



Transcriptions

An Assessment of Contemporary Missions Strategy

Ted Ward

Annotation: *BILD Conference: Approaching the Year 2000, Ames, Iowa, February 1990*, used with permission. Arguing that Christianity makes no sense without a missiological core in our reasoning and understanding, Ted Ward asserts that not every idea with regard to missions makes sense. He presents a perspective on a biblical view of missions and missionary education.



Today we must try to assess where we are in the history of the world and specifically the history of missions and to do so without creating false impressions and incorrect images, and that is a tricky business. If we're going to deal with any degree of integrity with the question of where we are in the world as Christians, we must approach it in terms of some good news and some bad news. It does the cause of Christ no good to paint a rosy picture based on half truth and unreality nor does it do the cause of Christ any good simply to dwell on the difficulties and the problems and where things have gone wrong. We must somehow strike a balance. It is neither the purpose of this conference, as a whole, nor certainly my purpose, as a contributor in specific, to suggest to you for one minute that the age of missions is over or that the involvement of Americans in missions is altogether wrong. Neither of those generalizations would hold up and I would not have people misunderstand me.

First of all, let me declare flatly that I believe in missions. I would not be a member of a missions department at a major theological seminary if I did not believe in missions. I think the department would have had sense enough to screen me out. I believe in missions, however, not simply because of some kind of pragmatic notion that it's kind of a good thing to do and that there

may come a day when it isn't a good thing to do. But I believe in missions because I think that's what the church of Jesus Christ is all about. Christianity makes no sense apart from that outreach motif that is shot through the whole of the Scripture.

The whole of the Scripture carries a missiological message of God's orientation toward a fallen world. When we learn early in life from John 3:16 "that God so loved that world that he gave his only begotten Son," we are talking missions. We are talking outreach of God toward the lostness of this world. The provision of Christ as the sacrifice for our sins that through his blood we might be saved, we are not simply talking evangelism. We're not simply talking conversion. We're not simply talking salvation for the individual. We're talking missions. God has done all of this as a model of outreach that is carried into the New Testament and doubled up in vigor because Jesus Christ, as person, becomes the master image for us of what a missionary is. A missionary by definition is one who follows Christ in that he or she leaves behind. As we learn in the Philippian letter, Christ recognizing all that he was and all that he had, called all of this as something to be left behind in order that he could come into the servanthood that was ultimately the servanthood to death, and then after this he was glorified. There's the model of missions: "Let this mind also be in you, as it was in Christ Jesus." Christianity makes no sense without a missiological core in our reasoning and understanding.

Having made that declaration hopefully, clearly, and unequivocally, I then would ask you to engage with me as reasoning people, as people who are bought by that blood of Jesus Christ, as people who are convinced of our important role in terms of the unfolding of God's plan in this time. I would appeal to you as reasonable people to reflect with me on the possibility that not every tomfool idea that comes into our heads makes sense in terms of getting on with the missioning of the world. And I submit that there are some tomfool things that have been done in the name of missions and are still being done and, in many respects, some of the things that we have virtually institutionalized and have in our minds inseparably with missions do not square up with Scripture.

I cannot teach a biblical view of missions without at least raising some very serious questions about the way we do missions today. And I suspect that most of you in this room would be quick to criticize me if I were to teach a model of anything that is apart from this Scripture. I hope you would. And I ask you to bear judgment on the ideas and observations that I share with you today on that very ground. Do they square with Scripture? That is our bottom line and I stand before you as a searcher and inquirer as a person who is concerned, but as a person who does not have the answers, but a person who is aware that there is an importance in at least forming the right questions. I'm going to ask you this morning to think. I'm going to ask you to consider what it means and what the possibilities are because the good Lord has put a head on our shoulders so that we might use it as something other than a frame of reference on which to perch a hat. It is appropriate for God's people to think and to reason.

Now I would not want to be guilty of troubling the saints. Sometimes asking the saints to think is very close to troubling the saints, but I trust in this audience at least you will not mind if I raise more questions than I provide answers for. I believe that is part of the process of getting God's people to think. I do not bring you a bag of answers, I bring you a bag of questions. Now as many of you have discovered in your encounters with my ideas and thoughts and writings before, I don't mind asking rather far out and radical questions and sometimes I tend to at least assert my view of why that question is important. And in this process of asserting my idea of the importance of the question, one gets the impression that I am rather an opinionated individual. Now I'm sure that an

objective analysis would reveal that I am not really opinionated, I am just stubbornly biased. I have an idea about almost anything. I have an opinion and often an emotionally held opinion about almost everything. That I admit. In fact, I am on something of a campaign to bring back to the career of professor the basic idea of professing something, and I can tell you what I profess. And that's served me well for thirty years at Michigan State University where I suspect almost no one doubted that I professed faith in Jesus Christ. And now that I am working full-time among the saved and sanctified and safe, I am no less a professor and I am no less a person asking tough questions.

