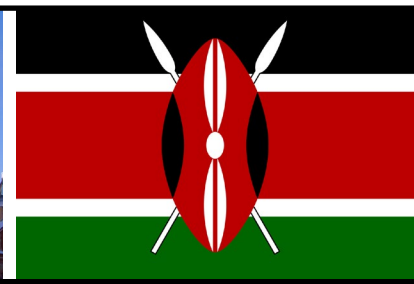
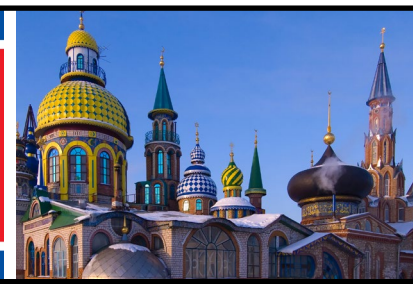
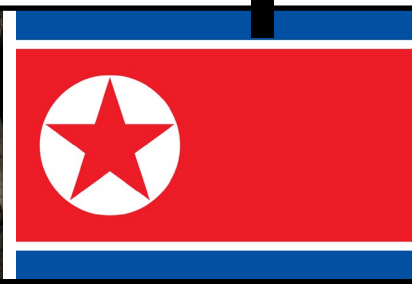
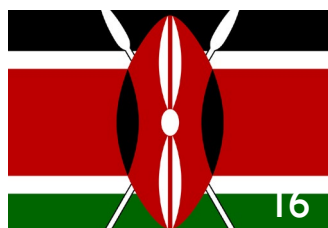


# 9 | 2013



Lausanne  
**GLOBAL ANALYSIS**

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The Lausanne Global Analysis seeks to deliver strategic and credible information and insight from an international network of evangelical analysts so that Christian leaders will be equipped for the task of world evangelization.

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# ISSUE OVERVIEW

*David Taylor, Editor,  
Lausanne Global Analysis*



Welcome to the September issue of Lausanne Global Analysis.

Whether you are planning to read the full articles or just the executive summaries, we hope that you find this issue stimulating and useful. Our aim is to deliver strategic and credible analysis, information and insight so that as a leader you will be better equipped for the task of world evangelization. It's our desire that the analysis of current and future trends and developments will help you and your team make better decisions about the stewardship of all that God has entrusted to your care.

In this issue we analyse the widespread persecution of Christians, as we look ahead to the annual International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church, and examine the lessons that can be learned from the work of the Holy Spirit in quietly building the church in North Korea and in developing peace in the wake of post-election violence in Kenya. Additionally, the implications for theological education globally are explored through a focus on ministerial education in Russia over the last 20 years.

Charles Tieszen, adjunct professor at Fuller Theological Seminary and specialist in Christian-Muslim relations, says that religious persecution is a global problem and not only a Christian concern. Nevertheless, Christians are the single most widely persecuted religious group in the world today. He reminds us that, "the Church is meant to be Christ's suffering body in the world". He adds that the Church must continue to reflect theologically on the persecution it endures even as it advocates for the religious freedom that all of humanity deserves.

For the last 70 years, Christianity has not been tolerated in North Korea. While the rest of the world seems riveted by North Korea's nuclear programme, there is a much more significant but largely untold story of what God is doing in the 'Judea of the East'. Christians around the world need to be aware of God's quiet work as he calls out laborers and opens the doors for them to enter the country. The global Church also needs to

prepare to assist when unification comes and the people in the North are free to worship openly. That assistance, says the author, should not harm the quiet work that the Holy Spirit is now doing.

Alexey Gorbachev, Rector of Eurasian Theological Seminary in Moscow, Russia, describes the development of ministerial and theological training in Russia in the 20 years since the collapse of Communism. Today that training is passing through a "developmental and cultural crisis", he says. Ministerial training, he adds, should be changed to equip the saints to serve God in their daily life—at their jobs, in their households, and in their communities. He concludes that "the achievements of the last 20 years in theological, biblical and leadership training in Eurasia should be preserved and developed further, but used within the framework of the concept of priesthood of all the believers, which will enable 'the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world'".

Paul Borthwick, Senior Consultant with Development Associates International and Jean Paul (JP) Ndagijimana, National Director for World Relief in Kenya, describe the Christian peace-building initiatives that started in Kenya after the post-election violence of 2008. Those initiatives continue to this day—bearing fruit in the peaceful elections this year. The Church around the world can learn lessons from what has happened in Kenya, they emphasize. A spirit of reconciliation and repentance has been fostered by times of confession, while pastors are also encouraged to preach against tribalism and teach forgiveness and restoration of relationships. These pastors have "carried the message of peace-building and reconciliation in their hearts to their communities. Let us all pray that God will continue working through his servants in reinforcing peace as the country moves forward".

Please send any questions and comments about this issue to [analysis@lausanne.org](mailto:analysis@lausanne.org). The next issue of Lausanne Global Analysis will be released in November.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## **PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD TODAY: CURRENT TRENDS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL CHURCH**

*Charles Tieszen*

November 3rd is the annual International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. In 2007, less than 30% of 198 countries and territories in the world had high or very high religious restrictions or hostilities. Just four years later, that number had risen to 40%, a trend likely to continue.

Two-thirds of the world's population live in countries with high government restrictions, while over half live in countries with high social hostilities against religions.

These statistics show that religious persecution is a global problem and that persecution is not only a Christian concern. Nevertheless, Christians are the single most widely persecuted religious group in the world today, with one source estimating that 75% of acts of religious intolerance are directed against Christians.

Christians must reflect on what the rising trend of religious persecution means for the Church today. Doing so will involve engaging in more developed theological reflection on persecution than the Church has exhibited in the past. One of the Church's most pervasive struggles in this area is its common misunderstanding of persecution as only physical violence. In fact, persecution can occur in a number of non-violent ways.

The Church must also continue in its effort to advocate religious freedoms and to place itself in solidarity with those who suffer. However, Christians in the West—still most able to help non-Westerners who are more frequently the victims of intense persecution—must give more thought to what it means to be present among those who suffer. The Church must consider the ways in which its efforts to promote and support religious freedoms complement its theological and biblical role as a suffering people.

