

### **Modern Missions; Strategies; Technology**

*We praise You and bless You, Father. Thank You for Your ongoing mercy and grace toward us. We are glad to be considered among Your people to bear the name of our Lord Jesus. We pray that by Your grace and mercy You will help, enable, and strengthen us to be worthy of bearing that name. We know it is by Your grace and mercy that You embrace us and embrace all Your people. Help us as we seek to serve You to be better equipped to serve You, to honor the name of the Lord Jesus, to serve, to co-suffer with others, and to learn more of how good You are. We pray for Your Spirit's help through Your Word. We acknowledge that You are the Lord of all the Earth and events political, military, economic, religious, and otherwise. You are indeed the Lord. We are glad that You come close to all of us as we need You to and as we each bear our particular burdens and sorrows of broken relationships, lack of food, or poor health. We are glad that You come close to us. Lord, we offer ourselves afresh as Your servants, and we pray that You would use us as You will, wherever You will, and however You will. In the meantime, as we are together for this lesson, we look to You for Your help and guidance. In Jesus' name. Amen.*

I think Paul Hurtick's article on Matthew is pretty fair and true to the Scriptures. In it he points out how Matthew intentionally notes how Jesus does not operate at the centers of power but at the margins. That has lessons for us. Though this article was short, judging from where the author of this article teaches and reading into what he has written, I do not think that the concerns that we have about this article are ill founded. This article is representative of what he believes. There is a little bit of confusion in it too, though, because he tries to do a lot in his article. It was in a series in one issue of *Christianity Today*. It struck me as something that highlights a number of issues, but it does so in some ways that should concern us. Reading an article like this should be helpful for developing critical eyes for reading some of these sorts of materials and for further expressing some of the concerns we have dealt with.

Let us pick back up with topic 22, which we started last time. I want to walk quickly through some of the things that Verkuyl points out. Let me highlight a few names that we have talked about in terms of prominent missions thinkers and formulators in the last couple of centuries. Verkuyl talks about Henry Venn, general secretary of the Church Missionary Society to Englishmen. This is a very important name and one that is helpful to remember in tandem with the American, Rufus Anderson, in connection with the formulation of the three-self formulation of the church. Churches need to be self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting. Roland Allen is another important English missiologist. I mention this in connection with his book, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?* When he wrote that book, it could not be heard, because of when it was written. It was not as though the Western missionary enterprise at that point in history (1912) was able to hear much criticism. After World War II, there was plenty of criticism that was offered and plenty of criticism that was heard. Roland Allen as a missiologist has made a comeback since World War II.

Max Warren is another important name. Bishop Stephen Neal is an Anglican bishop who ministered in India. He is known for a number of writings, including his *History of Christian Missions*. This is a name to lodge away. Lesslie Newbigin has had a tremendous amount of influence, and he has a great deal of influence today for people of our generation who seek to get a grasp on thinking missiologically with regard to the West. He was one of the first missionaries who said that we need to think missiologically about the West. He served for years in India, and he was Presbyterian. He fostered the growth of the Gospel and our Culture Network (GOCN). They are a group that is in various parts of the world, including the United States, that seeks to publish materials and coordinate thinking about how, in a post-Christendom setting, we think missiologically about the West. My awareness of Newbigin is that his

apologetics regarding Western culture is tied in with his wider missiological understandings of the importance of the worldwide church and the Western church's need to tap into the resources and insights of the non-Western church.

Verkuyl mentions some other important missiologists. Bengt Sundkler is a Scandinavian missiologist and an important figure. He is especially important with regard to the recognition and appreciation of the importance of African Christianity and African theology. He has a recent magnum-opus-type of book on the history of Christianity in Africa. There are about half a dozen books in the last few years that have come out that survey Christianity in Africa, but Sundkler's is probably the most detailed and comprehensive. Moving to the United States, Rufus Anderson is associated with the recognition that we are in a heyday of Western missions. God has especially prepared the United States to carry out the world missions mandate. He also helped formulate the three-self formula for the church.

