

God's Future Mission: Global Missiological Challenges
Toward 2020 and Beyond

Pentecostal European Mission Consultation
Madrid, Spain – October 15, 2018
© Grant McClung¹

We gather in Madrid, Spain in this week of October 15 – 20, 2018 under the umbrella theme, “The Future is Calling.” We are here to focus on “Raising Up the Next Generation,” with the supporting testimony of the Apostle Paul who declared that he was obligated, eager, and empowered (Romans 1.14 – 16).²

My contribution at the outset of this week will be to issue a three-fold call to (1) sanctified *living*, (2) strategic *leading*, and (3) sensitive *listening*; each of them coupled with expectations and descriptions of God's future mission:

1. Sanctified *living* toward the Savior's *manifestation*: God's future mission will be sanctified, spiritized, and scriptural.
2. Strategic *leading* toward sustainable *models*: God's future mission will be strategized, structured, and sustainable.
3. Sensitive *listening* toward surprising *moments*: God's future mission will be spontaneous, sudden, and surprising.

Many in the global Great Commission community may actually be surprised that we are well into the third millennium, moving toward the end of the second decade of the 21st century. Thirty years ago plans were being finalized toward the second International Congress on World Evangelization, “Lausanne II” in Manila (July 1989). The theme at Manila was “Proclaim Christ Until He Comes.” The first world congress had been convened in Lausanne, Switzerland by evangelist Billy Graham 15 years prior to Manila (in July 1974). Graham's closing message in Lausanne marched the delegates into continued enthusiastic world evangelization with his urgent reminder, “The King is Coming!”³

A continuing leadership network was formed under the name, “Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization.” One of the crowning achievements of the congress was *The Lausanne Covenant*, a theological/strategic working document on world evangelization. The closing section, “The Return of Christ,” addressed the preaching of the gospel until the second coming of the Lord:

We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly, in power and glory, to consummate his salvation and his judgment. This promise

¹President of Missions Resource Group (www.MissionsResourceGroup.org) and Missiological Advisor to the World Missions Commission of the Pentecostal World Fellowship (grant.mcclung@gmail.com).

²Unless otherwise indicated, all scriptural citations will be from the New International Version (NIV).

³J.D. Douglas, Editor. *Let The Earth Hear His Voice: International Congress on World Evangelization Lausanne, Switzerland* (World Wide Publications, 1975), p. 1465.

of his coming is a further spur to our evangelism, for we remember his words that the gospel must first be preached to all nations. We believe that the interim period between Christ's ascension and return is to be filled with the mission of the people of God, who have no liberty to stop before the end.⁴

The last twenty years of the 20th century brought about the language of “countdown” and “closure” in world evangelization. Challenges were lifted up toward “The gospel for every person and a church for every people” by the year 2000.⁵ There were predictions, projections, and prognostications providing us with a forecast of what we could expect as we moved closer to the end of the 20th century. After not realizing the completion of world evangelization by the year 2000, the language changed to slogans such as “A.D. 2000 and Beyond.” There was much discussion about the missiological challenges of “the third millennium” of the Christian movement which had arrived.⁶

As our theological/missiological DNA tells us, early Pentecostals were not too keen on discussing future trends and projections. When supernatural phenomena burst on the scene at the Azusa Street revival and numerous locations in 1906, Pentecostals were sure that they were living in and directly experiencing the end-time restoration of New Testament apostolic power.

Signs and wonders were a portent of Christ's imminent return. Everything else was put aside for the urgent business of world evangelization. Scores of Pentecostal missionaries, most of them ill-prepared in language and culture learning, and without adequate financial support, took off for the far-flung corners of the globe, “expecting to remain there until the rapture, which they believed was very near at hand.”⁷ Pentecostal historian Vinson Synan characterized these early evangelists as, “missionaries of the one-way ticket.”⁸ Someone has quipped that the name could be more recently changed to “missionaries of the refundable ticket.”

The eschatological urgency and focus on the task until the coming of the Lord is measured by the frequency of the use of Matthew 24.14 in missions sermons and conferences throughout the Pentecostal movement, even until this day. There, Jesus said, “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Because this verse captured the ethos of Pentecostal mission, missions historian Gary B. McGee chose it to title his history and theology of Assemblies of God world missions (published some 30 years ago in 1986).⁹ More recently, Michael

⁴ Cf. *The Lausanne Covenant* (“Missional Content”) at www.lausanne.org.

⁵ Luis Bush and Beverly Pegues, “Commissioned to the Ends of the Earth,” in *The Move of the Holy Spirit in the 10/40 Window* (YWAM Publishing 1999).

⁶ Grant McClung, “Third Millennium – Third Church,” in McClung, Editor. *Azusa Street and Beyond: Missional Commentary on the Global Pentecostal/Charismatic Movement* (Bridge-Logos Publishing, Revised Edition 2012), pp. 233 – 242. Available online at MissionsResourceGroup.org.

⁷ Donald Gee. *The Pentecostal Movement* (Elim Publications, 1949), p.30.

⁸ Vinson Synan, “Missionaries of the One-Way Ticket,” in Synan, *The Spirit Said 'Grow: The Astounding Worldwide Expansion of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches* (MARC/World Vision International 1992).

Dissanayake has revisited the urgent expectation of the soon coming of the Lord with his insightful and inspirational work with the lead title: *The End*.¹⁰

So here we are in the final quarter of 2018 and not observably at the final culmination of human history. Two thousand years have passed since the day of Christ's ascension and the promise to the disciples that, "This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1.11). We've marked over a century since Azusa Street and moved over forty years since the rallying cry at Lausanne. Thirty years have passed since we were being pointed toward closure by the year 2000. What is our way forward, moving toward 2020 and beyond in God's future mission?

I believe it can be simply stated: "Have a Plan...Hope for the Parousia." Our consultation and congress theme calls us to the future with the model of the Apostle Paul who was obligated, eager, and empowered (Romans 1.14 – 16). In that letter, he also gives us a template for balancing the tension between future planning with the expectation of the imminent coming of the Lord. Twice in the opening chapter of Romans, Paul says he has been praying and planning to visit the believers in Rome (1.10, 13). We should interject here that his prayer was answered but not in the way he expected. Charles Ryrie notes that, "Arrest, trial, two years languishing in prison (Acts 24.27) and shipwreck intervened before Paul's prayer was answered."¹¹

In Romans 8, he evidences an immediate expectation of the Lord's appearing: "We wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies (8.23)...But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently"(8.25). Then, in Romans 13 he handles very practical and basic duties such as abiding lawfully under government authority, paying taxes, and taking care of financial debts. Within a few verses he promises that, "...our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here" (13.11 – 12). He returns to the theme of future planning toward the end of his circular letter, promising to visit them in Rome on his way to Spain (15.23 – 29).