But again, this is not out of a spirit of undercutting what we are doing in missions, but in a spirit of seeking a stewardship among God's people that is more faithfully attuned to the purpose of Christ in the world. There will never come a time when we will have finished the job of evangelization and any slogans that suggest that there comes a date when we will have finished the job of evangelization is counter to Scripture. The reaching out into the world continues until the Lord comes and we have his warning not to set dates on when he should come, then we are warned against setting dates on when we will have finished the job of evangelization. You can't have it both ways. We tempt the Lord Jehovah when we give him our timetables and the fact that we are using a calendar from the Roman Empire does not make the year 2000 magic.

I am very sympathetic with the idea of being serious about missions. That's the major good outcome of the church growth movement: the notion of getting serious about what it is we're in the world to do, and I applaud it. But I do not applaud the fixation on quantitative data and record-keeping and posting up of how well we're doing that presupposes that all we've got to do is keep ticking off until we've ticked off everyone and then we will be able to run to the holy throne and report, hey, it's done. I am here for a lifetime of service. Now I am old enough at this point that that no longer has the ring of eternity. There was a day in my youth when I was convinced that I would be here when the Lord returned. I had a great aunt who was convinced that she would see the Lord's return and she was really old. And I'll never forget that in her elaborate system of having calculated out exactly what it was that God had to do in order to fulfill all the prophecies of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation that she had to have Adolf Hitler alive as the anti-Christ so that there could be Armageddon and there could be the rest of the scheme that she had elaborately worked out on charts. And I, as a youngster, was absolutely mystified at her reaction to the news that Hitler was dead. It blew her theological system right out of the water. She had put too much stock in her own date setting. She had put too much stock in her own interpretative sketching of how God had to do things based upon a devout belief that she had insight into the way the Word of God connected together. So early in my life, as a teenager, I began to be very suspicious of people and causes and movements that plot things out and tell God what he's got to do for us so that we can fulfill what he wants us to do by a certain day. There's something rather circuitous about that; I don't quite follow the logic of it. Our business is to be in the business of the kingdom until we are done in this life wherever and however that being done terminates. Do you agree? *That's right.* Amen. We do not disagree on this.

Now I believe that the year 2000 represents a tremendously important milestone in the psychological orientation of humankind. Most who can read a map and can read a calendar are aware that there's something rather electric about having to write a check on January 1, 2000, but if you're like I am and many others, after about March 1st you begin to write the right year in after all. And quite frankly I am very preoccupied with the year 2001 because I am a little bit concerned about how we will feel about ourselves even if we have finished the job of evangelization in the year 2000 when the Lord returns after the year 2000. And when in the year 2001 some of us are actually

writing checks that say January 1, 2001, I wonder how we will feel about ourselves. And if all we feel is frustration and disappointment because we didn't get it done, so what's the use, we will have lost something very important and that is the continuing obligation to be in the business of the kingdom until the Lord returns. Is that right? So then the year 2000 is a milestone somewhat equivalent to the fireplug on the next corner. You will know when you passed it. But meanwhile it does make a fascinating thing to move toward as long as you don't move at it head on. There's a metaphor there. I think we move toward the year 2000 recognizing that in the providence of God we may move past it. Do you follow me? And when we move past it, we will still be doing mission. Do you see that? Who is to say that if you're born after the year 2000 you no longer need to be evangelized?

I have another problem. To me the word evangelized, though not specifically a scriptural word, does represent something very important in my theological frame of reference and I hate to see it re-defined to the point where it loses its vitality. In our emphasis on modern media of communication, we have a somewhat mistaken notion that once people have heard we've done it. Now I submit that it is impossible to deal with late night AM radio in the United States without having heard the gospel. I mean every truck driver in the country has heard the gospel. Every person in every small town has heard the gospel. Is America evangelized? Is America a country that no longer needs to be reached? Jeff raises a question about France. For heaven's sakes, I raised a question about the United States. Thousands of villages in France have no one as live witness of the gospel. You probably would have to search rather hard in the United States to find a village that has no live witness of the gospel, but I submit that having a live witness of the gospel or being able to hear the name of Jesus Christ on late night television is not one and the same thing with having been evangelized. Do you follow me?

