

THEME NINE

MISSION SPIRITUALITY AND AUTHENTIC DISCIPLESHIP

Preface

The saying goes that ‘hindsight is 20/20’ (or, it is easy to be knowledgeable after the events). For our purposes, perhaps a more appropriate saying would be ‘hindsight is 2010’, for Edinburgh 2010 is in many ways about looking back and seeing with clarity things that could not possibly have been envisioned a century ago. But Edinburgh 2010 is not just about looking back; it is also about looking around us now and looking forward to the future, and it is with this in mind that this chapter on mission spirituality and authentic discipleship commences.

Looking back at the World Missionary Conference in 1910, it has been observed that ‘notable absent groups were the Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Pentecostals and most Evangelical churches and organisations; Africans and South American Christians were not present either.’¹ For the purposes of this study on mission spirituality and authentic discipleship, a concentrated effort has been made to seek out and include voices from these particular perspectives. Hence, whilst attention will be paid to the experience of the early church and Christians throughout the ages, the bulk of the space in this study will be dedicated to addressing insights gained from newer Christian movements, particularly among those mentioned above.

Study Group 9 was led by conveners Dr Wonsuk Ma (South Korea, Pentecostal), Director of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies (OCMS) and Dr Cathy Ross (New Zealand, Anglican), Manager of the Crowther Centre for Mission Education at the Church Mission Society (CMS) in Oxford and JV Taylor Fellow in Missiology at Regent’s Park College and Wycliffe Hall, Oxford. The core group, which was based in Oxford and met regularly, also included Dr Thomas Harvey (USA, Presbyterian) of OCMS and Naomi Rose (USA, Anglican) of CMS. The group organised an international consultation on the theme in Seoul, South Korea on 22-24 March 2009, which was hosted by Younknak Presbyterian Church.

This summary is intended to serve as a collection of samples. Most of the studies used for this summary were presented at the Study Group 9 consultation held in Seoul. Since then, several more studies have been added to this primary group of studies. The authors are well aware that many important traditions and regions are not included in this summary due to the limited nature of the process. The final published volume of Study Group 9 will include more studies representing a wider spectrum of church traditions and regions.

1 Some Words and Thoughts about Mission Spirituality

The term ‘mission spirituality’ has only been articulated as such relatively recently and has come to mean different things to different people. For the purposes of this present study, it is important to say what is meant by ‘mission spirituality’ in this document.

Mission spirituality is specifically concerned with what is necessary for the Christian to engage in mission. It examines the sources from which mission arises. ‘It suggests that Christian mission begins with the spiritual activity of discerning the spirits (according to the revelation of Jesus Christ) in order to discover the movement of the Spirit of God in the world and join with it.’² For help with understanding mission spirituality for this paper, we turned to biblical precedent and to mission scholars and practitioners from a variety of cultural contexts, such as C. Rene Padilla,³ David Bosch,⁴ Gustavo Gutiérrez,⁵ Samuel Rayan,⁶ Juan Esquerda Bifet⁷ and Christopher Duraisingh.⁸

Padilla, seeing Acts 1:8 as a promise, not a commandment, asserts, ‘The same Spirit that makes possible life in Christ on both the personal and community levels is the Spirit that empowers and guides the church so that this life is shared...Christian spirituality is, therefore missionary spirituality’.⁹ This will be important to bear in mind as throughout this essay, one will see that some contributors will have used ‘Christian spirituality’ and ‘mission spirituality’ interchangeably, and taken mission spirituality as a ‘given’; or assumed it as a natural part of the Christian life. Also, it will be seen that mission spirituality is not a term that is used universally or with the same amount of familiarity as other theological terms that have made their way into vernacular.

So it could be said that mission spirituality is essentially Christian spirituality lived in and fuelled by awareness of the *missio Dei*, and that, mission spirituality results in tangible mission practice in the world. Yet, as will be demonstrated, it is more than awareness that prompts global mission, which brings us to the key question for this study. At the heart of this study on mission spirituality and authentic discipleship is the desire to begin to answer the query: ‘What motivates and sustains mission?’ It was a question put to the diverse group of participants for this consultation and their answers, coupled with internal and external observations of mission past and present, should lead us to some helpful conclusions.

2 What Motivates and Sustains Mission? Churches and Mission Movements

Historically and currently, motives for mission have run the gamut from love of God to fear of God, to compassion, to guilt, to eschatological urgency. The more honest amongst us have also added a desire for power, control or even money to the list of possible motivations for mission.

The question of what motivates mission is an important one, not only because according to Scripture, our motivations matter to God (see Jer 12:3; 17:10, Ps 44:21, 1 Sam 16:7; Matt 15:8; 2 Cor 13:3, Phil 1:15-17), but because our motivations for mission have ramifications for mission sustainability. If for example, our mission is motivated by eschatological expectations of an imminent second-coming of Christ and a ‘rapture’ of believers in Christ only, this cannot help but affect our set of mission priorities, and it may very well be a motivation that lessens in its fervour with the passage of more and more time.

As aforementioned, one of the aims of this study was to ask this question, ‘What motivates and sustains mission?’ of Christians whose voices were not heard in 1910. What follows next is a survey of some of their perspectives pertaining to how their mission understanding, activity and motivation have evolved in the past century.

We will observe both accomplishments and challenges within such varying churches and movements as African Instituted Churches, China’s Back to Jerusalem movement, the Russian Orthodox Church and a variety of Asian contexts, including Roman Catholicism in India and Pentecostalism in Korea. Four regional and one collaborative reflections have also been included. We will also comment specifically on the relationship between mission sustainability and authentic discipleship. From all of this, we then make some recommendations for future generations.