- I. Sanctified *living* toward the Savior's *manifestation*: God's future mission will be sanctified, spirited, and scriptural¹² (1 Thess 5.19 – 24; Joshua 3. 3 – 5; Luke 2.25 – 27; 2 Pet. 3.11 – 14; Titus 2. 12 – 14).

When we say, "The Future is Calling," we can also reverse the order of words and say, "The Calling is the Future." The calling of God pushes and propels the people of God into God's future mission. As God is doing His work in His world, His mighty power is at work in us corporately and individually through the anointing of His Holy Spirit, calling us to be, "...conformed to the likeness of his Son," moving us forward into His future glory (Romans 8.18 – 30).

⁹Gary B. McGee. *This Gospel Shall Be Preached: A History and Theology of Assemblies of God Foreign Missions* (Gospel Publishing House, Volume 1 1986; Volume 2 1989).

¹⁰Michael Dissanayake. *The End: A Personal Journey in Missions in Southern Asia* (Life Centre & Global Impact for Southern Asia Missions 2017); also found at: www.worldagfellowship.org/missions.

¹¹ Charles Caldwell Ryrie. *The Ryrie Study Bible* (Moody Press, 1978), p. 1702.

¹²Note the centrality of Exegesis (Word) and Experience (Spirit) at the heart of McClung's "Pentecostal Missiological Paradigm," McClung *Azusa Street and Beyond*, p.18).

Our theological heritage and experience affirms that this Son of God is Savior, Sanctifier, Spirit Baptizer, Healer, and Coming King! ¹³ We resonate with the revelation of that classic passage on the Second Coming of Jesus Christ our Lord in 1 Thessalonians 4.13 – 17 and consecrate ourselves with the closing verses of that same epistle in 1 Thessalonians 5.19 – 23:

Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil. May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.

I believe it is highly appropriate, even indispensable, for missions leaders to be reminded of sanctified living and personal spiritual growth. It is the Biblical model and expectation. So much of the discussion about the future of world evangelization has to do with knowing facts, statistics, and trends, followed by a call to action according to planned strategies. It is good and necessary to know and do. The triangle of training is only complete, however, when we also experience the *affective* side of learning. This integration is called knowing, doing, and being, with the learning outcome of balancing head, hand, and heart.

There has been a recent growth in missions leadership studies toward spiritual formation in the missions leader. ¹⁴ This is of particular importance to the new generation of millennial missions leaders who are longing for transparency and looking for mentors of integrity. ¹⁵ “Sanctified living toward the Savior's manifestation” calls for a realization that what we *do* grows out of who we *are*.

The first disciples had the distinction of being sent by Jesus with power from Him. This proceeded out of the prior calling to, “...be with him” (Mark 3.13 – 15). God's future mission for both experienced and emerging leaders is an ongoing call to discipleship. It is a commitment to a local church family before it is to a global community. It is internal before it is external. It is private before it is public. It is consecration before commission. It is intimacy with God before initiation of preaching, projects and plans. It is my understanding that Thomas Barratt, the respected apostle of Pentecost to Western Europe, would turn to his wife before moving to the pulpit with a simple question of integrity: “May I preach today?”

We honor the salvation history of a holy God who calls us to holiness and we understand that the future is wedded together with faithfulness. Like the people

¹³Frank D. Macchia, “Theology, Pentecostal,” in Stanley M. Burgess, Editor and Eduard M. Van Der Maas, Associate Editor. *International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Revised and Expanded Edition, Zondervan Publishing, 2002), p. 1140. Also note Donald W. Dayton. *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Scarecrow Press, 1987).

¹⁴See the publications from Missio Nexus (www.missionexus.org) and William Carey Library (www.missionbooks.org). Note also my discussion (p.14) of “Morality [holiness/integrity]” in Grant McClung, “Missional Focus in a Milieu of Multiplicity: A Mental Map for Pentecostal Leaders” in the “Resources” link at www.MissionsResourceGroup.org.

¹⁵See “Mentoring Millenials” in McClung, “Missional Focus ,” pp. 19 – 20.

of God at the crossing of the Jordan into their future, we must experience consecration before executing conquest. Through Joshua, the Lord told them that sanctification prepares for and precedes sending:

When you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God ...you are to move out from your positions and follow it. Then you will know which way to go, since you have never been this way before...Then Joshua told the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do amazing things among you" (Joshua 3.3 – 5).

The tomorrows of the people of God throughout the Old Testament were filled with the "amazing things" of God leading up to the fullness of time when God sent His son. In the opening chapters of Luke's gospel we have the stories of a connected group of consecrated individuals who experienced the work of the Holy Spirit upon and through them.¹⁶ We witness sanctified living toward the Savior's manifestation in the personal life of Simeon. Three times in Luke 2. 25 – 27 we see his lifestyle of holiness and the corresponding work of the Holy Spirit of God upon, in, and through him [italics mine]:

Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was *righteous* and *devout*. He was *waiting* for the consolation of Israel, and *the Holy Spirit was upon him*. It had been *revealed to him by the Holy Spirit* that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. *Moved by the Spirit*, he went into the temple courts.

What were the simple hallmarks of this man used by God? In verse 25, he is described as being [1] "*righteous*," and [2] *devout*." Other versions indicate he was "an upright and God-fearing man" (Weymouth Translation), "a good and God-fearing man" ("Good News for Modern Man: New Testament in Today's English"), and "devoted to the service of God" (Philips Translation). Also, [3] he was "*was waiting* for the consolation of Israel." Other readings indicate he was, "looking for" (American Standard Version), "constantly expecting the Messiah to come" (Living Bible), "One who watched and waited for the restoration of Israel" (New English Bible).

Is there any wonder, then, that the simple, yet profound moving of the Holy Spirit was upon him, speaking to him and moving him with specific guidance? We are mentored and inspired by his lifestyle and consecration as we present ourselves to be moved by the Spirit on mission with God toward 2020 and beyond.

Note the anointing and favor in Luke 2.25b [italics mine] "...the Holy Spirit was *upon him*" (NIV). Other translations read: "He was filled with the Holy Spirit" (New Living Translation); "The Holy Spirit was with him" (NT in Today's English); "He

¹⁶ James B. Shelton. *Mighty in Word and Deed: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Luke—Acts* (Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), pp. 17 – 24); Merrill C. Tenney. *New Testament Survey* (Eerdmans Publishing Company/Inter-Varsity Press, 1985), pp. 183 – 185.

was under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (Charles B. Williams Translation); and “He was a man in touch with the Holy Spirit).¹⁷

Follow the work of the Spirit through him in revelation and God-given insight, once again in Luke 2.26 [italics mine], “It had been *revealed to him* by the Holy Spirit” (NIV). Other readings indicate, “It was disclosed to him by the Holy Spirit” (New English Bible), and, “He had been assured by the Holy Spirit” (Good News for Modern Man: New Testament in Today’s English).

