If after 18 years we’ve reached only 0.3% -- is there something we can do to put the pedal to the metal?!

SPEAKER: Bill Smith (East-West)

Father/Son – father was growing up in a prominent area. God called to go and he went about halfway and then stopped and died. He didn’t get there. God started dealing with his son. God did NOT tell the son where he was to go – told him what he was to leave behind… (Gen 12:1 – leave country, people, father’s household). *There’s got to be stuff left behind if you are going to take on new stuff.* *If the glass is already full you can’t put anything else in there without taking something out.*

Implications of leaving behind:

* COUNTRY
  + He had already left Ur of the Chaldeas.
  + As missionaries we’ve already left out home country physically – but sometimes we haven’t left it behind…
    - Wanting American food
    - Language, holidays
    - Take a container or dozens of suitcases
    - Facebook friends, skype, telephone, email
    - If you maintain all your r/t in home country you’ve got nothing left to make friends & r/t here
    - Personal space
    - Traditional (western) music, liturgy, etc.
    - Movies, videos
  + Abram had physically left Ur, but God still asked him to leave his country
  + *What is God going to ask me to leave behind if He’s going to do in me and thru me…*
* PEOPLE (your immediate neighbors, tribe, etc.)
  + Source of security (physical attack, need for food, etc)
  + Depend on God rather than on “tribe”
  + Allegiance, Loyalty
    - The way we’ve always done things in my Baptist church back home
    - Desire to defend my culture, my country
* FAMILY
  + Leave your past, your heritage, your personal life
  + Identity (you’re “known”, you’re “somebody”)
  + If people group socialize in evenings, “that’s family time”
    - May need to rearrange priorities, time mgmt, etc.

Difference between Buddhism & Christianity: if you want to go to a certain place, the Buddhist will give you a book of detailed instructions and don’t deviate you’ll arrive. If Jesus was beside you He would say “Take my hand and follow me every step of the way and I will take you, I will show you the way…”

(Abram didn’t leave his wife – but he did have to decide priorities)

God’s focus/desire is that ALL will be blessed…

THOUGHTS BASED ON STORY OF TERAH/ABRAM

* Leaving family 🡪 priority… Has implications for family time, esp. evenings
* Leaving country/people 🡪 has implications for who my friends are, whom I surround myself with, etc.

OVERVIEW OF THE WEEK

1. Entering new field
2. Sowing seed
3. Discipleship
4. Harvest Field (raising leaders, establishing & multiplying church)

You have to get out there and DO IT to learn it…

* Learning to ride a bike, to pilot a plane – it’s got to be practical, not just reading books and attending conferences…

“Churches that meet in houses”… The term “house church” often connotes something less than the real thing… A “house church” is almost the real thing… But these are real churches that meet in houses.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?!

* Learn how to plant Albanian churches
* I’m desperate to see a model that multiplies truly
* GENTI: want to be more informed on using small groups for CP
* I’m a CPer and want to learn

History & BG on CPM

* Terminology “CPM” is new – ’95 or ’96 – someone else already has a new term that they will use for this – we like new terms (as humans)
* REPRESENTS: churches that start churches that start other churches – quickly!
  + Repeated out loud several times
  + Healthy families produce children, healthy churches produce churches
* A missy going to start a church is NOT a church starting a church! Healthy churches give birth to new daughter churches. The impetus comes from within that church to start a new church. And it should happen quickly.
  + How quickly? Roughly every year… That’s typical. Maybe a little more, maybe a little less…
* CPM is NOT a church starting a group … and maintaining strong centralized control. It is starting CHURCHES, not just some sub-church group. It should be genuine, autonomous church.

ILLUSTRATION:

* Elephant needs 20 years to come to maturity. 22 months gestation period. Almost never twins or multiple births. ~22 years from one generation to the next.
* Rabbits need 3 months to come to maturity. ~1 month gestation period. Usually about 7 baby rabbits in a litter.
  + Start today …

What are characteristics of “elephant church”

* They take a lot of time to do whatever … reproduce, make a decision, etc.
* Underestimate the potential of new believers
* Professionalize everything in the church
* They are very strong, will last a long time
* Little or no focus on the goal of reproduction
* Paternalism on mission field (??)
* Whole body is probably not being used effectively/efficiently (at least for goal of reproduction)
* Tend to be inward focused
* Focused on receiving teaching and less on practice (lots of theory,little practice)
* Hard to try something new – traditions strong
* Lack of prayer
* Believers mature more slowly
* Spiritual gifts may not be used effectively
* Churches think they need a building to be a real church (SIGNIFICANT)
  + This has been an issue since 1st century – nothing new…
* 95% of work done by 5% of people
* Consumer mentality rather than servant mentality
* Lots of energy spent to maintain the institution