I rather like to use John 4 as an illustration of what the problem is as we define evangelizing. In John 4 we find Jesus encountering a person from a different culture. He, as a Jewish person, was encountering the woman of Sychar at the well, a Samaritan, a person whose culture was different. And because of cultural difference their orientation to things of God, though more or less cousins in the historic emergence of God dealing with his people, Israel—not related cousins, but emotional cousins—the Samaritans knew something of Jehovah. But they had a very strange orientation to Jehovah that was in sharp contrast with God's own people, the Jews. And they loved to debate and argue and each liked to treat themselves as being superior which is, of course, one of the characteristic problems in intercultural encounter of any sort. Each person on each side of the cultural line had a frame of reference that says our view of the universe is *the* view of the universe, and tell me about yours and maybe I can find out wherein ours is superior. And that's called intercultural problem.

Jesus was dealing with this woman and impressed this woman in such a way that she recognized his profound interest in her and that was the primary thing that attracted her apparently because as she rushed into the village of Sychar that was one part of her two-part message. I ask you, at what point was Sychar evangelized? Because I know it was as I know the whole story. Was Sychar evangelized when the woman first encountered Christ? Was that the point at which you say, ah-hah, now we can tick Sychar off and get on with it while we're ticking off communities that need to be reached before A.D. 50. I mean, because the disciples had the view that by A.D. 50 they'd have the whole thing wound up. They really did. They had the view that this was just something that was going to just go like crazy and it would only be a limited amount of time in their lifetimes which is why I use something around A.D. 50 as the first image of when they'd have the job done. And that was a fireplug that they passed some time ago.

Was Sychar evangelized when the woman encountered Christ? Was Sychar evangelized when the woman said, “I perceive you are a prophet.” Was Sychar evangelized when the woman was convinced enough that she ran off into the community to tell others? You got to put it somewhere, right? You got to put it somewhere, so tell me where you want to put it. Was Sychar evangelized when the people of Sychar heard this woman and her two-element message: I have encountered a man who is profoundly interested in me. Could he be the Messiah? Those are the two parts. She raised the question. Now, do you tick off Sychar at that point and say, ah-hah, Sychar is evangelized. The right question has been asked. Everyone has had a chance to believe. Everyone has had a chance to respond to the gospel.

Do you know that in our time people are re-defining the word evangelization along the lines of those various steps? Simply somebody from that society or culture or group has encountered somebody who told them about or gave them exposure to the person of Jesus Christ and, therefore, that sector is evangelized. That’s one way evangelization is being defined in our time.

Second, evangelization is being defined in terms of people becoming convinced that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Savior of the world, and Redeemer of myself. And that is tantamount to conversion. When one person from that group is converted, then that group has been evangelized. That would still leave evangelization back in the hands of one woman at the well at Sychar. Other people define evangelization in terms of when people turn back to their own people and begin to draw *them* into the message. That’s another point you say evangelization has occurred.

When you say that the community of Sychar was evangelized when the whole community turned their faces outward and moved toward Christ and they moved out to where he was with his disciples again at the well and, as they moved out, they were in that process now ticked off in the margin: they’ve been evangelized. Or do you wait until the community has, in fact, encountered Christ and heard for himself because you notice in that text in John 4 that the people of Sychar were saying, many of us believe because of the woman’s statements, but now we believe because of your statements? In other words, there were two dimensions of belief. One is belief because of the testimony of the woman. The other is belief because of the encounter with Christ. At which point was Sychar evangelized? You got to draw the line somewhere. Or was the community of Sychar evangelized when, as a matter of community action, they all were with Christ. Somewhere in there Sychar was evangelized. Do you believe that? I believe that. Would you tick off Sychar? I would tick off Sychar. But I ask you, at what point do you do it?

And if you look closely at the literature being used today to promote a perpetuating of the kinds of things we’re already doing, simply re-doubling the effort by the year 2000, you will find that the idea of evangelizing Sychar is being defined downward. And in most of the propaganda, the idea of simply having heard a meaningful message of the gospel in personal terms is the meaning of evangelization; and I say, my Scripture doesn’t know much about that.