Move with him as the Holy Spirit leads this faithful servant with special guidance. Once again we read Luke 2.27 [italics mine] where he was, “*Moved by the Spirit*” (NIV). Note other versions that indicate, “He came *by the Spirit* into the temple” (KJV), he was “...*inspired* by the Spirit” (Revised Standard Version), and, “The Holy Spirit had *impelled him* to go to the Temple that day” (The Living Bible).¹⁸

Not only was there the three-fold work of the Holy Spirit (1) coming upon him, (2) revealing to him, and (3) moving him. When Simeon saw Jesus, “the consolation of Israel,” he worshiped God through (4) inspired speech: [italics mine] “Simeon *took him in his arms* and praised God, *saying...*” (Luke 2.28). Simeon held and embraced God’s future in his arms! By the Holy Spirit he proclaimed the “light of revelation” for Israel and all the peoples of the earth (Luke 2.32).

In the surrounding narrative of Luke 1 - 2 there is rich Biblical symbolism and instruction to illuminate how we move into God’s future mission toward 2020 and beyond. As it is sanctified, spiritized, and scriptural, God’s future mission will reflect the inter-generational, gender and international/ethnic diversity in this story involving both older and younger.¹⁹ There is a single female teenager, older and younger married couples, an old man, and a widow. Women and men live and witness under the power of the Holy Spirit. There is a promise to Israel and beyond to the Gentiles. The chapter closes with a twelve year Messiah in question and answer sessions with an older generation in the temple, living in faithful obedience to his parents, and growing, “...in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men” (Luke 2.52).

In time, Messiah will raise up, mentor, and multiply a new generation of disciples. This new generation will witness His cross, resurrection, ascension and obey His command to wait in Jerusalem until, as He promised, they would be, “...clothed with power from on high” (Luke 24.49). At Pentecost, Peter will testify:

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear (Acts 2.32 – 33).

¹⁷*The Voice Bible* (Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2012), p.1239.

¹⁸ Curtis Vaughan, General Editor. *The New Testament from 26 Translations* (Zondervan Publishing, 1967), pp. 221 – 222.

¹⁹ Roger Stronstad. *The Charismatic Theology of St. Luke* (Hendrickson Publishers, 1984), pp. 36 – 39.

The gift of the Holy Spirit, Peter says, is both present and into the unseen future. It is, "...for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2.39). It is a sanctified, spiritized, and scriptural promise of Almighty God from Joel 2.28 – 29 realized on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2.16 – 21). It is an inter-generational, gender inclusive, and multicultural promise for "all people," "sons and daughters," "old men and young men," and God's servants, "both men and women." It is an enduring, global future promise until, "...the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord" (Acts 2.20).

In this meeting, let us once again bear witness to the necessity of the baptism in the Holy Spirit as the indispensable, Biblical, God-ordained empowerment for God's mission. Let us not take one more step toward 2020 and beyond until we have fulfilled Christ's command to, "...stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24.49b). This is a command concurrent with the commission, co-equally incumbent upon the older and the younger, the mature and the millennial.

Look at the yearning for the anointing of the Holy Spirit expressed by a younger leader from generations past. Based upon the year of his birth in 1888, J. Roswell Flower could not have been more than twenty years of age when he penned the following remarkable spiritual insight in 1908. Although I don't consider myself a missions historian, from my observations this could be one of the first *written* missiological statements on the relationship of the baptism in the Holy Spirit to world evangelization:

The baptism of the Holy Ghost does not consist in simply speaking in tongues. No. It has a much more grand and deeper meaning than that. It fills our souls with the love of God for lost humanity, and makes us more more willing to leave home, friends, and all to work in His vineyard, even if it be far way among the heathen...'Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.' This command of Jesus can only be properly fulfilled when we have obeyed that other command, 'Tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high.' When we have tarried and received that power, then, and only then are we fit to carry the gospel. When the Holy Spirit comes into our hearts, the missionary spirit comes in with it; they are inseparable, as the missionary spirit is but one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Carrying the gospel to hungry souls in this and other lands is but a natural result of receiving the baptism of the Holy Ghost.²⁰

²⁰As cited in L. Grant McClung, Jr. "'Try To Get People Saved:' Revisiting the Paradigm of an Urgent Pentecostal Missiology," in Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen, Editors. *The Globalization of Pentecostalism* (Regnum Books, 1999), pp. 36 – 37; also available online (at www.MissionsResourceGroup.org) in McClung, *Azusa Street and Beyond*, pp. 4 – 5. Originally published as Roswell's Editorial in *The Pentecost* (August 1908), p.4.

So we repeat the first call of “sanctified living toward the Savior's manifestation” understanding that God's future mission will be sanctified, spiritized, and scriptural. “So then, dear friends,” Peter reminds us, “since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him” (2 Peter 3.14). We are urged on toward ongoing spiritual formation with a call to godly living, “...while we wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ....(Titus 2.13).

- II. Strategic *leading* toward sustainable *models*: God's future mission will be strategized, structured, and sustainable.

When we encounter the future and enter the process of future planning, we brainstorm, project, forecast, and do scenario planning toward what is called a “preferred future.” Considering trends and issues, we typically speak of a future that is possible and probable, even speaking of creating or believing an envisioned future. This kind of forward thinking, says Derek Seipp, “...empowers leaders to explore and understand all the places the future could take them. They break free from limited thinking patterns holding them back from something greater.”²¹

On mission with God into the future leads us to a couple of basic questions: What does the Lord want us to do? How are we going to do it? These are fundamental and appropriate questions in approaching the development of a plan or a strategy for our particular mission. Strategizing is more of an ongoing, developing process than a momentary idea that is ready-made and fully formed. I offer the following “Seven Steps to a Strategy” as broader categories that involve a number of supporting processes.²²

1. Summons – In legal terminology, a *summons* is an order to appear before a legal authority. It is an order to come and see someone. It is a call to attention and action. It represents an alarm that mobilizes to action. Used here in the context of strategic planning, a summons represents the burden, calling and vision from the Lord. A classic New Testament example is the calling forth of Barnabas and Saul by the Holy Spirit for the work to which God was calling (Acts 13.1ff). Strategizing doesn't begin only with the mere accumulation of facts and potential methodologies but with the call of God.

²¹Derek T.Seipp, “Strategic Foresight: A New Horizon for Innovation in Ministry,” at www.lausanne.org/content/lga/2015-05/strategic-foresight. Also note Seipp. *Innovation in World Mission: A Framework for Transformational Thinking about the Future of World Mission* (William Carey Library, 2016).

