

Charity Christian Missions



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Charity Christian Missions

"For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles...for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the LORD of hosts."
Malachi 1:11

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What a blessing to see and hear the work of God! Check out the cassette messages available. Many booths highlighted aspects of work on the field. A few pictures are featured.

CROSSING CULTURES

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God loves diversity. He made many different peoples, and He loves each one. This article walks us through a discussion of culture, biblical examples, and practical outworking.

COUNTRY PROFILE

Turkey • page 11

Many events in Bible history took place in Turkey. Today it is very different but is still in a strategic position between Euro-Asia and the Middle East. Though a secular state, almost all profess Islam. Find out more about the Turkish people.

BOOK REVIEW

Eternity in their Hearts • page 14

"We could never have dreamed of how to prepare men's hearts to be His sanctuary." This is one of those books you'll find hard to put down. It will boost your faith in God and help you see how strategic preaching is.

MISSIONS CONFERENCE



**Lancaster
Children's
Ministry**



Sights and sounds of places near and far away greet the hundreds of visitors to Missions Conference 2003. Colorful booths line the walls of the auditorium and dining hall, inviting the curious, informing the inquisitive, and inspiring visionaries.



The sound of many drums draws the attention to the far corner, where a group of young boys is playing with an assortment of African drums. The drums are from northern Ghana. During the weekend, these boys will hear stories about tribes who beat similar drums into the late night to welcome and celebrate the Gospel of Jesus Christ.



The boys are sitting in the shadow of a thatched roof that extends over a display highlighting the work of Charity African Missions in Ghana. Looking closely at the photos, they will recognize men and women they know, working and ministering to people who live half a world away. They can touch and see the Ghanaian items, getting a glimpse into a culture vastly different from their own. They can thumb through the pages of the Bible. They can peek into the shiny aluminum pot, or handle the fabric on the table, and sense that these belong to people very much like themselves after all...

Across the large room, under another grass canopy is a Konkomba Marketplace. The table is laden with goods: colorful fabric and threads, sandals, knives, tools, baskets and bowls, beans and grains, pots and pans. Above the table are the portraits of Konkomba people from the marketplace in Bunbonayili where missionaries Daniel and Christy Kenaston live. One can imagine them smiling into the friendly faces of these people on a market day and sharing the testimony of their lives as a witness for Jesus Christ.



The books and papers on the next table have been picked up and thumbed through by many, indicating a keen level of interest. *Creation to Christ* is a chronological teaching of the Bible from Genesis up through the life of Jesus. Missionaries are successfully using this curriculum in the States and abroad to teach the full story of God's plan of salvation. Both the adult and children's lessons are laying on the table for inspection.



**A smile
is a
smile
in any
language.**



But, learning the local language is important for missionaries to understand and witness to the hearts of the people. Learning The Language: A Bridge to Their Hearts is an informative exhibit of resources and language study materials. Between sessions, Mel & Barbie Esh talk about Second Language Acquisition from their personal experience with formal study and on the field. Those with plans for a future on the mission field leave this booth with a motivation to prepare themselves with the study of language.

