

A THRIVING CHURCH FOR EVERY PEOPLE



**"So Many
Yet to Hear"**
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Dear Friends,

A few hours before our Lord went to the cross, in what is often referred to as His “high priestly prayer,” the Lord Jesus said, “This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent” (John 17:3). Eternal life is found in one source: knowing the Father and Jesus the Christ, whom the Father sent.

Who is the Lord referencing when He asks the Father “that they may know You”? In the next 40 days, the Lord will have died, risen from the dead, appeared many times to many disciples and ascended before their eyes back to the Father. His final words to His disciples are recorded for us by Mathew, Mark and Luke. It becomes clear in those final words who “they” are in His prayer. “Make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19). “Preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). “[Y]ou shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

In John 17:3, the Lord was asking His Father to make it possible for all people to come to know the Father and His Son. He wanted all people to have that eternal life found in knowing Him. Jerusalem heard this news in those very days. That good news reached Judea and Samaria shortly thereafter when believers in Jerusalem were scattered by persecution after the death of Stephen and moved to Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:1-4). That leaves “the end of the earth.” So how is that going?

According to most sources, today there are still some 6,000 unreached people groups. These are groups of people who share a common language and ethnic identity but do not have access to the clear teaching of the gospel message in their heart language. Further, these groups lack opportunity to grow to maturity in their knowledge of Christ due to the lack of functioning local churches in their people group. So, there is much left to do in that “end of the earth” category of the Lord’s command in Acts chapter 1.

This issue of Ethnos Magazine focuses on the process of entering new regions where these unreached people groups live, entering with the purpose of introducing them to “the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.” As you will read, it can be a long and difficult process.

Yours in Christ,

Steve Sanford, Ethnos360 (USA) CEO

*(Ethnos Canada operates in Canada,
Ethnos360 is the US entity within Global Partners)*

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NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

THE ASMAT PEOPLE

The Asmat people are one of hundreds of people groups in Asia Pacific who are living in spiritual darkness. The Asmat look good on the outside. They have a church, they pray and sing praise to God, but when you look closer, they are as lost as everyone else. Their culture of fear is still so deeply engrained side-by-side with their understanding of Scripture.

Some even fear rainbows while also knowing about Noah's ark and that the rainbow is a symbol of

promise—something you don't need to be afraid of. The Asmat people have heard about Jesus, but their understanding is a mile wide and an inch deep.

Pray for Pastor Hendrikus and the church leadership. They are deeply discouraged right now. Pray for them as they share God's Word and encourage the believers. Pray that God would provide more missionaries to serve in Asmat.

— *Daniel and Kristina Hansen, Asia Pacific*



LANGUAGE LEARNING

There is something profoundly humbling (sometimes humiliating) about learning another language and culture. You step off the airplane as a reasonably competent adult; suddenly you can't even ask where the bathroom is.

My wife and I experienced this voluntary humiliation twice in Asia; then we helped many others on their own acquisition adventure. And now, God brought us to Mexico, and we are experiencing it for a third time. For us, as we struggle through the final months of learning our

third foreign language, we keep reminding ourselves that language is not just something we acquire to put in our brain: Language is a doorway to developing relationships with people who need Jesus.

— *Brian and Brooke Johnson, Mexico*



CULTURE CORNER: FREEDOM OF SPEECH

In most Western cultures, we are taught that it is respectful to refrain from talking when a pastor, teacher or speaker is teaching. An engaged, attentive class is one that remains quiet while the teacher is speaking. Gary and Esther Smith learned that this is not so with the Dinangat people of Papua

New Guinea. "Their culture is so different from ours. When they start talking to each other in the middle of the message, it means that something significant has spoken to them. ... [T]here were a couple times I had to just stop talking because they were processing the points to each other."



BANWAON BIBLE DEDICATION

Pray for this month to be an eye-opening time for the Banwaon people. Albert Castelijns writes, “We flew to Manila in the middle of typhoon season, arrived safely ... very late due to extensive delays, met with colleagues, updated mission personnel on the Banwaon work and had an excellent meeting with the Philippine Bible Society, finalizing a timeline for the printing of the Banwaon New Testament in March. We have people flying in internationally for this, including some of our children and hopefully the missionaries who were first involved in the Banwaon peoples’ lives, leading them to Christ and then faithfully discipling the new believers.”

Please pray for Albert as he spends 16-18 hours a day working on getting the New Testament ready in Australia as their translation formatter, Bob Clark, works across the world in Indiana. Albert joked with Bob, “Talk about making the most of a day” as they work around the clock in opposite time zones. The Castelijns write, “Flat out? Yes! Resting? Definitely!” They are certainly “flat out”—busy with God’s work—but they are resting in the strength of the Lord.

— Albert and Lynne Castelijns, Philippines



VITAL SUPPORT MISSIONARIES

What do missionaries around the world do when their lights go out? When can a church planter have the time to fix countless machines that don’t always do their job in remote villages? How can church planters focus on learning the language, translating Scripture and teaching the Bible when their appliances are breaking?

Mark Corbett is an incredible electrician with a background in fixing the many technical issues that hinder missionaries on the field today. He and his family are planning to be sent out to use this experience on the field. Pray for Mark and Melissa Corbett’s time this spring speaking in different churches, doing various training through Ethnos360 and attending a local missions conference while saying goodbye to their incredible church family and ministry in northern Kentucky. Their hope is to get on the field by August 2025 to aid interior missionaries with technical issues.