Kenneth Scott Latourette wrote a seven-volume work, *The History of Christianity*. He ministered in China as a missionary, came back, and taught at Yale. One theme of his *History of Christianity* that is important is that he recognizes both the expansion and regression of the Christian faith. As we have noted, there is serial growth of the Christian faith. It will go into an area, and in many instances it passes away to where you can look at post-Christian areas of the world. Latourette did not exactly formulate it in that way, but he mentioned the idea that there was expansion and regression. He sees three or four major expansions of the Christian faith throughout history, including the nineteenth century, the great century of world missions. That is an important idea that he formulated in looking at 2000 years of Christian history.

Donald McGavran is a name that you will likely know. He helped to formulate and crystallize the foundation for the church growth movement and associated concepts like the homogeneous unit principle (HUP) and people groups. There is much associated with Donald McGavran. Ralph Winter is one in our day in association with the United States Center for World Mission who has taken that idea and developed it even further. That is probably the single most influential think tank and missiological material-producing enterprise and institution, certainly in North America and perhaps in all of the world.

One comment on the homogeneous unit principle is that it is still the subject of a good deal of debate. It says that church growth takes place among peoples, and people within their own groups receive the Gospel. To force people out of their groups by forcing them together to undergo conversion goes against the sociological reality within God's providence where people come to Christ throughout the world. You should see people come to Christ within their own groups, in a homogeneous group. That is where churches begin and develop. That is the principle, which is developed from sociological observation. Many people view that with abhorrence and disdain theologically because of the Gospel's push to bring people together. The Gospel brings people together, so the criticism of the HUP in many ways is well founded. However, as a sociologically descriptive model, it is very powerful and accurate. You can look at churches anywhere, including Saint Louis, and the HUP describes churches. How and when to bring to bear the Gospel's push to bring all peoples to Christ and overcome ethnic, socioeconomic, and sociopolitical barriers in particular settings takes pastoral wisdom and judgment. But I would say that even in situations where there are homogeneous peoples in churches, half of the battle, especially in this part of the world, is recognizing that you have an ethnic identity. That is not always easy, because when the literature talks about ethnic churches, it leaves out the majority of us as though we are not ethnic churches. That is the way the language is used. In my judgment, biblically, that is wrong and not helpful. It turns out that just because you are in a majority de facto, you are not ethnic. One way I try to help people see the importance of recognizing their ethnic identity is that if they are not ethnic, they are

outside the scope of the Gospel. Jesus came to die and live for *panta ta ethne*. If you are not among *panta ta ethne*, you are outside the scope, and you are in big trouble.

Let me make a few more comments about important missiologists. Eugene Nida formulated a great deal about the importance of culture and what contextualization involves. Gerald Anderson is another American missiologist. He is a recently retired director of the Overseas Ministries Study Center in New Haven, Connecticut. He is a statesman in modern mission circles. Non-Western missions thinkers are also very important. I have tried to introduce names like Kwame Bediako and others to let you know that increasingly so, within the evangelical world and wider, non-Western Christian thinkers and missiologists have increasing influence in worldwide Christian thinking.

Let us move on to talk about the goals and purpose of mission, which have varied from age to age and group to group. There was a goal of saving individual souls that we saw early on in the missionary movement. There were ecclesiocentric goals among Roman Catholics and in early Protestant thinking. The three-self formula is still very important, but for interesting reasons, it has undergone some criticism of late. That criticism, with which I concur, is that it can foster an independence of different groups at the expense of realizing that we are interdependent as the Church of Jesus Christ. Some people have seen that sometimes the impetuous for wanting to start a three-self indigenous church over there is that we instinctively have the notion that we are independent on this side. We do not realize how interdependent we really are as the people of God. That has been an interesting point of criticism, and it relates to the role of finances and how money flows in missions.