2.1 African Instituted Churches

African Instituted Churches (AICs) have experienced incredible growth in the last several decades, with more than 50 million members globally. The OAIC (Organisation of AICs) understands its mission as originating in founding visions. In his paper, ‘Doing Mission at the Margins of Society: Harnessing the Resources of Local Visions’, OAIC senior leader Nicta Lubaale Makiika says specifically that the rediscovered Jesus Christ healer as well as the Holy Spirit who was dwelling among them

...what the people of faith hear God telling them to do (often through the leadership and guidance of a prophet or preacher), what they believe about the world around them, and how they understand their call to live out their faith in the particular society they belong to.¹⁰

The original founding visions came out of a time of crisis in the lives of Africans when they were faced with a threefold challenge: cultural, political and spiritual domination. At the same time people were beginning to read the Bible for themselves in their own mother tongues and discovering Jesus and the Holy Spirit afresh. In his paper, Makiika says specifically that the rediscovered Jesus Christ healer as well as the Holy Spirit who was dwelling among them.

Though not a homogenous group by any means, most AICs view themselves to be engaging in mission from the margins. Marginality is understood as

‘being on the sidelines of dominant movements and activities in society’ and as ‘doing mission in a way that challenges the established understanding of mission’.¹¹ It is this second category of marginality that the Holy Spirit is understood to break down the barriers between the resource-rich and the resource-poor. This understanding of mission has enabled and empowered the AICs to engage in mission in a holistic way.

There is a focus on community in the AIC mission approach. The African worldview integrates the physical and the spiritual so they focus on the role of the Holy Spirit in the lives of individuals and communities. Prayer is a major part of mission at the grassroots, as is community building. The AIC ‘communities of the Spirit’ have modelled a counter-cultural approach to the Western models on offer and enabled support for those in the communities who suffered HIV/AIDS, unemployment and homelessness, to name a just a few of the needs being addressed.

AIC members develop their understanding of mission through ‘listening to the voice of the Spirit and reading the Scriptures in situations in which they are placed’.¹² This reading of the Scriptures in context has led to social action and engagement. In one community, praying over the issue of the increasing number of orphans in their midst directly led the women to start a ministry caring for the orphans and children in need in that community.

For the AICs it is prayer, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the reading of the Scriptures in community that sustains and motivates them in mission. The current challenge is for present day missionaries to dream dreams and see visions for their own generation. This will require a process of training and remobilising to enable ‘the missionaries to read the word, listen to the Holy Spirit and scan the environment they are operating in.’¹³ Sociological tools such as Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) programmes have been used to help them see and analyse the social realities of the communities around them. When used alongside the Scriptures, African Christians begin to realise the place of the Bible in social transformation. The founding visions are also a resource for the AICs and the wider church. Being on the margins is also a good place to be forced to rely on God for one’s ongoing Christian sustenance. The question, arises, how can AICs, which have become more popular, continue to identify with a marginalized stance? Perhaps if other global church structures and movements made a conscious effort to also identify with the marginalized, this would shore up the AIC commitment to remain true to this stance.

As communities and voices on the margins, AICs can be overlooked or not taken seriously. Their spirituality, which depends on being empowered and enabled by the Holy Spirit with visions, dreams and prophecies, challenges the dominant model of civic education ‘which hardly recognises the motivation of the Holy Spirit to speak to power’.¹⁴ At the same time, this very spirituality can cause AICs to slip back into cultural prejudice and values. For example, some

may claim that the Holy Spirit has told them not to talk about HIV/AIDS while others may claim that this condition is entirely demonic, warranting exorcism.

Inadequate theological training is seen as a problem. Theology is sometimes carelessly borrowed with little attempt made to integrate it into an AIC context. Lack of a carefully worked out theology is considered ‘a significant constraint on contemporary AIC mission.’¹⁵ AICs also have a tendency to remain separatist, which therefore limits their effective involvement. Patriarchal models of leadership are still prevalent.

The AICs developed in a context of challenge and resistance and it may be that they need to recapture some of this early sense of marginalization and resourcefulness once again, in which case their solidarity with the marginalized could be their unique offering to the wider church.

2.2 Back to Jerusalem Movement

The Back to Jerusalem movement is helpfully summarised and evaluated by Kim Kwong Chan in his study: ‘Mission Movement of the Christian Community in Mainland China: The Back to Jerusalem Movement’.¹⁶

Chan looks at the origins and missiological ramifications of the Back to Jerusalem mission movement. This movement arose in the mid-twentieth century and has more recently been taken up as a mission cause by some house church leaders in China and Western missionary groups. Chan documents how the movement arose from visions of a pilgrimage west to evangelize the Middle East and culminate in Jerusalem. This mission quest was to fulfil the final leg of world evangelism; a mandate that was the unique burden and honour of Chinese Christians to bring the gospel ‘back to Jerusalem’.

Chan’s essay tells not only the history of this movement but its spiritual, theological and ethical dynamics. His article is a cautionary tale exposing the difficulties such visions encounter when they bump up against harsh reality. These dreams and visions of reaching Jerusalem led to remote Kashgar but not beyond. There, the small churches founded remain, but the mandate to go on to the Middle East or Jerusalem remained unfulfilled. Thus, more recently their vision has been taken up by a new generation of Christian converts. Some have ventured into Middle Eastern countries such as Iraq, but with no cross-cultural training and no knowledge of Arabic their ability to effectively share the gospel is difficult at best. For example, Chan points to one group of itinerant pig herders who had much missionary zeal, but were without a ‘profession for gaining acceptance in the Muslim world’.¹⁷

Moreover, Chan’s article brings to the fore the dearth of reflection by Western mission organisations that have uncritically championed the Back to Jerusalem movement. The fact that it is ‘cheaper’ to send Chinese Christian labourers to the mission field and the assumption that given their years of persecution in China they will be better able to handle persecution in Muslim countries, when added to the economic motives of poor Chinese Christian peasants and labourers to leave China, raise all sorts of ethical, moral and

economic issues that have not been fully sorted out. All this, however, should serve as an ongoing reminder that in the end, despite all the academic and spiritual reflection on mission, mission is messy, and that despite all best or poorly laid plans, mission takes place and has all sorts of positive and negative unintended consequences.

