

A Bethany International Publication

coMISSION

MAGAZINE

HOW TO REACH A

NATION

FOR CHRIST

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A Message from the President

There is a common characteristic of the unreached people groups that we have recently adopted – they are listed as having less than 1 follower of Jesus for every 200 people (and many have no known believers). Why is this still true? There are geographical, religious, political, socio-economic barriers and spiritual forces that are hindering efforts to reach them with the Gospel!

Paul Strand, a former president of Bethany (1994-2000), served in Indonesia for 15 years as a missionary. Early on he visited a tribal village and shared a simple Gospel message. After inviting them to respond, there was a prolonged awkward silence. Finally, an old man rose and asked in front of hundreds of people, "If what you say is true about the Gospel, why has it taken 2000 years for that message to come to our village?" Then he asked, "How long have your people known about Jesus?"

That's why we must be passionately in action to "take the Church to where it is not!"

However, passion alone will not get the job done! In the next few pages you will read how leaders, churches, and workers all around the world are systematically adopting specific unreached people groups, sending new workers to them, making disciples, establishing churches, equipping these groups of believers to reach their neighbors and surrounding people groups. This is not random but methodical. We need to do this together.

The old man publically accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior that day...and so did many other villagers. 'How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"' —Romans 10:14-15



Daniel H. Brokke
President of Bethany International

Mission Statement

To take the church to where it is not by recruiting, equipping, and fielding followers of Jesus who are transformed by the cross, empowered by the Holy Spirit, are effectively prepared with intercultural educational experience, and lead by serving with global partners to transform individuals and communities, delighting God's heart and extending His Kingdom.

"Then He said to His disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.'" Matthew 9:37-38 (NIV)

What, Me, Reaching... Buddhists?

A Financial Advisor Finds Himself in a Remote Buddhist Village

MYANMAR COUNTRY FACTS

- **Continent:** Asia
- **Population:** 54,773,000
- **Unreached People Groups:** 49
(Less than 2% Evangelical Christian)
- **% Evangelical Christian:** 5.09%
- **Largest Religion:** Buddhism

Dale Teal is a financial advisor in Minneapolis and has been a Bethany donor for some years. Dale's faith is in action every week through teaching in BSF (Bible Study Fellowship), hosting a small group in his local church, and through living out Kingdom values in his work place. He loves to travel and has done three overseas trips with : twice to Asia and once to Africa. Dale says, "These trips help keep my vision for missions alive and growing."

In December, Dale accompanied Bethany's Executive VP, Tim Freeman, to Myanmar. This was Dale's first trip to a Buddhist country. For 10 days, Dale, Tim and two other American friends worked with vibrant in-country partners for the engagement of unreached peoples there. One of our key partners, Bishop Chin, has a missionary training school



Dale and Tim helping with a Christmas evangelism program in a Buddhist village in Myanmar.



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Dale sharing his faith with Bishop Chin translating.

to help prepare and launch new missionaries into the harvest field. Bishop Chin has a focused desire to impact several unreached people groups in the country and welcomed our visit with open arms.

Dale had no plans to just come along “for the ride.” He was prepared to actively share his faith as opportunities arose. Opportunities did arise and in spades!

