

## Raising Up Communities of Cross-Cultural Missionaries

"The church exists to draw people to Christ... This is the whole of Christianity. There is nothing else."

- C.S. Lewis

"It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfill in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the church."

- Jürgen Moltmann

## There is no Plan B

- There is no other way our culture is going to be reached with the gospel
  - Centralize programs are going to be resisted (culture of suspicion)
  - Recruitment is getting more and more difficult because of fragmentation
  - People will only respond to "embodied truth" (fear of controlling narratives / organized religion)

## How Can This Be Done?

- Two questions:
  - What definitely *doesn't* work?
  - What have you *seen* work?

(Conversations of 3 @ 20 min.)

## My Story

- Church background
- Community
- Commitment to the poor and marginalized
- Cross-cultural engagement
- Intrinsic motivation

## Why Don't We Share the Good News?

- Standard answers:
  - Didn't sign up for that part
  - Impolite and / or inappropriate
  - Worried about rejection
  - Not sure what to say
  - Not public person
  - Too busy just surviving
  - Don't feel guilty enough

## Why Don't We Share the Good News?

- Archytas of Tarentum (quoted by Cicero): "If a man ascended to Heaven and saw the beautiful nature of the world and of the stars, his feeling of wonder, in itself most delightful, would lose its sweetness if he had not someone to whom he could tell it."
- Roland Allert: "This is the instinctive force which drives men even at the risk of life to impart to others a new-found joy; that is why it is proverbially difficult to keep a secret."

## Why Don't We Share the Good News?

- Only one reason: our Good News isn't very good
  - "If lives don't change, turn out the lights"
  - Incentivizing: a self-defeating exercise

## What Makes it Good News?

- Not a better theory or "certain" argument
- "Tastes" of that give a "taste" for
  - John 1:14 - "The Word became flesh and blood and moved into the neighborhood"
- Incarnational encounter:
  - The woman at the well
  - Saul
  - Wilberforce
  - Moravians
  - Present examples

## How to Nurture Continuing Encounter?

- Tell the Story
- Focus on where / with whom encounter is taking place
- Bring the small fires together and keep bringing fuel to the fire - no faster way that sustains

## Where Do We Begin?

- Is the Good News still alive and well to us?
  - Has it become theological mind games that keep us occupied?
  - Is it still a privilege to live as an incarnational expression of God's invitational love everywhere we go / in everything we do?
- If not then humbly recognizing that reality is a great place to start (God gives grace to the humble)
- A good first question: "God how can I get back to the place where your Good News is really good again to me?"