

# Men of Integrity

THIS WEEK'S THEME

Closing the Call

Developing greater passion for both local and international missions

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Saturday, November 21, 2009



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## Clueless

Theme of the Week: Closing the Call

Sunday, November 15, 2009

### Who Said It ... Paul Borthwick

Paul Borthwick trains leaders in the under-resourced world with Development Associates International. He teaches missions at Gordon College and dedicates himself to mobilizing others for cross-cultural missions as a resource person, teacher, speaker, and author.

Paul and his wife, Christie, a microbiologist, are avid bird-watchers. During their travels to 95 countries, they've seen over 1,100 of the world's 9,000 species.

### What He Said ... Clueless

A computer sales fellow in our young adult Sunday school class guessed "the Great Commission" was 30 percent. Ten percent would be a good, 20 percent better, 30 percent a great commission. He had no frame of reference for the world outside of sales.

When my students hear the name C.T. Studd, their first response is "great name," not "great missionary." After I met with Jamie Taylor (James Hudson Taylor IV) and his dad, Dr. Jim Taylor (James Hudson Taylor III), I remarked in my newsletter about the thrill of meeting descendants of a historic missions figure. One young reader replied, "Next time you see your friend James Taylor, tell him that I really enjoy his music."

Those of us over 40 have created the pluralistic, materialistic, world of over-choice that the younger generation has absorbed. Now it's up to us to figure out how to make the challenge of missions register with them. Even the term "missions" might need definition because it could mean "purpose" (as in mission statements) or historic cultural imperialism.

*Adapted from EMQ (Evangelical Missions Quarterly, 10/03) by permission.*

### Prayer of the week:

*Lord, give me a feel for the world you sent your Son to save. Show me how to become more engaged.*



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## Put Us on the Map

Theme of the Week: Closing the Call

Monday, November 16, 2009

**Key Bible Verse:** Paul felt compelled by the Spirit to go over to Macedonia and Achaia before going to Jerusalem. "And after that," he said, "I must go to Rome!" (Acts 19:21).

Bonus Reading: [Romans 15:17-25](#)

Missionaries know they must use maps when making public presentations. Often, even their closest followers can't point to a world map and identify their country of service.

In 2002, the National Geographic Society polled Americans between the ages of 18 and 24. Only 13 percent of those polled could find Iraq on the map. Only 17 percent could locate Afghanistan. Fewer than half could identify China, Great Britain, or Japan. More of them knew that the locale of the late Survivor TV show was the South Pacific than could find Israel.

How can the next generation's leaders tackle the world's critical problems without some understanding of geography and current events? The same applies to the next generation of missionaries.

Information and entertainment pack the lives of this age group. They know how to sort out what they don't want to hear and see. If this poll is any indication, knowing world affairs isn't a high priority. To penetrate the world's spiritual darkness, we must first dig ourselves out of the pit of our woeful ignorance. We need both biblical and world facts if we are to be effective servants and ambassadors of Christ.

—Jim Reapsome in World Pulse

**My Response:** I could increase my grasp of geography or current events by ...

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## In Hock

Theme of the Week: Closing the Call

Tuesday, November 17, 2009

**Key Bible Verse:** Owe nothing to anyone—except for your obligation to love one another (Romans 13:8).

Bonus Reading: [Mark 10:28-30](#)

Indebtedness after college is the greatest practical hindrance to students pursuing cross-cultural missions. What do we do with a potential candidate who is \$10,000 to 40,000 in debt at age 22? School loans play into the indebtedness mindset of our culture. Borrowing money and living in debt to pay for school carry over into lifestyle issues that include unrealistic expectations and over-charging credit cards.

Can a generation raised on double-latte coffees costing \$3 or more per cup adjust to a world where the majority has no access to clean drinking water? Can Westerners who routinely spend \$9 to go see a movie live effectively alongside the 1 billion abjectly poor people living on less than \$1 per day? The editors of World Christian Encyclopedia assert that 43 percent of the world will never make a telephone call. Can a generation accustomed to personal cellular phones and dedicated Internet lines make the adjustment?

One missionary summarized the grasp that materialism has on our hearts this way: "When we went out in 1969, we left everything to follow Jesus to South America. To-day's new missionaries bring everything with them."

—Paul Borthwick in EMQ

**My Response:** Could my standard-of-living choices be pre-empting God's ability to direct me?

**Thought to Apply:** There was a time when a fool and his money were soon parted, but now it happens to everybody.—Adlai Stevenson (U.S. politician)

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## Harvest Hang-up

Theme of the Week: Closing the Call

Wednesday, November 18, 2009

**Key Bible Verse:** "[A kernel of wheat's] death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives" (John 12:24). Bonus Reading: [Philippians 3:7-9a](#)

The young man across the table from me had asked to meet to talk about his interest in serving as a missionary. "I want to have a truck and a motorcycle, and I know missionaries can't have those things," he said. "As a commercial pilot I could have all those things." I think his honesty surprised both of us, but surprise wasn't the only emotion we shared. We were both grieving as well: one for the potential loss of some toys, the other for the potential loss of an effective cross-culture agent.