The church growth school plays an important role. I can remember 20 years ago when the discussions in Presbyterian Church in America circles were more along the lines of how to set plans and goals for church growth when it is all within God's sovereign will. Discussions do not take place there anymore, but it is more about how tightly you hold yourself to goals. Most everyone will set goals and strategies, but what sort of goals should you set? There has been the goal of the social Gospel and the goal of improving macro structures in setting Christian societies. Verkuyl offers his own goal, which is the most prominent in missions thinking today, and it comes out in Shenk as well. The goal is that of God's mission and ours being the kingdom of God within the *missio dei* (God's mission). I would like us to think in those terms, combined with a covenantal understanding of who God is. He is the covenant creator Lord and the Lord who has entered into covenant redemptively with His people and world to redeem the entire cosmos. We need to see mission in a wider and more comprehensive sense, not just as saving individual souls or seeing churches begin. We should seek to say the whole earth will be redeemed by the way God grants faith, matures His church, and gives us glimpses of the new heavens and new earth. The modern missions movement, continuing to this day among evangelicals in North America, remains focused on missions being "out there" with people who have not yet heard. It wrestles now with the idea of the redemption of the cosmos, but much of it is still restricted to the unreached.

Let me jump next to some writing from Thomas, who incorporates other authors as well. Anderson talks about the three-self type of thinking. Hudson Taylor writes about women's role in missions. This is so very important. So many times in cross-cultural missions, women have taken the lead. John R. Mott is a name to tuck away. He was a Methodist layman who, in the wake of the Edinburgh missionary conference of 1910, trotted the globe and helped set up national Christian counsels. National Christian counsels are dirty words for many of us in evangelical circles, but they were set up for missions purposes. John R. Mott was one of those driven people who was a go-getter. He helped to formulate the phrase, "the evangelization of the world in this generation," which came up about 100 years ago out of the student volunteer movement. He is an important person in the formulation of much modern missions thinking. There are also writings from Roland Allen and Henry Venn that are important.

A graph has been developed by Ralph Winter to understand the modern missions movement in three eras. The first era was outreach to the coastlands. The second era began with people like Hudson Taylor and reaches more inland. That is associated with Western colonial advance and the sheer ability for Western missionaries to go inland because of the advances in medicine and otherwise. The third era began in the 1930s and focused on unreached peoples. We will comment later on the notion that this is the third and final era of missions. According to Winter, this third era began when Donald McGavran in India saw people come to faith. The notion of whole groups of people coming to faith started the third era.

Cam Townsend served as a missionary in Central America and realized the importance of translating the Bible. You might have heard the story of Cam Townsend witnessing with a native translator and using a Spanish Bible. He witnessed to an indigenous person, and the person said, "If your God is so smart, why can he only speak Spanish and not my language?" That spurred Townsend to realize the importance of continued Bible translation. That led to the eventual formation of Wycliffe Bible Translators and spurred on the Protestant missionary effort to translate the Bible into indigenous tongues.

The need for the Bible in all languages comes together with the recognition of people groups. As that happens, you have an understanding that reaching all nations, people groups, and languages is what missions is all about. That becomes the third and, for many, the final missions frontier. Thus begins the formation of all the statistics identifying the people groups, how many we have reached, and how many we have not yet reached. Now there is the understanding that all unreached people groups have now been accounted for. They have not been reached yet, but at least someone has taken responsibility for reaching all identified groups. So the end is almost here, is the thought. It is no longer a geographical notion, but it is about people groups. It is not about going in to make Christian political nations the way it was done 100 years ago. That development of the modern missions movement is much of what this scheme points out for us. It is a helpful scheme, but I do not think it is perfect. It is helpful to see how the modern missions movement phase II has developed over the last 200 years. We looked briefly at Verkuyl's evaluation of the different goals of the modern missions movement. He opts for a more kingdom approach, and Shenk and many others would concur with that.

Let me share a few notes from Shenk, which are things that he hammers home over and over again. You need to remember the historical context in which the modern missions movement developed. It was a unique coming together of modernity, scientific thinking, strategizing, setting goals, pragmatism, volunteer societies, and missions thinking. Those things came together, and that is how you can understand what happened over the last 200 years in a particular historical context. John Nevius was a United States missionary in China who went to Korea to implement the three-self formula of the church, and he saw churches begin in Korea. He was so successful that it became known as the Nevius method of church planting. It is a practical application of a particular formulation of what missions and church planting is all about.