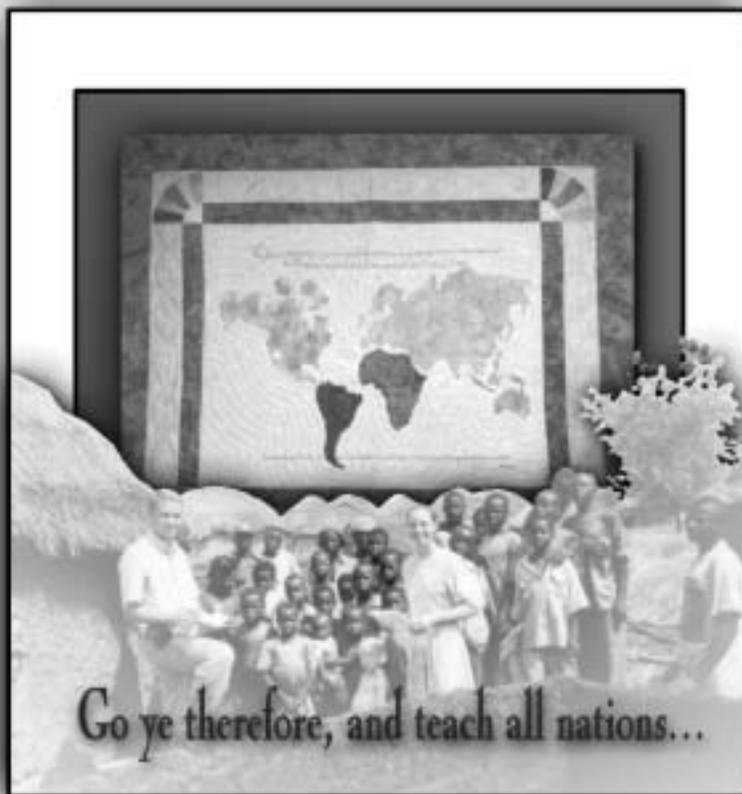


Splashes of color draw the eye toward the tropical scene along the wall of the dining hall. A path winds through a display of baskets and bowls and bags of fruits and grains, past a corner filled with primitive household items, laundry draped to dry in the sun, and a photomural that invites one to become part of the Sights and Sounds of Haiti. One young girl has accepted the invitation and sits at the desk in the "school." She is staring at the faces of the school children on the wall in front of her, wondering if she can identify the one her family sponsors. Next door some younger children are singing hymns on the benches that represent the church in Ailigue.



There is a murmur and a movement as a crowd gathers in the front of the auditorium. Weston and Charity Leibee, dressed in Muslim garb, are teaching about the basic practices and beliefs of Islam and engaging the audience in a lively discussion. Their display features a map

of Muslim nations and current revivals in the Muslim world. Twenty percent of the earth's population is Muslim. The challenge is posed that the glorious light of Christ must shine on every people and that God's people must "preach the Word" everywhere, even in the tough places.



The weekend draws to a close. Hearts are inspired and visions of the work of the Lord have been lifted to new heights. The beautifully quilted map that hangs on the wall leaves every person with the challenging command of Jesus Christ to spread the Good News of the Gospel.



Preaching to Every Culture

Adapted from a message by Rick Leibee

We have been commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ to go and do what seems like an impossible task: to preach the gospel to every nation, people, and culture.

Do you love the cultures of the world? Let's start with a more basic question. Do you love Jesus? He was actually from another culture. He was not an American, Anglo-Saxon Republican. He was a Jew. He was from another culture.

What is Culture?

Culture is something we all know something about, yet we struggle for a simple definition. Culture is more than certain practices or outward activities a group of people do. It is rooted in their ideas, their view of themselves and the world, their language, and even their food. It is rooted in their unique traditions that have become part of their behavior and ultimately, part of their

society. In short, culture is a way of life. It includes customs, beliefs, language, and values.

It is very difficult for us to define the culture we are in because to us, it seems so normal. But get off a plane in a remote village of Africa, a settlement on the Yangtze River of China, or a pueblo in the steaming Amazon basin, and suddenly everything is different. The sights, sounds, and

Is the gospel universal? Is it cross-cultural? Are there parts of Christianity that cannot be changed to fit into other cultures? Could it be that you and I are the problem when trying to take the gospel to another culture?

We will attempt to briefly answer some of these questions. Culture is a vast subject worthy of weeks of study, so we will only skim the surface.

"The key is...to carry the seed of the gospel in such a way that it can be transplanted into the soil of their culture without losing its truth or integrity."

smells hit you like a wall and for a moment or two, you don't seem to connect with anything. "How do I act? What is OK, and what is not OK with these people? How do I adapt and fit in?"

Christ alone can save the world, yet He has chosen you and me to transplant the gospel seed into a foreign soil.

The Diversity of Cultures

Peoples and cultures are very interesting. Something as simple as a greeting style becomes very important in another culture. Here in America, we grasp each other by the right hand

and wave our arms in an up-and-down motion in the air. In Japan they bow very slowly. Recently at an airport, I observed a group of people from Italy greeting their friends coming off the plane. Each one was kissed on both cheeks in rapid succession. In some tribal cultures, a slap on the back or chest is a form of greeting. Which one is more right?

Even eating utensils are a product of culture. The Chinese use chopsticks, and consider our fork and knife to be rather violent and awkward tools to use at the dinner table. Living in England years ago, I learned that there was more than one way to use a fork and a knife. After observing my manner of eating, my British friend remarked, "You Americans are so inefficient!"

