

PERSPECTIVES CANADA COVENANT

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Recognizing the diversity of each region in Canada, and the strength, value and effectiveness of working together in unity, we as Canadian *Perspectives* leaders agree to operate as a covenant-based association. We choose this model to provide the freedom necessary for *Perspectives* to be contextualized into every situation within Canada, while still maintaining the integrity of the movement. We choose to work and associate together because of the many benefits our interaction brings: mutual learning, capacity building, encouragement, belonging, synergy, resourcing, credibility, accountability, etc.

Together, we seek to mobilize the Canadian Church through the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* study program in order to see the Canadian Church engaged in God's mission, locally, regionally, nationally and globally. We are guided by our Passion, Purpose, Values and Plan.

Our Common Passion:

- To see God glorified among all ethn  wherever they may be found.

Our Common Purpose:

- To use the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* study program to mobilize Christ's Church in Canada to engage in Christ's mission in the world.

Our Common Values: (Comment: Values was moved ahead of Plan)

- Obedience to the Word of God as revealed in Holy Scripture. A ***Statement of Faith*** is listed in ***Appendix B*** and in the ***Lausanne Covenant*** in ***Appendix C***.
- Commitment to: Godly relationships, integrity, accountability, transparency, mutual submission.
- Collaboration with all spectrums of the Body of Christ in Canada and around the world.
- Creativity and flexibility within boundaries in implementation of the *Perspectives* program in Canada, to serve the context.
- Adherence to the ***Perspectives on the World Christian Movement – Core Ideas*** as outlined in ***Appendix D***.

Our Common Plan:

- To promote and facilitate the offering of the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* study program across Canada
- To recruit, equip and release new leadership to form Regional Teams across Canada, expanding the movement
- To develop and promote standards of best practice for the program.
- To maintain effective communication and contact amongst ourselves.
- To empower Task Teams to work on various Portfolios, developing the necessary support structures and guidelines for the Canadian program.
- To be mutually accountable for our activities.
- To remain connected with and accountable to the global "*Perspectives family*" for purposes of learning, growth and collaboration.

Our Structure/ Operation (what we look like, and how we operate)

- We strive to make decisions based on the consensus of members. Members are those invited by the Facilitation Team to join, by reason of their involvement in and commitment to the *Perspectives* program in Canada, who have signed this Covenant, indicating their agreement to abide by it. See **Appendix A** for ***Expectations of Members***.
- While members are self-funded; we may, as necessary, employ administrative support.
- We function within guidelines and standards:
 - to facilitate accountability in operations
 - to ensure the quality of the program
 - to express freedom and creativity within limits
 - to enhance sharing and helping each other through pooling our experiences
- The Facilitation Team, the Canadian Coordinator and any administrative support services will strive to achieve the most effective balance between accountability to agreed-upon standards with empowering and enabling our Regional Teams in achieving our Common Purpose.
- Regional Teams will have the freedom to organize themselves within established guidelines. Each region will conduct their finances independently.
- Our structure will be defined by necessary functions, but will at least include a Canadian Coordinator and a Facilitation Team.
- Each region will support the central functions of *Perspectives Canada* through a per student fee determined by mutual agreement.

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Expectations of Members

- Members are committed to the principles and practices outlined in the *Perspectives Canada* Covenant. Their signature to the Covenant is indication of their agreement to abide by these principles and practices and to work for the growth and development of the *Perspectives* program in Canada.
- Members will be either trained, active Coordinators of the program, or Speakers invited to join because of their support and endorsement of the *Perspectives* program.
- New members may be nominated by any current members. The Facilitation Team will vet the nomination and make a recommendation to the membership. Current membership must agree to the addition of the proposed new member before they will be invited to join.
- Recognizing that the *Perspectives* program is a movement, all members are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in at least one Portfolio Task Team to enhance the growth and development of the program in Canada.
- Members will strive to gather regularly (e.g. annually) for mutual learning, growth, collaboration, encouragement, etc.
- Membership can be removed at the request of that member, or on recommendation of the Facilitation Team if the member in question has become inactive in the program for a period of at least two years. The Facilitation Team will consult with the inactive member prior to removing membership.

Appendix B – Statement of Faith

We believe

...in the **Holy Scriptures** as originally given by God, divinely inspired, infallible, entirely trustworthy, and the supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct...

One **God** , eternally existent in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit...

Our **Lord Jesus Christ** , God manifest in the flesh, His virgin birth, His sinless human life, His divine miracles, His vicarious and atoning death, His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His mediatorial work, and His Personal return in power and glory...

The **Salvation** of lost and sinful man through the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ by faith apart from works, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit...

The **Holy Spirit** , by whose indwelling the believer is enabled to live a holy life, to witness and work for the Lord Jesus Christ...

The **Unity** of the Spirit of all true believers, the Church, the Body of Christ...

The **Resurrection** of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life, they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation.