²²McClung, “Seven Steps to a Strategy,” in *Globalbeliever.com: Connecting to God's Work in Your World* (www.MissionsResourceGroup.org, 2010), p. 241 – 248; “Read the Book” (English/Spanish).

2. Supplication – the word *supplication* represents the central place of prayer in strategic planning. This should not be any kind of prayer, however, but prayer and fasting that involves waiting, abiding, consecration, and deep adoration. In the Acts 13 model, fasting and prayer both preceded and followed the calling of the Holy Spirit. Strategies must not just be “prayed over” (i.e. asking God to bless our plans) but “prayed out,” emerging naturally under the distinct, wise guidance of the Holy Spirit. Over the past years, researchers have uncovered more than 700 strategic worldwide plans for missions presented over the last 2,000 years of missions history. No doubt every one of them had merit and good qualities. The “strategy of the Holy Spirit,” however, is pungent, penetrating, and perpetuated by intercessory prayer.²³ Here we highlight the vital indispensability of worship, renewal, intercession, and spiritual warfare in the missional outreach of the church. Indisputably, Pentecostal mission was born and bred in the fires of prayer and revival. The hunger for God at Azusa Street and many other locations created an expectant environment for the intimate presence of God, propelling them into global mission. As I have noted, “Indeed, early Pentecostal missiology was not only a missiology of the pulpit and pew, but, more importantly, a ‘missiology of the altar.’”²⁴

3. Scripture – Since God's desire and plan for world redemption is the heart of scripture, it follows that His Word would be central to the strategizing process. The Bible is our message book, for it has the clear revelation of the mission of God. The Bible is also our method book. We consider Biblical models and methods and find fruitful harvest, and fruit that remains. It is my opinion that most of the main global challenges and opportunities we face in our future can be found in the back story of scripture (such as urban mission, diaspora opportunities, engagement with non-Christian religions, resistance, marginalization, and persecution, etc.). Pentecostal leaders are called to continue on the path of scriptural engagement --- keeping themselves, their leadership teams, and their constituencies on a missional journey through God's word. This practice brings the Bible into the center of our missions conversations and consultations as the primary source of our definitions, practices, and strategies.²⁵

4. Stories – story is a key word to emphasize the importance of gathering personal experiences and testimonies, past and present. From the standpoint of “tracking” or “hearing what the Spirit is saying to the

²³ See prolific resources on prayer at www.operationworld.org; See also discussion and footnotes on “Meeting with God [worship, spiritual renewal, intercession, spiritual warfare] in McClung, “Missional Focus ,” pp. 13 – 14).

²⁴ McClung, *Azusa Street and Beyond*, p. 5.

²⁵ McClung, “A Missions Journey Through the Bible,” and “How Big is Our Bible? Confidence in the Bible for Missional Leadership,” under “Resources” at www.MissionsResourceGroup.org.

churches,” it is very important to gather stories and reports of what God is doing. This does not mean “happy talk” or “promotional advertising” of one’s ministry but sincerely looking at what God is saying through His people. This gives us an indication of what God is doing or preparing to do.

It is notable that the same missionaries (Barnabas and Saul) sent by the Holy Spirit and released by the church in Antioch (Acts 13.1ff):

...sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they now completed. On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles (Acts 14.26 – 27).

Story and testimony in mission can be inter-generational. Taking time to hear the past experiences of veteran missionaries can give new appointees a depth and wealth of background. Knowing the challenges can help avoid disappointment, lack of productivity or the waste of resources. Sincere listening to the younger leaders will help build their confidence and faith, and will give insight to how the Holy Spirit is speaking to the new generation of missions leaders.

Because the mission of God is for all the people of God, “global conversations” are needed and can take place in a variety of forms and forums, including social media. The Lausanne movement is providing an online vehicle for information sharing and building cooperative support/peer resourcing relationships in world evangelization.²⁶

Getting the complete story of what God is doing will involve a “global quadrilogue” among (1) the *assembly* (local churches and church movements), (2) the *agency* (missions agency), (3) the *academy* (missiologists, trainers), and (4) the *agora* (missional laity in the marketplace). These four representative bodies are common shareholders in global mission and equally mandated as Christ followers by the Great Commission.²⁷ The conversation is enhanced and facilitated by (5) the *association* (such as Pentecostal European Mission).

Alan Johnson says that in their recruitment and placement decisions, missions agencies need to examine the role that information plays in calling. “While acknowledging the sovereignty of God in directing his servants,” he says, “both practical and empirical evidence show that, in general, information plays some kind of role in people determining

²⁶See www.lausanne.org; Note also Paul Lewis, “Multiple Perspectives,” (Editorial), *International Journal of Pentecostal Missiology* (www.agts.edu/ijpm), Volume 2 (2014).

²⁷McClung, “Missional Focus,” p.2. I am indebted to missiologist Gary Corwin for the “Assembly, Agency, Academy” model, and to missions mobilizer Monroe Brewer for the “Agora” concept.

their sense of call to missionary service.” Johnson goes on to cite the doctoral research of DeLonn Rance who examined the call of missionaries in El Salvador. Rance found many of the usual scriptural and supernatural factors in calling but also concluded that information was a key factor. This information, he said, was typically conveyed in first hand personal experience, a personal relationship with another person, or some form of communication media.²⁸ In our discussions of various forms of media, it is important to remember that *people are media* and we learn from their stories.

5. Statistics – faith and facts do not have to be incompatible. There is nothing unspiritual about getting proper and accurate information. We do it before we buy a house or a car, or travel to a foreign place. The wisdom of the Old Testament says it is foolish and a shame to “decide before knowing the facts” (Proverbs 18.13 The Living Bible).

There is evidence in the New Testament that church leaders took time to do their research in advance – even if it was the informal data gathering through personal references. Paul, for example, acquired prior knowledge of situations and people before he arrived at a place. In the 27 verses of Romans 16, for example, he mentions 26 individuals by name, evidence that he had an information/relational network.

Moving to the future, missions leaders will need to develop an ongoing “monitoring strategy” to remain in constant awareness of emerging global trends, new missions issues, ideas, and innovations. The varieties of means are as creative as the gift mix of the leader/leadership team, such as: survey reading (Executive Summaries, etc.), webinars, consultations and conferences, and “think tank” style focus and advisory groups.²⁹

Thank God for the gifted women and men who bring us research, mapping, and reporting as their contribution to the global Great Commission community. The work of Operation World, Joshua Project, Finishing the Task Network, Issachar Initiative, and many others give clear insight and indications for the way forward. Valuable also, are statistical/trends research from secular sciences (economic, political, and demographic trends).³⁰

6. Strategies – a strategy is a working plan, a “faith projection” of what we expect to see develop under the guidance and leadership of the Holy Spirit.³¹ Strategies are a cumulative result of the prior work of

²⁸Alan R. Johnson. *Apostolic Function in 21st Century Missions* (Assemblies of God Theological Seminary and William Carey Library, 2009), pp. 211 – 212.