Truly, culture is very diverse. Have you ever considered the fact that God loves diversity? His created world exhibits wondrous variety: from the tiger to the house cat, the whale to the ant, the giant Sequoia trees to the blade of grass; from the brilliant red of the cardinal to the black of the raven. And in the peoples of the earth, what diversity in

In America, we have the disadvantage of being the superpower of the world and assuming that we do everything right. Can we allow God to open our hearts and minds to lay aside our biases and love earth's peoples and their cultures? Underneath all that diversity, we are all the sons of Adam. Let's agree with God, the differences are OK! Teach your children to love people.

Before we go on, I do want to give a word of caution. As we study and learn to appreciate a new culture, we need to understand that just because a certain activity or practice is acceptable in that culture, it does not mean it is biblical or all right. Some people have become so enamored with a love of culture that they lose their equilibrium when it comes to righteousness and holiness. We need to realize that the world system is at work in every culture, and it is anti-God. We in America do not have the sole patent on worldliness. *"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"*

ture without losing our zeal for holiness as expressed in God's Word. Then we will be true ambassadors.

Christ, Our Example

Let's look at some practical ideas of how to cross a culture to bring the gospel message. What strategy did Christ use to begin this great multicultural work? It is certainly a very unique one. He called out and trained a mono-ethnic group of disciples. They were all Jews, trained in their own home country, among their own people. Yet throughout the training period, the Lord modeled His purposes for the whole world. The poor disciples were almost upset when they found their Master talking with a culturally outcast Samaritan woman. They heard Him lift up the faith of a Roman centurion as greater than any Israelite.

Christ did not charge them to take the Jewish culture to all the earth. He gave them only the gospel.

"You and I are living proof that the gospel transcends culture."

size, shape, facial features, and colors! God loves this diversity, or else He would not have put in Adam the genetic diversity to create what we see today in over 6 billion unique individuals.

(Gal.6:14). We do not and cannot condone that which is worldly or sensual just because it comes from Africa, Haiti, or Latin America. May God help us to find our way as we identify with a new cul-

Transcending Cultures

We need to recognize that there have been mistakes made by God's messengers in the past. Perhaps by observing, we can sidestep similar cultural blunders. The story is told of a group of young mis-

sionaries working in Africa. They chose as their theme Rev. 3:20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock...." To you and me, this is a beautiful picture of Christ seeking sinners. But through the teaching, this tribe understood Christ to be a thief. You see, in their culture there were no doors. Anyone wanting to come in merely called out and entered. Only the thief knocked around on the house in the night to be sure no one was inside before he came in to steal.

This same missionary group insisted that anyone who was converted should get "Christian" names like *James* or *John*. Clearly, we are not going that direction. We need to see the great need to understand the culture to which we are going. We need a link into their culture, a doorway to their hearts. We need to live among them in a way that is truly meaningful to them, and still true to the biblical revelation of Christ. The key is not to bring the gospel to them as a final product of our culture, but to carry the seed of the gospel in such a way that it can be transplanted into the soil of their culture without losing its truth or integrity. Will it look the same? Will it be the same color as it is here? Of course not. When we enter the "foreign" field, we become the foreigners! Too many of the unreached cultures see Jesus as a foreign God. We must work according to God's purposes so they see He is not a foreign God. He made them. He sus-

tains them every moment. He shed His blood to purchase them. God desires that they acknowledge His goodness.

Rejoice! It can be done! You and I are living proof that the gospel transcends culture. The origin of the glorious gospel is from an agrarian society in the Middle East. The gospel was first preached to the Jews, then to the Romans, then to the Greeks. We stand today as a testimony to the cross-cultural ability of the gospel and God's messengers.

How is it possible that God used a bunch of uneducated fishermen to begin a work that spanned across the globe? In Psalm 33, we find that God "*fashioneth their hearts alike.*" This means that all men have essentially the same needs, temptations, and sins. Lust,

with Him. So we must become like Christ to reach the cultures of the earth.

How Paul Portrayed Christ

Consider the world's first missionary. If there is one feature that stands out about Paul, it is his Christ-likeness. "*Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth... a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on Him to life everlasting.*" (1 Tim. 1:16). If you desire to be used of God in missions, then study other cultures, yes! But most of all, become like Christ. Paul felt safe knowing that he was portraying a pattern of Christ to other cultures.