*From the Statement of Faith of the World Evangelical Alliance

Appendix C – The Lausanne Covenant (*A Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* foundational document)

INTRODUCTION

We, members of the Church of Jesus Christ from more than 150 nations, participants in the International Congress on World Evangelization at Lausanne, praise God for his great salvation and rejoice in the fellowship he has given us with himself and with each other. We are deeply stirred by what God is doing in our day, moved to penitence by our failures and challenged by the unfinished task of evangelization. We believe the gospel is God's good news for the whole world, and we are determined by his grace to obey Christ's commission to proclaim it to every person and to make disciples of every nation. We desire, therefore, to affirm our faith and our resolve, and to make public our covenant.

1. THE PURPOSE OF GOD

We affirm our belief in the one eternal God, Creator and Lord of the world, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who governs all things according to the purpose of his will. He has been calling out from the world a people for himself, and sending his people back into the world to be his servants and his witnesses, for the extension of his kingdom, the building up of Christ's body, and the glory of his name. We confess with shame that we have often denied our calling and failed in our mission, by becoming conformed to the world or by withdrawing from it. Yet we rejoice that even when borne by earthen vessels the gospel is still a precious treasure. To the task of making that treasure known in the power of the Holy Spirit we desire to dedicate ourselves anew.

Isa. 40:28; Matt. 28:19; Eph. 1:11; Acts 15:14; John 17:6,18; Eph. 4:12; Rom. 12:2; 1 Cor. 5:10; 2 Cor. 4: 72

2. THE AUTHORITY AND POWER OF THE BIBLE

We affirm the divine inspiration, truthfulness and authority of both Old and New Testament Scriptures in their entirety as the only written word of God, without error in all that it affirms, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice. We also affirm the power of God's word to accomplish his purpose of salvation. The message of the bible is addressed to all men and women. For God's revelation in Christ and in Scripture is unchangeable. Through it the Holy Spirit still speaks today. He illumines the minds of God's people in every culture to perceive its truth freshly through their own eyes and thus discloses to the whole Church ever more of the many-colored wisdom of God.

2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21; Isa. 55:11; Rom. 1:16; 1 Cor. 1:21; John 10:35; Matt. 5:17-18; Jude 3; Eph. 1:17-18

3. THE UNIQUENESS AND UNIVERSALITY OF CHRIST

We affirm that there is only one Savior and only one gospel, although there is a wide diversity of evangelistic approaches. We recognize that everyone has some knowledge of God through his general revelation in nature. But we deny that this can save, for people suppress the truth by their unrighteousness. We also reject as derogatory to Christ and the gospel every kind of syncretism and dialog which implies that Christ speaks equally through all religions and ideologies. Jesus Christ, being himself the only God-man, who gave himself as the only ransom for sinners, is the only mediator between God and people. There is no other name by which we must be saved. All men and women are perishing because of sin, but God loves everyone, not wishing that any should perish but that all should repent. Yet those who reject Christ repudiate the joy of salvation and condemn themselves to eternal separation from God. To proclaim Jesus as "the Savior of the world" is not to affirm that all people are either automatically or ultimately saved, still less to affirm that all religions offer salvation in Christ. Rather it is to proclaim God's love for a world of sinners and to invite everyone to respond to him as Savior and Lord in the wholehearted personal commitment of repentance and faith. Jesus Christ has been exalted above every other name; we long for the day when every knee shall bow to him and every tongue shall confess him Lord.

Gal. 1:6-9; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Tim. 2 :5,6; Acts 4:12; John 3:16-19; 2 Peter 3:9; 2 Thes. 1:7-9; John 4:42; Matt. 11:28; Eph. 1:20-21; Phil. 2:9-11

4. THE NATURE OF EVANGELISM

To evangelize is to spread the good news that Jesus Christ died for our sin and was raised from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that as the reigning Lord he now offers the forgiveness of sins and the liberating gift of the Spirit to all who repent and believe. Our Christian presence in the world is indispensable to evangelism, and so is that kind of dialog whose purpose is to listen sensitively in order to understand. But evangelism itself is the proclamation of the historical, biblical Christ as Savior and Lord, with a view to persuading people to come to him personally and so be reconciled to God. In issuing the gospel invitation we have no liberty to conceal the cost of discipleship. Jesus still calls all who would follow him to deny themselves, take up their cross, and identify themselves with his new community. The results of evangelism include obedience to Christ, incorporation into his Church and responsible service in the world.