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MOBILIZATION — THE NEED TO GO

My wife and I went to Papua New Guinea as church planters. In the people group where we orientated, the people were intermarried with another people group. As a result of the gospel in our people group, the other group came and asked for a missionary. We told them we couldn’t give them a missionary, so they returned sometime later with a pig and said they wanted to “buy” a missionary. As a result of this incident, our home assignments became recruiting campaigns.

Some years later, we returned to the USA because my wife needed a kidney transplant. At that time, we joined the Mobilization Team. Our efforts are to recruit more people who will become church planters among the unreached. We need more people who will step out of the pews and become church planters.

— Dave and Joyce Hilt,
Ethnos360 Representative to the Southwest USA and Global Missions Advocates

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SIMBA BAPTISM

Jack and Suzie Russell minister itinerantly among the Simba people of Bolivia. “The work continues daily, and once a year each of the three latest church plants holds a three-day Bible camp [that] they call a ‘conference.’”

“In October, a conference was held in one Simba community, and there were 24 [people] who made professions of faith and were baptized. In November, there was a second conference in a different community where the Simba church is a little more established, [and] there were six new professions of faith and five baptized.... [T]he third conference took place in the largest Simba community December 29 through January 1.

There are many believers in that community that are very enthusiastic about their new faith in Christ. They love to gather together to sing and worship the Lord ‘Simba style.’ It is wonderful to see. There were 10 new professions of faith, and 32 were baptized. Praise God for the Simba churches that are being established.”

— Jack and Suzie Russell,
Bolivia



So Many Yet to Hear

Where is God sending us?

You may be familiar with the story of Paul Fleming, founder of Ethnos, then known as New Tribes Mission. After hearing a message from a pastor, Paul recognized for the first time that salvation is by God's grace alone through faith, not through anything Paul could do. Paul put his trust in Jesus Christ that night. "I realized that, now that I belonged to Christ, it was my business to follow Him," Paul said.

Paul was determined that he would be willing to go to the mission field if God would send him. As he grew in his walk with

the Lord, "desperation gripped [his] heart," and Paul began to realize that it was not enough for him to just be willing, but he needed to act in obedience to the Lord's command to make disciples of all nations.

On February 7, 1937, Paul and his wife, Cherrill, set sail for Singapore en route to Sumatra, Indonesia, but were redirected to British Malay and its surrounding territory as the gateway to one of the greatest unevangelized fields of the world. When they learned of the need in British Malay, the Flemings changed their destination. "I found out later," Paul wrote, "that the Apostle Paul didn't

know where he was going either. He thought he was going to Asia, but the Lord changed his course."

Paul and Cherrill formed a team with a small group of missionaries, and the gospel began to spread throughout the region. Because they listened to God's instruction for them to go and allowed God to direct their steps, a people who had never heard God's Word were given the chance to hear and to believe.

While the methods Ethnos Canada and the other Global Partners utilize today may differ from those of Paul Fleming and

In a world with so many people who have yet to hear God's Truth, how do we determine where we should go?

*** Keith Copley and his wife, Angie,** began serving with Ethnos360 in 1998. They lived and worked among the Hewa people, an isolated people group in Papua New Guinea (PNG), first learning their culture and language, then teaching the Hewa God's Word in the Hewa's own language, eventually witnessing the birth of the Hewa church. Keith then served as the Managing Director for the field of PNG.

*** Clark Aspinwall** is a member of the IMT. Clark and his wife, Mary, served for more than 30 years in Southeast Asia Mainland (SAM). In SAM, Clark began serving as a church planter among an unreached people group and then served on the field leadership team.

early missionaries, our goal remains the same: to see a thriving church for every people. In a world with so many people who have yet to hear God's Truth, how do we determine where we should go? What factors must we consider before entering a country or region for the first time to begin church planting work among an unreached people group?

More than 6,000 of the world's people groups are still unreached. So, do we throw a dart at a map? Should we spin a globe and go where our finger lands? While God can certainly use these things, Ethnos and the other Global Partners like to take a more strategic approach.

IT STARTS WITH A NEED.

*Keith Copley serves on the International Ministries Team (IMT) as a Church Planting and Leadership Consultant, so understanding the need for missionaries is his first step. He explained, "Often the IMT will get a request or contact that initiates a conversation about a need." When we speak of a "need," we are referring to a people who need God's Word; this does not refer to physical or practical needs, although these needs often accompany spiritual needs.

Each need that is presented to the IMT is unique, so there is not a one-size-fits-all pattern for how to go about starting work in a new place. What works in one country might not work in another, and sometimes God opens doors in ways we don't expect. Ethnos has determined, however, that there are certain key components of beginning church planting work in a new-to-us country that cannot be compromised. We want to be flexible in how we approach a new work and be open to whatever doors God might open for us. At the same time, there is no need to re-invent the wheel, and research and experience have shown us some best practices that have become standard procedure when looking at entering a country for the first time.

THE RESEARCH BEGINS.

After a need is presented to the IMT, a small team is formed, and research begins. This team is responsible for gathering valuable information that will determine the next steps. We cannot overlook the importance of research in the process of church planting in a new region.

First and foremost, the team must conduct research to determine if there really is a need. Organizations such as Joshua Project work to compile and share data on people groups around the world. This data is very helpful for Ethnos in determining the needs in different regions. If we can understand which people groups are categorized as "reached" and "unreached" or "least reached," we can begin to form an idea of where to go next. (As a sidenote, within the context of this article, the terms "unreached" and "least reached" are used synonymously.)

