

WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The Challenge of Tokyo 2010



Under the theme "Making Disciples of Every People in Our Generation," the Tokyo 2010 Global Mission Consultation and Celebration will take place May 11-14, 2010 in Tokyo, Japan. Learn more at www.tokyo2010.org, and direct inquiries to tokyo2010@uscwm.org

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As a frontier mission consultation, Tokyo 2010 comes at a very auspicious time in both world and mission history. Opportunities abound to hasten the engagement of all peoples with missionary teams, but at the same time, very real challenges present themselves as the entire Church mobilizes for this final push. The world is quickly becoming a global village, and while this holds great promise for the rapid spread of the gospel, it also means that missionary work in restricted areas is more vulnerable than ever to misguided efforts.

The purpose of Tokyo 2010 is to bring together the sending structures of the world to take an in-depth look at how we can more effectively cooperate in this new environment and encourage best practices in frontier missionary work. The Korean Church has a goal of sending out 100,000 missionaries in the next 20 years. Leaders from China's house church movement seek to send out over 100,000 in a similar time frame! The Filipino Church is making great strides towards their goal of deploying and equipping 100,000 tentmaker missionaries (more Filipino evangelicals than that are already working as overseas contract workers throughout the Middle East!). With all this potential, global mission coordination is more essential than ever. We need to think through our strategies and consider how to work more effectively together rather than at cross-purposes. For example:

1. Let's not all go to the same places. An estimated 30,000 cross-cultural pioneer missionaries are needed to fully engage the remaining unengaged, unreached peoples and population

segments. At the present rate of progress, even more than this number of missionaries will be deployed over the next decade. But will the final frontiers remain untouched? Indeed, these areas of the world are unengaged precisely because it is so difficult to deploy long-term, church-planting teams among them. Specialized approaches are required.

2. Let's not hinder the growth of the indigenous Church. Does Mongolia need hundreds of more missionaries, or can the church there stand on its own (as they are proving capable of doing, sending out more missionaries per capita than any other national church)?
3. Let's not over-deploy missionaries to pioneer fields. For example, the nation of Turkey now has an estimated 3,000 missionaries (almost one for every Turkish believer!), representing hundreds of mission agencies and dozens of sending countries—Latin America, Europe and Asia. What will the future of the church in Turkey be 20 years from now? And can an over-deployment of missionaries actually suffocate the growth and independence of the indigenous church? This has happened many times throughout history.

These are the kind of real challenges which mission sending structures need to grapple with on the global level. This is why Tokyo 2010 will be a consultation that deals in-depth with subjects of frontier mission strategy and global coordination. If not confronted in the early stages, these issues may result in adverse long-term consequences for the future of many emerging church movements.

One of the fastest ways to destroy an indigenous church is by hastily going in and throwing money around. This has become a serious concern in almost every frontier mission sending field. It is not a new

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problem, but it is now an international problem, with multiple agencies from around the globe getting involved in the bidding for hiring national workers! This has created no end of conflict, division and suspicion, and has stunted or destroyed many emerging church movements.

From one perspective, the *global* frontier mission movement is a good challenge to face. We are in effect dealing with the success of one of the most powerful missionary efforts in history. But the question persists: have we been too successful! Or to put it bluntly: can too many missionaries spoil the indigent church?

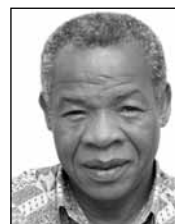
Fortunately, most missionaries among unreached peoples are still sent out through mission agencies. Gathered at Tokyo 2010 will be representatives of the major mission sending countries, mission associations and agencies, representing well over 150,000 cross-cultural missionaries. Enormous potential exists to see this momentum focused in a strategic way to reach the final frontiers of the Great Commission. The great missionary consultations of the past have proven that this is possible—that when mission leaders gather together to listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying through one another, incredible advance and strategic coordination has followed. Without any doubt, in today's world, such advance and coordination are more necessary than ever before. f

ATTENTION MISSION LEADERS!

Come join us for this historic gathering.

There is still time to register for Tokyo 2010. May 11-14, 2010. Register today at www.tokyo2010.org/register

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200911