1 Cor. 15:3-4; Acts 2:32-39; John 20:21; 1 Cor. 1:23; 2 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:11,20; Luke 14:25-33; Mark 8:34; Acts 2:40,47; Mark 10:43-45

5. CHRISTIAN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

We affirm that God is both the Creator and the Judge of all. We therefore should share his concern for justice and reconciliation throughout human society and for the liberation of men and women from every kind of oppression. Because men and women are made in the image of God, every person, regardless of race, religion, color, culture, class, sex or age, has an intrinsic dignity because of which he or she should be respected and served, not exploited. Here too we express penitence both for our neglect and for having sometimes regarded evangelism and social concern as mutually exclusive. Although reconciliation with other people is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty. For both are necessary expressions of our doctrines of God and man, our love for our neighbor and our obedience to Jesus Christ. The message of salvation implies also a message of judgment upon every form of alienation, oppression and discrimination, and we should not be afraid to denounce evil and injustice wherever they exist. When people receive Christ they are born again, into his kingdom and must seek not only to exhibit but also to spread its righteousness in the midst of an unrighteous world. The salvation we claim should be transforming us in the totality of our personal and social responsibilities. Faith without works is dead.

Acts 17:26,31; Gen. 18:25; Ps. 45:7; Isa. 1:17; Gen. 1:26-27; Lev. 19:18; Luke 6:27,35; James 3:9; John 3:3,5; Matt. 5:20; Matt. 6:33; 2 Cor. 3:18; James 2:14-26

6. THE CHURCH AND EVANGELISM

We affirm that Christ sends his redeemed people into the world as the Father sent him, and that this calls for a similar deep and costly penetration of the world. We need to break out of our ecclesiastical ghettos and permeate non-Christian society. In the Church's mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary. World evangelization requires the whole Church to take the whole gospel to the whole world. The Church is at the very center of God's cosmic purpose and is his appointed means of spreading the gospel. But a church which preaches the cross must itself be marked by the cross. It becomes a stumbling block to evangelism when it betrays the gospel or lacks a living faith in God, a genuine love for people, or scrupulous honesty in all things including promotion and finance. The church is the community of God's people rather than an institution, and must not be identified with any particular culture, social or political system, or human ideology. *John 17:18; 20:21; Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 20:27; Eph. 1:9-10; 3:9-11; Gal. 6:14,17; 2 Cor. 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 2:19-21; Phil. 1:27*

7. COOPERATION IN EVANGELISM

We affirm that the Church's visible unity in truth is God's purpose. Evangelism also summons us to unity, because our oneness strengthens our witness, just as our disunity undermines our gospel of reconciliation. We recognize, however, that organizational unity may take many forms and does not necessarily forward evangelism. Yet we who share the same biblical faith should be closely united in fellowship, work and witness. We confess that our testimony has sometimes been marred by sinful individualism and needless duplication. We pledge ourselves to seek a deeper unity in truth, worship, holiness and mission. We urge the development of regional and functional cooperation for the furtherance of the Church's mission, for strategic planning, for mutual encouragement, and for the sharing of resources and experience. *Eph. 4:3-4; John 17:21,23; 13:35; Phil. 1:27*

8. CHURCHES IN EVANGELISTIC PARTNERSHIP

We rejoice that a new missionary era has dawned. The dominant role of western missions is fast disappearing. God is raising up from the younger churches a great new resource for world evangelization, and is thus demonstrating that the responsibility to evangelize belongs to the whole body of Christ. All churches should therefore be asking God and themselves what they should be doing both to reach their own area and to send missionaries to other parts of the world. A re-evaluation of our missionary responsibility and role should be continuous. Thus a growing partnership of churches will develop and the universal character of Christ's Church will be more clearly exhibited. We also thank God for agencies which labor in bible translation, theological education, the mass media, Christian literature, evangelism missions, church renewal and other specialist fields. They too should engage in constant self-examination to evaluate their effectiveness as part of the Church's mission.

Rom. 1:8; Phil. 1:5; 4:15; Acts 13:1-3; 1 Thes. 1:6-8

9. THE URGENCY OF THE EVANGELISTIC TASK

More than 2,700 million people, which is more than two-thirds of all humanity, have yet to be evangelized. We are ashamed that so many have been neglected; it is a standing rebuke to us and to the whole Church. There is now, however, in many parts of the world an unprecedented receptivity to the Lord Jesus Christ. We are convinced that this is the time for churches and para-church agencies to pray earnestly for the salvation of the unreached and to launch new efforts to achieve world evangelization. A reduction of foreign missionaries and money in an evangelized country may sometimes be necessary to facilitate the national church's growth in self-reliance and to release resources for unevangelized areas. Missionaries should flow ever more freely from and to all six continents in a spirit of humble service. The goal should be, by all available means and at the earliest possible time, that every person will have the opportunity to hear, understand, and receive the good news. We cannot hope to attain this goal without sacrifice. All of us are shocked by the poverty of millions and disturbed by the injustices which cause it. Those of us who live in affluent circumstances accept our duty to develop a simple life-style in order to contribute more generously to both relief and evangelism.

