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Executive Summary

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BREXIT and its Impact on European Mission

Darrell Jackson

The UK referendum on its EU membership was held on 23 June, with 52% voting to leave and 48% voting to remain. At the heart of UK resistance to closer union with Europe has been an unwavering commitment to traditional notions of unlimited sovereignty based on the British parliamentary tradition and judicial independence. However, in practice, the *Leave* campaign made great gains by drawing attention to the dangers of immigration as a consequence of the UK's open border to the rest of Europe. They also highlighted the EU 'democratic deficit' and its bureaucracy and regulation, championed UK freedom to negotiate its own trade deals and highlighted the savings to be made by leaving. The *Remain* campaign focused on the economic losses that would follow withdrawal, arguing that the benefits of EU membership far outweighed any loss of sovereignty.

There are many explanations for the outcome, including the leadership politics of the Conservative Party; a democratic rejection of political elitism; dissatisfaction with the EU 'democratic deficit'; a populist rediscovery of English identity; the erosion of the vision for post-war European reconciliation and co-operation; and a protest against those held to be responsible for the global economic crisis and consequent austerity.

Affluent classes generally voted to remain; older voters generally to leave; metropolitan urbanites mostly voted to remain; and rural traditionalists mostly to leave. There is a strong statistical correlation between a vote to leave and areas with low incomes. Those who voted to leave might be characterised as having a vision that sees no future in a networked world in which flows of money and power remain concentrated in elite centres. Many young voters who were deeply frustrated by the voting patterns of their parents and grandparents quite simply understood themselves as 'European'.

If the UK does withdraw, it will take many years to deal with the political and economic fall-out. This includes the question whether the strongly pro-*Remain* Scotland will withdraw from the UK and forge its own relationship with the EU. The UK will probably wish to negotiate some sort of access to the single market of the EU. The EU is already insisting that it will come at the cost of the free movement of people. Soul-searching within the EU institutions has prompted them to revisit debate around the EU's 'democratic deficit'; its mismanagement of the migration crisis; the danger that its *Schengen zone* faces; and the need to re-energise convergence processes and promote the benefits of the single market.

Much as the churches spanned the political divide during the Cold War, European churches should rise above nationalist agendas and share their witness to a missionary God whose heart of love extends to people of every nation. Playing their part in the move of God's Spirit across Europe, mission agencies will continue to engage the Good News of Jesus despite any greater complexity involved in funding, placing, and supporting missionaries working within any new political realities of Europe.

Missionaries and mission agency leaders across Europe in the wake of the referendum have encouraged European Christians not to lose hope in a God who continues to call men and women to serve him in advancing the gospel to the ends of the earth. They have urged those who support, those who pray, and those who are sent, to rediscover their true identity in Christ, to condemn xenophobia, to continue to support vulnerable refugees, and to work for open and welcoming societies.

If the current situation has encouraged mission agencies in Europe to ask questions again about their core business and the values of service, radical availability, and sacrifice that shape this, then God will continue to be glorified, even in the midst of political turmoil and uncertainty. Pray for the light of Christ to continue shining in Europe!

The Refugee and the Body of Christ: The impact of the Middle East crisis on our understanding of church

Arthur Brown

The Institute of Middle East Studies (IMES) is a department of the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS) located in Beirut, Lebanon. The purpose of its Middle East Consultation 2016 was to explore the long-term implications of the significant number of refugees from multiple religious backgrounds who now regularly fellowship with other members of the body of Christ. By doing this, it sought to encourage healthy practices between and within different expressions of the local church in MENA, Europe, and beyond.

The fallout of the war in Syria alone has caused the biggest humanitarian crisis since World War Two. Yet this is only one of the sources of the global refugee crisis. Refugees, regardless of religious background, are arriving at the doors of churches in Syria, in Lebanon, across Europe and around the world—often in significant numbers. In many cases they have found a welcoming community ready, if uncertain how, to provide help. As a result, many churches are growing significantly, not only numerically but also in their understanding of holistic or integral mission. Some churches are providing material support and others non-material (social, emotional, and spiritual) support. Many are seeking to do both, discovering how faith may be put into action in new ways.