Shenk's conclusion about the place of mission theory within Anglo-American missions thinking over the past 200 has several points. First he notes that "mission theory has been ambiguous and erratic." It has been a pragmatic, "let us get the job done" focus. It is very clear what the job is, so just do it. There has not been a tremendous amount of theoretical formulation outside from a few key concepts along the way. Therefore Shenk claims that this has left missions without a clear framework and sense of the mission process as a whole. Much of the writing on mission theory has been partial and parochial. He points out later that one gap over the last few hundred years has been between theologians and mission

thinkers. That is still with us today. Missions is a practical discipline, and it is done in a certain way. Theology is much deeper. When do those two come together?

Let me make a few comments on why we look at all the historical background in missions. First, it helps to put us in our place in history in thinking about where we are in history and the whole historical development of missions. It helps us realize that missions has taken place and continues to take place within history. We have a notion of missions being a holy enterprise that is not subject to the forces of wars, economies, and sociological developments. Missions very much takes place within history. You can obviously see that with the nineteenth century, the two world wars, the Cold War, and now what is happening in the early twenty-first century. It is important for our identity. You have historical amnesia, and you really do not know who you are. To know what you are about as being a part of the overall mission of God, you need to know what has happened and how we move in that same movement of God in history. It is also helpful for humility in light of past reality. My own personal testimony is that when I first went as a missionary, history began with me. The world was coming to Christ, not just Japan! That was great zeal, it was wonderful, and I had pure motives. But I had no sense of 2000 years and before of what God had been doing and how I fit into that.

Second, historical background puts us in our place within our particular context. That is, within a particular setting, we can learn from God's people who are in different historical contexts. There is much to be learned with what people have dealt with in China. There is much to be learned from what Saint Patrick underwent. We can see the often complicated and multifaceted nature of events. It should not be a simplistic idea of missions. There are political, economic, social, linguistic, and personal factors involved in what happens on the mission field. We should not get bogged down in the paralysis of analysis, but we should recognize that things do not happen in simplistic ways.

Third, looking at historical matters helps to put us in our place. It helps us to remember that we as a people of God have a universal, corporate identity. That is helpful for perspective. It is universal in that it stretches around the world and down through the generations. What we are about is a part of the people of God and a part of God's people's work as God has used us down through the generations. It will continue to happen in coming generations until Jesus comes back. We need to have a corporate identity locally. As we think about being about God's mission in our own towns, you cannot do that alone, individually, or as a particular congregation. You need to have a greater appreciation for what the kingdom of God is all about in the entire city you are in. You cannot even go about it as city churches or suburban churches. You have to look together as what God is doing.

Finally, historical background puts us in our place before God, because we see that He is the one who has been at work. How is it that God is at work right now in a missional sort of way? The United States military has been active in Afghanistan and in other places. God uses particular people in situations that the media will never report. They serve in Christ's name, and it is magnificent to see how God is at work in some special ways. We need to recognize that. As such, we grow and trust in His commitment to redeem His world. It is God's mission, but that does not mean that we sit back and relax and do nothing. Just the opposite needs to happen. It means we work ourselves to the bone because God is about it. It is His redemption of the world, and you see that as you have a sense of what He has done throughout history. That is my apologetic for looking at matters historically and putting ourselves within that history.

As a reminder, there is a graph in Patrick Johnstone's book, *The Church is Bigger Than You Think*, that shows how the church has grown serially. The church grew around the Mediterranean into Europe. Serially out of Europe it grew primarily into the southern continents. That is where we are in our day.

You should remember that historical progression of the church and know that right now in overall Christian history we are at a point of transition. That will help give perspective on all sorts of questions, including financial ones. We will talk about these questions soon. Do we send Western missionaries, or do we support non-Western missionaries? There is a raging debate about that, but you can gain some perspective on it by remembering the macro-historical shift that we are in now.