"If you desire to be used of God in missions,
then study other cultures, yes!
But most of all, become like Christ"

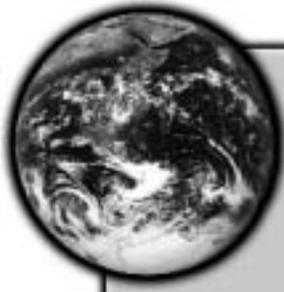
fear, hate, greed—these know no geographic or cultural barrier. So the gospel is just as needed in Paraguay as in New York, in Bangladesh as in France. Let us not be so intimidated by cultural differences that we forget their similarities.

Another key to remember in crossing a culture is to truly portray and live out Christ-likeness. Jesus called Himself the Son of Man over eighty times in the Gospels—not the Son of America, but the Son of Man. All men can identify

Let's look at a couple examples from Paul's preaching of how he adapted his message to fit various cultural settings.

In Acts 14, Paul and Barnabas entered Lystra and began their ministry by a miraculous healing. The excited crowd started shouting in their Lycaonian dialect. The apostles seemed to be unaware of a local belief that incited the riot. In certain cultures, miracles might be perceived as an authenticating sign preceding a message of truth. In Lystra

continued on page 31



Country Profile

TURKEY



Have you ever wondered where to go today to stand where Noah stood when he came out of the ark, offered a sacrifice to God, and beheld the first rainbow? Or have you wondered where God was looking when He gave the messages for the “seven churches of Asia”? On today’s map, what country did the Apostle Paul journey through three times? In twenty-first century language, where did Abraham’s servant find a wife for Isaac? And where did Jacob tend the flocks of his father-in-law, Laban? Where were the disciples of Jesus first called “Christians”? Where did the Apostle Peter send his two epistles?

You may be surprised to know that the one answer to

all those questions is **TURKEY**, the largest unreached nation in the world today.

Paul wrote to the “*saints and faithful brethren*” at Colosse two thousand years ago. He sent a letter to “*the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus.*” The epistle to the Galatians was addressed to the “*churches*” of Galatia. What happened to the faith once delivered to the saints in Turkey? Those ancient churches survived until the early 1900s. Massacres, persecution, and emigration nearly wiped out all but a remnant of 138,000 “Christians” in twelve differing traditions. These need a rekindling of faith and a work of the Holy Spirit.

TURKEY

POPULATION

66,590,940

Growth rate 1.27%

PEOPLES

Turks 80%

Kurds 20%

CAPITAL

Ankara

LITERACY

82%

OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

Turkish

All Languages 36

LANGUAGES WITH SCRIPTURES

with Bible 7

with New Testament 5

with portions 5

work in progress 13

INCOME PER PERSON

\$3,130

RELIGIONS

Muslim 99.64%

“Christian” 0.32%

Jewish 0.04%

DIVORCE RATE

6%

Land and Resources

Turkey is a country slightly larger in area than the state of Texas. There are tensions with nearly all of its border countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Iran, Syria, and Iraq. Narrow

coastal plains along the Mediterranean Sea on the south and the Black Sea on the north give place to mountains topping off to a high plateau through the mainland of Turkey. Mt. Ararat, close to the eastern border, peaks at an elevation of 17,011 feet. The Tigris and Euphrates river basins drain most of the eastern half of the country. The climate is hot and dry in the summer, with mild, wet winters. Northern Turkey has suffered severe earthquakes.

Nearly half of the Turkish labor force is involved in agriculture. They farm cotton, tobacco, grain, olives, citrus, pulse, sugar beets, and livestock. From these are exported apparel, textiles, and foodstuffs. Industry employs a fifth of the workers. Not only coal, but also chromium, copper, and boron are mined here. There are steel mills and auto manufacturers. The United States is Turkey's second largest buyer of exported goods.



The People

Coming from Asian descent, rather than Arab, the Turkish people use the Latin alphabet and speak a language related to Finnish. They value family and friend relationships highly. They are generous, hospitable, and friendly by nature. They have a patriotic zeal for their country. They value honor, loyalty, cleverness, a good sense of humor, good education, secure employment, wealth, and social status. They are a motivated and industrious people.

Religious History

Turkey has been a Muslim nation for over 800 years. After World War I Mustafa Kemal founded the country as a secular state and designed its government in the pattern of western democracy. He declared freedom of religion in the constitution, but Muslim cultural majority does limit some Christian privileges, and there has been persecution. There is an increasing openness of authorities to recognize Turkey as a multi-cultural and multi-religions country. The Muslims of Turkey vary as widely in adherence to Islam as Christians in America vary in their persuasions and practice. Turks only know of Jesus Christ as a prophet, consequently thousands of them die without knowing the true Christ.