The way in which the Church engages in advocacy alongside governments has important theological implications for Church-state relations. If, in its effort

to lobby governments, the Church cedes control of religious freedom to secular bodies, then the Church may lose its authentic, visible witness such that it cannot function as a body in authentic solidarity with those being persecuted.

Theologically understood, Christ is head of the Church, body and soul. The Church's true religious freedom, then, is found when it is a part of Christ's unified body and functions from a position of solidarity, not just by caring for persecuted souls, but by having something to say to the world about persecuted bodies as well.

The Church is meant to be Christ's suffering body in the world. The reality of persecution in the life of the Church also speaks to theological realities. The Church must continue to reflect theologically on the persecution it endures even as it advocates the religious freedoms that all of humanity deserve.

## **GOD AT WORK IN NORTH KOREA**

*Anonymous*

For the last 70 years, Christianity has not been tolerated in North Korea (DPRK). While the rest of the world is mainly focused on the issue of DPRK's nuclear programme, there is great interest among Christians globally in the much more significant but largely untold story of what God is doing in a part of the Korean peninsula that formerly was known as the 'Judea of the East', while its capital, Pyongyang, was known as the 'Jerusalem of the East'.

It is difficult to verify the number of believers in DPRK, but reliable reports have come that there are many. They have had to remain so deeply hidden underground that it is hard to make contact with them. When ways can be found, however, they are eager to interact. The church appears to be alive and growing, and the believers seem even stronger because of the persecution. God is also opening the doors to rebuild his church in the country.

God has chosen to use mostly non-institutional groups and often unlikely individuals to do his work. They are often not well organized, but they are probing to find the entry points, as God provides the open door. Some have worked to supply relief to simple human needs or to

make a niche for themselves in business or commerce. Others have worked through education.

God is using the physical presence of his workers. Some of them are internationals, but some are nationals ministering to their own people. God's approaches are not limited, and even though his believers may not see results immediately, they know the ground is being prepared and the seeds are being sown.

Christians around the world need to be aware of the quiet work that the Lord is doing in DPRK as he calls out workers and opens the doors for them to enter the country. No one knows when unification will come for the two Koreas or when the people in the northern half of the country will be free to worship openly, but we need to be prepared to assist without harming the quiet work that the Holy Spirit is now doing.

Assimilation will not be easy unless the Lord is at the heart of it. Believers who have been free must remember that these persecuted brothers and sisters will have much to teach us even as we work to help them to recover their spiritual heritage. They may well take the Gospel into other persecuted areas.

Christians globally can now be involved by praying for the willing servants he has sent, by supporting them or the organizations that send them or by seeking ways to join in this work as a participant. There are a number of groups who are openly involved in this work and who welcome volunteers or new partners. Anyone who desires to know how to reach one of these groups or to join as a participant may contact <cwren2@hush.com> for more information.

## **MINISTERIAL EDUCATION IN RUSSIA AND OTHER SLAVIC COUNTRIES OF CIS: LESSONS FOR THE GLOBAL CHURCH**

*Alexey Gorbachev*

Theological and ministerial education in Russia today is passing through a developmental and cultural crisis. During the last two decades of the Soviet era, only one formal programme to train evangelical ministers existed in Russia. The fast growth started as soon as government restrictions became milder and freedom came.

The first students of the newly created biblical and theological Institutions were usually active pastors and ministers who received much-needed training. The situation started changing when the active ministers

finished the training available for them, and full-time programmes were filled with young Christians who were searching for their place in life and ministry.

By the beginning of the 2000s, pastors and bishops stopped sending students to theological institutions. A gap between church and academy became obvious. Questions arose about the effectiveness of such 'greenhouse' long-term theological training as a way to prepare ministers.

The task of theological education is to prepare ministers who have deep theological knowledge and personal integrity, who are integrated into the life and ministry of the church, who are able to understand contemporary challenges and to give biblically and theologically sound answers.

The Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all the believers has to be placed into the foundation of ministerial and theological training. It should be theologically and practically reconsidered in the light of a holistic approach to the spiritual and material realms, to ministry and job, to the ministry of 'laity' and 'clergy'.

Ministerial training focus should be changed to equipping the saints for the work of ministry. Equippers should be trained with the purpose of training Christians to serve God in their daily life—at their jobs, in their households, in their communities.

The network of biblical schools, theological seminaries and institutes can become a strong force that can train a new generation of such front-line 'lay-ministers'. This training should help Christians to re-think and integrate their professional education into the foundation of a Christian worldview.

Educational institutions need to focus on raising up a new generation of church leaders with pastoral, teaching, prophetic, evangelistic and other gifts who clearly understand that their primary task is not to do the all work of ministry themselves as 'clergy'. They need to be raised up in the spirit of servanthood, realising that their main role is to help others to minister.

Educational institutions should clearly see their deficiencies. The teaching ministry is part of church life. Integration with local churches and missionary organisations should become an important value for it. Educational institutions also need to promote models of healthy leadership and mentoring.

The achievements of the last 20 years in theological, biblical and leadership training in Eurasia should be preserved and developed further, but used in the framework of the concept of priesthood of all the believers, which will enable the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world.

## **LESSONS FROM CHRISTIAN PEACE-BUILDING IN KENYA**

*Paul Borthwick with Jean-Paul Ndagijimana*

Following the elections of 2007, pitting incumbent Mwai Kibaki against Raila Odinga, tensions began to build as Kibaki was declared the winner. Accusations of election-rigging escalated into violence, largely between supporters of Kibaki (mostly members of the largest Kenyan ethnicity, the Gikuyu) and supporters of Odinga (mostly members of the second-largest, the Luo).

The nation and the world were shocked. After the violence shattered the apparent stability of this peaceful nation (where over 70 -80% claim to be Christian), the question arose: where was the Church in all this?

Rather than casting all the blame on politicians, pastors in February 2008 courageously took action and began to repent. On a national level, the National Council of Churches of Kenya released a statement in which they confessed partisanship and disunity. They called church leaders to recapture their strategic position as the moral authority of the nation. On a local level, pastors began to offer compassionate relief to those who had been harmed—assisting at camps for displaced people, visiting the violence-ridden areas, preaching reconciliation.