Significant challenges remain. For many, high levels of fear continue to be a barrier towards any form of social or community integration. In environments of economic and political instability, the additional number of people in desperate need of material provision adds an enormous stress on already fragile contexts. This is compounded by the fear of terrorism. The acceptance or non-acceptance of refugee communities has also become highly politicised.

A recurring theme of the consultation was that hospitality is a central feature of what constitutes the church. The theme of peace, or biblical *shalom*—healing, restoration, reconciliation, well-being, belonging, community, health, salvation—also recurred repeatedly.

The nature of the relationship between the host community—those in a position of relative privilege and power—and their new neighbours was another central part of discussions. The risks associated with a ‘project’ or ‘ministry’ mindset came into clear focus, as new friends who have fled the war in Syria shared honestly about been labelled ‘refugees’. It became clear that any engagement with people fleeing such horrors should be based in relationships of mutual giving and receiving.

The conditions causing such high levels of people movement show no signs of abating. This is going to be an issue for governments, communities, and the church for the foreseeable future.

It is thus becoming increasingly important for the church to seek to break down boundaries and walls between different groups and cultures that have the potential to lead towards enmity.

It should also seek to address the widespread fear of Islam, as well as moving beyond solely meeting the immediate needs of its new neighbours to find ways to address the root causes of conflict and injustice that have led to such migration.

The church should be working with refugees, not for refugees. This will only be possible when unconditional love is demonstrated through listening to their stories. The church should also be a prophetic voice, led by the Holy Spirit and not the media or political view of the day.

Churches need a theology that values human dignity for all and should be open to campaigning for the human rights of those within and beyond their own faith tradition. The church must also be the church, and not simply another NGO.

MENA churches continue to face significant challenges and face very difficult choices on a daily basis on how best to respond. They are in need of loving fellowship with the global church—on equal terms.

The Irresistible Grace of God: The story of North Korea

Jamie Kim

Although North Korea seems impenetrable and impregnable, with no apparent religious freedom, there are signs of hope. Throughout the country's history, God has used Christians, both foreign and indigenous, to woo the people of Korea with his irresistible grace.

North Korea has attempted to eradicate the Christian faith for over 70 years. Throughout these years, those who have sought to engage with North Korea have encountered 'donor fatigue' and criticism of the engagement approach, while some have suffered burnout or left. However, God is not absent in North Korea.

North Korea is no stranger to Christianity. Christian revival, modern medicine, education, and the Independence Movement have been used by God to draw this nation to himself. In 1907, Pyongyang, the then capital of Korea, was declared the 'Jerusalem of the East' due to the vigour of its Christian presence and activities.

Since 1945, many Christians have been persecuted for their faith as the ruling party attempted to eradicate Christianity from the face of North Korea. The persecution and extermination of Christians were so thorough that in the 1970s, Kim Il Sung declared there were no Christians in North Korea.

After Kim Il Sung's death, millions of people died of starvation and malnutrition, and out of desperation, hundreds of thousands of people headed to China in search of food and help. Many North Koreans came to know the love of God there. Thousands became Christians and are now living in North Korea with their personal faith in God. When it was not possible to come to know God's love inside North Korea, many became Christians after coming out to China.

North Korea, although a Communist country like China, is very different. Christianity does not have the same historically negative associations as it does in China. Korean history associates Christianity with progress, education, and liberation. As a result, the recommendation is for Christian organizations to engage North Korea transparently as Christian entities.

Since 1995, over 70 Christian organizations and churches have been welcomed by the North Korean government. Moreover, many secular organizations employ Christians inside North Korea. Christian organizations are welcomed because of their integrity and benefit to the nation. Therefore, a disproportionate percentage of people working inside North Korea (as well as with North Koreans outside the country) are Christians. In God's sovereignty and timing, he will allow Christian goodwill to bring spiritual dividends to the nation in ways we cannot fathom.

In February, 80 professionals, ministry experts, and church leaders gathered in Pasadena, California, to pray and envision ways for the global church to be more involved. Through the meetings, Christians shared incredible stories of living and working inside North Korea. Moreover, Christian professionals shared testimonies of their concern for North Koreans and of their willingness to go and work inside. Various challenges were discussed too. How is the church preparing to equip these young professionals to be engaged in difficult circumstances in North Korea?