Chan recognises that the Back to Jerusalem Movement, generated as it was by visions and a special mission mandate to the Christians of China, has done much to motivate mission both in China and abroad. Nonetheless, one also senses Chan's concern that that motivation leads to a mission emphasis and practice that is in many ways spiritually and ethically malformed. That said, one senses in Chan's essay a deep appreciation for Chinese enthusiasm for and willingness to sacrifice in mission. Further, he recognises the good unintended consequences of these movements and expresses appreciation for how this has impressed and heartened Christians in the West. Nonetheless, as Chan notes,

(T)he dubious motives of many... mission candidates within the current Chinese social trend of migration to overseas, the clandestine style of operation lacking accountability and transparency on financial and administrative matters and the ethical issues with the law both in China and in the mission field, all these factors cast doubt on the idea that the Back to Jerusalem will bear strong influence on the development of global Christianity.¹⁸

Regarding the Back to Jerusalem movement, we have raised critical questions surrounding a trajectory in mission that seeks to utilize global Christians to complete the work that Western missionaries no longer can. On the one hand, the Back to Jerusalem movement is but one of many indigenous Christian missionary movements that have taken up the mission mandate; nonetheless, as noted above it runs the risk of repeating many errors that have been committed by missions and missionaries in the past as well as raising a raft of new issues not easily resolved. Whether one feels that the Back to Jerusalem movement signals the completion of the great missionary enterprise or is mere missionary folly, bringing out the worst characteristics of missions in the occident and the orient, it represents the fecund energy that lies at the heart of global Christian mission that has now moved well beyond the bounds of the Western missionary endeavours of the past two centuries.

2.3 CMS Africa

Regarding African mission in general, it is helpful to consider reflections from Serah Wambua of CMS Africa, a mission agency recently weaned from its parent body in February, 2009. CMS Africa is convinced that God's intentions for Africa are found in Isaiah 65:20:

Never again will there be an infant who lives for a few days
Or an old man who does not live out his years;
He who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth;

He who fails to reach a hundred will be considered accursed.

CMS Africa celebrates the tremendous church growth in Africa but is challenged by what it identifies as a lack of discipleship. In its view, the missionary church failed to address this and the current church is failing as well.

The African indigenous church movement largely grew out of this failure by the church to address pertinent issues rooted in the African culture and religion. African cultural practices such as polygamy, witch doctrine, the place of ancestral spirits, clan and communal responsibility left African Christians hanging and the result has been Christians torn between the two worlds.¹⁹

CMS Africa forms part of a wider Africa Working Group, which is convinced that a paradigm shift is necessary for the church in Africa to make any difference. They believe that the mission of the church is for social and cultural transformation and that the church is ‘the single most important indigenous sustainable institution with members in virtually every area of society.’²⁰ Integral mission is their call and challenge to the African church so that African Christians do not experience a kind of schizophrenia but rather an integrated Christian lifestyle, or mission spirituality. Accordingly, a group of trainers in Africa has developed the Samaritan Strategy – an advanced, holistic discipleship training programme to be used all over Africa. Churches that have received this training are indeed making a noticeable difference to their contexts:

They are effectively and practically addressing issues like the HIV and AIDS pandemic, responding to conflict with biblical peacemaking principles; and effectively engaging in social, political, business and environmental concerns using their local resources. Not surprisingly, they are also more effective in their evangelistic outreach.²¹

Business as Mission (BAM) is a programme being used in several African countries. BAM is about establishing real businesses and not an excuse to enter into a community for evangelistic purposes. BAM is seen as the entry point for poverty reduction and it ‘is empowering and inspiring businessmen in Africa to create jobs and make wealth strategically dealing with the poverty challenge.’²² This approach also capitalises on Africa’s extraordinary resources in terms of people and natural resources. CMS Africa’s challenging of the dominant worldview is an example to the wider church, especially in those contexts where the state church takes on the colour and hue of the society around it so it is virtually indistinguishable from it.

CMS Africa firmly believes that more effective Christian discipleship is needed for the church in Africa to grow and develop. They believe that the church is God’s agent for transformation and so as the church is challenged and

changed so will Africa be changed. CMS Africa is committed to working at retaining the best of the African worldview that is not at odds with the gospel and challenging that which is. This ongoing study of the Scriptures inspired by the leading of the Holy Spirit to transform the African worldview is what motivates and sustains them in their mission.

2.4 Immigrant church example

The Grace Korean Church in Southern California is a first-generation Korean immigrant church. Although the formal affiliation of this fast growing church is Presbyterian, its theology and ethos are more Pentecostal.²³

The church's understanding of mission has been deeply influenced by the vision of its founder, Kwang-shin Kim. Mission is understood as the proclamation of the gospel and the establishment of strong local congregations in challenging places. Other areas of engagement support these goals, such as martial arts programmes among Muslim youth, community development programmes in Africa, and general education in Latin America. The single goal of the church's mission has been the presence of dynamic local missionary congregations. However, recently the church made a change in its mission thinking. The recently dedicated Vision Centre includes a Prayer Centre for Nations where intercessory prayers will be offered continuously. This implies the church's continuing priority toward the spiritual aspect of mission, but also the expansion of its mission scope to include its own neighbours and its host country, the United States.

Kim was radically converted after seeing a vision of a weeping Jesus (weeping, he presumed, for lost lives). This led him to establish a church of 'award-winning' members who would win souls. The unique immigrant context of the founder and the members has been another motivation; the motif of 'sojourning' or 'pilgrimage' is often highlighted in Kim's sermons.