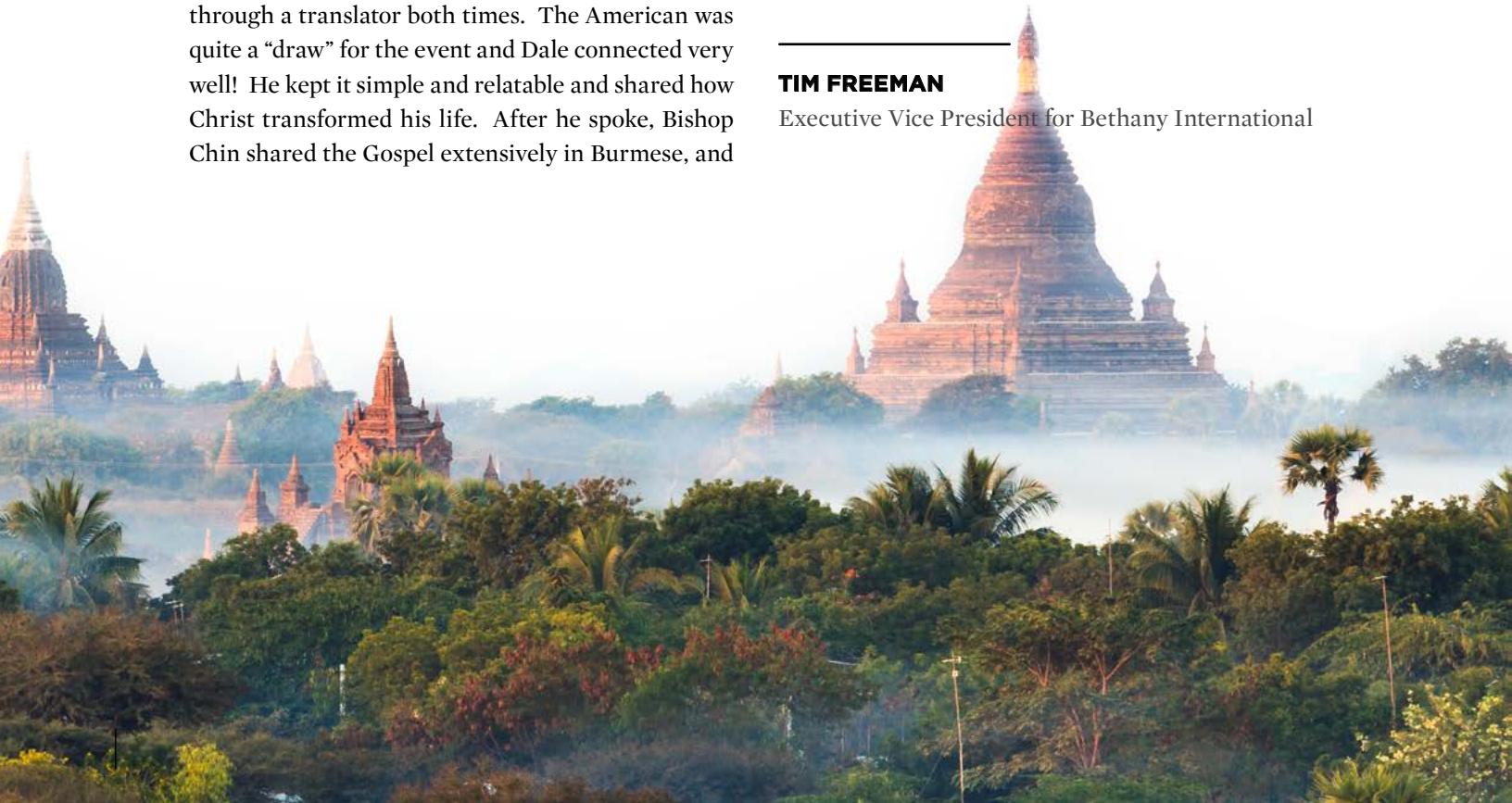
Two of the days were spent helping Bishop Chin with Christmas evangelism programs. It is not easy to do open air preaching in this Buddhist country. In fact, it was forbidden for years. Recently, the government has allowed Christians to share their faith in select-ed public meetings, but primarily this is only allowed at Christmas. Hundreds of Buddhists turned out in curiosity to hear the Gospel. Dale shared his faith through a translator both times. The American was quite a “draw” for the event and Dale connected very well! He kept it simple and relatable and shared how Christ transformed his life. After he spoke, Bishop Chin shared the Gospel extensively in Burmese, and

as a result several people came forward to receive Christ during the two evenings we held these meetings. Our local partners will ensure that these who have newly come to Christ will be discipled!

At the end of the trip, Dale expressed his desire to do it again! These ministry trips are a balance of ministry and fellowship with local leaders and believers. We also experience the magnificent scenery and the amazing hospitality of the local people. When we come alongside of partners like Bishop Chen, fulfilling the Great Commission becomes a reality. Raising up workers to bring the Gospel to those who have never heard is the first step in completing the Matthew 28 Great Commission Mandate - make disciples of all nations!

TIM FREEMAN

Executive Vice President for Bethany International



PRAYER, A NECESSITY.

Prayer is a privilege purchased for us by the blood of Christ, a privilege, strangely enough, that we greatly neglect. We have many privileges which God in His mercy gives us, but if we examine our privileges we will find that they are necessary as well. However, the privilege is secondary to the necessity. So it is with prayer: it is a necessity, pure and simple.

