

## How Can European Missionaries Contribute to World Missions Today?

Because of the present growth of the church in so-called receiving nations there have been serious questions about whether affluent nations should send missionaries to less affluent nations. Because of differences in culture and ways of relating to each other often there is an attitude of suspicion and even hostility in relationships with partners in the mission of the church. This seminar looks at the ways that churches of different nations can enrich each other and at possible roles that foreign missionaries could have today. Proposals will be given about how to forge Christian cultures which can overcome hostilities and suspicions and promote mutual enrichment.

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Introduction:

Theologically: because the worldwide church belongs to the same body of Christ we should benefit from each other

### I. LOOKING TO SEE WHERE THEY CAN CONTRIBUTE

- A. The Immediate thing that comes to mind is: **specialists**.  
Europe has the resources to afford specialists
  
- B. Yet **foreign missionaries who are not specialists can meet vital needs**  
e.g. infusing the church with evangelistic passion
  
- C. **Ministry that is truly penetrative is incarnational**.  
That takes a long time to develop. So long-term missionaries are very effective

## II. A HISTORICAL OBSTACLE TO OVERCOME

### A. **The hey-day of European missions was during the colonial era**

Europeans were considered culturally superior

- i. Note: many missionaries helped create an environment which helped in freedom struggles of our nations (an often forgotten fact)

### B. **Today sensitive responsible leaders will not tolerate European dominance.**

Yet, Europeans usually have much more wealth

- i. Antioch church—the mother church sent the gospel and the daughter church sent funds.
- ii. Money was no longer the key feature in missions

### C. **European missionaries must not only be equal in theory and through theological affirmation.**

Locals must *feel* equal.

- i. Many leaders in the church today are from poorer backgrounds.
- ii. There are no short cuts in this pilgrimage to the poor feeling equal.

## III. THE PILGRIMAGE OF THE YOUTH FOR CHRIST MINISTRY

### A. When the poor began to realise they are equal, **resignation to the status quo gave place to anger over inequality.**

- i. Acts 6: When this problem emerged in the early church the church responded immediately.

**B. *Koinonia* Acts 2 and 4 included a financial element**

- C. Soon we **needed to change criteria for leadership**, e.g. educational qualifications and English language fluency  
Many from poor backgrounds do not qualify if we use the normal criteria

IV. THE INTEGRITY ISSUE

Often Europeans are attracted to people who are not very truthful.

**A. Integrity is a huge problem in economically poorer cultures**

—e.g. truthfulness and financial accountability

- i. “They have so much; we have a right to some of what they have.”
- ii. The above style of community is an answer to this problem
- iii. Very important in a shame-honour culture where change takes place through shared community values
- iv. A thoroughgoing attempt to practice community is needed including confrontation and discipline
- v. Spiritual parenthood in the form of discipling as supervision is best done relationally rather than through contracts and a rule book

**B. When organisations get bigger systems and checks need to be brought in**

- i. Seem to be out of sync with values in a shame/honour culture
- ii. We have to blend 2 cultures: Family community and management from the business world
- iii. A key: the Leader must be scrupulous in following the rule. There is an idea that leaders are exempt.

**C. A culture of walking in the light is still the best answer to the integrity problem.**

**D. This model is very time consuming and takes a lot of time to forge.**

#### V. A SOLIDARITY IN CHRIST IS FORGED

A. Through Christ's barrier-breaking sacrifice Eph. 2:11-16

B. Through a shared experience in Christ Eph. 4:3

C. Through a felt sense of equality with problems dealt with seriously Eph. 4:3

D. Through the truths of the faith which unite us Eph. 4:4-6

E. Through each one having a significant role to play Eph. 4:7-13

There is always a place for enablers (Eph. 4:12) wherever they come from  
Not for people with an agenda which they thrust on people