Christian unity will be one of the major challenges as North Korea opens up. Throughout recent history, Christians have not done well in exhibiting cooperation and unity. Unless Christians give priority to unity there, it will be difficult for North Koreans to differentiate cults working there (such as the Moonies) from orthodox Christians. We are not engaged in competing or disparate enterprises. If Jesus is Lord of our organization and our purpose is to bless the people of North Korea, then we need to proclaim one unified message of God's love.

Theoretically, all Christians stand for unity until they or their organizations have something to lose. However, in order for true unity that will win the world to Christ to be established, sacrifice is essential. May we be brought to complete unity so that the North Koreans will know (John 17:23). *Soli Deo gloria!*

Evangelism and Apologetics Confusion: How the Apologetics Spectrum can help

Tom Price

There is a real confusion in the global church concerning the relationship between apologetics and evangelism. I have heard it around the world on the lips of pastors, ministers, workers, and other believers. I saw it as I came to faith and began to try to lead my friends to Christ.

I will present a conceptual model which was life-changing for me, and I have found that it clearly matches the biblical directives, as well as the fuller biblical narrative. The *Apologetics Spectrum* involves three kinds of outreach activity from the believer to the not-yet believer: *Subversion*, *Persuasion*, and *Proclamation*.

At the subversive stage, the believer is interested in loosening the chains. His/her aim is to ask questions or present reflections that will ‘shake the sceptic’s cage.’ Jesus used this kind of approach a great deal, and his questions showed that he listened closely. His questions were subversive because they opened up the issue, getting to the heart of the matter. Discussing popular level secular films, music, and art—while keeping a clear conscience before God—can be an amazing vehicle for opening up the conversation. You may not always get all the way to the gospel, but that does not matter.

Persuasion involves both listening and giving reasons for the truth and reliability of the Christian worldview. This involves defending your own position by sharing the reasons behind your belief. For example, this might take the form of presenting a sceptic with some of the excellent reasons we have for accepting the Bible as a true picture of Jesus. Alternatively, it might be as simple as sharing how much difference having a relationship with God has made in your own life. Looking behind the question or the objection that someone asks you to answer can reveal undisclosed or more personal concerns. There is always a question behind the question, and to discover it, you just need to listen and ask a few good questions. Then when we speak, when we offer our apologetic, it can be aimed exactly where the person is—at the heart. This is what Jesus did, treating people as individuals, with different questions and concerns.

Proclamation requires unpacking the core gospel message. It requires careful handling of Scripture to unpack the message of the Bible faithfully and it is helpful to ensure you really understand what the gospel actually is (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4). Jesus spoke to many different people, but he always got to the need to decide about responding to what God was doing. We need to anticipate more carefully what our messages and sermons might sound like to someone who is not yet a Christian, and to adapt our communication style and tone, often quite significantly, to preach the same gospel, but through words and concepts that they are familiar with (as Paul did in Acts 17).

So the *Apologetics Spectrum* provides an understanding of mission that marries evangelism and apologetics. The model as presented so far has an omission: God’s role. This is God’s redemptive love story, not ours. So you need to keep a prayerful conversation going with God as you reach out, and you might find that the Holy Spirit will provide you with insights as you pray because the Holy Spirit unlocks the person from the inside.

The global church needs our mission work to be friendlier, more convincing, and more biblical. The *Apologetics Spectrum* is an effective and biblical way of understanding how we should be reaching the world for Christ. I would encourage you to get out there and be creative with how you reach out to persuade people and proclaim the gospel, remembering that God is much bigger than your mistakes and that he can always catch the ones you miss.

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Lausanne Global Analysis

Lausanne Global Analysis seeks to deliver strategic and credible information and insight from an international network of evangelical analysts to equip influencers of global mission.

Editor's Note: The Lausanne Movement connects influencers and ideas for global mission, with a vision of the gospel for every person, an evangelical church for every people, Christ-like leaders for every church, and kingdom impact in every sphere of society. Our three foundational documents are *The Lausanne Covenant*, *The Manila Manifesto*, and *The Cape Town Commitment*.

The Lausanne Movement is a global network of individuals and ministries from a wide range of denominations, nationalities, theologies, and strategic perspectives that shares an evangelical faith and commitment to global mission. Articles in the *Lausanne Global Analysis* represent a diversity of viewpoints within the bounds of our foundational documents. The views and opinions expressed in these articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the personal viewpoints of Lausanne Movement leaders or networks.

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