

The Strategy of Co-operation for Missiological Education in the Two-Thirds World

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I. Introduction

Since the late twentieth century the dominant power of western countries in missions has weakened, and the number of Western missionaries has diminished along with this trend. On the other hand, the number of missionaries from the Two-Thirds world has increased very fast. This points out that missiological education in those countries has become more and more important in relation to mobilizing missionary potential. If missiological education fails, not only will the resources of missions dry up but also the consciousness of missions will stagnate. Missiological education, therefore, must reflect the need of times as well as the consciousness of educatee for the fulfillment of the Great Commission (Matt. 28:18ff; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8). These contexts indicate that Christian educators have to recognize correctly God's redemptive history and opportunity with a new paradigm from missiological perspective.

Secularization and other religions have been emerged very strongly in modern society as well. Secularization is the result of the Enlightenment and modern technology. It has shaken traditional values with increases in urbanization and individualism. The world's population in cities are growing rapidly. In religions, Islam has spread the sphere of its influence to western countries in particular. The New Age movement impacted young people living in modern society.

The Presidents and Academic Deans (PAD) track held during July 1-3, 1997 in South Africa addressed very accurately the problems about the trends of

modern society.

The content of ministry training must uphold the uniqueness of Jesus Christ and the necessity of personal faith in Him as Lord and Saviour. This is especially imperative in the light of the increasing pluralistic environment which has been brought about by the resurgence of non-Christian religions hostile to the advance of the gospel, by the erosion of historic Christianity in the West, and by the increasing prevalence of secularism almost everywhere.¹⁾

These kinds of phenomena have raised challenges for mission educators so that they may deeply consider the opportunity of new strategy through “empathetic and creative study, interaction and response.”²⁾ Accordingly, educators in theological schools should think about concentrating on creative and cooperate study in both home and foreign mission strategy with all Christian institutions and people who are involved in missions.

Erwin McManus, a futurist and urbanologist as well as pastor in Los Angeles, is indicating the radical changes of culture, “from Christian worldview to pluralistic worldviews, from western influence to Eastern influence, from secular debate to syncretistic dialogue, from homogeneous to multicultural, from suburbs/local to cities/global, from word/books to images/films.”³⁾ These contexts require a new kind of education and cooperation with Christian educational institutions, and ask the students of theological schools to have various competencies to be effective in the new century, and demand the students’ personal and spiritual life in theological training programs.⁴⁾

Fortunately, modern technology can be a new opportunity for missiological education as well as mission strategy, if it is used as the instrument of service for Christian community and is the means for preparing and training the

1) Kenneth Mulholand, “Global Consultation on World Evangelization 1997: Presidents & Academic Deans Declaration” In *the Occasional Bulletin*, Vol. I (Winter, 1998), p. 1.

2) J. Dudley Woodberry, “Past Symbols of Interacting Theory, Reflection and Experience” In *Missiological Education for the 21st Century* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1977), p. 7.

3) Erwin R. McManus, “The Changing Rules of Ministry Preparation” In *the Occasional Bulletin*, Vol. 13 (Spring 2000), p. 9.

4) Ebbie Smith, “Four Dimensions of Leadership Training” In *the Occasional Bulletin*, vol. II (Summer 1999), p. 4.

students in theological schools. In terms of theological/missiological education, cooperative ministry among churches, mission agencies and theological schools is needed for an effective strategy in missions.

Particularly, theological relativism and religious pluralism have not been included in the basic doctrinal principles of Christianity. Both are diminishing the ardour of missions that evangelical Christianity must proclaim Jesus Christ as the unique way of salvation Acts 4:12 and John 14:6.⁵⁾ In other words, evangelical theologians and missiologists need to reemphasize the biblical and theological education for missions with the desire of salvation.

Education for missions is a specific area in which all related Christian communities must work together and cooperate with one another. The education program of a theological school alone is not sufficient in order to satisfy the necessity of diverse mission and specialized ministry. Education in theological schools must be cooperative with other institutions and agencies in relation to wholistic education.

In order to maximize the effect of missiological education, a “tri-cooperation system” must be applied for missionaries. Paul Beals points out that in the twenty first century, mission board, theological school and mission agency must cooperate with one another for the effective education of mission.⁶⁾ Christian educators must take into account the newly deployed situations and opportunities within the recent stream of the world mission from missiological perspective.