*As Clark Aspinwall points out, just because a people group is categorized as unreached does not mean that no work is being done there. He says, "A lot of times



The goal is to come alongside the national Church in the work they are already doing among their people to see God glorified.

you're going to have your bigger mission groups already involved" in church planting and discipleship. This is something that can be researched from outside the country during this initial stage. But as the team investigates what work is already being done among unreached people groups of the country, there comes a point when the research needs to move from the desk to the field.

THE INITIAL VISIT

It is now time for the team to make plans to visit the country. Before travel can begin, preparations must be made. The team often will use this time to build relationships with contacts in-country and form a strategy for their visit. Methods can vary greatly depending on the country but often include booking transportation and accommodations, gathering provisions and performing numerous other details that would go into planning any other missions-focused trip.

"Then," Keith says, "a small team is sent in for a visit to gain a good understanding of the condition of the Church on the ground and an understanding of the needs being expressed." The team meets with national believers and visits the people to assess their interest in hearing God's Word. Does the Church desire to grow in the Lord? Does the Church recognize the needs of unreached people groups? Does the Church desire to bring the Good News to their neighbours who have not heard? Is the Church working to engage unreached people groups? What needs does the Church have?

The goal is to come alongside the national Church in the work they are already doing among their people to see God glorified. As Keith puts it, "The Church is always the primary driving factor." The team shares what we do as an organization—not to downplay what the Church is or

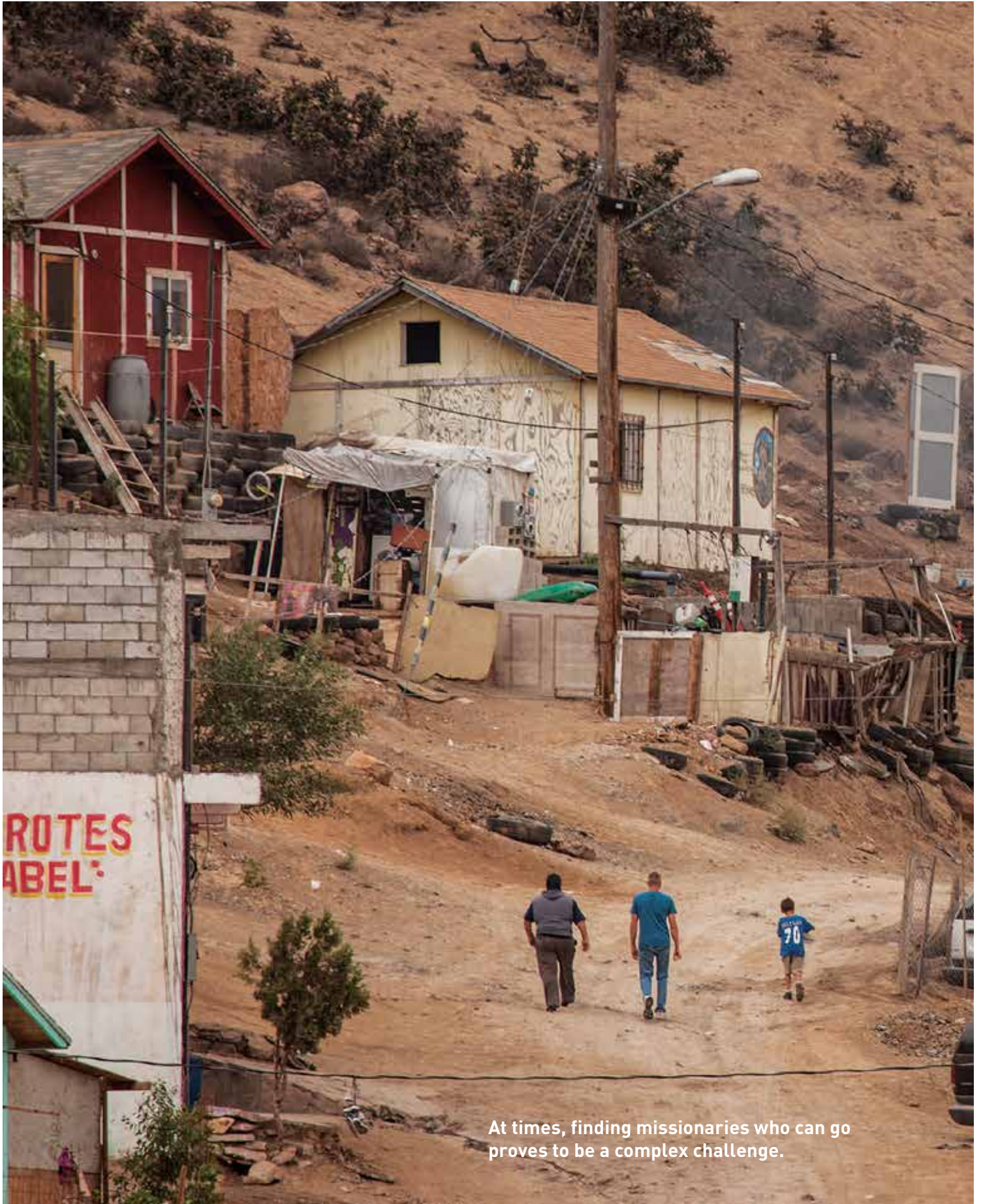
isn't doing, but to find ways in which Ethnos and the local church can work together. "We're learning to be careful as we go in; we're not judging," Clark says. "We're asking, 'How can we serve here?' And if there is truly a need, we want to be able to go in with hearts of servants."