The issue of evangelizing the world in faithfulness to the Word of God is a matter of bringing people to Christ—not simply exposing them to the hearing of the claims of Christ. There’s a difference. Now if we’re going to bring people to Christ, we’re going to have to be involved with a lot more than simply information giving. We’re going to have to be involved instead with relational things in which we do things with people. Now doing things with people is where we have to start understanding missions today. I think we need a definition of missions that sees not a task that can be completed, but a task that can never be completed; a task in which we simply engage because

God has expected us to. Not asking ourselves success questions, asking ourselves fidelity questions. Are we doing it? Are we there? Are we faithful with the resources? The issue is not, how do we get a person to hear the gospel, but how do we get a community to rally around the Lord Jesus Christ? Not evangelizing as telling, but evangelizing as involving people with Christ. Therefore, when I hear such a phrase as, to complete the global task of evangelization of the world by the year 2000, it riles my theological constructs. That's a sanctified way to say, it burns me up.

Now, as a matter of fact, we've got to do a better job of matching our investments to need. Let me run through with you some of the things that I think we're going to have to find some new and creative solutions for because as I assess the present situation we're nowhere near home base on this one. We're still stuck right around second wondering how we're going to steal to third.

In matters of stewardship, we really have never worked out an effective accountability for individual missionaries within the evangelical sector. Part of the problem is that we have gotten ourselves into a scattered support base that makes it very difficult for any missionary to feel deeply beholden to anybody because there is such a scattering of accountability. And it becomes very easy for Satan to do dirty, dirty things within missions. When, for example, a missionary is supported by fifteen different churches and any one or two of those churches are invaded by people who want to use some kind of a new litmus test of fidelity and send letters to the church to say, that unless your missionaries will sign this statement, it probably means that they have gone into some kind of liberal perversion. And, therefore, the mission field is troubled by these kinds of declarations that they must sign or lose their support. If there were the kind of close accountability with one or two sending churches, missionaries would not be nearly so frequently troubled by these scatterings that occur here and there and yonder always bubbling up because of Satan's work within the church.

Nor have we really worked out an accountability of the mission management systems to the churches. We have allowed the mission management systems, whether in terms of independent boards or even in denominational boards, to pretty much run the show the way they thought they think they ought to be run; and tell the church where the church ought to go with its mission strategy. I don't find many churches counseling with the mission boards of the denomination to tell the mission boards of the denomination what they in the church are feeling about the direction that missions ought to go. I think this, like theological education, has simply been delegated out. And it's been delegated out in a strange way that makes it almost unaccountable back to the churches. Now the churches surely can decide not to send their money in and, of course, in some denominations that use a unified budget this is even hard to do, but it can be done. But it isn't done very often because usually there's a kind of an emotional thing that says, well, we wouldn't want to not support missions. Furthermore, there's Lili Gurch out there and we've known Lili for a long time. We don't want to do anything that will kind of spoil her life. After all, she's getting old. And churches have a kind of an emotional attitude toward missions that is so soft and so flabby that it allows the missionary boards in the denominations and the missionary organizations within the independent sector to pretty much do what they want to do.

I don't think we've solved this, the problem of pride either. In many churches, the size of the missionary budget is quickly converted to a self-congratulatory matter of pride. I don't know of anything the churches take more pride in than their mission budget and the sizes of their properties. It's no mistake that the Scripture gives us a great deal of warning about these so-called little sins; the little sins that we read past while we're watching for people who are falling into adultery so that we can all go up in holy horror. And I don't mean to belittle that problem; that's a tough one, and it's a

devastating one. But let me tell you, there's a devastation that's occurring left and right over the issue of pride, and it happens to all of us. And that's one reason that we don't pay much attention to it in corporate center because in corporate center it's too exposing. Because every one of us is beset in some respects, by pride, and the more visibility we have, the more temptation pride represents. And the more we're doing for Christ, the more temptation pride represents. And the more we're giving to mission, the more temptation pride represents. And I think we have to be very, very careful.

The third—the next center of attention I'd like to draw is to recruitment, itself, within missions. I don't know whether you've paid attention to it or not, but if you get the news magazines from some of the independent boards: the EFMA, IFMA boards, you get the impression that an awful lot more missionaries are being sent out today than they were even ten years ago. You see the pictures of the new missionary families going out quarter by quarter in the quarterly magazine of this mission or that. My goodness, it looks like God is really getting busy. Well, I have challenged a number of those missionary magazines if they would, please, open up a new section in the magazine and give similar-sized pictures of those that are returning from the mission field because what you're seeing is an increasingly revolving door kind of a recruitment strategy. We're recruiting like crazy in missions because the people we're sending into missions aren't lasting very long. It's a revolving door. It's a little bit like the kind of super church that I was on staff for eight years. We had people coming in every time there was an invitation, which was about three times a week. We had people coming down the aisle. Every time we opened the baptistry and warmed up the water, we had some more people to run through it; but as you looked at the congregation, we stayed about 95% full on every service we held; not 95, 96, 97, 98, and 100, but 95. And I am very good at mathematics and I can tell you that if you have 95% full space and you're baptizing fifty a month, you're losing fifty a month. I mean, it doesn't take a lot of sophistication to figure out that there's somewhere a revolving door going on there. Now don't I believe those people are converted? That's beside the point. The point is that that church quantitatively is not growing. It is ministering, but not growing. Now it may be that church Christians are being scattered throughout the community and into other churches and raising up other churches. I would like to think that, but I'm not sure of that either. I just think we are too accustomed to a revolving door, and I think in missions we have just adjusted ourselves to a revolving door and that we're not asking the question: are we recruiting the right people?