Mark 16:15; John 9:4; Matt. 9:35-38; Isa. 58:6-7; James 2:1-9; 1 Cor. 9:19-23; James 1:27; Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 2:44-45; 4:34-35

10. EVANGELISM AND CULTURE

The development of strategies for world evangelization calls for imaginative pioneering methods. Under God, the result will be the rise of churches deeply rooted in Christ and closely related to their culture. Culture must always be tested and judged by Scripture. Because men and women are God's creatures, some of their culture is rich in beauty and goodness. Because they are fallen, all of it is tainted with sin and some of it is demonic. The gospel does not presuppose the superiority of any culture to another, but evaluates all cultures according to its own criteria of truth and righteousness, and insists on moral absolutes in every culture. Missions have all too frequently exported with the gospel an alien culture and churches have sometimes been in bondage to culture rather than to Scripture. Christ's evangelists must humbly seek to empty themselves of all but their personal authenticity in order to become the servants of others, and churches must seek to transform and enrich culture, all for the glory of God.

Mark 7:8-9,13; Gen. 4:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:19-23; Phil. 2:5-7; 2 Cor. 4:5

11. EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP

We confess that we have sometimes pursued church growth at the expense of church depth, and divorced evangelism from Christian nurture. We also acknowledge that some of our missions have been too slow to equip and encourage national leaders to assume their rightful responsibilities. Yet we are committed to indigenous principles, and long that every church will have national leaders who manifest a Christian style of leadership in terms not of domination but of service. We recognize that there is a great need to improve theological education, especially for church leaders. In every nation and culture there should be an effective training program for pastors and laity in doctrine, discipleship, evangelism, nurture and service. Such training programs should not rely on any stereotyped methodology but should be developed by creative local initiatives according to biblical standards.

Col. 1:27-28; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5,9; Mark 10:42-45; Eph. 4:11-12

12. SPIRITUAL CONFLICT

We believe that we are engaged in constant spiritual warfare with the principalities and powers of evil, who are seeking to overthrow the Church and frustrate its task of world evangelization. We know our need to equip ourselves with God's armor and to fight this battle with the spiritual weapons of truth and prayer. For we detect the activity of our enemy, not only in false ideologies outside the Church, but also inside it in false gospels which twist Scripture and put people in the place of God. We need both watchfulness and discernment to safeguard the biblical gospel. We acknowledge that we ourselves are not immune to worldliness of thought and action, that is, to a surrender to secularism. For example, although careful studies of church growth, both numerical and spiritual, are right and valuable, we have sometimes neglected them. At other times, desirous to ensure a response to the gospel, we have compromised our message, manipulated our hearers through pressure techniques, and become unduly preoccupied with statistics or even dishonest in our use of them. All this is worldly. The Church must be in the world; the world must not be in the Church.

Eph. 6:12; 2 Cor. 4:3-4; Eph. 6:11,13-18; 2 Cor. 10: 3-5; 1 John 2:18-26; 4:1-3; Gal. 1:6-9; 2 Cor. 2:17; 4:2; John 17:15

13. FREEDOM AND PERSECUTION

It is the God-appointed duty of every government to secure conditions of peace, justice and liberty in which the Church may obey God, serve the Lord Christ, and preach the gospel without interference. We therefore pray for the leaders of the nations and call upon them to guarantee freedom of thought and conscience, and freedom to practice and propagate religion in accordance with the will of God and as set forth in The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We also express our deep concern for all who have been unjustly imprisoned, and especially for those who are suffering for their testimony to the Lord Jesus. We promise to pray and work for their freedom. At the same time we refuse to be intimidated by their fate. God helping us, we too will seek to stand against injustice and to remain faithful to the gospel, whatever the cost. We do not forget the warnings of Jesus that persecution is inevitable.

1 Tim. 2:1-4; Col 3:24; Acts 4:19; 5:29; Heb. 13:1-3; Luke 4:18; Gal. 5:11; 6:12; Matt. 5:10-12; John 15:18-21

14. THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. The Father sent his Spirit to bear witness to his Son; without his witness ours is futile. Conviction of sin, faith in Christ, new birth and Christian growth are all his work. Further, the Holy Spirit is a missionary spirit; thus evangelism should arise spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church. A church that is not a missionary church is contradicting itself and quenching the Spirit. Worldwide evangelization will become a realistic possibility only when the Spirit renews the church in truth and wisdom, faith, holiness, love and power. We therefore call upon all Christians to pray for such a visitation of the sovereign Spirit of God that all his fruit may appear in all his people and that all his gifts may enrich the body of Christ. Only then will the whole Church become a fit instrument in his hands, that the whole earth may hear his voice.

Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 2:4; John 15:26-27; John 16:8-11; 1 Cor. 12:3; John 3:6-8; 2 Cor. 3:18; John 7:37-39; 1 Thes. 5:19; Ps. 85:4-7; Gal. 5:22-23; Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; Ps. 67:1-3

15. THE RETURN OF CHRIST

We believe that Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly, in power and glory, to consummate his salvation and his judgment. This promise of his coming is a further spur to our evangelism, for we remember his words that the gospel must first be preached to all nations. We believe that the interim period between Christ's ascension and return is to be filled with the mission of the people of God, who have no liberty to stop before the end. We also remember his warning that false Christs and false prophets will arise as precursors of the final Antichrist. We therefore reject as a proud, self-confident dream the notion that people can ever build a utopia on earth. Our Christian confidence is that God will perfect his kingdom, and we look forward with eager anticipation to that day, and to the new heaven and earth in which righteousness will dwell and God will reign forever. Meanwhile, we rededicate ourselves to the service of Christ and of people in joyful submission to his authority over the whole of our lives.

