Kingdom Movement in East Asia. One basic ground rule was to try not to answer their questions, but rather ask, “What does the Bible say?” This is so much easier in theory than in practice!

One afternoon, my pastor friend spent an hour teaching from Ephesians 5: Husbands, love your wives. The application appeared to be crystal clear. I asked for questions after he taught. One 62-year-old man in the back nervously raised his hand. “I would like to know if this means



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we have to stop beating our wives!?”

My pastor friend and I were appalled. How could he possibly dream there was room for wife-beating after such a clear teaching from the Word?

Let's return to the main rule: “What does the Bible say?”

We carefully shared with the whole group, “If we pray, the Holy Spirit will be our Teacher. If we go to His Word, He will give us a clear answer about beating wives. First, I want you to stop as a group and cry out to the Holy Spirit, ‘Holy Spirit, be our Teacher! We want to rely on you! We need you to give us understanding!’”

After praying, the 12 huddled together and began talking rapidly in the Ina dialect, which the rest of us could not understand. Meanwhile, we prayed together. We cried out to God, “Lord, please let them get this right! We don't need a movement of wife-beaters!” We had to trust that the Spirit of God was leading the group.

Meanwhile, the commotion in the Ina group rose and fell and rose and fell. One person would get up and air an idea. Others would admonish him. Then, someone else would share their opinion, and a few would support it. Finally, after an interminable wait, one of the leaders stood up solemnly and pronounced their decision with import worthy of the Council of Chalcedon: “After studying the Scripture, we have decided to STOP beating our wives!”

We felt an immense sense of relief, yet I questioned the delay.

A day or two later, one of the 12, an Ina man who was a close friend of mine, privately explained their discussion to me. “We have a saying in the Ina language: ‘To be a real

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man, every day you must hit your wife.”

Immediately, I realized the gravity of the 62-year-old man’s question and the reason the answer took so long. His real question was not, “Do we have to stop beating our wives?” Rather, after a startling discovery of the holy standard of God’s ways and the clash with their own culture, the real question was, “Can I be a follower of Jesus and still be a real man in my culture?”

Would we have stepped in if they arrived at a non-biblical answer? Of course. But if we had short-circuited the process by immediately giving them the answer, we would have missed God’s deeper lesson for them. That day, and in many other scenarios like it later, God’s Word was reinforced as the ultimate authority, not culture or any Bible teacher.<sup>42</sup>

### FROM “MEET ONCE A WEEK IN A SPECIAL BUILDING” TO “OUR LIVES ARE INTERTWINED”

One man—newly trained in movement approaches—said his coach offered to talk to him whenever he needed someone to talk to. He ended up calling him in a different city three or four times every day. We need this type of commitment to help those who are passionate and desperate to reach the lost.

We must shift away from the idea of single weekly events in special buildings. Instead, our lives need to be intertwined, with disciples meeting in many places throughout the week. This forms

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<sup>42</sup> Steve Smith, “The Riverbanks of a Movement,” *24:14—A Testimony to All Peoples*, p. 92-95.

a genuine community, with people relying on each other.

One advantage of reaching families and natural groups is that they already have daily relationships and continue this into their growing in Christ, individually and as a church. Like Jesus and His first followers, they live their faith together instead of being an unrelated group of individuals who gather once a week.

Sometimes we mistakenly think that church gatherings should mainly be a weekly occurrence on Sunday. Some churches would add a midweek prayer and/or Bible study. But in the Bible, there are many descriptions of daily frequency for worship, teaching, and encouragement.

- Jesus taught in the temple daily (Luke 19:47).
- They met daily in the temple courts and in homes (Acts 2:46).
- God added to their number daily those who were being saved (Acts 2:47).
- They had a daily distribution of food to widows (Acts 6:1).
- The churches were strengthened in their faith and grew daily in numbers (Acts 16:5).
- The Berean Jews examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true (Acts 17:11).
- Paul reasoned daily with Jews and God-fearers in the public square (Acts 17:17).
- Paul held daily discussions in the hall of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9).
- The believers were told to exhort each other daily to avoid being hardened by sin (Heb 3:13).

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Traditional Christianity often gathers larger groups of unrelated people from multiple places, providing a key reason for once- or twice-a-week meetings. But when the Gospel comes into a natural group (i.e., Cornelius' family and friends, Lydia's household), the lives of the group are already intertwined, and they have daily interactions. As that group becomes Jesus' followers, they become transformed into a baby church that begins to grow in maturity. Prayer, Scripture study, obedience, and worship done on a daily basis means they grow in maturity at a much faster rate than if they did these things as a group just on a weekly basis.

The Church has long recognized that in many places around the world, small groups of believers must meet in all kinds of places. While these have loosely been called "house churches," they do not always meet in houses. They sometimes meet in office buildings, restaurants, or under tents or trees. However, many people expect that once a church becomes successful, it will move out of its initial setting and into a church building to become a "real" public church.

We must shift away from the idea of house churches as temporary and toward an understanding that these are already real churches. A church is a congregation of disciples, not a building. When asked about their definition of the church, many of these movement disciples point to Acts 2:42-47. They study Acts 2 and seek to become and do the things they see in this first church.

### **FROM "KNOWLEDGE-BASED CHRISTIANITY" TO "OBEDIENCE-BASED DISCIPLESHIP"**

Many churches emphasize knowledge over obedience. The most knowledgeable individuals are regarded as the most qualified leaders. But in movements, they consider obedience as criti-

cal in the life of a leader.

Kingdom Movements emphasize teaching people to *obey* all that Jesus commanded (Matt 28:20). We need to shift from “teaching all the commands” (where success consists of knowing the commands) to focus on “teaching to *obey* all of Jesus’ commands” (where success consists of a lifestyle of obeying God, in whatever He reveals to us). Then, as disciples learn more and more of who God is and what He requires of us, they consistently obey Him.

This subtle shift fits with the previous two. If we teach people they should go to Scripture for answers, while reassuring them we will be available to help in that process, we can focus on teaching them to obey what they find in Scripture. Along the way, we encourage and support obedience while leaving it to the Spirit and Scripture to define what they should obey. The life of Sanjay, a traditional church planter who became a faithful disciple-maker, profoundly illustrates this shift to a life of simple obedience to Jesus’ commands.

I was born into a Christian family in India. We followed the Christian traditions. When I was old enough, I received four years of Bible training and became a Bible teacher. Over time, I started 17 churches in rural locations over a large geographical area of my country.

In December 2011, I met Brother W on the road in my city. He asked if I would like to come to his house for training in church planting. At that point in my life, I was a very proud man. I had a large ministry. I had started a school and a Bible training center. I thought, “What can this guy teach me?” I decided not to go.

However, a month later, I called him to wish him a Happy

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New Year. When I called, he said, “I spoke with you before about a church-planting training. Why don’t you come?”

This time, I gave in. I said I would come and bring some friends.

When we arrived, he gave us water to drink and thanked us for coming. Then he gave us paper and pens and said, “Today, we are going to study Scripture. I’m going to go make chai for everyone. While I do that, all of you please copy Matthew 28:16-20 from your Bibles onto your piece of paper. Next to the passage, write how you are going to apply it to your life.”

I thought, “What kind of training is this? All he did was give me a piece of paper and a pen!” I already had Bible college training. I had completed 12 years of very successful ministry. But, in 10 minutes, I was a changed man.

I read in Matthew 28 that Jesus said we must go and make disciples. I wrote that down. Later, after I shared what was on my paper, Brother W asked me, “Sanjay, you have a very large ministry, but do you have any disciples?”

I thought, “I don’t have a single one. In 10 years, I have done nothing for Jesus. Jesus said to make disciples, but up to this day, I have none.”

The next month, I came back to visit Brother W again. We sat together and studied God’s Word. I decided that from then on, I would leave behind all other things. I returned home with one desire—to do nothing less, nothing else than disciple-making. I resigned from the school I had started, my position with the international ministry that paid a good salary, and my job as president of the Bible training center. I left everything. Since that time, I have

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focused on obeying Jesus' command and nothing else.  
And God has faithfully provided for our every need.<sup>43</sup>

Since that initial revelation for Sanjay, he and the Walkers began to train disciple-makers who multiplied disciple-makers and churches. At this point, the movement has grown to over 300,000 churches in 12 years.

Making disciples of all nations requires more than just good ideas. We don't just need additional fruitful practices. We need major paradigm shifts, as we have just outlined here. To the extent we wrestle with and apply any one of them, we will probably become more fruitful. But only as we embrace the whole package can we effectively help catalyze or support movements. We need to trade in the DNA of human tradition for Kingdom Movement DNA.

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43 Walker family, "How God is sweeping through South Asia—Part 1", <https://2414now.net/how-god-is-sweeping-through-south-asia-part-1>.





PART 2  
**ACCELERATORS**



## 6 NOT ENOUGH: ACCELERATION NEEDED

As exciting as these movements are, the current rate of kingdom advance is *not enough*. Twenty-eight percent of the world's people do not have access to the Gospel, and 42.5% are part of an unreached people group with no significant church that can bring the Gospel to their own people.

I (Stan) was born in Indonesia, where my parents were missionaries and served during an amazing movement of God in 1966-68, when an estimated two million Javanese Muslims came into the church.<sup>44</sup> Years later, my wife and I were praying about our call to missions. Where did God want us to go? We felt an urging from God to serve those in greatest need of the Gospel.

Due to the millions of Indonesian Christians, I saw no need for pioneer efforts there. Imagine my surprise to realize an estimated 121 million Indonesians were part of 200+ Unreached People Groups!

In 1996, Indonesian leaders gathered to consider the

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44 Avery T. Willis, *Indonesian Revival: Why Two Million Came to Christ*, (William Carey Library Pub., 1977).

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Great Commission need within Indonesia. Significant collaborative advances were made in prayer, research, and mobilization. Within just five years, the number of Indonesian UPGs being served by Gospel workers grew from only 21 to over 100!

*Amazing and sacrificial efforts were made in the centuries before and the years after 1996, but 28 years ago there were 121 million unreached Indonesians, and today there are 192.5 million unreached Indonesians.*

In 1996 and afterward, our motivation was right, our desire was great, tremendous prayer and mobilization happened, and many people made great sacrifices. But we made a fundamental mistake. We thought sending workers to all these groups would result in reaching them. But the vast majority of us used traditional methods to try to reach groups that had been either resistant or cut off from the Gospel for centuries. We saw some bright spots, but for the most part, we failed to make enough impact to offer real hope of reaching everyone in these groups. Today we are seeing some movements break out in Indonesia, but I am haunted by the many people we have failed to reach.

While movements are the main way we currently see God changing these percentages, tremendous challenges lie ahead.

### CHALLENGE #1: COUNTING UP BEFORE COUNTING DOWN

One danger among some Great Commission thinkers is the desire to count down. We want to determine the number of groups who need to be reached, then mark them off our list—based on certain markers of activities as opposed to outcomes. But our goal is the Gospel for every person and multiplying churches that saturate and transform every community within that people/

language/tribe/*ethnē*.

We almost certainly have more segments than just 7,280 UPGs to reach. Some strategists estimate needing a movement effort for each segment of 100,000 people. One engagement for every segment of 100,000 people among 3.37 billion unreached people groups would be a minimum of 33,700 segments. When you add to “peoples” their “places” (such as the 43,000 world’s districts), the increase in complexity becomes daunting. If each district averages three segments, that could be 120,000 places in need of movements.

**Solution?** Movements are cascading into multiple people groups and places around them. With the DNA of every disciple being a disciple-maker and close cultural affinity to the surrounding peoples, they are positioned by God to reach them.

## CHALLENGE #2: SOME “SINGLE” PEOPLE GROUPS ARE ACTUALLY MULTIPLE GROUPS (THEY ARE WAFFLES, NOT PANCAKES)

Jesus did not tell us to disciple a few individuals but to disciple entire *ethnē*. The Greek word *ethnos* (singular of *ethnē*) is defined as “a body of persons united by kinship, culture, and common traditions, nation, people.”<sup>45</sup> Revelation 5:9 and 7:9 round out the picture of the *ethnē* who will be reached, adding three more descriptive terms: tribes, peoples, and languages—various groups with common identities.

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45 *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, third edition, 2000. Revised and edited by Frederick William Danker, based on Walter Bauer and previous English editions by W.F. Arndt, F.W. Gingrich, and F.W. Danker. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, p. 276.

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In our desire to simplify the task, we have lost some wisdom from the early pioneers of the unreached concept. The Lausanne 1982 people group task force stated: for evangelistic purposes, a people group is “the largest group within which the Gospel can spread as a church planting movement without encountering barriers of understanding or acceptance.”<sup>46</sup>

Here’s one specific example. In the 1990s, a research team led by Marvin Leech discovered that the Jawa (Javanese) people group, which had millions of believers and was counted as one large “reached” people group, was almost certainly at least *eight distinct people groups* by the Lausanne definition. Three of these groups had between 7-10% evangelical Christians, while five of them were less than 1% Christian. Obviously, barriers existed between the 10% Christian Jawa Negarigung and the 0.1% Christian Jawa Pesisir Lor. Counting the Jawa as one people group greatly neglected the five groups who were unreached.

**Solution?** We have seen movements start in all five of the Jawa UPGs in the last ten years. They were started by movement catalysts from Indonesian and Javanese backgrounds. Much more effort is needed to reach 100+ million Jawa people, *but this is a very encouraging start.*<sup>47</sup>

### CHALLENGE #3: 2% IS TOO LOW

A “reached” people group is defined by many to mean a group with more than 2% evangelical Christians. Joshua Project website

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46 Ralph Winter, “Unreached Peoples”, *Mission Frontiers*, August 1989. Archived at <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/unreached-peoples>

47 These Jawa movements are reaching beyond the Jawa people and have started movements in 30+ UPGs and some pre-movement fruit in another 40+ UPGs.

states that “the original Joshua Project editorial committee selected the criteria less than or equal to 2% Evangelical Christian and less than or equal to 5% Professing Christians.”

A history of the term “unreached”<sup>48</sup> shows that prior to 1980, 20% seemed to be the line between reached and unreached. Then in the 1980s various figures such as 5%, 10%, 20% began to circulate. In 1995, the Joshua Project committee arbitrarily chose the criteria of 2% and 5%.<sup>49</sup>

None of these percentages seems to have a basis in anything other than speculation. In 2011, a study out of Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute found that the “tipping point” for the rapid spread of ideas was 10%. “Once that number grows above 10 percent, the idea spreads like flame.”<sup>50</sup> This was the only non-arbitrary and empirical figure we could find. Perhaps we need to look at groups that are *less than 10%* as needing outside help to reach their own people.

**Solution?** Movements are not just good at starting; they are very strong at sustaining efforts. Some movements have grown to 15, 20, even 30 generations. Once a movement reaches four generations in multiple branches, it becomes much more likely to continue multiplying and effectively reaching all of the segments and sub-segments of their people group(s).

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48 Dave Datema, “Defining Unreached: A Short History,” IJFM 33:2 Summer 2016 [https://www.ijfm.org/PDFs\\_IJFM/33\\_2\\_PDFs/IJFM\\_33\\_2-Datema.pdf](https://www.ijfm.org/PDFs_IJFM/33_2_PDFs/IJFM_33_2-Datema.pdf).

49 On the Joshua Project website where they give the 2% and 5% criteria they acknowledge that that this change to 2% was “somewhat arbitrary.”

50 “Minority Rules: Scientists Discover Tipping Point for the Spread of Ideas,” Original paper is here: <http://cs.rpi.edu/~szymansk/papers/pre.11.pdf>

## CHALLENGE #4: OVEREMPHASIS ON ETHNO-LINGUISTIC GROUPS

We have been eager proponents of focusing on UPGs. But we have to admit that sometimes we have focused almost exclusively on ethnolinguistic groups without giving enough consideration to tribal, language, cultural, kinship, and geographical groupings.

Consider the reality that people groups are not segregated into one pure homogenous homeland. They are increasingly intermingled with other groups. This is why the 24:14 Coalition has the vision of movements in every unreached people and place.

The starkest example is cities. There are “593 majority non-Christian megacities”.<sup>51</sup> The incredible complexity of the cities “means that including ‘cities’ as segments to be listed, focused on, described, researched, documented, tracked, measured, and strategically engaged is probably just as important as ‘unreached people groups.’”<sup>52</sup>

**Solution?** Movements are increasingly focused on reaching cities and geographical segments, in addition to ethnolinguistic segments. See the next chapter for one such focus on 110 key cities.

## CHALLENGE #5: THE FAILURES OF THE CHURCH

- The Church has roughly 14,000 times the financial resources and 36,000 times the manpower needed to

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51 Justin Long, “Urbanization and Measuring the Remaining Task,” [www.justinlong.org/2023/05/20/](http://www.justinlong.org/2023/05/20/). A megacity is defined as having a population of one million or more.

52 Ibid.



finish the Great Commission.<sup>53</sup>

- Evangelical Christians could provide all the funds needed to plant a church in each of the 7,280 unreached people groups with only 0.007% of their income.
- Christians spend \$52 billion annually on missions of any kind. Meanwhile \$59 billion is lost to theft by church members.

**Solution?** God is doing a new thing! These movements are brand new breakthroughs with 2,000-year-old patterns. The global church has the opportunity to join this fresh move of God. God is creating streams in the desert, as the most fruitful movements are growing in many of the (formerly) hardest, least reached peoples and places of the world.

As stated above, since 1995, movements have grown at an average annual growth rate of 23%: the number of believers doubling on average every 3.5 years. That is far different from the 1.18% average growth rate of global Christianity in the last 20 years, or even the 1.8% growth of Evangelical and 1.89% of Pentecostal Christians.<sup>54</sup>

This 23% growth is primarily internal, as the movements reach their own populations. Moreover, while seeking to reach their own desperately unreached people groups, these movement disciples are frequently compelled by the Spirit to reach beyond their borders to other nearby peoples and places.

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53 The following statistics are from <https://www.thetravelingteam.org/stats>. They aggregate a variety of sources such as the World Christian Database and World Christian Encyclopedia and other research materials.

54 Justin Long, “How Long to Reach the Goal?” <http://beyond.org/2023/01/25/how-long-to-reach-the-goal/>..

## ACCELERATION NEEDED!

Our desire is not to see the world reached many centuries from now. Our generation is responsible for this generation of lostness.

God is on the move. He is starting Kingdom Movements that far outstrip population growth and begin to transform societies from within in holistic and financially sustainable ways. In movements, disciples multiply disciples, churches multiply churches, and leaders multiply leaders. We are also learning that *movements multiply movements!*

Most of the over 2,000 known Kingdom Movements<sup>55</sup> have been reported by only 40 movement families. The research team of the 24:14 Coalition is tracking the movements emerging in these various global families of related movements. For example, “Family A” has started multiplying churches in over 800 languages. “Family B” is multiplying churches in 157 of the 320 UPGs in their region, with plans to begin reaching the remaining 163 UPGs in the next few years. “Family C” is impacting 73+ UPGs with efforts to reach an additional 50+. “Family D,” twelve years after starting, is impacting 400+ UPGs with more than four generations of churches and another 130 UPGs with some fruit.

So, a key question becomes, “What can we learn from these most fruitful movement families?” What key dynamics are allowing them to grow—not just wide but also deep? The DNA of movements is that growing maturity leads to more effective outreach. Only a strong, sustained movement or movement family can continue to grow internally and externally. Some movement leaders describe aiming for growth that is wide, deep, and long. They want the movement to go wide, to reach every unreached people

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55 From “Global Statistics” accessed 05/24/2024 at [2414now.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/dashboard-template-english.pdf](https://2414now.net/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/dashboard-template-english.pdf).

and place. They want to go deep, so disciples and churches can continue to grow in maturity. They want to go long, so the movement lasts for hundreds of years (or until Christ comes back).

In the following chapters, we will examine seven “accelerators” that God is using to expand His Kingdom through these movements. These are:

- Prayer Strategies
- Kingdom Finances
- Heart-language Bible Translations
- Crisis Responses
- Systems for Justice and Mercy
- Surges
- Movements Starting Movements



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## ACCELERATOR: PRAYER STRATEGIES

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*Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”*

*Matt 9:35-38.*

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Does prayer make a difference?

Several years ago, a church in Phoenix, Arizona, conducted an experiment. Intercessors randomly selected 160 names from a local phone book. They divided the names into two groups—and prayed regularly for one of the groups: 80 homes. They did not pray for the other 80

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homes. After 90 days, they called all the homes, offering to stop by and pray for the family.

Of the 80 homes they had not prayed for, only one person invited them to come in. Of the 80 homes that were prayed for, 69 invited someone to visit, and 45 invited the visitor into their home.<sup>56</sup>

Every movement is born in prayer. When Jesus sent out the Twelve (and later the 70 “other” disciples) to prepare the way for His coming, His first command was to pray to the Lord of the Harvest that He would thrust forth laborers.

Every movement can describe the role prayer played at its start: usually recounting the story of an apostolically gifted leader whose heart was on fire for a particular place or people group, spending time on their knees, begging, like John Knox’s famously passionate prayer, “Give me Scotland, or I die.”

A testimony from the Arab world shows us this process in vivid detail:

In 2012, a group of movement practitioners in the Arab world began to seek God together. At that time, there were no known movements in this part of the world. As the group prayed and sought God that year and the next few years, he gave a collective picture of small fires being started all over North Africa and the Middle East. As these fires started, families and friends gathered around them, eating and singing together. Then someone from that fire would take a burning stick and go to a different area and start a new fire. As this was happening, there was also

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56 Felicity Dale, “Does Prayer Make a Difference?” <https://simplychurch.com/does-prayer-make-a-difference/>

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the picture of volcanic fires underground, that began to break through in great geysers of fire. Eventually, these fires spread throughout the entire region. At the time, the group's understanding was that this meant God would use both relational networks and cataclysmic events to cause a breakthrough in the region. This group and other partners committed to greater prayer and prayer mobilization for the region.

This was about the time the Arab Spring was toppling governments. The resulting chaos and violence increased both disillusionment and openness in the Arab world. In the years since then, there have indeed been breakthroughs with many Kingdom Movements starting throughout the region.

## A GLOBAL WAVE OF INTERCESSION

Forty years ago, the core of the unreached world was 24% of the world's population and remained mainly unengaged and unresponsive. There were few examples of large numbers of Muslims coming to faith in Christ. More than 1,400 years of world history since Muhammad's time showed quite the opposite: millions of Christians becoming Muslims, rarely the reverse. Two thousand years after the apostle Thomas brought the Gospel to India, 97% of Indians still rejected Christianity. Very few Hindus were being reached with the Gospel. Two hundred years of mission efforts in Buddhist heartlands had produced little fruit, with some proclaiming that the vast majority of Buddhists were unreachable. Some unreached pockets responded, but both the total number and global percentage of the unreached continued to grow. Traditional approaches failed to make disciples in a way that exceeded population growth.

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However, over the past few decades, God began doing something amazing in the unreached world, and the key difference seems to be God calling His global Church to greater prayer and fasting. These included various efforts such as the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, *Operation World*, AD 2000, *Global Prayer Digest*, Joshua Project, Praying through the Window, 30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World, and many more.<sup>57</sup> These initiatives provided vital foundations for the movements we now see sweeping through people groups and countries.

One of the reasons these Kingdom Movements have emerged is that the initial catalysts were assigned an overwhelming task and knew that only God could do it. In the 1990s, instead of focusing on personal church-planting efforts, movement catalysts accepted a God-sized assignment for seeing whole people groups reached and discipled—such as 13 million Zhuang people of China, 90 million Bhojpuri language speakers, and nine million Cambodians.

Given their God-sized vision, workers knew their only hope was to mobilize massive prayer. Some focused on starting 24/7 prayer. Others focused on finding intercessors in every time zone around the world. They all sought to find intercessors from all over the world. These specific prayer campaigns combined with the broader global intercession efforts to become part of an unprecedented move of God.

Another story from West Asia shows how prayer preceded a movement there:

A West Asian movement leader recounted mobilizing weekly prayer over a tribal people group living in one specific region, asking the Lord of the Harvest for a breakthrough. As the prayers mounted, eventually a global canopy of prayer was formed to pray unceasingly for these

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57 See Appendix D: A Prayer Wave Preceded the Current Harvest Wave.



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people. After nine years, the leader recounted that the “walls fell, the doors opened,” and the tribal chief gave permission for the Gospel to spread to 2,000 families.