²⁹“Monitoring [trends, issues] and Metrics [research, evaluation]” in McClung, “Missional Focus,” p. 23.

³⁰Appendix A: World Evangelization Resourcing in McClung, “Missional Focus,” pp. 33 – 34.

³¹ An excellent example is found in Veera Tikkakoski Hug, “Pentecostal European Mission: A Unified Strategy Toward 2020,” in Arto Hamalainen and Grant McClung, Editors. *Together in One Mission:*

summons, supplication, scripture, stories, and statistics. God's command to Habakkuk is an example of how written and clearly articulated strategies give clear direction for the future:

Write down the revelation [some translations say “write the vision”] and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it. It will certainly come and will not delay (Habakkuk 2. 2 – 3).

Veera Hug has reminded us that, “The term strategy was originally used in military contexts to denote planning. However, the content of the concept has occurred in missiological contexts since the times of Paul.”³² Paul had a plan that included concentrating on cities/regions administered by Rome, focusing on two or three urban centers in each area, and going into centers of Jewish influence such as the synagogue. In new communities, he used contacts supplied by relatives of people from established churches; and, he reached whole families.³³

7. Structures – structures provide a vehicle to deliver the strategy in practical, systematic forms. For years, Arto Hamalainen has provided pioneering studies and practical helps in translating missions strategy into missions structures.³⁴ More recently, Hamalainen and his colleague Ulf Strohhahn have teamed up to offer additional guidance on *Building a National Mission Structure*.³⁵ Hamalainen reminds us that, “Any strategy is useless if there is no proper structure in which it can be implemented. It is then like a piece of music on paper without an instrument to play it.”³⁶

William Carey, who is called “The Father of Modern Missions,” argued for organized missions structures. Although the Roman Catholics had enjoyed global missionary success through established missionary orders (we could call them structures), the Protestants had nothing similar. Carey recognized this need and lack of organization. He wrote down his convictions and began to circulate them in a small pamphlet titled, “An Enquiry Into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens.”³⁷ A closer examination of Carey's use of the word

Pentecostal Cooperation in World Evangelization (Pathway Press, 2012), pp. 303 – 320); also online at www.MissionsResourceGroup.org and www.worldagfellowship.org/missions/documents-and-resources.

³²Hug, in *Together in One Mission*, p. 305.

³³McClung, in *Globalbeliever.com*, p. 247.

³⁴Arto Hamalainen. *Leadership: The Spirit and the Structure* (Fida International, 2005); *How to Start Missionary Work in New Sending Countries* (Fida International, Revised 2014).

³⁵ Arto Hamalainen and Ulf Strohhahn. *Building a National Mission Structure* (Fida International, 2017). Also online at: www.worldagfellowship.org/missions/documents-and-resources.

³⁶ Hamalainen and Strohhahn, *Building a National Mission Structure*, p. 19.

³⁷William Carey, “An Enquiry Into the Obligation of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens,” in Ralph D. Winter and Steven C. Hawthorne, Editors. *Perspectives on the World Christian*

“means” reveals that he understood the indispensability of financial support systems, methods, and an organized missions structure.

On May 30, 1792 he preached his now famous sermon from Isaiah 54.2 – 3 in which he coined the oft-quoted watchword, “Expect great things from God; attempt great things for God.” The sermon had a profound effect upon his hearers. One of the concrete results of that message was the founding of the Baptist Missionary Society, under whose banner he sailed for India. This set off a chain reaction of 12 new missions agencies (structures) over the next 32 years. This ushered in “The Great Century of Missions” in the 1800s and became the seedbed of expansive Pentecostal global mission.³⁸

The focus in this section has been on “strategic leading toward sustainable models” with the prescription that God's future mission will be strategized, structured, and sustainable. Sustainability is a term commonly used in business circles to highlight how economic growth is maintained at a certain rate or level. In the field of ecology and environmental studies, “... sustainability is the capacity to endure; it is how biological systems remain diverse and productive indefinitely. Long-lived and healthy wetlands and forests are examples of sustainable biological systems. In more general terms, sustainability is the endurance of systems and processes.”³⁹

The sustainability of God's future mission toward 2020 and beyond will require missions leaders to maintain missional focus in the midst of a complex diversity of alternative agendas and competing visions. Their mandate is to stay on task with singular obedience to the straightforward instructions of the Great Commission and ensure that this international, intercultural, and inter-generational mandate is carried forward by the next generation.

In missions training and leadership, I have found it helpful, for my own approach, to outline emphases and actions around three categories. These come to us from *The Lausanne Covenant* in the assertion that world evangelization would require the “whole church to take the whole gospel to the whole world.”

I change the order to formulate a *mental map* for leaders formulating strategies into sustainable structures: (1) Whole Gospel – the Biblical/theological understanding and motivation; (2) Whole Church – the basic “workforce” of laborers for the harvest; and (3) Whole World – the scope of our missions challenges and opportunities toward making disciples.

Movement (Fourth Edition. William Carey Library, 2009), pp. 312 – 318. Cf. also Ralph Winter on “The Two Structures of God's Redemptive Mission” in Winter/Hawthorne *Perspectives*, pp. 244 – 253.

³⁸McClung, *Globalbeliever.com*, pp. 78 – 80, 216.

³⁹Sustainability definition at: www.dictionary.com/browse/sustainability.

The topics, themes, and issues related to global missiological challenges toward 2020 and beyond are highlighted in the following “M” words. This is not an exhaustive or final list but beginning points for continued dialogue, prayer, and strategic action.⁴⁰

Whole Gospel: (1) Meanings; (2) Memories; (3) Message; (4) Miracles; (5) Mercy

Whole Church: (6) Meeting with God [worship, spiritual renewal, intercession, spiritual warfare]; (7) Morality [holiness/integrity]; (8) Marriage [family]; (9) Missional [local] church; (10) Mobility, Mobilization, Media; (11) Mentoring Millennials; (12) Missionary [training, care]; (13) Monetary [Resources]; (14) Mutuality [cooperation]; (15) Monitoring [trends, issues] and Metrics [research, evaluation]

Whole World: (16) Making Disciples and Multiplying churches; (17) Most Neglected [least engaged and evangelized] and Most Receptive; (18) Maps and Migration; (19) Megacities and Multicultural [societies]; (20) Minors [children]; (21) Mars Hill [universities/students]; (22) Muslim world; (23) Middle Kingdoms [China and India]; (24) Marginalization, Militancy, and Martyrdom; (25) Moments [“kairos,” missional moments]

In a word or phrase, “M” words of our “mental map” give attention to:

Whole Gospel

1. Meanings – definitions of “Missio Dei; mission; missional, missions, and missiology” are necessary to focus our Biblical mandate.
2. Memories – knowing our story of how God has acted in salvation history, including our global Pentecostal missions heritage.
3. Message – the indispensability of evangelistic verbal proclamation of the gospel with the expectation of a verdict on the part of the listener.
4. Miracles – whole gospel is Spirit-empowered, “full gospel” accompanied by miracles, signs and wonders.
5. Mercy – Biblical social action leading to societal transformation.