Mark 14:62; Heb. 9:28; Mark 13:10; Matt. 28:20; Acts 1:8-11; Mark 13:21-23; 1 John 2:18; 4:1-3; Luke 12:32; Rev. 21:1-5; 2 Peter 3:13; Matt. 28:18

CONCLUSION

Therefore, in the light of this our faith and our resolve, we enter into a solemn covenant with God and with each other, to pray, to plan and to work together for the evangelization of the whole world. We call upon others to join us. May God help us by his grace and for his glory to be faithful to this our covenant! Amen, Alleluia!

International Congress on World Evangelization, Lausanne, Switzerland, July 1974

Appendix D – Core Ideas (A *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* foundational document)

The content of the *Perspectives on the World Christian Movement* course is undergirded by an integrated set of core ideas. While there are many other ideas in the course that are part of an orthodox Christian worldview, these core ideas are not commonplace. This document introduces these distinctives. Each of these is expanded in an accompanying document not only to articulate them, but also to differentiate them from other viewpoints. The course is designed to provide these key ideas which are normally lacking in the instruction available to most believers. We desire to provide a philosophical framework for understanding the curriculum's essential core. We hope this will also serve as a guide to those developing supporting curricula and resources. As the *Perspectives* Movement continues to expand internationally into other languages and cultural contexts, this framework will help those adapting the course to transfer the core concepts rather than merely translating the material. It is important to note that this is not a summary of the course content (i.e. the specific teaching objectives such as the Kingdom of God, understanding worldview, appropriate contextualization, etc.). Additional tools are currently under development to list content items and relate them to resources used to teach them.

1. God initiates and advances work in history to accomplish His purpose.
2. God calls His people to join Him in fulfilling His purpose.
3. God's purpose is to bless all peoples so that Christ will be served and glorified among all peoples.
4. God accomplishes His purpose by triumphing over evil in order to rescue and bless people and to establish His kingdom rule throughout the earth.
5. The Bible is a unified story of God's purpose.
6. God's work in history has continuity and will come to an ultimate culmination.
7. The Christian movement has brought about positive social transformation.
8. The mission task can and will be completed.
9. The world's population can be viewed in terms of people groups.
10. The progress of world evangelization can be assessed in terms of church-planting movements within people groups.
11. Completing the mission task requires the initiation and growth of church-planting movements that follow social avenues of influence.
12. Completing the task requires effective cross-cultural evangelism that follows communication patterns within cultures.
13. Completing the task requires strategic wholism in which community development is integrated with church planting.
14. Completing the task requires collaborative efforts of churches and mission agencies from diverse cultures and traditions.
15. God calls His people to embrace strategic sacrifice and suffering with Christ in order to accomplish His global purpose.
16. By participating in the world Christian movement, every believer can find a way to live with vital, strategic significance in God's global purpose.

1. God initiates and advances work in history to accomplish His purpose.

Expanding the idea:

God is the source of mission. Because of His abiding desire and love, God acts with intelligence, emotion and will, moving throughout history toward the fulfillment of His purposes. The Latin phrase *missio Dei*—the mission of God—has been used to describe God at work in history to accomplish what He has purposed. Ultimately mission is not a response to human need but a pursuit of divine purpose.

What this idea supports:

Christians can engage in mission activity with the vital legitimacy of knowing that their efforts contribute to the accomplishment of God's global purpose. While Christian mission invariably responds to human need, ultimately it is the reality of God's initiative and purpose that helps Christians avoid the absurdity of being self-sent by their own convictions or compassion.

2. God calls His people to join Him in fulfilling His purpose.

Expanding the idea:

God authorizes and invites people to join Him in mission and gives them the needed authority and power to carry out His purpose. The mission of God is always greater than the mission task He has given His people to complete. With God, His people pursue promised destiny instead of merely labouring to perform duty. God works with His people in a personal and relational way so that there is intimacy and dignity in the mission task. Even when His people fail to obey Him fully, God still pursues His purpose, sometimes even using the disobedience of His people for His purpose.

What this idea controverts:

Mission obedience is never a condition of God's covenantal love. Instead, God's call to mission is a high dignity and privilege for those who respond. God does not utilize people; instead He invites people to become more closely related to Him as they join Him in the mission venture by choosing to fully use their fully engaged intellect, emotion and will. Since mission is always accomplished in personal relationship with God, mission should not be presented as a matter of volunteerism or opportunism.