### GOD CHANGES US TO CHANGE THE WORLD

“Prayer begins with God” conveys a double meaning. First, God initiates prayer. He motivates, moves, and causes us to pray. But also, prayer begins with God in the sense that we should focus first on Him. We must start by thinking of Him rather than ourselves, our needs, or others. God is the center of the universe, not us.

Because God is a personal being and created us for fellowship with Himself, He desires us to respond to His love. Isaiah reveals, “As a groom is delighted with his bride, so your God will delight in you” (Isaiah 62:5). Jeremiah advises,

*This is what the LORD says: “Don’t let the wise boast in their wisdom, or the powerful boast in their power, or the rich boast in their riches. But those who wish to boast should boast in this alone: that they truly know me and understand that I am the LORD who demonstrates unfailing love and who brings justice and righteousness to the earth, and that I delight in these things. I, the LORD, have spoken!”*

*Jer 9:23-24, NLT).*

The real purpose of prayer is to know God. He is the best answer to our prayers. Prayer should not consist of just asking God for things. He intends prayer to involve His moving in us—to know Him, love Him, listen to Him, and share our hearts back to

Him. He teaches us to pray for what He wants to do. “For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him” (Phil 2:13, NLT). This conveys a crucial truth about intercession. We do not have to beg God to do something; instead, we join Him where He wants to work. God put the ideas in our minds in the first place. He may have to change us in seeking His answer, but He wants to bring us to a place of being so at one with Him that we only desire and ask for the things He wants.

From this place of relationship, the God of the universe offers us a great privilege: an opportunity to take part in His eternal purpose by praying. Ephesians 6:11-13 tells us to put on God’s armor. When we have put on every piece of our Christian armor, we are ready for the battle. Does Paul say, “Now fight”? No, he says, “Now pray” (verses 18-19).

The Lord calls us to make disciples and gives us the confidence that not even the gates of hell will overcome our efforts to rescue those who are perishing. Jesus promised, “I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven” (Matt 16:18-19, NLT).

### **WHAT DO MOVEMENT DISCIPLES PRAY FOR?**

Biblical patterns for prayer are a core foundation for every movement.<sup>58</sup> We can learn from these brothers and sisters in the way they pray strategically. Shodankeh Johnson and the leaders in his movements equip people with 10 biblical principles of

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58 See Appendix E: Prayer and Fasting in the Bible.

praying in movements.<sup>59</sup> We can join them in these types of prayers. We can pray:

**1. That God will send laborers into the harvest field and increase the number of disciple-makers and intercessors.**

“These were his instructions to them: ‘The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields’” (Luke 10:2, NLT).

**2. That God will touch people’s hearts and draw them to Himself.**

“The king’s heart is like a stream of water directed by the Lord; he guides it wherever he pleases” (Pro 21:1, NLT).

“But Jesus replied, ‘Stop complaining about what I said. For no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them to me, and at the last day I will raise them up.’ As it is written in the Scriptures, ‘They will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me” (John 6:43-45, NLT).

**3. For open doors for the Gospel.**

“Pray for us, too, that God will give us many opportunities to speak about his mysterious plan concerning Christ. That is why I am here in chains. Pray that I will proclaim this message as clearly as I should” (Col 4:3-4, NLT).

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59 Shodankeh Johnson, “Prayer was very critical to Jesus’ ministry,” *Mission Frontiers* (Mar-Apr 2022), archived at <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/jesus-10-movement-principles>.

**4. For persons of peace to be discovered in communities.**

“Whenever you enter someone’s home, first say, ‘May God’s peace be on this house.’ If those who live there are peaceful, the blessing will stand; if they are not, the blessing will return to you. Don’t move around from home to home. Stay in one place, eating and drinking what they provide. Don’t hesitate to accept hospitality, because those who work deserve their pay” (Luke 10:5-7, NLT).

**5. For every stronghold and lie of the enemy to be broken.**

“We are human, but we don’t wage war as humans do. We use God’s mighty weapons, not worldly weapons, to knock down the strongholds of human reasoning and to destroy false arguments. We destroy every proud obstacle that keeps people from knowing God. We capture their rebellious thoughts and teach them to obey Christ” (2 Cor 10:3-5, NLT).

“The wise conquer the city of the strong and level the fortress in which they trust” (Pro 21:22, NLT).

**6. For a fresh anointing and boldness for the disciple-makers.**

“The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free” (Luke 4:18, NLT).

“And now I will send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit

comes and fills you with power from heaven” (Luke 24:49, NLT).

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8, NLT).

“And now, O Lord, hear their threats, and give us, your servants, great boldness in preaching your word... After this prayer, the meeting place shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. Then they preached the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:29,31, NLT).

**7. For an increase in signs, wonders, and miracles.**

“I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father” (John 14:12, NLT).

“People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through him, as you well know” (Acts 2:22, NLT).

“Stretch out your hand with healing power; may miraculous signs and wonders be done through the name of your holy servant Jesus” (Acts 4:30, NLT).

“They were convinced by the power of miraculous signs and wonders and by the power of God’s Spirit. In this way, I have fully presented the Good News of Christ from Jerusalem all the way to Illyricum” (Rom 15:19, NLT).

“And my message and my preaching were very plain. Rather than using clever and persuasive speeches, I relied only on the power of the Holy Spirit. I did this so you would

trust not in human wisdom but in the power of God” (1 Cor 2:4-5, NLT).

**8. For protection and provision for workers.**

“Look, I am sending you out as sheep among wolves. So be as shrewd as snakes and harmless as doves” (Matt 10:16, NLT).

“‘Yes,’ he told them, ‘I saw Satan fall from heaven like lightning! Look, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy, and you can walk among snakes and scorpions and crush them. Nothing will injure you’” (Luke 10:18-19, NLT).

“Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are... I’m not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one” (John 17:11b, 15, NLT).

“And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus” (Phil 4:19, NLT).

“And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others” (2 Cor 9:8, NLT).

**9. For rapid multiplication of the work that results in movements.**

“So God’s message continued to spread. The number of believers greatly increased in Jerusalem, and many of the Jewish priests were converted, too” (Acts 6:7 NKJV).

“Then God blessed them and said, ‘Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground’” (Genesis 1:28, NLT).

“When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father” (John 15:8, NLT).

**10. For other movements and disciple-makers all around the world.**

“Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt 28:19-20, NLT).

“We always thank God for all of you and pray for you constantly. As we pray to our God and Father about you, we think of your faithful work, your loving deeds, and the enduring hope you have because of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess 1:2-3, NLT).

“Pray that the Lord’s message will spread rapidly and be honored wherever it goes, just as when it came to you” (2 Thess 3:1b, NLT).

**HOW DO MOVEMENT  
DISCIPLES PRAY?**

We have been repeatedly struck by the significance of prayer in these movements. We can learn from not just “what” these disciples pray for but also “how” they pray. Obviously, many powerful intercessors around the world are not part of movements.

However, the prayer in movements tends to be similar for all disciples instead of relying on a small committed group of intercessors to do most of the work in prayer. Once again, we acknowledge that these disciples are far from perfect and are the first to admit this. But their prayer has a depth to it that inform our prayers. Disciples in movements pray:

- ***with sacrifice.*** Multiple hours and days are given to prayer, with a willingness to do whatever God asks of them. Some of this is time devoted to only prayer and worship and some of this is “prayer-on-the-go.” Stories abound of people giving up jobs or changing jobs to have more time to pray.
- ***starting with listening.*** It is ironic to use the phrase “listening prayer.” Prayer is communication with God, but often we are so eager to tell God what we want Him to do that we forget the part where He speaks to us. Many disciples in these movements have learned to wait and listen for God to speak before they respond.
- ***as their first work.*** Oswald Chambers reminds us, “prayer does not fit us for the greater work; prayer is the greater work.”<sup>60</sup> Given the great challenges many of these movement disciples face and their own experience, they know that prayer must be the primary focus from which the ministry flows.
- ***with fasting.*** Many disciples fast one day a week with others in the movement, praying for God to rescue the lost. Many movements have a 30- or 40-day fast one or more times a year. Some movements fast 21 or 31 days during January and many movements in the Muslim world fast and pray during the 30 days of Ramadan.

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60 Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, October 17.



- ***with power.*** As we have asked movement leaders around the world about initial breakthroughs, the first response to the Gospel in a new area comes, on average, about 75% of the time, from a healing, exorcism, or other miracle.
- ***as spiritual warfare.*** Recognizing that our battle is not against flesh and blood but against spiritual forces of evil (Eph 6:12), great attention is given to personally and collectively putting on the spiritual armor for the battle (Eph 6:10-18). Careful attention is given to praying for the protection of the workers against Satan's attacks and for the discernment and breaking down of spiritual strongholds.
- ***with repentance.*** In a recent meeting of Gospel workers living in a South Asian country, a group of outsiders and a group of insiders both listed key obstacles to reaching the unreached in the country. The outside expatriate workers came up with a list that focused mainly on external challenges, such as government opposition, entrenched false religions, persecution, and so on. The inside leaders came up with a list that mainly focused on themselves and other local Christians: not enough prayer, lack of sacrifice, lack of faith, and so on. Their conclusion was that the external obstacles did not matter; rather, the reason these people were still unreached was their own failure and the failure of the rest of Christ's body.
- ***in rhythms.*** The rhythms are varied, but all movements have prayer patterns. Some pray together at certain times each day. Weekly rhythms include days of fasting and prayer and all-night prayer meetings weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly. Some movements pray at midnight on the first day of the month, while others pray and fast the first three days of the month.

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- ***sometimes with “special forces.”*** While everyone in a movement is part of the prayer efforts, sometimes people are set aside to do intercession full-time. Several movements have groups of older widows who devote all their time to prayer. From the start of one movement in West Africa, they have had a prayer house devoted exclusively to prayer. They have so many people interested that they are now building a prayer village for people who want to devote their entire lives to prayer.
- ***with urgency and love.*** As people who know what it is like to live in darkness and be a slave to sin and Satan, they have a great passion for seeing others released from these chains and move from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. They pray with urgency because they want their family, friends, and everyone everywhere to come to salvation. They know that only God can change hearts, and they are full of faith that He can and will do it, so they pray.
- ***with multiplication.*** Personal prayer is crucial, so movement disciples want to mobilize many others to join in the work of prayer. The principle is to multiply prayer by modeling prayer and training others to train others to pray. Disciple-makers understand that mobilizing others to pray is not just a matter of quantity, but also a matter of unity and alignment with God’s heart and purposes. By mobilizing believers to pray and bring others to pray, a prayer movement gains momentum and sustains a constant flow of intercession for the advancement of God’s Kingdom.

## GLOBAL PRAYER STRATEGY: 110 CITIES

In 2021, a group of movement leaders began undertaking a global strategy focused on movement efforts in 110 influential

cities. This attempts to integrate global prayer with local movement efforts to experience breakthrough.

They aimed to collaborate with one another and, in a new way, with the wider Body of Christ. They also organized a strategy around an initiative to reach cities. This is not a replacement for a focus on people groups but a recognition that both ethnicity and geography have to be considered in the effort to bring the Gospel to all people.

### WHY ARE CITIES IMPORTANT?<sup>61</sup>

When mission and church leaders talk today about the Great Commission, much of the conversation revolves around reaching specific Unreached People Groups (or, more recently, “Unengaged Unreached People Groups”). Since the 1970s, focusing on the unreached has been a major strategy in mission circles.

While Matthew 28 speaks of “making disciples of the nations (*ethnē*),” focusing too strongly on ethnic groups can introduce significant strategic limitations. Which groups get “on the list” can determine where workers are sent and where they are not. Yet defining a people group is difficult, and making lists of them even more so. Should we define a people group purely by language? What about dialects? What about sociocultural differences? What about political borders? Are Pashto speakers in Afghanistan, for example, the same people group as Pashto speakers in Pakistan or Germany?

When we turn to Revelation 7:9, we see a vision of something wider than just people groups: every *ethnos* (a different form of the word *ethnē*), *phylē* (tribe), *laos* (people), and *glossa* (language) “before the throne.” These words can be translated into English as

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<sup>61</sup> See Appendix F: The Importance of Reaching Cities.

peoples (ethnic groups), clans (families), individual populations (of places), and languages. This suggests the task consists less of ticking boxes next to names of people groups and more of saturating *all the kinds of groups* of people in all the places: “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea” (Hab 2:14).

When Ralph Winter and others began advocating for reaching Unreached People Groups in the 1970s, they did so out of a passion for those cut off from or disconnected from the Gospel. Movements share this passion for reaching those cut off from the Gospel. The focus on cities does not abandon a focus on the unreached. It serves, rather, as a strategic stepping stone to ensure every ethnic group, every family, every population segment, and every language can receive the Gospel.

Cities also represent urban clusters of ethnolinguistic people groups. Many of these people groups are inaccessible in their remote homelands, but through their urban diaspora or immigrant communities, they provide us with gateways back into the remote homelands with their native communities with whom they remain connected. It’s as if God has given us global urbanization as an unparalleled portal into every corner of the world.

### REACHING 110 CITIES AND SURROUNDING REGIONS

Researchers estimated the world to be about 14% urban in 1900. A massive shift has taken place since then. Global researchers now estimate that over 56% of people worldwide live in cities. If this trend continues, over two-thirds of the world’s people—some 6.6 billion people—will probably live in cities by 2050. This would include nearly 1,000 megacities (each over 1 million people), with about half of those megacities largely non-Christian.

During the past few years, God has been working in the hearts of many movement leaders. Their discussions and data-sharing had compiled reports of over 100 million people in over 2000 Kingdom Movements. But they realized that unless something changed, our generation would still fail to bring the Gospel to hundreds of millions of people. As they prayed and consulted with other movement leaders, they asked the Lord to reveal action steps to bring greater breakthroughs in the unreached world. God pointed them to the pattern of massive multiplication in Acts 19.

These movement leaders began to pray and consider how they might follow the Apostle Paul's path, bringing a new level of strategic engagement to cities to reach them and their surrounding less-reached regions. Global researchers provided an initial list of the world's least-evangelized megacities, obtained through the Center for the Study of Global Christianity.<sup>62</sup> The movement leaders discussed this list and prayed, asking God to reveal which of these least-evangelized cities could experience a movement of the Holy Spirit like the one described in Acts 19. As a result, they made additional recommendations of cities not on the list but strategic for reaching Unreached People Groups. When they had completed this vetting process, they had a list of 110 cities (see [110cities.com](http://110cities.com)).

Strategically, these 110 cities contain people from over 90% of the world's 7,280 Unreached People Groups. Many UPGs make their home in one or more of these cities, and each city has substantial relational and economic connections to the surrounding regions and unreached peoples.

For instance, Jakarta (the capital of Indonesia) is home to over 300 different people groups, plus a huge number of migrant

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<sup>62</sup> [www.gordonconwell.edu/center-for-global-christianity/](http://www.gordonconwell.edu/center-for-global-christianity/)

workers who circulate through the city. It has several reputable universities that attract students from all over Indonesia and neighboring countries. It is the primary center of political and economic power in the country and a melting pot of cultures and religions, with substantial Christian, Muslim, and Hindu communities. Many people from remote villages and islands come to Jakarta for work or education, which makes the city a significant place to impact various people groups. Reaching unreached people in Jakarta can impact unreached people throughout Indonesia and Southeast Asia.

In a different context, Diyarbakir, in eastern Turkey, serves as a major waypoint for Asian migrants traveling toward Europe. Reaching this city could influence a broad swath of people from multiple countries and cultural backgrounds.

Although Mecca presents a complex and challenging environment for outreach, we cannot overstate its global significance as a pilgrimage destination. It offers unique opportunities to connect with people from a broad range of backgrounds—people gathered in one place with a shared religious purpose, who will then scatter to every country on earth.

Focusing outreach efforts on these cities can have a ripple effect, creating networks of influence that extend into the surrounding region and even back to the home countries of migrant populations. By understanding and using the dynamics of urban influence, initiatives can reach more people more effectively than by focusing on isolated communities alone.

## FUELING THE BREAKTHROUGHS

In most of the 110 cities, work has already begun. Movement teams are already working, and some of them have seen small but growing movements start. Now we are inviting Great Commission

Christians around the world to serve and assist the movements in these cities. We want to enable these movements to extend to every tribe, language, and people represented in them and then follow those relational lines back to their home cities and lands.

With the global prayer support and encouragement already happening, they have begun praying and planning toward reaching every unreached person and place with the Gospel.

For new efforts in cities, the work has begun—as all movements do—with prayer, prayerful planning, and spiritual mapping. Movements seek to first understand each individual city. They send teams to walk the streets, meet people, learn its history, uncover historic spiritual patterns and challenges, and intercede for its future.

Prayer support plays a crucial role in this effort. People all over the world can take part in the 110 Cities effort ([110cities.com](http://110cities.com)) by praying for these teams as they begin the work. This testimony from one of the cities shows some of the effects of this prayer support:

In one of the world's least evangelized cities, often a site of religious pilgrimage, movement leaders began to coordinate their evangelism and discipleship efforts in collaboration with the intentional and timely prayer of global prayer movements. They noticed three significant shifts. First came a sense of boldness in the teams sent to mix among those on a spiritual pilgrimage. Second, a general sense of openness and an absence of the spiritual darkness that had previously dominated most conversations. In fact, many of the pilgrims reported unfulfilled expectations and a lack of any spiritual encounter with their former religion. In contrast, their interaction with the supernatural, characterized by dreams, visions, and

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

revelations about Jesus, markedly intensified. This opened the way for the third factor: significant openness to Jesus-centered conversations, receptivity, and commitment to radical obedience.

Any effort to reach a city of millions of people comprehensively that also influences the surrounding region requires an enormous collaborative effort. Both local disciples and disciples and churches from other regions have plenty of work to do.

Local disciples do most of the frontline work of disciple-making and church-formation. Near-culture disciples and churches, perhaps in the same movement or nearby movements, can often send teams to join campaigns, holiday celebrations, and events around religious festivals.

In many of the remaining unreached places, foreigners stand out and face rejection. Considering that challenge, what role can believers from the global Body of Christ play in specific locations? We can start toward an answer by actively listening to the needs expressed by teams on the front lines. Global disciples can seek out particular activities that may help local workers, but we need to remember to ask, “What will it take?” rather than simply offering what we can do.

An early example of being ready to do ‘what it takes’ is found in the life of William Carey:

William Carey is often called the “Father of Modern Missions.” He and some other English leaders organized the Baptist Missionary Society to begin a Great Commission effort. Dr. Thomas, a young Christian surgeon, had gone out under the East India Company. Greatly impressed with the deep needs of lost people, he returned to the U.K. to raise funds and seek a companion before returning.



## FORESTS IN THE SEED

“From Thomas’s account,” one of the men recalled, “we saw there was a gold mine in India, but it seemed almost as deep as the center of the Earth. Who will venture to explore it?” “I will go down,” said Carey to his brethren, “but remember that you must hold the ropes.” “We solemnly engaged to do so; nor while we live shall we desert him.”<sup>63</sup>

In these cities and regions, many are risking and sometimes giving their lives to bring the Gospel to unreached people. We must do our part to hold the ropes for them.

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63 Mary E. Farwell, *The Life of William Carey* (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1888), p. 20.



## 8

# ACCELERATOR: KINGDOM FINANCES

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*But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today.*

*Deuteronomy 8:18*

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In a constantly changing world where economic independence and sustainable growth play crucial roles, we see a vital intersection of Kingdom Movements, business development, and generosity.

Most followers of Jesus in these movements have families and jobs. Nearly all local fellowships within Kingdom Movements are led by trained volunteers rather than professional clergy. Everyone ministers. At the same time, some of the larger families of movements need specialized ministry leaders to provide training and oversight. While Kingdom expansion lies at the core of movements, they're grounded in the tangible realities of life.

In the past, missionary activity "in foreign lands" has relied on

donations from missionaries' home countries, but this model has many weaknesses. It is susceptible to the whims of donors, the ability to transfer money between countries, fluctuations in the global economy, wars, and exchange rates for the value of that money.

Dependence on external revenue can hinder a movement's growth. Movements need to seek local solutions, which they can sustain in their contexts and scale for future growth. Church workers' ministry within their home cultures has typically been sustained by the tithes and offerings of local Christians. However, greater resources are often needed for outreach to new areas. God's people need to create an ecosystem where the community can sustain itself, multiply, and expand without compromising its cultural ethos.

One challenge is that, very often, unreached places are economically less-developed places. Unreached People Groups are often the poorest of the poor. In the year 2000, unreached groups comprised 29% of the world's population, yet accounted for only 12% of total global income; this ratio has not changed significantly since then.<sup>64</sup>

As faith-driven movements spread, they face economic and spiritual challenges. Movements choose to avoid dependency, so new wealth-creating structures that are culturally indigenous are formed. These do not require outside funds and are sustainable within the countries. People who operate these businesses seek to have culturally appropriate levels of income and wealth. They will be able to interact with other people in the community, create jobs for people in the community, and fund the creation of other businesses (thus honoring the principle of multiplication).

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64 David Barrett & Todd Johnson, *World Christian Trends* (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2001), p. 52.

The Lord has granted humans the capability to create wealth. Creating wealth is not an end in itself; movement leaders think deeply about what God would have them do with the resources He's provided. A community of Christ-followers seeking transformation in their culture must also impact community economics.

The wealth created can go far beyond just economic uplift for those directly involved. A Kingdom-focused business can become an “engine” that helps equip, grow, and multiply a movement. For instance, when Cru<sup>65</sup> discovered one Unreached People Group lacked a Jesus Film in their heart language, they arranged to provide training, recording equipment, travel, and accommodations to movement leaders from that region. To Cru's surprise, no one ever submitted a budget for the project because a Kingdom-focused business among those same people generously used their profit to advance the Good News.

By its very nature, a movement cannot rely solely on external financial resources. Harnessing the power of culturally indigenous business structures provides an alternative. By intertwining faith and entrepreneurship, movements achieve financial independence and also create powerful engines that propel them forward in innovative ways. This self-reliance both safeguards them against economic uncertainties and fosters a community-driven approach to spreading their teachings.

### **1. KINGDOM BUSINESSES ARE CONTEXTUALLY APPROPRIATE**

Staying rooted in the local context is paramount. Beyond financial returns, a business needs harmony between business practices and local customs, ensuring both monetary success and

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65 Formerly named Campus Crusade for Christ.

genuine social acceptance. Businesses that resonate with the economic and cultural pulse of an area can harness local resources and cultural practices to foster growth.

Local customers can afford and sustain businesses that are normal for an area, including appropriate technology, space requirements, and management and reporting structures that fit cultural norms. There is no need to import significant materials. Such businesses are not viewed with suspicion as an outsider's establishment. They can be locally tested and, if successful, taught to others for reproduction in other locations. Without indigenous flavor, even the most well-intentioned business may draw undue attention and be perceived as a foreign plant from a distant government or outside religion. But, as this real-life story of a young boy named Hafiz illustrates, a business that fits the local context can have far-reaching and everlasting effects.

In Central Asia, one Kingdom movement supplied the capital to start a new business in an unreached area. The team prayed and felt impressed to begin a goat business. To acquire the goats, they decided to go house to house, asking people if they would sell their goats so the new business could begin. This strategy enabled them to meet every family in the area and introduce themselves and the business.

They needed a location outside of town for the actual business, where they could acquire the needed land. As they built houses and barns to prepare the farm, the people who sold their goats would come by to visit and offer help. While working together, our teams would ask if they could pray for the needs of the people in the village.

Every day, more and more people learned the team had spiritual power. Soon, even more people came asking the

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team to pray for their problems and for physical healing. The believers kept praying, and God answered their prayers with supernatural healing.

One day, early in the morning, a family brought their young boy (not yet a teenager), who was a Hafiz (a special title meaning he had memorized the entire Qur'an and had also been named an imam). They told our team, "We sent our son away to board at a madrassa so he could study Islam, but we realize his studies are incomplete; he doesn't have strong faith. We know this because when he prays, he has no power to heal people. We have brought him this morning to complete his faith."

As the mother explained her request to the team leader, a female member of the team overheard the request and, with a powerful anointing of the Holy Spirit, placed the Bible on her chest, raised her voice, and proclaimed with a loud voice all about Jesus and the Gospel. Suddenly, everyone there saw the power of God touch the mother of the Hafiz. She grabbed his hand and walked him over to the woman who was declaring the praises of God. The mother said, "We gave up our son to study Islam, but now we see Jesus is God! Our son needs to study at your feet. Do not return him to me until he completely knows that Book, knows Jesus, and has the power to heal!" Then the parents left.

After a few weeks, the son returned home to share the news with his parents. He had received Jesus, had been filled with the mighty power of the Holy Spirit, and had the power to heal by the mercy of Jesus.