⁴⁰McClung, “Missional Focus in a Milieu of Multiplicity: A Mental Map for Pentecostal Leaders” pp 3 – 4. The paper is a research/discussion resource for missions leaders in a wide variety of spheres of influence such as missions agency leaders, national missions leaders, missiologists, pastors, missionaries, and missional laity in the marketplace. It includes 90 reflection/discussion questions, 30+ website resources, and 125 footnotes for further research/reading (cf. “Resources” at www.MissionsResourceGroup.org).

Whole Church

6. Meeting with God [worship, spiritual renewal, intercession, spiritual warfare] – the Pentecostal heritage of prayer and missional revival.
7. Morality [holiness/integrity] – leadership lifestyle of personal morality; the connection of holy living to evangelistic proclamation.
8. Marriage [family] – Contra to the contemporary, godless assault on Biblical values of marriage and sexuality, the “mission of marriage” and the evangelistic presence of Christian families on mission with God.
9. Missional [local] church – the seedbed from which all mission grows.
10. Mobility, Mobilization, Media – mission from everywhere to everyone, everywhere; marketplace and short-term missions; mobilization of all the people of God through preaching, publications, mass and social media.
11. Mentoring Millennials – at 80 million, the largest cohort group in history both unreached with the gospel and a missions workforce – present and future – reflecting age, gender, and ethnic diversity.
12. Missionary [training, care] – Where is the next generation of full-time career missionaries and how are they being trained?
13. Monetary [Resources] – finding creative ways to fund world missions.
14. Mutuality [cooperation] – collaboration and interdependence across our movement and beyond to the global Christian community; partnership of women and men; equal participation and leadership of women.
15. Monitoring [trends,issues] and Metrics [research and evaluation] – awareness of global trends and issues; measurement and evaluation.

Whole World

16. Making Disciples and Multiplying churches – local church based discipleship; priority of church planting and multiplication.
17. Most Neglected [least engaged/evangelized]; Most Receptive – planting where the church is *not* while reaping where the harvest is receptive.

18. Maps and Migration – a geographical paradigm (reaching nations, regions) mixed with the missiological opportunities of migration and global mobility in a border-less world.⁴¹
 19. Megacities and Multi-cultural [societies] – urban missional opportunities among the younger generation, “cultural elites,” unreached people groups, and majority of world's poor.
 20. Minors [children] – a sizable and growing bloc of world's population; discipling children ages 4 – 14; majority are unengaged, unreached.
 21. Mars Hill [universities/students] – mission to international students and scholars: future nation builders and agents of societal transformation.
 22. Muslim world – largest single bloc of unreached people on the planet.
 23. Middle Kingdoms [China and India] – the geographical, population strengths, and global influence of these nations; major internal migration underway from rural to urban; India's “emerging youth tsunami” with 400 million under 25 years of age – 50% of them female.
 24. Marginalization, Militancy, and Martyrdom – future mission in a hate-filled, violent world; hostile secularists in the West; militancy against Christians on the rise from radicalized non – Christian religionists.
 25. Moments [“kairos,” missional moments] – sovereign, unanticipated, and strategic mission opportunities.
- III. Sensitive *listening* toward surprising *moments*: God's future mission will be spontaneous, sudden, and surprising (Habakkuk 1.5; Isaiah 43.18; Acts 1.6 – 10; 2.2; 8.1; 8.26; 9.3; 9.10; 10.3; 10.11; 10.44; 13.2; 16.9; 16.26; Ephesians 3.20 – 21).

Before continuing a forward *projection* toward 2020 and beyond, we look back for a brief *reflection* on the past three decades of recent world history. Conventional wisdom defines a generation as an average period of about thirty years. During this time, the current generation has witnessed a sea change in world evangelization. Next year, the world commemorates the profound transformation across Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union that was sparked, among other events, by the Romanian Revolution of December 16 – 27, 1989.

⁴¹McClung, “Moved by the Spirit: On Mission with God Among People on the Move” presented to the Pentecostal European Mission Consultation in Turin, Italy (November 16 – 19, 2015); in the “Resources” link at www.MissionsResourceGroup.org.

Our generation has been shocked, staggered, and surprised by the sometimes almost unbelievable events we have witnessed in our generation. As for missional implications, one world evangelization consultation and congress after another during these years has highlighted the turning of entire people groups and populations to the living God with descriptive words such as *unsurpassed, unanticipated, and unprecedented*. They have reported rapid acceleration in the spread of the gospel worldwide.

The text for our times (evidenced by its occurrence in numbers of sermons and publications over the last thirty years) could very well be God's word in Habakkuk 1.5, "Look at the nations and watch – and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told." Bible expositors have noted that:

Whereas this remarkable statement in Habakkuk has a negative outcome, Paul applies it positively to Jesus' life and ministry as the fulfillment on a grand scale of what was foretold by the Old Testament prophets about the Messiah (see Acts 13.41). God in His sovereignty continues to act at certain times and places in history (in either judgment or salvation) on such a grand scale that the contemporary generation finds it hard to believe when it is prophesied to them.⁴²

The main takeaway for me from that quotation is the phrase, "on such a grand scale." This current generation of world Christians is also witnessing – *on a grand scale* – an incredible unfolding of the saving actions of the Triune God -- frequently in surprising moments – through the spontaneous and sovereign Holy Spirit, the divine superintendent of world evangelization.⁴³

A parallel verse to apply to this current phenomenon are God's words to the prophet Isaiah, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?" (Isaiah 43.18). Note how the New Living Translation renders this command, "But forget all that – it is nothing compared to what I am going to do; for I am about to do a brand new thing. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it?"

This word came to Isaiah in a time of spiritual decline and geopolitical threats from massive armies to the north. Every testimony among the faithful in those dark days was about "the good old days" when God miraculously delivered the Israelites from Egypt and eventually settled them into a prosperous land, giving them political stability in the golden days of David and Solomon. But now, in essence, God is saying to Isaiah's generation – and I believe to ours – "I'll give you something *new* to talk about!"

If we are not careful, projections for God's future mission toward 2020 and beyond can easily get locked into the past – always leaning upon the history of

⁴²Donald C. Stamps, General Editor. *Life in the Spirit Study Bible* (Zondervan Publishers, 2003), p. 1353.