The need of prayer is very clearly presented in the experience of Israel at Rephidim. This was God’s opportunity to teach the young nation their dependence on Him. Moses sent Joshua and his men to fight the battle in the valley against Amalek, while Moses held his hand up toward heaven until Israel prevailed and gained the victory. The enemy was not defeated by manpower or human weapons only, but by the power of God through the intercession of Moses.

This was written for the church– that ‘we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers’ (Eph. 6:12). Israel discovered that they were in conflict with spiritual powers far superior to their own natural powers.

Joshua and his men in the valley with swords fighting, Moses together with Aaron and Hur on the mount with uplifted hands speaks of the two phases of the gospel ministry, the outward ministry and the upward ministry. The outward ministry is the sword of God’s Word and the upward ministry is intercessory prayer. Both were necessary in winning the battle and in going forward in God’s purpose. A man of God once said, ‘Prayer is not everything, but everything is by prayer!’

Notice Exodus 17:11, ‘It came to pass, when Moses held his hands, Israel prevailed.’ What does this teach us? That Victory hinged on the intercession of Moses, Aaron, and Hur. We can call for an army of soldiers for Christ to preach the Gospel and great is this need. But, we can settle it in our hearts that the missionary army will not prevail in its mission unless God’s people lift up holy hands in constant believing prayer - the two or three who will feel the burden and responsibility of the battle in which missionaries are engaged. Satan doesn’t care if the saints are sincere and confident as long as they are passive and weary in prayer.

God needs praying men who sense that they are at the very core of the success or the failure of the Gospel in the world. Such men as these, like Moses and his supporters, will have the thrill of being co-workers together with God in the furtherance of the Gospel. They will see Satan defeated and Christ exalted!

REV. HAROLD BROKKE

Served as dean of Bethany Global University from 1948-1994 and president of Bethany International from 1991 until his retirement in 1994.

THE FURNACE

If you’ve never experienced a Minnesota winter, you might not completely understand how brutally cold it is! It is no wonder that in the early days of Bethany, those who met to pray daily gathered in a furnace room to keep warm. This furnace room became a place of encounter and intercession.

Any lasting move of God starts in the place of prayer. From the desperate cry for holiness in 1956 that prompted all nights of prayer to the desire to see 24/7 prayer established for power and protection for ministry around the world – Bethany’s history is rich with the desire to commune with Jesus and seek His face.

As John Piper wrote, “Missions exists because worship doesn’t”. At Bethany, the mission ahead of us is not an easy task. We need the power of the Holy Spirit to take the church to where it is not.

Like the furnace of our early days, the embers of our hearts are fueled when we meet with God in the place of prayer and worship.

The Furnace Prayer Room goes back to the fire and culture of prayer that fueled dedication to seeing Jesus being worshipped in every tribe, tongue and nation. Through that culture and commitment, we will see the Gospel go forth in power to reach the unreached.

Let’s go back to the Furnace.

A RIDE WITH BENSON

How the multiplication of missionaries is accelerating the work of the Great Commission.