A LOOK AT THE HOW AND THE WHO

While on this initial trip, the team typically not only focuses on the condition of the Church but also asks questions and conducts research to determine how we can send missionaries into this new context and who can go. To determine this, we must ask questions such as: Are the people of this region hostile to God's Word? How accessible is this country to our organization? Is there a best way to enter the country? What is security like for foreigners, especially foreign missionaries, living in this country? How can we support missionaries and keep them safe while they minister here? What are our transportation options for missionaries and their supplies while in-country?

It serves us well to be flexible in our plans. Sometimes God closes one door and opens another. In fact, there are usually many more open doors than there are missionaries to walk through them! "I would say there's more opportunity than we have personnel to fill," Clark added. "There's need, and the Church recognizes it, and there have been invitations into those things that they're already doing. It's been encouraging."

Using the information gathered in the initial trip, the IMT will determine what is necessary in order to begin this new work. The IMT will also consider whether there are missionaries willing and equipped to serve as consultants, leaders, church planters and support missionaries in this new country.



At times, finding missionaries who can go proves to be a complex challenge.

At times, finding missionaries who can go proves to be a complex challenge. Even if there are missionaries willing and equipped to go, sometimes they are not the right fit for the context. Factors such as nationality, ethnicity and physical appearance can affect the people's perception of the missionary. In some cases, if the missionary is not able to blend in, this can put the missionary at risk and can compromise the work in that country. Clark says that in these instances, it is wiser to trust that God will raise up missionaries who would be better suited for the context, people who are a little more inconspicuous.

In many areas of the world, people labelled as *missionaries* or *Bible teachers* are met with skepticism or even hostility. The missionary team must be more subtle or even creative when engaging with these unreached people. Research is vital!

THE MISSIONARY TEAM

As important as this research and planning has been, it does not mean much for the unreached people group until we send people to bring them God's Word. So, whom will we send? Or, the more accurate question would be, whom is God going to send?

This is another stage in the process of church planting that can vary significantly. Sometimes there are missionaries who have already built relationships with contacts in the country. Other times missionaries are ready to begin serving on a church planting team, but they are not yet sure where God is leading them. Still other times, willing missionaries may not yet be trained and equipped or do not have adequate financial support. But fundamentally, missionaries should be people who, like Paul Fleming, feel "desperation gripping their hearts" to act in obedience to God's command to make disciples of all nations. In addition to this heart of obedience is the need for a solid foundation. Ethnos missionaries must go through foundational Bible teaching, receive valuable training and form partnerships with churches and individuals who will support them with prayer, encouragement and finances. This process can take years, but it is important that our missionaries be trained and equipped to be effective servants.

A STRATEGY FOR ENGAGEMENT

When the resources and personnel are assembled and everything is in order, the Global Ministries Agreement (GMA) board and the IMT will make plans for engagement. This is an exciting time in church planting work. Our missionaries are venturing into a new country for the first time in our history in order to engage with an unreached people group.

When we think of the task at hand and we recognize that eternity is at stake for those who have not yet heard and believed, it is easy to want to rush this process along. We don't have much time! Even so, we desire to see thriving churches established, and this takes time.

Ethnos missionaries must go through foundational Bible teaching, receive valuable training and form partnerships with churches and individuals who will support them with prayer, encouragement and finances.





We are there to engage on the edge of the Church and assist it in moving into new areas where God's Word has not made impact.

Rather than rushing in, dropping off copies of God's Word and leaving, it is far more beneficial to the people if the missionaries take the time to establish relationships and learn their culture and language.

Typically, the missionaries will first learn the culture and language at the national level, which is a part of a process known as CLA, or culture and language acquisition. They will get connected with the local church and gather more information about the unreached people group. This can take several years before the team engages directly with the unreached people group. "The process is fluid, but the team must keep the long-term goal of engaging the least-reached in mind to keep the process on target," Keith says. "We are there to engage on the edge of the Church and assist it in moving into new areas where God's Word has not made impact."

Once the missionary team is ready to engage directly, they will make plans to live among the people group. This usually involves receiving permission from the people and their leaders to live within their community and either finding existing housing or building their own. The team will then take the next step of CLA: learning the culture and language at the people group level. Most times, there are similarities between the national culture and language and the people group's culture and language, but there are also important differences that can significantly impact Bible translation down the road. Therefore,