People who are involved in three institutions--mission board, theological school and mission agency--must have their own ministries in the new century while they recognize a new understanding to interdependency, commitment and synergy effect for carrying out God’s redemptive mandate “to make disciples of

5) Acts 4:12 "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

John 14:6 "Jesus answered, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

6) Paul Beals, "The Triad for Century 21" In *the Occasional Bulletin*, Vol. II (Spring 1999), p. 1.

all nations and to teach them to be obedient in all matters Jesus commanded.”⁷⁾

If they find out their common purpose in each ministry such as “the Great Commission”, they have to cooperate properly with one another for it.

2. The Role of Mission Board (Home and Foreign)

Mission will not proceed smoothly without the support of local churches. In other words, the power of local churches is the key to world mission. Because the spiritual power of prayer for missions, not just financial ability, comes from local churches. The church is the source of spiritual power. Each one will pray according to the information acquired from the mission field and, at the same time, for financial support. The cooperative power of local churches will definitely not only strengthen the world mission but also manifest a tremendous potentiality for the evangelization of the world. The mission board of each denomination is a united body of local churches. Accordingly, mission boards must support actively the mission programs of local churches. As a result, a local church can excavate human resources that each denomination needs for the program, and also can have opportunity, simultaneously, to expand mission consciousness to her congregation.

It will be difficult to expect the continuous mobilization of missions unless mission boards support the mission program of local churches in terms of symbiosis. The mission board should make an effort to establish the cooperative system with local churches from a missiological point of view. For example, the mission board can share lots of information and resources about missions with a local church so that she may utilize them for her mission training program. This will be one of strategies to ensure long term missionaries who are the result of cooperation between the mission board and a local church. The mission board of each denomination must remember that church history indicates, “Where mission consciousness extinguished, the church

7) Edgar J. Elliston, ed. “Moving Forward in Missiological Education” In *Teaching Them Obedience in All Things Equipping for the 21st Century* (Pasadena, Calif.: William Carey Library, 1999), p. 240.

dies.”⁸⁾

3. The Role of Theological School

The most basic purpose of school is to educate students. And the important factor of effective education is in the right communication between educator and educatee. Teachers should teach what students need on the basis of the teacher's knowledge and experience. Good education is closely related to good communication, and good communication will come out of good cooperation between the teacher and the learner.

The cooperation of theological schools with local churches is indispensable for missiological education. Theological school cannot exist without the cooperation of local churches. One of main functions of a theological school is to supply theological basis so that the church may grow soundly. If so, the programs in theological school must be taken into consideration with the context of local churches. At the same time, the school must develop the programs in which local churches can participate together. It would be called the “integrative work” between the school and a local church with the same purpose, “the evangelization of the world.” In relation to the function of theological school, Christian educators must listen carefully to Ebbie Smith's suggestion, “Let the training program center on the skills needed to serve in the church. Another channel can be developed to produce the scholars the Church needs.”⁹⁾

The “structured communication” of Christianity itself is three-fold.¹⁰⁾ In other words, the mission board of each denomination (the united body of local churches), the theological school to be in charge of education in the first line, and the mission agency must share resources and information that they have in order to accomplish the same purpose effectively through active communication

8) Wilbert R. Shenk, “Toward a Global Church History” In *International Bulletin*, Vol. 20 (April 1996), p. 54.

9) Ebbie Smith, “Four Dimensions of Leadership Training,” p. 5.

10) Paul Beals, “The Triad for Century 21,” p. 3.

with one another. This structured communication will be active when the leaders of churches and mission agencies recognize how a theological school let students prepare for their future ministry, including home and foreign missions, how the leaders will have concern with its curriculum, and how they support the management of a denominational theological school.

One of strategies for this purpose is that workers committed to the evangelization of the world in a theological school and professors who are in charge of missions visit together local churches regularly. While they have fellowship and communicate regarding missions with the pastors of local churches, they may enlarge the width of understanding for missions with one another in terms of cooperative work through visitation. As mission mobilizers also meet mission administrators, professors and students in theological schools, they must show deep concern for recruitment in all of them. This model of cooperation will improve the morale of para-churches working in campus, and will have a positive effect on missionary candidates in theological schools.

Extension programs for pastors and church leaders will be another dynamic strategy for missiological education if the resources that theological schools have are used for the programs with the participation of mission board. This project would be a long-term and an ideal cooperative system by theological schools for the future missions.