Many Turks are nominal, cultural Muslims who do not keep the laws of Islam. Turkey has been under deception for many centuries. The Apostle Paul confronted worshippers of the goddess Diana at Ephesus. Goddess worship has continued through the years to Mary the Queen of Heaven and Mother of God in this century.

Operation World records Turkey as 99.64% Muslim. That remaining 0.36% includes "Christians," Jews, and any other minority religions. There was a decline in the Christian population in the early 1900s. It was thought that there were only 10 Christians in the country of Turkey in 1960. But by the year 2000 there were 2000 believers in 34 fellowships! The average is one Christian to every 33,000 Muslims.



There appears to be much searching for spiritual answers among the Turks. There have been numerous reports of those having dreams and visions of Jesus. A natural curiosity about Christianity is manifested in the thousands of responses to advertisements offering free New Testaments. Yet persecution is also evident. *Operation*



World mentions that ambiguities in the law give an open door for many politicians, police and Muslims to mistreat Christians. The strong family ties hinder a bold stand

for Christ. Many Turks group Christians with the Armenian terrorists, or Jehovah's Witnesses, and there are many Muslim misconceptions of true Christianity.

Turkey is ripe for the gospel and could well play a key role in reaching the Muslim world. There is more freedom to proclaim the gospel in Turkey than any other Muslim nation in the world today. There are no laws against converting Muslims. Missionaries have been arrested for religious activities, but the courts have upheld the constitution and released the Christians. Turkey is at a crossroads of destiny. Pray that the faith of those early saints may yet be rekindled, blazing up as a witness to many, including the Muslim world. □



Eternity in Their Hearts

by Don Richardson

Has the task of reaching remote or “primitive” peoples with the gospel ever looked next to impossible to you? Have you ever wondered what the Scripture means when it talks about enlightening “every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9)? Have you been intrigued by almost unbelievable stories of tribes that were prepared for the gospel?

Then *Eternity in Their Hearts* will fascinate and inspire you.

The book opens with the story behind Paul’s famous sermon to the Athenians on “the unknown god” in Acts 17. This chapter in the Bible took on new meaning and depth for me as I realized the complex history that Paul had studied into and used to bring the gospel to these people.

The book is divided into two parts: “A World Prepared for the Gospel” and “A Gospel Prepared for the World.”

In part one, the author explores over twenty different people groups, giving examples of how God has prepared them to receive the good news of Christ. Not only has the God of heaven given us a commission and a message, but He has also prepared the field for us! Read the captivating story of the Santal people of India, who were waiting for a messenger from Thakur Jiu (lit.—“the genuine God”) to come and bring them back to the way of truth that their forefathers had left in order to worship the spirits. Then there are the Lahu people of Burma who believed the Creator would send them a white brother with a white book containing His laws. “Some Lahu even wore chords around their wrists symbolizing both their bondage to the nats [evil spirits] and their need for a divinely appointed deliverer who would one day cut those chords from their wrists!”

A fascinating account is given of the Wa people, a headhunting tribe near present day Burma/Laos. One of their prophets named Pu Chan, told them to put away their headhunting and prepare themselves to hear from a “white brother with a book.” After a dream telling him that the white men were close by, he saddled a Wa pony and told several men to follow it to the messengers of Siyeh, the true God. The pony led them over 200 miles of mountain trails straight into missionary William Marcus Young’s courtyard.

The author then illustrates cultural keys to the gospel that are hidden in many people’s history or practice. The Dyak people of Borneo are one of several illustrations in the book. Every year the Dyak tribe prepared a boat and placed it in the river. Two chickens were placed in the boat. Then everyone in the village came and placed something invisible between the chickens while saying, “*Dosaku!*” (“My sin!”) Finally, the little boat was allowed to float away down the river while the excited people on the bank shout, “*Selamat!*” (“We’re safe!”) The analogy is not far removed from the scapegoat principle of the Jews, however this one is a *scape-boat*.

Could it be that many of the “heathen” tribes that we would have considered to be clueless about God’s existence actually have links to the gospel in their cultures? Could it be that God’s Spirit is at times working among a people hundreds of years before missionaries ever reach them?

Eternity in Their Hearts clearly shows that salvation is not possible until the gospel message comes through preaching. But we must not miss the importance of God’s preparatory revelation of Himself, or redemptive analogies to a people.