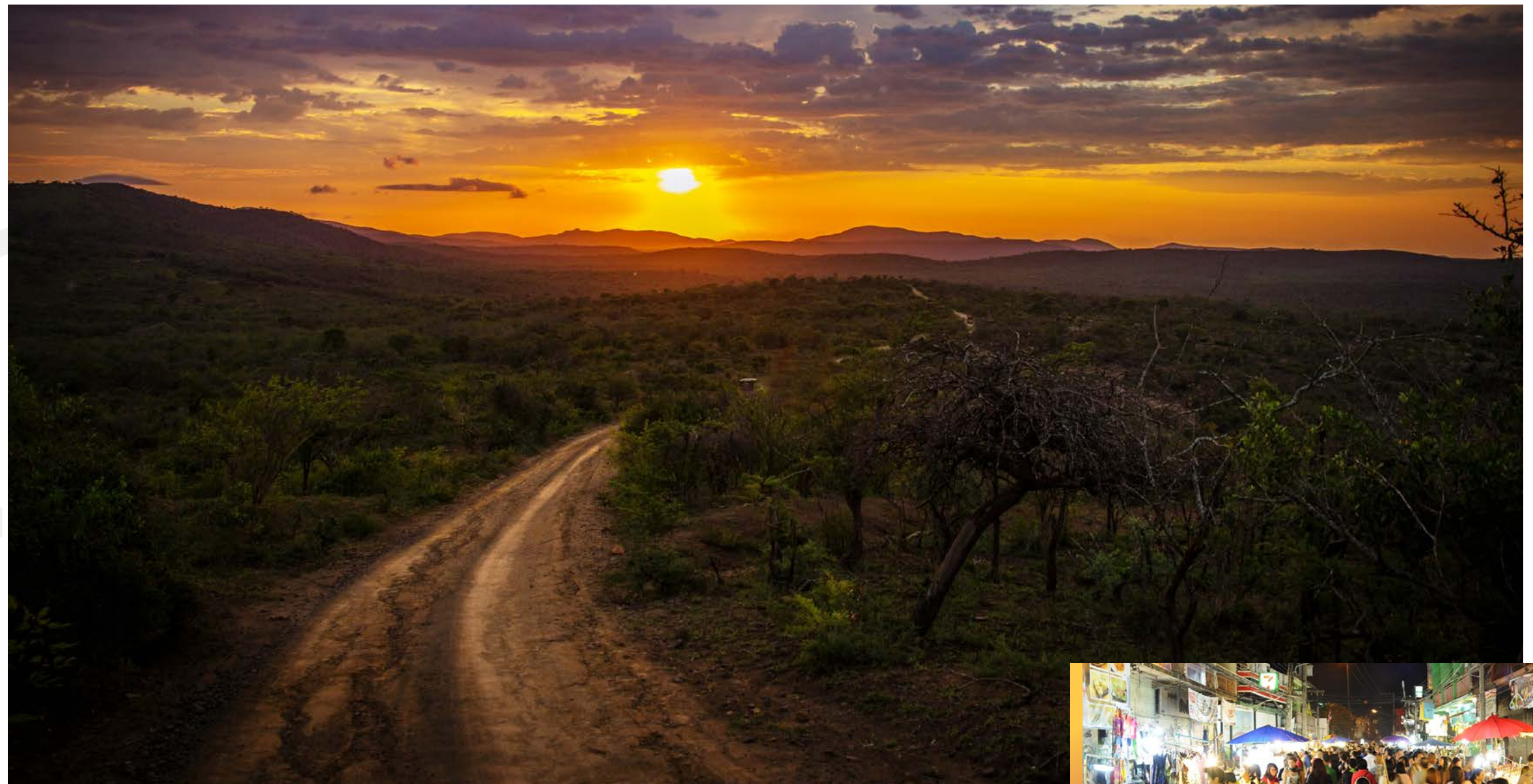
I looked at Benson who was sitting beside me as we jolted our way along the seemingly never-ending road. My hands itched on the steering wheel as my insides were being shaken by the northern Kenyan “road.” Benson, however, had a smile from ear to ear.

“How does this compare to your regular ride?” I asked. His “regular ride” to the unreached tribe he worked among was on top of a cattle truck sitting on the iron beams over the cargo bay for eight hours. “I feel like I’m flying,” he responded, with the smile firmly in place.

Benson was one of many Kenyan missionaries I had the opportunity to train in the years we served in Kenya. Our focus was on the unreached peoples... but our strategy to reach them was to prepare the African churches to send their own missionaries. Benson was not “reaching his own people.” He was, and is, truly a missionary... reaching out to a tribe that does not have the Gospel... a tribe with a completely different language and culture than his own.

That ride with Benson was 17 years ago... and he and his family, and his church as a whole, are still committed and engaged in establishing the church among these people so different from themselves.

Our mission is to take the Church to where it is not... while helping others to do the same. The latter phrase is not of lesser value. It reflects our heart to see the Church around the world play its part in transforming their communities and in reaching the unreached. I see this being played out in the ministries



of Bethany missionaries the world over.

GHANA: Jeff has had more than 3,000 pastors and church leaders in Ghana, from many denominations, go through his Awaken to the World program, showing them the need, and their responsibility, to be engaged in reaching the unreached.

SLOVENIA: Chris and Sabina serve faithfully in Slovenia, which has only 1,100 Evangelical believers. While pastoring in the capital city, they began to focus on bringing healing and unity to the church across the nation. They know that only a unified Church can reach the neighboring Balkan region, which remains one of the most unreached places in the world.