For the higher education of career missionaries, for example, four theological seminaries in Korea-- Asian Center for Theological Studies and Mission(ACTS), Chongsin Theological Seminary, Jangsin Theological Seminary, Hapsin Theological Seminary--have offered a "Missionary Extension Program" as a type of non-formal education. This program would be called "TEE"(Theological Education by Extension). From a missiological point of view, however, it is better called "MEE"(Missiological Education by Extension). The professors of those seminaries have taught courses for the Korean missionaries on the mission field. This program will be activated when the mission board positively cooperates and participates in it. Missiological

education is to be extended not “on the campus” but “off the campus”, utilizing modern technology and various methodologies to Christian leaders as well as missionaries unable to attend a resident campus.¹¹⁾

The pastors of local churches need to know who the missionary candidates in their mission board are, if they have the heart to cooperate for the sake of the world mission, and mission candidates in theological schools need to be informed to the local churches of their own denomination as well. Mission center in theological schools must be related to a “three-fold structure.” When they are working actively and cooperatively, they will bring on a great synergy effect to the people who belong to each structure.

A theological school must become an integrative organization for the Kingdom of God in terms of missiological education. From this perspective, the Great Commission should be the common element in all theological studies. God’s redemptive history is flowing in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament God worked with His redemptive initiative in the history of Israel, His chosen nation. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ has elected His disciples for accomplishing God’s salvation to the end of the world. This mandate should be integrated in all areas of theological studies; exegetical, historical, systematic, philosophical, ministerial, and so on.¹²⁾ In other words, theology and missions including evangelism are not separated subjects in the curriculum of theological schools.

From a missiological point of view, it is the great plan of God as revealed from Genesis to Revelation that furnishes both the context for our present evangelistic and missionary endeavors and the content of what we are to teach in our efforts to “disciple the nations.”¹³⁾

From a theological point of view and in relation to theological foundation for missions, Hesselgrave emphasizes that theological schools “should return

11) Byron Klaus, “The Integration of Seminary Curriculum and Missions Vision” In *The Occasional Bulletin*. Vol. II(Summer 1999), p. 2.

12) Ibid.

13) David J. Hesselgrave, “The Role of the Academy in Current Evangelical Malaise” In *Trinity World Forum* (Winter 1995), p. 5.

biblical theology to a primary place in the collective thinking and overall program of the academy.”¹⁴⁾

For the fulfillment of the Great Commission, first of all, the integrated contents of theology and missions must be contained in the curriculum. It would be called the cooperative and integrated work of curriculum in theological schools. The presupposition of successful application is a shift of paradigm among professors for God’s redemptive work. Ultimately it will be difficult to find out the value of existence in the curriculum of theological schools unless the essence of missions and evangelism is included in all courses. From the perspective of missiological education, all courses in theological schools should be cooperative programs for saving souls in all nations by God’s grace through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Theology and missiology must be applied together in the curriculum under the same purpose of the world evangelization as recognizing the necessity of new cooperation in the new millennium for the glory of God. Theology has reflected the cultures of time and existed for missions. Theology must serve for the ministry of church. In this sense, missiological education must be in the center of theological curriculum. Missiological factors are in theology and theological factors are in missiology even though they are not synonymous. If missiological education loses its theological basis, there is a danger of it falling into just social science and cultural anthropology as practical studies. In other words, missiology as a part of theology should not be neglected and even in missiology right evangelical theology of mission should be established through continuous biblical studies. Accordingly theology and missiology are cooperative studies in theological schools.

4. The Role of Mission Agency

Mission agencies have a lot of opportunity not only to manage but also to supervise individuals as well as teams in various patterns since short-term

14) Ibid., p. 4.

missions have become popular with college students and young adults. Mission agencies can be a bridge between short-term missionaries and the mission field, and give efficient information related to mission journey to the local churches. Mission agencies are able to provide the cutting edge information regarding world mission to missionary candidates. All of them can serve as a medium for mobilizing missions.

Even though the history of Korean mission is short, for example, the power of mission in the Korean churches has increased with the development of the economy and technology. The number of mission agencies alone recorded in Korea Mission Handbook(1998-2000) has increased and is worthy of close attention when compared with previous years. This book reports that there are 16 mission agencies that belong to denominations and 75 interdenomination mission agencies.¹⁵⁾ It means that the areas of mission education are widen as the characteristics and roles of mission agencies are various.

Advantages and strengths that mission agencies have can be utilized for missiological education in theological schools. Theological schools must give opportunity to missionaries to have lectures. From a long-term perspective, mission agencies can exhume the potential human resources for missions as they participate in lectures.