Twenty-six households have already come to Jesus through this boy!

This story exemplifies the power of aligning business objectives with local sensibilities. The team started a simple goat business—something normal for the area—so it was accepted and grew. With more trusted encounters, the business became a conduit for spiritual conversation and healing prayers. This underscores the importance of contextual appropriateness in business. Such ventures not only thrive economically but also serve as catalysts for profound personal and community transformations.

## 2. KINGDOM BUSINESSES PROVIDE INCOME THAT SUPPORTS LABORERS

A Kingdom business project first aims to provide income that supports the church planters and gives them a genuine reason to live in a particular place and among a particular people—a reason that blesses the local community. A local business is a far more sustainable, dependable, and reasonable source of support for their work. The Apostle Paul worked to provide for himself (Acts 18:3) while accepting contributions from other churches to support the work.

The following story shows how wise business models lead to the support of workers and builds bridges for the Gospel.

A movement in Africa sent a research team to explore possibilities for an appropriate business in an area where the Gospel had never penetrated.

After several weeks, they returned to the movement leaders with a proposal to launch an agricultural business, providing tractors and other motorized tools to enhance farming. The movement mobilized prayer and funds to send a family to establish the business. The business would buy its own farm, use better farming techniques,



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and lease out its equipment to improve the nearby farms.

At first, the surrounding farmers suspected the new family that moved in and their mechanized approach to farming. But as the team cleared the land and planted the seed, local people became interested. By the time of the first harvest, local farmers showed great interest in receiving training in better farming techniques and leasing the tractor. As they worked with the local farmers they not only helped them improve their economic situation but many heard and responded to the Gospel.

A profitable business had begun, but more importantly, the business had produced opportunities to build relationships that would disciple families into the Kingdom. The right business model will provide food for workers—and also provide opportunities for Jesus’ kind of food: “My nourishment comes from doing the will of God, who sent me, and from finishing his work. You know the saying, ‘Four months between planting and harvest.’ But I say, wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest” (John 4:34-35, NLT).

### 3. KINGDOM BUSINESSES ENABLE JOB CREATION

Economic stability and prosperity in communities, especially faith-driven communities, rely heavily on the ability to provide sustainable incomes. The impact of a Kingdom-focused business results from its capacity to create new jobs, sustain its workers, and resonate with the community it serves. A local business anchored in the community’s needs and values can foster economic and spiritual growth, as this example from western Asia shows:

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In a rural part of this region, each farmer grew their crops and then took them to market, competing against their neighbors on price and quality. Noticing that selling only to the local market limited income and the possibility of expansion, Kingdom-focused business owners proposed a different solution. What if they formed a wholesale produce company and sold their crops together? This would guarantee a better price for the crops and help them expand to other nearby villages, as well as to the big city several hours away.

Some farmers initially felt hesitant to agree, but momentum built as the plan was laid out in more detail. First, each family's income would increase. Next, the growing season could be extended to meet the larger demand, creating more jobs.

Most importantly, the Kingdom-focused business team became an intricate part of the lives of each farmer in their area. As leaders who had brought economic blessing, the Kingdom workers were listened to and respected. Opportunities to share the Gospel abounded as the wholesale business grew, jobs were created, and economic stability increased.

The transformative power of a thoughtfully designed business becomes clear—not just adding to pocketbooks but also knitting more tightly the fabric of a community. In western Asia, the farmers didn't just witness a surge in their incomes; they became part of a larger, shared vision. When businesses are built on principles of cooperation, trust, and shared benefit, they create jobs and pave the way for broader community engagement, spiritual growth, and a shared sense of purpose—turning simple transactions into lasting relationships.

#### 4. KINGDOM BUSINESSES ENABLE INTERACTION WITH PEOPLE

A business that enables believers to interact with the local community in ways that are a blessing can lead to multiple opportunities to share the Gospel. It can also demonstrate the transformation that God's Kingdom brings.

One movement built a business offering bottles of clean water to homes for a reasonable price. This contextually appropriate business gave believers the opportunity to go from house to house, both to offer the water bottles for sale and to bring the bottles once they were purchased. Since customers purchased water regularly, the teams could go back to each house weekly or monthly. This gave them multiple opportunities to interact with the families.

Engaging with communities, especially ones wary of or unfamiliar with new ventures, requires patience, persistence, and genuineness. However, when a business' goals align with the good of the community, the results can be transformative.

The following story shows how, despite initial suspicion, persistence led to a profound change in spiritual understanding and acceptance. The power of persistent, genuine interaction resulted in a harvest.

The local people were not friendly or hospitable when our team arrived. After eleven visits to the same village, the team finally convinced local leaders to hold a *jirga* (council meeting) and discuss the possibilities of our living there and starting a business. The team shared all the ways the business and the team would help the village—in medicine, jobs, and hunger, as well as reduce the death toll from poverty. During this discussion, God spoke to

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the village elder, who eventually declared: “We agree to this new business, and we will all work together to see success.” It was a breakthrough deal.

The next day, as our teams started the business, hundreds of men and women joined to become a part of its success. Early every morning, many people came to see the business and offered to help. When the people came, our team asked everyone to join in our morning prayers in the name of Jesus.

At first, the Muslims would come alongside the team and pray their usual Muslim prayers, but soon, up to 265 people gathered before sunrise to pray in the name of Jesus! These prayers continued every day for a month. One day in the second month, a tribal leader overheard the Jesus prayers and decided to join in. After a few days, this same tribal leader asked our team, “When I pray the Muslim prayers, I don’t feel any peace in my heart, but when I pray in the name of Jesus, peace fills my heart. Who is Jesus?”

The team saw this as the open door they had been praying for and began sharing the Gospel with him. Tears came to his eyes as he heard about Jesus’ love and forgiveness, and he said, “I will come every day and pray in Jesus’ name.”

Soon, word spread that this leader had come, discussed the prayers with our team, and was praying in the name of Jesus. Many additional people came to learn about Jesus and experience Him in the same way. They eventually said, “We want to follow Jesus.”

Within two months, the entire village stopped going to their mosque to pray, and hundreds of men, women, and the tribal leader started praying in Jesus’ name!

## 5. KINGDOM BUSINESSES SHARE AND MODEL THE GOSPEL THROUGH KINGDOM WAYS OF WORKING

Businesses can provide many opportunities for believers to act in just, equitable, and uncorrupted ways. By modeling how to live out Kingdom values, other people can see the difference that the Gospel makes in the disciples' lives and want that difference in their own lives and the lives of their loved ones. This story from a very strict religious area demonstrates these truths.

In one area, neighbors began to notice a business that, besides providing a needed commercial service in the community, offered after-school classes and basic education to young girls. They had never seen other businesses do this.

Soon, mothers from around town began to approach the business owner's wife, asking how she convinced her husband to allow girls to have an education in this strict religious environment. She answered, "Our God is merciful and loves all children. Since my husband has started following God more fervently, he has shown kindness to our daughters and has been teaching them to read. He recently thought it would be good for other girls to learn as well."

This sparked such discussion throughout the community that many women began meeting with the business owner's wife to learn more about how to convince their husbands to honor their own daughters in this way. After several weeks, the women in the community reported that these discussions had gone well. The business owner's wife told her husband, "I think it is time that you meet

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with the men. They are ready to hear about the love and forgiveness offered in Jesus.” The ripple effects of these events is continuing in the community and nearby places.

A business built on Kingdom values can bring profound transformation. More than just commercial entities, such businesses become beacons of hope and change. They meet tangible needs and also address deeper societal norms and biases. By illuminating the path of love and justice they become more than just places of trade. They pave the way for entire communities to reflect upon their values and move closer to the Way of Jesus.

### **6. KINGDOM BUSINESSES SERVE AS A BRIDGE TO ADDITIONAL MODELS OF MINISTRY**

Businesses can stretch beyond just creating wealth. A community’s economic situation will naturally improve when people are healthy, educated, and acting justly and fairly. Kingdom businesses promote things like schools and medical care, which can bless the community and offer additional ways to model Kingdom life. The following story illustrates how this built a bridge for the Gospel to both Shia and Sunni Muslims in the same area.

My name is Akil. My people are Sunni Muslims, and for the past seven generations, we have lived in this area among Shia Muslims. Our culture and our thoughts differ greatly from the Shia Muslims, and we have experienced persecution from them. Over time, we have found it easier to live away from the city and travel there only to collect food and supplies.

One day, several months ago, God changed our lives—on

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the day the business team leader came to our village. He came with a new idea of goat farming. We live as nomads, always moving from place to place, so at first, we thought these new people were different from us. We stayed away from them while they started their goat farm. But over time, we saw them helping us in our everyday challenges, especially with our children.

Every night, the team would come and visit our area leader and share for many hours about family and children. We did not understand this. For generations, we could not care for children and have sent them out to watch the goats every day. But these new people asked if they could help our children learn to read and write in school. We were very excited because we had never had a school here. All our families got together, discussed it, and eventually said, “Yes, you have permission to teach our children.” We entrusted 411 of our children to them.

Over time, we saw how they loved our children, which began to change our hearts. Then, the Shia Muslims also saw the dramatic changes in the way our youth behaved, so they sent their children to the school. Now, over 2,000 children attend this school. Finally, we, as parents, began asking our children what they were learning in this school that changed their hearts and behavior. That’s when our children led us to Jesus.

## 7. KINGDOM BUSINESSES DO NOT LACK CHALLENGES

Not every business will succeed. Movement disciples understand risk is inevitable and keep learning how to more effectively

design and implement businesses. Some, as in the story below, get very close to failure before they succeed; others will not succeed at all.

In one metro area, a team found a village and eventually discovered a business that would be an excellent opportunity to interact with many people and also share the Gospel. With great faith and enthusiasm, they started a small hotel that also served tea and provided fresh bread.

The team leader shared, “In the beginning, we had some challenges because all our team members were outsiders, and the people did not accept us.” In fact, this problem was severe and lasted over a month. The leader continued, “With no customers coming to the hotel, we prayed day and night for the Lord to help us. We felt concerned that if the business didn’t work, we would soon run out of food.

“One night, we all felt very discouraged. The business seemed finished, and all our food was gone. We called a special meeting to pray and discuss whether to close the business. We felt very ashamed to admit defeat in the face of our King, but we had no money left. We concluded the devil was very strong, controlling people’s hearts. As we continued to pray, the Lord spoke through one of our team members, reminding us that in God’s Word, Jesus instructed His disciples to shake the dust off their feet if they were not received. After more discussion, we all accepted this as wisdom for our situation, so we prepared our hearts to close the business the next day. Everyone felt very sad.”

Early the next morning, the team left their house to go close the hotel/tea shop and bakery. But as they arrived, something strange happened. It could only be a miracle



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from the Father God. Over 100 people were standing in line waiting for tea!

The leader shared, “We wanted to ask them why, after all these months, they had come today, but before we could speak, they began to all speak at once: ‘Why are you not open yet? Come quickly! Open the hotel and serve us breakfast.’

When they paused their shouting, I asked the crowd what had happened, since no one had come for an entire month, and now 100 people stood in line. A man spoke for the crowd, saying, ‘God has blessed this place. Each of us had the same dream last night. The angels of God were drinking tea in this hotel, and a big flash of light suddenly came from the sky and stayed over the hotel. This hotel is blessed. We began to wake each other up early this morning and found out we all had the same dream! Now we understand you are people from God, and we will be blessed if we come to your hotel.’”

Now, the hotel is full, the tea shop has plenty of business, and people come to see the place where the angels had tea and the light rested in the night. Large crowds are now visiting and hearing about our Father God!

Faith-driven businesses transcend mere profit and serve as a spark for broader community engagement and profound spiritual growth. Such ventures, deeply rooted in Kingdom values, foster economic resilience. More importantly, they sow seeds of hope, transformation, and lasting relationships in communities worldwide. In the next chapter, we’ll look at one more step in the ways movements affect communities: when they stand for the oppressed, challenge communities to righteousness, and protect the vulnerable.



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## ACCELERATOR: HEART LANGUAGE SCRIPTURE

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*“Can a group be considered truly reached if they have been contacted only through their second language, and there are few, if any, highly bilingual people in the group? Can they be considered reached if they do not have the Scriptures in a language they understand adequately? We have to answer that ministry in the mother tongue and mother tongue Scriptures are two of the prerequisites for nearly all peoples in order for them to be accurately described as reached.”*

*Barbara Grimes, Ethnologue*<sup>66</sup>

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When I (Stan) was a college student, I spent nine months in Senegal. As a former French colony, French was the official language of government and education. The missionaries who went to Senegal usually went to France first and learned the official language, but most did not

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66 Barbara F. Grimes, “‘Reached’ Without the Scriptures?” *IJFM*, vol. 7, no. 2, Apr. 1990.

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learn a local language. When I was there, I helped in a community center with children and teenagers. I did not speak French, but I also knew most of the children spoke the Wolof language in their homes. I began to learn some Wolof from some of the teenagers and crafted some simple Bible stories in Wolof.

When the long-term missionaries told the children Bible stories in French, the children often talked with each other and did not pay attention to the stories. They mainly seemed eager to get to the crafts and activities. It was chaotic and hard even to hear the story due to all the chatter from the children.

On the first day I began to tell a Bible story in Wolof, the children reacted with surprise, and almost immediately, the entire room was completely silent and remained silent for the entire story. From that day on, whenever Wolof was used, the children always paid close attention. My Wolof was very simple, and I am sure it was not very good. The missionaries' French was fluent, and the children spoke French quite well. But listening to the stories in their own heart language captivated them. People desire and deserve to hear the Word of God in their own language.

As you read this book in English, you probably do not realize that at one time, John Wycliffe (c. 1331–1384) and his followers experienced a prolonged campaign and persecution aiming to prevent the Bible from being translated into the “vulgar” English language.<sup>67</sup> The leaders of the Church felt that the Bible should be

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67 “Why Wycliffe Translated the Bible Into English,” *Christian History*, Volume II, No. 2, Issue 3, 1983. Archived at [christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/archives-why-wycliffe-translated](http://christianhistoryinstitute.org/magazine/article/archives-why-wycliffe-translated).

only in Latin and interpreted only by church leaders who spoke Latin; thus, they persecuted Wycliffe and his followers as heretics. Wycliffe argued, “Christ and His Apostles taught the people in the language best known to them. ...believers should have the Scriptures in a language which they fully understand.”<sup>68</sup>

Bible translators have served and sacrificed to translate the Bible into the heart languages of many people. According to statistics from Joshua Project and Progress.Bible, 724 languages have the full Bible, 1,617 have just the New Testament, and 1,248 have only portions, as of this writing. This is an enormous achievement. However, it leaves 3,799 languages—more than half of the world’s total—with no Scripture.<sup>69</sup>

Many of today’s Kingdom Movements have taken root using trade languages, but the movements need the Bible in their heart language to fully mature and be strengthened against persecution. But there are often challenges to translating the Bible into these “Bibleless” languages.

### KEY CHALLENGES

- The remaining languages are often in areas hostile to the Gospel.
- The remaining languages have fewer speakers.
- Often, what is classified as a dialect needs its own translation.
- Governments sometimes oppose the use of these languages to encourage national unity.

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68 Ibid.

69 “Data – ProgressBible,” *ProgressBible*, [progress.bible/data](https://progress.bible/data).

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- For these and other reasons, traditional translators have trouble accessing these difficult areas and helping local translators.
- Copyright restrictions keep local translation teams from accessing needed resources.
- Copyright restrictions often prevent new translations from replacing outdated translations.
- Financial models built on Western donors are often not feasible in certain contexts.
- Some existing translations are greatly out-of-date or otherwise unusable.

## GOD IS AT WORK

These challenges do not surprise God. In His wisdom, He has used existing trade-language Bible translations to multiply disciples and churches in many of the remaining Bibleless languages. These disciples are positioned inside these language communities and are willing to face life-threatening risks in translation because they deeply yearn to provide the Bible—to both believers and lost people—in their own heart language. God has allowed us to live in a day when we can strengthen and support those who risk so much.

Experienced translators have been empowering movement disciples to develop their own translations. Movements have either completed or are involved in translations of over 200 languages. This involves several dynamics.

- **Crowd-sourced:** A team of 25 to 30 mother-tongue bilingual speakers are trained and then get ongoing feedback

from a larger community of several hundred disciples and lost people.

- **Computer-aided:** Various translation tools can help with oral translation, consistency checking, and similar-language aids.
- **Expert-guided:** Translators with decades of experience are mentoring the movement translators and providing multiple translation and biblical resources in many key languages.

The goal of the translations is to be:

- **Clear:** A trustworthy translation is clear when it is easily read and understood. The words, grammar, and structure of the translation are those currently used by the language group.
- **Accurate:** A trustworthy translation is accurate when it has the same message as the source. Nothing is missing, added, or changed. The meaning is conveyed in a faithful and consistent way.
- **Natural:** A trustworthy translation is natural when it sounds like it was translated by members of the heart language group. The translation should sound like everyday language, just as the New Testament did for its original audience.
- **Movement Approved:** The text is clear, accurate, natural, theologically consistent, and effective in evangelism and church planting.

Through this process, a translation of Scripture can be developed from an initial group of stories to a finished version of the complete Bible.<sup>70</sup>

### THE IMPACT OF SCRIPTURE ENGAGEMENT

Movement-led Bible Translation measures the increase in both quantity (number of new churches and disciples) and quality (discipleship metrics of transformed lives and communities) and serves as the final piece in measuring Scripture impact.

In the Horn of Africa, a Scripture translation team was formed by those who had already been discipled, made new disciples, and multiplied their house churches to at least four generations. After receiving training from qualified translation mentors, they began the arduous process of reading the biblical text from a gateway language and translating it into their own tribal language, spoken by over two million people. These Kingdom Movement translators describe how local resources and indigenous people can accelerate the translation of the Bible even in difficult contexts:

At first, the process seemed to go smoothly, but soon, for various safety reasons, their mentors left the region and moved back to Europe. Then came persecution from the neighborhood religious authorities and the loss of their daily jobs. Without support from the West or jobs nearby, these translators had to decide: Was translating the Word of God worth their lives and the safety of their families?

Long conversations ensued, and testimonies came

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70 For a more detailed explanation of the translation process, see Appendix G: Movement-Led Bible Translation Process.



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pouring in from nearby house churches. Rice, goats, and eggs began showing up at the doors of the translation teams, with coffee and tea brought during the day. What began as a small team of trained people became the responsibility of an extended church community. Today, multiple movements have been birthed from this sacrificial beginning. The Word is worth it!

By involving at least several hundred people in translating and checking the translation, the community gains a strong sense of ownership, which increases their respect for and use of the Bible. The lives of disciples among this people group will be impacted during the testing process as they deepen their understanding and application of Scripture and use newly translated passages in discipleship processes. William experienced a situation a few years ago that shows how a team translating the Bible gained a better understanding of Jesus' values in contrast to their culture's values:

“Brother, how can Jesus come in on a donkey? We have to change this story. He is our King, and no King would ever humble Himself to ride on a donkey. Donkeys are beasts of burden.”

I (William) said in reply, “Let’s read the story together and ask the Holy Spirit to solve this for us.” As we slowly went through the text and discussed for the next several hours, a beautiful picture emerged. Every other king would insist on riding in on a camel, but King Jesus humbled Himself, coming to us lowly and meek. This was His power, not in prestige but in service.

Excitement filled the room as the leaders sensed a deeper connection to their Savior. Jesus was a humble king,

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and all of them came from humble means. As we ended the training that day, I asked them to go and share this newfound understanding of Jesus with their family and friends. The next day, joy overflowed. Jesus was not like other kings, demanding things from people. He came to serve and give life, as should we.

Newly translated Scripture portions become tools for evangelism, as translators ask local nonbelievers to help by checking whether they can understand the translated passages. This serves as an effective way of sharing the Gospel with family and friends. Often, during this time of nonbelievers reading or listening to the translated Scripture to give feedback, the heart of the nonbeliever is softened and turned toward the Gospel. Some come to faith just by reading God's Word. One remarkable story from a Movement disciple illustrates this.

Here in the Horn of Africa, a system exists in which families send their young and impressionable children to people like me. We recruit and train them for a life of service—to serve without question. I started just like them. I was still a boy when I memorized the entire Qur'an. No one was more passionate than I.

But a problem began with a sharp pain in my back, which came and went. I ignored the pain and hoped it would go away. I didn't know I had developed kidney stones from lack of water. Soon, the pain became constant. So I hid myself in a mountain village, hoping that whatever I had would run its course. I didn't know that the village had visitors.

A Bible translation team had come to check up on one of their manuscripts. They heard about me. I wasn't exactly

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a secret. I had been recruiting in that village for years. The team came to me with medicine. Why would they do that? I would have shot them on the spot if the tables had been reversed.

Not only did they give me medicine, they stayed with me overnight to monitor my progress.

While I slept, they worked on their handwritten manuscript. At four in the morning, I woke up to see them at work, which made me curious. What could they possibly be working on in the middle of the night that was worth risking their lives for? They shared with me their notes from a book called Titus. I couldn't stop reading it.

Something important happened to me: something deeply spiritual. I asked them to pray for me, and I instantly felt the warmth of my healing. I've never felt such power in my whole life. At that moment, I was truly changed.

I am now a follower of Jesus. But now I have a different message that I tell with a new passion. I don't recruit; I rescue. Instead of taking boys and sending them to die in a holy war, I send them home to live out God's love and truth.

I know the danger I'm in, but I'm not afraid. I'm evading the same men I recruited as boys. I can't take back my recruiting boys for jihad. I can't change my past. What I can do is take the time I have left and change as many futures as I can.

Once the translation is completed, it is distributed for ongoing discipleship and evangelism. Depending on the circumstances of the local churches, distribution may take place through print-on-demand and/or digitally through MicroSD cards, audio devices,

Bluetooth, and/or off-internet local Wi-Fi.<sup>71</sup> This is when it begins to have a wider impact. This story from the Bhojpuri movement in India shows how audio devices helped to spread the Gospel widely.

Approximately 100 million people speak the Bhojpuri language. Their homeland is in North India and includes Varanasi, the holiest city of Hinduism. Gautama Buddha came from this language group, and he preached his first sermon and gathered his first disciples in Varanasi. For centuries, the Gospel had no impact in this area of North India.

Initial efforts to reach the Bhojpuri people used the Bible in Hindi, with people reading or listening to the Bible in Hindi, then doing informal oral translations into Bhojpuri. This resulted in a significant number of multiplying churches. The leaders of this growing movement knew that translating the Bible into Bhojpuri was crucial, but they could not find any translators willing and able to do this, so they worked on it as a larger community. Leaders in this movement say that having the Bible in their heart language led to explosive growth.

Bhojpuri disciples would bring an audio Bible to a village, and families took turns playing the audio in their homes every night, with many other people inside and outside the home listening. The Bible would then be shared with the next home. People often wept when hearing the Bible in their heart language. Today, the single largest modern Kingdom Movement is among this language group, with millions of people having become disciples of Jesus since the 1990s.

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71 A unit that allows users to access Bible texts and films by local Wi-Fi without giving access to the broader internet.

## DIFFERENT FORMATS FOR DIFFERENT NEEDS

Most new followers of Jesus come out of religions that have some type of holy book that plays an important role in their old beliefs. When they become followers of Jesus and are baptized, one of the first things they ask about is the “holy book.”

Some of the new disciples are either illiterate or oral-preference learners. Oral Bible translation puts God’s Word into audio form, which is very useful for these believers. Oral communicators can most easily create an audio translation. They use the same principles of translation as the written translations. Once an oral translation is finished, it can be made into a written translation that serves the whole body of believers.

When the New Testament is translated into a heart language, sometimes this is in a high-security area. This prohibits printing in large numbers. One alternative is to use “print on demand” to produce small, secret runs of 200 or 300 copies at a time. These copies are brought into the area through various means and distributed through the relational networks of disciples in the movement.

Another alternative is to distribute digital forms of Scripture through mobile Wi-Fi hotspots, where up to 15 people can download electronic copies of the Bible or the New Testament in about 20 minutes. People like Hussein are bringing these distribution channels into very high security places:

Hussein and over 1,000 others like him had completed their training and were set to release the Word of God through Wi-Fi hotspots spread around the main square of the capital city. He looked at his watch, waiting for the signal. He was to turn the Wi-Fi hotspot on and leave his

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

backpack when he left the coffee shop. The signal would soon invite hundreds of people within a 50-meter radius to read the words from God.