FRANCE: While visiting in France, Grayling told me, “Impact is now being felt across Marseille.” He was referencing the multiple churches who have been encouraged in their ministries and purposes through the partnership of our team.

MEXICO: Recently I traveled in the mountains of Mexico with Bethany missionaries, Lowell & Sheri. The van was full of Mexican believers from various churches, and we were heading for their monthly outreach among an unreached Indian people group. Lowell and Sheri have been going to this village for nine years, always taking along Mexican believers. They have literally been taking the church to where it is not... so the Mexican church can gain a vision and capacity, to play their part in the Great Commission.

Across the world, Bethany workers engage unreached people groups, but also work closely with the local Church to see them become committed to and effective in reaching unreached peoples. The Great Commission will only be completed if we, as the Church globally, do it together.



DAN GERMO

International Director of Bethany Gateways



STEPPING INTO THE UNKNOWN



Students in Edward's school.

Edward Jesudhas could not believe what he was hearing! Over and over, the Lord was challenging him to leave behind his ministry of 18 years and go out in faith to start all over again. Hadn't he already done this once before?

As a young man, he had left family and friends to become a missionary in the north of India. He had also stepped out in faith at that time, but that was when he was single and responsible for only himself. Now, he had a wife and two teenagers who relied on him for support and guidance. Would they agree to support his vision? Would they think that he was chasing the wind on a misguided venture?

Through extended prayer and discussions, every member of his family joined Edward's new faith journey. They moved to a newer, growing part of New Delhi, which is a city of 19 million souls with large numbers of devotees of almost every religion imaginable. However, Edward and his family had one primary people group in mind to focus on: the Chamar. The Chamar are a very large "scheduled caste" (i.e. low caste) in India of almost 50 million people, primarily Hindu. Edward's goal was to first plant a church among the Chamar, and then, to train missionaries that would be sent to plant more churches among this unreached people group.

The first part of Edward's vision is on the way to being fulfilled. He has filled his living room with so many people that it's now standing room only! He spends a great deal each day visiting and praying for his flock of newly disciplined members. He often calls them while stuck in traffic in Delhi's famous gridlocked roads in order to pray and encourage them.

He has now opened his missionary training school with a very modest enrollment of 3 young men who are training in a con-

verted two-bedroom apartment. They will graduate in a few months and then will be sent to pioneer the planting of new churches. A new class of students will then be brought in. Edward is hoping for a dozen new students! As you can see from the attached photo, the classroom is already tight with just a teacher and three students. When we asked Edward how he was going to fit 9 more students into the classroom, he smiled broadly and quipped, "This is India! We'll figure it out."

Edward represents the face of men and women who are stepping out in faith to help accomplish the extension of the Kingdom of God among the unreached. Bethany is involved in financially supporting the efforts of faithful and faith-filled men like Edward and his family in their efforts.

TIM FREEMAN

Executive Vice President for Bethany International

AN INVENTOR LEAVES THE LEGACY OF TIME, TALENT, AND TREASURE

Russ Solheim loved to invent. He came to Bethany during its early years and used his skills to create products that supported the ministry. As Bethany's resident engineer, he designed the Lefse Grills that eventually saw 250,000 manufactured and sold to support missions!

For nineteen years, he worked at AMC/Chrysler and was noted as an outstanding engineer because of his development of labor saving tools that made the production line more efficient. Russ had five patents to his name. His latest patent, which he

completed in his nineties, had a new blade design that could be used on a flying car that he was developing. He was on the front page of the Racine Journal Times and the local CBS station in August 2015 with his invention.

Russ chose to include Bethany in his estate so that in his going home to the Lord, he could leave behind a gift that would enable the work of the ministry to grow. Often an estate gift is the largest contribution that people can make to the ministry of their choice. By including Bethany in his will, Russ left a lasting legacy as people who never have heard of Christ will hear the Gospel for the first time.

If you would like to learn more about how you can remember Bethany in your will or through a trust, please contact David Yerry who can assist you in the process. You can reach David at david.yerry@bethfel.org or by phone at (704) 236-1511).

RANDY DIRKS

Vice President of Advancement at Bethany International



Left: Al Linder and Al Palmquist building lefse grills invented by Russ.

Below: Photo of Russ Solheim in 2017.