⁴³George W. Peters. *A Biblical Theology of Missions* (Moody Press, 1972), pp. 304 – 305.

what God has done and, based upon God's past patterns, predictably expect more of the same. We may be prone to bring this kind of thinking into our strategizing for future mission. As one observer has noted: "The problem with this kind of thinking is that we look back at what we have done in order to see what is possible in the future. In essence, we look backward to look forward."⁴⁴

A notable phrase from one of Shakespeare's plays says that, "What is past is prologue." In much of contemporary use, the line is interpreted to mean that the past defines the present and sets the state for the future. That is the usage of the phrase as it is inscribed on the pedestal of statue simply called "Future" (sculpted by Robert Aitken in 1935) on the northeast corner of the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. in the United States. Shakespeare originally meant, however, that all the past is only an introduction to a new and glorious future unlike and surpassing the past if certain decisive actions are taken.⁴⁵ It is this original usage of "What is past is prologue" which we affirm in this final section with the assertion that "God's future mission will be spontaneous, sudden, and surprising."

That is why the words of Eva Burrows at Lausanne II in Manila, July 1989, remain imbedded in my heart and mind to this day. At that time, Burrows was the International Director of the Salvation Army. She related how, in reflection before the Lord over her many years of ministry, a clear word from the Lord came to her: "Eva, I have seen your ministry. Now, let me show you mine."⁴⁶ This powerful testimony resonates with that of missions leader Delanyo Adadevoh of Ghana. He stated that in a time of searching prayer, he asked God, "What do I need to do to allow you to work more in my life?" The Lord answered, "Dela, get out of my way!"⁴⁷

In their last meeting with the Lord, however, the disciples wanted a trends forecast, "insider information," some sort of predictable pattern as to what He had in mind for future times and dates. "It is not for you to know," he told them, but "to receive power" and "be my witnesses" (Acts 1.6 – 8). Immediately, "While he was blessing them..." (Luke 24.51), "...he was taken up before their very eyes" (Acts 1.9). One version reads, "Jesus had no sooner said this than he was caught up before their very eyes."⁴⁸

Then, things begin to happen "suddenly" at the outset and across the developing stories in the evangelistic expansion of the early church. These "sudden missional moments" in the Book of Acts record promises of the return of Christ,

⁴⁴Seipp, "Strategic Foresight," p. 3.

⁴⁵Roger Armstrong, "What does 'what's past is prologue' mean." www.grammarly.com. (November 18, 2015. Also J. Philip Hogan's Foreword to McGee. *This Gospel Shall Be Preached* (1986), p.8.

⁴⁶L. Grant McClung, Jr. "Pentecostal/Charismatic Perspectives on Missiological Education," in J.Dudley Woodberry, Charles Van Engen, and Edgar J. Elliston, Editors. *Missiological Education for the 21st Century* (Orbis Books, 1996), p. 65.

⁴⁷Grant McClung, Lausanne Global Leadership Forum (Bangalore, India, June 17 – 21, 2013) Executive Summary Report (July 2013), p. 14.

⁴⁸Twentieth Century New Testament in Vaughan. *The New Testament from 26 Translations*, p. 435.

empowerment from heaven, unanticipated conversion of a legendary missionary apostle, the Holy Spirit upon the Gentiles, and an unexpected open door across the entire household and family of one of the earliest European converts:

“...*suddenly* two men dressed in white stood beside them...” [announcing the return of Jesus Christ; 1.10].

“*Suddenly* a sound....from heaven” on Pentecost baptizing them in the Holy Spirit (2.1 – 4).⁴⁹

“...*suddenly* a light from heaven” at Paul's conversion/calling (9.3;22.6).

[At the house of Cornelius] : “Peter wasn't planning to stop at this point, but the Holy Spirit *suddenly* interrupted and came upon all the people who were listening” (10.44 *The Voice Bible*).⁵⁰

“*Suddenly* there was a violent earthquake...” resulting in the conversion of the Philippian jailer, his entire “household” and “all his family” (16.26 – 34).

We cannot know the future but we can count on our missionary God to convert and call – *suddenly*; act and anoint – *suddenly*; speak and send – *suddenly*; We take note of the synonyms for this word and apply them with confidence to our amazing and astounding God on mission:

Sudden/suddenly – abruptly, immediately, quickly, swiftly, rapidly, unforeseen, unusual, unexpected, unanticipated, accelerated, expeditious, immediately, instantly, impromptu, impulsive, out of the blue.⁵¹

Mere words, their meanings and synonyms are insufficient. But we bear witness to our amazing and astounding God when we say that the work of God on mission is unlimited, indescribable, unimaginable, and unpredictable. The charismata of the Holy Spirit cannot be contained or explained.

While engaging observable, recognized trends and issues in our future, we must allow room for the unanticipated, always ready to proactively respond to the “kairos” missional moments created by the spontaneous, sovereign, saving God of history. “Kairos” is a New Testament Greek word which describes a specific, strategic, and opportune moment in time. God carefully prepared the world and orchestrated His precision “kairos” moment as revealed in Galatians 4.4a, “But when the time [“kairos”] had fully come, “God sent his Son.” In turn, Jesus told his disciples, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20.20); and

⁴⁹Note one of the classic Pentecostal histories from Carl Brumback. *Suddenly...From Heaven: A History of the Assemblies of God* (Gospel Publishing House, 1961).

⁵⁰*The Voice Bible*, p. 1344.

⁵¹“Sudden, suddenly” Synonyms at www.Dictionary.com.

He continues sending us today, even “... to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28.20b).

Although a predictable pattern of mission was provided the disciples (Acts 1.8 – “Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, ends of the earth”), “kairos” moments awaited early church witnesses at every turn. More often than not, they were moved by the unpredictable “surprises of the Spirit” that advanced the gospel, quite unexpectedly, into new missional directions among new peoples.

For example, there was: the unanticipated commissioning of a lay evangelist to an African seeker (Phillip to the Ethiopian in Acts 8); the unexpected vision revealed to a reluctant disciple, sending him to a religious terrorist who was destined to be an apostle to the nations (Ananias prays for Saul in Acts 9); and the startling summons sent to a recalcitrant Jewish preacher to enter the home of a Gentile, a Roman military officer (Peter preaches to Cornelius in Acts 10).

In Acts 13 a team of local church leaders respond to the spontaneous, sudden, and surprising God. The command of the Holy Spirit was, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them” (13.2). After fasting and prayer, “...they placed their hands on them and sent them off” (13.3). As the Holy Spirit hovered over and moved upon the waters in creation, (Genesis 1.2), the creative movement of the Spirit of God hovered over church leaders worshiping and waiting in fasting and prayer, moving them to release the first intercultural mission team.