He checked his watch. At noon, he flipped the switch to set the Wi-Fi hotspot in motion and walked away, praying for a harvest. Meanwhile, a team leader in a stairwell nearby could see many people using their phones to access the Bible from these hotspots.

## HONORING THE PRINCIPLE OF MULTIPLICATION

A completed translation has benefits far beyond just the people who speak that language. It can serve as an additional bridge to related languages or major dialects. In addition, once a group becomes familiar with the process of translating Scripture into one language, some of them have helped train movement disciples in other languages to translate the Bible into their heart language.

But much remains to be done. Many movements are discovering that what was previously thought to be one language is actually a network of dialects, each of which needs its own translation. This makes the task even more complex.

As we observe how the Holy Spirit has already used this process, we can trust, work and pray to see many more translations completed until, in our generation, there are no more Bibleless languages.

10  
**ACCELERATOR: CRISIS  
RESPONSE**

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*Share your food with the hungry and give shelter to the homeless... Feed the hungry, and help those in trouble. Then your light will shine out from the darkness, and the darkness around you will be as bright as noon.*

*Isaiah 58:7, 10*

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Scripture contains many examples of God's Kingdom spreading during crises. The book of Daniel, for example, opens with the Jews exiled to Babylon and their country destroyed. Daniel and his three faith-filled friends rose through crisis to become counselors to the empire. God's renown and glory spread throughout the Babylonian Empire through them and the various problems facing the rulers of Babylon. Daniel 4 exemplifies this. King Nebuchadnezzar writes a letter to all his subjects, saying, "It is my pleasure to tell you about the miraculous signs and wonders that the Most High God has performed for me" (Dan 4:2).

Such opportunities can come at a significant cost. Most

movements operate in places where believers already experience persecution, and those who come to follow Jesus have counted the cost of living as His disciples. With this decision already made, the disciples in movements tend to be well-prepared for the costs of Kingdom expansion.

As they navigate the many challenges of natural disasters and manmade crises, movements stand as pillars of faith, resilience, and adaptability. Drawing from biblical wisdom and the teachings of Jesus, they have formulated principles that guide their response in times of crisis, ensuring that their actions stay anchored in compassion, love, and the unshakeable hope of the Kingdom.

### EMBRACE A KINGDOM PERSPECTIVE

We live in a fallen world that has been corrupted by human sin (Rom 8:20-22). Disasters, plagues, wars, and crises have resulted from this corruption. Still, we know that in all things—including these crises—“God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28). The next verse tells us God’s purpose: to shape those who love Him into the image of His Son.

The Kingdom of God expands in and through all circumstances, even crises. In fact, we often see the Kingdom expand more during a crisis because people are uprooted from their old lives and securities and begin searching for answers. We can approach crisis response with faith and hope, seeking God’s guidance and trusting in His provision (Jas 1:12).

One Syrian refugee expressed it this way: “During this war, I lost my husband and my son, and our family lost our home and had to flee, but without this war, I never would have met Jesus.”

Indian leaders described some of these dynamics during the



COVID-19 pandemic. They said the pandemic opened communities and opportunities previously closed to them.<sup>72</sup>

One Indian leader reported, “Our disciples have done a great job identifying opportunities to meet needs and deliver food. They have also taken every opportunity to share the Gospel and have seen numerous salvations across the field. The food distribution opened a natural opportunity to share the Gospel and follow up. Our leaders have been extremely careful and conscious of local restrictions on social distancing and, in many cases, have received special passes from officials to deliver food.”

Another leader reported: “Recently, our team found eleven Muslim families living without food. They were very surprised when our team brought them bags of food. After receiving it, one man said, ‘Are you men or angels sent to us? For the past three days, we have had no food. We were going hungry, and nobody came to help us.’ Later, as the relationship developed, we shared the Gospel and the love of the Lord Jesus. Now, six of the families are in a discipleship process, and we hope they will accept the Lord soon.”

In another situation, high-caste people built a wall around the town’s well and posted armed guards to keep the low-caste people from “contaminating” the water. When disciples in a nearby community heard about this, they brought equipment and dug a well for this community. Many in that area also have now received the living water that only Christ can give.

Ultimately, crises are a symptom of a broken world. Wars, disasters, and pandemics only intensify the difficulties and

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72 Many of the examples listed in this chapter have been adapted from the article “50 Examples of Movements in Crisis Response,” *Mission Frontiers*, Nov-Dec 2023, 32-37. <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/50-examples-of-movements-in-crisis-response>.

tragedies of life. Amid the stress and trauma faced by responders, they need to remember their true enemies are the spiritual powers of darkness (Eph 6:12) and use the weapons God has put at their disposal to pull down strongholds of resistance to the Gospel (2 Cor 10:3-5). This story describes how God can overcome resistance even in the darkest places.

We serve in crises, not only with our physical resources but also with God's supernatural resources. We often see healings and providential provisions. Jesus told His disciples to pray for the sick, cast out demons, and ask for God's intervention regularly. So, it is no surprise when God works in amazing ways in crises.

### BE PREPARED

The question is not *if* crises will happen but *when*. Disciples in a movement have the right DNA to love God and love their neighbor, and in an emergency, they rise to the occasion. But Christ's global Body can do a better job of preparing (Matt 7:24-27; 25:1-13). We need to equip disciples with practical training, such as how to shelter in place and apply basic first aid. We also need better collaboration in identifying and communicating with first and second responders, both locally and globally, and working on preparing and caching supplies ahead of time. Three examples from Kingdom partners illustrate this:

- Famine led movement disciples in India to ask, "How can we connect food distribution with a multiplying DNA?" They created bundles that included relief supplies and Gospel stories, which produced opportunities for new groups that multiplied among the recipients.
- During longstanding violence in Myanmar, believers created access routes for supplies that could be directed, when

needed, to high-risk areas—along with physical, emotional, and spiritual care. Disciples have multiplied as a result.

- After a devastating earthquake in Nepal, disciples prepared go-bags to store on roofs so that when disasters hit, they could retrieve the go-bags and help their families and others in the midst of the chaos.

### PRIORITIZE PRAYER

In any crisis response, we recognize God is the ultimate healer and provider. One of the main ways we can help, from anywhere in the world, is to organize concerted efforts of prayer from the global Church. We can join with others locally and globally in asking God to design and lead the response efforts.

When our human efforts are blocked or ineffective, we find it easier to focus on God as He works. As Hudson Taylor often stated, *“When we work, man works. When we pray, God works.”*<sup>73</sup>

The 9/11 terrorist attacks in the USA led to increased attention and prayer for the Muslim World. Many former jihadists who have become radical for Jesus say they are thankful that God used these prayers to turn many, many people and families to Christ, with ongoing exponential growth.

Many Indonesian believers had been praying for years that God would open doors for the Gospel in closed areas. The response of Christians to the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia resulted in new access to places that had been entirely closed off to outsiders. This access has resulted in new multiplying churches.

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<sup>73</sup> This has frequently been attributed to Hudson Taylor, who apparently used it in speaking and writing; OMF researchers note it has also been attributed to other Christian leaders, including Julian of Norwich, Grattan Guinness and D.L. Moody.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

Dr. Aila Tasse leads a family of movements impacting over 20 countries and over 200 UPGs in Africa. He described their response to the COVID-19 pandemic:

By early March, the situation was very depressing for many of our leaders. The government of Kenya was closing down the country. I had traveled to the northern part of the country and got locked down. So from March until August, I was locked down in the north.

One of the challenges was that we couldn't travel to other parts of the country; we couldn't even engage with the people. We started thinking, "How are we going to respond to this? We need new ways to do ministry, to be able to engage."

Our first response was prayer. In mid-March, we called for prayer among all our team members: our core team and our country leaders, who represented all of the countries where we work. We all started praying at the same time, using WhatsApp to distribute the prayers. We prayed that God would sustain the movement because we realized that leaders and families were suddenly losing all their sources of income. Prayer was key for us to keep the momentum. We all started praying, especially on Tuesdays and Thursdays. We called for fasting on Wednesdays. It was a whole day of fasting every week, which still continues to the present.<sup>74</sup>

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74 Aila Tasse, "Gaining Church-planting Momentum During COVID-19," *Mission Frontiers*, May-June 2022. Archived at <https://www.mission-frontiers.org/issue/article/gaining-church-planting-momentum-during-covid-19>.

## MOBILIZE THE LOCAL BODY OF CHRIST TO SACRIFICE

The greatest resource in these crises is the local body of believers. So, a fundamental principle is to mobilize local believers to respond to the disaster. As the global Body, we need to do all we can to empower, equip, and resource them as they serve as the hands and feet of Christ in their locality.

The need for preparation does not replace the need for sacrifice. Giving only out of our surplus limits our impact.

*As Jesus looked up, he saw the rich putting their gifts into the temple treasury. He also saw a poor widow put in two very small copper coins. “Truly I tell you,” he said, “this poor widow has put in more than all the others. All these people gave their gifts out of their wealth; but she out of her poverty put in all she had to live on”.*

*Luke 21:1-4*

Sadly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many Christians from wealthy communities focused primarily on their own rights and desires. At the same time, thousands of very poor disciples shared out of their poverty and shocked their neighbors. When the neighbors asked, “Why would you help us?” the answers led many to want to know more about Jesus.

- Food shortages in India led to believers bringing food—often sacrificing a meal a day to give it to someone in need. They asked if those they shared with also wanted spiritual food, and this catalyzed movements among disconnected and unreached groups to which they previously had no access.

- In another location, a leader reported, “We have started 35 new house churches since lockdown and fed about 3,000 people. Many of them came to Christ, and we plan to do follow-up after the lockdown, even as they disperse to other provinces. We encourage believers to bless their neighbors, pray for them, and visit in small numbers. Every house church has taken initiative.”

## TAKE RISKS FOR GOD

Sociologist and historian Rodney Stark gave a powerful argument that one of the principal reasons Christianity grew while Roman paganism waned in the 1st through the 4th centuries was the mercy Christians displayed toward people who physically suffered—in particular, Christians’ willingness to serve at the risk of their own lives during two plagues that ravaged the Roman Empire.<sup>75</sup>

Dionysius, bishop of Alexandria, reported:

“Most of our brother Christians showed unbounded love and loyalty, never sparing themselves and thinking only of one another. Heedless of danger, they took charge of the sick, attending to their every need and ministering to them in Christ, and with them departed this life serenely happy; for they were infected by others with the disease, drawing on themselves the sickness of their neighbors and cheerfully accepting their pains. Many, in nursing and curing others, transferred their death to themselves

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75 Rodney Stark, *The Triumph of Christianity: How the Jesus Movement Became the World’s Largest Religion* (New York: HarperOne, 2011), 114–119. Referenced in <https://www.biola.edu/blogs/good-book-blog/2020/how-did-early-christians-respond-to-plagues>.

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and died in their stead. ...But with the heathen, everything was quite otherwise. They deserted those who began to be sick and fled from their dearest friends. They shunned any participation or fellowship with death; which yet, with all their precautions, it was not easy for them to escape.”<sup>76</sup>

In movements around the world, we see that same attitude today. Shodankeh Johnson describes the response to Ebola by the movement family he helps lead in West Africa:

New Harvest Ministries serves many countries from their headquarters in Sierra Leone. When Ebola struck in 2014, our leaders refused to stay in safe places and ignore the disaster all around us. The crisis hit many Muslim villages especially hard, as the burial rites caused the epidemic to explode there. Suddenly, because of Ebola, people could not even touch dying parents or children. In that context, several New Harvest leaders volunteered in the most hazardous places. Some survived, but several lost their lives serving others—mostly Muslims.

The Muslim chief of one community was discouraged by people trying to escape his quarantined village. He was amazed at seeing Christians coming to serve. He privately prayed, “God, if you save me from this, if you save my family, I want us all to be like these people who show us love and bring us food.” The chief and his family survived, and he kept his promise. Memorizing passages from the Bible, he shared in the mosque where he had been an elder. A church was birthed in that village, and the chief

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76 “St. Dionysius on the Epidemic of Alexandria,” OrthodoxHistory.org, posted March 16, 2020. <https://orthodoxhistory.org/2020/03/16/st-dionysius-on-the-epidemic-of-alexandria/>

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continued going from village to village, sharing the Good News of God's love.<sup>77</sup>

When disciples respond to a crisis and willingly risk and sometimes lose their lives to help those in need, this is a powerful witness. In fact, early Christians were so willing to bear witness even at the risk of their life that the Greek word *martus*, which means “a witness” was transformed in Latin, French, Spanish, and English into various forms of the word “martyr” which means “one who willingly suffers death rather than surrender his or her religious faith.”<sup>78</sup>

### DEMONSTRATE LOVE

God is Love (1 John 4:8), and He is close to the brokenhearted (Ps 34:18). Responders can reach out to the hurting with physical aid, spiritual comfort, and unwavering love (Matt 25:35-6; Jas 1:27). They can reflect Christ's compassion by listening and offering prayers and support.

At times, responders feel frustrated when “all they can do is listen.” Many crisis survivors say this listening actually provided great help and healing to them. One man whose children died in the 2004 tsunami in Southeast Asia expressed it this way, “Everyone else around me was suffering with their own grief and loss. To have this outsider just listen to my stories and offer his sympathy and cry with me was very helpful.”

In a crisis, someone who listens and grieves alongside others

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77 Shodankeh Johnson, “Passion for God, Compassion for People,” *Mission Frontiers*, Nov-Dec 2017. Archived at [https://www.missionfrontiers.org/pdfs/32\\_Shodankeh\\_39.6\\_1112-2017-8.pdf](https://www.missionfrontiers.org/pdfs/32_Shodankeh_39.6_1112-2017-8.pdf).

78 *Online Etymological Dictionary*, [www.etymonline.com/word/martyr](http://www.etymonline.com/word/martyr). Accessed 07/24/2024.



gives tremendous comfort to those who are suffering. Listening to and then praying for those in need is also a powerful way to minister during these crises, as a former jihadist and his wife now know.

Achmed, a Jesus follower, was distributing food to refugees from a nearby country being torn apart by war. When he finished handing out the food packages, a woman named Amiyah stood next in line and pleaded with him to give her a package, but he said they had no more. She began to weep and told him her husband was fighting in the war, and she and her children had no food. She said she was being pressured by men who promised her food if she would prostitute herself. Achmed told her that Jesus knows her and cares about her and her children, and he would pray and ask God to help her. As soon as Achmed finished praying with her, his phone rang, giving him news that some more food packages had just arrived.

Later that week, Achmed was awakened in the middle of the night by someone banging on his door. He hesitantly opened the door and saw a jihadist there. This man asked, “Are you the one who told my wife, Amiyah, about Jesus?” Achmed hesitated because this man obviously belonged to a sect violently opposed to Christians. But he bravely admitted that he was the one. The soldier wept and said, “I am fighting and killing people in the name of God, and yet I did not protect my own family. My wife was almost forced into prostitution to feed our children. And you are an infidel, but you took care of my wife and children and protected our honor. Why would you do that?” That night, Achmed began to share with him the beautiful story of Jesus. Now, this former fighter and his wife and children

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have become disciples of Jesus, sharing that same story and showing God's love to other refugees.

### LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

Crises can bring out the best in people or the worst. In truth, crises bring out whatever is inside of people and often magnify it. Whether in war, persecution, or natural disasters, Christians often seek to protect the innocent against oppressors. In these situations, they often become targets for those who oppose the Gospel. Disciples' responses can turn an attack into an opportunity to show the difference God can make in communities and nations.

One man in Syria noticed that "In this war, the only people not killing everybody outside their own group are Christians. Instead, they help others even when it can cost them their own life. I knew I had to find out what made them so different."

Besides wars, another consistent crisis for many believers around the world is the persecution they endure. Here is one example from South Asia.

In one community, a coordinated attack led to the burning of the homes and crop fields of families who had recently become disciples of Jesus. But their response astonished the community. When the police captured some attackers, the believers asked the police to free them. Also, many of the believers had to stay in the homes of non-believing relatives for several months while they rebuilt their homes. Many of these relatives who had been hostile to the Gospel came to faith because of seeing the forgiveness and love in these disciples' lives. Eventually, the leaders of the attack came to the church leaders, asked for their forgiveness, and asked how they could follow

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Jesus. One said, “We had to find out what was so important that these people would willingly suffer so much and be so strong not to forsake their belief.”

In another example, earthquakes in Nepal led to remarkable instances of reconciliation, as persecuted believers helped those who had beaten and exiled them. Persecutors repented, and disciples forgave, leading to multiplying churches during recovery after the quakes.

When unbelievers first hear Jesus’ teaching—to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us—they are often astonished that Jesus taught this, not only by His words but also by His life and death. When people see that lived out, it often leads to a dramatic change of heart.

## BE WISE AND PATIENT

In a disaster, most people are just trying to survive; they will often say and do anything they feel will help them. Jesus followers must be careful not to manipulate people into “accepting” the Gospel because they think this will help them get more aid. Often, the seeds sown in the immediate aftermath of a disaster will not be harvested until months later, when the survivors can respond without feeling coerced.

Christians are sometimes accused of paying people to convert. The old phrase “rice Christians” described those who came to church only to receive the rice given to those in need. Kingdom disciples need to help without hinting that those who follow Jesus will receive more help. This viewpoint can be controversial. Many Christians in the field of crisis response feel the first priority should be helping Christians. We agree with this in cases when Christian identity is being used against a group—for example, in

situations of persecution or when a government blocks aid specifically to Christian families and communities. However, when responding to a general crisis that affects everyone, we feel it is crucial to give aid with no distinction with regard to a person's faith.

One leader expressed that, during disaster response, while they openly share that they were Christians, they were very careful to share about Jesus only with those who pressed for answers. Even then, they invited any seekers into a careful Bible study process over several months so they could understand the nature and cost of discipleship before making a commitment.

### INTEGRATE RELIEF WITH DISCIPLESHIP

Many of us reading this book grew up in the West. Because of the Graeco-Roman roots and ongoing developments in Western culture, we have adopted an un-biblical separation of the sacred and the secular and between physical and spiritual. Since many of the modern crisis-response structures originated in the West, we see these separation dynamics in crisis response, even by some Christians.

We need an integrated response that includes serving the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of survivors. Besides prioritizing physical safety and health, this also includes the growing ministries of trauma healing<sup>79</sup> and wholeness prayer<sup>80</sup> for individuals, families, and communities. People in numerous movement contexts have experienced inner healing, as did the women in this story.

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79 See Mary Roberts and Tricia Stringer, "Trauma Healing in Crisis Response," *Mission Frontiers*, Nov-Dec 2023. Archived at <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/trauma-healing-in-crisis-response>.

80 See *Freedom for the Captives Ministries* at <https://ent.freemin.org/wholeness-prayer/>.

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As a group of Middle Eastern women experienced healing through listening and loving each other (healing community), deepening their faith in God (faith), and intentionally sharing God's Word with others (purpose), they formed a strong, multiplying group. This group grew stronger as they experienced both the joys of "new beginnings" and the inevitable crises that repeatedly arose.

As this group sat on the floor eating, they reminded each other of the storms they had weathered together. One member of their group had died. Another woman's family had experienced kidnapping in their home country. Another had experienced abuse. But the community remained strong. The women talked about how they had seen God's grace and faithfulness through the way the community remained united through every hardship. This community, which began during a monetary crisis, remains strong three years later, consistently growing in number and depth of relationship with Jesus.

These ladies remember well the vision of simple trauma-healing groups. They hold on to the truth God revealed through Joseph after his traumatic experiences. "You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives" (Gen. 50:20).

For eternal reasons, disaster response cannot just be focused on immediate physical needs, but can also be an opportunity to share the Gospel and make disciples in wise and healthy ways. As we do this, we encourage both new and mature believers to grow in their faith and serve others, integrating relief with ongoing discipleship efforts.

## STRENGTHEN EXISTING NETWORKS AND BUILD NEW NETWORKS

Jesus prayed that His disciples would “become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you love me” (John 17:23). As Christians locally and globally band together to pray and serve, we see that the pressure of a crisis can become a unifying factor for many of us, and a powerful witness to the rest of the world.

During crises, it is important to collaborate with existing Christian networks and organizations by activating or building partnerships that will magnify the impact of the response, reinforcing the unity of the Body of Christ. Whenever possible, we can also collaborate with secular networks and organizations when our goals overlap. Many times, we can help deploy the money and resources provided by both Christian and secular organizations in a way that meets their goals (and respects their parameters) while reserving our funds for efforts that only disciplemakers can or will do.

We have seen this in multiple instances. Recently, floods in India led to organic cooperation between previously unconnected networks to distribute immediate food, water, and shelter. It also led to believers’ homes being relocated and families starting over. Another example is when floods in Southeast Asia led disciples to create a network of boat ministries, bringing supplies to those in flooded areas and leading to spiritual breakthroughs.

The war between Ukraine and Russia has led to equipping disciples on how to detect human trafficking, how to be prepared to live as refugees, and using pre-existing sports networks to provide aid in Jesus’ name. This has resulted in thousands becoming disciples. It has also created opportunities for believers to equip

churches in surrounding countries to receive refugees. These believers have opened their homes as base camps for physical, emotional, and spiritual care to the refugees as they continued their journey.

### PRIORITIZE SUSTAINABILITY

It is important to focus on long-term solutions that empower local communities to recover and thrive. During the first phase of a disaster, responders focus on urgent needs. But even from the beginning, a long-term view must be in focus. One aspect of that is to help those hit by the crisis do whatever they can for themselves. Outsiders should do only what the insiders cannot. This also involves equipping and resourcing insiders to do as much as possible and make as many decisions as feasible for themselves. The crisis response will often end in a few weeks or months, so helping in a way that enables long-term recovery and vitality is critical to the health of the surviving community.

The following chart describes the differences between traditional crisis response and crisis response from Kingdom Movements.<sup>81</sup> As you read these lists, reflect on how the movement approach encourages sustainability.

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81 Dr. Mary Roberts and Dr. Curtis Sergeant, Originally from “Movements Responding to Crises,” *Mission Frontiers* (November-December 2023), slightly edited. See <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/movements-responding-to-crises>.

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<b>Traditional response functions:</b>	<b>Kingdom Movement functions:</b>
Come and go (short to mid-term)	Stay (physically and/or relationally long-term)
Focus on individuals	Focus on small groups
External and top-down decision-making	Grassroots and indigenous problem-solving
Outsider-based (foreigners leading)	Insider-based (local and/or nearby people leading)
Physical focus (despite occasional trauma-healing events or religious chaplain events)	Ongoing holistic focus: physical, emotional, and spiritual through all response phases
Many silos with occasional collaboration	Connection, communication, and collaboration as goals toward Kingdom outcomes
Most responders are trained professionals (some volunteers in later phases)	Most responders are ordinary people (non-professionals)
Temporary help (a few weeks to months)	Eternal impact and long-term sustainability (years)
Focus on present destruction	Focus on the future redemption of people and places through restoring what was lost.



## CELEBRATE GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

We are children of a sovereign and benevolent loving Father. We must recognize and proclaim His goodness and sovereignty even during chaos and heartbreak. In this way, we allow crisis response to become a testimony to God's grace, mercy, and love. Amid devastation, the sorrow of "the night" is replaced by the joy of the "morning" as shown in Mr. and Mrs. Pilo's lives:

Mr. Pilo and his three children were playing on the seashore of the Indian Ocean with family and friends on the morning of December 26, 2004. It was his birthday, and they had a small family celebration in the morning, during which his children lovingly greeted him on this special day.

Though he had humble beginnings, Mr. Pilo had worked hard and attained a well-paid position as an engineer. He had a loving wife, two young daughters, and one son. His one-story bungalow sat close to the seashore. He felt content with life and enjoyed its blessings.

Mr. Pilo and his son were throwing a frisbee when a 30-foot-high wall of water crashed onto the seashore. As he grabbed his son's hand, shouting at him to hold on, the water lifted them high in the air and washed them inland. The waves wrested his son's hand from him, and Mr. Pilo lost consciousness. When he came to his senses, he realized his son was lost and probably dead.

After two consecutive waves and more destruction, Mr. and Mrs. Pilo found the bodies of their three children and buried them, with memories of the morning's laughter and celebrations still ringing in their ears.

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When they realized the enormity of the event, they both went into deep shock and considered ending their lives. Their house, previously alive with the laughter and chatter of their children, was shrouded in a pall of gloom. As they struggled to come to terms with the loss and pain and a world turned upside down, Mr. and Mrs. Pilo found deep solace and comfort in their faith in God. In their grief, they understood that God wanted them to continue living and found strength and assurance in Jesus.