Another macro-historical scheme from Dr. Winter is one in which he seeks to look at the last 4000 years. You can look at how God has worked in 400-year blocks. It starts with the patriarchs, and then there was captivity with the judges and kings, followed by the exile. In the Roman peoples there were the European barbarians, the Vikings, and the Islamic peoples. The last block of time is "the ends of the earth," which is where we are now. It is an interesting scheme, though no scheme is totally complete. God has been at work in His mission right from the beginning. We should not begin our biblical missions understanding from the Great Commission in the New Testament, and we should not begin it with Genesis 12 either. Genesis 1 is where God's work begins. God made His world, His world is good, His world rebelled, and He redeems it back. That is what His mission is all about. If you start with Genesis 12, it will give you a truncated view of what missions is all about. Winter's scheme does not account adequately for the early multidirectional growth in the early centuries 2000 years ago.

I want to communicate to you that I have a deep appreciation for so much of the zealous and helpful work that the United States Center for World Mission puts out. They provide very helpful statistics, and it is all intended to motivate and equip Christian people to keep at the task of having our eyes and strategies on reaching unreached people. I have a deep appreciation for that. Insofar as we interact and seek to evaluate and understand the full dynamic of what they do, I do not want you to hear me throwing stones necessarily. There are a few points that we need to evaluate about the things that come out of Pasadena. But I want to communicate that within God's providence and how God uses people. I have a deep appreciation and gratitude for what they do.

Let us move ahead to topic 23 about Western mission strategies and money. Looking at Western and particularly United States missions takes us again to some of the writings of Shenk. Let me highlight a few points from his evaluation of the last 200 years of the modern missionary movement. He says, "The modern mission project has been a special locus of the larger confrontation among modernity, the Christian faith, and world cultures." He breaks that down a bit in talking about the rise of the Enlightenment and scientific thinking in the West. He says that missions has operated out of that modern worldview of looking at things scientifically, trying to manage, strategize, and do projects to solve problems. He developed categories of the pre-critical, critical, and constructive views of understanding culture in missions thinking. There was a self-evident notion among Westerners 100 years ago that there was a superiority in God's having blessed the West. On page 162 he talks about the church and says, "The Christendom model of church was deformed by its disallowance of *diaspora* and all that entails. The *diaspora* that went out from Christendom was a callous for growth of the church elsewhere, and the modern mission movement recovered for the world church the importance of *diaspora*." In other words, there was the notion that you have the church that is established here, and you go out and establish a church elsewhere. That is what missions was considered to be. The notion of the *diaspora*, which is the church scattered, was recovered and experienced "out there." People within Christendom, as things started to change so rapidly in Europe and North America, started to realize that we are all aliens and strangers and do not belong here. The questions of being established have come to the fore and have begun to recover for all of us the sense that we are all on mission wherever we are. There is no single geographic headquarters of the Christian church.

Shenk notes later, "One of the regrettable aspects of the modern mission movement was that it was largely unaccompanied by theologians committed to missions." There was some significant theological input from people like Andre Cramer and Stephen Neal. He goes on to say, "But largely, mission involves the church. In fact, mission involves the church in the most fundamental of theological questions, and it is at the point of missionary engagement that critical theological reflection is called for." We engage in theological reflection where we are and, for example, in how the Gospel speaks to 16-year-olds. I always appreciated one example I had of a pastor who telephoned me and said, "Nelson, I have a theological question for you." I wondered if it might be about an infant, something about the Trinity, or something like that. He said, "There is a 15-year-old girl in our congregation who is dating a non-Christian boy. I want to know how I should advise her parents about counseling with her." I thought that was not a theological question, but it most certainly is. You have to bring to bear all sorts of factors of how God relates to His people, family structures, and church session. If you want to call it practical theology, that is fine. As you know, as you are involved in ministry, those gut-wrenching, on-the-ground theological questions come up when you deal with those sorts of matters.