A long process of Christian peace-building initiatives began that continues to this day—and has borne fruit in the peaceful elections of March 2013. The Church around the world can learn lessons from it.

A spirit of reconciliation and repentance has been fostered by times of confession and forgiveness in groups that have been meeting together for months, and thus building relationships.

Intentionality towards multi-ethnic peace and relationships started with the basic message to Christian leaders: what do we need to do to make sure that this never happens again? Peace program groups have been meeting, with pastors making commitments to preach peace, to encourage election involvement based on the qualities of the political candidates rather than ethnic affiliation, and to contest election results through the courts rather than by violence. Pastors have also committed to exchanges with pastors from different churches and denominations from other ethnic communities.

Integral ministry has been evident in efforts to ensure that peace-building initiatives also carry with them a practical component. Part of the driving force behind supporting the candidate from one's own ethnic group was economic. To address this, groups and churches have established an agricultural program and a savings program—with multi-ethnic partnerships built into them.

Exhorting each other to lead has also been a key element. Pastors throughout Kenya are being encouraged to join hands pro-actively to preach against tribalism; preach forgiveness and restoration of relationships; pray and intercede for prospective leaders; and distance themselves from politicians.

These pastors are representatives of a larger community and they have carried the message of peace-building and reconciliation in their hearts to their communities. Let us all pray that God will continue working through his servants in reinforcing peace as the country moves forward.

# PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS IN THE WORLD TODAY: CURRENT TRENDS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR THE GLOBAL CHURCH

*Charles Tieszen*



November 3rd is the annual International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church. In 2007, less than 30% of 198 countries and territories in the world had high or very high religious restrictions or hostilities. Just four years later, that number had risen to 40% (Grim 2013), a trend likely to continue.

Similarly, while the twentieth century was the 'bloodiest century', particularly in relation to Christian martyrdom, the twenty-first century is witnessing yet more Christian martyrs, with an estimated 100,000 in 2013 and a rising trend projected (Johnson and Crossing 2013, 33; Johnson 2012).

## Religious freedom overview

According to Brian Grim, an expert on religious freedom issues, over five billion people presently live under religious restrictions or hostilities, the majority of them being felt by religious minorities (Grim 2013). Grim's designations 'religious restrictions' (or 'government restrictions') and 'social hostilities' are important and helpful terms for our understanding of religious persecution today:

- Religious restrictions are laws set in place by governments. For example, a law making blasphemy of a religious tenet punishable by imprisonment or death is a government religious restriction.
- Social hostilities can be seen as consequences of functioning contrary to a norm enforced by a society.

As Grim illustrates, the antagonism, threats, and even physical violence Ahmadiyya Muslims sometimes experience as a result of government restrictions placed upon them (e.g., legally restricting their activity to their mosques) are social hostilities (ibid.). Socio-political definitions like these are helpful to our understanding of persecution and support our ability to measure, analyse, and aid victims of religious persecution.

With this in mind, Grim notes that two-thirds of the world's population lives in countries with high government restrictions:

- More specifically, one-quarter of the world's population lives in countries with laws restricting religious symbols, and over one-third of countries worldwide imprison people based on religion.
- Significantly, 23% restrict conversion, a restriction which, when broken, often leads to social hostilities.

Over half of the world's population lives in countries with high social hostilities against religions:

- These include one-in-seven countries where sectarian violence is present.
- Religion-related terrorism exists in over 30% of the world's countries, and in over one-third of countries world-wide social groups use force to impose religious norms (ibid.).

Of course, many of these demographics relate to restrictions and hostilities in countries where their occurrence



is most frequent. However, some infrequent restrictions and hostilities also occur. For instance, while Egypt or Russia may have high government restrictions (e.g., restricting conversion in Egypt or restricting mosques in Russia), religious symbols have been restricted in the United Kingdom, where restrictions or hostilities are not otherwise common (ibid.).

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“While the twentieth century was the ‘bloodiest century’, particularly in relation to Christian martyrdom, the twenty-first century is witnessing yet more Christian martyrs”.

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## Persecution of Christians

Not only do these statistics show that religious persecution is a global problem, but they demonstrate that persecution is not only a Christian concern. Nevertheless, it also remains the case that “Christians are the single most widely persecuted religious group in the world today” with one source estimating that “75% of acts of religious intolerance are directed against Christians” (Marshall, Gilbert, and Shea 2013, 4).

## Christians in the Middle East

To take one region as an example, countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) rank high on Grim’s scale measuring government restrictions and social hostilities connected to religion. In this region, Christianity exists as a minority religion, often the largest religious minority among others:

- Many MENA countries favor one religion to the detriment of others.
- In fact, MENA ranks eight times higher than countries in the rest of the world in religious favoritism (Grim 2013).
- In a similar way, MENA countries rank nearly four times higher in sectarian violence related to religious restrictions than countries in the rest of the world (ibid.).

At the risk of some over-simplification, the reasons for rising religious persecution in MENA are numerous and likely a mix of religious, historical, political, and economic

factors. MENA has a long history of controlling religious communities by means of government restriction:

- The Byzantines taxed their conquered and religious minorities.
- Later Muslim governors used a very similar system to control the non-Muslim groups they ruled.
- Under the Ottomans, religious groups were divided and subdivided into millets.
- Similar restrictive controls were also employed in the region under British and French mandates.

With such tight control over religious (and ethnic) populations, social hostilities are often inevitable, especially as one religious group rises in power.

Moreover, Christians can sometimes pay the price in reactions against Western dominance and influence in the region. While the 2011 Arab uprisings, in general a reaction to perceived tyranny and Western-supported governments, brought some political freedoms, they did not often yield religious freedoms for the region’s religious minorities. In some cases, the perceived connections between Christianity and the West—a perception not helped by the West’s political presence, but also a history of Christian mission that was not always charitable—can make local Christian populations, as ancient as many of them may be, appear suspect to many.