In the next few days, Mr. and Mrs. Pilo felt led to visit the surrounding villages and came into contact with young children orphaned by the tsunami. Moved by their own loss and a deep inner urge, they decided to adopt these children and nurture them as their own. Today, the Pilos have adopted 16 young children who live in their home and have all their needs provided for—with love, affection, and care.

Laughter and joy of children fill the house once more. Pictures of the children lost in the tsunami adorn the house as a reminder of their grief. The Pilos, now expecting a new baby, have received this turn of events as God's purpose and will for their lives. They believe the spirits of their first three children also rejoice.

They have found that reaching into the lives of others to fulfill their needs has helped them leave behind their sorrow and enjoy life in all its fullness. While the memories of their lost children still live with them, they have found new purpose and meaning in life by sharing their resources and their lives with children in need.

Matthew 24 tells us that wars, disasters, persecutions, and betrayals will continue from the 1st century until the end of the age.

Jesus said, “You will hear of wars and threats of wars, but don’t panic. Yes, these things must take place, but the end won’t follow immediately” (Matt 14:6, NLT). Verse 14 says that during such times, “the Gospel will be preached in all the world, as a witness to all the peoples.”<sup>82</sup>

Crises can be challenges to multiplication—but when overcome, they often amplify multiplication. Wars, disasters, and persecutions—terrible though they are—present opportunities for believers to bless others and for the Kingdom to spread; if we seize those opportunities.

Even in the face of disaster, the calling to make disciples remains, and our faith becomes a beacon of hope for a hurting world. Every challenge provides an opportunity to serve, witness, and strengthen our bond with God and each other. Jesus offers a promise of hope and redemption during adversity. Our God, who turned the crucifixion into the resurrection, delights in turning tragedy into opportunities for redemption.

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82 Author’s translation. The word  $\epsilon\theta\eta\eta$  (*ethnē*) is usually translated as “nations,” but in modern English usage this brings to mind the world’s approximately 200 political nation-states. *Ethnē* refers to an ethnolinguistic people group, of which there are approximately 17,000 in the world today.



11

## ACCELERATOR: SYSTEMS FOR JUSTICE AND MERCY

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*He has shown you, O mortal, what is good.  
And what does the Lord require of you?  
To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly  
with your God.*

*Micah 6:8*

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The biblical themes of justice and mercy flow through both the Old and New Testaments, often intertwined. While the “day of the Lord” or the “day of judgment” describes an awesome, fear-provoking event for the corrupt and the sinful, on that day, all will be made right for the oppressed. God’s justice will be served in the end, but He expects His children to pursue justice even now, before that day arrives.

Throughout the Scripture, God clearly portrays His desire for justice. He weaves justice with mercy to restore humanity to righteousness—a right relationship—with God and each other.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

- In God's liberation of the Israelites from bondage in Egypt, we see His desire to bring His people out of captivity and mercifully bring them to the good land He had promised them, where they could live and thrive.
- In the Prophets, we see God's anger over and over again at people's mistreatment and oppression. God shows His intent to see justice done on their behalf.
- Jesus taught loving one's neighbor was second only to loving God.
- The early church made a practice of sharing everything they had to meet each other's needs. James 2 provides a New Testament echo to the Prophets: "How can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?"

As the Kingdom of God spreads over the Earth, the changes in the lives of individual Christ-followers and families lead to the transformation of their societies. These ripples of justice, mercy, and humble love for each other flood the community through lines of relationship.

A biblical worldview does not include a sacred/secular divide. Those in movements don't debate whether to meet physical needs or share the Gospel. Sometimes Christians from traditional backgrounds ask how we can help these new disciples become holistic in their ministry. We do not need to do this. As they read the Bible and ask the Holy Spirit to help them obey, they live and minister in thoroughly holistic ways.

Because we love Jesus, of course we meet people's physical needs (as He did). And as we do that, we also share Gospel truth verbally (as He did). When Jesus sent His disciples, He told them

both to heal the sick *and* proclaim the Good News that God's Kingdom was near.

Movements have a holistic approach to discipleship, combining knowledge with action. The disciples don't simply teach and impart knowledge; they also put that knowledge into practice. It is not enough to only meet physical needs or only share the Gospel. Word and deed go hand in hand. When disciples in movements meet needs, it often opens doors for sharing the Gospel. People become more open to receiving the Gospel and asking questions about it.

The Bible says we are "saved by faith alone, not by works," yet good works are the natural fruit of our faith. In an outpouring of their biblical faith, many churches in movements become a beacon of hope and lives are transformed, such as Shira's.

Shira was a wealthy woman, but her husband was imprisoned for corruption, her family lost all they had, and she became destitute. This shock seemingly caused her to go insane, and those in the community began calling her a "crazy woman." She was invited to a house church that began the long, slow process of loving her back to sanity and health. She eventually was healed by God through the love of this church, was baptized, and is now sharing her faith with her husband and others. Other disciples later gave her a small loan to start a business.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Shira worked with other disciples to start a program to give food to several hundred people a day who had no money or access to food. As they helped save people's lives, they also shared about the Bread of Life.

## DEVELOPING SYSTEMS

Disciples in movements are holistically focused on helping others. The *accelerating* difference we see in the larger movement families are the “systems” the movements develop to allow an even greater impact in bringing justice and mercy to people’s lives.

This shift from personal efforts alone to more strategic efforts is shown in a movement family that developed Community Learning Centers (CLCs) to open communities that were closed to more traditional approaches. Savender’s story shows how this happens:

In 2001, Savender, one of our leaders, suffered well-organized persecution against the churches he had planted in one area. He was driven out of the area and not allowed to return. The ministry stopped in that area because of the severe persecution.

Six years later, in 2007, Savender started a Community Learning Center. This gave him a new opening: The same people who had previously harassed him welcomed him back into the area to work there. People realized that his service wasn’t just spiritual but would benefit their daily, material lives as well. The change was so radical that they gave him a piece of land in the village to build a community center so that he could run the program. He built the community center using bamboo and simple materials and then began an anti-drug awareness program. The program impacted not only those who came to the building but also touched people for a two- to three-mile radius. Most CLC activities took place around the villages, in the streets and courtyards.

After the CLC had been functioning for a while and



## FORESTS IN THE SEED

Savender had built solid relationships, some people became more open to the faith. Some of those began to follow Christ. When new people started coming to faith, there was no persecution or negative reaction.

Savender shares, “We saw a whole new attitude after I started the CLC; all the misconceptions changed. I’m now well-connected with all the leaders of the community. Many political leaders come and say ‘Can you promote us? Can you recommend us?’ So, the influence of the CLC has changed the equation. There’s no need to be fearful; rather, I’m respected in the community.”

He continues, “The CLC also helped me gain boldness and strength. The first time persecution came, I immediately fled. Since having the CLC, I’ve had the courage to endure and have gained a positive reputation. In the next election, I may run for village head. From being isolated and being a victim, I’ve become a victor. Like Joseph, whom the Lord took from slave to prime minister, the Lord has brought me from tragedy to triumph. Three to four hundred people now meet at the community building for worship services, and no one opposes the work.”

In addition to drug awareness, Savender’s CLC also empowers women, something radical for this region, and provides educational programs. As he leads the CLC, Savender involves many other people to help with it. He notes that all the CLCs apply this pattern of on-the-job leadership development of local people.<sup>83</sup>

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83 Victor John, *Bhojpuri Breakthrough: A Movement that Keeps Multiplying* (Wigtake Resources, 2019), p. 49-50

## JUSTICE IN COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

Justice and righteousness are part of true transformation. When we live rightly with God and others, we act differently toward each other as the Spirit introduces His fruit into our daily interactions. This changes how we act toward unbelievers. It means we grant mercy, but we also challenge those who are acting unjustly. We stand up for the marginalized, the oppressed, the bullied, the widow, and the orphan.

While we might imagine this “standing up” as confrontational, disciples in movements often stand up for the marginalized in ways that include mercy and humility and offer redemptive opportunities. This takes place especially in situations where people in positions of systemic power or privilege oppress marginalized people around them.

The “underbelly” of the world blurs the lines of right and wrong and denies honor and dignity for women and children. When movements “move to the margins” by serving the poor, they are following Kingdom values. Jesus’ statement in the Sermon on the Mount, “Blessed are the poor in spirit,” helps us see that God’s Kingdom is most easily recognized and often travels at the margins, among dysfunctional and broken people.

Kingdom Movements have often flourished among the marginalized because, among them, false hopes of self-sufficiency and self-efficacy have already shown their inadequacy. God works powerfully when disciples like Yusuf step in and stand up on behalf of the marginalized:

Yusef realized that since he had become a follower of Jesus, he had begun to notice the needs of the people around him. In the past, he had distanced himself from the poor.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

As a follower of Jesus, he was often marginalized, but every Friday, during his local house church meeting, his heart increased in compassion for poor people and immigrant laborers.

When the fasting month of Ramadan approached, Yusef realized most of these laborers only received one meal a day—a noon meal at work. So, during the fasting month of Ramadan, they would have nothing to eat. The next Friday at church, during the prayer request time, Yusef told the other members what he had learned and suggested they pray to bless the laborers.

Within days, God brought about a miracle. As Yusef and some friends passed by a wealthy neighborhood, they saw the rubbish bins filled with food that had been brought in for the sunset feast but never opened. Yusef knocked on the door and asked if he could help the family fulfill their obligation to the poor by taking the food to those who did not have anything to eat.

The wealthy family was honored at the request, gave their extra food to Yusef, and then called their friends to do the same. The church had to form a team to gather food from the neighboring rubbish bins and distribute it to the poor.

After two weeks of working through the night, Yusef and his friends received a call from the local officials. They had heard of the mercy being shown to the poor and wanted to know if Yusef would expand the program to help many others.

God opened doors for those with great riches to be generous and for those without food to be enriched by the Good News while they feasted on the food brought by Yusef and the church.

## BUILD UP

Not only do justice and righteousness come to those in the margins, but movements multiply more quickly when they work both to build up those who have been torn down and to bind up the wounded. These new disciples are often the people best placed to change the oppressive systems they have just escaped. The power of the Gospel comes with justice when Jesus' followers forge their efforts together and seek to replace evil systems and unjust infrastructures with the life-giving hope of a biblically-rooted love, forgiveness, and restoration. This includes efforts such as legal help against persecution, anti-trafficking efforts, creating schools where there are none, and working to raise local, national, and international attention to combat injustices.

In India, one movement family focuses on rescuing some of the more than five million orphaned and abandoned children who live in railway stations. Many of these children have run away from home due to either mistreatment (often from abuse arising from drug or alcohol addiction) or poverty (the family cannot afford to feed some or all of their children).

These movement disciples win the trust of the railway children and then invite them to a group home. Over the course of days or months, they help the children heal from their trauma and grow emotionally, physically, and spiritually. In their service to railway children, they focus primarily on restoration to their families. They engage with them to find out where they came from, who they are, and how they ended up in this place. Then, they work together with the government and the police and do what they can to restore them to their families.

Most of the time, they are able to find their families and help the family overcome the challenges so the child can be reunited

with them. The entire family is transformed, not just the child. When they cannot find any family members or cannot help the family in their situation, the child is then taken in by a family in the movement. They started with ministry to the railway children, and that work expanded into many other areas, including a children's home, slum work, education, and the parallel starting of churches.<sup>84</sup>

### PRACTICE ONE-ANOTHERING

Leaders within most Kingdom Movements are so eternally grateful for the mercy and grace of Jesus that their witnessing is a natural outgrowth of the forgiveness they have received.

Rather than view life through the lens of paradigms that focus on guilt/innocence or honor/shame, many movement leaders see the world as having been broken by evil and needing the restoration of Jesus' love and forgiveness. In this way, they can both relate to the brokenness around them and practically bring hope and beauty through a spiritual restoration process.

The focus is not merely on a confession of faith, but going further to a more complete and holistic pattern of loving one another. They help people move from a place of brokenness into a place of healing, forgiveness, and new creation. In fact, many times, those who come from great brokenness into a new Jesus family reach out to their former peers with a passion to see them rescued from darkness as well. They prioritize rescuing others over their own benefits as believers. One such story comes from Hosseim.

When Hosseim decided to follow Jesus, his house church leaders began mentoring him every day in the ways of true

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84 Ibid. pp. 85-102.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

life. Slowly but surely, his spiritual eyes began opening to the needs around him.

One day, Hosseim noticed a farm nearby that seemed to receive vans, or sometimes trucks, of young girls. At first, he thought little about it, as he didn't consider it his business to pry into the affairs of others. But as the days progressed, thoughts of what might be happening to these girls continued to disturb him.

So, Hosseim went to meet the farmer and see what he could observe. The visit confirmed the worst of his fears, and he realized that somehow, he must do something to stop this act of slavery. He reported all his findings to his house church, and they began to pray and ask the Lord for wisdom. The church leader suggested they ask a regional church leader for counsel on this situation.

As they investigated further, they realized that this nearby farm functioned as a holding station for buying and selling girls. Then, over the next few months, Hosseim and his friends learned this farm was part of a broader slavery network for young girls, where traders would buy, sell, and then ship them to multiple countries. One day, a stranger who had been watching Hosseim's interest in the market approached him and asked if he would like to buy some girls.

Hosseim said, "Yes, I am interested. How many do you have?" The trader explained he was hoping to bring up to 100 girls to the market in three weeks, but he would sell them to Hosseim at a discounted rate if he would purchase them now. They exchanged phone numbers and agreed to talk the next day.

Hosseim met with his church, his pastor, and the regional

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leader. What should they do? Should they buy the girls? Would this perpetuate the problem? A painful discussion ensued until the regional leader said, “What if this were my daughter? I would do anything to get her back.”

Hosseim and his friends each went home and asked their wives to give up all their jewelry. Then, they went to all the house churches they knew of, shared the story, and asked for their jewelry. The regional leader organized an offering with the churches in the region, and the girls were freed from slavery.

## CHALLENGE INJUSTICE

The struggle for justice is even more vivid for those who have been rescued from living in great darkness. When they enter the Kingdom of Light, they see for the first time how the darkness has impacted them and those around them.

These new believers often experience God’s grace so strongly that they physically return to where they previously lived and work to bring the justice of the King, rescuing their friends and family from the same oppression. In addition, many leaders carry out the mission of God in new areas and among new peoples, bringing hope, justice, grace, and forgiveness in Jesus’ name to those living nearby. Ishmael shared with us his story of his experience of God’s grace and transformation.

My name is Ishmael. I have eight wives and 46 children—mostly boys. Muslims like me focus on just two main things in life: making Allah happy by sending our boys for jihad, and work. I live 85 percent of my life for Allah. That is why I sent 20 of my sons for jihad.

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But this is not an easy life. I have found it very hard as a father to raise my children and then send them to die. Many times, when my heart feels unsatisfied with this way of life, I share my thoughts with my wife, and she says, “Don’t say this out loud, Ishmael. If our relatives hear you talk like this, they will kick us out of our tribe.”

But I am writing to let you know that Jesus changed my whole life, though I am 74 years old—very old for this area. Early one morning, I met a believer who began walking with me, and we talked about many things, thanking Allah for all. Then suddenly, he looked into my eyes and asked, “Ishmael, are you really thanking Allah? Tell me the truth.”

I was shocked because I had never met a Muslim who asked a question like this that pierced my heart deeply. I answered him, “I have to tell you I weep every night because I miss all the sons I have sent to jihad. I hope that when I die I will go to heaven, but right now, I am not alive.”

What happened next shocked me. This believer grabbed my arm, took me to a very secret place, and showed me the Jesus Film. As I watched the film, I saw the way to God. I became very emotional and said, “I thank the Lord because He chose me and saved me from all my sins.”

Ishmael returned to his extended family and shared the grace and mercy of Jesus. Instead of sending 60 of his grandsons into jihad, he shared with his sons and their sons about the new family of Jesus and how God would forgive their past and wanted them to live for a different future.

Ishmael’s 60 grandsons are now being trained in the ways of Jesus’ Kingdom.



## VULNERABILITY AND THE CALL TO ACTION

As the Kingdom spreads through movements, it consistently reaches out to the poor and the oppressed. These vulnerable people find themselves exposed to possible attack or harm because they don't have the protections that many people in society do.

People in many societies look down on those who are vulnerable. The proverb, "A chain is only as strong as its weakest link," implies suspicion toward the vulnerable because they have the potential to damage the rest. But Jesus constantly sided with the vulnerable and the poor, especially against the self-righteous Pharisees.

Matthew 12 contains a poignant story in which Jesus rebuked the Pharisees. Jesus entered their synagogue and saw a man with a deformed hand. He challenged the Pharisees with whether it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath, noting that they would be more likely to treat their animals with mercy on the Sabbath than they would a human being—and then He healed the man. This same mercy is shown in the lives of His disciples like Hussein today.

In our community in Central Asia, Hussein said, God has done a big miracle! The team noticed that a poor man named Hussein was visiting their business every day. So, one day, they approached him and asked, "How can we help you?"

Hussein said, "I want to build a house for my family, but I can't afford it." Later, one of the team members sensed God was working in Hussein's heart and asked if he could travel with him back to his home. Surprisingly, Hussein agreed.

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On the way back, the team member began to learn about his life, and when they arrived at the place where his family stayed, they saw no house at all, just land. He began asking more about Hussein's background and learned that he had spent his entire life living under trees and bushes, started his family there, and now had 13 children.

Hussein explained, "I work hard but can't make enough money to build a house. I have asked others for help, but they demanded two of my boys for jihad, so I refused. Another time, some older men wanted my young daughters for additional wives. I could not do this to my family, so we live in the bushes." He continued, "But I have watched you and seen that you are very godly people. I have come by your place every day to ask you for help for my family, but I felt afraid because I didn't want to be hurt like before."

The next day, back at the business, the team member shared Hussein's story, and Hussein came back! The believers hugged Hussein like a long-lost family member and said, "You have come to the right place. First, we would like to give you a job in our business, which will help you earn money for your house. Then, from time to time, we will all come and help build your house."

For the next few months, while the team built Hussein's house, God built His house in Hussein's heart. One day, he said to the team, "God has had mercy on me. I am the first person in all my family's generations to have a home. But even more, I have made a home for Jesus in my heart. He is God."

Please pray for this dear man. Today, he goes from house to house visiting Muslims—no longer asking for help to

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build a home. Instead, he pleads with them to come and follow Jesus.

God's call for justice and mercy in Micah 6:8 still applies today, whether in fighting slavery, racial injustice, or poverty. Disciples' obedience in this often becomes an avenue to share in word, deed, and power—God's offer of liberation from sin and Satan (Luke 4:18).



12

## ACCELERATOR: SURGES

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*For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the  
glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.*

*Habakkuk 2:14*

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In 2012, a prophetic word in the leadership meetings of a movement family called them to “flood the nations with Jesus.” After all, the Bible tells us that Jesus is the glory of the Lord in John 1:14, “...we beheld his glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth.” So, the knowledge of the glory of the LORD we see in Habakkuk 2:14 is nothing less than the knowledge of Jesus. These leaders came to understand that during regular times when people are spiritually searching, movement workers can augment normal Kingdom Movement work with concentrated “surges” of ministry to further multiply the Kingdom.

In 2013, during the first attempt to add the “flood” to existing efforts in one particular country, the movement mobilized hundreds of church planters in dozens of teams and spread them

across all the provinces of the country over a two-month period. As a result of this surge, over 60,000 people came to faith and formed over 900 new house churches. This effort was not without cost: 12 people were martyred.

The 2013 effort was evaluated and adjusted, then repeated in 2014 among Kingdom Movements working with UPGs in two other nearby countries. Since that time, this model has continued to be used and improved, becoming a movement amplifier in over two dozen countries. This story of a displaced tribe is an example of the impact from a surge team.

A surge team had already been ministering for 90 days, but they sensed in prayer that they had not yet completed their time of ministry. So, after taking several days to pray and seek the Lord, they contacted their leadership and posed this question, “Does Jesus want us to keep going to another location?” Soon, the answer came back: “YES!” Early the next morning, during their prayer time, they asked the Lord where they should travel. The answer came: to travel to a specific nearby village and trust God to open doors for ministry.

The team arrived in time for the evening meal and was well received. They were given food by the villagers and introduced themselves around the evening fire. The team noticed one man who also seemed to be a guest that night, and they struck up a conversation with him. The team leader noticed this stranger dressed like a Muslim but looked different: he had bright blue eyes and pale skin. So, after a while, the leader asked, “Are you from this region?”

The man answered, “Oh, no. I am from far away, behind the mountains. I am not from this tribe. In fact, centuries

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ago, our people descended from the Prophet Yusef (Joseph), and we never left the mountains when the rest of our clan returned to their homeland. We have been isolating ourselves from these other tribes for centuries.”

The next night, with permission from the elders of the area, the team opened up a screen, turned on a projector, and showed the Jesus Film. It touched people’s hearts, and many responded to a call for sacrifice and commitment to Jesus. After the meeting, the blue-eyed man came to our team and said, “Now I understand why I came to this village—it was to meet you and to hear this news about Jesus. Would you come with me and meet my entire tribe? We live far from here.” Then he whispered, “We are not true Muslims, but we have been waiting for a prophet to come and show us the way to God.”

The next night, this man led the film team to his village. He had called far and wide for his clan to come and watch the Jesus Film. Over 1,000 came the first night and more the next. Eventually, the family leaders from each clan came together and decided to follow Jesus. The blue-eyed leader opened the door for us to reach an entire tribe for Jesus!

## THE FORM OF THE SURGE

In this model, a surge takes the form of eight synchronized waves. Each builds upon the one before, and over the course of any given surge, thousands of church planters might participate in these surges.

**1. Prayer covering.** In order to build the required prayer support for each surge, movement leaders cast a vision for

the initiative at the national, provincial, and district levels to encourage house church clusters to appoint, fund, and send workers. Each sending house-church cluster is given information on the project and provided tools to become the primary intercessors for the teams and the megacities. Depending on the size of the movement involved, a goal of recruiting ten intercessors from each sending house church cluster can result in a prayer army of thousands and even hundreds of thousands of intercessors.

**2. Research.** Once a sense of direction and location has been determined through prayer, a research team of nearby, experienced, near-culture church planters are deployed to walk, listen, and observe the area, determining leadership structure, social patterns, religious affiliations, economic infrastructure, and potential locations for gathering small and large groups.

**3. Discernment.** Teams of people with a gift of discernment (1 Cor 12:10) are sent to strategic locations. Through intercession and spiritual warfare, they locate spiritually dark places to avoid and open places where work should begin.

**4. Initial evangelism.** Teams then enter and, building on this foundation of wisdom and discernment, begin the initial work of building relationships and introducing the Gospel.

**5. Media impact.** As appropriate, additional teams enter and use a variety of media tech tools such as mobile backpacks, Wi-Fi hotspots, and microSD cards to saturate the area with the Gospel through digital means. This step continues to soften the ground for subsequent evangelism and church planting.



## FORESTS IN THE SEED

This story of teams lead by Ismail illustrates some of the dynamics of these initial waves of the surge.

Based on the information gathered from prayer, research, spiritual discernment, and relational evangelism teams, a strategy became clear to Ismail. He gathered his leaders and divided them into teams. The first tech team would take responsibility for regionally sourcing, assembling, and distributing the mobile media backpacks and smaller Wi-Fi hotspots. A second team would acquire the digital media in multiple languages and load them on multiple devices, storage units, and equipment.

Ismail also met separately with a smaller group of trainers and equipped them to prepare teams of 10-20 people to use the technology, acquire basic language and culture, and be prepared for apologetics. These would help them discreetly or publicly share the accompanying media and explain that Jesus is God in a culturally relevant and biblical manner.

Finally, Ismail prepared the rest of the team to understand the importance of inviting respected leaders (he referenced Cornelius in Acts 10) in the area to a special presentation about Jesus. They would host these leaders to a meal and a dialogue to honor their role in the community. As these local leaders begin to understand the mercy of God's grace, they will call their family and friends to hear the message. Lengthy discussions over several days begin by watching the Jesus Film and continue with listening to audio of the New Testament. Eventually, these "Cornelius" leaders will invite the teams into their homes where a full discussion of the Gospel allows for further questions to be addressed. Afterwards, an opportunity is

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

given to respond, and frequently, the entire household has a salvation encounter, as seen in the book of Acts.

Over the next 60 days, the teams were cross-trained and learned about interceding for open hearts and open doors. They were also trained for “persecution-proofing” their ministry, which included learning to listen to those they share with, to share the Gospel fully without using offensive words. It also involves a pathway for pre-conversion discipleship with an emphasis on spiritual alignment (renouncing old patterns and allegiances to fully embrace Jesus). In addition, the training reinforces how to dress, converse, and behave in public to avoid needless suspicion.