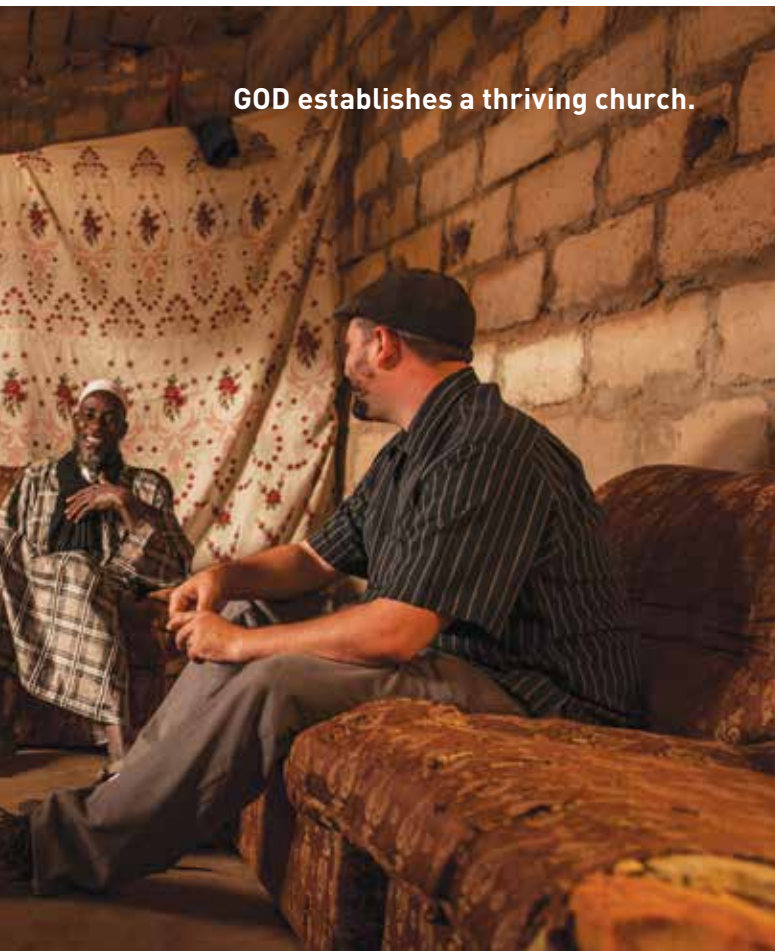


it is important for missionaries to be fluent in both the national language and the people's heart language, the language the people group knows best. All the while, the missionaries work to establish meaningful relationships with their new neighbours.

Often, the people group does not have its language in written form. In this case, the missionaries will develop a phonetically written language based on the people group's verbal language and then teach the people to read and write in their own language. This can be a long and tedious task, and literacy is an ongoing undertaking, but it is crucial if the people are to be able to read, study and grow in God's Word in their own Bible long after the missionaries have left.

THE GOAL IS A THRIVING CHURCH.

The missionaries will teach through the Bible chronologically from Genesis to Revelation in the people's heart language. It is our desire and our goal that, as they study God's Word together, they will recognize God's story of grace throughout the Bible and will put their faith in Christ's redemptive work on the cross for their salvation. As the people come to believe, a church is born. The people grow in spiritual maturity and in unity, function as a local body and as members of the Body of Christ, make disciples, and begin to share the Truth with others who have not yet heard. God establishes a thriving church.



GOD establishes a thriving church.

STORY FROM THE FIELD: A PIONEERING ATTITUDE

Dan Rabe serves on the IMT as both IMT Chairman and Director of African Ministries. Over the years, Dan and his wife, Sharon, played an influential role in bringing Ethnos into new-to-us countries in Africa.

Dan explained that the IMT “keeps our finger on the pulse of the world needs” and is aware of “various majority unreached areas.” Dan shared a real-life account of what it looks like for Ethnos to begin a work in a new country. Note that this is not a prescriptive example but simply how God worked through His servants in this specific instance. Names have been changed for security reasons.

“We first heard about the potential of God leading us into a particular country in Africa when we met Eric and Joan. They approached us and said they felt the Lord was leading them to a particular country in Africa, and what was particularly unique about the situation is that Eric is from this country originally. He had to leave the country with his family when he was 12 years old because of conflict and strife, so they fled to the USA. He was raised in an American culture context [and was] American in his expression and his way of life. Eric and Joan had both been through Ethnos360's missionary training, and he wanted to know if there was any way that Global Partners might be interested in working in his country of origin. And, ironically, the country which he is [from is] one of the countries that lies within ... one of the areas that fit our purpose statement.

“Here's a gentleman who's from that country and, with the training he has received, wishes to go back. That catches our attention. We have no infrastructure in that country. We have no field leadership team. We have no other Global Partners personnel there. And yet our response to him was: ‘We're willing to accompany him as part of Global Partners and see what God wants to do.’

“Rather than make a one-week or two-week visit, we wanted Eric and Joan to move back into the country, connect with the local church and gain a sense of what God is doing [in order] to make decisions about whether we would open a new field. Over the next three to five years, we would have a much better understanding [to] make a decision: Is there a role for Global Partners?

“They made a first visit to connect with family and to spend time looking at some of the linguistic dynamics. Then there was a second trip in which they visited one of the strategic cities in the eastern part that lies in a safe, peaceful area. [Based on the information gathered in this second trip,] they decided that they would move their family to that city.

“We want them to become messengers who will draw local people to want to hear the gospel. In order to do that, we need to understand not only their language, but also the following: What are the values that make a person respectable? What is important [to the people]? How does an important message get communicated?



HE is the one who is going to build His Church, and HE rules over the nations.

“Eric and Joan have been there now for over a year, and they’re engaging well in connecting with the local church [and] learning Swahili. But I would say one of the challenges of moving in this way, [is] it’s far better for getting firsthand data rather than just impressions from a short visit, but it demands a pioneering attitude. There’s no one that’s gone before Eric and Joan.

“Together with a single lady that has joined them along the way, ... they are an exploratory team. They’re learning how to pursue sustained living in the country. They’ll need to understand [these issues]: What paperwork needs to be done? What are the implications if unrest hits the area? What are their escape routes? Will they be able to locate a strategic airport? [They need to figure out] all of those things, as well as connect with the local church and understand what is going on in terms of the Body of Christ. And those are not easy things to do on top of learning language and understanding culture, [learning] how people think and what spiritual life looks like. Not having a like-minded community around them is especially challenging, but, by God’s grace, they are proving to be resilient.

“[There is a lot] to be praying for, but I would tell you there are no regrets. They understand the key role that they’re playing, not only for their future work, but also for many who will be coming behind them.

With every stage of this process of church planting in a new country, there are many variables, and nothing is set

in stone. What works one time might not work the next time, and God, in His sovereignty, often works in ways that we cannot predict. Rather than looking at this as our work, meaning Ethnos and the other Global Partners’ work, we want to look at this as God’s work. He is the one who is going to build His Church (Matthew 16:18), and He rules over the nations (Psalm 22:28). When we remember this, we recognize that it is a great privilege to be used by Him!