In [today's Key Bible Verse], Jesus proffered "a plentiful harvest." That's what awaits the patient worker. Jesus says missionaries can have a harvest. But he also says the road to that harvest goes through the cemetery: "its death will produce many new kernels."

Most of us Westerners will never experience a literal martyrdom. But the principle applies nevertheless. Comfort, security, familiarity, family, toys—all of life's trappings, Jesus puts his finger on them and calls for death. He may take them away, he may allow us to use them for a while, but we must not let things interfere with obedience and, unchecked, that's exactly what they will do.  
—Gary Brumbelow in *World Pulse*

**My Response:** Which of life's trappings is Jesus pointing to in my life?

**Thought to Apply:** The standard of living is the god of twentieth-century North America and advertising is his prophet.—Ron Sider (social activist)

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## Long-term Questions

Theme of the Week: Closing the Call

Thursday, November 19, 2009

**Key Bible Verse:** "What should I do with you," asks the Lord. "For your love vanishes like the morning mist" (Hosea 6:4). Bonus Reading: [Luke 9:62](#); [Matt. 21:28-31a](#)

I met a student who'd attended the Urbana Missions Conference 11 months before. I asked him what its lasting impact was. He couldn't remember. "Wow," he said, "that was so long ago!" A commentator reporting on the Iraq War, declared, "The conflict drags into its fourth day." We're not a culture that would do well with "The 100 Years War." Today's multi-taskers commit intensely to mission trips of three weeks or less, but are reluctant to commit to long-term missions.

How effective will short-term oriented North Americans be in the world of Muslim evangelism or Bible translation?—ministries that often require several decades. Can a generation raised with remotes in their hands dedicate themselves to ministries that will take 20 or 30 years?

The answer is yes. But the young person is unlikely to go forward at a missions conference and make a life commitment. He'll usually make a progression of choices. A short-term mission trip leads to Urbana. A decision there leads to a longer mission trip or a relationship with an agency or taking a correspondence course. After two or three years of this, he may go for a four-year term.

—Paul Borthwick in EMQ

**My Response:** Am I open to a missions commitment extending beyond a couple of weeks?

**Thought to Apply:** A deep consciousness that I was not my own took possession of me.—J. Hudson Taylor (pioneer missionary from England to China)

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## Plugging into a Need

Theme of the Week: Closing the Call

Friday, November 20, 2009

**Key Bible Verse:** They even did more than we had hoped, for their first action was to give themselves to the Lord and to us, just as God wanted them to do (2 Corinthians 8:5). Bonus Reading: [Matthew 9:35-38](#)

Gordon Moreshead believed God wanted to use him in missions, but wasn't sure where. Then his church became involved in building a house for Rudy Barlaan, a translator working with the Isnag people in Dibigat, a Philippines village without modern conveniences. Gordon, a problem solver with a background in electrical engineering, saw that as the need he'd been gifted to fill. He volunteered for his first short-term trip in June 2001.

Watching the Isnag people respond to God through Rudy's ministry impacted Gordon. Following his return to the U.S., Gordon, president of a small company, made plans for a second trip in 2002, and prepared his staff to cope in his absence.

Back in Dibigat, he helped install the system that now supplies energy to the house and church, worked on plumbing to bring clean water to the house, and wired the chapel for lights. Team leader Nard Pugayo said, "We got the best, most affordable equipment thanks to Gordon's research. He rallied his church to provide funding and helped buy the components."

—Kathy Mendieta in *JAARS Beyond*

**My Response:** How might my skills, interest, or even hobbies be put to use on a short-term missions experience?

**Thought to Apply:** Bring along a tuxedo to meet the president and overalls to do whatever work comes to hand.—Clarence Jones & Reuben Larson (Radio HCJB co-founders)

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## Weekend Wrap-Up

Theme of the Week: Closing the Call

Saturday, November 21, 2009

After Jesus' disciples had observed how he took the Good News to cities and villages of their region, it was going to be their turn to carry on the mission. But before he sent them out on their own road trips, Jesus put the huge task they were going to tackle into prayerful perspective. Today's passage summarizes that orientation session.

### Interact with God's Word

[Matthew 9:35-38](#)

1. What two word pictures describe the inhabitants of our world (vv. 36-37)?
2. In a parallel Scripture, Jesus stated, "Wake up and look around. The fields are already ripe for harvest" (John 4:35). Do you sense that many people in North America would be ready to give their lives to Christ if someone would show them how? Why or why not?
3. How does it help to know that God is in charge of the harvest (v. 38)?
4. Jesus instructed his disciples to pray for more harvesters. Do you include this prayer for harvesters in your own prayer times?
5. God often answers our prayers by using us. Are you prepared for God to use you in a local outreach? Cross-culturally?

### Spend Time in Prayer

*Ask God to help you become knowledgeable and concerned about your world. Ask him to deal with the issues in your life that raise obstacles to his call for harvest workers.*

### Matthew 9:35-38

35 Jesus traveled through all the towns and villages of that area, teaching in the synagogues and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom. And he healed every kind of disease and illness. 36 When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. 37 He said to his disciples, "The harvest is great, but the workers are few. 38 So pray to the Lord who is in charge of the harvest; ask him to send more workers into his fields."

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