The days prior to teams launching were filled with anticipation and prayer. Each team member went back home to say goodbye to their family and friends, knowing the potential risk to their lives as the project began. The teams were equipped with mobile film projector backpacks, Wi-Fi hotspots, and other tools. Then Ismail called for a consecration service, and the media teams were prayed over, commissioned for ministry, and sent out.

**6. Church-planting.** These initial efforts of evangelism and media distribution are followed up by intentional church-planting, with immediate spiritual formation and discipleship. Jamal provides us with an example.

Jamaal’s leaders sent him and his team to a distant city, instructing them to walk only during the night to avoid undue attention from those who might not understand the Good News.

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

Two weeks later they arrived safely and began to prayer walk the community, noting where the research, prayer, spiritual discernment, and relational evangelism teams had suggested they begin the work. Within a few days, a plan seemed to come together, and they told people that later that night, they would show a film in an open field.

The first night, no one came, and Jamaal had to encourage the team to watch the Jesus Film together and be refreshed by the Holy Spirit. The next day, they set out to let more people know about the showing. Again, no one came. This pattern repeated for four days and nights. Jamaal and his team worked all day, setting up the food and the media and waiting—and no one showed up.

Jamaal called for a team meeting. “It’s time to pray and ask God what is happening,” he said. “Perhaps we have not heard properly, and we should pack up all our things and move on to the next place before the jihadis find us.” That night, they prayed outside for several hours until consensus came. They would stay one more night.

Jamaal and the team mustered their courage for one more day, sharing about the film on the streets and in the market, setting it up during the hot portion of the day, and waiting for the sun to set. No one came.

The team wanted to pack up, but Jamaal insisted they watch the Jesus Film one more time together before they left. A few minutes into the film, a religious leader, a mullah, came up and asked to speak to the leader. Jamaal said, “I am the leader. How can we serve you?”

The mullah replied, “I have been watching you for the last several nights from the corner of our mosque.” As he pointed back from where he had walked, he continued,

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

“Each night, you faithfully prepare food and set up your projector, and no one comes. What gives you the strength to do this?”

Jamaal sensed the Holy Spirit moving on the heart of this mullah, so he declared boldly, “We have been sent by our leader to come and rescue people from the devil! Our God is great, and He must be honored above all.”

The mullah agreed and said, “Yes, I have watched your film from a distance, but I could not hear it. Something in my heart tells me I should learn more about your message. Since no one has come to your showing tonight, please be my guest. Come stay in the mosque tonight. We will watch the film together and discuss how God wants to rescue people from the devil and all his evil.”

Jamaal and the team could hardly believe what they had just heard. God had opened a door no one could shut (Rev 3:8). They agreed, packed up their belongings, and followed the mullah back to the mosque. That night, after many showings of the film and long discussions, the mullah decided to follow Jesus.

The next day, he called for a special meeting of all the people in the community that night. He stood in the mosque and announced that he had come closer to God because of Jamaal and his team, and invited all the people to watch the film. After the film was over, the mullah stood and announced his allegiance to Jesus. The community gathered to watch the film for the next six nights, and many believed!

**7. Ministry training teams focus on discipling families.** This process involves discipling people into the

Kingdom and teaching them the ways of Jesus. Because of their close family relationships, everyone naturally tells their friends and family about the encounter they had with Jesus, and this training helps disciples grow in humility and purity before Jesus. It includes a spiritual formation weekend with an opportunity to renounce their former way of life, denounce evil, and embrace Jesus and the cross.

**8. Leadership development.** The ministry training teams focus on training heads of households, showing them how to disciple their extended family into the Kingdom. Once someone hosts and multiplies their house church, new leaders receive training, and the leaders of the new house churches learn the principles of sharing and caring for multiple house churches.

## BUSINESS SUSTAINS THE SURGE

Local businesses (see Chapter 8) are established as profitable operating hubs to provide long-term sustainability for surges and for the growth of ongoing church-planting ministries.

Experienced church planters and businesspeople are recruited and trained in the concept and principles of a Kingdom business. The skills of the trainees are affirmed through a verification review from global trainers. They are then strategically sent out as a business seed team over a three-month period.

This process especially helps when done during the first three waves of a surge and helps to “prepare the soil.” Business initiatives have been launched in dozens of megacities and have provided logistical, financial, and spiritual support for spiritual formation, leadership development, and multiplication of house

churches. These businesses open doors to the poor, refugees, and the persecuted, providing shelter, food, and assistance in finding permanent homes.

### THE SURGES FACE SIGNIFICANT CHALLENGES

Although most surge plans have been successful, surges always face unforeseen obstacles. For example, in recent years, supply chain logistics were severely impacted because of the global COVID-19 pandemic, leading to significant increases in the cost of supplies.

In addition, the teams found it both more difficult and more fruitful to do ministry in cities (as opposed to rural areas), but they also faced far more costly persecution. Breaches in digital communication systems have resulted in significant numbers of teams being compromised and top leaders targeted for attack. In the face of these challenges, we are reminded that Jesus said He was sending His disciples out as “sheep among wolves.” The only protection sheep have is from their shepherd.

Sometimes, God responds in miraculous ways, such was the case related to us by a simple shepherd who was also a disciple of Jesus.

One surge brought enough response that a large supply of spiritual materials was brought into the area. Those searching for a safe place to store these materials found a disciple who was a shepherd in the hills near the city. Soon he was guarding Christian materials for many ethnic groups in and around the city.

Unfortunately, this information somehow leaked to enemies of the Gospel, who then came and stole all 200

## FORESTS IN THE SEED

of his sheep. With great sadness, the shepherd went to the Lord in prayer, asking for wisdom on how to regain his livelihood. He finally decided he should meet the jihadis face to face and ask for his sheep to be returned.

The jihadis, whom he found feasting on a freshly slaughtered lamb, were shocked to see the simple shepherd. The chief said, “Do you not know who I am? And that I have the power to kill you?”

The shepherd answered, “I am not afraid of you. I am just a shepherd, and I came for my sheep. You have taken my entire livelihood.”

The jihadi asked, “What about all the spiritual material you are keeping in your shed?”

The shepherd responded, “I am just a shepherd. I own the 200 sheep you took, and I would like to have them back. As for the spiritual materials, they belong to Jesus, not me. You will have to talk to Him about those.”

After a long conversation, the shepherd was finally allowed to retrieve his sheep, minus the ones that had been slaughtered, and headed home. When the jihadi chief told him that he would come the next day for the spiritual materials, the shepherd responded that he would have to talk to Jesus about that.

The next day, before the jihadis arrived, the shepherd grabbed a large stick and drew a circle in the dirt around his house and the edge of his pasture, marking what he owned. He then drew a circle around the spiritual material in the shed, marking what belonged to Jesus. When the fighters came, he showed them the circles and said, “I only take responsibility for what is inside my circles. The other things (pointing to the spiritual material) belong to Jesus.”

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Furious, the first jihadi walked toward the storage, but when his foot crossed the circle drawn in the dirt, it suddenly became paralyzed, followed by his side. His weapon fell to the ground. The next soldier came rushing forward, and the same thing happened. It happened *again* to the next soldier. Finally, the fighters screamed, “What is happening? Why do we get paralyzed whenever we step into the circle with that material?”

The shepherd said, “I am just a shepherd, and these are my sheep. I don’t own that material; I just drew a circle around what Jesus owns. You should talk to Him.”

The partially paralyzed fighters dragged themselves back outside the circle, and the paralysis left! The following day, they returned in peace, with extra sheep to repay the shepherd for what they had eaten and to learn more about Jesus.

In 2020, the leadership of this family of movements who pioneered this surge approach determined to find ways to multiply their ministry times 10 by sharing what they had learned about surges and other movement strategies with other like-minded Kingdom Movements. They are now working to do this to help more movements start movements.



13  
**ACCELERATOR:  
MOVEMENTS START  
MOVEMENTS**

Despite God's amazing work, the need remains tremendous. What will it take to see everyone in our generation reached with the Good News of Jesus? The Great Commission is not just for a few Christians, but for every disciple. Matthew 28:17 informs us that even after all the 11 disciples had seen and experienced, some still doubted. But Jesus understands our weaknesses. He gave His commission to all His disciples, including those who doubted.

Jesus tells us we can't just be disciples—we also need to be disciple-makers who invest in new believers and help them reproduce. Paul describes this beautifully to Timothy: "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others" (2 Tim 2:2). This single verse describes four generations of believers: from Paul to Timothy and other witnesses, to "reliable people," then to "others."

Each disciple brings unique gifts and perspectives that can expand the Kingdom. One simple example is that one new disciple might speak a language the rest of the movement doesn't, and this new disciple can open the door to a brand new community where

the Gospel can spread.

Embracing the Great Commission allows individuals to expand beyond their personal skill set and limitations. The disciples in the movement have a passion for ensuring that “all” are reached. Instead of focusing only on “What can I do?” they ask, “What does God desire? The DNA in these movements focuses on constantly seeking to raise up new disciples and empower disciples to use their gifts so that the Kingdom can spread far beyond the reach of the initial leaders. Like John the Baptist, our individual role must decrease so that the spread of Jesus’ glory can maximally increase.

As disciple-makers go into these new communities where the Good News *is* news, they lead groups of lost people to commit to Jesus as Lord. When disciple-makers baptize these groups of new disciples, they give birth to a new church that starts obeying Jesus’ commands (Matt 28:20). They make disciples of other lost people and grow into a mature church seeking to look like the first churches as described in Acts. Like those early churches, they emphasize reaching out to new people and locations.

To go to all people, disciple-makers constantly look beyond where the church presently exists in order to see where it doesn’t yet exist. Which tribes, languages, and nearby places have not yet been reached by disciple-makers? Where are the gaps? Who can they send to these places?

Some outsiders have asked, “How can we motivate these movement disciples to reach the unreached?” The truth is, those within movements are usually much more motivated, sacrificial, and effective than those of us who are outsiders. It is our privilege as the global Body of Christ to learn from them and serve them as they lead the way in reaching their own communities and the unreached in every unreached place. This story of families moving

to an unreached area is an example of the deep commitment often seen in movements.

Ten days ago, a cluster of underground house churches in one country called a special meeting to discuss their response to the move of God. Following prayer and discussion about regional surges, the Holy Spirit led six families (52 people) to serve in a different country. They sold their businesses, said goodbye to family, and started on their journey of faith. However, not sure of how to make proper connections in the city and where they should live to serve the Lord effectively, they met with the regional leadership council to submit their plans to the leaders and to the Lord (Acts 15:28).

First, the regional leaders slaughtered a goat and called for a feast to celebrate this great sacrifice of obedience. One by one, each family's leader rose to share how God had spoken to them through the Holy Spirit, how they had sold all they owned, left their livelihoods, and committed to serving Jesus. Eventually, as night gave way to early morning, the real questions surfaced: "How long should they stay?" and "Where should they live?" They put a secure communication channel in motion to help provide the answers to where they should live, and eventually, each of the six families received a sense of confirmation from the Lord.

But the question remained: "How long?" A dispute arose between the families that they could not settle on their own. Finally, a spiritual council was called at 4 a.m., and after a long discussion and prayer, each of the families gave grace to the other. Four families committed for life, while two committed for ten years with a potential

extension. The resolution brought joy and peace—and about four hours of sleep. By 10 a.m. the next day, they safely drove across the border and were heading to their new home.

### MOVEMENTS STARTING MOVEMENTS

As Chapter 6 described, we need to reach more segments than just the world's 7,280 UPGs. Given the complexity of languages, peoples, and places, the probable need for over 100,000 movements to reach all the unreached people and places is daunting. So we are thrilled to see over 2,000 movements, but we realize we probably need 50 times as many movements.

A survey of movement leaders showed that existing movements have started approximately 90% of newer movements. These movements are cascading from their initial peoples and places into other peoples and places, both near and far. And these movements are our best hope for God to fulfill the Great Commission in our lifetime.

An initial 200± movements have started an additional 1,800± movements and an additional 1,500± pre-movements with some second- and third-generation churches. For example, the Bhojpuri CPM leaders were not willing to limit their efforts to the 100± million Bhojpuri speakers. God has used them to impact millions of others by catalyzing movements in eight neighboring language groups and five major cities in North India.<sup>85</sup> Another family of movements in Southeast Asia has started work in over 100 UPGs and 17 countries. The largest family of movements is tracking

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85 This is updated information from the article by Victor John, "Movements Multiplying Movements: How the Bhojpuri CPM has Started Other Movements," in *24:14—A Testimony to All Peoples*, p. 185-88.

churches in over 800 language groups.

Now we can see how 100,000 movements are possible. A key challenge is that we need to have more than one movement per UPG. Providentially, the unreached segments and people are interconnected through language, culture, geography, religion, and kinship. These 7,280 UPGs can be grouped into 123 clusters of related people groups.

Reaching one segment of an unreached group can lead to reaching all the segments. For instance, the Hausa language is spoken by 56 million people in 30 people groups in 16 countries.<sup>86</sup> Reaching one or more UPGs in this Hausa cluster can create leverage to reach the remaining UPGs. These new Hausa disciples become the best suited to spark new movements until all 56 million people have access to the Gospel. Some have used the term “hot coals,” likening this spread to embers from an existing fire being used to start one or more fires in a new location.

In earlier chapters, we described some of the approaches movements use to start new movements. Here are more examples.

### DISASTER RESPONSE

One Southeast Asian movement sent a church-planting team as part of a disaster response team into an area where a disaster had struck. Initially, the team went throughout the area, helping community leaders organize local relief and rebuilding efforts. Then, as time went on, spiritual conversations developed. The church-planting team identified key people—some who protected the relief efforts and some who connected them to social networks. Churches began forming, and they spread further

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86 <https://joshuaproject.net/languages/hau>.

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because of prayer and miracles. Over three years, similar churches multiplied in the villages in several mountain areas, reaching over 3,000 believers in seven generations in less than seven years.

### RESCUE IN WAR

Another movement described their work in a war zone. Heart-broken by the cruelty of ISIS, they sought to rescue persecuted Christians and Yazidis. Teams of experienced local church planters from the Middle East volunteered to leave their posts to do whatever it would take to rescue these people from ISIS.

Broken by the demonic, barbaric actions of ISIS terrorists, Yazidis began pouring into underground secret locations we called “Community of Hope Refugee Camps.” The Middle Eastern church planting teams provided free medical care, trauma-healing counseling, fresh water, shelter, and protection. One movement of Jesus-following house churches was living out their faith to impact another people group.

They discovered that the best workers came from nearby house churches. Those disciples knew the language and culture and had the heartbeat of evangelism and church planting. One leader wrote:

Many Yazidi families have accepted Jesus Christ and have asked to join with our leaders in serving their own people. Their ability to share in their own cultural way makes this very good. Today, we are praying for the affected people—that God will provide for their needs and protect them from the Islamic fighters. Please join with us in prayer.

## VISION, TRAINING, AND COACHING

One approach has been to share information about unengaged UPGs in existing movement churches. Those UPGs often have representatives in the movement. Then, they share with the people from those groups a vision for reaching their own UPG, and they train and coach those who respond to do this. One movement family working in over 400 UPGs described how they cast vision and train and coach people to reach the gaps.

- Believers with a vision for reaching their own people come to observe our work and receive ten days of training. They return to initiate a movement.
- We often go to their locations since some cannot afford to come to our location. First, we do an initial training course. Then, we invite some of them to a second training, where we do 50% of the training, and they do 50%. For the third training, we coach them to do all the training.
- We then follow up with ongoing coaching of those who have implemented the training principles. Every three months, we try to call them and see how it's going. Then we go back to follow up. We keep doing follow-ups in different countries on a quarterly rotation.
- Finally, we cast a vision to coalitions of partners for “no place left” in their regions. For follow-up training, we send master trainers (people who understand the complete model and can train others to start movements) to equip them.

## GENEROSITY TRAINING<sup>87</sup>

One family of movements was operating in a mode of funding their own needs but looking for outside help to start work in new areas. Through a training in generosity, they learned seven principles of generosity from studying the Bible.

1. God Owns Everything  
*Psalms 24:1 — “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it.”*
2. God Provides Enough  
*Luke 12:32 — “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.”*
3. God Gave Generously  
*John 3:16 — “For God so loved the world that He gave his one and only Son.”*
4. We Respond Lovingly  
*1 John 3:16 — “Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters.”*
5. We Hear God  
*John 10:27 — “My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.”*
6. We Find Joy  
*Acts 20:35 — “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”*
7. We Store Treasure in Heaven  
*2 Timothy 1:12 — “He is able to guard what I have entrusted to him until that day.”*

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<sup>87</sup> See [stationsofgenerosity.org](http://stationsofgenerosity.org) for training materials.



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While these disciples were already sacrificial in their giving, this biblical study process created a greater faith, desire, and willingness to give, to support outside work. They began to pray and give, and they sent out ten teams of two people each to areas with no existing ministry. Within a year, these teams had all seen several generations of reproducing churches started.

## WAVES

Chapter 12 described the surges, which have started over 100 new movements. Other movements are using similar approaches of a multi-wave campaign. For instance, one describes their process as having four stages, featuring four roles they consider critical in spreading the Gospel among a new group. People from existing movements are recruited to fill each of these four roles for a new area. First, committed intercessors are mobilized to support the work for the entire time of this focused ministry. Second, evangelists go out for one month to a new area to sow the seed broadly. Third, missionaries are sent to the same area for six months to follow up with the fruit. Fourth, planters move to the same area to continue to build up the new believers and help them multiply.

In one situation, they used this approach to gain entry to a very closed island and saw over 200 churches established in the first year.

## BUSINESS START-UPS

One movement family uses a business model to send extended families to new areas.<sup>88</sup> The following testimony is a story of the beginning of a movement in a new area.

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<sup>88</sup> See Appendix H: Kingdom business Project Overview for more details on this process.

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We moved our family across the country border and settled into the home that the research team had located for us. On the first Friday, we gathered as a family and gave thanks to God for choosing us to bring His love and forgiveness to the M People. Our leader said, “We are glad that our God chose us for these people. No one has ever had this chance before to come and share about salvation with M People. We are the first Christians to bring the Jesus faith to this nation! These are very friendly people; pray for them.”

Our first farming business failed due to our failure to listen to the market, so people disliked our product. However, because of the good work of the market research team and the fact that we were sent as a gift from one tribal leader to here, the local village leaders were very concerned that part of the business failure was also their responsibility. They opened their doors to us in hospitality and, together, eventually agreed to start a chicken farming business.

We knew the second business idea was from God because every day, people came to visit us to make sure the business was going well and to offer to help us. One day, we began our morning praying together, and suddenly, 64 farmers came into our meeting. They did not know Jesus, but they respectfully joined us for morning prayers. We kept praying in front of them in the mighty name of Jesus!

At the end, the leaders came and said, “We came to help you make your farm better, but listening to your prayers is changing something inside of us.” The main leader stepped forward and said, “I’m the richest person in this entire area, but today I see that my heart is empty. Today, your prayers have filled my heart!” Then, ALL of them asked how to be saved!

## UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Another approach that movements use to reach new peoples and places is ministry to university students. One ministry reaches lost college students with a restoration model that focuses on emotional and relational healing, guiding them to the Bible and drawing on movement dynamics.

They use a simple “Five Finger Model” to aid reproducibility:

1. **Discover needs.** Talk with them and try to uncover their felt needs quickly (such as family problems, personal trauma, abuse, addiction, etc.).
2. **Offer prayer.** Offer a prayer of blessing and then help them evaluate if this touched them.
3. **Show care and coach alongside.** It is important to show people that our willingness to help them does not depend on their response.
4. **Guide them to make choices based on Scripture.** This is done using passages appropriate to their need. Discussion guides them to realize God is the only one who can truly help them.
5. **Help them form a restoration group anchored in the Bible.** After a person is helped with their problem, they are encouraged to start a group with several other people. Often, these restoration groups become groups of baptized disciples, and a church is born.

God has used graduates to start movements in eleven UPGs. When they see at least 20 believers and third-generation groups, they go to do follow-up coaching. They then keep coaching through phone calls and messages and occasional trips.

## COMPASSION MINISTRIES

Besides the ministry during Ebola described above, the New Harvest Global family of movements in West Africa has also used compassion ministries to bring the Gospel to new peoples and places.<sup>89</sup> They started with agriculture. Since most farmers were desperately poor, they did not save seed for the next planting. New Harvest started seed banks in various locations. This access strategy led not only to many farmers becoming more self-sufficient but also to many coming to faith.

Another access ministry is healthcare. Team members provide training on hygiene, breastfeeding, nutrition, child vaccines, and prenatal care for pregnant women. They have also trained some church planters as rudimentary dentists and optometrists. They send teams to new areas and provide care to everyone possible, while their higher purpose is to find people to serve as bridges for the Gospel into the community.

Many areas need better access to education, so New Harvest workers go into new communities and partner with local people to serve educational needs. When education is an obvious need, their intercessors take this need to God in prayer. As they pray, they engage the community to discover what resources the community already has. Often, the community will supply land, a community building, or construction materials to build a temporary structure.

New Harvest recruits veteran disciple-makers and church planters to go as fully certified teachers. We usually encourage the community to pay part of the teacher's salary, and we pay part at the beginning. Schools start with a few benches, pencils or pens, a box of chalk, and a chalkboard. The school may start

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89 Shodankeh Johnson, "Passion for God."

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under a tree, in a community center, or in an old house. The school leaders start slowly and grow the school academically and spiritually.

New Harvest has launched over 100 primary schools, most of which are now owned by the local communities. From this simple program, God has also raised up 12 secondary schools, two trade schools, and Every Nation College. This college has an accredited School of Business and School of Theology.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE?

Research from the 24:14 Coalition of Movements shows the following information.

		#	Population
Category	Joshua Project Unreached People Groups	7,280	3.39 billion
1	UPGs where the language has a movement in the same country	1,870	1.66 billion
2	UPGs where the language has a movement somewhere in the world	4,069	2.74 billion
3	UPGs where the language has no movement anywhere	3,211	656 million

This information shows us the way forward. Our first and most important action is always to pray and mobilize prayer.

**For category #1**—where there is a movement in the same language in the same country—we need to ask the movement leaders how we can best assist them, either in beginning work or expanding work they have already begun.

**Category #2**—where there is a movement in the same language but in a different country, this will typically be more

challenging—so we need to ask how we can serve the movements to send “hot coals” who can ignite responses within these UPGs.

**For category #3**—where we don’t know of any movements in that language—we can inform movement leaders and disciples of the need and see if any would respond to go to a new group. We can then, as much as possible, help those who respond. If none respond, our best approach would be to work with both movement leaders and outside movement catalysts to mold new catalysts, then work together to help them catalyze pioneering efforts into the gaps.

God has done far more than we can ask or imagine in starting over 2,000 modern-day Kingdom Movements, with most of them among UPGs. As these movements begin, we might expect them to focus all their energy on the tremendous needs among their own people. Instead, we are thrilled to find that many movements are now multiplying movements among other groups.

We have seen that disciples from with Kingdom Movement DNA are the best laborers to spark new movements. To fulfill the Great Commission we should prioritize finding the best match between existing movements and remaining unreached peoples and places. Our global body must provide resources and assistance to Kingdom Movement disciples who are dedicated to reaching the millions of people in unreached areas.

## 14 CHARGE

A renewed struggle has been gaining momentum over the past 40-plus years in efforts to bring the Good News to the over two billion people who have never heard the saving news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.<sup>90</sup> Ephesians 6:12 tells us that this “struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Those involved in this struggle engage in intercession as spiritual warfare and lifestyles of love and sacrifice so that the Good News reaches the unreached people of the world.

At first, this struggle began as a quiet effort by a few “freedom fighters” unwilling to see billions of people live and die with no access to the Gospel. Radical Christ followers who, not accepting that so many lived in bondage to the “ruler of this world,” have laid down their lives to see Jesus set the prisoners free.

This insurgence has spread rapidly and broadly. Initial sparks have grown into a global firestorm. Millions of new disciples have

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<sup>90</sup> Portions of this chapter are adapted from an article that Stan Parks co-authored with Steve Smith, originally published in the Jan-Feb 2018 issue of *Mission Frontiers*. Archived at <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/2414-the-war-that-finally-ends1>

arisen in this battle: **to date, over 114 million new disciples from within the harvest.** Prisoners of the devil in the past have become steadfast proclaimers of Jesus today.