Contributing Writer

Abbie Patterson taught English in a public high school until God laid it on her heart to serve Him in full-time missions. For the first several years of her life, her parents served as missionaries with Ethnos360, first in Mexico, then at the Home Office in Florida. In 2023, Abbie returned to the Home Office to serve as a staff writer/editor. She is sent by Faith Bible Church of Jasper, Texas.

INTERFACE Papua New Guinea 2024

I have my black hiking sandals in my left hand. The Velcro tore loose from the strap on the right shoe a few weeks back, when Interface had just started. I think at the time I was swimming over a coral reef off the north shores of Papua New Guinea. Now, thanks to the broken strap on my shoe and the slick reddish mud on the mountains we're hiking up, the shoes do more harm than good. Our guide, an elder in the village church, told me to take them off miles ago. My bare feet certainly get better traction on the steep parts.

We've reached another fallen tree—the jungle version of a bridge. This log is narrower than my shoulders and black with wet slime. It spans a deep ravine. I look up at our guide, who is already out on the log, balancing effortlessly like he is taking a stroll down the sidewalk. He's looking back at me with concern.

If he can do this, so can I. ... He wouldn't lead us across this bridge if he thought I couldn't make it—[but] he's watching my every move, poised to spring back and try to grab my hand.

I step out onto the log one foot at a time. I've actually crossed dozens of logs on this hike already, some narrower than this one. But this one

is unusually high and long—it must have been a huge tree before it fell. I look at the ravine below. It's 30 feet down to a rushing river full of boulders. I don't usually get queasy just from looking down, but pure logic has got me upset this time: If I fall, I am either dead or seriously injured. In the best-case scenario that I'm badly hurt, I am miles out in the jungle. Once I get back to the village, there is no way for me to get to a hospital. We would have to wait for a helicopter to medivac us out. *And I volunteered for this hike!*

So, I do what my little brother tells me to do when we play sports: “lock in.” I narrow my scope from the magnificent, green, shiny-with-moisture-and-leaves jungle around us. I block out the river and the muddy far side of the ravine and even the mud and twigs stuck in my clothes and hair, and I focus on one thing: the feet of the person ahead of me. Every time he takes his foot off the log to take a step, I put mine right where his was. I am not particularly good at walking across slick logs over steep drops into rushing rivers miles out in the jungle. But he is still upright, and if I put my feet exactly where he is showing me, I'll make it too. For me, the key to the jungle is being so focused on the feet of your guide that you don't even see the path.

I went to Interface hoping that God would just strike me with a lightning bolt of revelation about my life's purpose. That's probably what every Christian senior in college wants. But I got back off the plane in Los

Angeles with the same two suitcases and memories of what may well have been the best six weeks of my life, not a play-by-play set of marching orders from God.

While I was at Interface, I learned amazing truths about how good, good, GOOD God is and what a gift we have in His Word. I met people and saw places and learned customs so different from my own—some of which I loved and some of which made me cry and some of which I hated. I heard the stories of the [people groups] who are out there waiting, dying as they wait for the gospel, just as they've waited for thousands of years. Haven't they waited long enough?

I lived so much life in six weeks that it was hard to explain when I got home. It was a jungle of beautiful and exciting and the best and the worst. I am thrilled and terrified to be part of sharing the gospel to the furthest ends of the earth. And I don't know exactly how I ought to do that—but God keeps showing me the next step. Right now, I am watching His feet, ready to put mine where His have gone before.

As you may have guessed, I made it across that log.

After Interface, I am committed to watching the feet of my Saviour so closely that I don't notice the anxiety, pride and unknown dangers that want to consume me. By His great saving grace, I will walk behind Him until one day I look up and see the glorious, thrilling vista He saves for those who follow Him with everything.

—Natalie McDaniel, Interface 2024



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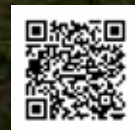
What Ethnos missionaries are saying,
from the field in Asia Pacific:

“One thing that I am constantly grateful for, on a daily basis, is the training that I received to do what I’m doing today; it has given us the tools to accomplish this.”

“Training has been crucial for us to be able to do what we’re doing here. We’re working with a monolingual people group; there’s no go-between language. So in order to do that, we have to have the tools necessary: phonetics, phonemics, linguistics.”

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PRAY Stressors Missionaries Face



"I kept track a couple of weeks ago. In one week, I had conversations with missionaries and leaders regarding such things as: mystery illnesses that forced the missionaries to return from the field, a house fire, miscarriage, other health concerns resulting in ER visits, conversations about legal matters and a retired missionary having a stroke. It was quite a week, and the next week held its own challenges. I was reminded again of Matthew 6:34, "Sufficient for the day is its own trouble."

To this, a Member Care teammate responded:

"Part of our job (which is hard to explain to others) is that much of what we hear is heavy. Some conversations

are very encouraging, but some are not. When grown men and women are crying in your presence with the challenges they are facing, it is hard! Member Care work is so different than doing a task such as building, packing boxes, etc. It is about people. We have to be fully, mentally engaged in conversation and coming alongside [the person]. It is a great calling, but it is a different one! We love it though!"

Pray for missionaries facing constant, difficult challenges that they would find refreshment in the Lord. Pray also for wisdom of those encouraging them.

—Tom and Danielle Brendle, USA

PRAISE The Lord Provides and Sustains



"I have finally finished coining the Kantuq alphabet based on the data that I have collected for a while. It cannot be possible without your prayers and encouragement. Now I can write the language in a consistent way.