Another source of motivation is a sense of historic mission opportunity, which motivated Kim and the church to launch an 'all-out' mission effort to the former Soviet areas, including massive celebrations of new believers with several hundreds of Grace Church members who were flown in by a chartered jumbo jet. The church also has a mission-oriented understanding of ecclesiology. The paradigm is reinforced repeatedly that the real heroes are missionaries, and the primary reason for the church's existence is to support their work. They also employ military language to express their 'all-out' commitment to mission. The large banner in the church lobby reads: 'Mission is Prayer, Mission is War, and Mission is Martyrdom'. Mission has priority in finance, the pastor's schedule, church programmes, and so on. One also senses a commitment to the 'democratization of mission.' There is a distinct expectation in the church that every member is to give to mission. Moreover, an average member is expected to visit a mission field at least once a year, often with his or her family at their own expense and also contribute to missionary work through finances, time or whatever is needed. Any lay leader of the

church is also expected to be ‘commissioned by the pastor’ to be a missionary and to prepare to go as a missionary in the near future. Finally, a belief in the supernatural intervention of the Holy Spirit, particularly in a mission setting, through miracles, divine healing, miraculous provision and protection, fuels their mission activity.

Like Yoido Full Gospel Church in Seoul (see section 2.6 below), Grace Church in the United States employs various forms of worship that contribute to the orientation and reinforcement of the church’s mission commitment. They include preaching, prayer, teaching, testimony and intercessory prayers for missionaries and mission fields. Passionate presentations of God’s missionary call on individuals and the church have been made by Kim and now his successor Kee-Hong Han. Sacrificial giving to mission projects and to mission support was exemplified by Kim himself when he offered his own personal resources. The church has repeatedly reported that over fifty percent of its gross income has been committed to mission each year, and sometimes over sixty percent. The true picture, however, is not that of planned spending, but that of spontaneous and often emergency contributions toward urgent needs in mission fields. This ‘mission without proper plan’ demonstrates the church’s openness to and preparedness for any surprise development.

Grace Church has a discipleship programme called the Tres Dias. This modified Catholic retreat is intended for participants to experience lavish, genuine Christian love from their hosts, who are mature church members. The programme has been extremely effective for individual conversion and spiritual renewal. This is where, in the context of high Christian commitment, the ultimate calling of God upon his people is presented – the proclamation and sharing of God’s love for the lost world. Through this programme, seeds for Christian missionary commitment are planted and this results in an unusually high level of participation in mission.

2.5 Russian Orthodox Church

The Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) provides a particularly interesting example of mission spirituality because, as Orthodox educator Valentin Kozuharov states, the ROC did not really express an intentional interest in mission as an activity or as a field of study until quite recently.²⁴

At the end of the 1980s, as major changes took place within Russia, churches struggled to regain their properties and buildings. Simultaneously, they began to restore their teaching activity, social ministry and worship structures. The Missionary Department of ROC was established at the end of 1995, thus initiating a new, more concentrated stage in ROC missionary practice and missionary theology.

The ROC had not up until this time used the term ‘mission’ as such but rather understood such activity as ecclesiastical discipline, ecclesiastical tasks and witnessing. In this context mission was understood as forming and strengthening God’s people. In 2005 further work was done towards developing

an understanding of mission and the document *Concept 2005* states that ‘the mission of the Orthodox church aims at the salvation of every human being’.²⁵ The document affirms ‘all the faithful children of the Orthodox church should take the path of Orthodox Christian witnessing’.²⁶ By 2007, the understanding of mission was further nuanced:

The Orthodox mission aims at teaching the peoples to be enlightened in the truths of the faith, at educating people to enable them to live a Christ-like life, and mainly at passing on the experience of communion with God through a personal participation of the believers in the sacramental life of the Eucharistic community.²⁷

We see here twin emphases on participation in the Eucharist and participation in a healthy Orthodox community as essential parts of mission. Another important aspect of mission for the ROC is the re-evangelization or re-Christianisation of large parts of the Russian territories that lost their faith under Communism. *Concept 2005* (April 2007 version) notes this as a new focus:

For the last 800 years, the Russian Orthodox Church has never been exposed to the necessity of apostolic preaching on areas and territories where millions of people, through the violence of the atheistic communist regimes of the past decades, have lost their faith and tradition and have acquired other types of culture and history. Now we have faced the paradoxical situation where Russia needs a second Christianisation of the peoples living on the vast Russian territories.²⁸

For the ROC, mission is very much focused on their current context of dealing with the legacy of atheistic communism and attracting believers back into the Orthodox Christian community.

The ROC understands mission as enabling people to live a Christ-like life by participating in the eucharistic community. There is no distinction between internal and external mission as mission is about coming closer to the world, sanctifying and renewing it. Ten main ‘directions of missionary service’ are defined in *Concept 2005*:

- 1) Missionary service of lay people
- 2) Missionary commissioning
- 3) Missionary parish
- 4) Missionary worship and services
- 5) Organisation of missionary schools
- 6) Mobile mission
- 7) Establishing of missionary camps and stations
- 8) Mission amongst young people
- 9) Mission amongst the immigrants in Siberia and Russia’s Far East
- 10) Characteristics and qualities of the modern missionary²⁹

More recently the mission of reconciliation has been added to this list.

Special attention is now also being paid to young people in an attempt to attract them back to the church. Mobile mission carried out in the form of missionary pilgrimages by train covering distances of more than 15,000 km to Siberia and Russia's Far East are novel ways of engaging in mission. This involves building and transporting a car-temple – a trailer truck and a temple (or sanctuary) built within. Other forms of mobile mission are missionary camps and field stations, which involve building hundreds of new churches, chapels and educational centres, as well as bringing and leaving priests in Russia's territories in the east. Through this method, thousands have converted to Orthodoxy – including Russians and other ethnic groups.³⁰

In 2007 the mission and ministry of lay people was also developed – especially that of women who have four main areas of mission engagement:

- 1) Founding charitable organisations and bodies to serve those in need
- 2) Missionary ministry in hospitals
- 3) Missionary and teaching ministry in social homes, mainly children's homes, nursing homes and boarding schools
- 4) Missionary ministry in prisons for women³¹

ROC believers need to be nurtured and strengthened through building eucharistic communities to be spread to the ends of the earth. Missionary bishops, missionary priests and missionary lay people all bear responsibility for this.