They advance the banner of Christ against demonic strongholds and despite human opposition. Their chief weapons are the love of God and the Gospel of Jesus. They lay down their lives for Jesus while forgiving and blessing their persecutors. They thrill at the salvation of multitudes in unreached areas, and when they experience sparse fruit and frequent suffering, they rejoice that their own names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20).

Most are not professionals; they work regular jobs but wage spiritual war day and night. Some volunteer for dangerous missions to rescue the lost. All have a heart to embrace those who enter their Kingdom communities. This groundswell of disciples praying, sending, and going overwhelms every major obstacle to the King of Kings by the power of the cross. Laying down all to finish what Jesus began spreads and fuels the mission (Rev 12:11).

His Kingdom is invisible, as He declared:

*My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.*

*John 18:36, ESV*

This is a battle for the souls of people. These disciples have fought the restraints of institutional religion to obey the commands of Scripture. They have endured not only attacks by demonic powers but also friendly fire from church leaders who have misunderstood their desire to live as authentic disciples of the King.



These children of God have chosen to believe that disciples, churches, leaders, and movements can ***multiply as movements of the Spirit***, just as they did in the early church. They believe that the commands of Christ still carry the same authority and Spirit-empowerment as 2,000 years ago.

Our goal is simple: **No more unreached peoples and places: every person with access to the Gospel and the church thriving in every nation, tribe, people, and language.**

In his final instructions to His disciples (Matt 28:18-20), Jesus laid out an amazing plan for all his disciples—both then and now. Yet, two thousand years after Jesus gave us this command, over 2 billion people still do not have access to the Gospel!

When I (Stan) was in Senegal, as Thanksgiving approached, I described our plans to celebrate later that week. A young man in my English class asked, “What is Thanksgiving?”

I told my class, “Thanksgiving is a day Americans set aside to thank God for His many blessings to us.”

A Senegalese friend said, “We don’t have a holiday like that. But if we did, it wouldn’t be Thanksgiving Day. We would call it ‘God-Has-Forgotten-Us Day.’” I was stunned, speechless at first. Senegal was a resource-poor country in the midst of a multi-year drought. More importantly, very few people had ever heard the Good News of Jesus.

After a long pause, I said, “No, God hasn’t forgotten you, but we, as Christians, have failed to obey Him. He commanded us as His followers to share His blessings and the Good News of His love and salvation through His Son, Jesus Christ, with everyone in the whole world. But we have not done that.”

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Despite the Church's historic failures, God is at work bringing the Gospel to the entire world. He is starting movements of multiplying disciples, churches, and leaders, who are discipling entire communities, language groups, cities, and nations. We have a God-given desire to see these movements grow and multiply until no more people live beyond the reach of the Gospel.

These Kingdom Movements are not a Western-centric initiative. They comprise many disciples and churches in movements throughout Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe. The vast majority of the millions in these Kingdom Movements are new disciples from Unreached People Groups.

Kingdom Movements are spreading in our day, just as they did in the Book of Acts and at various times in history. They are not a new phenomenon but an old one. This is no fad but a transformative Kingdom revolution. Through over 40 years of reproducing churches, the number of these Kingdom Movements has multiplied from a mere handful in the 1990s to over 2,000 as of 2023. Each movement has won this advance with great endurance and sacrifice.

This mission—to take the Gospel of the Kingdom to every unreached and under-reached people and place—comes with real casualties of persecution. This is a struggle to the end—to see the name of Jesus exalted in every place, to be worshiped by all peoples. This mission costs everything, and it is worth it! He is worth it as we see from the bold disciple-makers in this recent account from Central Asia.

For over two millennia, a war-torn mountainous region high in the Central Asian Steppe and the major trade city at its base had held every family captive to spiritual darkness. The Nestorians failed to make disciples here;

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Jesuits and tradesmen on Marco Polo's Silk Road had seen little fruit, and modern Western missionaries had come and gone with no lasting fruit. Still, the Lord had put on Arsalan's heart this region and the city at its base. He began asking the Lord for a new way, and the more Arsalan prayed, the more he returned to the patterns and ways of Scripture. Knowing that he might have only one opportunity to bring the Good News to every person in the area, Arsalan and his team decided to begin with prayer. For more than ten years, Arsalan and his team prayer-walked this city and region, asking the God of Heaven for a miraculous breakthrough.

Eventually, a relative of the most influential tribal leader of the area expressed interest in learning about Jesus as God and began his spiritual journey into the Kingdom. Soon, his immediate family also became followers of Jesus. Arsalan invited them to join the prayer walks, and together, they continued to petition heaven's throne room. Months later, the relative asked Arsalan for a meeting and conveyed that he thought it would be possible to bring the Good News to the tribal leader. If he embraced the Gospel, the entire region would follow, but if he rejected them, they would not survive.

Word spread among the believers that God had opened a door for the Gospel. Those working on translations of Scripture came and brought their drafts; others who had been using the Jesus Film nearby came and offered their tools and their time. The believers gathered discipleship tools to help in spiritual formation, deliverance, inductive study of God's Word, development of house-church leaders, multiplying leaders, and building healthy movements.

Intercession mounted, and prayer was lifted up by

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people around the world. A small team of 20 church planters gathered and sought the Lord for His way to impact this tribal leader and, through him, the city and the region. After weeks of prayer and fasting, a plan came together. One by one, these experienced house church planters would ask for a meeting. Knowing the likelihood of their going and not returning, they rehearsed the plan. The first promised to quote Luke 1, the second Luke 2, the third Luke 3, and so on. They would lay down their lives to reach this man.

Amazingly, the first leader was granted a meeting, traveled on foot past all the checkpoints, was welcomed in the tribal leader's home, and served tea. When asked why he had come, the church planter explained that God had sent him with a special message for the leader and began to quote Luke 1. The meeting went well, and the church planter thanked the tribal leader for his time and left. But when the church planter had walked about a mile from the tribal leader's home, he was killed.

When the church planter did not return, the team knew what had happened but did not change their plan. The second approached the tribal leader, quoted from Luke 2, and was then murdered in the same spot. The third church planter approached the tribal leader, quoted from Luke 3, and was murdered in the same location. The same thing happened with the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth... all the way to the eighteenth: welcomed by the tribal leader, quoted from Luke, and then murdered about a mile after their departure.

When the nineteenth church planter approached, he was welcomed like all the others and served tea. But this time, before he could quote Luke 19, the tribal leader

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interrupted him, saying, “Do you know what has happened to all of your friends? They came here, told me their message from God, and then I had them all killed. Are you not afraid of what I will do to you?” Filled with peace, the church planter replied, “My dear brother, Jesus has guaranteed me a place in heaven. Like my friends, I have nothing to fear in this life. You, however, have no guarantee for your eternity and live in the fear of uncertainty.”

The tribal leader broke down in tears and asked, “How can I know the way to heaven?” At that moment, the prayers of the saints and the love of God had conquered. The church planter asked for permission to bring in his team, which the tribal leader granted. Word was sent back to disciplers, intercessors, film teams, and others. They all came, ready to share the hope of the Gospel.

The tribal leader first gathered his eldest sons, then his immediate family, to share the story and the Gospel of Jesus as God. Once the family had considered the message, asked questions, and repented, they were baptized and encouraged to invite their extended family to experience Jesus’ love and forgiveness. The multiplication of a movement had begun, and within months, over 2,000 large extended families had been freed from the darkness and brought into the light.

We long to see the Great Commission fulfilled in our lifetime. We desire kingdom movements in *every* people and place.

As God draws multitudes of new believers from every language, tribe, people, and nation into His Kingdom, we yearn: “Come, Lord Jesus!” (Rev 22:20). We can see an end to a 2,000-year spiritual war. Satan’s defeat is in sight. We glimpse on the horizon: no place left without the saving knowledge of Christ. The Lord is

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asking us to pay the price and sacrifice deeply, to be the generation that fulfills the Great Commission.

God *will* complete His purpose. Will He do it with you or without you?

We invite you to join us.

Come, join the revolution.

## EPILOGUE TAKE THE NEXT STEP

Becoming part of God's work in our world through movements is simple. Begin in prayer:

*Lord, You are doing an amazing thing in the world today. Some of these stories are awe-inspiring. Some of them are difficult for me to understand. I want to hear Your heart for the nations. I want to be part of what You are doing. Please, show me Your heart. Please show me what You would have me do to be part of Your work.*

Then, listen.

Then, obey.

We invite you to take the next step at [2414now.net/nextsteps](http://2414now.net/nextsteps)

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: 2004 ELEMENTS OF CHURCH PLANTING MOVEMENTS

From David Garrison's 2004 book, *Church Planting Movements*.<sup>91</sup>

#### **Ten universal elements present in modern CPMs.**

1. extraordinary prayer;
2. abundant evangelism;
3. intentional planting of reproducing churches;
4. the authority of God's Word;
5. local leadership;
6. lay leadership;
7. house churches;
8. churches planting churches;
9. rapid reproduction;
10. healthy churches.

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91 See *Church Planting Movements* by David Garrison, Wigtake Resources, 2004 -- [www.churchplantingmovements.com](http://www.churchplantingmovements.com)



**Ten common elements that are often present:**

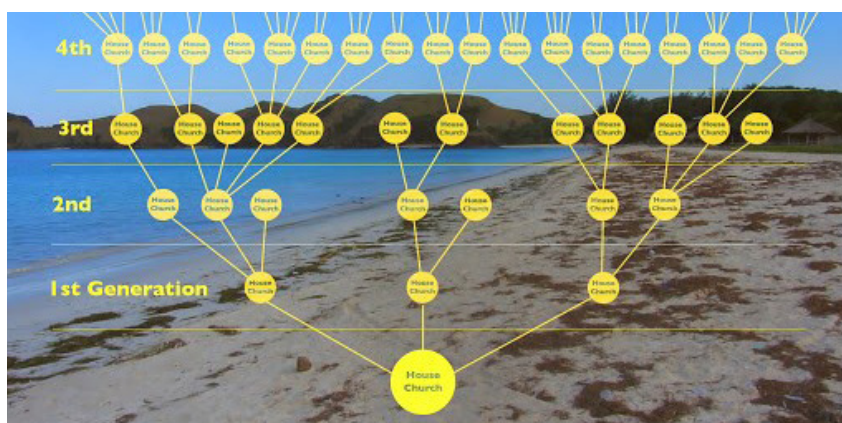
1. a climate of uncertainty in society
2. insulation from outsiders
3. a high cost for following Christ
4. bold, fearless faith
5. family-based conversion patterns
6. rapid incorporation of new believers
7. worship in the heart language
8. divine signs and wonders
9. on-the-job leadership training
10. missionaries suffered.

**“7 Deadly Sins” that can kill a CPM:**

1. blurred vision (not having a clear vision of a CPM)
2. improving the Bible (adding our cultural patterns to what we teach)
3. sequentialism (being mechanical rather than modeling all things from the beginning)
4. unsavory salt (Christians who give a bad testimony and/or a church who does not love the lost and share their faith)
5. the devil’s candy (trying to take shortcuts by using money and other resources illegitimately)
6. alien invasion (foreigners importing their style of church)
7. blaming God (there are a lot of reasons that CPMs don’t take place, but don’t blame God).

## APPENDIX B: MOVEMENT RESULTS VS. MOVEMENT PROCESSES

**The Result and the Process:** When modern Kingdom Movements began to emerge in the 1990s, the term Church Planting Movements (CPMs) was used to describe the visible **results**. Jesus promised to build his church, and these movements show him doing that in marvelous ways. He also assigned his followers a specific role toward that result: to make disciples of all *ethnē*. Our job is to implement the disciple-making **processes** by which Jesus builds his church. These processes, under God's sovereignty, can **result** in Church Planting Movements.



**Kingdom Movement Results:** a multiplication of disciples making disciples, and leaders developing leaders, resulting in indigenous churches (usually house churches) planting more churches. These new disciples and churches begin spreading rapidly through a people group or population segment, meeting people's spiritual and physical needs. They begin to transform their communities as the new Body of Christ lives out kingdom values. When consistent, multiple-stream 4<sup>th</sup> generation reproduction of churches occurs, church planting reproduction has crossed a threshold to becoming a sustainable movement.

**Kingdom Movement Processes:** There are many variations, but these are some of the approaches and processes God has used to start Kingdom Movements.

***Discovery DMM (Disciple Making Movement):*** focuses on disciples engaging the lost to find “households of peace” who will gather their family or circle of influence to begin a Discovery Group. This is an inductive group Bible study process from Creation to Christ, learning directly from God through His Scripture. The journey toward Christ usually takes several months. During this process, seekers are encouraged to obey what they learn and share the Bible stories with others. When possible, they start new Discovery Groups with others in their relational network. At the end of this initial study process, those who are ready to commit are baptized. They then begin a several-month Discovery Bible Study (DBS) church-planting phase, during which they are formed into a church. This process disciples the Discovery Group into a commitment to Christ, leading to new churches and new leaders who then reproduce the process.

Typical discovery Bible series include: 1) Creation to Christ for seekers 2) Commitment 3) New Church 4) New Disciple 5) New Leaders. A typical DMM process would involve:

1. Prayer for the Harvest and Laborers
2. Launching Disciplemaking Teams
3. Engage the lost community through access/compassion ministries
4. Find the Household of Peace

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5. Disciple to commitment through DBS
6. Form churches of those who commit to Christ and begin them on the growth process
7. Leadership Development.

Then, the cycle is reproduced by these new disciples.

**Four Fields:** The 4 Fields of Kingdom Growth is a framework for visualizing the five things Jesus and his leaders did to grow the Kingdom of God: entry, gospel, discipleship, church formation, and leadership.

1. Entry Strategy = Seek and save the lost
2. Gospel Strategy = Proclaim the Gospel of the Kingdom everywhere you go
3. Discipleship strategy = Nurture growth and obedience through partnership with the Holy Spirit
4. Church strategy = Gather the harvest together to repeat cycle
5. Leadership Development Strategy = empower ordinary people to carry on the extraordinary task of making disciples through the power of the Holy Spirit

This pattern can be seen in Mark 1. It follows the model of the parable of the farmer entering new fields, sowing seed, watching it grow even though he knows not how, and when the time is right, cutting and bundling the harvest together (Mark 4:26-29). The farmer works with the reminder that it is God who gives the

increase (1 Cor 3:6-9). Like Jesus and his leaders, we need to have a plan for each field, but it is God's Spirit that causes the growth. The items are usually trained sequentially, but in practice, the 5 parts happen simultaneously.

***Train4Trainers (T4T):*** a process of mobilizing and training all believers to evangelize the lost (especially in their *oikos* or circle of influence), disciple the new believers, start small groups or churches, develop leaders, and *train these new disciples* to do the same with their *oikos*. Discipleship is defined as both obeying the Word and teaching others (hence, trainers). The goal is to help every generation of believers to train trainers, who can train trainers, who can train trainers. T4T equips trainers using a three-thirds process of discipleship each week:

1. looking back to evaluate and celebrate obedience to God
2. looking up to receive from his Word
3. looking ahead by setting prayerful goals and practicing how to impart these things to others.

***Spiritual Revolution:*** A very widespread family of movements called the RUN (Reaching Unreached Nations) Family of Movements. They have a variety of approaches but common themes of radical love and sacrifice. They have the following frameworks:

***Five Truths:*** Essential Truths act as the foundation for our daily walk.

1. I base my life on Jesus and His Word
2. As a sacrifice of Worship
3. In Fellowship with others

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4. As a witness to the world
5. I am willing to live like Jesus.

***Six Orders:*** Spiritual revolution demands that we sacrifice our own ambition and career paths to follow Christ in announcing and expanding the Kingdom.

1. Ask God where He is going, then join Him
2. Walk in faith and obedience, trusting Him to provide
3. Seek out the God-hungry “men of peace”
4. Invite God to encounter the “men of peace”
5. Baptize them and teach them to obey
6. Go with the “men of peace” proclaiming the Kingdom to their family and friends

***Seven Principles:*** To guide us in growing and expanding His church throughout the world

1. The church begins with my core
2. The church meets in the house
3. The church has a God-ordained leader(s)
4. The church reproduces organically
5. The church relates to an extended family
6. The church expands globally from family to family
7. The church is indestructible and will eventually rule and reign with Christ

## APPENDIX C: CRITICAL ELEMENTS FOR CATALYZING MOVEMENTS

This is one example of a strategic framework. Catalyzing, growing, and expanding Kingdom Movements are a very complex endeavor. This example is a re-framing of the elements from unpublished training materials of David Watson.

**GOD has a VISION for our People...so we reproduce PRAYER and EVANGELISM ...for reproducing DISCIPLES, CHURCHES, LEADERS so that all can hear.**

*Acts 19:10*- This continued on for two years, so that everyone who lived in Asia, both Jews and Greeks, heard the word of the Lord Jesus.

### **God**

1. God is the initiator of CPMs—they are His work and for His Glory (Hab 2:14; Eph 3:20-21). The Holy Spirit is the Equipper and Empowerer of CPMs (Acts 1:8).
2. *Vision*: God has a vision for reaching a UPG/city/tribe/nation to a person/team (Acts 19:10). Start with knowing the mind of God and join Him in His work. Prayerfully prepare a view of “What God Will Do” as an EndVision (Rom 15:18-19).
3. Cast vision to believers to join in the work.
4. Scripture is the foundation of all beliefs and practices (2 Tim 3:16-17).

## Prayer

5. Relationship with God is primary (personal and team) (Matt 22:37). Prayer and fasting for the lost is foundational (Luke 10:2). **Reproduction of Intercessors is crucial.**
6. Spiritual Warfare is common and necessary, especially in unreached areas where the Gospel is newly being presented (Eph 6:12).

## Evangelism

7. Ministry creates access for evangelism. Share in truth and power (“Kingdom of God is near” and “Heal the sick”) (Luke 10:9). Ministries open the door for church planting
8. Use the access to find Persons of Peace (Matt 10, Luke 9, Luke 10) who open a family/group.
9. Evangelize the *oikos* (households and relational networks) as your main focus (Luke 10:5-8)
10. Use culturally-appropriate evangelism leading to discipling lost people (1 Cor 9:19-23).  
**Help those learning from the Father reproduce evangelism immediately.**

## Discipleship

11. Disciple the lost *oikos* to commitment to Christ (make disciples, not converts).
12. Lead them to love Jesus and obey His commands (Deut 6:4-9, John 14:15, Matt 28:20). Teach obedience to the



Word, not to human doctrines and traditions.

13. Group Process: help the group learn together and share leadership and accountability. Groups/Communities learn more quickly, remember more things and remember them better. Groups also replicate more quickly, and when correctly established, protect against heresy and bad leadership.
14. Persecution is normal and prepared for (John 15:20, Luke 21:12-19)  
**Help those becoming disciples begin reproducing immediately.**

## Churches

15. Churches are discipled oikos' that become obeying congregations (usually meeting in homes) who transform families and communities.
16. Scripture and the Holy Spirit are all they need (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor 14:26) to establish self-replicating disciples, leaders, and churches. Church Planting is an act of God through His Spirit and His people who are obedient to the Word and the Spirit.
17. Together, these new believers begin the process of discerning how to redeem local culture. Do not import external culture, but allow them to redeem local culture biblically.
18. They need to reach out beyond their culture/group (Matt 28:18-20). Reaching Out to "ALL" segments of society becomes a part of the group DNA.  
**Help new churches begin reproducing immediately.**

## Leaders

19. Outside leaders model (only what is reproducible by insiders), equip, watch, launch, and support from afar. Outside leaders introduce new concepts that are contextualized by inside leaders. Outside leaders deculturalize; inside leaders contextualize.
20. Inside leaders keep all things reproducible by inside leaders and directed/lead by inside leaders (2 Tim 2:2).
21. Self-supporting local leaders start and sustain all work—including groups, fellowships, and churches. Self-supporting may mean the worker has a job or business.
22. Develop leaders through on-the-job training (Phil 4:9). Discipleship and Leadership Education and Training are “on the job,” continuously and primarily through mentoring.

**Reproducing leaders is crucial—a CPM is a leadership development movement.**

## Plan and Evaluate

23. Research—know and continue to learn about the population group you are reaching.
24. Be honest in evaluating strengths and weaknesses and make necessary changes.
25. Be accountable to God and each other

## APPENDIX D: A PRAYER WAVE PRECEDED THE CURRENT HARVEST WAVE

A prayer movement has preceded the current wave of modern harvest movements in the same way prayer preceded and was critical to the work of Jesus and the early church.

- In the 1960s and 70s, new resources from the *World Christian Encyclopedia*, Operation World, and the Perspectives course opened the eyes of many to the existence of unreached peoples. These guides gave people ways to pray for these people.
- In the 1980s, this growing information about the unreached coalesced into many new prayer campaigns and tools—such as the *Global Prayer Digest* and *Concerts of Prayer*.
- In the 1990s, a multinational prayer effort called *Praying through the Window* eventually mobilized over 40 million intercessors from 120 countries. This led to prayer journeys throughout the unreached world. In 1993, the first of the annual *30 Days of Prayer for the Muslim World* began mobilizing prayer for Muslims during Ramadan. Many movements among leaders point to this as a key step in a breakthrough among Muslims.
- During this period, another significant element was the growing emphasis on “adopting” Unreached People Groups for prayer and outreach. Through adoption, individual groups (especially churches) would take responsibility for mobilizing a network focused on a specific people group. This was championed by Joshua Project, Caleb Project, the AD2000 & Beyond Movement, Ethne, Adopt-a-People

Clearing House, Call2All, Finishing the Task, as well as regional networks such as COMIBAM (Latin America), MANI (Africa), SEALink (SEAsia), IMA (India), SEANet (Buddhist World), the Central Asia Consultation, and Vision 5:9 (Muslim World).

- Throughout these decades, various geopolitical events also spurred more prayer. The Iranian Revolution (1979), the Gulf War (1990-91), the 9/11 attacks (2001), and other events inspired many prayers from Christians around the world. They also spurred disillusioned and desperate lost people to seek another path.

These dynamics mobilized millions of people to learn more about specific unreached peoples and to pray for the Gospel to be brought to them. As the movements described in this book began to grow, these new disciples within the movements prayed sacrificially for the Kingdom to spread to every people and place.

We know God mobilized His global Church in prayer to lay the foundation for the explosive growth of Kingdom Movements—from three known Kingdom Movements in 1995 to over 2000 in 2023.

## APPENDIX E: PRAYER AND FASTING IN THE BIBLE

**Praying like Old Testament Leaders:** Scripture repeatedly commands us to pray, both individually and corporately. The transformation of communities (cities, towns, villages, families, countries, and regions) through prayer forms a consistent thread running through Scripture from beginning to end. We consistently see people partnering with God through prayer, resulting in breakthroughs and changes on a significant level. Their prayers were not secondary to their ministries. Prayer lay at the very center of God's plan for these people as the foundation of the spiritual impact released through them.

- Abraham pleaded with God over the city of Sodom. He kept asking for a smaller and smaller number of faithful men to save the city. God continually granted his requests, with every sign that Abraham's requests reflected God's heart (Gen 18:22-33).
- Moses held the staff of the Lord over the battle against the Amalekites (Exod 17), and this intercessory act enabled Joshua to win victory in battle. When the people fell into idolatry, Moses' intercession led to God sparing them (Exod 30-31).
- David left a legacy of worship and passion for being in the presence of God. He won many of his victories through guidance given directly by God in the place of prayer (2 Sam 5:17-25). Even as God used him to expand the borders of the Kingdom, David's greatest joy as king was to see the ark of God's presence brought into the center of his people's lives.
- God used Elijah's prayers to perform supernatural signs

and wonders that turned the nation back to the Lord. His obedience in prayer withheld and released rain, caused fire to fall, and resulted in the people falling on their faces and worshiping God (1 Kings 17-19).

- Daniel spent weeks in prayer, unleashing country-shaping shock waves in both the seen and the unseen realms (Dan 10).
- Nehemiah spent four months in prayer, and the wall was reconstructed in less than two months (Neh 1-3).
- Even the King of Nineveh—as a first step in his allegiance to Yahweh—launched a national time of intense fasting and prayer (Jonah 3:7-8) that resulted in the deliverance of his city from God’s judgment.