3. God's purpose is to bless all peoples so that Christ will be served and glorified among all peoples.

Expanding the idea:

God intends to bless people from every people group on earth. God's blessing brings transformation in every dimension of human life: physical, social and spiritual. As communities of people come to obey and glorify Christ, their communities experience lasting transformation. Conversely, as communities come to experience the blessing and salvation of God in Christ, God is glorified. The blessing and salvation God gives people is obviously of infinite worth. And yet the ultimate reason for blessing and salvation is for the glory and delight of God. In this sense, world evangelization is more for God than it is for people.

What this idea controverts:

Unless the outcome of mission is seen as bringing about something valuable for God, then mission is reduced to an enterprise which benefits people. If mission is understood in such a humanistic framework, then mission can easily be understood strictly as a matter of responding to human needs. Regardless of how wholistic the array of human need may be, if mission is understood in a humanistic framework, mission usually becomes a matter of mobilizing human resources to meet human needs. Mission that is not for God is rarely seen for very long as being from God or by God. True mission is ultimately from God, through God, and to Him again.

4. God accomplishes His purpose by triumphing over evil in order to rescue and bless people and to establish His kingdom rule throughout the earth.

Expanding the idea:

God has judged and fought against evil throughout history. He will ultimately triumph over evil. The greatest stroke of judgment against evil resulting in salvation for people was accomplished in the death and resurrection of Jesus. As groups of people come to glorify and obey the risen Christ, they find that His kingdom governance brings genuine transformation and substantial measures of God's intended justice to their communities. It is this triumph over evil and the transformation of communities by Christ's effective Lordship that constitutes the blessing of the nations.

What this idea is not:

God's people are not mandated to bring an absolute end to every evil. The mandate Christ gives in this age is limited to bringing about communities liberated from evil and blessed in obedient allegiance to Christ. God will ultimately vanquish every evil at the end of the age. A war against evil is not a triumphalistic license to go on conquest against every perceived evil. God's war must be waged with God's ways of suffering with Christ in liberating service.

What this idea supports:

As Christians labour to overcome evil in all of its forms and to bring healing to the harm that it brings, they can know that they are co-working with God in His longstanding war against evil. Petitionary prayer is essentially missionary prayer because it pursues God's purpose by asking Him to intervene in order to accomplish His purpose of overcoming evil and establishing His kingdom blessing.

5. The Bible is a unified story of God's purpose.

Expanding this idea:

The most important factor in helping students form a vision and commitment to fulfilling God's global purpose is to help them see the Bible as a unified story of God's work in the world unfolding in real history. The stories and prophetic statements flow together as one unfolding drama.

What this idea is not:

This idea is not about simply finding many references to universal themes such as "all the earth" or "every creature." Nor is it a matter of finding verses referring to "the nations" in every book of the Bible. It's about a story, not about only finding repeated recurrent words or truths. It is not just a long story. It is the big story. What makes it big is that it is a story about God. This story is reflected, but not fully expressed in what has been commonly called "salvation history." It's not ultimately a story about people and how they get saved. It is a story about God, and how He brings glory and followers to Himself from all peoples.

What this idea controverts:

Without the Bible as single, unified story, we are left facing a desperate moment in a world of great need, deriving hope from trends and framing mandate around isolated biblical passages. Certainly there are commandments and examples of compassionate action. Bible verses can be used to prove the importance of any number of agendas or causes. But God's mandate is framed around what He has been and will be accomplishing throughout history. By helping students see God at work in a great, unified story, their lives and convictions can be built on a solid framework of biblical substance.

6. God's work in history has continuity and will come to an ultimate culmination.

Expanding this idea:

We do not move through chronological time as if it were random chaos. From the beginning, God is both master over and participant within His creation. The unfolding of His purpose is central to all of history. If there is continuity in history, then there can also be culmination of history. What God has promised must be fulfilled. What God has purposed He will accomplish. This is the very essence of biblical hope.

What this idea is not:

The culmination of history has a strong connection to the idea (Idea 8) that the mission task can and will be completed. However, we need to distinguish between our completing the missionary task and God bringing about the end of the age. God remains the governor of history. While there is some linkage between Christ's coming and the completion of missionary task, we must be careful not to suggest that by our actions we can somehow control history and "make" Jesus come back.

What this idea controverts:

Most students have a modified B.O.B.O. (Blink-On, Blink-Off) view of history, in which God has only been occasionally involved. However, God's purpose is never abandoned and then restarted again. This idea frees us from the despair of thinking that God is absent or has done all that He is ever going to do.

What this idea supports:

We can honour God's work in and through previous generations. We can work with courageous humility that our efforts continue what others have done and can be continued by later generations. This idea also supports the idea that God is accomplishing more than what He has given us to complete. We can work with courageous zeal toward the things that God has promised to fulfill, but has not mandated us to complete (for example, justice for the poor, reconciliation of all peoples, an end to biological evil, and many more).

7. The Christian movement has brought about positive social transformation.

Expanding this idea:

One cannot hold the conviction that God will eventually make His people to be a blessing for all peoples and also subscribe to the common view that God's people have invariably been a curse upon the nations. God has indeed brought substantial blessing upon the societies of earth. An accurate telling of the long story of God's work through His people will point out the terrible failures of His people as well as the progressive increase of His blessing.