The second part of the book, “A Gospel Prepared for the World,” has a beautiful chapter about Christ as the Messiah for all peoples. Aspects of Christ’s ministry relating to the Gentile world are highlighted, as well as His teachings on missions and His Father’s worldview. Some passages that are often skipped are looked at closely in the book, such as Jesus’ mention of Naaman the Syrian, and his comments to the Syro-Phoenecian woman about the dogs under the table.

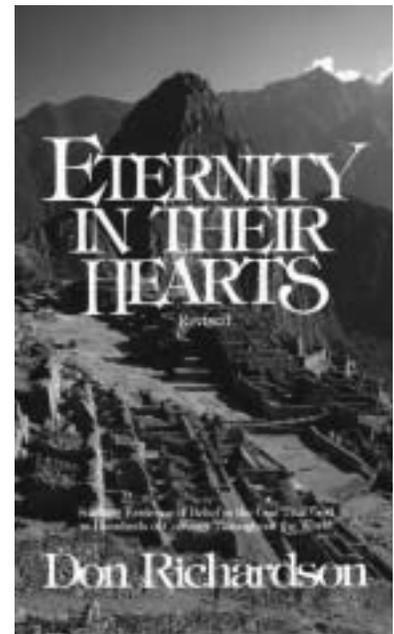
There is also a chapter in the book refuting the modern concept of the “origins of religion,” which is the teaching that man has evolved from idol worship to monotheism.

This book will hold your interest and is worthy of much thought.

How exciting to see our God working in ways we could never have dreamed of to pre-

pare men’s hearts to be His sanctuary, if only they will seek Him and turn wholly to Him! □

Eternity in Their Hearts, by Don Richardson, should be available through your local bookstore.



continued from page 26, Crossing Cultures • Preaching To Every Culture

however, the miracle created a panic because of the cultural assumption that incarnated gods work miracles but are oppressive and must be appeased, not simply listened to. Paul found himself an object of pagan worship and had to work quickly to handle this cultural issue (v.14).

Paul urged the Lystrans to turn from empty idolatry to the living God who had already revealed Himself through nature. Paul could not refer to Jewish history or prophecy, as his audience would accept neither as authoritative. Instead, he spoke of God’s kindness in giving rain and crops in their seasons. Building upon the knowledge they already had from the evidence around them, he showed them the Creator and the folly of vain worship.

In another example, we take note of Paul’s message to the Athenians on Mars Hill.

He proclaimed the “Unknown God,” as he had read on an inscription of an old altar. Here Paul was preaching to the intellectually elite. Again, he did not appeal to them from the Jewish Scriptures, but reasoned with them from the creation. To these Grecians, the Jewish Messiah was just that—a Jew. They were not the “Children of the Covenant”; they were the “Children of Creation.” The fact that they craved something to worship pointed to a God who desired that kind of relationship. Paul modified their conception from an impersonal essence to the personal, living God of the universe. He introduced them to the God of the Bible.

Another key that Paul used very effectively in his mission work was the use of local people within the culture as part of the leadership at the earliest time possible. This for me is one of the most exciting prospects of mission work. In establishing local leadership who knew the local culture, Paul was able to pass the burden over to them to further penetrate that culture with the gospel.

Missions must not transport cultural ideologies. Missions must take the seed of the gospel and transplant it into the soil of other cultures. God desires worship. That worship begins here on earth, in a symphony of diversity that will continue into heaven and eternity. □

*This message was preached at Missions Conference 2003
and is available on an audio cassette.
For ordering information see back cover.*

MESSAGES FROM MISSIONS CONFERENCE 2003

#3083	Salvation for God's Sake	Raymond Burkholder
#3084	Sacrificial Brokenness	Raymond Burkholder
#3085	The Experiential Fullness of God	Raymond Burkholder
#3087	Missions—the Responsibility of the Church	Emanuel Esh
#3088	Church Planting at Home	Mose Stoltzfus
#3089	Preaching to Every Culture	Rick Leibee
#3090	The Work Among the Konkombas	Daniel Kenaston
#3091	Four Pillars of Missions	Daniel Kenaston
#3092	The Radical Example of Moravian Missions	Denny Kenaston

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Take a tour of the Missions Conference—see page 18

“We need to know more of the fellowship of Christ’s death. We need to feed on the Word of God more than we do. We need more holiness, more prayer. We shall not, then, be in such danger of mistaking His will.”

-James O. Fraser



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