Perhaps, in addition to the emphasis on being a healthy Christian community, the unique contribution that the ROC offers to the wider Christian community is that Eucharist is the mission of the church and that 'it is this most intimate and holy act of communion with God that makes believers wish the same intimate and holy communion for every human being. Communion means unity.'³² The Eucharist is understood as the mission of the church as it represents the meeting point of God and his people and as it is an eschatological celebration of the forthcoming kingdom. So real unity is to be found not in ecumenical gatherings, nor even in common actions and witness but in the Eucharist, this eschatological celebration which foreshadows the coming of the kingdom.

For the ROC, their mission engagement is not only practised within a specific community, but it is also sustained by that eucharistic community, supported by catechising and teaching. It also requires love 'towards God and neighbour, and towards all the creation, since the Orthodox affirmation of sanctification of nature through sanctification of man lies in the foundation of the Christian understanding of the salvific mission of Christ.'³³ However, the ROC faces some challenges in her ongoing mission engagement – she needs to interact with the world more and to cooperate with other Christian churches. This would not only enhance her mission but also the mission engagement of other churches as they learn from the ROC approach to mission.

The ROC is aware of the challenges facing it in its missionary task today, including a loss of cultural identity and an increase of socio-economic hardship

since the collapse of communism. There is also an attempt to divinise science and intentional ‘informational violence’ has been expressed against Orthodoxy. An increasing plurality of religions and worldviews also poses a challenge for the ROC.

2.6 Pentecostal church: Korea

The example of Yoido Full Gospel Church (YFGC), Seoul, Korea, the largest single congregation in the world, was studied by Young-hoon Lee, the current senior pastor of the church.³⁴ The YFGC can be described as ‘classical Pentecostal’ or denominational Pentecostal. However, the theology and spiritual ethos of David Yonggi Cho, its founder, reveals a contextualized version of classical Pentecostalism.

For the church, evangelism is the foremost form of mission engagement. The growth of the congregation to 750,000 attendees in its fifty-year history attests to the full mobilization of the whole church in sharing Christ’s ‘good news’ at home and beyond. Cho regularly conducts mass evangelistic crusades in many parts of the world. Church growth is also a priority. Cho has been responsible for the birth of more than five hundred churches throughout Korea, some quite large. Yoido’s Church Growth International programme has promoted active church growth, which has influenced the increase of large or mega-churches. In addition to evangelism and church growth, there is an emphasis on caring for the needy at home and abroad. The church now operates two international NGOs and is constructing a cardiac hospital in North Korea. Yoido members also engage with various social issues. The most conspicuous platform for this is the *Kukmin Daily Newspaper*, which has a national circulation.

Cho espouses a holistic view of the gospel and Christian mission, encompassing the whole spectrum of human life: physical, material and spiritual. The term ‘mission’ is used in conjunction with the expansion of God’s kingdom, visibly expressed in the presence of local congregations. Several things surface as key elements in Cho’s motivation for mission. The first is his encounter with God. His experience on his ‘deathbed’ resulted in a radical conversion and coincided with healing from a severe case of tuberculosis. This is where his theology of a ‘good God’ began. The second is human suffering, which formed the context of his life-long ministry. This includes poverty after the Korean War, social disorder, injustice, insufficient health care, and rampant corruption, among other factors. His first congregation represented the marginalized and ‘disinherited’, who might have otherwise resorted to Shamanism, alcoholism, and social crime. The third is his sense of empowerment through the Holy Spirit. His conversion experience and subsequent theological education orientated him around the empowering work of the Holy Spirit. He often admonishes his congregation to ‘receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit’ which opens a floodgate of spiritual gifts. This

missiology of empowerment has been demonstrated in his use of female lay leaders to organise and lead cell groups.

The growth of the church in number and in influence also motivated the church to expand its missionary engagement. The establishment and maintenance of a national daily newspaper, for instance, requires resources that only a church of this strength can afford.

For Yoido Full Gospel Church, it seems that things commonly known as spiritual disciplines sustain their mission. Worship appears to be the backbone. A church bulletin lists at least twelve worship services per week in the main sanctuary. However, a countless number of group worship services are organised by groups specific in age, gender, vocation, language, and special needs. The centre of worship is preaching. Cho's message can be summed up as a message of hope, as he emphasises God's goodness, although deep spirituality also includes the element of suffering in human life.

Prayer is the most significant spiritual practice of the church, and this is where the church draws most from the traditional spirituality of the Korean church. Fasting prayer, congregational unison prayer and supplication for specific needs are characteristics of the church's prayer life. Every day the church holds an overnight prayer meeting and dawn prayer meetings. Its international fasting prayer mountain is crowded with people who dedicate a period of several days, a week or even forty days for fasting and prayer.

Sharing of narratives is a typical part of Pentecostal tradition. Stories of mission engagement are shared at almost every opportunity in church life: formal worship service, the weekly church newspaper, the monthly magazine, and also through cell group meetings. The transformation of human life through mission engagement is a regular feature of Sunday worship services through a video presentation. The church holds a full-scale weeklong annual mission conference and all of its missionaries participate with their families and sometimes with choirs from various countries. The event not only promotes mission but also provides every member with an opportunity to pledge their monetary contribution to mission. Giving is another unique part of the spirituality of Korean Christianity, and the members of the church have been generous in their sacrificial giving. Unique to the church is that most of the mission funding is generated through individual giving outside of the church's budget.

2.7 Reformed church example

This example is taken from the Youngnak Presbyterian Church, Seoul, Korea, another high-profile Korean church. According to Chul-shin Lee, Senior Pastor of Youngnak Church, Kyung-chik Han, the founder, has been considered as a 'model pastor' of Korea.³⁵ He was born and grew up during the Japanese occupation of Korea, and his encounter with God's reality includes a miraculous healing of tuberculosis. After studying in the United States, his pastoral ministry began under the careful watch of Japanese authorities and

soon he was forced out of ministry. Until liberation, he cared for orphans and widows in North Korea. After liberation, he was subjected to communist persecution, including imprisonment. After he fled to South Korea, he established the Youngnak Church and influenced Korean Christianity in many areas.

