



Preparing to Serve: Training for Cross-Cultural Mission.

Harley, David (1995). California: William Carey Library. 156pp.

The book is about training missionaries in the Two-Thirds World for ministry across cultures due to the "rapid growth of the missionary movement" (p. 5). Dr Harley holds a strong view that missionaries should receive training before proceeding to their respective fields for the benefit of the "well-being of the missionary candidates and their families and for the effectiveness of their future ministry" (p. vii). His stance is grounded on his 15 years of experience as a Missions educator at the All Nations Christian College in the United Kingdom, his observation and research on a number of missionary training centres in Brazil, Korea, Nigeria, India, Kenya and Singapore.

The major portion of the content is spent on discussing what constitutes a balanced training programme for missionaries. It begins with the advice that theological education is necessary but not sufficient for preparing individuals for service in another culture (p. vii). Therefore, Dr Harley's proposed programme for training missionaries advocates an inclusion of both theological foundations and professional training to ensure that the very best and the "fully qualified missionaries" are sent out or else, anything less will be "unfair to the national churches and dishonouring to the Lord" (p. 7). It is appropriate that the author did not begin the programme design with the listing of courses but the definition of the term, "missionary." Its definition of "one who is sent" can mean all Christians who are called to be witnesses, short-term missionaries, long-term missionaries or tentmakers and these different classifications of missionaries call for different programme decisions and approaches. This information is helpful in guiding missionary candidates to select the "right" training package to match their calling and to caution training institutions to recognise their strength in preparing candidates for different mission professions. For example, those who sense the

calling to be tentmaker are likely to enroll in an institution whose philosophy, focus and experience is on training lay professionals.

In his research on the effective training programme for missionaries, the data collected from the six training centres (Chapter 8) indicate that developing "spiritual character" ranks top priority, interpersonal relationship ranks second with developing "ministry effectiveness" in the fifth position! The significant findings remain a tough call and challenge for trainers and institutions to accomplish beyond the explicit programme to "produce" a "wholistic" missionary. Perhaps, the criteria on "Choosing the Right Students" (Chapter 6) may help to bridge the gap by inviting the church to co-operate. Church leaders and members of the missions committee can use the criteria to prayerfully select and support the potential missionary candidates for cross-cultural mission training. In the process, candidates who fall short of the expectations may receive further counsel from the church.

In Chapter 5, the focus is on trainers but the author's belief that effective missions educators are those who have "served as missionaries themselves can teach with authenticity, because they are teaching from experience" (p. 48) has limitations. The missionary's teaching may be confined to his or her realm of experience and geographical location. Secondly, the experience may not be specific to student's field of service. It is also worth considering educators who are trained in missions, cross-cultural studies and who have lived and served in multicultural settings to provide effective missionary training.

The book may be written for those who are responsible for missionary training but the implications are not limited to the target audience. An understanding of the book will enable mission pastors, church leaders and members of the missions committee to have a greater awareness of what cross-cultural mission involves and how they may guide and nurture their missionary interns. The complexity of training missionaries discussed by the author may serve as documentation to persuade churches who plan to shoulder their own training to rethink their decision by evaluating their resources and capacity to handle the enormous responsibility. Missionary candidates may use the literature to assess their readiness for training for the work of

God's mission in a foreign land.

(Review by Dr Ng Peh Cheng)

Chapel Notes

Last Wednesday, Rev Dr Peter Tow, a missionary with the Global Missions Partnership spoke on Psalm 96: 1-10, "Declare His Glory Among the Nations."

Rev Dr Tow, who has served as both a pastor as well as missionary, has a burden for the Ukraine and for the work of the Gospel globally. He is involved in an area of ministry which many in Singapore know very little about. He reminded us that out of 6 billion people in the world, 2 billions are Christians, 2 billions are unevangelized and 2 billions remain unreached. With the introduction, he outlined three reasons for sharing the Gospel with the unsaved people of the world.

1. *God is Lord and wants the whole world to worship Him (96:1,2a).* The three attributes of God that are vitally connected with missions are His power, His Love and His Wrath.
2. *Man needs to be saved from sin and eternal punishment (96:10b,3b).* Man's greatest need is to receive God's forgiveness, love and power.
3. *Christ commissioned us to do the work of global missions (96: 2b,3,10a).* When Jesus was on earth, he issued the three basic commands of

Come (Evangelism),
Follow (Discipleship) and
Go (Missions).

In response, we are to bring the Gospel to the three kinds of people.

- People who are same like us (E1)
- People who are similar to us (E2)
- People who are radically different from us (E3)

And we can reach them for Christ by being a partner in Missions: Pray, Give and Go.

In conclusion, Rev Dr Tow shared about his mission work in Ukraine and a quotation from William Carey, "ATTEMPT GREAT THINGS FOR GOD, EXPECT GREAT THINGS FROM GOD."

Chapel speaker today (10 July) will be a

Hymn Chapel, led by Dr Quek Swee Hwa. Dr Philip Satterthwaite, who has just returned from sabbatical is unwell and will speak at a later chapel.

NEWS BITS

1. **CONDOLENCE.** The staff of BGST would like to extend our deepest condolence to Mr Yam Keng Mun on the demise of his father last Sunday. May the peace of God be with him and his family.
2. **BIBLE LANDS STUDY TOUR.** Please note the departure date has now been changed to allow for those who are finishing their O & A Levels to participate in this Tour. The new dates are: depart Singapore, Friday, Nov 29, 2230 hrs; return Wednesday, Dec 11, 1520 hrs. The extension tour dates will be adjusted accordingly. Brochures giving itineraries and cost are available from Serene Woon. The closing date for registration is July 31, 2002.
3. **EASTER APPEAL.** To date we have just crossed the halfway mark, with \$58,840 from 41 donors. Please continue to pray for the operational expenses of BGST.
4. **NEW TESTAMENT GREEK: BASIC RESEARCH TOOLS AND METHODS (BG214).** The registration for this course stands at 52 and Dr Quek has decided to run two sessions. The Saturday session stands at 5.30-7.00 pm and the Thursday session will commence on July 18 from 10.00-11.30 am. Those who missed the first class can still attend, but they must either view the video-tape of the first lecture **before** attending the second lecture. After the second lecture students will have to wait for the next time this course will be offered.

Wishing you God's blessings on your Birthday!



Mrs Lucy Lim 9/7
Mr Ho Chee Kiong 10/7
Mr Peter Jamir 10/7
Mrs Jerusha Ang 12/7
Mr Kok Kar Wing 13/7
Mrs Lee Siang Ju 13/7
Miss Evelyn Tan Yee Ling 14/7