**Praying like Jesus:** Jesus is our best example of prayer. Shodankeh Johnson is a leader of a family of movements in West Africa with over 15,000 churches. He applies Jesus’ example to us:

“We should pass on this message to our disciples: to pray and fast as Jesus did. Even though He was God in the flesh, He prayed before He started His ministry. If Jesus prayed so often, we need to pray just as often. If we hope to see any success among UUPGs,<sup>92</sup> we need a praying ministry. We need praying disciples. As we keep praying and raising up disciples to fast and pray, we can hope to see multiple movements. Remember that prayer is the engine of a movement.”<sup>93</sup>

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92 Unengaged Unreached People Groups are groups where there is no known effective outreach to the people group.

93 Shodankeh Johnson, “Prayer was very critical to Jesus’ ministry” *Mission Frontiers* (March-April 2022), archived at <https://www.missionfrontiers.org/issue/article/jesus-10-movement-principles>

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- We know Jesus “often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:16).
- At His baptism, “as He was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on Him” (Luke 3:21b-22a).
- We see Him praying all night before He chose His 12 apostles: “One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray and spent the night praying to God. When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles” (Luke 6:12-13).
- Jesus prayed before performing miracles such as feeding the 4,000 (Mark 8:6) and the 5,000 (Matt 14:19). He prayed when He healed a deaf-mute (Mark 7:34). He prayed when He raised Lazarus from the dead (John 11:41b-42).
- He taught His disciples to love their enemies and pray for their persecutors (Matt 5:44). He taught them that they “should always pray and never give up” (Luke 18:1). He taught them, “And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith” (Matt 21:22, ESV). Jesus taught us to “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; and the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks it will be opened” (Matt 7:7-11).
- Jesus taught us to pray like this: “Our Father in Heaven, may your name be kept holy. May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us today the food we need, and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us. And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one” (Matt 6:9-13, NLT). Jesus taught His disciples to approach God

with childlike love and trust. Our first requests are that God be honored and His kingship be fulfilled among humans. Only then can we be in a healthy place to ask for our needs—for daily physical needs, to be forgiven and be able to forgive others, and for protection from temptation and the devil.

- His response to the need of the lost was to command His disciples: “The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore, pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest” (Luke 10:2, ESV).
- Jesus prayed for Peter during his spiritual crisis. “Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat. But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers” (Luke 22:31-32).
- Jesus prayed in the garden during His own terrible crisis: “While Jesus was here on earth, he offered prayers and pleadings, with a loud cry and tears, to the one who could rescue him from death. And God heard his prayers because of his deep reverence for God. Even though Jesus was God’s Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered.” (Heb 5:7-8, NLT).
- Because of this decision, Jesus did not pray to be rescued. He said, “Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt 26:53, ESV).
- His last words on the cross were a prayer: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit” (Luke 23:46).
- Even now, Jesus is still interceding: “Therefore, he is able, once and forever, to save those who come to God through



him. He lives forever to intercede with God on their behalf” (Heb 7:25, NLT).

**Praying like the Early Church:** The book of Acts repeatedly highlights how God used prayer as one of the most significant building blocks of the Church. We see the central role of prayer in the following passages:

- As they waited for the Holy Spirit after Jesus had ascended, “they all joined together constantly in prayer” (Acts 1:14).
- When they chose a replacement apostle, they all prayed, “O Lord, you know every heart. Show us which of these men you have chosen as an apostle to replace Judas in this ministry” (Acts 1:24-25a, NLT).
- As a key element of church life, “they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).
- After persecution, they appealed to God’s sovereignty and asked for boldness, healing, and signs and wonders, and their meeting place “...was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly” (Acts 4:31b).
- When conflict arose, the apostles decided to give their “attention to prayer and the ministry of the word” (Acts 6:4b). They prayed and laid hands on the men chosen to oversee the daily distribution of food (Acts 6:6).
- “While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’ Then he fell on his knees and cried out, ‘Lord, do not hold this sin against them’” (Acts 7:59-60a).

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- When they went to meet new believers in Samaria, “they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:15).
- While in prayer, Ananias received a vision from God and was told to go and find Saul, who was praying after being confronted and blinded by Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:10-12).
- When Peter prayed, Tabitha was raised from the dead (Acts 9:40).
- Cornelius’ prayers were “a memorial offering before God” (Acts 10:4). So as Peter was praying, God gave him a vision to compel him to go and share the Gospel despite Jewish laws against associating with Gentiles (Acts 10:9-48).
- The church prayed for Peter in prison (Acts 12:5), and God freed him.
- The church leaders prayed and fasted before sending out Paul and Barnabas on their missionary journey (Acts 13:3).
- Paul and Barnabas prayed and fasted in appointing elders in each church (Acts 14:23).
- Paul and Barnabas looked for people gathering at a place of prayer, which led them to Lydia (Acts 16:13).
- While Paul and Silas prayed and sang in prison, an earthquake opened the prison doors and loosed every prisoner’s chains, which led to the salvation of the jailer and his family (Acts 16:25-34).
- Paul said a tearful goodbye to the Ephesian church leaders (Acts 20:36) and later the church leaders in Tyre who urged

him not to go to Jerusalem (Acts 21:5). In both situations, they ended their time kneeling and praying together.

- Paul encouraged disciples to pray continually (1 Thess 5:17) and present their requests to God in every situation (Phil 4:6-7).

Paul's epistles make it clear that a significant portion of his focus in caring for the churches he planted was to pray for them. Virtually all of his letters include powerful prayers for those to whom he was writing. We see more than 43 prayers of Paul in his epistles. We see one wonderful example of how he prays for the disciples:

*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the Kingdom of light. (Col 1:9-12)*

We also see Paul's church-planting teams follow his model. For instance, Epaphras, a member of Paul's church-planting team and a "faithful minister of Christ" (Col 1:7), was known primarily for his constant "wrestling" in prayer on behalf of the church (Col 4:12).

**Fasting in the Bible:** A number of the verses above refer to prayer and fasting. Fasting is a common and important discipline for believers in movements. In Matthew 6, Jesus tells us not to fast so that others will see us, but only to fast with our Father in mind. Fasting is a discipline we see in both the Old and New Testaments.

- Moses fasted for forty days and forty nights without bread or water, and God gave him the Ten Commandments (Exod 34:28).
- David fasted for his enemies when they were ill (Psa 35:13) and fasted, asking God to spare the life of his son born from adultery with Bathsheba (2 Sam 12:16).
- Queen Esther fasted and asked all the Jews in Susa to fast for three days and nights before she risked her life to intervene for the Jewish people (Esth 4:16).
- Daniel fasted in mourning for three weeks, and God sent an angel with an explanation for the future of the Jews (Dan 10-12).
- When Nehemiah heard about Jerusalem's trouble and disgrace, he "mourned, fasted, and prayed" for days (Neh 1:4), and later, he called the Jews of Jerusalem to prayer and fasting (Neh 9:1-2).
- Ezra fasted and mourned over the unfaithfulness of the exiles (Ezr 10:6).
- Anna worshiped night and day, fasting and praying in the temple, and God used her to proclaim that the infant Jesus would redeem his people (Luke 2:36-38).
- Jesus fasted for 40 days before he began his public ministry (Matt 4:1-2).

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- Jesus said his disciples would fast after he was taken from them (Mark 2:20).
- Paul fasted after his conversion experience (Acts 9:9).
- The Church elders were worshipping and fasting when the Holy Spirit told them to set apart Paul and Barnabas, and they fasted and prayed before sending them off (Acts 13:1-3)
- Paul and Barnabas committed new church elders to the Lord through prayer and fasting (Acts 14:23).
- Fasting reminds us that our main priority in life is to know God and know his will.

**How Should We Pray?** Thankfully, God has given us very specific and detailed instructions about how to pray. The following directives all work together to give us a healthy and holistic prayer life. We are to:

- express praise (Matt 6:9; Ps 8:1)
- be thankful (Phil 4:6; 1 Thess 5:18)
- acknowledge our dependence on God (2 Chron 20:12; Prov 3:5-6; John 15:7; 2 Cor 12:8-10)
- approach with confidence (Heb 4:16; 1 John 5:14-15)
- repent of specific sin (1 John 1:9; Prov 28:13; Judg 10:10)
- confess unforgiveness (Matt 6:12, 14-15)
- ask God to reveal subconscious sin (Ps 19:12)
- pray for deliverance from temptation and sin (Ps 19:13; Matt 6:13)

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- come in humility (Jas 4:6,10)
- be sincere and truthful (Ps 145:18)
- be specific (Phil 4:6)
- pray for personal needs (Matt 6:11; Rom 15:30-32)
- pray for other's needs (Eph 3:14-19; Phil 1:3-4,9-11)
- pray for all people and nations to be saved (1 Tim 2:1-4; Rom 10:1; Ps 67:1-2)
- abide in Jesus (John 15:7)
- ask in Jesus' name (John 14:13-14; 16:23-24; 15:16)
- ask for God's glory (John 14:13)
- ask in faith (Matt 21:22; Mark 11:24)
- pray as the Spirit leads (Eph 6:18; Jude 20)
- make God's Kingdom the first priority (Matt 6:10, 33)
- seek God's will (John 7:17; Jas 1:5; Luke 22:42)
- be submissive to God's will (Judg 10:15; 2 Cor 12:8-9)
- be watchful in prayer (Neh 4:9)
- be alert when praying (Col 4:2)
- be obedient (1 John 3:22)
- pray at all times (1 Thess 5:17)
- wait patiently for the Lord (Ps 40:1)
- persevere in prayer (Luke 18:1)

**Barriers in our praying:**

- unbelief (Matt 13:58; Mark 6:5-6; John 16:8-9)
- unconfessed sin (Ps 66:18; Isa 59:1-2)
- unforgiveness (Mark 11:25-26)
- selfish or wrong motives (Jas 4:3)
- lack of consideration for marital partner (1 Pet 3:7)
- doubt whether we want God's guidance (Jas 1:5-7)
- idols in the heart (Ezek 14:7-8)
- lack of action and obedience (Exod 14:15-16; Jas 2:17-18)
- unfaithful stewardship of material possessions (Luke 16:11)
- lack of compassion toward the poor (Prov 21:13)
- failure to surrender (John 7:17)
- hypocrisy in worship (Isa 1:11-15)
- disobedience and rebellion (Jer 7:16, 24)
- ignoring or committing social injustice (Isa 1:15-17)
- rejecting God's will (1 Sam 8:18)
- praying to impress people (Matt 6:5)
- thoughtless, mechanical praying (Matt 6:7)

## APPENDIX F: THE IMPORTANCE OF REACHING CITIES

Researchers estimated the world to be about 14% urban in 1900. A massive shift has taken place since then. Global researchers now estimate that over 56% of people worldwide live in cities. If this trend continues, over two-thirds of the world's people—some 6.6 billion people—will probably live in cities by 2050. This would include nearly 1,000 megacities (each over 1 million people), with about half of those largely non-Christian.

This demographic shift has profound implications for economic opportunity, technological innovation, social mobility, cultural change, and expansion of God's Kingdom. More people will live in the melting pots of cities, where cultures become assimilated and languages lost as younger generations leave behind older languages for more commonly spoken ones.

The world's increasing urbanization offers unique opportunities for outreach and influence. Cities are hubs of innovation, culture, and ideas. They often set the trend for what becomes mainstream in nearby smaller cities and rural areas. They draw people from more rural locations who come to the cities seeking employment or education. These workers and students often continue to communicate with their families back home.

Cities do this in part because they are powerhouses for economic development. By offering a diverse range of career opportunities—from tech startups to financial institutions, healthcare, and the arts—cities draw individuals from rural areas seeking better job prospects and upward social mobility. In many countries, the economies of large cities far outweigh the rural areas around them, making them vital economic hubs. This attracts ambitious individuals seeking better lives for themselves and their families.



Cities also provide logistical connections to other cities, bringing new products and technologies from outside the region. This all creates a magnetic effect, bringing people from less-developed areas to the city seeking jobs. As a result, cities become whirlpools of diverse backgrounds and aspirations.

Cities also draw intellectuals, creatives, and entrepreneurs to converge with each other. This proximity promotes an accelerated exchange of ideas, leading to groundbreaking developments in technology, art, and social movements. For instance, San Francisco has become synonymous with tech innovation, while cities such as New York set trends in fashion and media, and London and Hong Kong are known as financial hubs. A city's reputation as a center for new ideas draws even more people—entrepreneurs and scientists, for example—to larger cities.

Educational opportunities in cities often surpass those in rural settings, both in quality and availability. Higher education institutions (such as colleges and universities) and specialized training centers are usually located in or near major cities. These often draw students from surrounding areas.

Similarly, healthcare services are more robust, with better-equipped hospitals and more specialized care providers. Better medical services draw “medical tourists” (people coming from places where treatment costs more) as well as those in desperate need of healthcare unavailable in their hometown.

As centers of culture and arts, cities often have museums, art galleries, theaters, and music venues, providing opportunities for artistic expression and appreciation. Cities host various events and festivals that celebrate different cultures and traditions, fostering diversity and inclusivity. These can draw people as tourists and vacationers.

Finally, cities play a significant role in shaping cultural norms

and values. The media, advertising, and entertainment industries are often centered in cities, and they have a powerful influence on shaping societal beliefs and behaviors. Trends and popular culture often originate in cities. As many cities become more diverse, including people from different backgrounds and cultures, they contribute to the richness and variety of ideas and perspectives.

We cannot overstate the importance of reaching cities with the Gospel. Since over half of the world's population lives in cities, and many of these people have relational connections with the surrounding areas, cities have become the epicenter of global influence. As we reach cities, the message of the Gospel can spread rapidly and impact millions of lives.

### **Reaching 110 cities and their surrounding regions will be challenging**

Urbanization has brought its own set of challenges. Rapid growth can lead to congestion, higher pollution levels, and a strain on essential services like healthcare and education. Inequities between the affluent and the impoverished can be starkly visible, making social disparity an urgent issue to address. As cities swell in both size and influence, their role in shaping the surrounding economic and social landscape will become even more significant.

Many rural villages and districts have just one or two people groups or languages. Cities are often complex systems, full of multiple languages and cultures mixing—sometimes harmoniously, sometimes explosively. Because cities are often hubs for employment, they receive significant numbers of migrants. These rapidly growing populations of poor people seeking work lead to increased poverty, and often, the populations grow faster than governments can build infrastructure. This can cause slums and

undeveloped parts of cities.

Cities are often so large that believers working there can develop ministry silos—a focus on one particular part of the city with no sense of other gaps or other ministries working in the same area. Cooperation and collaboration can be difficult in such an extensive field. The struggle to reach those at hand can prevent useful focus on the larger goal of reaching all people and places within the city.

But even reaching the city is not enough. Those serving in the city must keep in mind the necessity of reaching the people of the larger region influenced by the city.

Reaching urban people can be harder than reaching those in rural areas. Urbanites are often busier, more materialistic, and have less time. Materialism can kill movements because it saps time and damages relationships. During the heyday of China's openness in the 1990s, Chinese church leaders often noted they worried about materialism killing the church far more than they ever worried about persecution.

As the world becomes more and more urban, reaching into its cities—and from them, into the surrounding areas—will become more and more important. We must focus on cities because we know God desires that “none should perish”—that all kinds of populations be represented before His throne.

## APPENDIX G: MOVEMENT-LED BIBLE TRANSLATION PROCESS

**1. A language is selected.** The leadership of a Bible-less movement or family of related movements discerns, through prayer and counsel with the broader 24:14 family, the need for a translation of the Bible in a certain language(s). Bible translations take time, and there are not enough workers to do all the translations immediately, so some languages must take priority over others. After extensive prayer and discussion, a language(s) is selected based on the following criteria:

- commitment of the leaders to complete the translation process and make the best possible effort to distribute and use the translated Scriptures.
- current capacity of the translators and outside partners' ability to assist the process.
- security for the translators, which is more workable with a larger group of believers, such as in movements.
- existence of other language-related movements in the same or different countries, which can aid in the translation process.
- available training, translation tools, and resource texts (the texts from which the new translations will be made).
- the need and possibility of translation into two or more closely related languages or major dialects of a mega-language.

**2. A translation team is recruited.** For each language, an initial group of 25 to 30 mother-tongue bilingual, literate speakers

are pre-qualified by their local house church leaders. They do not have to be trained career translators.

**3. The team is trained.** The 24:14 translation trainer(s) begin preparing and training the translation team. Self-learning tools and other helpful resources are also provided to help teams address gaps and find opportunities for further learning. Teams are trained to develop a trustworthy translation that is:

- **CLEAR:** A trustworthy translation is **clear** when it is easily read and understood. Words, grammar, and structure of the translation are commonly used by the language group.
- **ACCURATE:** A trustworthy translation is **accurate** when it has the same message as the source. Nothing is missing, added, or changed. The meaning is conveyed in a faithful and consistent way.
- **NATURAL:** A trustworthy translation is **natural** when it sounds like it was translated by members of the heart language group. Just like the New Testament, this should sound like everyday language.
- **MOVEMENT APPROVED:** The text is clear, accurate, natural, theologically consistent, and effective in evangelism and church planting.

**4. Initial translation drafting begins.** Once qualified by their local church leaders and the 24:14 translation trainers(s), the translation team works collaboratively to define keywords and produce quality drafts of Scripture.

**5. Texts are checked and edited.** In a careful process, drafted

Scripture portions are peer-checked, then checked by local house churches, then sent to the translation trainer for review, and finally sent to movement leadership. Once the draft is approved, the text is community-tested through an approved set of questions to help determine clarity, naturalness, accuracy, and acceptability. Adjustments are made and tested again. Usually, several hundred people are involved in this process for each language translated.

**6. A Movement-approved translation advisor provides ongoing coaching.** A series of web-based and offline tools are used to help ensure the same criteria that the community checked. Concurrently with and throughout the checking process, each language coordinator who leads a translation team has frequent access to translation advisors.

**7. The finished draft is evaluated by the larger movement leadership.** The texts are assessed, evaluated, and edited by the teams and web-based and offline tools. They are then checked by the local church networks and approved by the translation trainer(s), and the drafts are forwarded for final evaluation by the larger movement leadership.

Through this process, a translation of Scripture can be developed from an initial group of stories to a finished version of the complete Bible.

By involving at least several hundred people in translating and checking the translation, the movement gains a strong sense of ownership, which increases their respect for and use of the Bible. The lives of disciples among this people group will be impacted during the testing process, as they deepen their understanding

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and application of Scripture and use newly translated passages in evangelism and discipleship.

Bible distribution in written and audio formats is dramatically increased once this process is finished (although ongoing improvements will take place in future years).

Movement-Led Bible Translation measures the increase in both quantity (number of new churches and disciples) and quality (discipleship metrics of transformed lives and communities) and serves as the final piece in measuring Scripture impact.

## APPENDIX H: KINGDOM BUSINESS PROJECT (KBP) OVERVIEW

**Focus 1 - Market Identification:** The national leadership of the movement family recommends near-culture and near-by opportunities to its International Council. The selections are jointly chosen and passed down from the international, national, and provincial levels to the local level.

**Focus 2 - Market Research:** Teams of market researchers have been trained to identify and quantify both the spiritual and marketplace needs in the local economy where the UPG is located with 36 tested and proven business models. They are also adept at engaging the local village leaders and introducing the fact that the “Seed Team” is coming.

**Focus 3 - Selecting, Training, and Developing Seed Teams:** Potential Seed Team members are evaluated at the national level and then chosen to undergo further training from a team of full-time trainers. Prospective Team members have completed 3-5 years of leadership training, passed an initial security screening, and are proven church planters and business owners. They must make a life-long commitment with their extended family to start and oversee a Kingdom Movement among their chosen UPG.

**Focus 4 - Global Partnership and Tools:** A key element of the KBP to reach the remaining UPGs is the synergy created by partnering with other ministry organizations through an End to End strategy. An End to End Strategy combines training and tools (materials, media, Bible, technology, etc.) to ensure the message’s



quality and accelerate the process of evangelism and church planting.

### **Focus 5 - Financial Management and Accountability:**

Resources are gathered by the movement and outside partners. Due to security, initial disbursements are hand-carried, with added daily provisions for the KBP team provided by the local house church networks. A Kingdom Impact Review is conducted at the six-month and one-year intervals to measure both financial and CPM sustainability. Both profits from the Business and a tithe are paid forward to the next KBP launch and growth of the movements.

**Focus 6 - Commissioning the Seed Team:** The heart of the KBP program is the Seed Team. Each member has been extensively vetted and gone through rigorous training. A commissioning ceremony is held by the local house church to send the KBP Seed Team for life to the UPG.

**Focus 7 - Kingdom Growth and Reporting:** An extraordinary effort is undertaken each year to gather accurate data from the local churches, many in remote areas. The data is evaluated by regional, national, and international leadership and cross-checked by different movements before being collated and sent.

## GLOSSARY

<b>1st Generation Churches</b>	The first churches started with lost people in the focus group/community.
<b>2nd Generation Churches</b>	Churches started by 1st Generation churches. (Note that this is not biological or age-related generations.)
<b>3rd Generation Churches</b>	Churches started by 2nd Generation churches.
<b>4th Generation Churches</b>	Churches started by 3rd Generation churches.
<b>Branch (in a movement)</b>	A multi-generational, connected chain of church plants. Sometimes called a stream.
<b>Church Circle</b>	A diagram for a church using basic symbols or letters from Acts 2:36-47 to define which elements of the church are being done and which need to be incorporated.
<b>Discovery Bible Study (DBS) is the Process &amp; Discovery Group (DG) is the People</b>	DBS is a simple, transferable group learning process of inductive Bible study. The key principles are that God is the teacher and the Bible is the authority. A Discovery Group is a group of lost family and/or friends using DBS to discover who God is in a Creation to Christ sequence.
<b>End Vision</b>	A short statement that is inspirational, clear, memorable, and concise, describing a long-term desired change resulting from the work of an organization or team.
<b>Ethnē</b>	The Greek word used in the Bible (Matt 28:19) to describe a large group of people united by identity—primarily ethnic and linguistic.

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<b>Five-Fold Gifting</b>	From Ephesians 4:11—Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd (Pastor), Teacher. APEs tend to be more pioneering, focusing on expanding the kingdom among new believers. STs tend to be more focused on the depth and health of the disciples and churches, focusing on the same people over longer periods of time.
<b>Frontier People Group (FPG)</b>	A people group that is less than 0.1% Christian
<b>Generational Mapping</b>	Multiple Church Circles linked generationally in streams to help determine the health of each church and the depth of generational growth in each stream.
<b>Great Commission Christian</b>	A Christian committed to seeing the Great Commission fulfilled.
<b>Great Commission Worker/Laborer</b>	A person committed to investing their best time and effort in fulfilling the Great Commission.
<b>Legacy Church</b>	A traditional church—usually meets in a building with salaried staff.
<b>Majority World</b>	The non-Western continents of the world, where most of the world's population lives: Asia, Africa, and South America.
<b>MAWL</b>	Model, Assist, Watch, Launch. A model for leadership development.
<b>Movement Catalyst</b>	A person being used by God to catalyze a Kingdom Movement.
<b>Movement Coaching</b>	Regular processes with leaders to pray, report on what is happening, discuss obstacles, and solve problems together.

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<b>Movement-led Bible Translation</b>	Bible translations being done by movements. This is typically a crowd-sourced, computer-aided, translation-expert guided process.
<b>Oikos</b>	The Greek word best translated “household.” Because households in the NT context were normally much larger than just a nuclear family, the term can well be applied to “extended family” or “circle of influence.” Scripture shows that most people come to faith in groups (oikos). When these groups respond and are discipled together, they become a church (as we see, for example, in Acts 16:15; 1 Cor. 16:19 and Col. 4:15). This biblical approach also makes sense numerically and sociologically.
<b>Oikos Mapping</b>	Diagram of a plan to reach family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors with the Good News.
<b>Oral Learner</b>	Someone who learns through stories and orality; may have little to no literacy skills.
<b>Person of Peace (POP)/Household of Peace (HOP)</b>	Luke 10 describes a person of peace who opens their household. This is a person who receives the messenger and the message and opens their family/group/community to the message.
<b>People Cluster</b>	Related people groups, which for strategic purposes, may be grouped together.
<b>People Group</b>	A large group of people united by identity—primarily ethnic and linguistic.

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<b>Sustainability</b>	The capacity to endure. Sustainable methodologies allow a church or community to continue an activity for years to come without outside assistance.
<b>Unengaged UPG (UUPG)</b>	A subset of global UPGs; a UPG not yet engaged by a church planting team.
<b>Unreached People Group (UPG)</b>	A sizable distinct group that does not have a local, indigenous church that can bring the gospel to the whole group without the aid of cross-cultural missionaries. This group may be variously defined, including but not limited to ethno-linguistic or socio-linguistic commonality.