What this idea supports:

This idea is important when we emphasize the strategic importance of planting new churches in order to bring about lasting social transformation. This "transformational development" is essential to see how evangelism and social action can and should be integrated.

What this idea is not:

We are not trying to deny that mistakes have been made. Students must recognize that significant harm has been done in Christ's name. We are not trying to say that every church will automatically or quickly transform its society.

8. The mission task can and will be completed.

Expanding this idea:

This idea is sometimes described with the single word "closure," referring to God's intention that the missionary task be done with a view to finishing it. The term "mission task" or "missionary task" refers to what Christians have been clearly mandated to accomplish in scripture. One way to state that task: to establish Christfollowing movements among every people group so that the gospel is eventually proclaimed throughout every people group, giving every person an opportunity to understand the gospel and follow Christ. Most needs and opportunities can be prioritized according to how they might help complete the entire task.

What this idea supports:

The concept of unreached people groups only makes sense with the idea of closure. The world's unreached people groups are not the neediest peoples. They are the remaining peoples.

What this idea supports:

The conviction that the entire task must be completed becomes an important strategic criterion for mission leaders in allocating mission resources and deploying missionaries. This conviction is every bit as important for individual Christians and local churches to make strategic choices about lifestyle and labour in order to make their best contribution to completing the entire global task.

What this idea controverts:

Some have asserted that the missionary task is an unending effort never intended to be completed. Those who hold this view often dismiss the idea of framing the task in terms of people groups, focusing their efforts on the obviously unending task of conveying the gospel to every person.

9. The world's population can be viewed in terms of people groups.

Expanding this idea:

For the purposes of evangelization, it's important to understand how culture, social forces, language, history and other factors work together to form lasting groupings called people groups. The gospel flourishes amidst a people group, and moves with more difficulty between people groups.

What this idea supports:

Seeing the world's population as individuals, or even as countries defined by geopolitical boundaries, can be helpful for some aspects of mission. But seeing humanity as a mosaic of people groups is strategically important when analyzing the entire task of world evangelization. Since every people group will require a unique approach and strategy, it becomes important to understand distinctive features of the peoples.

10. The progress of world evangelization can be assessed in terms of church-planting movements within people groups.

Expanding this idea:

Since the mission task of world evangelization can be completed, progress toward the finishing of the task can and should be assessed in order to make strategic decisions. Church-planting movements are the best way to evangelize entire people groups. A church is defined as a group of people committed to obeying Christ. "Church-planting movements" describes the phenomenon of churches multiplying as they are given leadership and encouragement. Church-planting movements so effectively multiply congregations that they eventually evangelize entire populations. Church-planting movements are the best beginning points for efforts that result in lasting social transformation. Because indigenous churches are able to reproduce rapidly, it is feasible to complete the task of world evangelization.

What this idea controverts:

Highlighting the primacy of the church as an evangelizing force helps students from individualistic societies recognize that evangelism does not depend so much on effective individuals as it does on the power of planting self-reproducing churches. Students from slow-growing, highly institutional churches will recognize that different kinds of churches are needed among unreached peoples.

What this idea supports:

Assessing progress toward the completion of the entire mission task is necessary in order to identify the peoples in which the gospel has yet to make a beginning, and to make strategic decisions about missionary deployment. Without condemning churches of any tradition, we present the importance for vibrant, simple church-planting movements among the world's unreached peoples. Because church-planting movements are tangible realities, different mission agencies and churches can strategically co-labour to complete the entire task.

11. Completing the mission task requires the initiation and growth of church-planting movements that follow social avenues of influence.

Expanding this idea:

Students need to understand how church-planting movements spread within a people group in order to recognize, value and labour strategically toward that end. The most important dynamics of people movements are forces best described with the vocabulary and concepts from the field of sociology rather than anthropology. Some of these concepts—such as multi-individual group decisions and the influence of family structures—help students grasp the difficulty as well as the feasibility of starting church-planting movements.

What this idea is not:

Reviewing the basic principle doesn't mean that students are equipped to do church planting. Instead, they're exposed to the vision of accomplishing the task through church-planting movements.

What this idea controverts:

Because evangelical tradition honours the communication of the gospel message, it might seem to many students that evangelizing a people group is only a matter of effective proclamation. However, pioneer church planters actually find that their main task is to help new movements survive, and eventually thrive in their social setting. Without awareness of this practical wisdom, students might focus on matters of communication to a culture and miss the more crucial matters of conversion within culture. Without insight into the dynamics of pioneer church planting, contextualization will be seen as a matter of contextualizing the message instead of seeing the more important matter of helping the resulting movements to grow effectively within their social contexts.

12. Completing the task requires effective cross-cultural evangelism that follows communication patterns within cultures.