CPM in the last 100 years or so…

* Methodists, Asbury, in USA, 1771. Wesley trained Asbury. There were 300 methodists in 3 congregations in all of the Americas when Asbury got to the US. Asbury died in 1816 there were 200,000 methodists (apart from children). By 1860s Methodists were the largest denom with more than 500,000 plus children, etc. They had a community of about 1 million.
  + God used one man, single, never married, single-handedly helped raise up entire denom that swept the American frontier.
  + God used a PERSON to start that movement. That person had a particular vision (lost people needed to be saved and then put together into churches).
  + It changed the shape of N. America
  + A powerful vision that let them say “no” to things that wouldn’t get them to the vision
  + A simple methodology (“Methodists” – they just follow a method)
  + Many were illiterate
  + Both Wesley and Asbury read the Bible and then preached what they read. That’s what they taught the circuit riders.
  + TAKEAWAY
    - What he started were churches – not Bible studies, groups, etc.
    - Simplicity of teaching
    - Simple strategy/methodology – meet ‘em, tell ‘em, organize ‘em into churches
    - Focused
    - Fervent preachers, passionate evangelists – note the adjectives
* John Nevius - 1870s
  + Relatively unsuccessful in CP. Went back to NT and wrote a book on NT methods (“Nevius methods”)
  + Plant self-supporting churches, foreigners will do less, etc.
  + Churches in Korea grew rapidly (!) after the foreigners left, continued until late 1970’s with rapid multiplication
    - Foreigners are responsible to bring gospel, raise up & empower leaders
    - Those leaders are responsible to take the gospel to their nation
    - Lots of limitations on what foreigners should be doing or NOT doing
    - Anything a local did the locals supported it financially – indigenous ministry
* Roland Allen – missy in China, relatively unsuccessful, looked for what was working
  + *Spontaneous expansion of the church* written and then went to India, S. Africa
  + *Missionary methods, St Paul’s or Ours* (~1890s)
    - Indigenous leadership
    - If someone is really saved, baptize ‘em immediately
    - Etc.
  + Motivated by the lostness of all the people in China (that’s what drove him to innovation)
* Africa – from 3million to 300million between 1900 and 2000
  + Hundreds of different movements from many different denoms, etc.
  + Usually the foreign denoms have not been as effective as locally led denoms
    - Foreign-led did not see multiplication
    - “I guess God holds us responsible to take gospel to our people…”
    - In Uganda AOG has vision for a church in every single village in Uganda (there’s an urban component as well) – strength of vision means there’s a lot of stuff they do NOT do
      * Relatively common for an ordinary lay family to be asked to pick up and go to a certain village
      * Primarily self-supported lay people doing the CP
      * Expectation is that they will stay there until the C is planted, a leader is raised up, then they move on… The leader comes from that village and will lead in that village.
* OMS has a CPM going in French-speaking W. Africa (Bruce Bennett)
  + Every village in Africa needs a church 🡨 that’s the vision
* China (Morrises, Taylor, etc.) 1800 and on
  + 1949 – all missies left or were martyred
  + 1952 – thought maybe 1 million Christians (maybe 800,000)
  + 2010 – no one knows exactly but maybe 100 million!!!
    - SKEPTIC: by normal 10% growth you would arrive at about the same number…
  + All trained leadership was decimated by around mid-50’s
    - I guess it’s up to us…
    - Remember what we read in the Bible – why don’t we try that?
  + Lay-led, meeting in homes, everyone taking responsibility, applying what they see in the Bible
  + Immediate obedience (i.e., baptism, who are you going to tell TODAY? Let’s pray for that person that they will be open. Tomorrow you can tell me how it went.)
    - If God said it we need to be obedient in carrying it out
  + Lots of persecution over the years
  + Missionary heart for the nations
  + Leaders STUDY but they do not typically go to seminaries on a long-term basis
    - Only if you have already planted ~15 churches would you be considered…
  + They PRAY on steroids – lots of time on their knees
  + Lots of PASSION
  + Strong FAITH pervades
  + Much less theological system and much more “show me in the Bible”
  + Perhaps more open to cults & heresies
* Several in India
* Victor Chadri (current, Delhi area)
  + London trained surgeon, Indian citizen, Christian background
  + Around age 50 he was struck with the lostness of Indians
  + Trains lay people to go into people, they go and pray/prayer-walk a community, go (usually 2x2) and offer to pray for people and actually pray for them. A few weeks later they come back and find the same people and ask ‘em how it’s been. Most of the time nothing has happened, but in every single community there will be a family or a few families where there were dramatic answers to prayer. They take that as an indication that this may be a household of peace or a person of peace and move from there.
  + Victor has burned his passport and promised to never leave his country to ask a foreigner to support what God is doing in India. “If my God is not big enough to use Indians to reach India, my God is not big enough.” Refuses to ask or accept foreign finances in his work.
  + In January 2009 they baptized 50,000 people on one day (Indian day)
  + What is the national day of Christianity? Pentecost. So Pentecost of 2009 they hit 100k.
* Cuba
  + Good traditional Christianity until Castro when missies went home and then lots of persecution. Mid-90s started CPM and since then several streams of CPM.
    - God has used Fidel Castro & Raul more than anyone else to encourage & facilitate CPM in Latin America
      * “whatever you’re doing in your church building, do it in your houses”
      * “if there are more than 10 in one house then it’s illegal – you have to have less than 10 in a meeting”

Size is **not** the determiner of rabbit vs elephant

* “big pastors” often are those that influence rabbit pastors as well
* You can have small elephants and large rabbits
* The difference is whether you are aiming to build a (large) church or whether your goal is to reach your people – you act in a different way depending on where you want to go
* Often big churches aren’t bringing more to Christ but rather you are seeing transfer growth
  + To have a big church I just need the best children’s program and the best music program
* In churches in Tirana, church has become like a spiritual supermarket

In CPM when any individual believer receives something of value (truth from Word, from pastor, from discussion, etc.) they see themselves responsible to pass it on to others…