Han's vision and that of the church was for the evangelization of the nation. The link between patriotism and Christianity is noteworthy, as both Japanese and Communist authorities viewed Christianity as their ideological enemy. Han viewed Christianity as the answer to the nation's survival and identity. He and the church were responsible for the establishment of over six hundred new congregations. Han initiated several nation-wide evangelistic initiatives such as 'Three Million to Christ' and 'Five Million to Christ' campaigns. Han and the church have had a special interest in evangelism in the military, in which every Korean man is required to serve.

The provision of a good education with a Christian foundation has been the vision of Han and Youngnak Church. They established a number of educational institutions and supported many secondary schools and universities. Many prominent leaders in politics, education, economics, social sectors and Christianity have been graduates of such schools. Currently the church operates nine schools. Scarcity of education for Koreans during the Japanese period and the communist rule must have motivated Han's dedication to education. Han's own education was provided by dedicated Christians who also shared a passion for the nation. This later developed into the notion that a good Christian should have a good love of nation.

Social service is another area of the church's mission engagement. Care for the neglected began in the early days of Han's ministry in North Korea. The church established facilities for orphans, the disabled, widows and the elderly. The mission mandate has been understood by the church to include the demonstration of God's love, in addition to the proclamation of the good news. Further, restoration of social and church life in North Korea has been unique in the Youngnak's mission. Han, himself a North Korean refugee, attracted similar refugees to begin his church. Naturally, the church has had a deep commitment to the restoration of Christianity in North Korea, where it has been suppressed by the communist regime. Han, the recipient of the 1992 Templeton Freedom Award, donated the award fund to the church's North Korean mission. Since then, various mission initiatives have been used to bring the gospel and God's love to North Korea, including relief and welfare projects. Currently the church operates a large ministry to recent North Korean refugees to assist them to settle in the South Korean social environment.

What has been observed of the mission discipleship in Yoido Full Gospel Church is also found at the Youngnak Church. Yet another ministry should be noted and that is its commitment to pray for the divided nation with families separated by fortified borders. This focused prayer indicates that the hope of reunification may be a sustaining force. The gradual disappearance of the

generation who experienced war has brought a new urgency to see the divided nation united.

2.8 Roman Catholic Church in Asia

‘Expressions like “mission, evangelization, and conversion” so vital to the Christian faith, are greatly misunderstood in many Asian countries (like India),’ according to Executive Secretary for the Office of Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs for Federation of Asian Bishops’ Conferences, Sister Clemens Mendoca, working in Pune.³⁶ One way of approaching mission in India is to engage in a ‘triple dialogue’³⁷ with the poor, people of other religions as well as people from all walks of life. In India, harmony is considered to be a core value and this triple dialogue calls for the church to ‘stretch our capacities for relationships that are more inclusive’.³⁸

The Roman Catholic Church in Asia tries to listen actively to its context and also recommends a four-pronged dialogue. Subjects for dialogue include life (living together as neighbours), action (collaborating with others), experience/testimony (sharing of spiritual riches) and theological exchange (deepening an understanding of respective religious heritages). The Roman Catholic Church in Asia sees mission as striving towards the fullness of life and the intent of this mission of dialogue is to lead to greater understanding along the path of love. Mendoca reports that listening and receiving leads to a deeper relationship and a ‘civilisation of love’.³⁹ She acknowledges that for the wider church to take this dialogue approach would require a paradigm shift that many would not be eager to undertake.

Rather than attempting to follow in the footsteps of Western mission, the Roman Catholic Church in Asia is learning to re-read Scripture in their own context. They have discovered that Western creedal formulae are for the most part meaningless in their context and that more work needs to be done to make Jesus relevant so that their mission engagement can be sustained.

3 What Motivates and Sustains Mission? Regional and Collaborative Insights

3.1 Indian indigenous Christianity

David Emmanuel Singh, Research Tutor of OCMS, asserts that approaches to mission in India must become more suited to the cultural context. He turns to the spirituality of Sadhu Sunder Singh and Narayana Vamana Tilak to bring to light fresh paradigms by which to consider mission spirituality and discipleship.⁴⁰ Singh argues persuasively that it is only by looking at the great diversity of India’s rich spiritual tradition that mission and discipleship can break out of the spiritual and missiological confines that have limited Christian witness to only certain castes and worldviews. He turns to these two critical converts to Christianity whose embrace of the rich spiritual traditions of India

could, if tapped, energize and transform mission today. Were mission to embrace the 'direct, personal, devotional and sacrificial faith focused on the living guru-sanyasi 'teacher-renouncer' Jesus'⁴¹ emulated by Sadhu Singh and Narayana Tilak, Singh argues that Christian mission could begin to shed its Western vestments and present itself transformed in a manner receptive and conducive to Indian spiritual traditions, devotion and desire.

For Sadhu Singh and Tilak, it was the 'direct experience of Jesus' that transformed not only the life of the disciples, but their own lives. It was this direct 'experience' of the risen Jesus which was the warp and woof of their spirituality that in turn shaped how they viewed discipleship. Both Sadhu Singh and Tilak had a spiritual encounter that they describe as a vision that utterly changed their lives. The result was that they literally became followers of the guru Jesus. In their view, through spiritual vision the Transcendent God was able to relate with his creatures through Jesus. Moreover this spiritual experience of Jesus was in turn mediated through parental modes of relation. Thus, Jesus as father required the 'need to maintain reverence' whereas 'Jesus as the mother' fulfilled their deepest aspiration for actual friendship, intimacy, and loving communion.⁴² Accordingly, Singh argues that emphases upon experiential encounter, familial imagery and spiritual intimacy lead to a view of mission and discipleship that is needed to 'tone down the polemical approach that characterised much of... missionary work up until now'. Thus, mission spirituality and discipleship would be seen as 'the path of devotion to Jesus' as opposed to the establishment of Christian churches and institutions or polemical debates surrounding Scripture and the nature of God.