In future, if the role of Islam in government becomes a more central feature in MENA, the place of religious favoritism, even if it is (mistakenly) seen as a means for controlling religious groups, must be challenged. Further, as Western Christians seek to advocate religious freedoms for their brothers and sisters in MENA, local Christians must be allowed to take the lead as a spirit of true solidarity and unity with one another is emphasised.

## Developing a theology of persecution

Christians must reflect on what the rising trend of religious persecution means for the Church today. Doing so will involve engaging in more developed theological reflection on persecution than the Church has exhibited in the past (Tieszen 2008, 18-35).

One of the Church’s most pervasive struggles in this area is its common misunderstanding of persecution as



only physical violence. In fact, as Grim's work suggests, persecution can occur in a number of non-violent ways such as antagonism, ostracism, legal restrictions, etc. In fact, even though restrictions can lead to violent hostilities, it can also be the case that legal restrictions on religion can be so strict that violent hostilities are curbed—or indeed redundant:

- For example, restricting a religious community's life and activity to a ghetto would also proscribe interaction with other religious communities and thereby eliminate possible inter-religious violence as well.
- Over-emphasizing violent acts may thus risk overlooking non-violent restrictions that are still forms of persecution.

The Church must also work out a thorough theological definition of the religious persecution of Christians, one that complements socio-political definitions like those of Grim and others (Tieszen 2012). With a proper definition in place, the Church will be able to identify persecution wherever and however it occurs, engage in proper theological reflection upon the event, and offer comprehensive advocacy on behalf of victims:

- One area where this may be most felt is in the presence of rising secularization and privatization of religion in the West, quite possibly a form of persecution in its own right.
- If this is the case, then the Church, especially in the West, must reflect upon its role in a society where it is increasingly marginal and marginalized.

## **Advocacy and solidarity**

The rising trend of religious restrictions and social hostilities also means that the Church must continue in its effort to advocate religious freedoms and to place itself in solidarity with those who suffer. Advocacy efforts are aided by the work of those like Grim, the World Watch List ([www.worldwatchlist.us](http://www.worldwatchlist.us)), the International Institute of Religious Freedom ([www.iirf.eu](http://www.iirf.eu)), and others.

However, Christians in the West—still most able to help non-Westerners who are more frequently the victims of intense persecution—must give more thought to what it means to be present among those who suffer. Even more, the Church must consider the ways in which its efforts to promote and support religious freedoms complement its theological and biblical role as

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**“The Church must also work out a thorough theological definition of the religious persecution of Christians.”**

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a suffering people. This latter theological consideration may further point to the importance of large segments of the Church recapturing theologies of martyrdom and persecution, especially ones that offer a place for the memory and celebration of the Church's martyrs.

## **Church-state implications**

Finally, while the Church's advocacy is vital, the way in which it engages in this task alongside governments has important theological implications for Church-state relations:

If, in its effort to lobby governments, the Church cedes control of religious freedom to secular bodies, then the Church may lose its authentic, visible witness such that it cannot function as a body in authentic solidarity with those being persecuted (Hauerwas 1999).

When this occurs, the Church functionally interiorizes religion.

As a result the Church purchases its freedom from the state; Christians become responsible for the soul while secular groups and governments control the body (Cavanaugh 2002, 87).

Theologically understood, Christ is head of the Church, body and soul. The Church's true religious freedom, then, is found when it is a part of Christ's unified body and functions from a position of solidarity, not just by caring for persecuted souls, but by having something to say to the world about persecuted bodies as well. This latter function is not just the job of governments, a point significantly impacting Church-state relations and what it means that the Church is a persecuted body.

## **Conclusion**

There is a rising trend of religious persecution in the world today. While Christians have no monopoly on suffering, they are frequently the victims of it and will continue to suffer its presence in the world. The Church is meant to be Christ's suffering body in the world. The reality of persecution in the life of the Church

also speaks to theological realities. The Church must continue to reflect theologically on the persecution it endures even as it continues to advocate the religious freedoms that all of humanity deserves.

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# GOD AT WORK IN NORTH KOREA

*Anonymous*



## INTRODUCTION

For the last 70 years, Christianity has not been tolerated in North Korea (DPRK), and for at least 30 years before that there was persistent persecution during the Japanese occupation of Korea. There are regular reports of great persecution for the known Christians in DPRK—believers are not allowed to meet together for worship or even to own a Bible.

While the rest of the world is mainly focused on the issue of DPRK's nuclear programme, there is great interest among Christians globally in the much more significant but largely untold story of what God is doing in a part of the Korean peninsula that formerly was known as the 'Judea of the East', while its capital, Pyongyang, was known as the 'Jerusalem of the East'.

## Outreach through aid

For many years, church groups and Christian organizations have been very concerned for their brothers and sisters in DPRK and the generations of others there who have been growing up with no knowledge of God's love for them. Most attempts to provide aid through normal administrative channels have been rejected by the government, but a few groups have had a little success:

- The outreach division of one of the main denominations in the United States negotiated over several years and received permission to assist the development of one of the open churches which has a seminary.
- This was a major development and it was a help, but very few such projects have been allowed.
- Most groups continue to work through humanitarian projects and special needs projects, like well-drilling and tuberculosis clinics.

Still there has been no real progress in meeting and working with known Christian groups in DPRK on a wider level.

## Believers in DPRK

It is extremely difficult to verify the number of believers or where they are located, but reliable reports have come that there are many believers in DPRK. These faithful believers have had to remain so deeply hidden underground that it is hard to make contact with them. When ways can be found and communication begins, however, they are eager to interact and very grateful for any assistance that is offered, especially gifts of Bibles, hymnals or other materials to aid spiritual growth.

We wonder how these faithful believers could be growing under such difficult circumstances until we remember their Lord and Master. The church appears to be alive and growing in DPRK, despite all the persecution, and the believers seem even stronger because of the persecution. God is opening the doors to rebuild his church in the country.

## Ministry in DPRK

God has chosen to use mostly non-institutional groups and often unlikely individuals to do his work. These individuals and groups are often not well organized, but they are probing to find the entry points, as God provides the open door:

- Some have worked to supply relief to simple human needs or to make a niche for themselves in some valid area of business or commerce.
- Still others have worked through education, such as the Pyongyang University of Science and Technology (or PUST) project now in its

third year. It is led and staffed by an avowed Christian faculty forbidden to speak about Jesus, but living the Christ-life before the students and depending on the Holy Spirit to use their lives as a witness.

