First Principles

Newsletter of Principia, a non-profit educational institute
November 2004

First Principles

Missions to Transform Culture

"The problem is not only to win souls but to save minds. If you win the whole world and lose the mind of the world, you will soon discover that you have won the world."

- Charles Haluck

T he Church today has a distorted view of missions. Most Christians think that Jesus’ great commission relates solely to "getting the heathen saved." Unfortunately, history testifies that although Christianity has reached the four corners of the world, it has failed to disciple healthy nations. Today, many evangelized nations remain in subjugation to poverty, disease, and corruption. For example, 85% of Haiti is evangelized. She has more missionaries per capita than any other nation in the world! Yet, she remains the poorest country in the western hemisphere. Her poverty is rooted in her lack of a biblical mindset. This is an indictment against the Church’s view of missions and her failure to teach and disciple new converts.

A holistic view requires an understanding that missions is more than evangelism and church planting. As our friend Darrow Miller teaches, most believers live in chapter three of Genesis, forgetting that before the fall of Adam and Eve, God issued a cultural mandate to "be fruitful, multiply, and subdue the earth." Salvation is the essential first step towards transformed individuals and healthy nations. However, sinful man not only needs a new heart but a renewed mind to affect the culture for Christ. The great commission includes the cultural mandate. Believers must learn to think and reason within biblical principles and transform every area of life and to apply godly solutions in every institution of society. In the Islamic world today, wealthy Arabs heavily support Muslim education around the world! The battle rages for the hearts and minds of youth. Will the evangelical church embrace a holistic view of missions and support missionary educators? Principia’s mission to "disciple leaders with principles to transform education" has found expression, as we labor in conjunction with other international networks.

I encourage you to support our missionary teachers in the same manner in which you support other missionaries. The two-thirds world is unable to fund Christian education.

Disciple Nations Alliance Retreat (DNA)

Dr. Elizabeth Youmans attended the seven-day 2004 DNA Retreat high in the Arizona mountains. Leaders gathered from forty-five nations to pray, share, and collaborate with what God is doing worldwide in the Church. This alliance began in 1946 to stimulate world evangelization through the mission: "the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world." The Lausanne Forum seeks to periodically check the pulse of the worldwide Church and to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit as He burdens the hearts of believers. The movement, Disciple Nations Alliance, was founded in 1973. Several world congresses have been convened over the years, which have dramatically influenced the direction of the Church worldwide. The evangelization of the two-thirds world (the 10/40 window), and the worldwide prayer network both began with Lausanne. The key topics addressed at these congresses eventually impact the local church.

This Pataya Forum hosted 1,700 participants representing 156 nations. It placed participants into small issue groups such as The Arts, Children At-Risk, The Place of Women, Holistic Missions, the issue group in which we participated. All issue groups were tasked with evaluating where the Church is in view of the Great Commission and identifying what the current challenges and needs are. Each group met daily to examine and expound key issues. At the end of nine days, each submitted an essay and presented a five-minute summary to the whole Forum.

It was sobering to hear the heartbreak of the Church. The death of Christ is a great turning point in her history as she wrestles with such complex issues as globalization, terrorism, HIV/AIDS, famine, poverty, Islam, postmodernism and biotechnologies. These critical issues forced participants to reflect upon their own lives and to challenge the local church to adopt a larger perspective of her role in engaging in tangible solutions. Discussions were made interesting and, at times, even tense by the diversity of the participants as worldviews and cultural perspectives clashed. Each gleaned different ideas; however, this report focuses on those issues that affect Christian education most highly.

1. From the DNA retreat, we learned how urgent the need is for the body of Christ to have a biblical-worldview education. Education is the institution where Satan consistently steals our children's inheritance. He is the peacemaker at all levels of life. We were challenged to BE DISCIPLED to know that only as we are intentionally involved in discipling others, can we have the impact of transforming the culture around us.

2. Beauty has moral value when imparting truth. God is beautiful and the source of all beauty! The issue of reclaiming the arts is a critical one. How can the Church communicate how the Holy Spirit transformed Saul to Steven? How can we reclaim the arts that are so integral to world education? Arts are a part of the mission of the Church. We were challenged to examine how the arts can be reclaimed by the Church.

3. The Church must adopt a larger perspective of Church education for the body of Christ really is and not withdraw from the suffering world but serve it. Food and clothing are more basic to life and no more critical to the Church worldwide. The evangelization of the two-thirds world is a critical priority. Effective education requires a greater commitment of resources to reach the millions who are malnourished, abused, abandoned, diseased, dying and/or subjugated daily to social and economic injustices. The Forum served to bring the heart of God on these issues into focus. It challenged the Church to comprehend what the kingdom of God really is and not withdraw from the suffering world but serve it.