David Singh laments that the examples of Sadhu Sunder Singh and Narayana Vamana Tilak have not done more to motivate mission or define its mandate. Indeed, Singh argues that, given these early examples, Indian Christians ought to walk in their path and adopt their attitude and engagement with Indian society so that missions, Christians and the church might become more attractive to the great diversity of Indian ethnic people groups of various religious backgrounds. By moving from an institutional and polemical model of Christianity and Christian mission to one that is based on discipleship and enlightenment while engaging people personally, devotionally and sacrificially, Singh believes that a mission more reflective and formed by the Indian context could be realised.

David Singh argues for a mission spirituality and discipleship that was once embodied in the life and witness of Sadhu Sunder Singh and Narayana Vamana Tilak, but has since been neglected much to the detriment of mission reflection and practice in India. Were this to be embraced it would represent a definite shift in missional thought, word and deed in India itself. Further, it would probably run into severe tension as it calls into question the established church in North and South India which might feel threatened by approaches that question the roots of their own faith, mission work, institutions and theological convictions. Nonetheless, as Singh points out, without change, Christianity in

India will be stuck in the same narrow channels and not be able to begin to reach out in ways that resonate with traditional Indian perspectives of spirituality and discipleship.

3.2 Korean spirituality

One study that Group 9 received was dedicated to taking a close look at Korean Christianity as an example of an emerging missionary church or spirituality within the global South. The growth of Christianity and mission engagement in Korea in recent years is certainly remarkable. Shin Ahn, professor of religious studies at Seoul National University, has provided further insight into the relationship between Korean spirituality, social engagement and Christian mission in his paper ‘Korean Spirituality: Christian Presence among World Religions’.⁴³

Ahn maintains that the unique alchemy of Korean Confucianism and Shamanism has given rise to a mission spirituality and discipleship that transcends the borders of ‘religion’ proper. Given its emphasis on a moral and social righteousness founded upon essential relationships, Korea’s Confucian moorings provided the framework for Christian emphases on social justice and liberation while the spiritual emphasis of Shamanism has served as a precursor to a Christian spirituality deeply connected with the harmony of body, mind and spirit.⁴⁴ Thus, for Ahn mission spirituality and discipleship in Korean Christianity draw deeply from the philosophical and spiritual roots of Korean culture.

For Ahn, the nature of mission lies in its appeal to the spiritual and philosophical concerns that arise out of Confucianism and Shamanism. Thus, from a Confucian standpoint, Christian mission has had significant impact in Korea due to its engagement with the cultivation of virtue through moral education along with its concern for social righteousness particularly in terms of liberation and social justice. This embrace, however, is not without complication. As Ahn notes, given that Confucianism recognises no distinction between moral education, social justice, citizenship and identity, Christians have often sought to impose a Christian worldview and faith upon a society where they still represent a minority of the population, even if active and powerful. Nonetheless, Ahn notes that Koreans are appreciative that for Christianity authentic discipleship includes an emphasis upon human political liberation as well as a willingness to share in and help relieve those suffering hardship and injustice. This owes much to a spirituality that seeks to cultivate moral and ethical character both individually and socially. For Ahn, this is complemented by Christian spirituality that has the power to bring about wholeness, healing and personal transformation. This spirituality not only brings harmony to body, mind and spirit, it is turned to as sign and seal of the visible blessing of material and economic well-being. Thus, mission spirituality in the Korean context has its physical and tangible expression in healing power

as well as material and economic development, all of which are seen as blessing bestowed by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Ahn holds that the concern for liberation, moral and ethical individuals and society motivates Christian Korean mission. In turn these goals are energized and informed by traditional Korean spirituality, and this has now taken on Korean forms such as dawn prayer and praying from spiritually discerned prayer mountains. This has served as well to define the holistic and transformational mandate of Korean missions that hold together concern for education, democracy, human rights, moral and ethical individuals and society as well as political and spiritual liberation. At the same time, Koreans have been spiritually formed by their unique forms of prayer, devotion and discipline.

No one can doubt the impact of Korean mission activity globally. Ahn's essay provides insight into the sort of implications the Korean experience and view of mission will have as mission enters a new century. Certainly the spiritual emphasis on prayer, healing, and social and ethical transformation resonate with trends within global Christianity and the mission work of Christians outside the West. Although missionaries arising out of more staid and traditional understandings of mission spirituality and discipleship will find some of these aspects disturbing, nonetheless, Korean emphasis upon holism and ministry resonates with Christians in the 'majority world' who share their concern for holistic transformation.

In conversation at the consultation held in Seoul, Shin Ahn pointed out that, following the explosive growth of the megachurch movement, there has been a subsequent diminishing of Sunday school attendance. Adding to that, he said that young Korean Christians now see Christian education as oppressive, whereas for the previous generation, Christianity was a liberator. He cited as a further challenge the relatively low number of ordained women. Korean Christians, he said, also face the challenge of migration; there are an estimated one million foreign workers in South Korea. Speaking candidly, he further noted that atheism is on the rise and that there is some inter-denominational tension.

3.3 Philippine and Mexican Christian spirituality and culture

For each of the contexts that we have explored, there are other places and situations that would resonate with the thoughts expressed. For example, like India, the Philippines has never seen Christianity flourish the way it has elsewhere. Some have stated that this is partly because Western missionaries had no fundamental understanding of the fatalistic *bahala na* worldview espoused by Filipinos. Filipino missiologist Tereso Casino has suggested that perhaps a parallel can be drawn between *bahala na* and 'Thy will be done.'⁴⁵ This is just one example.

Similarly linking spirituality and culture, regarding the aboriginal church in Mexico, Mario Perez Perez proposes a renewed profile of the priest as disciple-

missionary, who draws from and is nurtured by all the richness of his indigenous ancestral culture as well as Christian tradition.⁴⁶ These two examples call upon Christians in mission to consider, and embrace the existing spiritualities already inherent within a culture and in a sense, to recognize that God is already at work within these cultural contexts.