The ministry to the hungry, the young and the poor is another approach that many groups have tried. Especially in the 1995-1998 period, when a series of droughts and floods left millions of people with little or no food and starvation may have claimed as many as 3 million lives, a number of groups used various doors of opportunity to transport food or foodstuffs to the country, usually with the assistance of some of the committed Korean-Chinese believers living in the Chinese border area along the Tumen River.

During this period, tens of thousands of North Koreans crossed the Chinese border to seek food or other assistance:

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“We wonder how these faithful believers could be growing under such difficult circumstances until we remember their Lord and Master”.

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- They were usually given food, clothing, a safe place to a rest and an introduction to the Gospel.
- Many would receive sacks of food or other assistance and cross the river to return to their families on the other side of the river.
- Often there were Bibles in the center of the sacks of food.

As these same people came to get more food and to learn more about Jesus, they would bring news of the believers whom they had found in their communities. Some had been believers for many years—indeed a few had been quietly continuing their faith secretly since the country was divided.

## Resourcing the church

As the believers in China heard about their brothers and sisters in DPRK and began to interact with them, international groups partnered with them to provide more resources:

- Bibles, hymnals and Bible study materials, including chronological Bible storying materials, have been carefully introduced into the country.
- Sometimes the North Korean brothers and sisters involved were discovered and were publicly executed or sent to the worst prison camps.
- The persecution seems only to have increased the growth. The people have been faithful and God has blessed with them with his presence.

## House church seeds

When children whose parents had died formed part of this group of people who crossed the river, the churches began to form ‘shelters’ for these children that would provide a place to live, a loving caregiver, instruction in Chinese and an introduction to Jesus. Many international groups participated in providing for these shelters until the Chinese police began a crackdown in the mid-2000s.

At that time, many of the children who were in the shelters were discovered, as well as many adults, and even families who had been quietly living in China for some years. They were returned to North Korea and were sent to labor camps for ‘re-training’. Most had been exposed to Christian help and many had become Christians; so their punishment often was harsh and long.

Among the children who were apprehended at that time and sent back to North Korea, there were three young men who had been carefully tutored in the Bible and trained to lead Christian groups:

- Their time in the labor camps was not long because of their youth, and they were soon on the streets of their home town again.
- Their parents were dead and they were alone, but these three young men set up a business to support themselves and they began a small house church.
- They are one example of what we understand has happened in other areas as well.

## Feeding children in care

One of the feeding projects that stands out is the one that Dr. James Chin Kyung Kim of Yanbian University of Science and Technology (or YUST) in Yanji, China,

began over 20 years ago to supply food, medicine, and other needs to people in the northern provinces of DPRK where there were many reports of starvation and great need:

- Soon it developed into a feeding project for the children in these areas, primarily to children in the children's homes.
- That project is funded by donations from people in churches around the world.
- It is now feeding about 40,000 children each month in areas all over the country.

The project does not control any of these homes, but it seeks in the Lord's name to make them able to care for the children and provide good nutrition and health. The premise is that these children are the future citizens of Korea and they will remember that it was the Christians who fed, clothed and provided for them.

One of the graduates of YUST is the supervisor for this work now. As a Korean-Chinese, he enjoys relative freedom to travel in the country so that he can directly supervise the use of the materials or the funds he brings. He is also able to maintain a supervisory role with the workers who care for these children and to counsel them on teaching the children.

He is not able to teach the children openly in these homes, but this dedicated young man, a graduate also of a seminary in Seoul, is quietly ministering to the local workers who know that the food is given in the name of the Lord and by donations from Christians elsewhere. He has earned the trust and the affection of the people and is welcome whenever he goes.

## Implications and suggested responses

The main point that should be noted here is that God is using the physical presence of his called-aside workers to live and work among people who do not know or understand. Some of these workers are internationals, but some are nationals whom he is enabling to minister to their own people. God's approaches are not limited, and even though his believers may not see results immediately, they know the ground is being prepared and the seeds are being sown. A great harvest will come.

Christians around the world need to be aware of the quiet work that the Lord is doing in DPRK as he calls out workers and opens the doors for them to enter the

country. No one knows when unification will come for the two Koreas or when the people in the northern half of the country will be free to worship openly, but we need to be prepared to assist without harming the quiet work that the Holy Spirit is now doing.

Assimilation will not be easy unless the Lord is at the heart of it. Believers who have been free must remember that these persecuted brothers and sisters will have much to teach us even as we work to help them to recover their spiritual heritage. They may well be the empowered ones who will take the Gospel into other persecuted areas and carry the message with great zeal and believability.

Christians globally can now be involved by praying for the willing servants he has sent, by supporting them or the organizations that send them or by seeking ways to join in this work as a participant. There are a number of groups who are openly involved in this work and who welcome volunteers or new partners. Anyone who desires to know how to reach one of these groups or to join as a participant may contact <cwren2@hush.com> for more information.

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This article is being published anonymously to protect the author's identity. She has been involved in work with Korean people in many locations for more than 40 years. The writer and her husband are still very active in this and are participants in a work that puts them in daily contact with people of the North. They are in awe of the wondrous things the Lord is doing for the Korean people.



# MINISTERIAL EDUCATION IN RUSSIA AND OTHER SLAVIC COUNTRIES OF CIS: LESSONS FOR THE GLOBAL CHURCH

Alexey Gorbachev

Twenty years have passed since Russia entered a time of religious freedom. A fleet of evangelical educational institutions grew out of one very small boat, consisting of hundreds of different-sized ships:

- This fleet is sailing today, though not at full speed as it was 10 years ago.
- The captains and admirals wonder why many of the ships are half-empty.
- At the same time there are crowds of travellers who are waiting for a different kind of transport.
- Western funding of this fleet has decreased considerably.
- Captains and crews are working hard to attract travellers. Without solid funding it becomes a challenge to match the real cost of the journey with the price that travellers are ready to pay.