HOW TO **REACH** A NATION FOR CHRIST

& The Seven Stages of Engagement

Bethany International sent its first missionaries to work among the unreached in the late 1940s. Seventy-two (72) years later, more than a thousand missionaries have been trained and sent and thousands of national missionaries have joined them. Today we are helping to make disciples of Jesus Christ among 269 unreached people in 70 countries, and our global team of Bethany and national missionaries have adopted 239 more. It is hard work, but rewarding! These remaining places where the Church is not found are the darkest and hardest places to reach.

Through the years we have identified seven distinct stages of engagement. It is a systematic ministry cycle that begins with the adoption of an unreached people group, then the placement of missionaries, the planting of churches, and prayerfully completing with the now-reached people group being strong in the Lord and sending their own missionaries to other unreached groups.

The **Seven Stages of Effective Engagement** come to life through transformational life stories (some names had to be changed because of the sensitive nature of the ministries that we highlight). I hope you enjoy reading about them!

THE 7 STAGES OF ENGAGEMENT

STAGE 1

Adopt People Group

Prayerfully research and map unreached people groups, area by area, resulting in the ADOPTION of specific UPGs. Missionary candidates are selected, trained and readied to go.



Myanmar (Burma) is a Buddhist country of 54,773,000 people with 49 unreached people groups and some of the most inaccessible tribes in the entire region. The Burmese, with 32 million people, are the primary ethnic group with only one Christian for every 300 people. Much work remains to be done.

Missionaries into Myanmar are engaging 16 new unreached people groups in addition to the groups they are already reaching. This added commitment required much prayer, discussion, and research before the groups were finalized. Our part is helping students be trained as missionaries.

In order to engage unreached peoples, a special type of pioneer evangelist needs to be raised up - those who are able to endure hardship and are gifted in language, culture and boldness to preach the Gospel. Graduates are sent in teams to engage UPGs as part of Engage500. New workers are beginning preparation to reach these targeted groups with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

STAGE 2

Arrive On Site

Missionaries ARRIVE on site to begin the challenge of language and culture learning, as well as the process of developing relationships with the local people.

The process of initial engagement happens in field after momentum builds. About a thousand workers are in training throughout Bethany partner schools at any one time, and they are being deployed in record numbers to the unreached. And yet much work remains to be done if we are to engage a total of 500 UPGs by the year 2020.

One such effort is being undertaken in Muslim areas of the country of Ethiopia. In one very practical training program, workers are trained for weeks at a time, and then sent back into their own unreached Muslim people group to begin work in evangelism. This cycle repeats itself several times over the course of two years. Once graduates are cleared to become a fulltime church planter, they are given support for their pioneer ministry.



In the photo below, a team of Ethiopian church planters prays in a very resistant Muslim area before being stationed there to plant a church. Pray for workers like these who are willing to endure much hardship for the sake of the Gospel. May God give them success as the fruit of their labors!

STAGE 3

Begin Discipling

People begin to come to Christ when the UPG and the DISCIPLESHIP process begins.

New churches among unreached people groups are seldom planted quickly and easily. Most often they come into being as the result of intense efforts



over a period of several years. Spiritual warfare can be quite intense in what we call "Stage 3", where the worker begins to reach out to the surrounding communities and people begin to come to the Lord. At first it may be only a family or two who come to Christ and there might be much resistance against those who first follow the

Lord in the new area. The pioneer worker's challenge is two-fold: first, to disciple the new believers; and second, to encourage them to reach out to others so that a church can eventually be planted.

There may be a number of new believers under the discipling care of the missionary before a church is organized. And churches in a new culture might even need to look quite different from the churches the missionary is accustomed to in his own culture, especially in areas where there is a great deal of persecution.

New believers have come to Christ and are being disciplined. After several lessons they have decided to take steps to be baptized. The church will be organized once the new believers reach a point where they understand the roles and responsibilities needed to sustain church life and ministry.

STAGE 4

Establish Church

An indigenous (local) CHURCH is established.

Jesus said, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I with them." (Matthew 18:20 NIV). When can we say a church has been planted in the new soil of the unreached people group? The size of the church is not the only issue. According to Matthew 18:20 Jesus will be present even in the smallest of congregations! But it is important that the new church has local leadership, is able to care for one another, including taking care of its own finances, and is able to take the Gospel to others, thus growing in both depth of faith and in numbers.