Now one of the less well-distributed pieces of information in missions is that for every missionary going out, the home office gets to its home office budget a certain fraction of the missionary support. Obviously, it costs the home office something to add that person to the maintaining list, but if the maintaining—if the home office budget is running tight, one of the better ways to increase that budget is to increase the number of missionaries going out. And this is a little dark secret, but it's to the advantage financially of the mission to increase the number of missionaries.

Now this one is where if a missionary exec hears me say this they begin to rave and rant because this is really dirty pool—another phrase that Christians have learned, not through Christian media. And I bring it up simply to indicate that it's symptomatic of something we at least ought to look into. Are we sure we're not over-recruiting? You say well, don't you believe that God has a call upon every one of us? Absolutely, I believe that God has a call on every one of us for a lifetime service. But I make a distinction between the call to lifetime service and ministry within the community of faith which is a call to all of us and the specific of a call to being an intercultural missionary in another situation. There's a difference there. Many times I'm asked in institutions and

organizations and churches to come speak at missionary conferences and often they say, would you do the last session? And I say, you don't want me to do the last session. And the question is usually, well, why don't we want you to do the last session? I say, well, the reason you don't want me to do the last session is because you've never heard my recruiting speech because if you'd heard my recruiting speech, you'll know it's not what you want for your last session. "Oh, I'm sure it is, Dr. Ward." "Well, I'm sure it's not, Mrs. Smith, Chairman of the Mission Committee." And she says, well, what do you mean? I say, well, my recruitment speech goes like this: do you think God wants you to be a missionary? If you do, try to talk him out of it. If you do, try to talk him out of it because God only needs the people in missions who can't talk him out of it. Because I have run into far too many people who have gotten over there and then tried to talk God out of it, and usually very successfully.

We need to use a much harder criterion; a much tougher criterion about who it is that goes into missions. When little Sally comes and says God has really laid it on my heart that with my fantastic secretarial skills I know there must be a mission board somewhere who needs me to be secretary to the field chairman. I say, whoa! And when Joe Smith comes and says, look, I'm a radio technician par excellence. I'm sure they need me in HCJB because God needs radio technicians in missionary radio. I say, whoa! The Ecuadorians have already among themselves as national persons raised up plenty of good radio technicians; plenty of good secretaries. Now missionary execs quite often say, oh, I wish I had a secretary here who knew how to cope with the American offices that I have to call and deal with. And my secretary, who is a national person, goes at this in a very Bolivian way and she just can't get through to some of those people I have to get through with in North America. I wish the mission board would give me a missionary secretary. Look. Let me tell you, one of the reasons why the nations are getting tough with us in terms of sending missionaries in is because we send an awful lot of supply system missionaries in who are simply part of the support and supply network and they aren't church planters. They aren't evangelists. They aren't frontline. They are simply support system people. I don't know what the actual percentage is but it's probably, at this point, well above 50% of the people who are so-called missionaries are in the support and supply system. We are running a whale of a support and supply system. You say, wow! Where is the most of them? I'll tell you where the most of them are; they're teaching missionary kids in missionary kids' schools. You say, well, they've got to do that, haven't they? Yes, I believe they've got to do that, but I don't believe that it's real for us to say simply, because it's got to be done. We ought to turn our blinders off and say, well, that doesn't count. No, it does count. Those are live warm bodies supported by the church and supported at rather great cost. One of the fascinating things about looking at stewardship and recruitment is the number of people that are engaged in activity that has very low productivity with reference to the needs of the church.

There is probably nothing else more crucial in terms of the needs in mission today than the development of leadership; the development of leadership within the communities of faith that have been planted. That is a cry all over the world. But what we commonly do there is we commonly create to meet that need institutional education that looks a lot more like it would look back here than it does down there, and usually it doesn't fit in the socioeconomic reality. In the first place, we create schools that leak. Now a school that leaks badly is one that spends a lot of its time doing things that don't count.