"It is hard to see any results in this long-term ministry. There are many times when I am discouraged, but I see the hand of our faithful Father working with me. Praise the Lord; He is the one who takes care of me all the time.

"[In an answer to prayer,] I have found a village [that is] strategically located. Our leadership team agreed on my moving to the village. I have been visiting some people there and building relationships with them. There is also a grandfather who practices all the rituals [so I can learn the culture and language]. He wants to tell me so many of their oral stories which are necessary to see their worldview. Please keep praying for the process of moving to this village."

Praise the Lord for language progress, endurance in long-term ministry and His hand in building new relationships.

—Yu Jung Kang, Asia Pacific

PRAY Worldview Impacts Everything



Jesse Walker teaches at Pusdim, a four-year missionary training centre in Asia Pacific. The students at Pusdim are receiving training to become missionaries and reach unreached people groups in their region and around the world.

“The stories you grow up hearing impact the tacitly held assumptions you hold about reality, which impact what you believe to be true or false, which impacts your values about what is good and bad, which impacts the actions you make every single second of every single day of your life!”

“This is what we call someone’s worldview, and these precious

worldviews are upheld inside the socio-cultural institutions that we take part in every week like church, our workplace and our family/house.

“Please pray we could get all of this extremely important information across so that in the future they can dissect their future target people group’s worldview and then figure out how to develop curriculum and other teaching material that will truly cause change to happen in the hearts of these people from the Word of God and ultimately the Holy Spirit!”

—Jesse Walker, Asia Pacific

PRAISE Naty



in the past. At least that is what we assume. Then we go deeper and find out that there is more to the story.

As we have gone deeper in our relationship with Naty, we have found that there is indeed more under the surface. She was one of the first believers [among the Cora people group] when missionaries came to the village 60 some years ago. Not only did she and her husband (now deceased) both believe, but they fought legally for the rights of their people to leave their traditions and become Christians. Not only did they legally fight, they also donated part of their land for the church building to be built on it

(a building now unused). She left her rituals behind and has clung to her Saviour for decades. Oh yeah, there is more to the story for Naty than what meets the eye!

Just a few weeks ago she decided to get baptized! She still comes to church and desires to worship God. She is a consistent part of the church and is a blessing to us all!

You can thank God for Naty and all that she has done. You can also pray for her as most of her children do not believe in Christ as their Saviour, and I know that weighs on her.

—Lucas and Jessica Rondy
Central Mexico

Every church has someone like Naty. A nice elderly lady who seems to blend into the background. Probably isn’t doing much for the Lord, probably hasn’t

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AN MK FOR MKS

All four of our girls have been a significant part of our ministry, and it has been a joy and privilege to raise them in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and do life and ministry with them. As MKs, or missionary kids, our girls have had more cultural experiences, unique opportunities and front-row seats to overseas missions than most Christians have in a lifetime. MKs are a huge part of missions, and their physical, emotional and spiritual health is essential to continued ministry by their missionary parents.

This brief article is focused on Avalon, her life as an MK in PNG and the ministry she is pursuing. Growing up in a people group, her tender heart, compassion and desire to help others was often evidenced

whether she was holding babies, mending hurt parrots and other jungle animals brought to us, assisting with literacy, helping to run kids' programs or hurting with families when loved ones in the village died. Later when she went to boarding school in high school on the mainland of PNG, her compassion grew for fellow MKs at her school in the struggles that they faced, big or small. She grew up loving missions and PNG but was also fully aware of the challenges and difficulties that came with ministry and being a "third culture kid" as an MK.

When she graduated, she was debating between pursuing either missions or Christian counselling. She saw the need for missions but wanted

to serve in a way she could give help to others in tough situations. Through a series of events, upon graduating from Ethnos360 with a bachelor's degree in Intercultural Studies, she has chosen to sync missions and people care and join the Ethnos360 MK Care Team to provide care and resources for MKs and their parents to better equip them for the unique dimensions of cross-cultural ministry and family life.

—*Aaron and Lori Luse,*
Papua New Guinea



The Luse family in Papua New Guinea, 2017. Avalon far left.



CONNECT WITH NEW MISSIONARIES



KATIE WRIGHT

Enroute to Papua New Guinea

Sent by
Central Baptist Church,
Edmonton, AB

ethnos.ca/katie-wright



Katie grew up as a missionary kid in Papua New Guinea and through the transformation of the lives of the Mengen people, she began to see her own need for a saviour. God then began her on a journey of faith preparing her heart for where He was calling her, back to serve as a missionary there herself.

Katie quickly came to realize that if God was calling her to serve overseas in Papua New Guinea, then she was going to need to be equipped. That led her to apply to Ethnos Canada's cross-cultural church planting program, giving her skills necessary for the task ahead. Her next step

will be taking an advanced linguistics course which will give her tools for learning an unwritten language, developing an alphabet, and translating the Bible.

After completing the advanced linguistics course, she plans to move back to Papua New Guinea to serve long-term on a church planting team.

CHECK OUT

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DANIELLA KRESS

Enroute to Papua New Guinea

Sent by
Granton Community Bible Church,
Lucan, ON

ethnos.ca/daniella-kress



God has been preparing me for missions since childhood by deepening my love for His Word and using my home church and time at Child Evangelism Fellowship to disciple me. I considered working in children's ministry for the rest of my life.

And then I was asked a question in Bible school that stopped me cold: What is God's goal in all of human history? It was the first time I really understood God's heart for all the nations—that they would come to know Him. (Revelation 7:9) If God's heart is for the nations and I love God, then my heart needs to be for the nations too.