So that is an overview that Shenk gives us with what has happened with Western missions over the past 200 years in terms of its theoretical development and theological reflection. Let us look at a few mission organizations. One that you will know and love is the Presbyterian Church in America's (PCA) mission organization called Mission to the World (MTW). MTW is the mission-sending agency of the PCA, advancing Reformed and covenantal church planting movements in strategic areas worldwide, resulting in mature churches and equipped leaders from every people. That is what MTW is all about. MTW has broadened in its scope an openness to being involved in a number of other intentional ministries other than church planting movements. There has been a general shift in much of evangelical mission thinking from strictly church planting where people go and start individual churches to seeing church planting movements begun. In that you facilitate a bunch of churches starting out. MTW still has that as its focus, but there is a lot more that it is about these days. Church planting is MTW's central focus.

Short-term ministries and missionaries are also very important. Fifteen years ago, "short term" meant two or three years. Now the categories have changed a little bit, and a short-term missionary is anyone who does missions from a week to two years. The categories have shifted, and so many people from this the United States and from Korean churches go out on short-term mission projects. There are also internship opportunities, which is an attractive option for seminary students. You can actually receive a measure of a stipend as an intern, and it helps you fulfill your field education requirements. There are needs for those in many places. Those last for up to 11 months, or you could do it for a semester. There are two-year opportunities as well. MTW also has a second-career opportunity for people who are retired or near retirement age. I have heard MTW people say that they do not want people to retire but to rehire. A lot of people have entered into various second career programs. Medical missions has come to the fore within MTW. That is something that took place a great deal within the modern missions movement. Some groups continued with that, and now MTW has picked up with it in allowing many people to use their medical practice in church planting, short-term trips, or other places. I would suggest that this is one instance, along with street child ministry, where MTW has adjusted itself and become more responsive and flexible in response to what different members of the PCA sense they would like to do. They have also responded to general needs that are in various places.

MTW was much more keen on having a vision, and because that is what God has called you to, you should stick with it and not get deterred from it. MTW led the church in setting its missionary vision, so they wanted to get people and money to fulfill the vision that God led them to, which was church planting. Part of the dynamic that has occurred in the past decade or so within North American missions is that, as you know from your own settings, more and more local churches are sending missionaries

themselves. This happens especially in those churches that have significant resources. The church realized that missions is a job that they are to be about. Up until that point, there were the mission experts who recruited the people and money to do missions. But the church wanted to participate in missions too. Part of the dynamic is that the mission agencies start to have some of their resources threatened. If you are not responsive, you will get left out. That is a crass way of talking about the dynamic, but it is a reality that has occurred. Mission agencies needed to adjust because of that reality to work together with local congregations and be responsive to needs that people see here. You have people in churches who are involved in Lima, Peru and see the many street kids. They come back and want to do something about it. Now MTW has said, "How can we help you do that?" That is a shift in their thinking, but it is a constructive shift. MTW, as a result, is more than ever seen within the PCA as our church's mission organization. In some circles MTW was regarded as any other mission organization, but we are the church that is Reformed. People wanted to "reel in" MTW a little bit. The church has always been for MTW's stance on cooperative agreements where someone could go out as a missionary with Wycliffe or any other evangelical mission organization and be an MTW missionary at the same time. That way they do not reinvent the wheel. The church has always voted for that, although there have been some who have been concerned about it. Now more than ever, MTW has adjusted to and seems to facilitate and encourage PCA churches in their ministries. Their website has a list of many of the ministries that MTW is involved with.

Another mission organization that is very influential and has undergone some significant changes in the past several years is the International Mission Board (IMB). It was formerly the foreign mission board of the Southern Baptist Convention. Southern Baptist missionaries are known within other missionary circles as being very Southern Baptist. I grew up Southern Baptist, and most of my family is still Southern Baptist. I do not mean to offer criticism, but I want to be descriptive and highlight the adjustments that have gone on within Southern Baptist mission circles. Southern Baptists would do Southern Baptist things with all their own materials, strategies, and goals. They did their thing, and they did not really work with the rest of us. On the ground, that was not always the case. I know where I was in Japan all of the missionaries would get together, and it did not really matter a whole lot about those sorts of differences. In terms of programs and strategies, the Southern Baptists did their thing. That is not true just of Southern Baptists, but because they were always the biggest, they stood out. They changed their name to the IMB, and they have taken on much of the wider thinking of evangelical missions. This includes focusing on people groups, church planting movements, and actively cooperating with other groups. They maintain their distinctives, but they also work together with others. You can see it in the way that they speak. Their website says, "Now missionaries have factored new risk into their strategy, they are pressing fully ahead into the challenge of sharing the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ with their people groups." They have taken on the concepts and the language of reaching the unreached peoples and doing it by facilitating church planting movements. That is a significant change for them. It also says, "With more than 6000 predominately ethnic and African-American Southern Baptist churches across the United States, the condition is at its peak of racial diversity." In my opinion, that is an example of a poor use of the word "ethnic." It communicates that the ethnic majority churches are not ethnic. It is a good intention, though.