In Acts 16, we see the unpredictable moving of the Spirit by closing two doors so another could be opened. Paul and his companions were, “...kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia.” The King James Version says they were, “...forbidden of the Holy Ghost...” (16.6). They tried another direction, toward Bithynia but, “...the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to” (16.7). Instead, Paul and his team moved on to Troas where a direction changing vision during the night led them into Macedonia (16.9 – 10).

In his sermon titled, “Forbidden to Preach,” William Hull informs us of an important bit of geographical information about the location of Troas as it, “...lay on the outermost edge of a protruding lip which made it a gateway to the Aegean Sea. In other words, Troas was the jumping—off place to another world!” Hull continues:

Paul would not have had the sensation of being driven by the Spirit from one “continent” to another, but he would clearly realize that he was leaving his homeland, that the beckoning of God was pointing to lands beyond the sea, that the young Timothy so recently recruited (Acts 16. 1 – 5) was being swept with him into a wider world than either may have envisioned when they set out together.

That journey on to Troas, with the memory of twin frustrations still vivid in our minds, is always a daring act of faith in the Savior of surprises. For remember, Paul did not embark upon this third alternative with any answers in hand. Rather, it was only after he got to Troas, after he reached the end of the road with nowhere else to go, that he was given a vision of what to do next. It was not until he ran out of human plans, and was ready to offer God, as it were, a clean page on his itinerary, that he received the divine plan leading on to Macedonia.⁵²

When I read these phrases from Hull's message – “jumping off place....swept into a wide world....daring act of faith...a clean page on his itinerary” – my mind fast forwards centuries down the road from Paul and his church planting team. I'm reminded of Celtic Christianity and their original “missionaries of the one—way ticket.”

The character of Celtic mission was not comfortable or convenient, but was created in the context of chaotic times. Clifton Warner tells us that this unique form of Christianity flourished despite the darkness and uncertainty of the so-called Dark Age. Let's join him for an extended look:

Peregrinatio was one of their unique customs, a combination of asceticism, adventure, and mission practiced by monks who would hear a call to drift the seas, led only by the Spirit of God in the wind of their sails. Where they landed, they started a new community like the one they had left behind. This was a common form of mission.

These Celtic missionaries called themselves *peregrini*, a Latin word that is not easy to translate. They were pilgrims, for lack of a better word, but they were unlike medieval pilgrims. *Peregrini* were voluntary exiles who felt called like Abraham to a land that would only be revealed after the journey had begun, a place to which prevailing winds and currents supervised by God would take them. And it was usually a lifelong commitment.

Once, some Celtic monks who drifted ashore in Cornwall were taken to the king, who asked them where they had come from and where they were going. The three men replied that they “stole away because we wanted for the love of God to be on pilgrimage, we cared not where.” It was both a geographic journey and an interior journey: voluntary exile for the love of God.⁵³

⁵² William E. Hull, “Forbidden to Preach” Unpublished sermon presented to the Taskforce: 21st Century Missions Consultation at Beeson Divinity School Chapel, Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama, January 28, 1996. The results of the Taskforce consultation (in which this author served as a Pentecostal representative) were published in Paul McKaughan, Dellana O'Brien, and William O'Brien. *Choosing a Future for U.S. Missions* (MARC/World Vision Publications, 1998).

⁵³ Clifton D.S. Warner, “Celtic Community, Spirituality, and Mission,” in William D. Taylor. *Global Missiology for the 21st Century* (Baker Academic, 2000), pp. 491 – 494.

This unbridled passion for God and His mission from the Celtic communities has captivated authors such as Mark Batterson who says:

The Celtic Christians had a name for the Holy Spirit that has always intrigued me. They called Him *An Geadh-Glas*, or “the Wild Goose.” I love the imagery and implications. The name hints at the mysterious nature of the Holy Spirit. Much like a wild goose, the Spirit of God cannot be tracked or tamed. An element of danger and an air of unpredictability surround Him. And while the name may sound a little sacrilegious at first earshot, I cannot think of a better description of what it's like to pursue the Spirit's leading through life than *Wild Goose chase*. I think the Celtic Christians were on to something that institutionalized Christianity has missed out on. And I wonder if we have clipped the wings of the Wild Goose and settled for something less – much less – than what God originally intended for us.

I understand that “wild goose chase” typically refers to a purposeless endeavor without a defined destination. But chasing the Wild Goose is different. The promptings of the Holy Spirit can sometimes *seem* pretty pointless, but rest assured, God is working His plan. And if you chase the Wild Goose, He will take you places you never could have imagined going by paths you never knew existed.⁵⁴

Paul was ready to follow this unpredictable and surprising God on mission to Rome and beyond to Spain – even to the ends of the earth. In Madrid this week, we make this *apostolic heritage* our *anointed horizon*. Our stated theme is “The Future is Calling” as we focus on “Raising Up the Next Generation.” Like Paul and his generation, this and the next generation are “obligated, eager, and empowered” (Romans 1.14 – 16).

The next generation is not just emerging; they have emerged. Together, the generations present in this meeting are ready to embrace the three-fold calling to (1) sanctified *living*, (2) strategic *leading*, and (3) sensitive *listening*. As stated in our introduction, these are coupled with these expectations and descriptions of God's future mission:

Sanctified *living* toward the Savior's *manifestation*: God's future mission will be sanctified, spiritized, and scriptural.

Strategic *leading* toward sustainable *models*: God's future mission will be strategized, structured, and sustainable.

Sensitive *listening* toward surprising *moments*: God's future mission will be spontaneous, sudden, and surprising.

⁵⁴Mark Batterson. *Wild Goose Chase: Reclaim the Adventure of Pursuing God* (Multnomah Books, 2008), pp. 1 – 2.

Conclusion

May I say that the promises and descriptions of a spontaneous, surprising, and suddenly moving God are not just *promises* from our miraculous past. They are more than *projections* of God's future mission toward 2020 and beyond. They are most certainly supernatural *power* in our present “kairos” moment – God's “Madrid moment” now in these days together.

At the outset of this week, let the Pentecostal European Mission set the tone for this congress. Let us believe that the Triune God in *this very week* will bring sudden empowerment and callings, accelerated favor, unusual, unexpected financial provision, unanticipated open doors, and unforeseen, miraculous receptivity to the gospel among the unconverted.

Anticipating our theme, “*The Future is Calling – Raising Up the Next Generation*,” let us embrace and welcome the doxology of praise in Ephesians 3.20 – 21:

Now to the God who can do so many *awe-inspiring things, immeasurable things*, things greater than we ever could ask or imagine through the power at work in us, to Him be all glory in the church and in Jesus the Anointed from this generation to the next, forever and ever. Amen. ⁵⁵

⁵⁵*The Voice Bible*, p. 1439.