3.4 Ecumenical spirituality

The Commission on World Mission and Evangelism of the World Council of Churches contributed a paper on ‘Mission Spirituality and Discipleship’ prepared by their working group on Transformative Spirituality and Mission.⁴⁷ They point out the importance of the disciple’s authentic gospel lifestyle as we traverse as pilgrims and migrants through the mission landscapes of these troubled times.

The reflections start by acknowledging the ways in which contemporary borders, boundaries and barriers shape our life in mission and discipleship today. Then the group take a biblical approach, turning to Acts 10 to understand how the early church dealt with the issue of borders, and how their encounter with each other in the Spirit led them to cross over various barriers in order to move into a new spirit of reconciliation. Then the group addresses how the church, as a pilgrim people or a migrant in this world, is called to overcome contemporary barriers. Finally, the reflections look at how we travel as authentic disciples and identify elements of a healthy spirituality, one that can help us cross over the barriers of our contemporary world in order to become a church which participates in God’s transforming mission at the borderlands.

In its conclusion, the reflection affirms that the world in 2010 looks different to the world in 1910, but still it is a world characterized by borders, barriers and boundaries, a world rich in diversity and yet filled with inequalities. We can rejoice, like Peter, that God has a transformative encounter in store for us as individual disciples and for the church if we are willing to step outside our comfort zones. In the story from Acts we see that transformation takes place when we meet each other at the boundary and cross over the borders that humanity has turned into barriers. The metaphor of the church as a migrant calls the church to participate in God’s mission by travelling to the borderlines. And how should we, as part of the church, walk on this journey to the borderlines as authentic disciples? What can sustain us in difficult times? It is the vision that this is precisely Christ’s way and when we cross over to this way we will meet him and be sustained by him to be bridges and blessing amongst our neighbours. In the ‘crossing over’ we meet each other and a bridge is built; the impenetrable spot is penetrated and we too, like Peter and Cornelius, can experience in 2010 a spiritual transformation made possible by the transforming power of God’s Holy Spirit.

4 Conclusions and Recommendations

As we see it, Edinburgh 2010 calls us to celebrate what God has done and is doing in global mission, to admit to mistakes that have been made, and to look to the future.

For Western mission thinkers and practitioners, it may be tempting to look at developments such as the Back to Jerusalem movement or the mega-church movement in Korea, and advise, 'Do as we say, not as we've done.' And yet, the Western church has by no means 'arrived' in terms of determining what motivates and sustains mission. We must continue to work together globally, to listen and receive from each other.

At this point in mission history, it is probably a given that what is called for in our time is a mission spirituality that recognises that God is already working, has been working within all cultures, revealing Godself. And yet, having observed recent mission history in Asia and Africa, it becomes necessary to reiterate this point. If we officially recognised and articulated this years ago, we could have perhaps made greater strides toward effective mission in places like India and the Philippines, for example.

As we strive toward a mission spirituality that embraces the contributions of a diversity of cultural spiritualities, we have seen that some of our terms may need to change. Instead of discipleship, we may, as the Orthodox do, need to talk about a path to holiness or a path of devotion, as Indian spirituality espouses. Instead of mission, we may need to speak of a path of love, of dialogue or of ecclesiastical or community duty.

Regardless of what we call it, we have certainly seen that authentic discipleship is crucial to sustain effective mission. Mission spirituality cannot exist without authentic discipleship--a discipleship, a path, that specifically addresses mission and that necessitates mission as an integral part of the path.

What should an authentic discipleship path look like? What sort of spirituality will it embrace? This will of course in some ways vary from culture to culture, and yet, we can glean some seeds of commonality. We have seen that discipleship should be holistic. Categories (sacred and secular, physical and spiritual, religious and ordinary) and compartmentalizing do not seem to work in the long term; they do not make for sustainable mission. To speak about spirituality is to speak about living a life oriented toward the fulfilment of God's purposes for all creation. Rene Padilla has made the following point:

Christian spirituality is a gift and a task. It requires communion with God (contemplation) as well as action in the world (praxis). When these two elements are separated, both the life and the mission of the church are deeply affected. Contemplation without action is an escape from concrete reality; action without contemplation is activism lacking a transcendent meaning. True spirituality requires a missionary contemplation and a contemplative mission.⁴⁸

Alongside this we recognise and make the distinction that mission is for everyone; authentic missional discipleship cannot exist without acknowledging this as fundamental. Christian spirituality is mission spirituality.

We commend a discipleship that embraces diverse Christian spiritual practices, not merely tolerating but actively seeking to understand and incorporate them. We call for a renewed discipleship that expects the unexpected in a spirit of humility and reconciliation. We have seen over and over, since the early church, that God's Holy Spirit is actively involved in reconciliation and bringing nations, tribes and cultures together. At the same time, this spirituality should be Christ-centred and biblically grounded.

With all these worldviews working together, we must of course practice discernment. Therefore we must embark on a path of discipleship that calls us to be inclusive, yet authentic with each other. In a world that is aware of the temptation of corruption, we need to be accountable and transparent with each other. We must commit to a discipleship that recognises that God is fundamentally concerned with 'the least of these'. This kind of discipleship most certainly has personal and community dimensions. This is not a path to be walked alone by oneself, or even in just one set-apart community. It crosses the boundaries in today's world.

If this sounds too idealistic, then perhaps our ears are too jaded. Or perhaps we are not teaching the values of reconciliation, accountability and transparency early enough. Scott Todd, senior ministry advisor at Compassion International, has suggested that we be more proactive with cultivating mission spirituality and discipleship in children and young people. With regard to spirituality, Todd points out that Jesus himself held that those who follow him must become like children.⁴⁹ Perhaps, if we followed his advice, we would see a more sustainable mission for the future, particularly in countries like DR Congo, where youth comprise a majority of the population.⁵⁰

Regardless of whether we are talking about children or adults, new followers of Jesus or seasoned Christians, it is becoming increasingly clear that there is much to learn with respect to mission spirituality and authentic discipleship. No matter who we are, our vision needs to be broadened. Hindsight may be 2010, but as long as we continue to listen to the voices of God's children from all over the globe, the future may become ever clearer as well.

Endnotes

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