Let us move on and talk about strategies and technology. Shenk notes the ambivalence of strategy within the modern missions movement. First, it is a military term. Second, many feel that it is all in God's sovereignty, so we should not strategize but just let God work. Those have been some of the tensions within thinking about strategy. Shenk notes that how we have thought strategically within the modern missions movement has been culturally and historically conditioned. He lays out his own understanding of the biblical perspective of what things need to be regarding strategy. He mentions William Carey, Rufus Anderson, and their important places. He also notes the important role of missionary conferences,

as that has come up in the last 150 years. He finally notes, "What shall we then say about mission strategy? Christian mission is subject both to the divine imperative and socio-historical forces to give it context." We need to note that our context undergoes fundamental shifts, that the bipolar world has disintegrated, and that we are in a new post-Cold War world. There are new centers of influence that have emerged, and the Christian church has had its center of gravity, in terms of membership, shift to the rest of the world from the West. However, the church in the West continues to control the bulk of financial and institutional resources. Therefore you still have a statistic that says the majority of international missionaries go out from the West. That is still a true statistic, contrary to what some of us have thought. That is because we have the strongest economy and military.

Jonathan Bonk talks about some of the strategic costs of missionary affluence. He makes a few points that I will note. First, "Western missionary strategy is characterized by dependence upon expensive technology such as computers and Land Rovers." Second, "Affluence-dependent strategies cannot and must not be imitated by those whom Western missionaries presume to instruct." How is it that a particular church can go about a strategy of having 20 English teachers on its own? How can they use the type of strategic planning that involves graphs, computers, and analysis? Third, "Genuine fraternal strategies in conjunction with poorer churches are usually frustrating and often unworkable from the point of view of both mission agencies and churches." This is because of the affluence and technological gap. Fourth, he says, "Western affluence results in strategies that cannot effectively reach the poor." How can middle class people strategize and genuinely reach the poor? Some have commented that the laundry list of evils associated with affluence does not recognize the reality of people needing to drink bottled water or have antibiotics. It does not recognize the good blessings of bringing in medical technology or other things. Perhaps Bonk goes overboard in his broad strokes. I remember having a friend comment to me that he was glad that he does not receive pre-Enlightenment dentistry! Another comment is that computer technologies and networks are used in affluent settings. Bonk eventually says that there needs to be some people who take the road of living more simply and leaving affluent lifestyles and technologies. I do not think that he would say that computers should be thrown away and technology should be totally disdained. He seeks to address the blind acceptance of the affluence gap. He points out some of the risks and costs of that gap. Some can appreciate the spirit in which Bonk writes for the purpose of clear understanding and communication of the Gospel and not confusion of what the Gospel is all about. Missionaries can genuinely identify with people and effectively be Gospel communicators when they eliminate some of the affluence gap. It seems that Bonk issues a warning about dependence on technology instead of using technology as a tool.

We will pick up here next time. Let me give you some questions to help prepare for the next topics. One idea to keep in mind is to relate the development during the previous two centuries of modern missions strategies to the historical context of Western mission initiatives. We have talked about that a good bit, and Shenk talks about how modern mission strategies have developed within a peculiar historical sociological locus. For next time, evaluate as a paradigm the notion of word-and-deed ministry. Shenk offers his own comments there.