

THIRD WORLD MISSIONS

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1. Strategic goals

It is of primary importance that the goals for Third World missions are set by the church and not by the Western missions. The evangelization of the entire world must be the scope of her strategy. All the regional evangelical missions should be integrated and mobilized for a jointly supported operation and quick achievement of objectives. Strategies should be indigenous and not foreign but advice should not be refused. There should be a wholesome relationship between the church and the mission for effective working of the mission programs. National and international Third World mission cooperation is needed for the purpose of sharing of ideas, fellowship, prayer support, and financial assistance wherever the need arises. The spirit of domination or authoritarianism must not be allowed in the inter-mission relations. The structure should be formulated and directed by the national mission church people and should not be a carbon copy of Western mission structure.

2. Actions recommended

There must be proper preparation and orientation of national missionaries to be sent out in order to avoid unnecessary casualties. An effective missionary-minded board should be set up for the proper coordination. The regular dissemination of information to member bodies and missionaries should not be ignored. There must be schools of missions, evangelism, church growth, and constant study of the Scriptures in order to equip missionaries who will be sent to new areas. Revival of in-depth evangelistic campaigns in urban and rural areas is a matter of urgency in all Third World constituencies.

If any fund is to be given for the support of the mission by Western mission agencies, it is wise to channel it through the existing church board and not directly to individuals in order to avoid the spirit of divided loyalties on the part of individual missionaries.

The social ministries of medicine, food supplies, clothing, and rehabilitation of nationals into business life will increase their income and advance their social status. There ought to be specific concentration on helping nominal Christians, the conversion of Muslims, neglected ethnic groups, adherents of traditional religions, prisoners, the Armed Forces, the handicapped, street-beggars, the shut-ins, and the aged.

Christian endeavors, e.g., camping, missionary conferences, daily devotion Bible schools, boys' and girls' brigades, youth meetings, Scripture Union, family evangelism, body life ministry, and Campus Crusade for Christ programs are very essential to mission strategy. The importance of tent-making missionaries who earn their living in other areas of their own country or across the borders cannot be over-emphasized. Duplication of efforts and unnecessary multiplicity of mission societies must be eliminated.

3. Plans for follow-up

Regular joint meetings will assist the church in keeping up the resolutions made on mission strategy. Regular Bible study groups will increase the involvement of individual churches and missions. The provision and distribution of literature always has lasting and effective results. The assignment of individual Christian workers for visitation and production of progress reports will stimulate action and produce better results. Regular prayer meetings and repeated spiritual cooperative activities of all types can easily unite mission bodies, strengthen individuals, generate zeal, and inspire action. The use of available resources of men and materials can improve the mission program.

Hindrances to mission strategy are inconsistent Christian living, lack of Bible understanding, Westernization of Christianity, syncretism, Islam, and other cults which are growing at high rates today. The manipulation of people for selfish purposes and exploitation of fellow workers must be stamped out if we want to work together to evangelize our generation with the Gospel of Christ.