Theological and ministerial education in Russia today is passing through a developmental and cultural crisis. In addition it suffers from the general crisis of educational systems globally. In order to understand what is happening today in evangelical educational institutions, it is necessary first to describe the vacuum where construction started 20 years ago.

## Development of ministerial and theological training

During the last two decades of the Soviet era, only one formal programme to train evangelical ministers existed in Russia. The fast growth started as soon as government restrictions became milder and freedom came:

- Every region and every evangelical group of churches wanted to have its own school for training and educating ministers.
- Local initiatives were supported by foreign human and financial resources (mostly from the USA, Europe and South Korea).

In the beginning, pastoral schools offering 1-3 months training were started in different regions. Today graduates remember them as very intense, practical and exciting. Existing pastors and ministers of evangelical churches as well as new zealous Christians went through these programmes. Many of the graduates acquired the necessary knowledge to shape their ministries as missionaries, pastors and overseers.

The next step was the development of full and part time Bachelor programmes with majors in theology and ministry. Considerable foreign finances were invested in building educational facilities for theological schools. Today we see the fruits of this investment:

- More than 100 educational institutions in Russia, Ukraine and Belarus offer BA training in theology and ministry.
- More than 10 schools offer Masters level theological training.
- There are no local doctoral level programmes yet, but that is a matter of time.

The academic development of evangelical schools is guided by the Eurasian Accrediting Association (EAAA), instituted in 1997. It has 51 members from Eurasia.

In addition there are evangelical institutions focused on practical and spiritual training without theological

depth or desire to get academic accreditation. Most of them belong to charismatic churches that started from scratch after the revival of the 1990s. Presently charismatic churches are moving toward development of higher ministerial education through Western colleges and universities.

## Changing demands

Western influence is a noticeable feature of evangelical education in Russia. The majority of theological schools in Eurasia were developed with the support of Western Christians, started by foreign missionaries according to the Western theological training model. Full-time theological training has been seen as the best way to prepare pastors, church planters and leaders. The degree of effectiveness of such foreign educational help has been in direct proportion to the level of cooperation with indigenous churches.

Alongside the full-time programmes, part-time and extension programmes have been growing. Demand has increased for these during the last decade, while the number of students in full-time programmes has decreased dramatically over the last 5-7 years:

- Because of economic and social changes, Christians in Eurasia now have more financial resources.
- They are ready to pay for professional education, and are able to cover the expenses of part-time education, but since theological and ministerial training does not provide a well-paid job, Christians are not ready to invest significant personal resources into it.

What are the fruits of the theological schools that were started in the 1990s? The first students of the newly created biblical and theological Institutions were usually active pastors and ministers who received much-needed training. The churches were blessed with the fruits of their education. The situation started changing when the active ministers finished the training available for them, and full-time programmes were filled with young Christians who were searching for their place in life and ministry.

## Challenges facing training institutions

By the beginning of the 2000s, pastors and bishops stopped sending students to theological institutions. A gap between church and academy became obvious.

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“The task of theological education is to prepare ministers who have deep theological knowledge and personal integrity”.

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Questions arose about the effectiveness of such ‘green-house’ long-term theological training as a way to prepare ministers for the church.

At least three factors caused the crisis:

- **Unrealistic expectations of self-supported full-time ministry.** Church traditions from the Soviet time as well as economic challenges required the majority of ministers to be bi-vocational. However, frequently theological education was their first and only education after high school.
- **Educational gap between leadership generations.** Soviet policy prohibited Christians from obtaining higher education, and in turn fostered an anti-educational ‘sectarian’ situation in many evangelical churches. Situations where young ministers had a better education than the pastor and the elders inevitably caused many conflicts.
- **Lack of practical preparation.** Theological education in the 1990s and at the beginning of the 2000s was mostly theoretical, and focused on Bible, theology and preaching. Practical courses in areas such as leadership skills, team building, leading change and dealing with conflict were not part of ministerial training.

It is not surprising that many new graduates got into trouble in the congregations to which they returned. Such situations prompted them to pursue professional and business careers instead. The English language, speech and computer skills that they received at seminaries were welcomed in the business world. On the other hand, their classmates who were able to overcome the obstacles in the local churches gave testimony to the helpfulness of their long-term theological training.

This raises an important question: why do we evaluate the effectiveness of ministerial training by the percentage of graduates in positions of pastoral hierarchy?



## Degree-granting liberal arts Christian education

In general, evangelical churches have not seen the creation of Christian liberal arts institutions as a priority. Frequently churches oppose this due to general criticism of secular education as worldly—and also because of the example of Western universities, many of which started as seminaries and today have become very liberal and secular schools.

The Greek dichotomy between the spiritual and the material continues to define what the church considers its sphere of responsibility. Secular professional education as well as the professional life of Christians is surrendered to the secular world.

## Suggestions for theological education globally

The task of theological education is to prepare ministers who have deep theological knowledge and personal integrity, who are integrated into the life and ministry of the church, who are able to understand contemporary challenges and to give biblically and theologically sound answers. The following suggestions are made in order to guide the future development of educational efforts:

### 1. Priesthood of all believers

The Protestant doctrine of the priesthood of all the believers has to be placed into the foundation of ministerial and theological training. It should be theologically and practically reconsidered in the light of a holistic approach to the spiritual and material realms, to ministry and job, to the ministry of 'laity' and 'clergy'.

### 2. Equipping the saints

Ministerial training focus should be changed to equipping the saints for the work of ministry. Equippers should be trained with the purpose of training Christians to serve God in their daily life—at their jobs, in their households, in their communities. These saints are the front-line ministers who should discover their high calling and gifts, and who should be equipped, commissioned and supported in their mission.

### 3. A new generation

The network of biblical schools, theological seminaries and institutes can become a strong

force that can train a new generation of such front-line 'lay-ministers'. This training should help Christians to re-think and integrate their professional education into the foundation of a Christian worldview.

### 4. Training 'equippers'

Educational institutions need to focus on raising up a new generation of church leaders with pastoral, teaching, prophetic, evangelistic and other gifts who clearly understand that their primary task is not to do the all work of ministry themselves as 'clergy', but to equip others. These new clergy need to be raised up in the spirit of servanthood, realising that their main role in the Body is to help others to minister as servants of God; they are equippers, and not 'great ministers' who gather big crowds.