Later that year I went to Papua New

Guinea where I met tribal believers who had received the gospel in their language for the first time 20 years ago. They told us that despite persecution, different villages in their language were asking them to come and teach God's message! They were eager to go despite big challenges in their way. If they can trust God with big things so can I. Six weeks later, I was training for cross-cultural church planting (ethnostraining.ca).

God has led me despite my knee-shaking faith and taught me that ultimately He will accomplish the task of the nations knowing Him. He is simply using me to do so and shaping me to be more like Him in the process.

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An aerial photograph of a winding asphalt road that snakes through a dense green forest. The road features several sharp, hairpin turns. Patches of snow are visible on the forest floor, particularly in the upper left and along the edges of the road. The text "ADAPTING TO CHANGING REALITIES" is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font on the left side of the image.

*ADAPTING
TO CHANGING
REALITIES*

"Adapting means
having to define
a new way
to pursue
the same principle."





STAYING TRUE TO OUR PURPOSE, BEING READY FOR THE CHALLENGES OF A CHANGING WORLD.

“From the tribe of Issachar, there were 200 leaders of the tribe with their relatives. *All these men understood the signs of the times and knew the best course for Israel to take*” (1 Chronicles 12:32 NLT).

Let me give you some context. Israel was in a major transition. Saul had taken his own life, and David had been declared king over Israel, as promised through Samuel years earlier. Part of preparing for the future involved having men who “understood the signs of the times and knew the best course for Israel to take.”

What are the implications? Primarily, it is that decisions about what direction or course is taken depend on understanding the signs of the times. Forms, policies and practices that have served well in the past may not always be effective now. Knowing when and what changes must be made seems to be a part of how God works. Some are skilled at understanding these things while others may not be. It also means knowing what must not change, as David Hesselgrave once expressed: “Although changes must and will be made, the future of Christian missions will depend more on changes that are **not** made than on changes that **are** made.”

First Chronicles chapter 13 describes the return of the Ark. While this was a change, it was actually because of a change that should **not** have been made. Verse 3 says, “[L]et us bring the ark of our God back to us, for we have not inquired at it since the days of Saul.”

All the ministry partners that make up Global Partners seek to function according to principles founded on God’s character and His purposes as discovered through His Word. Principles like God’s heart for the nations lead us to pursue unreached people groups wherever they are found. Equal to our commitment to remain faithful in the task until the Body of Christ is completed is our commitment to work as part of that

Body, His Church. These are examples of what must **not** change!

What **must** change, however, is how we will pursue these principles as we see contexts and attitudes toward full-time workers change. **This** is understanding the signs of the times.

Policies and forms are needed to help a partnership like Global Partners express the principles from God’s Word that guide us at any given time and in the various contexts in which we find ourselves. But these policies and forms must be assessed and evaluated as times and contexts change.

This process of change can be difficult for a number of reasons. Some of us are not gifted in this way. I confess that I am not among those who “understand the signs of the times,” but I have had the privilege of serving alongside those who do. I praise the Lord for gifting Global Partners with this kind of people! If you’re like me, sometimes it is hard to accept changes when we might not be convinced that they are necessary. “If it’s not broken, don’t fix it” can be an obstacle for people like me.

It takes work to research and process what is happening around the world. Sometimes it’s simply easier just to keep doing what we have been doing for so long. How many times have I come to realize that God “has turned a corner” way back in the past? I hadn’t realized it because I wasn’t making the effort to discern what He was doing and how He was changing realities.

Finally, I realize that sometimes the forms and policies that were simply intended to serve as an effective way to pursue a principle have taken the place of that principle. In other words, doing things a certain way has become more important to me than the purpose they originally served. Adapting means having to define a new way to pursue the same principle. This can either leave us unable to predict outcomes or threaten our sense of security or comfort.

For me this has been a rather uncomfortable yet most rewarding process. As a practical example, one area that has most significantly impacted me has been my identity as a missionary. As I face the reality that more and more contexts are resistant to having missionaries in their communities, my first response was to consider that place to

be a restricted access context or a closed community. In reality, what needed to happen was for me to reassess a form or identity that has been convenient for us for centuries. I have had to come back to my primary identity, a child of God or a disciple/servant of Christ. Perhaps the biggest change that had to take place was for me to realize that my identity as a missionary was simply a secondary identity that still serves well in many contexts but not in others. And like any other secondary identity (teacher, father, son, coach, soccer player), wisdom is needed to know when it is not appropriate or how it should be managed. Recognizing what has **not** changed (my primary identity as a child of God) allows me to let go of my default as a missionary and to embrace other strategic and more effective secondary identities. This is considerably different from simply covering up my identity as missionary and pretending to be someone else. My goal is not to deceive. Rather it is to live out my true identity authentically through a different and relevant secondary identity for the sake of the Good News!

Have you ever considered that God might be moving in a new direction while you continue in familiar routines, simply because you haven’t been paying close attention? Like me, could a desire for comfort or hesitation to engage with significant change cause you to miss what God is doing? Change is hard, and adapting in deep ways can be painful! But if it is for the sake of staying useful and effective instruments in God’s hands, it always ends up being so worth it and far more rewarding than the alternative.

God, help us to be those who understand the signs of the times and know what to do or to benefit from those who do!

—Dan Rabe is the chairman for the International Ministries Team, which is responsible for issues and initiatives around the globe in conjunction with the network of like-minded entities called the Global Partners, with Ethnos360 being one of the partners.

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