4. The body of Christ is one body. To be effective believers, must understand that the local church is part of a greater whole. The local church that understands her role in the greater move of God will be more effective in transforming individuals and nations for Christ.

5. Globalization is a real concern that the Church must face. As globalization is submitted as an issue, the diversity of cultures remains a huge time bomb for strife and war. The Forum was challenged to examine how the diversity of cultures remains a huge time bomb for strife and war. The Church must learn from the past how to reach the diverse cultures around the world.

Discipling leaders by biblical principles for individual, educational, and cultural transformation.

Lausanne Forum for World Evangelization 2004

In October, Dr. Elizabeth Youmans attended the Lausanne Forum for World Evangelization in Pattaya, Thailand at the invitation of Dr. Ted Yamamori, co-convener of the Holistic Missions Group. She roomed with Jinhi Roskamp, friend and Korean educator from Asuncion, Paraguay, who accompanied her to the Forum. "The opportunity to meet other believers from many areas of the world was exciting and a good reminder of the diversity of cultures remains a huge time bomb for strife and war. The Church must learn from the past how to reach the diverse cultures around the world."

The Lausanne Forum begins with evangelist Billy Graham in 1966 to stimulate world evangelization through the mission: "the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world." The Lausanne Forum seeks to periodically check the pulse of the worldwide Church and to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit as He burdens the hearts of believers. The movement, Lausanne, was founded in 1973. Several world congresses have been convened over the years, which have dramatically influenced the direction of the Church worldwide. The evangelization of the two-thirds world (the 10/40 window), and the worldwide prayer network both began with Lausanne. The key topics addressed at these congresses eventually impact the local church.

This Pataya Forum hosted 1,700 participants representing 156 nations. We placed participants into small issue groups such as The Arts, Children At-Risk, The Place of Women, Holistic Missions, the issue group in which we participated. All issue groups were tasked with evaluating where the Church is in view of the Great Commission and identifying what the current challenges and needs are. Each group met daily to examine and expound key issues. At the end of nine days, each submitted an essay and presented a five-minute summary to the whole Forum.

It was sobering to hear the heartbreak of the Church. The death of Christ is a great turning point in her history as she wrestles with such complex issues as globalization, terrorism, HIV/AIDS, famine, poverty, Islam, postmodernism and biotechnologies. These critical issues forced participants to reflect upon their own lives and to challenge the local church to adopt a larger perspective of her role in engaging in tangible solutions. Discussions were made interesting and, at times, even tense by the diversity of the participants as worldviews and cultural perspectives clashed. Each gleaned different ideas; however, this report focuses on those issues that affect Christian education most highly.

1. From the DNA retreat, we learned how urgent the need is for the body of Christ to have a biblical-worldview education. Education is the institution where Satan consistently steals our children's inheritance. He is the peacemaker at all levels of life. We were challenged to BE DISCIPLED to know that only as we are intentionally involved in discipling others, can we have the impact of transforming the culture around us.

2. Beauty has moral value when imparting truth. God is beautiful and the source of all beauty! The issue of reclaiming the arts is a critical one. How can the Church communicate how the Holy Spirit transformed Saul to Steven? How can we reclaim the arts that are so integral to world education? Arts are a part of the mission of the Church. We were challenged to examine how the arts can be reclaimed by the Church.

3. The Church must adopt a larger perspective of Church education for the body of Christ really is and not withdraw from the suffering world but serve it. Food and clothing are more basic to life and no more critical to the Church worldwide. The evangelization of the two-thirds world is a critical priority. Effective education requires a greater commitment of resources to reach the millions who are malnourished, abused, abandoned, diseased, dying and/or subjugated daily to social and economic injustices. The Forum served to bring the heart of God on these issues into focus. It challenged the Church to comprehend what the kingdom of God really is and not withdraw from the suffering world but serve it.

4. The body of Christ is one body. To be effective believers, must understand that the local church is part of a greater whole. The local church that understands her role in the greater move of God will be more effective in transforming individuals and nations for Christ.

5. Globalization is a real concern that the Church must face. As globalization is submitted as an issue, the diversity of cultures remains a huge time bomb for strife and war. The Church must learn from the past how to reach the diverse cultures around the world.

First Principles Board of Directors

William F. Cox, Jr., Ph.D. President
Bryan D. Youmans, B.S.V. Vice President
Elizabeth Youmans, Ed.D. V.P.
Jacqueline Gough, M.Ed. Secretary
David Folger, M.B.A. Treasurer
Esie Tindall, Ed.D.
Mary Christian Moorman, J.D.

First principles. (Webster’s 1828 Dictionary)