### 5. Integration with church and mission

Educational institutions should clearly see their deficiencies. The teaching ministry is part of church life. Integration with local churches and missionary organisations should become an important value for it.

### 6. Mentoring

Mentoring is a vital tool that helps Christians to grow into maturity. Educational institutions need to promote models of healthy leadership and mentoring.

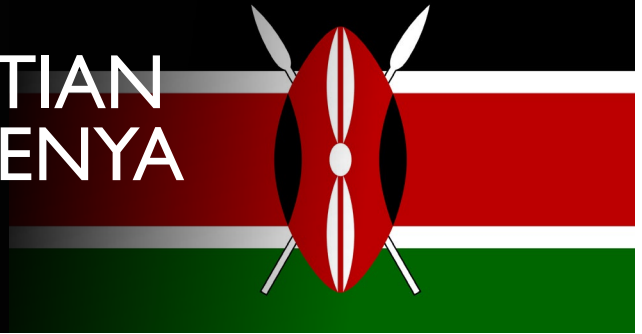
The achievements of the previous 20 years in theological, biblical and leadership training in Eurasia should be preserved and developed further, but used in the framework of the concept of priesthood of all the believers, which will enable the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world.



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# LESSONS FROM CHRISTIAN PEACE-BUILDING IN KENYA

*Paul Borthwick with Jean-Paul Ndagijimana*



## INTRODUCTION

A perusal of global events will often yield stories of inter-ethnic conflict. These range from hate crimes of one group against another, to an attack on another's worship center, to extreme genocidal stories. Sadly, some of these stories even include the Church's active or passive participation.

The stories that get reported less often are those of the Church's role in healing nations—where Christian leaders recognize their failures of the past and take positive steps to repent, recover, and rebuild not only their nations but also the reputation of the Church as moral authority. This is one of these stories—the Kenyan church's recovery after the post-election violence in 2008.

## 2008 CRISIS

Following the Kenyan national elections of 2007, pitting incumbent Mwai Kibaki against Raila Odinga, tensions began to build as Kibaki was declared the winner. Accusations of election-rigging escalated into violence, largely between supporters of Kibaki (mostly members of the largest Kenyan ethnicity, the Kikuyu) and supporters of Odinga (mostly members of the second-largest, the Luo).

By the end of February 2008, more than 1,100 had died and more than 250,000 were internally displaced. The election was “only the Molotov cocktail that ignited the gasoline-soaked heap of ethnic hostilities”.<sup>1</sup>

Hedwig Simuyu-Otsieno has described the intensity of the situation in early 2008—down to the family level<sup>2</sup>. For a long time, inter-marriage between communities had been normal, but many families were now split right down the middle, with people that had been married for years suddenly finding that they could not co-exist.

People lost their homes. Neighbors turned on neighbors. People were afraid to travel from one section of Kibera (one of Nairobi's largest slum communities) to another because Kiberans tended to live in sub-communities of their own ethnic people.

The nation and the world were shocked. No one expected that this sleeping hatred existed in Kenya, much less that it could be awakened and result in brutal murders.

## REPENTANCE

After the violence shattered the apparent stability of this peaceful nation (where over 70 -80% claim to be Christian), the question arose: where was the Church in all this?

Rather than casting all the blame on politicians, pastors courageously took action and began to repent:

- On a national level, the National Council of Churches of Kenya released a statement in which they confessed partisanship and disunity. They confessed that they had “...identified with our people based on ethnicity; and after the elections, we are divided on how to deal with the crisis”.
- They called church leaders to “to recapture their strategic position as the moral authority of the nation. We have put in place measures to enable us to overcome the divisive forces and set off on a new beginning. As the church we will do our best in helping achieve the rebirth of a new Kenya”.<sup>3</sup>
- On a local level, pastors began to offer compassionate relief to those who had been harmed—assisting at camps for displaced people, visiting the violence-ridden areas,

preaching reconciliation. The process of peace-building had begun.

## LESSONS IN PEACE-BUILDING

Pastoral repentance in February 2008 began a long process of peace-building initiatives that continue to this day—and have borne fruit in the peaceful elections of March 2013. Many groups within and outside Kenya began to get involved in addressing the issues that helped provoke or accelerate the violence in 2008 and five years later they are still at work.

In February 2013, I and two ministry colleagues from the USA<sup>4</sup> had the opportunity to be part of this process. We joined with East African leadership from ALARM (Africa Leadership and Reconciliation Ministries, a ministry launched after the Rwandan genocide of 1994) and World Relief Kenya to continue their peace-building initiatives with pastors from two of the 2008 ‘hot spots’—the Kibera slums and the Molo area north of Nairobi. We were invited because two of us are World Relief (USA) Board members and because two of us serve with Development Associates International which utilizes a course entitled ‘Culture, Ethnicity & Diversity’, which the World Relief Kenya staff knew and wanted us to use.

Although our experience was but a microcosm of Kenya’s healing (about 100 pastors participated), it exposed us to a process of peace-building from which the Church around the world can learn. These four lessons stand out:

### 1. Spirit of repentance and reconciliation

In both Kibera and Molo, Rwandan leaders Celestin Musekura (ALARM) and Jean-Paul “JP” Ndagijimana (World Relief Kenya) relayed stories from their own journey after their nation’s genocide. Celestin related how one of the murderers of several of his family members was now forgiven and serving as the caretaker of his mother. Their stories of forgiveness communicated to the pastors that multi-ethnic forgiveness and growth together are possible.

In Molo, JP led the group through a time of confession and forgiveness. There were multiple ethnicities present, and we sat interspersed in a circle. The eldest member of each community became their spokesman.

Each spokesman was instructed specifically to ask the members of other groups for forgiveness for “things that my people did to your people”. Then the representative of the offended group would respond, ideally pronouncing the other community forgiven. All groups participated as both confessors and forgivers.