One of the first pieces of research that I did back in 1966 on missionary education looked at five institutions in Latin America that were training pastors, and that was their alleged purpose: to train pastors for the churches. Now all of them used a preparatory mode in the sense that they were

preparing younger people to go into pastorates. And we used a rather standard criterion that you use in educational economics research, we said, well, if they're not delivering people that stay with it more than three years, they're not doing it. So we used a criterion of, are the graduates staying in pastoral ministry three years or more? Does that seem reasonable? Somehow it always seemed reasonable to me, but this study was soundly criticized.

Secondly, we put in all the costs; not just the cost of the local resources, but we put all the missionary costs because the educators in most of these institutions were missionaries. And we put their overhead costs: the cost of maintaining the home office chair for them; the cost of transportation and communication for them; the cost of getting them and their equipment to the field; the cost of educating their children; the cost of their downtime on furloughs. We put all those costs into it and you know what we found? We found, first of all, that the institutions that we were looking at, which were just a happenstance set of five that were representing different types of institutions in the northern part of Latin America, were losing well over three-quarters of their graduates within three years to secular employment. You say, well, don't you believe in educated laypersons? I surely do, but I do believe that there's an accountability for an institution that is claiming to be primarily in the business of training pastors if all they're doing is training a handful of pastors and a whole lot of people that go take jobs in the airlines and in the travel industry. And that's what they were doing because having gone to an American-style educational enterprise, made those people very employable in organizations within their country that were dealing with North Americans. And they could get good jobs in the airlines and the travel industry, the banks, and that's what they were doing. So once we got down and winnowed out the number of people that they were actually graduating who were going in to serve the church in pastoral ministry of any sort, whether salaried or not, we found out that this was a fabulously expensive enterprise. And the churches of North America were sponsoring it and still are sponsoring it under the impression that they're doing the church there a tremendously great service. I submit that much of the great service that we're rendering to the church is in and through leaky ships.

Secondly, we build schools that alienate. Let me give you one horror story. In Bolivia, which is a good example of a mission country, there are over 330 missionary-sponsored or organized or initiated Baptist meeting points. Now I have to cautiously say, 'not churches', because under the structure of polity of the allied Baptist ministries, all kinds of Baptists—everything from G.A.R.B. to American Baptist in Bolivia—only a church that has these criteria can call itself a church. It has to have a pastor who is at least partially salaried and the pastor must have at least some formal theological education. Very interesting, very interesting. In other words, unless the pastor's gone to seminary and is drawing a salary from the community, you can't call it a church. Now there's good Scripture for that. There's excellent Scripture. It's in Hezekiah 14:3—look it up after the meeting—and in Hezekiah 14:3 it says thou shall not have pastors who do not have salaries and who do not have formal theological education. Now you recognize the absurdity of that remark and somehow I wonder why the churches of Jesus Christ of Bolivia can't recognize what has happened? What has happened is that they have modeled themselves on the kind of church that the missionaries have known and the missionaries have held as an ideal for them, and consequently of these 335 Baptist meeting assemblies, only about 10% can call themselves a Baptist church. Now when Baptists with all of their belief in congregational autonomy can be dictated to in that way, there's something very wrong in the church. Now we're talking about almost 300 functional churches in Bolivia, in the Baptist faith, that cannot call themselves church because they cannot conform to a model that does not fit in the socioeconomic structures of Bolivia. [Bolivia] is not a cash economy for most of these

people. The idea of a salaried pastor is just like thinking about having the astronauts show up to be their pastors.

As a matter of fact, there is a seminary that allegedly serves these churches and the Baptists of Bolivia maintain a seminary in Cochabamba: the big Indian second capital of the country. It's almost like the second capital and it's a big Indian center: Cochabamba. And in this seminary, they have in the past had a few Indian students. Now notice, the Indian churches account for well over 85% of the churches, but they have had a scattering of Indian students and the result has been that the Indian graduates of that seminary have been alienated from their communities and have not been able to communicate effectively when they went home to their communities and ultimately have left their communities. Therefore, the Indian Baptists, as a sub-caucus of the Baptist Fellowship of Bolivia, have decided that no more Indian pastor candidates will go to theological seminary. Catch 22: they can't be a church unless they do; they won't do it because they've seen their people become alienated, and all of this in the name of a leadership education missionary-style. Something is wrong somewhere. Now you say, well, Ted, you're probably bringing us the world's worst example. Well, obviously this is a bad example. It is not the only bad example by any means.