Research by mission agencies for missionary work must be preceded by digging out the potential chance in cross-cultural ministry for the unreached people. For instance, mission agencies must study continuously to make the most of “Nonresident missionaries” for effective ministry in the “Restricted Access Countries.” With this study they should reevaluate the types of ministry on the mission field in terms of missiological education for mission candidates in theological schools. Mission agencies to have the closest communication with the mission field need to study the possibility of missions and educate missionaries according to the development of modern technology, the internet in

15) *Korea Mission Handbook* (Seoul: Global Missionary Fellowship Publishing Co., 1998), pp. 5-13

particular. Mission agencies can help the students in theological schools prepare for their future ministry as the agencies share information and resources that they have acquired from their experience with career missionaries.

5. Proposals for Missiological Education

It is not too much to say that the future of missiological education depends on how mission boards, theological schools and mission agencies effectively sustain a cooperative system. For this purpose, there are some suggestions. First, these three institutions must try to maintain a relationship through effective communication to be mutually beneficial. They need to encourage their own mission programs with one another, not from competitive relation but from symbiotic cooperation. If the cooperative relationship among these three institutions is established well, synergistic and pervasive effects will come about much more than what people expect for missiological education.

Second, as the senior and mission pastors of local churches try to participate actively in various kinds of mission conferences and seminars, they must inspire mission consciousness in their congregation. They can lead church members toward a mission-oriented church through worship services to dedicate themselves to missions. Education for missions “involves a life-long commitment to learning and growing”¹⁶⁾ in the lives of both the church leaders and members.

Third, theological schools must open the door to the senior pastors of local churches and the representatives of mission agencies so that they may have special lectures or seminars in relation to ministry training. This will not only encourage students who are concerned about missions and missionary candidates in particular but also have the opportunity to motivate other students for future missions. Furthermore, by taking advantage of lectures and seminars, a mission agency will have the chance to communicate with students and to inform the

16) Lois McKinney, “Educating for Missions: Holistic Perspectives On a Global Task.” Paper. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Illinois, U.S.A.

tidings of mission field to them in terms of mission mobilization.

Fourth, theological schools as well as local churches must positively introduce mission agencies and institutions to people, and offer an opportunity so that students and congregation members may have relationships with them. If theological schools emphasize academics only, they will lose the reason of being for mission and evangelism. When theological schools inform mission agencies and institutions to their students, they will give opportunities to the students who are interested in mission. Then, they will explore the sort of ministry related to their own spiritual gifts.

Lastly, the national churches of mission field and the sending churches need to have so-called "*Koinonia* mission."¹⁷⁾ What it simply means is that both a national church and a sending church share fellowship with one another in the love of Jesus Christ. *Koinonia* mission can provide missiological education to the congregation of sending church through actual and visible communication with the Christians in the mission field. *Koinonia* mission means not only proclaiming the Good News but also sharing God's grace with brothers and sisters in the receiving church in the love of One Lord. Accordingly, *Koinonia* mission can be divided into two parts; (1) sharing together the grace of God's salvation acquired by confessing that Jesus Christ is one's saviour (Rom. 10:10), (2) sharing together the gifts given by the work of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:4-11). It is a new paradigm for missions in the new millennium.

The Christians who became saints through repentance, forgiveness of sin and faith in Jesus Christ(cf. Romans 5:1-2) must recognize the importance of sharing the love of Christ with others. In order to have communication in terms of the *Koinonia mission* between the receiving and sending churches, the people of God in a country must acknowledge how important prayer is in bestowing God's grace and mercy alike upon His people in other nations. To

17) Chul-Ha Han, "*Koinonia* mission seminar," Paper(Seoul: Asian Center for Theological Studies and Mission, 1999).

be able to have fellowship with the congregation of national church and to pray for them has a positive effect on education for missions, including the sending as well as the receiving church members.

The purpose of missiological education is to help Christians be the disciples of Christ and “to foster an evangelistic and missionary emphasis with a global and multi-cultural perspective in order to equip men and women to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ at home and abroad.”¹⁸⁾ The movement of mission-oriented education based on the Word of God, the full authority of the Bible, must arise first in theological schools. Then, the cooperative structural system of three institutions (mission boards, mission agencies and theological schools) must be established in planning curriculum in terms of the effective strategy for missiological education. Unless the training programs of three institutions are cooperative, they will lose the dynamics for missions. If this cooperative system is successful, it will have a synergy effect on and make a great contribution toward missiological education.

18) Byron Klaus, "The Integration of Seminary Curriculum and Mission Vision," p. 2.

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