We were merely observers until JP called upon me to ask forgiveness for the evils done by the white man. He then asked another colleague<sup>5</sup> to confess and ask forgiveness for the negative impact of colonialism. For us Westerners, with our highly individualistic worldview, this act of serving as confessor representing our forefathers was quite awkward, but the spiritual power of the service was tangible.

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“Rather than casting all the blame on politicians, pastors courageously took action and began to repent”.

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This ceremony could have been words only, but this group had been meeting together for months and had been building relationships. There were tears, embraces, and then the ‘forgiver’ would follow the pronouncement of forgiveness with a prayer for God’s blessing on the other’s community.

### 2. Intentionality towards multi-ethnic peace and relationships

After the 2008 violence, World Relief Kenya and others joined together to (in the words of JP) “establish a peace programme in a bid to play an active role in ensuring that the Church is empowered to be actively involved in the peace making process and equipping Church leaders to have the heart, mind and hands of Jesus towards restoration and reconciliation”.<sup>6</sup>

A critically important leader in this initiative was Pastor John Gichinga, former pastor of Nairobi Baptist Church and now a World Relief staff member. Working with World Relief Kenya, they produced a challenging documentary from the 2008 election aftermath entitled “Grave Errors”. The basic message to Christian leaders was: what do we need to do to make sure that this never happens again?

Peace program groups had been meeting together for months by the time we visited. More than 300 Christian leaders from dozens of diverse ethnic communities were involved. They knew that if Kenya was going to change, it had to start with them. Pastor Dorothy Munyao of Jesus the Distinct King Church (Kibera) explained that learning together had taught her that “Peace starts with me. When I have peace, I can be able to spread it to others, starting with my home, my neighbors and our community here in Kibera”.<sup>7</sup>

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“These pastors are representatives of a larger community and they have carried the message of peace-building and reconciliation in their hearts to their communities”.

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Together these pastors began making commitments to preach peace, to encourage election involvement based on the qualities of the political candidates rather than ethnic affiliation, and to contest election results through the courts of law rather than by violence.

Understanding the significance of symbolism, the pastors chose to do things together to illustrate to their congregations that they were committed to Christian unity. The pastors in Molo committed to pulpit exchange where pastors from different churches and denominations preach and interact with churches from other ethnic communities.

In the ethnically-charged slum of Kibera, a local saying warns that you need a passport to go from one neighborhood to another. Here, three weeks before the elections, Christian leaders committed to a joint peace caravan:

- More than 100 pastors marched together through the whole of this huge slum.
- Their slogan stated “Bonga Amani”—we stand for peace. Pastors from one ethnic section of Kibera would preach in another section to show that they were standing together.

### 3. Integral Ministry

The peace-building initiative also carried with it a practical component. Part of the driving

force behind supporting the candidate from one’s own ethnic group was economic. In short, if our man gets elected, our area often benefits with more consistent electricity, better roads, etc.

As part of the goals of the peace-building initiative Christian leaders agreed to address what JP calls the “scarcity mentality”. He explained: “We knew that building for peace would require us equipping leaders to deal with fear and insecurity caused by limited resources, and lack of trust that a leader will not pull all resources to one community and forget others”.<sup>8</sup>

To address this, World Relief Kenya and other groups and churches have established an agricultural program and a savings program in Kibera—with multi-ethnic partnerships built into them.

### 4. Exhorting each other to lead

Pastor Sam Mutongori of the Israel Church (Kibera) challenged his colleagues: “God sends us as leaders, not as tribal representative to His people”.<sup>9</sup> Pastors from Molo agreed that pastors throughout Kenya should join hands pro-actively to:

- preach against tribalism and break tribal boundaries, stereotypical thinking and attitudes;
- preach forgiveness and restoration of relationships just as God forgave us and Christ restored our relationship with him;
- preach the truth, not lie to the congregation or manipulate the truth for selfish gain;
- hold interdenominational meetings;<sup>10</sup>
- pray and intercede for prospective leaders, including a day to fast and pray for the elections;
- take a neutral political stand;
- stand up against propaganda, and discipline pastors involved in it; and
- distance themselves from politicians, refusing to have them campaign during church events.<sup>11</sup>

## HOPE FOR THE FUTURE

Pastor Jackson Nyaribu Magoma of Jesus Revival International Ministry (Molo area) has written: “Though this area has had its challenges in the past, we have hope about the future, and we as children of God have a role to play in making God known. As the church we must be impartial during the election period. We must preach peace”.<sup>12</sup>

JP writes: “These pastors are representatives of a larger community and they have carried the message of peace-building and reconciliation in their hearts to their communities. We pray that God will continue working through his servants in reinforcing peace as the country moves forward”.<sup>13</sup>

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### NOTES:

1. This phrase was developed by PhD candidate Joshua Harper, in a paper prepared at Gordon Conwell Theological Seminary (April 2008).
2. Hedwig wrote this as a paper related to the “Culture, Ethnicity, & Diversity” course taught at Africa International University in August 2012.
3. <http://rescuekenya.wordpress.com/2008/02/21/ncck-executive-committee-press-statement-13-feb-2008/>
4. Our USA team included Tim Breene (Board member of World Relief USA), Michele Breene (staff member of Development Associates International), and myself (staff member of Development Associates International and Board member of World Relief USA).
5. Tim and Michele Breene are both from England and Michele (who was chosen in this exercise) grew up in Kenya.
6. Quoted from our personal correspondence.
7. From feedback compiled by World Relief Kenya.
8. Quoted from our personal correspondence.
9. From feedback compiled by World Relief Kenya.
10. In many situations in Kenya, denominations were planted along ethnic lines so the term “interdenominational” means multi-cultural.
11. Preceding the 2007 elections and subsequent violence, some pastors would yield their Sunday pulpits to politicians from their ethnic community. Some of these pastors reputedly received money and other benefits by doing this.
12. From feedback compiled by World Relief Kenya.
13. Quoted from our personal correspondence.



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*Jean Paul (JP) Ndagijimana is a Rwandan national serving in Kenya as the National Director for World Relief. Prior to joining World Relief, Jean Paul was a Senior Consultant with KPMG, a global financial advisory firm. He holds an MBA in Finance, a B.Com in Business Administration and Management and a Diploma in Economics.*