Expanding this idea:

Effective communication of the gospel requires a readiness to contextualize the message in appropriate cultural forms. Wise gospel communicators make efforts to grasp worldview, beliefs, values and behaviour patterns of the people group they are attempting to reach. Then they can carefully convey the truth of the gospel in ways that are persuasive and reproducible. The discipline of cultural anthropology provides most of the contributing concepts.

What this idea is not:

Reviewing the concepts related to this idea (such as finding a redemptive analogy, and communicating at a worldview level) will not provide adequate training in cross-cultural communication. The introduction may avert some the worst-case scenarios, but the main point is to expose students to the complexity and feasibility of effective cross-cultural communication.

13. Completing the task requires strategic wholism in which community development is integrated with church planting.

Expanding this idea:

Fruitful efforts of evangelization invariably integrate relief and development endeavours. Development efforts aim to help local people to mobilize local resources to meet basic needs in enduring ways. The long-range fruit is for social transformation in which Christ is recognized for what He has done to bless entire communities and for His kingdom values, which characterize the people known to be His followers. The integration of evangelism and social endeavors should be strategic, by which we mean that the integration is framed on a time line which positions in some strategic sequence some of the various relief, development, evangelization, and transformation efforts. The best strategic approach will sometimes call for social transformation to precede or accompany evangelization efforts. But in most situations, evangelism is essential to infuse the values of Christ's kingdom into the community.

What this idea is not:

We are not echoing the common cry for a "both-and" balance wholism. A commonplace platitude regarding a balance of evangelism and social action would say "It's not either-or, but both-and."

What this idea controverts:

Without a clear strategic integration, people involved in evangelization efforts find themselves unable to respond to the charge that they only care about people's souls. Would be practitioners can find themselves diverted from wholistic effectiveness by pouring efforts into relief efforts or offer assistance which unwittingly traps people in a debilitating dependence.

14. Completing the task requires collaborative efforts of churches and mission agencies from diverse cultures and traditions.

Expanding this idea:

The enormous diversity of Christian streams and traditions has long contributed to world evangelization. The explosive growth of non-Western Christian movements means that Western Christians will likely remain a minority until the end of the age. Many vigorous mission efforts have been emerging from non-Western churches in recent decades. This idea goes far beyond a passive recognition that many diverse efforts are at work. Students need to see the necessity and long-range wisdom of intentional collaboration and partnership, particularly between Western and non-Western missions and churches.

What this idea controverts:

It's very easy to presume that mission efforts must be initiated, funded and controlled by one's national churches and leaders. It's even easier to enter into partnerships with churches and organizations which end up diminishing overall fruitfulness in the long run.

15. God calls His people to embrace strategic sacrifice and suffering with Christ in order to accomplish His global purpose.

Expanding this idea:

God calls His people, without coercion, to fulfill His mandate in costly ways. This willing readiness to do whatever it takes to fulfill the particular assignment that God gives is best understood as joining with the living Lord Jesus in His ongoing suffering. Living for Christ and His Kingdom purpose will involve intentional sacrifice to live a lifestyle of strategic simplicity, sometimes called a “war-time” lifestyle. Accomplishing the missionary task in most people groups usually involves many years of difficult labour. Christians seeking to worship and follow Christ and to fulfill the task of evangelization in settings of hostility to the gospel will often suffer, sometimes involuntarily, but often willingly and strategically.

What this idea is not:

We do not mean to imply that a life consecrated to fulfilling God’s global purpose will be a bitter, joyless struggle. On the contrary, there is great joy in living with Christ for the gospel.

What this idea controverts:

It’s not unusual to find a mentality that missionary task can be accomplished quickly and easily with mass media and clever marketing techniques. Mission strategy should never begin by trying to find the easiest way. Mission can only be accomplished in the authentic life-giving ways of Christ as seen in scripture. Life-giving mission effort invariably means that whole lives are freely given. Short-term mission efforts can be very valuable components of most mission efforts. But in most settings, cross-cultural communication is essential. Such cross-cultural communication usually requires missionaries to have long-standing relationships requiring years of work.

16. By participating in the world Christian movement, every believer can find a way to live with vital, strategic significance in God’s global purpose.

Expanding this idea:

Students are invited to live a “world Christians,” following Christ with growing awareness and commitment to His global purposes. That discipleship should shape every area of life, integrating a believer’s life around Christ’s global purpose. How that vision and commitment is lived out can be done in a variety of ways. The distinction of senders (supporters or mobilizers) and go-ers (cross-cultural missionaries, located home or abroad) frees people to focus on aligning their lives with God’s global purpose instead of making issues of geography and job description a primary matter.

What this idea controverts:

A general impression still remains that missions is the business of professional missionaries. Other Christians may have an interest, but feel that they have no compelling part in missions unless they become missionaries. The global culture of materialism assails and corrupts world Christian discipleship. It’s unlikely that many students will succeed in integrating their lives for God’s purpose without a challenge to live in a counter-cultural way.

End