A basic definition of a church might be stated as: "people committed to Jesus, committed to each other, and committed to taking the Good News about Jesus to others. Certainly this should be the goal of every pioneer worker, to take the Church to where it's not.

The church in the photo to the right was planted by missionaries who cautiously nurtured the congregation, developed local leadership, and helped train them in how to reach out to others around them. The church members themselves, and not the missionaries, took responsibility for the vitality of their church. They built their church building with their own hands using funds they raised for that purpose. It continues to be a thriving church today!



STAGE 5

Plant Other Churches

The indigenous church begins to PLANT other churches (demonstrating that the Gospel has taken firm root among the people).

The Church is a family. Like the human family, the Church is designed by God to reproduce. Churches that do not reproduce will eventually die.

The Church in the photo to the left is not the first church planted by the Indian missions organization that birthed it. It is not the 10th or even the 100th. The Bethany partner that planted this Church has a vision to plant many churches throughout the unreached villages of India. They have a desire to multiply and they relentlessly pursue their goal to plant many churches.



Recently, one of their leaders stated the goal that within the next year he wanted each of their churches to at least plant one additional church. This is the evidence of the vitality of this church movement! Once the indigenous (local) church begins to plant other churches, it's a demonstration that the Word of God has taken deep root among the local people. This Church takes up offerings from each and every member that goes towards expanding their reach into the surrounding villages and even into far flung areas in the country of India. It's great having partners with such amazing vision and commitment!

STAGE 6

Multiply Churches

Church MULTIPLICATION becomes a reality as more and more churches are planted.

Church multiplication is taking place in some of the most inhospitable corners of the globe. The photo shows a nomadic Gabbra man in Northern Kenya who heard the Gospel for the first time and joyfully accepted Christ at the end of the conversation! This simple way of sharing the Gospel with others and discipling them is the heart of this church planting movement.

In the year 2009 alone the disciple making movement this evangelist is part of saw 400 new churches planted, many of them among nomads! These new churches need both spiritual and material strengthening. The area they're planted in is semi-arid and the people are poor in many ways. The ministry is continually encouraging and training not only their new believers but also their church planters. Recently they have asked Bethany to also train them in specialized agricultural methods that work in semi-arid conditions like the one in this photo.

Church multiplication depends on several simple, replicable factors, such as a willingness to sacrifice, a commitment to intense prayer, to fervent evangelism, simple discipleship methods, and local leadership, often unpaid. It's amazing to see this type of growth taking place in otherwise inhospitable environments!



STAGE 7

Send Missionaries

The Gospel grows among this group to the extent that they begin to SEND their own missionaries to other unreached people groups around them.



The Gospel first came to the Ethiopian Kambata people in the 1920s, and the church grew tremendously during the Italian occupation of World War II. The Kambata are now 93% Christian and are very passionate about missions. Bethany's affiliation with the Kambata, in fact, came through their desire to start a missionary training program, which they call the EKSM (Kale Heywet School of Missions).

This photo shows students from the first graduating class of the School of Missions. At one point more than 90% of all of their graduates were either serving as missionaries to the unreached inside the country of Ethiopia, or serving in surrounding nations such as Sudan, Zambia, and even as far as Pakistan and China. Several graduates have served unto death, either by sickness or by suffering, and such is their passion to take God's word to others.

God's dream, and our dream, is that people from every nation, tribe, people and language will come to the Lord in great numbers, as the Kambata have, and will catch a vision for ministry to other unreached peoples!

Conclusion

It is one thing to ADOPT an unreached people group, but then the hard work of selecting, training, deploying and supporting missionaries begins.

On their part, the new missionary not only perseveres through training and saying goodbye to family, but then has to be planted into new, often very foreign soil. Then begins the challenging task of becoming comfortable with the language and culture of the engaged people group.

If all that a missionary wants to do is to become comfortable living among a new people group, then that missionary will far fall short of God's plan for the expansion of his Kingdom. Once there, and once functional in language and culture, the missionary embarks on the hardest take of all: convincing people of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, bringing them together with other new believers, discipling them, organizing the Church, and then growing the new church into a multiplying, missions-minded church that will reproduce and grow.

This is Engage500. It's a goal, it's a process, it's a commitment. Nothing less will bring people out of darkness into the light of God's glorious Son. To Him be all the praise and glory.

TIM FREEMAN

Executive Vice President for Bethany International



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