Another mission organization, not the Baptists; another hundred-year-old independent—and I was there to witness their field council voting themselves out of support and participation in the big theological seminary that has been jointly operated by that mission and one North American denomination. And they voted themselves out because, after many years of anguish, they have finally come to an accountability that says what is happening in the seminary is not serving the churches because—and this is the third factor—because of the development of schools that exalt the intellect at the expense of relational evangelism. The worst example of that that I know of, and it's a Southern Baptist example. It got so bad in Indonesia that the Southern Baptists ultimately closed their seminary because the seminary graduates, Indonesian young men, were going out saying, we are seminary graduates, therefore, we are not going to engage in missionary work. We are not going to do church planting; that's the job of the missionaries and it's obligation of the North Americans to send more missionaries and plant more churches so that we can have a church to pastor and get a salary when we get out of seminary—because that was their image that they learned in seminary. It is basically an intellectual trip in which they learned that to be a pastor is to be above certain kinds of things. And one of the certain things that it's above is church planting. After all, that's just a job for a missionary.

Now there's something very sick when the church takes root under those kinds of conditions where your educated leadership is under the impression that church planting is beneath the dignity of pastors. But where do they get those ideas? They get those ideas because of the casually imported—not deliberately imported, the casually imported. It's like the fleas that go along in the carpet when you move interculturally. Missionaries have moved interculturally with a lot of fleas in the carpet.

Another problem. We tend to hold up an image of missions itself that may be very, very alien to Scripture. We hold up an image of missions as a kind of a place-bound lifetime activity in which the person, in order to demonstrate real fidelity and real commitment, just simply sells out and goes for a lifetime and says, God has called me to this place and I will stay here and I will be buried here. Now that image in the 19th century was almost necessary because of the difficulty of transportation. There weren't just a whole lot of facilities to getting corpses home quickly when people died in a mission field. So it was true in the 19th century that it was a lot more popular to bury

your missionary friends and colleagues on the field. Today with high-speed airplanes you don't see many missionaries buried in the field, but the fact is that missionaries still die in the field and they still die as young as they used to. Not in the average, but it happens. And there are some very, very tragic things because life is a tragic experience for many of us in most of the places of the world. There's nothing unique about the missionary context. In fact, because of high-speed transportation and communication, the world has shrunk to the point where this notion of lifetime at one altitude, longitude, latitude, and attitude is a very, very strange kind of preoccupation.

I was sitting at dinner in the home of a Japanese friend in Osaka during June and this Japanese pastor had a rather small Japanese home. He had it all cluttered with gadgets because the Japanese have more gadgets than the Americans have now. He had little electronic machinery all over the place. The first place I ever ran into a warmed toilet seat. I mean, they're way ahead of us on the important things. No such thing as sitting on a cold toilet seat in Japan. Of course, in Japan there's a lot of places where there are no toilet seats, but that's another matter. That's called the Asian toilet, but we'll talk about that some other time.

At any rate, in this very Western-style small Japanese home, up on the sideboard where he had a lot of dishes stacked and his wife has a marvelous meal for us and my wife and I are sitting there enjoying it and all of a sudden I hear one of his machines start to go clickety-clack. And this machine goes buzz buzz boomp boomp, and I said, that sounds strangely like a fax machine. Our host got up from the table, walked to the other side of the room and over here on the corner of the sideboard shuffled off some odds and ends and some napkins and tablecloths and so forth. Down underneath here sure enough there's a fax machine. He rips off the fax, brings it over, looks at it, hands it across the table to me and he says, 'Ted, it's for you. It's a small world, folks. It's a small world. These are the realities. It's a small world. And because of the shrinking, the transportation, the communication changes, this business of being forever in the same spot is really anachronistic. In the first place, it isn't scriptural. You will never find, hard as you may search, a missionary who stays put. It is not the missionary pattern in the Scripture. The missionary pattern in the Scripture is as it was in Christ's experience: a basically nomadic experience moving around. You say, well, you can't do that if you got a wife and children. Indeed, and that's one reason why the Roman Catholics are able to do so much more in mission deployment than we can because they've got a much more flexible kind of a starting place with the celibate ministry. They can move people in and out of situations and leave them there; become part of the establishment and they don't have the same kinds of supply system problems. And the MK schools among Roman Catholic missionaries are very, very rare. Now I am not suggesting that we get all missionaries out of the field who have kids. But I do think we need to look harder at the fact that there are a lot of Americans who are prime candidates for going into missionary service for the normal number of years of missionary service, which is somewhere around eight after their kids go off to college.

We need to look at the recruitment base within the United States in a very different way. And in the first place, since there is a leadership need overseas and the leadership development problem is prime problem number one, we need to send people who have credibility as leaders. And this business of sending out rank amateurs to discover life and to discover themselves and see whether God really wants them there or not is a pretty wasteful use of missionary funds. Now, at some point, we've got to get serious about this church by church; and I think you can't really separate the leadership patterns within a church from its investment in leadership development in and through missions. Those have got to be harmonious. They've got to be synchronistic. They've got to be, in some respect, matching because one of the things that nationals always ask is, how do

you do this back in your country? And one of the reasons why I think we so desperately need in the United States more church-based ministry education is because my job as a missionary consultant and a consultant to national churches I'm constantly being asked this question: but don't you send all of your young people to theological seminaries? Don't you send all of your young people to Bible colleges? And I say, no, we don't send them all that way. That's not the only route, but I have to admit that that is a standard route. And what we're encouraging churches to do is to take more responsibility for themselves overseas. And they say, is that the way you do it in the United States? And I have to rather honestly say, not very often. Not very often. In the United States, we have let money become the answer. So we buy our way out of some of these responsibilities and we turn them over to institutions that then we contribute to help them do the job for us, which brings me to my last point: appropriate forms of institution-building; institution maintaining.

In the first place, we should understand that much that we do in modern missions in the Colonial era has been focused around the building of institutions. Medical hospitals were the first growing up out of a lot of compassionate ministry in the 19th century as missionaries would move out and find rampant disease, rampant starvation, rampant problems of the physical. In the 19th century, the most conservative Protestant evangelicals never asked the question: is social action part of the reason we're here? They knew it was. Today we have the luxury to ask, was that really why we're here? In the 19th century they didn't ask. But unfortunately what they did in the 19th century was to start a pattern moving in which what was used to solve those problems was largely importation of images of institutional forms from the Western world. And in most of the world, especially the world that is on a barter economy rather than cash economy most of those institutions are absolutely unsustainable. They cannot be maintained financially within the economy of the country. And institutions are today one of the biggest millstones around the neck of missions because in many cases the institutional forms themselves cannot be supported within the economy of the national community. So it forces a choice about continued dependency on money from outside the country or abandoning the institution and reconstructing it around the idea of something we can support from within the country.

Now I will give you three guesses as to which I recommend that be done and I recommend it aggressively when I'm working overseas. And you're right. You got it on the first guess: I recommend that institutions be abandoned if they cannot be sustained by funds primarily from the national sources. Don't I believe the United States has an obligation because of our wealth to continue to make support and encouragement to those sorts of institutions? No, I don't because it doesn't do the national church any good to be so continuously, extensively beholden to the decision-makers that control that money. It puts the responsibility out of their hands and they get clever about how to convince the Americans that it's still worthy of the American support—Americans and British and Germans. We're not the only one kicking money in on maintaining institutions that don't fit.

One of the hallmarks of the change that will occur I believe in the '90s is that we will move out of a lot of these dependency-producing missionary activities and move into the kind of activity that helps people stand on their own feet. It's, again, back to this missionary model that I have described in other places: that there are really four phases of our service in missions. And in every location, every site, every situation a missionary works; these four ought to be maintained in mind. First of all, becoming oriented enough that one can build some kind of credibility. Secondly, becoming involved for a period of active parallel companionate service. Third, a period in which we move out and let those who have become part of the Body of Christ learn to stand on their own feet

and make their own choices. And then a period sustained through life in which we continue through various forms of communication and visitation to return and to encourage and return and encourage. This is exactly what Paul was telling Titus when Paul said to Titus, I want you now to go back around, circle the churches again, and this time appoint or ordain for them the elders, in effect, that the Spirit has raised up within those churches. It's time for a re-visit.

Now if we had that kind of a model of mission, we could still see missionaries going into countries and staying in a country for as long as they do today, but not fixating their mission in one place doing one kind of work which, in the final analysis, usually comes down to fitting in to some kind of an institutional form and locking in because that institution needs them. We have got to go back to Scripture. We have got to re-discover something of the simplicity of the early church. We've got to re-examine the 1st century. I don't believe any of us would advocate going back to the 1st century in terms of how we view church. We are in a complex world. But we must see something of the genius of the 1st century in order to know how effectively to cope with the 21st century.

Thank you very much.